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LIFTING THE CURTAIN BETWEEN TWO PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

WHAT SPIRITUALISM IS AND WHAT IT DOES

By MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART

From an Address at the Church of the Confraternity,
Bournemouth.

WHAT is this Spiritualism which we of the Confraternity are asking the Churches to accept? Clairvoyance, psychometry, and talking with friends on the other side? Yes, Spiritualism means all sorts of interesting phenomena which prove that our friends survive. It is interesting, and it is useful as proof of Survival; but I suggest that all this is the nursery end of Spiritualism.

Let me venture another answer to the question: *Spiritualism is the lifting of a curtain between two planes of Consciousness.*

What do we mean by Consciousness? To be conscious of something means to be aware of something. There are grades of consciousness. The worm, the frog, the rat, have a narrower range of consciousness or awareness than the dog, the cat, the horse; and these have a narrower range than Man; and each extension of consciousness has coincided with a new phase of evolution.

Now I ask: Has Man reached the limit of possible consciousness? Are we aware of everything there is to be aware of that is within reach of our physical consciousness?

Let me give you an example of *seeing, without being aware*, from animal life. A dog will come into a library stocked with books of philosophy, art, history, fiction, etc., and for the dog, those books are non-existent—as books. Yes, you may say, but we humans are not dogs; where does the analogy come in? Surely human beings, unless they are afflicted with blindness, are conscious of all objects that come within the range of their physical eyesight? But are we sure of this? Is it not a little startling to realise, for instance, that our distinction of colours—our awareness of colour—is of comparatively recent date? Professor Max Müller tells us that Xenophanes, who lived in the 6th century B.C., knew only of *three* colours of the rainbow—purple, red, and yellow. Even Aristotle (B.C. 384) spoke of the tri-

coloured rainbow. Again, Dr. Bucke tells us that throughout the Rig-Veda (the sacred books of the Hindus), the Zend-Avesta (sacred book of the Zoroastrians), the Homeric poems, and our own Bible, the colour of the sky is not once mentioned.

Awareness of colour is of comparatively recent date. Even to-day many *men* are colour-blind—cannot distinguish red from green. Being a woman, I am sorry to refer to this, because as a matter of fact, this colour-blindness is restricted to the male sex. It can be inherited through the female, but no female, having been taught to distinguish colour, is ever colour-blind. In this respect at least, Woman would seem to be more firmly established, shall we say, on this Plane of Colour awareness.

Similarly it appears that Mankind's sense of fragrance is also recently acquired.

But there exists a still more glaring example of human unawareness. It is almost unbelievable, but as lately as only five hundred years ago (1492), one half of the inhabitants of our Globe were not aware of the existence of the other half. Not only was the greater part of Africa and Australia unknown to Europeans, but the whole of the Western Continents of North and South America was undiscovered.

And so, may we not ask legitimately: Is there nothing in the world around us to-day which is waiting to be discovered? Is it not possible, as we have only gradually become more and more conscious of our physical surroundings, of the beauties of Nature, of colour, of fragrance, of many wondrous truths and glories of the Universe, that we have not yet reached the limit of the possibility of our awareness, and that, as Spiritualists, we are to-day learning to become aware of a world which is intermingled with the world we know, and is lying there, as was America, before Columbus, close at hand, waiting to be discovered?

Spiritualism—the lifting of a curtain between two planes of consciousness. For me, the significance of Spiritualism lies not in the psychic phenomena which are associated with its name, but in the fact that these phenomena are evoked through the agency of a consciousness which is distinct from, and is an extension of our normal intellectual consciousness.

I am not going to worry you with the intricacies (even if I understood them) of the 4th dimension. But I do want to put before you this thought—namely, that if, as we believe, throughout Nature, every new phase of evolution coincides with an extension of consciousness, and if, as we also believe, every extension of consciousness coincides with perception of a new dimension of space, it seems reasonable to suggest that the present revival of Spiritualism, which denotes extension of our normal consciousness, may be the heralding of a perception by mankind, of a new dimension—the 4th dimension of space. This might mean that we shall be

ON OTHER PAGES

Colour and Healing

By ROLAND HUNT—page 179.

The New Testament in Basic English: St. Paul on "Coming Back from the Dead"

By THE EDITOR—page 180.

Panorama and Perspective—I.

By C. R. CAMMELL—page 181.

The Many Mansions

By W. H. EVANS—page 182.

able to overcome the present limitations of space-movement, not by mechanical inventions of internal combustion engines, but by faculties from *within ourselves*.

Whilst the evolution of man's physical body has apparently come to an end, the evolution of the soul-body is in an early stage; and the possibilities of what might be attained—what have been attained in prehistoric, in Atlantean, times—take one's breath away. But it is through the psychic faculties that such development can alone proceed—psychic faculties which are, generally speaking, ignored, despised, or prostituted to ignoble ends.

What is this psychic faculty? Is it a new faculty which came into being with the Fox Sisters 80 years or so ago? Absurd! The psychic faculty has been Man's guide to the Eternal from prehistoric times. It is a faculty which is part of Man's make-up. I suggest that we should recognise it as hall-marked by the Creator as an instrument for obtaining such knowledge concerning the life of the soul as is essential for the soul's development.

What is the soul? It is the soul-body, encased in the physical body—the soul-body, which enfolds the spirit, the ego, the controlling force, the mind. Now, this soul-body is, as we Spiritualists believe, an etheric body, which interpenetrates the physical body, as ether interpenetrates air and space. And is it not of interest to note that this belief of modern Spiritualism in the etheric nature of the soul confirms the belief held and taught by Pythagoras in the 6th century B.C. Pythagoras, a great religious leader and philosopher, affirmed that the soul is of a semi-material, etheric nature, and enfolds the spirit, which is the Self, the controlling force; that the soul-body is like in appearance to the earth-body; and that when, at death, the soul is dis severed from the physical body, it withdraws the spirit. Pythagoras believed that an etheric plastic substance permeates all visible objects, and that, by its agency, Divine thought exerts its power upon the worlds, and

is the great intermediary between the visible and invisible—between spirit and matter.

As I expect most of you know, Sir Oliver Lodge has been the great modern upholder of this belief in the ether and its functions.

WHERE IS THE SPIRIT-WORLD?

To me, this idea of the ether as the atmosphere, the medium of life, of spirit-life on the next plane, is reassuring. It answers the oft-put question: "Where is the spirit-world?" If the ether is the atmosphere of the spirit-world and the ether interpenetrates our earthly atmosphere, we can picture the spirit-world as being, as we are always told, in our midst. Hidden from our physical sight because of its different rate of vibration, but around us and amongst us.

Spiritualism—the lifting of a curtain between two planes of consciousness. Now, Spiritualism claims that this curtain becomes transparent when, under certain conditions, the normal consciousness is held in check and another consciousness is allowed to supervene. We call that other consciousness *super-consciousness* to distinguish it from *sub-consciousness*, which lies on the lower side of the intellectual consciousness, at the lower end of the human spectrum. This super-consciousness gives us awareness of things not visible to the physical eye of our normal consciousness. We become aware of entities which are clearly visible and audible—entities who, on the strength of a considerable amount of evidence, can be proved to have lived at one time or another as human beings on this Earth. These entities are recognisable by their forms, features and mental characteristics. For we learn, in studying psychic science, that we are turning the truth inside out when we affirm that the soul is the facsimile of the body—as though the body were of chief importance. It is the other way round. The body, which is buried in the grave, is of secondary importance; it is only the facsimile, the outer garment of the soul-body. The soul-body, being of etheric substance, interpenetrates the physical body in all its parts and moulds it after its own image.

Confusion is caused by an indiscriminate use of the word "Spirit," which is often employed as alternative for Soul. But the Spirit is, as we believe, the Self, the Ego, the Mind, the controlling force, which resides in the soul-body, and is never parted from it. People talk of seeing *spirits*, but it is souls, not spirits, that we see and contact. The Spirit uses the physical brain as its instrument, whilst the Soul is clothed in body, but it is independent of the physical grey matter of the brain as it is of all the other constituents of the physical body. We need, therefore, have no fear that troubles of the physical brain will be continued on the next plane of life. Those troubles only concerned the physical instrument used temporarily by the spirit-mind (as the gramophone record is used by the human-mind).

Now, assuming that survival is a fact, it is obvious that it is the physical body and not the soul-body which is buried in the grave. That form was only a facsimile, a discarded mould. Man is essentially Soul and Spirit. And if this can be justified, if Man is Spirit and can be proved to be Spirit here, now and ever after, he is at once transformed from a being limited to a consciousness of three dimensions—he becomes transcendental, a being with potentialities of a consciousness which will one day become a cosmic consciousness.

We contend that a general recognition of this fact would necessitate a readjustment of many of our human valuations. For if Spiritualism is fact, Man is at this moment a potential god, who will come into his own on the lifting of the next curtain of consciousness. Is this, perhaps, a safety curtain? Possibly. But a safety curtain, if never withdrawn, fails of its true purpose and becomes an obstruction which blocks all vision of the scene beyond. And what lies beyond that curtain for those who have the audacity and the knowledge to lift it? Infinite horizons of a knowledge undreamed of in these materialistic days—things which, as Paul said, it is not expedient for a man to utter. Surely, instead of

(Continued at foot of next column)

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IS COLOUR THE FUTURE HEALING-LANGUAGE?

By ROLAND HUNT

THE articles of R. R. Yates (LIGHT, January 16th) and of Cyril Worsley (LIGHT, Feb. 20th), touch illuminatingly on the neglected importance of learning the alphabet of Colour for better expression in our physical life and contact with the Life Beyond. Indeed, a great purpose would be served in collating all the evidence we have supporting this premise and of the ways in which we might immediately employ Colour with its Seven Rays—the children of LIGHT.

Mr. Worsley gives a valuable starting point when he affirms that "psychic circles are quite aware that breadth of manifestation depends largely upon a varied selection of coloured auras among the sitters, and that the more varied the individual colours the greater the field of communication. We seem to attract the spirits of those akin to ourselves in Colour." Here, it is my personal opinion, we have the key for broadening the basis of contacts and expression in the work.

According to Drs. Kilner, Mesmer and Babbitt, the variety and clarity of the colours in the aurā indicate the mental and soul calibre of the individual, and the wideness and keenness of his interests. For instance, a man of limited or narrow interests expresses thought-radiation of limited colours and wavelengths and invites a like response. Whereas the man with a "world travelling" mind often has a dynamic, resplendent aura like a veritable power-house, and is thus qualifying for world citizenship.

Deeper study of Colour reveals a profound parallel which is this: "Just as the world body is composed of different countries and centres, the expression of each being coloured by the outlook of nationality, so also the individual is composed of seven or more radiant centres, and has developed his consciousness in one or more of them in particular which constitutes his egoic expression or Ray, and that as he grows from egoic into world consciousness he develops all centres towards their synthesis in White.

Following Mr. Worsley's statement to its ultimate conclusion therefore, it would seem that for circles to operate on the widest wavelengths of world service, groups should be composed of not less than seven earnest students, one of each Ray, and each one contributing the egoic Ray to which he is attuned, yet with the widest possible range of auric subtone. Together these Seven would compose a White circle.

With this complete and comprehensible instrument available for reception and expression, a wider range of minds on the other side would be attracted and fuller

(Continued from previous column)

scientists peering into our past and tracing our physical descent from apes and jelly fish, they would do better to peer into our future and recognise our kinship with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven.

If the reality of spirit were established as a truth, no longer controvertible, is it conceivable that nations would spend the greater part of their substance in war, in elaborate attempts to kill that which is unkillable, condemning millions of their fellows, in the full flush of life, and unprepared, to a sudden and violent transition from one plane of life to the next?

But where then does our Religion come in, the Religion which we of the Confraternity seek to further? We contend that, assuming that Jesus was, as we know Him to be, an historic figure, there is nothing inconsistent with natural law in the traditional story of His life and teaching; we can see that these were in conformity with psychic facts which we can verify to-day. We have, therefore, as evidence for the reality of our Religion, not only Religion in general, but also the very beautiful Religion taught and exemplified by Jesus.

The Churches of to-day seek to carry on His teaching. Therefore, we ask the Churches to add psychic science to their teaching of the "Way of Life," to make, as Jesus did, science religious and religion scientific.

teachings for wider individual and international understandings should come through.

Although it is impossible to measure the consolation that at times "personal" messages can give, it is important that as soon as we learn the truth of survival we should try to rise above certain selfish elements in the continued seeking of personal "comforts," since we are warned to beware of self-pity and self-seeking. With this personal victory more widespread we should tend to get information for the welfare of the world at large.

The difference might be likened to the use of two different instruments, one a single manual organ with a handful of stops, the other a seven manual with innumerable stops capable of registering and expressing any given theme in a variety of ways in which to meet the understanding of the many.

There have been abundant evidences that those on the Other Side have been long awaiting instruments of such range, power and sensitivity. We have been told so often that there is great power and beauty awaiting its expression for us as soon as we are able to receive and use it. But first we must find the keys.

As Mr. Worsley confirms, "those of us who have been given glimpses of the next world of Colour must concede that its brightness surpasses anything which ordinary matter is capable of reflecting," but we can prepare ourselves for receiving this brilliance and of reflecting it into the world of matter. "Our next existence," he says, "will be in a world of varied Colour caused by our bodies being made of some form of rarified matter upon which rays impinge." The ancient wisdom of China affirms this fact in the cryptic words of the Taoist sage, that "the body is a crystal vessel through which the rainbow of the Great Existence is to shine."

If this is so, surely it is time we began our A-B-C and learned the alphabet of this language of Colour, which as Geoffrey Hodson says in his book *The Coming of the Angels*, is the language of the inner planes—the language of Angels and of men-to-be.

Many of the great teachings of the East tell us that the earliest known Universal Tongue, the Senezar language, embraced the alphabet of Colour and colour-symbology. It would seem that the world has lost these colour keys to understanding, which it must regain and use to greater purpose.

Esperanto aimed, happily, at a physical universal tongue. But any language depending upon physical sound cannot be primary if it be true that thought precedes physical utterance. Nor can a language be essentially true whilst lips can transpose what the mind really thinks. Since, for the seeker after Truth, there can be no language that permits of equivocation, he is led back to the one primal language behind speech, which is thought-power expressing itself as Colour-Radiance, or Colour-waves.

From all this evidence it would seem clear that we should start to learn our Colour Alphabet so that, in the near future, we may receive and "speak" in this brilliant and dynamic language of the Rainbow with a fuller realization of the instrument and energy at our command.

With this Rainbow Esperanto as a common denominator of understanding amongst nations, many of the misunderstandings that have persisted between different world races may well begin to disappear.

INSPIRATION

It comes with a rush, unbidden,
From somewhere that nobody knows;
And tells of a life that's hidden
And a love that grows and grows.

A Something beyond Earth's dreaming
Of all that is fairest and best;
That leaves the heart with a feeling

On infinite peace and rest. AUBREY TURLE.

Light

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EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

THE COMING BACK FROM THE DEAD

THE New Testament in Basic English (Cambridge University Press, 3/-, 3/6, 8/6) is a book of special interest to Spiritualists. The vocabulary used is limited to one thousand words, including 50 special Bible words and 100 words "listed as giving most help in the reading of English verse," and it is intended "to provide a simple translation for those for whom the rich Elizabethan prose of the Authorised Version conceals, sometimes by its familiarity, the plain meaning of the text." It is not, we are told, a paraphrase of the Authorised Version, but a new translation from the originals, in which "great trouble has been taken with every verse and every line to make certain that there are no errors of sense and no loose wording."

As an example of how the "plain meaning" of the original text is brought out where it has been concealed by familiar but ambiguous or misunderstood words, St. Paul's references to the "resurrection," and how it is accomplished, will be found to be specially illuminating.

"Resurrection" is one of the familiar Authorised Version words which is *not* used by the Basic English translators—presumably because, as now understood, it does not "make plain" the meaning of the Greek original. Instead of the one word "resurrection," the words used are "come back from the dead"—thus following the lead given by Dr. Weymouth in his *New Testament in Modern Speech*—1 Cor., xv., 35: "With what kind of body do they (the dead) come back?"

The plea—advanced by the Dean of Lichfield in a broadcast criticism of the book—that the word "resurrection" should have been retained because it has taken on a special theological meaning which students can easily ascertain, would no doubt be considered by the learned Translators, and the fact that they have rejected it may be taken as a clear indication that, in their opinion, the change was necessary.

WHAT PAUL TAUGHT

In the Authorised Version (Acts, xxiii., 6) Paul is represented as reminding the Sanhedrin that "of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." In the Basic English translation the issue is stated much more clearly: "I am here to be judged on the question of the hope of the coming back from the dead." Again, when before Felix (Acts xxiv., 15), Paul specified the charge brought against him as being (according to the Authorised Version) that he taught "that there should be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust." In the Basic English translation, the words used are: "That there will be a coming back from the dead for upright men and wrongdoers."

In 1 Cor., xv., this theme is expanded and expounded, and the words used by the Basic English translators make it clear that the "coming back" cannot be relegated to the "last day" or made to depend on the "resurrection" of the physical body—that, in fact, the "plain meaning" of the text can be understood only by the psychic (that is, the Spiritualist) interpretation of the events described.

Paul tells how Jesus was put to death and "came back" so that He was seen by His disciples and by more than 500 brethren, and last of all by Paul himself. Then he takes up the challenge of those who say "there is no coming back from the dead," and so deny the

"good news" (that is the Gospel) on which their faith was based.

"If there is no coming back from the dead," says Paul (verse 13-15, Basic English), "then Christ has not come back from the dead: and if Christ did not come again from the dead, then our good news and your faith in it are of no effect. Yes, and we are seen to be false witnesses of God; because we gave witness of God that by his power Christ came back again from the dead, which is not true if there is no coming back from the dead." The plain meaning of this is that Jesus was not the first to "come back from the dead," but that, on the contrary, His "coming back" was due to the operation of a law which applies equally to all men, "upright and wrongdoers" alike. Paul therefore did not teach that the "resurrection" or "coming back" of Jesus was unique as an event, as theologians have claimed and taught, although he does give good ground for believing it was of outstanding importance as compared with the "coming back" of lesser beings.

WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?

Then Paul takes up another challenge: "How do the dead," including Jesus, "come back, and with what sort of a body do they come?" His answer is that "when the dead come back again," they come not in the resurrected physical body but in the "body of the spirit," for (verse 44) "if there is a natural body," as everybody knows to be the case, "there is equally a body of the spirit," and it is in the "body of the spirit" that the dead "come back."

Some complication in regard to Paul's teaching is caused by the references in the text to the dead as being "asleep." From these references it has been argued that Paul thought of the dead as "asleep" in the grave until "the last day." That such cannot have been his belief is shown by his declaration in 2 Cor. i., 1: "We are conscious that if our tent of flesh" (that is, the physical body) "is taken down, we have a building from God" (the "body of the spirit") ". . . so that our spirits may not be unclothed." That there is no waiting until the last day for the "body of the spirit," he makes clear when he writes (verse 4): "For truly, we who are in this tent do give out cries of weariness, for the weight of care which is on us; not because we are desiring to be free from the (physical) body, but so that we may have *our new body*, and death may be overcome by life." (Basic English).

We do not suggest that all difficulties regarding Paul's beliefs and teaching are cleared up by the "plain meaning" of the words used by the Basic English translators. They are not; but at least the new translation makes it clear that Paul believed in and taught the "coming back" of the dead very much as do present-day Spiritualists; and, when to this is added his psychic experiences and his accurate descriptions of psychic faculties and manifestations (1 Cor. xiv.), there is little room left for doubt that he was himself not only a Spiritualist but also a highly gifted Sensitive.

QUIET PLACES

Lord of the quiet places, breathe upon us now
As, deep in thought, we walk among the fragrant
plants,
Or stand at ease beneath the gently-swaying pines,
Away from all the turmoil of the restless world.
And may Thy healing beauty like a blessing fall
On minds washed clean and ready for Thy quick-
ening.
Then plunge we, once again with inspiration filled,
Into the seething whirlpool's soul-destroying swirl,
Composed of men's desires and thoughts and agonies.
Inspired by Thee, may we with hands outstretched,
sustain
Encourage and uplift those hapless ones whose fear
May drown them if no messenger from Thee be
near.

DOROTHY KENRICK.

PANORAMA AND PERSPECTIVE

THE OLD STORY

WITH the great buildings of our capital crumbling into ruin; with Westminster Abbey, where lie the mortal remains of our kings, our heroes and our poets; with St. Paul's Cathedral, the Houses of Parliament, The Tower, The Temple, the Guildhall, our noblest churches, mansions and national monuments, and even our Sovereign's palace, bombed and battered by the night-marauding murderers who have slaughtered and mutilated our people—men, women, children—by tens of thousands; with these things happening, it were wise, as far as it is humanly possible under conditions which strike at the very foundations of all we venerate and of all we love, to look out upon the wider landscape of Man's history, and endeavour to follow the track of his destiny through the age-long defiles of time.

And first, let us remember that Fate is playing no new trick on Man. It is true that the instruments of material destruction have increased enormously, and are daily increasing, in their power to wreck and ruin all things rapidly; but the Devil's work they accomplish has nothing new about it, nor is it actually more destructive than the simpler, slower, but equally effective methods of the past. It is an old, old story: tyrants exalted by the admiration of fools, obsessed by the demon of power to destroy. The means change, but the motive and the results are always the same.

THE MARCH OF HISTORY

All the great and famous cities of Antiquity, many of them vast in extent, their populations counted by millions, their construction incomparably stronger and more durable than that of any city of our time;—all these cities, with their mighty ramparts, their bastioned castles, their towering temples, and gorgeous palaces, their law-courts and exchanges and wharfs and warehouses, their theatres and arenas and public baths, and the mazes of their countless populous streets, have disappeared utterly, or remain only in fragments of ruined masonry or mounds of sand or turf.

Of the greatest monuments, the Wonders of the Ancient World, none but the Egyptian Pyramids remain, lone, mysterious watchers left in a desert, where once Pharaohs reigned and the heart of a majestic civilisation beat with a thousand energies of arts and arms, of science and commerce and religion. Where now are Thebes and Memphis, the great cities of Egypt? Where are Tyre and Sidon, the capitals of Phoenicia? Where is Nineveh, the mighty metropolis of the Assyrian Empire? Its very site was lost and forgotten till Layard found its buried remnants beneath hills of sand and rubble. Then, to the astonished gaze of men, the winged bulls and sculptured histories and inscribed tablets of an age remote from theirs were brought back to light from palace-halls and temple-courts and libraries, once the seats of glory and devotion and learning. Where now is Babylon the Great? Only sand, with squalid villages scattered across its vast circumference. Gone for ever are the gigantic walls, on the tops of which four-horsed chariots rolled, passing one another with ease; gone, the Hanging Gardens, those artificial hills built by hosts of hands upon a hill-less plain to solace with their woods and waterfalls, their terraces and fountains and flowery walks, the heart of a mountain-born Median girl who was the darling and the queen of Nebuchadrezzar, the Great King, the King of Babylon. Gone are the sky-pointing temples of the Gods of the Chaldeans, from whose summits magician-astronomers charted the story of the stars; gone the broad parks and stately squares, the long riverside quays and docks, which harboured the merchant navies of the world.

Jerusalem is fallen; the temple of Solomon is no more. The library of Alexandria is devoured by flames: how many poets, historians, philosophers, perished in that conflagration! The Colossus of Rhodes, that giant-

image of the Sun-God, between whose outstretched feet the fleets of nations sailed, lies buried deep beneath the sea-floor. At Athens, the reliques of the Acropolis are Beauty's reminder of the eternal mutability of human perfection; the columns of Karnak, of the inevitable mortality of human glory. To what forgotten Gods were built those divinely beautiful temples of Poestum? Antiquaries wrangle the question. The Roman Forum is a desolation of shattered stones; the owl nests in the rent walls of the Coliseum; the nightingale sings in what was the villa of Hadrian at Tivoli. And the building of all these was but yesterday beside the mystery of Stonehenge; and that, too, is young beside the colossal circle of Avebury.

THE TRUE PERSPECTIVE

Armies have marched in their hundred-thousands. They have followed Sargon and Cyrus, Alexander and Pompey, Attila and Mohammed and Tamarlane, Charlemagne and Bonaparte. Small bands have stood for liberty with Leonidas, for honour with Bayard, for faith with Agrippa d'Aubigné. Empires have been desolated, one by one. The populations of whole provinces have perished by famine, of whole cities by fire and sword. Bombs and mines cause no vaster devastations than battering rams and hammers. Fire is the destroyer in all ages. Death is the same, though it come by arrow or bullet, by sword or shell.

Let us try to view the world in true perspective. The ambition of Man is utter vanity. Power and wealth are the seeds of inevitable destruction and penury; pride is the forerunner of debasement; self-confidence of ruin. Mankind is as savage as it is superstitious; its cruelties are as monstrous as its delusions. The outer forms of its religions are akin in their material enormity or idle triviality. The Almighty All Seeing God abandons temple and mosque and cathedral alike to destruction. The conception of these, in the beginning of each, is holy, but the days of their spiritual impotence are numbered. For all is mutable and Protean in the procession of inevitable change, all except the *Spirit*. The Spirit alone is changeless, and its creative power indestructible. So it is that Art, which is of the Spirit, re-awakens to rebuild and recreate, and that devastation is the herald of Renaissance.

CARDINAL POINTS

(1) If we can show strong reasons for assuming that the legend of the Golden Age and the Fall of Man (a legend found, not only in the Bible, but in the traditions of the ancient civilisations everywhere) is an allegory derived from what actually was, we possess a model of attainment; we have in view, however distant, a goal of ultimate achievement.

(2) If we can provide evidence that the hope of this ultimate achievement is based entirely on the spiritual knowledge acquired by the *individual*, we shall have indicated a single way of travel, though the paths may be many and divers; and shall have exposed the error of all theories based on the illusion of *collective* progress, an error which has held mankind enslaved to misery, and led him repeatedly into orgies of destruction.

(3) If we can prove that the regeneration of Man should not and cannot be hastened by Utopian impatience, but must be born at its destined time out of the age-long efforts of individual Souls, we shall have helped to combat the dangerous despondency inseparable from a sense of frustrated effort and deferred hope.

(4) Lastly, if we can show that belief in the Immortality of the Soul is not only of paramount importance, but that evidence thereof is obtained, not from one, but from many sources widely diverse in character, we shall have helped to set Man's feet more firmly on the way to individual development, and, incidentally, have established the claim of Spiritualism to the first place among human studies.

C. R. CAMMELL.

THE MANY MANSIONS

By W. H. EVANS

Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.—John 14, 1-2.

ONE of the great things Spiritualism gives is a more definite conception of the Life Beyond. Not only does it prove our survival of bodily death, but also that we go to a world which will be to us as real as this we now inhabit.

One of the difficulties of unbelievers is the lack of definiteness in the teachings of Christianity relative to the next state. This is natural, for the only ones who can give us any report of the next state of being are those who live there. Just as we are dependent upon the reports of travellers regarding countries we have not visited, so are we dependent upon the reports of those in the next life regarding their world; and, as the Churches closed the door between the two states of being, they cut off any possibility of getting any information about it.

That there is a world in which we shall dwell is certain. There is, in our experience, no life apart from a living organism, and no consciousness apart from a brain with which to think; and all the evidence goes to show that it is so in the next state of life.

We must bear in mind that subjective states of consciousness are dependent upon mechanism for any awareness of them by the individual. There is no thinking in a vacuum; thinking and imagining have definite relations to an appropriate mechanism. That, on earth, is our brains and nervous system; and, as we know there is a spiritual body, it is reasonable to infer that it corresponds to the physical vehicle with which it is associated.

The reality of the spiritual body implies a world corresponding to it in substance; a world as real externally as the spiritual body we shall act through when there.

It is noticeable that Jesus, when speaking of the next world, used words that implied its concrete nature. "Many mansions" (or as some say, "resting" or "abiding places"). Jesus did not say "I go to prepare a spiritual condition for you," but a "place," implying that homely domesticity associated with home. "A place" was to be prepared for his followers. They were to inhabit "mansions" or places of rest; all of which is in line with what our friends tell us about their life. There is, then, *place*, or external environment as well as states of mind.

Let us consider a moment what may be one of the meanings of the Universe. It is a result of creative activity; but creative mind must have the appropriate tools to work with. Creation is the transition of the no-thing (that is the mental conception) into the concrete embodiment which is the some-thing. But, for that, there must be appropriate organism. The Universe we see is a result of invisible forces directed by mind; that mind is expressed not only in visible universes but also in the invisible one. For all stars and planets are held in one embracing law, and law must correspond to a power using appropriate means to effect its purposes. The visible Universe, then, may be regarded as the "many mansions" of the physical plane, and will have their corresponding aspects in the Unseen.

Those vast spaces between stars and planets are not empty; the space is in use, for in it are those many orders of life invisible to mortal eyes, and those orders of being have worlds appropriate to them.

It is comforting to think this; and when our friends "over the way" assure us of the reality of their life, and the wonder and beauty of their surroundings, it indicates that the reasoning here given is not so far from the truth.

In these days, when so many are being bereaved, it is necessary to emphasise the reality of the spiritual world; to replace theological vagueness with the

definiteness of knowledge given by those dwelling in that life. It is an *all-round* existence, full of interests of every kind; and we shall assuredly each go to his own "place," which will reflect the development of our being.

There are as many states of being as there are men and women, but the mental state is associated chiefly with the individual, and is reflected from his or her environment in much the same manner as it is here. Here we dwell in more worlds than one: there is the external environment and there are the continually moving mental states, often more real to us than our external surroundings. So in that Life Beyond; and here we are preparing those mental and spiritual conditions which will affect us when we pass on.

Now, refinement in thinking acts upon our spiritual bodies and, by so doing, makes them responsive to finer environment. Hence our progress is two-fold—the inner unfoldment preparing us for finer spiritual environment, with its corresponding increase of power to minister to our sense of beauty and holiness.

It would seem that Jesus did not conceive of a static existence beyond death, but one in which His followers would have their appropriate work. The idea that grew up of singing psalms and playing harps is a materialisation of a condition of supreme harmony of being. The clattering of crowns upon a glassy sea can only dimly shadow forth that divine ecstasy which fills the souls of those who realise the consciousness of divine union with God. But one notes that the Seer is compelled to use figures of speech and illustrations pertaining to *this* plane—crowns, harps, seas, thrones, swords, candlesticks, lamps, horses, dragons, etc., are all drawn from earthly experience; their transfer to another plane to try to illustrate divine truth ends in confusion. We have to put the symbols on one side and endeavour to perceive the truth hidden in them.

Nonetheless, a divine city, no matter how conceived, is a "place"; and a city must be built, no matter what means may be employed. Bringing it down to our understanding, it suggests the *reality* of the next state of being and that we shall, as our friends insist, dwell in a real world, which in its lower aspects corresponds with our life here. To speak of the next world as a glorified earth may not be so far from the truth as some think. For a glorified earth must indeed be a "place" of beauty in which there will be room for "many mansions" and where our friends may joyfully prepare a place for us.

HAUNTED HOUSES

In reply to Mr. C. J. Seymour (LIGHT, May 15), may I say that it should have been obvious to him that no one who had read his article could possibly have charged him with claiming that his theory covered *all* cases of hauntings. He appears to have been misled by the omission of the words "some of" before "the phenomena" from the first paragraph of my article of April 24. I would point out, however, that Mr. Seymour made precisely the same omission in the opening sentences of his own article.

He definitely advances his theory, however, to cover a "considerable group" of cases of haunting, and my rebutting statement was made in reply to this claim. Nor will students agree with his assertion that the phenomena of haunted houses are *mostly* crude and childish. He is apparently thinking only of poltergeist phenomena, which occur in only a very small proportion of hauntings.

W. HARRISON.

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SPIRITUAL RE-BIRTH

By JESSIE ULPH

IT was hard to understand why my most constant friends, on "the Other Side," had been silent for so long, especially with regard to the war. They had never spoken of it, as far as I know. I only wrote a strange jumble in October, 1939, of what now proves to be fact and fiction. The following extract from messages helps to explain it:—

"You have been troubled at our silence. But your hopes were set in other directions, and you were not ready for the help that we could offer. We have seen good coming out of evil, for, being a short distance 'up the rise' we can discover movements and tendencies which are hidden from you.

"Yet we, too, receive truth only as we can bear it: we cannot read the Eternal Mind, but can only look on the tempered rays as they come to us from the Light that lighteth every man.

"We do not say that God permits evil, but rather that men have willed evil upon themselves through self-seeking. Yet we know, and are now finding ever more clearly that Love is at work, bringing order out of the disorders of man, and beauty out of corruption and death.

"To us it still appears that he who is the centre of evil forces on earth will soon be removed. But do not take this as final. We cannot judge of earth-time since we are now further on our way towards Him with Whom a thousand years are as one day.

"But we can see, and share in, earth's approaching re-birth. Its signs are unmistakable, and it appears to be due to two main causes:—(1) The dispersal of the different races of men, and, following, as a definite result of this (2) their new-found spiritual union in the struggle against evil.

"From our present angle of vision we see this as though greatly magnified, while you still view it as 'through a glass darkly.' Yet ours is the truer vision, and earth will arrive at it by slow degrees."

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WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

OBSESSION IN WAR-TIME

SIR,—Mr. W. Harrison has done great service by calling attention to the reality of spirit-obsession, and I am glad he quoted Nona, Rosemary's Guide, among his authorities. Another point Nona made was that obsession is more difficult to cure on the Other Side than here. Hence the desirability of removing it from the patient while still in the body.

But the Rosemary guides also foreshadow that this problem will be more acute after the War, as so many earthbound spirits, bombed out of the physical body, will try to attach themselves and their distress to people on this side. They will need all the help we can give, for many are not yet aware of their new surroundings, nor of their spirit-helpers.

I have written on this question in my new book *Mediumship and War*, which Messrs. Rider will shortly publish, but it is not too soon to be making plans, even now, for this great curative work. It will need Mediums, as well as enlightened doctors. I have also stressed the fact that this War caught us unprepared psychically, as well as materially. The people who had plenty of evidence but who refused to tell all the world that survival was proved are as much to blame as the governments who failed to prepare for the menace of German aggression. Had these people moved with the times, the Church might have moved also, for in all walks of life we naturally look to specialists for guidance. The medical profession also, might by now have been well informed of the post-mortem conditions of their patients, and remedial measures, like those I outlined in my recent article on *Clearing Stations*, might have been more widely adopted. The need for them is most urgent to-day.

FREDERIC H. WOOD.

LIFE AND DEATH

Sir,—Dr. E. Le Cronier Lancaster's letter in LIGHT of May 15 seems to me very much to the point. Spiritualists on this side and Spirit-friends on the Other Side frequently appear to explain the universal intention too easily. We cannot get away from the fact that Nature's method of maintaining Life is one based on Death. Construction and Destruction work alongside each other—surely and inevitably. . . .

We have to go a long way to learn how Death is a part of Life. Man cannot be responsible for the little dead birds we pick up in the garden in early summer; and did God or Man make the iron frosts of a hard winter which destroy our feathered friends by the thousand?

M. HOLLAND (Miss).

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