

LIGHT

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STORY OF A SUDDEN PASSING HOW SHATTERED FAITH WAS RESTORED BY COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE OTHER SIDE

By RUTH PLANT

THIS is the story of a sudden passing, an episode which is happening around us each day, but one which can never fail to fall with shattering weight when it makes its personal impact upon us. For death is often not merely the eclipse of a single life, as we know it here, but the darkening of a whole family circle. And because at this time there are so many who are going over into the Hereafter suddenly, I have set down the following story in the hope that it may be of help to some of those who mourn.

My brother Ralph was a medical student and he was killed on his motor-cycle returning to Oxford for his Finals. He was a very beloved son, and his loss was overwhelming. Our Faith, which had been too much one of easy acceptance, perhaps, was unable to stand up to the blow. Everything became bewilderment and doubt. Only someone who has experienced such a loss can understand the awfulness of those days. At first it was possible to keep up a show of courage, to hide for brief moments the sorrow that was in our hearts. But, little by little, resistance waned and life became one long time of gloom with nothing to dispel it.

About this time a cousin of ours, who had also lost her son, lent my mother Lady Glenconner's book *The Earthen Vessel*. We had some slight knowledge of psychic things. My father (a clergyman) had always been interested in queer stories relating to old houses in the neighbourhood. My parents had read *Raymond* many years before; but because the Truth is seldom apparent unless related to our immediate needs, the book did not appeal to them at all. Those details, which we came later on in our own sittings to regard as so indicative of individual survival, seemed futile and childish. We had also some intangible idea that communication was wrong.

But our attitude towards the subject was entirely altered by an experience my mother had when she was lying awake one night in bed. Suddenly the thought broke in on her like a flash: "Oh, supposing he is trying to get through to us and we are not making the effort to do so." As a result of this experience my mother

wrote a letter to the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, who was mentioned in *The Earthen Vessel*. She gave no details about us; she only said that she had had a son killed on the road on a motor-cycle and that she was longing to get a message from him if it were possible.

It seemed at this time as if life had reached its zero hour. My father, who had been in a very delicate state of health for some time, was getting slowly worse, and he realised now he could never recover. The winter was coming on, and in the mining village where we lived it was bleak and desolate.

The answer to my mother's letter and our first messages came one foggy afternoon in late October, when the world looked like night. My father put the letter in his pocket, at first not realising what it contained. He went down to the Church where my mother had gone to do the Altar flowers and then to my brother's grave. Describing that day in a sitting, after his death, my father said:—

"It all seemed so inexplicable as we stood there that day by his grave. There was my health, my deafness, too, and this terrible tragedy to my son. What had I done to deserve it? I had always done my best to be honest and sincere. It seemed to be inexplicable and incomprehensible, an unmerited punishment. I was a man without hope. And then suddenly this ray of light from those messages in the letter appeared straight across what appeared to be an impenetrable shadow. It meant more than anything that happened to me in my whole life, and in a spiritual sense it was more a recognition of a beacon of hope than anything I had known before."

(The messages from Ralph were received by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas at a proxy sitting with Mrs. Osborne Leonard.)

I think that this message of my father tells more than any words I can write of the profound effect that communication had on an individual life. The fact that my brother, whom we mourned as lost, had suddenly broken through to us and established contact, was to alter the whole meaning and purpose of our lives. We had become aware of the truth and reality of the Communion of Saints.

Its further significance was shown when my father passed on two years later. It altered so much for him. Describing this afterwards my brother said:—

"After I passed over, Daddy was in such a terrible state of mind, and you took such definite steps to get me back for him, and you did get me back, you see. Oh, and we have been glad of this, because Daddy needed this knowledge of the Other Side so much when he was so ill before he passed over. It made such a difference having it before, and not after, he passed. It was just that feeling of 'all rightness' that made it perfect and made such a difference. All the time I was watching him and by his bedside he was just lying there feeling 'It will be all right, it will be all right.' And I was not anxious but happy about him, and kept on impressing

ON OTHER PAGES

When Minds are Attuned: A Seer's Vision

By L. MARGERY BAZETT—page 163

Antidote to Despair

By THE EDITOR—page 164

Power of the Word

By C. R. CAMMELL—page 165

him, saying: 'Yes, that is right and it will be all right and you will be coming to me.' And Daddy felt 'I shall be seeing Ralph soon and hearing all about what he has been doing.' You don't know what it meant to us both having got in touch with me before."

"And it needed courage, too," my brother continued, "because at first, although you pushed forward, you did not know how to do it. You just thought 'I hope I am doing right,' and he felt you were really praying about getting in touch with Mr. Thomas: 'If it is the right thing, help me to go on with it; if it is not, then let something stop me.'"

And, my brother went on: "I was saying all the time 'Go ahead.' When you prayed like that I was allowed to be the means of answering your prayer in a way, because you were asking for a sign to know whether you were right or wrong. I was allowed to push you into doing it, to make little things happen that pushed you into writing. And afterwards I was given *additional power* in order to make it definite, not only to go to Mr. Thomas, but to Mrs. Leonard too. Because you prayed only to be right and prayed to be shown the right thing to do you were allowed to do it all very definitely."

Here we see how prayer fits in and how God can reveal Himself to the mourner, not necessarily by some vision shown to the individual, but by the use of communication, when sought prayerfully and in the right way. And the knowledge of this possibility may be shared and handed on to others. Hence, the purpose and meaning of this article.

So many of my friends say to me they cannot think it right to communicate unless through their own powers, and if God means them to have this help He will give them a vision. But God does not always intervene by a special act. Once in ten thousand times perhaps people are able to manifest themselves to us without assistance, but in all other cases they are quite powerless unless given assistance through the special powers of a Sensitive. We might bring forward this same argument against calling in the Doctor or even the Healer, feeling

that, if the patient was meant to recover, God would intervene direct. It may be that, hundreds of years hence, all men will have so developed their knowledge of the supernormal that they may all be able to communicate, but God works in conjunction with present conditions, and I think that this message does show how He can answer our prayer and send us a vision, though it be through an outside source.

WAR PROPHECIES

THE Rev. Charles Tweedale's letter respecting the fulfilment of Stradivarius's prophecy as to the recovery of Abyssinia (LIGHT, April 24th) once again raises the problem of prediction. I have carefully read all that Mr. Tweedale has written on the matter so far as it has come within my cognisance, but unfortunately he would not appear to have committed himself to much in advance of the event. True, in his book, *News from the Next World*, not all the prophecies he mentions would appear as yet to have been fulfilled, but they do not concern matters of any great moment. The more important matters, he tells us, have been recorded and deposited under seal for later inspection, but this practice does not enable us to determine what proportion of his prophecies has proved correct.

There can be no doubt that the question of prediction is one of real importance, but no dispassionate judgment upon it can possibly be formulated unless error is risked by giving prior publication to the relevant material. In all truly scientific experiments, the failures are examined quite as closely as the successes. Much gratitude is, therefore, due to those who have shown courage in this matter, and the many disappointments do not invalidate the claim that successful predictions are sometimes made. Indeed, a careful study of apparent errors will often disclose highly significant features which would not otherwise have been available.

I would appeal to those who are in possession of suitable material not to hesitate to publish it in advance, no matter whether it is agreeable or not, and I trust the psychic press will continue to give a reasonable amount of space for this matter. Despite the most careful documenting, little notice will be taken of information that is suppressed till later, and no adequate light will ever be thrown on the problem until we are able to consider not only the "hits" and the "misses," but also (and perhaps most important of all) the "near misses."

(REV.) HERBERT CRABTREE.

MR. B. ABDY COLLINS BECOMES EDITOR OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE

IN the current issue of *Psychic Science*, Mrs. Hewat M'Kenzie announces her retirement from the Editorship and introduces Mr. B. Abdy Collins, C.I.E., as her successor. *Psychic Science* was first issued in 1922 as the quarterly organ of the British College of Psychic Science (founded by Mr. and Mrs. Hewat M'Kenzie), and it is now the organ of the International Institute for Psychic Investigation, with which the College was amalgamated some two years ago. The first Editor was Mr. F. Bligh Bond, F.R.I.B.A. (1922-26), and he was succeeded by Mr. Stanley De Brath, M.I.C.E. (1926-36). Then, to fill the gap caused by the resignation of Mr. De Brath (owing to advanced age and illness), Mrs. M'Kenzie took up the work and has "carried on" successfully throughout the difficult intervening period of five years. "I have possibly contributed to every issue in some form or other," she writes, "... and now I shall enjoy sitting back and seeing the work competently carried on by my successor and wish him joy in the service."

Mr. Collins has been a frequent and welcome contributor to LIGHT; and, whilst he is to be congratulated on his succession to the Editorship of *Psychic Science*, the Institute and the readers are to be congratulated on securing an Editor so suitable in every way. G.H.L.

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June 4th. NO MEETING.

LECTURE

THURSDAY, MAY 15, at 6.30 p.m.

Dr. HECTOR MUNRO on
"My Psychic Experiences."

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WHEN MINDS ARE ATTUNED: A SEER'S VISION

By L. MARGERY BAZETT

I SHOULD like to tell simply how I was able to follow, from a considerable distance in space, the mind of an old friend during the few days preceding his death.

At the time, I was myself ill and unable to go to see him; but on a certain Tuesday I had a strong idea that he would die on the following Thursday, two days later. On the Wednesday, from 1.50, for half an hour, I had a vision of the Communion Cup and Plate in connection with him; I naturally came to the conclusion that he was receiving the Communion, but on writing later to the nurse in charge of him I heard that he had neither seen a clergyman nor had that service celebrated. It was a service to which he was particularly attached; and although he was not conscious during that half hour, I think it possible that his unconscious mind had been going through the service with which he was so familiar, and that he actually received the Sacrament in some mystical form. I myself heard the words being said—"Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?" Curiously enough, at the very time, his physical body was going through a time of great disturbance and distress, as I heard afterwards.

During the whole of the Tuesday or Wednesday night, I cannot remember which, when I myself was unable to sleep, I was vividly aware of the workings of my old friend's mind, along the following lines: He seemed to be picturing, in a painfully acute way, the "Stations of the Cross," almost as if he were identifying himself with the suffering Christ. I think I had never experienced anything of that nature so vividly before. I knew that my friend was deeply religious, and it was rather curious that his wife sent me, after his death, a tiny book called *The Stations of the Cross*, mentioning that he was particularly fond of this little book, and that I might like to have it.

At noon on the day of his death (which took place at 8.30 that evening) I saw him, with no appearance of illness at all, and imagined that he had already passed over. A very familiar expression was in his eyes, a mixture of enthusiasm and great pleasure, a diffidence of manner in the presence of advanced personalities; this was a marked characteristic of his, as although he was an extremely clever man, he had a deep respect for those whom he considered greater than himself. There was a look of shyness in the eyes, intense interest, and a touch of the mischievous—all characteristic of him when in full health. Between 7 and 8 o'clock on that evening, I was distinctly aware that his passing was virtually accomplished; so much so, that I sent by post a small wooden cross which I asked his wife to place in his hand. On the day of his funeral, I heard organ music being played, though there was no music in the house where I was. I enquired whether music had been played in his home after his death, but it had not. It did not surprise me that music should be heard in connection with him, as it was one of the great pleasures of his life. My mind was concerned that day with the thought of some message of comfort that I could suitably send to his wife, but I could think of nothing that satisfied me. At a definite hour on that day (5.15 p.m.) a short figure appeared close to my bed, clad in a light garment; this figure stood exactly under a sketch, painted by his wife, of a place in the East, when we three were on a visit many years before; I had been thinking of that particular tour some hours previously. Although the figure was indistinct, I could not help feeling that it was my friend himself. What emerged clearly were the following words spoken to me: "Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we com-

mit you. May the Lord bless you and keep you, and give you His Peace." It was strongly impressed upon me that that was the message which he himself wished to send to his wife, and I wrote this to her.

The same evening, I saw also a cross within a circle, the significance of which would have been well known to him, as he was learned in religious symbolism.

COMFORTING THOUGHTS

It is comforting to remember that, if our eyes were opened to the spiritual nature of life and of man, and if this attitude were habitual rather than occasional, we should realise, even through great physical pain, suffering and loss, that the essential person whom we love is less affected by these passing things than may appear on the surface; even in acute suffering the mind may not be wholly absorbed thereby, but free to contemplate the things of the spirit, and to gain refreshment from them. Again when, to our earthly perception, we are face to face with the lifelessness of the body, the freed human spirit is already entering into that joy of renewed life. How slow is our consciousness in realising—though we have learned it all our lives—that we are immortal souls, clothed here for a short period in the garment of mortality!

GOSPEL OF THE REDMAN

SEVERAL years ago, there appeared in *LIGHT*, an account of a book written by *Buffalo Child Long Lance*. The author was a pure-blooded, fully-educated Red Indian, who had been through the Great War, side by side with his fellow Americans. In his book, published some years later, Chief Long Lance gave an intimate picture of his people, of their religious customs and beliefs, their family life and general outlook; a picture which is completely at variance with that portrayed by Fennimore Cooper and other writers of the early nineteenth century, so dear to the hearts of schoolboys of those and later days. This corrected picture of the Redman is brought out even more strongly in *The Gospel of the Redman, an Indian Bible*, (Methuen & Co.), compiled by Ernest Thompson Seton (assisted by J. M. Seton); the man whose many books about the wild animals amongst whom he lived in Northern America have fascinated more modern readers.

This little book does indeed present us with a sharp contrast, not only between the Redskin of Cooper's stories, but between the Redskin and his enemy, the Whiteman. Were it not for the scrupulous care with which the compiler gives us chapter and verse for every accusation quoted against the latter, one would be tempted to doubt some of the charges made; but in point of fact, many of the records given were drawn up by the Whitemen themselves, who obviously at that time regarded "savages" as legal prey for any form of duplicity or cruelty on their part.

Very different is the picture of the Red Indian as depicted by many writers, who, like Seton himself, had spent many years amongst them, as one of themselves; been accepted as blood-brothers, and who formed the highest opinion of their red-skinned brothers, as a race of high-minded, deeply religious, often mystical people: faithful to the keeping of a given word, or to a sworn friend, wise in their education of the young, and in their social customs; as well as in command of a degree of endurance and self-control far beyond that obtained by their conquerors. A study of this record helps one to understand why members former of their race so often figure now as "Guides."

M.A.B.

Light

All communications for the EDITOR should be addressed: "The Editor of Light, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7." 'Phone: Kensington 3292-3.

EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

ANTIDOTE TO DESPAIR

IS Faith the only alternative to Despair in face of the mystery of Death and especially of the wholesale slaughter by bomb and bullet and other instruments of modern war? Answering an inquirer in a Broadcast address, the Rev. Dr. J. S. Whale (President of Cheshunt College, Cambridge) asserted that it is—making it clear that he meant Christian Faith.

We need not dispute Dr. Whale's dictum, provided it be kept in mind that the Faith of Christians in a Life after Death is based—or should we say *was* based?—on the New Testament story of the after-death appearances of Jesus, supplemented by the doctrine of the Spiritual Body proclaimed by St. Paul in explanation of these appearances. Dr. Whale may have had the Gospel evidence in mind, but, unfortunately, he did not mention it, did not even suggest that direct evidence of any kind existed, either ancient or modern. Rather, he seemed to take the familiar line that no evidence is needed for a life after death—only Faith; and he said that Faith that faltered (as described by his questioner), even before the wholesale destruction of human life in war, was not true Faith, but only sentimentality.

If Dr. Whale is right, then it is to be feared that there is a sad lack of true Faith, even in the Christian Churches, for there is reason to believe that it is the rule rather than the exception that Christian people—like non-Christians—are stunned by the death, and especially the tragic death, of those they love; and, as described by Tennyson (In Memoriam, liv.) that they

" . . . stretch lame hands of Faith and grope
And gather dust and chaff,"

instead of holding fast to the assurance which Dr. Whale seems to think so easy of attainment and preservation.

In an article published in this issue of LIGHT (front page), there is a description of what happened in a Christian home which ought to raise doubts in the mind of Dr. Whale as to the fairness or rationality of his conclusions. A beloved boy was killed in a motor accident, and, as the writer of the article says, "his loss was overwhelming—our Faith, which had been too much one of easy acceptance," (that is, Faith without a basis of evidence), "was unable to stand up to the blow, everything became bewilderment and doubt." Fortunately, in that case, Faith was restored by evidence of Survival and continued affection provided by messages from the boy; but evidence was needed before Faith was restored; and, had evidence not been forthcoming, Faith might have been entirely lost,

If Dr. Whale thinks that desire for evidence is a sign of weakness, he would do well to recall the case of the Disciples of Jesus. They had lived with Jesus for three years and heard His explanations of how He was "to bring life and immortality to the light," but, after His death, they thought that was the end of Him—they lost their Faith, which was not restored until they had seen and heard the Risen Master who presented Himself to them in His spiritual body. Indeed, one of them refused to believe the story told by his companions who had first seen the Master, and insisted on complete evidence for himself before he would believe—and it was given to him in full measure.

(Continued at foot of next column)

AFTER DUNKIRK

I am not dead! Alive I speak, and nigh,
Tho' on that distant battle-shore I fell,
From higher vantage point 'tis mine to tell
The comrades whom I left: *I did not die!*
I fell to rise. While my brothers said,
All-pitying, grief-struck, mazed: "He, too, is
gone."

'Twas mine to rise, alive, and, passing on,
To enter this new realm. *I am not dead!*

'Twas flesh that fell. In spirit I arose,
The spirit that was mine before the strife,
But spirit-clad to meet this new-found life,
And strong and fit for life that grows, and grows.

Ye do us wrong whene'er ye name us 'dead.'

We are the living—living even as ye.

We share with you in immortality

Life's high imperative. *We are not dead!*

God leads from life to life. His basic laws
Direct our course. He lifts us up at death
Decreeing for our spirit-bodies breath
To speak His word—to carry on His cause.

So stand we here,—not phantoms, ghosts nor shades,
But living men from out the lands of earth,
Each bearing still whate'er of human worth
On earth was his—to life that never fades.

So stand we here—uncounted thousands we—
Shred helpless, broken from the battle-flame,
Yet each received and welcomed as he came,
Emancipated—from the carnage free.

Nay, marvel not; it hath been ever so;
The close of life is but the opening door
Of larger life. And we yestreen who bore
The earth-form, now in spirit live and grow.

Think not, as ye conceive our tarrying-place,
'Tis in some strange remoteness, far away,
From yours to ours is but—as we would say—
One step. Such is the Father's loving grace.

Nor have we changed. The cause of mankind still
Is ours. We serve it from these fields of light,
Your allies still against the powers of Night,
In pledged fidelity of love and will.

We stand with you—uncounted myriads we—
Who serve the Light, devoted to His will,
Our deep desire this purpose to fulfil
That humankind may from their bonds be free.

Fiat Voluntas Tua! Yea, the Night,
And all its terror, all its ill shall cease.
Morn shall bring to the troubled earth His peace,
And ye shall rest from strife in holy light.

Winnipeg, Canada.]

W. R. WOOD.

(Continued from previous column)

Does Dr. Whale think it wise for a Christian preacher like himself to ignore the psychic evidence which Jesus thus deliberately provided for His disciples, or to neglect the modern evidence of similar happenings by which the Gospel story is corroborated? We suggest that, in demanding Faith without evidence, Dr. Whale is asking what, to the majority of human beings of the present generation, is an impossibility; and that for him and those—all too many—who make such demands, the choice is not between Faith and Failure, but between Failure and the provision of reasonable evidence.

By acceptance of the modern evidence of Survival, as Frederic Myers pointed out, belief in the reality of the after-death appearances of Jesus (generally referred to as His resurrection) would soon become general, whereas without the modern evidence the time will come—if it has not already arrived—when "no reasonable man" will believe it.

POWER OF THE WORD

THE SAILORS' PRAYER

LATELY in an old Scrap Book I found a prayer of great beauty and strangely apposite to the times. The cuttings that make up this gem of a Scrap Book were all printed in the holy Island of Iona some fifty or more years ago: it is "The Iona Press Scrap Book"—a rare and lovely collection of woodcuts and etchings, architectural motifs, fragments of legend and poems in the Gaelic, or in English translations from that tongue, brought together and preserved by some amateur of things precious and beautiful. The prayer which touched me so deeply is entitled: "The Blessing of the Ship: A Form of Prayer formerly used by many of the Sailors of Iona and the Isles on beginning a Voyage after the Sails are set." It is an Invocation to the King of all Seas, to Him whose incarnate Godhead commanded the restless elemental Spirits of the Storm: "Peace, be still."

In its absolute simplicity of Faith and Power, this prayer is to me inexpressibly moving, now when the sailors of Iona and the Isles have "set their sails," one and all, and are ever at sea in storm and calm, sweeping mines, patrolling the Scottish shores, in the Royal Navy, in the Merchant Navy, fighting the enemy wherever on the waters he prowls, wherever peril lurks. Only the women remain in the Islands, to till the scant soil, to spin and dye and weave the lovely and enduring fabrics which are their tradition, their pride and their livelihood. Perhaps when the long twilights darken, they still send up this ancient prayer of their sea-faring sires; for the tyranny of time is little felt in the Western Isles, and the old arts, the old songs, the old tales, and the old prayers, are repeated from generation to generation down the centuries. Here it is, the English rendering of the Gaelic original, transcribed from the rare woodcut pages with their wealth of Celtic allegorical ornament:

"The Helmsman says: Bless our Ship.
The Sailors reply: May God the Father bless her.
The Helmsman: Bless our Ship.
The Sailors: May Jesus Christ bless her
The Helmsman: Bless our Ship.
The Sailors: May the Holy Ghost bless her.
The Helmsman: What fear ye when God the Father is with you?
The Sailors: We fear no evil.
The Helmsman: What fear ye when God the Son is with you?
The Sailors: We fear no evil.
The Helmsman: What fear ye when God the Holy Ghost is with you?
The Sailors: We fear no evil.

The Helmsman: May God! Almighty Father, with the love of his Son Christ Jesus and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, One God, who miraculously led the Children of Israel through the Red Sea; who took Jonah to dry land in the belly of the great whale; who delivered the Apostle Paul and his helpless ship from the raging and boisterous sea. Save and defend us and bless us and guide us prosperously and cheerfully and with joy on the wide sea, and lead us to our quiet haven according to His own divine will. According to which let us ask everything of Him, saying: (here follows the Lord's Prayer, after which) All the Sailors say Amen."

POTENCY OF PRAYER

I have called this prayer an Invocation. All prayer, worthy that holy name, is Invocation; every Invocation, rightly understood, is a prayer. Prayer, true prayer, prayer which is so earnest that all else in the world is forgotten and shut out utterly in the praying, creates an Image of what is desired. The stronger the prayer the clearer the Image. Such images are seen, and "seeing is believing." To believe absolutely is to have absolute Faith, and Faith can remove mountains: "Go thy way, thy faith hath saved thee." The cause and

effect of prayer cannot too often be stressed.

Dignity and, above all, simplicity of phrase, are essential to the most efficacious prayer. The Lord's Prayer is in all respects the perfect model. As a simple refrain will bind the verses of a song in the memory, so will the simple repetition of moving words often help him who prays to put his all into the asking of the boon he craves of God. It is just this which makes the Iona Sailors' Prayer so moving, and which makes it (I am very sure) so potent.

INVOCATION OF PEACE

The Sailors' Prayer brings to my mind another piece of Gaelic magic: the Invocation of Peace," which Fiona MacLeod translated. There is no question about the potency of this masterpiece. Even in its English dress the sequences of images and the arrangement of words have a positively magical effect. It is a spiritual opiate. It is the Soul's lullaby.

The Seer, the Healer, chants the spell with rhythmic cadence: "Deep peace I breathe into you, O weariness, here; O ache, here!

Deep peace, a soft white dove to you;
Deep peace, a quiet rain to you;
Deep peace, an ebbing wave to you!"

The Invocation—the Incantation—gathers in volume, image on image, like the waves of an incoming tide. The winds are invoked each by its mystical colour: the east and north "from you," the west and south "to you." The idea of colour is further prolonged, that the mind may actually behold them:

"Deep peace, pure red of the flame to you;
Deep peace, pure white of the moon to you;
Deep peace, pure green of the grass to you.
Deep peace, pure brown of the earth to you;
Deep peace, pure blue of the sky to you!"

The tempo is increased, the measure runs dancing to the new images: "Deep peace of the running wave to you; Deep peace of the flowing air to you; . . . of the quiet earth; . . . of the sleeping stones to you!" All nature is conjured, all Earth, all Heaven, to produce the magical change that will bring to the hearer peace; "the Flock of Stars, the Son of Peace, the heart of Mary: Deep peace, deep peace! . . . In the name of the Three who are One, and by the will of the King of the Elements, Peace! Peace!"* The effect of these wonderful lines must be tried to be proved.

THE WORD

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." That the *word* is Divine, that the *word* is Power, the prophets and masters of all religions and higher philosophies combine to affirm in precept and practice. St. John is one with Plato. In Egypt, in Chaldea, in Israel, in Greece, in Alexandria, in India, China, Arabia, with the Persian Sufis and the Celtic Druids, in every Christian Church—everywhere where Seers have seen beyond the veil, where Sages have taught wisdom, and Saints virtue, have "words of power" been the vocal expression of the Holy Mysteries. The power of the *word* is the core of the ritual of all Magic. The Kabbalah discovered in *words* a clue to the eternal tangle of the Universe. "The pen is mightier than the sword," and the pen but chronicles *words*. Poetry is the Divine Word manifested down the ages. And words are the force behind conquerors; and the word of the *Vox Populi* is the driving power of political evolution. No one will dispute it, who has read history intelligently; no one who has heard the oratory of our Prime Minister.

C. R. CAMMELL.

**Poems and Dramas*, by "Fiona MacLeod" (William Sharp) London, Wm. Heinemann, 1929.

DISRAELI AND HIS PICTURE

By MARY WINEFRIDE SLATER

READERS of LIGHT may remember my article "Spirit Visitors," published on September 26th, 1940, that described a sitting with Mr. Goodall, a Liversedge Medium. "I cannot see you sitting in your chair," he said, "you are entirely overshadowed by the spirit-form of Queen Victoria, and I can see a large letter D over your head. I hear the name 'Disraeli.'"

Two days later, I received a letter from Walter Goldsmith, a well known York Medium, verifying Mr. Goodall's clairvoyance. The description of Benjamin Disraeli was identical, but this time he showed a *walking stick* as a mark of identification. I found the explanation in a biography called *Disraeli* by André Maurois, recording that, when a young man, he possessed a great number of walking sticks. He used "a *morning and an evening cane*" that he changed by system punctually at the stroke of noon, "laughing at himself all the while."

I have always had a great admiration for Benjamin Disraeli and his charming wife "Mary," and have often mentally asked Queen Victoria, who was a personal friend of my family, to help me to contact them.

A few weeks before my sitting with Mr. Goodall, I received a letter from Mr. Harry Boyd, a Worthing Healer and Medium, who was quite unknown to me. He wrote in appreciation of my article describing the spirit return of General Gordon, which appeared in LIGHT. His letter concluded with the words: "I am impressed to give you the name of 'Mary Anne,' in spirit." I replied that I could not remember anyone with those names who had passed over, but while consulting Andre Maurois' biography of *Disraeli* I found that chapter III. was headed "Mary Anne." She was Disraeli's devoted and much loved wife. I knew that she was called "Mary," but the fact that she was also called "Anne" was unknown to me. I left York last October year with a heavy heart, fearing that I should not find a suitable Medium in Scarborough with whom to continue my work.

A SCARBOROUGH MESSAGE

For over a year I searched in vain and called on Mrs. Frith, the President of the Scarborough Spiritualist Church, to tell her of my failure. "Wait a minute, let me think," she said. "A Medium has come to live just across the road, within the last three weeks. I will take you over to her."

I was delighted to hear of a Medium to whom I was a complete stranger and who did not even know my name, and therefore could not connect me with those in spirit of whom I had written in my articles for the psychic papers, as anything she gave me would prove more evidential.

Mrs. Garnett, the Medium, not only contacted and gave evidential proof of the spirit-presence of those of whom I had written, but also of many with whom I have since made contact and of whom I have written, but owing to war conditions, have not submitted an account to any Editor.

"Queen Victoria is overshadowing you," she said. "Prince Albert is with her." She paused and laughed. "Someone has come with them, a rather thick-set, sturdily built man, who is very Scotch and wears a kilt. He says in such a pleading voice, 'May John Brown come too? I was only a servant,' he says, 'but I was treated as a son and a friend.'"

After a pause she asked, "Who is Mary?" I replied that my name was Mary and that also I had an aunt in spirit with that name. "This spirit is a lovely old lady," the Medium explained. "Her hair is drawn back from her forehead. She has a white lace shawl over her head and wears violets. She is laughing so happily, and says 'I am Mary Anne, and so very glad to be able to come to you at last, my dear!'"

(Continued at foot of next column)

MORE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

THROUGH the Trance-Mediumship of Mrs. Pamela Nash, the following questions were answered at the fortnightly meetings at the L.S.A.:—

We are taught to regard suicide as a very grave mistake. Would it be accounted so if the motive were not selfish despair but an unselfish desire to reach and comfort a loved one in the Beyond? And would it achieve its end?

It is, as you say, "the motive behind the crime" which is judged by higher minds, but in any case suicide is a mistake. It is a grave error because, no matter what the circumstances, it is forcing the spirit out of the body, sometimes before the spirit is sufficiently matured. This does not apply merely to earthly years, but to lack of experience. All suicide vibrations or tendencies are a grave error and even if the motive is to help a loved one whom they feel to be in distress—and there need be no distress—this could bring no comfort but rather further distress, because the soul would feel that it had forced another spirit into the higher life prematurely.

Do Higher Powers ordain the manner and the hour of every death? Or are some cases—those of young people for instance—the result of unforeseen and regrettable accident?

No, the higher powers are not exactly the rulers of destiny, and sometimes when young people are called into the higher life through some unforeseen accident it may be because the soul has greater possibilities of development in the higher sphere, and the passing is what we call a natural process of leaving the body. The life on the earth need not be necessarily three-score years and ten or four-score, or so on, because there are circumstances where the soul would be unable to develop sufficiently while in the physical body, and often these souls enter into the other life in order to gain spiritual education and progress. So it is not destiny that says "come over!" it is for the good and progress of the soul.

We are told that when people have passed over it often helps them if we get into communication with them. Can you explain why this is so?

Because encouragement is always one of the greatest helps that can be given. Suppose someone has gone into a distant land, so that the only way of getting in touch is by letter, and he has received a letter from you. How it does help him. Perhaps you are impressed to write your letter just at a psychological moment and that letter means so much, and is read and re-read. Perhaps there are only everyday things expressed in that letter, but it helps. So it is with us in the spirit. If someone comes to see you and talk to you, even on your earthplane you are pleased, and so are we in the spirit if somebody has a desire to talk to us.

(Continued from previous column)

"A man called 'Rizzie' is here," the Medium continued. "No! you have got the wrong name!" I declared, "The first letter is incorrect." "He is laughing, and showing me the alphabet. I am to go through each letter until he tells me to stop!" she said. "A, B, C, D—stop! It is Dizzy!" she exclaimed. "He is laughing heartily and enjoying the joke. He has still a great sense of humour, he says. He wants me to tell you that he began by writing for the papers, and he will help you to write. He shows me some old-fashioned books. 'How they opposed me and made fun of me,' he says, 'but I won through and so will you.' He tells me that he came with his picture."

I had taken to the sitting a pencil sketch, that I had copied from a portrait of Disraeli!

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

THE VERSAILLES "VISION"

SIR,—Some of your correspondents speak of the "vision" that the two ladies had at Versailles. "Vision" is hardly the correct term for the unusual and various phenomena that those ladies experienced.

In the book, *An Adventure*, written about their experiences, they said that the first time they went for a walk in the famous Gardens, they were quite unaware that they were not seeing the Gardens as they really existed, but were seeing them as they were laid out in the days before the French Revolution. They noticed several people sitting or walking about, who were dressed, they thought, in somewhat old-fashioned clothes. They spoke to one man who, they concluded, was a gardener. *He actually replied to them.* Though they were versed in modern French, they could not understand his ancient French.

The two ladies spent many years searching through ancient records, etc., and they obtained striking proofs that all they had seen was absolutely correct. They even succeeded in discovering the identity of some of the spirits.

It was certainly not a simple, clairvoyant vision of the past; as the ladies walked about the Gardens at the time, spoke to a spirit who replied, and sometimes one lady would see a spirit that the other could not see.

In short, they saw earth-bound spirits, and what those spirits had built around themselves. Therefore, to be exact, the ladies did not see the past at all. They saw, and were in, the psychic present. Which present was merely a *copy* of the past.

D. M. C. GRANVILLE.

THE OBJECT OF SPIRITUALISM

Sir,—Adverting to the letter of Mr. W. H. Evans in *LIGHT* of April 17th, I think the true position is best expressed in the final lines of the quotation from the *Hill of Vision* at the end of my article in the same issue. The New Revelation is very much more than a mere new presentation of old ethical teachings. It reveals a flood of wonderful information concerning the nature of life beyond the veil and the progress of the spirit from sphere to sphere—all matters on which the Bible and the orthodox churches are entirely silent. Although much of the old teaching is incorporated in the new structure which is being erected on the crumbling ruins of the older institutions, the new edifice is so much larger in its scope and purpose that the identity of the older structure will become ultimately lost by absorption in the nobler, wider, and grander proportions of the new.

W. HARRISON.

PUBLICITY FOR SPIRITUALISM

Sir,—Mr. Dutton's plea for co-operative advertising (*LIGHT*, April 3rd) contains some excellent ideas, which ought to be put into practice, perhaps in conjunction with the previous suggestion in your columns for the formation of a Psychic Press Association. Is it more than a coincidence that your contemporary, *Psychic News*, for the same week, contains a plea by the Editor for action now by the Spiritualists' National Union to promote the interests of post-war Spiritualism? All these ideas contain much promise and if there could be a concerted effort on the part of *all* the main Spiritualist organisations throughout Great Britain, much good would undoubtedly accrue. Which of them will start the ball rolling?

J. D. TURNER.

FOOD AND DRINK

Sir,—The answer given through Mrs. P. Nash regarding food and drink (*LIGHT*, April 10th) cannot be accepted as final. For, through knowledge gained, we have learnt

that the evolution of a spiritual body is a slow process, even as with the human body. Therefore to the mass of people, who as yet have only touched the fringe of spirituality, to be told they will live on "light, love and peace" will convey to their minds the ghostly idea of being wisps of air. Spiritualists believe that such is not the case, and we learn that the spiritual body, when completely formed, is as substantial as the physical body. Therefore, as the human frame is fed to grow, so will the spiritual be fed according to the mental development. Let me quote an answer given to this same question by one who is progressed to a great degree. He replied: "Of course we eat and drink. The only difference is we are fed from mother atmosphere and you from mother earth."

K. E. TURTLE.

GOD, MAN AND THE ANT

Sir,—I feel I must say a few words in reply to Mr. O. Holland's implied criticism of my article on "The Nature of God." I agree with him that Spiritualism should leave revelations and dogmas alone. To me it seems that the two cardinal facts of Survival and Communication with those who have gone before are sufficient guides to conduct. I prefer to rely on proved facts.

The object of my little essay was to see if there was any ground, *in fact* for the idea of the Fatherhood of God. In spite of what Mr. Holland says, I still think that I showed there is at least some slight ground for it. I argued from facts as we see them. Mr. Holland argues from a state of affairs that does not exist and bases his argument on analogy—a very insecure foundation. If there had been no creature on the earth wiser than the ant, if it had, in fact, controlled all others, its supposed conclusions would quite probably have been correct. But man *does* exist. He is at the top of the scale. I argued from facts as they are and I think there is some force in my arguments, but these are my own opinions and I do not wish to force them on anyone else.

B. ADBY COLLINS.

"POSSESSION" IN THE GOSPELS

Sir,—It seems strange that Mr. Stanley Bedford, in his letter to *LIGHT* of April 17th, should regard as an impossibility what belongs as much to authenticated facts as any other historic facts recorded in the Gospels—"Obsession" or Possession by a discarnate spirit or spirits. Mr. Bedford quotes: "We sleep until the trumpet sounds," and says it is true, taking "the trumpet" as metaphor. One does not know the quotation, a line of a hymn perhaps. The translation in 1 Cor. XV., 52, does not mean a "trumpet," but is from the Latin "triumphus"—victory or triumph, "Io triumphe" the shout of the soldiers. Biblical meaning (as also the spiritual meaning): A voice. St. John V., 25, 28.—X. 16 and XVIII, 37. The word translated "the graves" in St. John V, 28, probably corresponds to what the ancient Greeks called "the shades."

M. C. MERRETT.

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