

# LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF SPIRITUALISM AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

VOL. LXXIII. No. 3394

FEBRUARY, 1953

## WHAT LIGHT STANDS FOR

LIGHT proclaims a belief in the existence and life of the spirit apart from, and independent of, the material organism, and in the reality and value of intelligent intercourse between spirits embodied and spirits discarnate. This position it firmly and consistently maintains. Its columns are open to a full and free discussion conducted in the spirit of honest, courteous and reverent inquiry, its only aim being, in the words of its motto: "Light! More Light!"

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LECTURE, THURSDAY, 26th FEBRUARY 1953 at 6.30 p.m.

**BRIGADIER R. C. FIREBRACE, C.B.E.,** on

“**RADIONICS**” (*Illustrated with slides*)

**MR. H. STUART BERRY** will preside

Members free ; members' guests 1/-. , non-members 2/-.

*Coffee served at 6.0 p.m.*

**SUNDAY AT HOME, 3.0—5.30 p.m. 15th February, 1953**

Speaker, **Mr. H. Stuart Berry.** Clairvoyance, **Mrs. Jean Thompson.**

Members 2/6, Visitors 3/6 (Including Tea).

**CLAIRVOYANCE, Tuesdays at 6.30 p.m. Free to Members, Non-Members 2/-.**  
Refreshments served at 6 p.m.

10th Feb. **Mrs. Ena Twigg.**

24th Feb. **Mr. Douglas Johnson.**

**DISCUSSIONS** (Free to Public) **Tuesdays at 6.30 p.m.** (Refreshments served at 6 p.m.)

3rd Feb. **Major D. B. Stevens.**—“Some Early Attempts at Spirit Photography.”

17th Feb. **Mr. H. Stuart Berry.**—“Xenoglossy as Evidence for Survival.”

**AT HOMES, Wednesdays, 3.0—5.0 p.m.** Admission: Members 1/-, Non-member, 1/6 including Tea.

4th Feb. **Mrs. C. J. Treloar** “Result of Experiences.”

11th Feb. **Mrs. G. Hobbs** “A Year of Enquiry.”

18th Feb. **Mrs. Jocelyn Perkins** “Magic and Transmutation.”

25th Feb. **Mr. W. H. Evans** “Creating a Tradition.”

**PRIVATE SITTINGS WITH MEDIUMS** arranged daily between 10.30 a.m. and 5 p.m. and during sessions in the evenings on **Tuesdays and Thursdays**—**Mrs. Elizabeth Bedford, Mrs. Annie Brittain, Mrs. Frank Brown, Mr. Douglas Johnson, Mr. F. Jordan-Gill, Mr. John Lovette, Mrs. Mary Methven, Miss Thirza Smith, Mrs. Ena Twigg,** and others approved by the Council.

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Open discussion in the pages of LIGHT is welcome, but the Editor cannot be held responsible for views expressed by contributors.

## Sidelights

THE B.B.C apologises. In the course of a recent sermon broadcast by Canon J. R. Peacey, he stated "those who leave Christ out of their lives today follow false lights, like spiritualism." The Spiritualist Council for Common Action informed the B.B.C. that such remarks are highly offensive to thousands of listeners, besides being untrue. The Head of Religious Broadcasting (The Rev. F. H. House) replied: "We regret that a sentence in the sermon should have caused offence, and, although we must point out that the complaint refers only to a single short aside in a twenty minute sermon, we apologise for the fact that we failed to draw the preacher's attention to this departure from the normal procedure in broadcast services in the matter of references to other peoples' beliefs." This is not the first time the Corporation has allowed orthodox ministers to disparage spiritualism while at the same time denying the opportunity to reply. At the moment the Spiritualist Council for Common Action is pursuing the matter through a Committee composed of members of both Houses of Parliament which has as its aim Freedom of "Religious Controversy."

\* \* \*

NEWS comes from America that Mrs. Eileen Garrett has accepted the Honorary Fellowship of the L.S.A. offered to her by the Council in December.

The signal honour of being the first Honorary *Fellow* ever elected by the Alliance was conferred on Mrs. Garrett in recognition of her outstanding services to the cause of Spiritualism in all its ramifications, through her earlier work as a trance medium of superlative quality

and her later unique and valuable contribution as a "guinea-pig" for scientific research into parapsychological faculties carried out by eminent Professors in America.

It is also desired to record her particular goodwill towards the work of the London Spiritualist Alliance and her most generous financial help to LIGHT.

Mrs. Eileen Garrett is well-known in America as the Editor-Publisher of *Tomorrow* which is termed the World's first national Digest of Psychical Research and Occult Studies. She is also President of the Parapsychology Foundation, of New York, founded last year of which much may be heard in the future. This Foundation has a most commendable and ambitious programme, and plans, among other things, to promote scientific methods of experiment and research, to sponsor lectures and forums, and to publish books dealing with the various aspects of parapsychology.

\* \* \*

**D**RRAWINGS and paintings for which supernatural origin is claimed are frequent. Whether the genuine article is the result of inspiration from or control by, a discarnate entity, or whatever the psychic origin, there could be no doubt as to the artistic merit of those exhibited recently at an Alliance "At Home" by Mrs. Beresford Ryley. Their delicacy of execution, the scrupulous detail of design, the spiritual conception of the message they appeared intended to convey, combined to impress the observer as outstanding.

\* \* \*

**T**HE New Year has brought changes in the journalistic world of spiritualism. Mr. Maurice Barbanell is now Editor of *Two Worlds* and Mr. A. W. Austen is resigning the Editorship of *Psychic News*. The latter, on account of his wife's health, is leaving for Australia, where, we understand, he is likely to continue his efforts on behalf of spiritualism. Both these gentlemen will be assured of the good wishes of spiritualists in their new spheres of activity.

\* \* \* \*

**B**RAINS Trusts appear never to lose their popularity judging from one arranged at the Caxton Hall by the Occult Magazine *Destiny*. The questions on spiritualism were admirably answered by Mr. G. E. Cregeen, a journalist who has courageously defended spiritualism in the South of England and elsewhere. As the Question Master,

Brigadier C. A. L. Brownlow, D.S.O., commented recently, such affairs may introduce the subject to many people who may be led to profounder thought. It is difficult to assess the value of large public demonstrations of clairvoyance unless one can discuss results with recipients, but a report suggests some remarkable successes by the medium, Mr. Taylor Ineson. The first "message" he ever received, we are informed, was for himself when believed dying in hospital. It was to the effect that he would live and fulfil a duty through his mediumship.

## A Theory of Mediumship

BY BRIGADIER R. C. FIREBRACE, C.B.E.

**I**N my last article (*LIGHT*, January) I said that I would give a more positive view of psychic phenomena. In this article I shall try to put forward my own opinions and the theories which have led me to accept fully the main basis of the spiritualist belief that we do survive death and that we can communicate with those who have died. I consider that the evidence taken as a whole is strong enough to be accepted as a basis of belief by the ordinary reasoning individual. Just as a jury has to make up its mind on the evidence produced before it, so has the student to decide whether the facts justify a belief in communication. I have decided that the facts are sufficient warrant for my belief. I am not concerned with so-called scientific proof, as I doubt whether it is attainable in this case or in many others. Certainly what was regarded as science when I was young has been contradicted by subsequent discoveries. Absolute truth does not seem to be within our reach.

To start with, let us accept telepathy as a proven fact. Whilst we do not understand the mechanism of telepathy, there is more than sufficient evidence to show that it exists. I accept telepathy as a form of communication between individuals without the intervention of the five physical senses. Telepathy does not seem to follow the known laws for the physical senses, and I therefore cannot accept it as one. It may therefore be thought of as communication between minds and not as one between brains. This statement reveals that I consider that the mind is not the same as the brain, which is merely the physical organ utilised by the mind. If these statements can be accepted,

the possibility of communication is greatly enhanced, as we have a method which can be utilised independently of the brain cells which decay in death.

I accept telepathy or the more inclusive expression, extra-sensory perception (E.S.P.) as the basis for most forms of mediumistic activity: clairvoyance, clairaudience, trance. It is also concerned with such phenomena as the direct voice and materialization. It is, however, probable that there are other methods used at times by discarnates in producing phenomena which are not of the telepathic order.

Let us consider different phenomena in turn and try to see what happens in a typical demonstration, and the probable way in which it is accomplished.

A medium giving a demonstration either to an individual sitter or to an audience may be clairvoyant or clear-seeing, and clairaudient or clear-hearing, although it is usual for one or other of these faculties to be more strongly developed. In addition, the medium will always be clear-sensing, which can be taken to mean that, by a process which does not appear to him to be either hearing or seeing he obtains knowledge not available to his ordinary senses. He can (and any medium will confirm this) be clear-smelling, as he will sense odours acutely, and certainly clear-feeling, as he will feel pains in his own body corresponding to actual conditions in others. I do not think that the average medium actually sees in any way with his eyes, hears with his ears, or smells with his nose. In other words, what he receives is not due to any hyperacuity of his physical senses. There are possible exceptions to this rule which will be discussed later.

The problem to solve is the source of the impulse which causes the medium to register the sensations of seeing, hearing, sensing or smelling. Let us digress a moment to explain briefly in non-technical terms the mechanism of ordinary sight. That of the other senses will be similar. We see because light, which we can consider as a vibration or impulse, acts through our brain mechanism to produce a picture. We receive the light impulse from an object, and our brain mechanism makes the picture. This is an imperfect statement of what happens, and we have little idea as to how this receipt of an impulse is translated into vision.

The picture of what we see is made by us. We make with our bodily mechanism a picture of what stands before us, of the impulse which we receive.

The medium normally acts in an analogous manner. He is receiving an impulse, though of a different order from that of light, and some

mechanism is translating it into vision or hearing. The impulse is not that of light or sound, and therefore does not act directly on the optic or auditory nerves. It is a telepathic impulse received from a mind and registered by the mind of the medium.

It is probable that all minds, to a greater or lesser extent, receive these psychic impulses. It is only with a sensitive that there exists what Sir Oliver Lodge has called the etheric bridge which conveys them to the brain, which produces in us the sensation of seeing or hearing. This bridge can be developed, as it exists potentially in all of us, and indeed in many of us functions spasmodically on rare occasions during our life. Many people do receive strong psychic impressions which correspond with facts on one or more occasions during life. The sensitive is born or trained to receive and transmute these impressions regularly.

The clairvoyance and clairsaudience that have been described are what is called "subjective,"—that is to say, a mental picture or sound not having its origin in anything existing in the bodily or physical sense. It is claimed that there is objective clairvoyance when the sensitive actually sees with his eyes something situated in a definite position in space. Whilst it is considered that the majority of instances of clairvoyance and clairsaudience is subjective (although so vivid and clear to the sensitive as to appear to be objective), it is not wished to deny that objective clairvoyance may exist. When however it does occur, it would seem that the object to be seen by the eyes must have taken on a quasi-physical shape and to be visible to an extension of the ordinary senses of the medium. It need not be a full materialization in the ordinary sense of that word. It could be something that has been described as an etherealization, just sufficiently material to be seen by a medium whose vision is extended to include portions of the spectrum invisible to the average human being. To illustrate the point: a quartz lens will photograph objects outside the range of an ordinary glass photographic lens.

It seems possible that apparitions come within these two categories, subjective and objective, the latter varying from the type where they are visible to only one person (etherealization) to more completely materialized forms which have substance and would be visible to all present. This type probably occurs, but is rarer than the subjective (the impulse for which may lie well back in time), or the etherealization. Much of interest has been written in Mr. Tyrrell's study of apparitions, which, however, appears to neglect the objective type of this phenomenon.

Let us get back to our main subject. We have said that in ordinary clairvoyance a medium receives impressions or impulses which he is unconsciously able to transmute into vision. These impulses may reach the sensitive in theory and also in practice to some extent from the sitter, when we get a reading of the circumstances, health or otherwise, of the individual concerned; from other incarnate minds, present or absent (which may account for some unrecognized descriptions), or from a discarnate entity who is deliberately trying to transmit an impulse to the sensitive. This picture would represent the medium as being bombarded by impulses received from many sources. If he is to get into touch with the discarnate, he must be able to tune out unwanted impulses and to tune into and to hold on to one source. His ability to do this will depend on the strength of his mediumistic powers, and his training. The undeveloped medium, like the old-fashioned wireless set, may receive two stations at once. The task of the medium is far from easy, and we should have every sympathy with him. It takes courage to be a medium, and the extent to which he overcomes his difficulties is deserving of all praise. I am always impressed by a good demonstration of clairvoyance which often in its accuracy of detail warrants the assumption that, at any rate in part, the evidence given of identity emanates from discarnate sources. Experimental telepathy between incarnates has not shewn such a high standard of accuracy and is therefore not acceptable as a full explanation of a clairvoyant demonstration.

We come to a consideration of the trance state in which many mediums work. It is often supposed by people not well acquainted with psychic phenomena that trance is synonymous with unconsciousness. This is not so, for many mediums who work in trance retain consciousness to a greater or lesser extent—that is to say, that whilst not consciously in control of what they are saying, they can hear themselves speaking. There are, however, mediums who really become unconscious during trance and have no conscious knowledge of what is being said. The level of trance may vary from time to time and, indeed, during a sitting, as mediums have told me often they can hear the beginning and sometimes the end, whilst having no knowledge of the rest of the sitting.

The feature of trance mediumship which distinguishes it from the clairvoyant or “normal” type (although no medium in action can really be said to be “normal”) is the substitution of the “control” for the personality of the medium. What purports to be another entity speaks through the lips of the sensitive and claims to be in touch with dis-

incarnate friends of the sitter. He acts as an intermediary. Opinions vary as to whether this control is in truth, as he invariably claims to be, a separate personality from that of the medium, or whether he is only a trance personality, a fiction created by the subconscious forces of the sensitive. I do not wish in this article to enter into this controversy, but I will venture the opinion that, whilst accepting as a fact the separate identity of some controls, that of others remains to be proven. It seems probable that in many cases the control is more or less a trance personality, but a very essential one, for the functioning of trance mediumship.

Once the control is in charge of the medium he seems to me to be in very much the same state as a medium functioning consciously, although the sensitivity of the medium may be increased. The control appears to be only in some form of telepathic communication with the discarnate communicator, as it is clear that normal, full and clear conversation between them is difficult or even impossible. It is only by this assumption that I can explain the fragmentary nature of much of the evidence given, the difficulty of giving names and the inaccuracies and mistakes that do occur. Further, there have been undoubted cases where controls, just as in conscious mediumship, have got into touch with incarnate minds, although it is nearly always assumed at the time that the individual concerned is dead. All this seems to me to point to the conclusion that the basis of trance communication, as well as that of clairvoyance and clairaudience, is of the telepathic order.

In the cases where the control is a separate entity, does he displace the spirit of the medium, who stands aside, allowing the control to manipulate the bodily functions of the medium? It is impossible on the evidence to say that such cases do not exist, and it is the universal claim of mediums that this does occur. This would be possession of the medium's body by another entity. An alternative is that the control of the medium is effected by telepathic impulses, and that there is no bodily invasion by another individual. This may well be the usual method, as imposing less strain on the medium. It is control of one *mind* by another, but not the possession of the *body*. For this type of trance control Myers coined the words "telepathic possession," which would seem to cover most cases of trance mediumship where the control can be held to be a separate entity. There are many kinds of trance mediumship; the control may be in reality a subconscious personality of the medium; there may be telepathic control by a separate entity; or when it is necessary for a particular purpose, there can be full bodily possession of the medium by a discarnate

entity. The principle of economy of force would seem to be understood in the spirit world. A further possibility is that a discarnate spirit may work behind a subconscious or trance personality, using this as the mechanism by which he controls the ideas and thoughts uttered by the medium. We must confess that after many years' study and speculation we know very little about mediumship. We can, however, try to make our theories fit in with the known facts.

In all forms of mediumship the possibility exists that the utterance of the medium will be coloured by the ideas and thoughts existing in his conscious or subconscious mind. This may not always be so and, given the best conditions, the evidence provided by or the ideas communicated through a medium may be singularly free from such colouration. When mediumship for any reason is weak, what is said or done may have as its source the mind, in any of its various strata, of the medium. In the average case there will be greater or less colouration, and this fact should be taken into consideration when judging statements made. The ideal medium would be completely impersonal, without preconceived ideas or prejudices; but this is too much to expect in an imperfect world and can no more be demanded from a medium than it can be from ourselves.

I have discussed much of what I have said with my medium friends who have been good enough to agree and to disagree on various points. I hope that they and others will realise that this article is not written as a final decision on any of the points raised, but as a contribution towards an understanding of some of the difficulties encountered in a study of mediumship.

[A further article by Brigadier Firebrace on physical and "voice" phenomena, will appear later.]

\* \* \*

The real being, learning little by little to know itself and the universe, is the divine spark on the way to realise its divinity, of unlimited potentialities, creative and eternal.

In the manifested universe, the different appearances of things are only the illusory, attenuated, and restrained representation of the divine unity coming into realisation by endless evolution.

—*From the unconscious to the conscious.* GUSTAVE GELEY.

# The Voices

BY MARY BUCHANAN

[Report of an Address delivered at an 'At Home' at the L.S.A. ]

I have been asked to speak about what first aroused me to take an interest in psychic things. I believe most children are psychic, seeing and feeling things not evident to the grown-up people about them. Being very sensitive and easily rebuffed, they do not readily speak about anything peculiar but may think the more.

In my childhood my health was not very robust. In illness I was frequently left for quite a long time alone, but at night a little light was often left burning in my room. That provided me with a world of shadows in which to amuse myself. I do not remember being afraid of darkness or semi-darkness because I was aware of people, unseen, but very real, who took care of me. I disliked dreams; they were often frightening. I seemed to be always running very hard from one danger or another, but when I was about thirteen years old I had a dream, the first I remember that interested me very much. In that, I was not taking any violent exercise or trying to escape from anything; the action was all on the part of other people. I stood watching.

In this wonderful dream I was walking in a strange and beautiful city. I knew there was a river flowing through the city, but I was quite high above the level of the river and could not see it. I found myself in a rather narrow, very clean and sunny street, in the quiet of afternoon. Quite suddenly the paving blocks of the street were thrown up, and water, dark and sinister, forced its way over the surface of the street till quite deep. Men came running and quickly launched a little boat on the water, and began to help women and children from the houses and take them to safety.

When I awoke, this scene was before me, very clear and ominous. I wanted to know how the water from the river could break through so far above its own level. I asked my mother about it. She thought it not a very likely thing to happen except in a dream, and dreams were not to be trusted. I could only say that it had seemed to me very real and true.

Long afterwards, when I had gone to live for a time in Paris, I experienced the dream in reality. That was during the Paris floods of 1910. I was living with a French family, in an interesting old

house on the Place Saint Sulpice, and Paris was very new to me. There was great anxiety in case the floods should reach the Place, with its great Church and the fine old buildings about it. It did reach it one afternoon, bringing thousands of rats from the sewers to make all the pavements quite black. I was fortunate in being absent, so missing the horrid sight. The water began to subside quite quickly, and men came shouting through the streets that the floods were abating in the suburbs, *les banlieus*, they called them, so I added a new word to my vocabulary which I did not forget. Every peculiar thing that water could do seemed to occur in that strange rising of the Seine. For me, a very strange thing happened. I was walking in a narrow street when I saw the scene of my dream play itself out before my eyes. I knew at once that I had seen it all before, but it took a little while to remember just when and where.

I had another strange dream, that made a deep impression on me. I have very rarely spoken of it. In this dream I knew myself to be very ill and about to die. I felt rather bitter that I should have to die before I had begun to really live. I awoke in great distress, but felt thankful to find I was still alive. I went to sleep again but soon realized that I was taking up the dream exactly where I had left off. I was still on my bed dying, and my family had come into the room. Suddenly I realized that I was not in my body, I was hovering above it. I wanted to tell my people I was so near them, for they were grieving, but I could not speak. Then I found myself passing out through the ceiling into the open air. It was very cold. Swiftly I mounted into a world of cloud, increasing cold and absolute silence. There I drifted beyond time and space, beyond hope or desire, beyond thought. At last I realized that I had ceased to move, I had come to some solid foundation, cold but better than the ceaseless movement. Kneeling there I began to think. Eons of time, I thought, must have passed, while I whirled in space, yet I had seen no human being nor heard any voice. The people I loved must have died and might be quite near me but we could not communicate with each other. Suddenly I spoke aloud "This is not what was promised: where are the many mansions, or the place Christ went to prepare?" A voice came from behind me as I knelt, and said, "There is no place for you because you have made none. Your life was given to you to be lived by you, no-one can live it for you or take responsibility from you. A way will open; you must take it." Bewildered I found myself moving again and came at last to my own home and my own bed, cold and exhausted but thankful to find myself alive.

Long after I related this dream to a Psychologist with whom I was studying. He heard it in complete silence. Then he asked me what I thought of the dream. I said I thought it had been sent to me as a guide and to help me to have confidence to pursue a course which was not popular with my kin. He replied he thought that was probably quite true and advised me to hold on to it. "You know," he said, "that was not a dream but an experience, one that is vouchsafed to very few, and then only at the point of death." He enquired about my state of health and I replied that as far as I knew I was quite well, but he remained of the opinion that my hold on life at the time must have been precarious. After a further silence, with a little laugh, he said, "Where do you think I imagine you got to? I think you reached the moon!" So by some who have heard the story it has been called my "Moon dream".

Since that time I have quite often known myself to leave my body and travel sometimes a long distance, but only once have I experienced anything of such intense vividness, or so full of pain. The other was under ether and I do not want to speak of it just now.

I think we are all accustomed to hear strange voices in dreams without thinking much about it, but if we hear them when wide awake, we remember. On the occasion on which I went sketching out of doors for the first time, I went with a friend older than myself and with more experience. We walked quite a long distance, got through a hedge, crossed a very wide field, and came to the edge of a river. There we began to work. After a time I got up and leant against a tree to study what I had done. I became aware of a curious darkness descending on me and a strange humming sound in my ears, and discovered that I had disturbed a wasps' nest in the tree. The wasps were clouding all over me, alighting on my eyelids, my nose and everywhere. I was very much afraid, but a man's voice said, "Don't be afraid, just keep quite still". I did that. My friend having spoken and got no reply, looked round and seeing my plight, came running. I frowned to her to keep away. She realized and kept still also, until every wasp had left me and I had no sting. I turned to thank the man who had spoken. I could see no one in all the wide lonely expanse about us, and my friend was quite sure that no one had passed near us.

Shortly after that, we gave up, and went to the home of my friend for tea. My friend told her mother about the wasps. She was a very precise, quiet little lady, whom I was meeting for the first time. She looked at me quietly and said nothing. I felt she did not believe it,

so I said nothing. Even when I got home, I do not think I spoke of the strange happening. What I realize now is that what kept me from being able to speak at that little tea party was probably the extreme fatigue which I have since found to descend upon me after any such experience and to be a feature of it.

The same voice spoke and gave the same advice when I was in danger from fire. I obeyed in the same way.

During the 1914-18 war I worked very hard in France, largely with refugees from the Battle Front. I was happy in my work, but another organization urged me to leave my group and go to work for them instead. I did not want to do that, but had to admit that the work they offered was more important than what I was then doing.

With two of my friends and fellow workers, I went for the weekend to Chartres. That first night I could not sleep, wondering what to do. I sat up in bed and gazed out of the window of my little room. I saw before me the roofs and chimney pots of Chartres, very old and medieval. Beyond were the lovely towers of the great Cathedral. As I looked, the roofs and chimney pots gave place to a great forest, with a path running through it, out to the far distance. I saw a man walking there. He carried one of those curious baskets that to this day carvers use to carry their most precious tools in.

As the bells of the Cathedral chimed the hour, the man stopped in his walk, turned and watched the tower, until the bells ceased chiming, when he reluctantly pursued his way. I began to realize that he must have helped to make the beautiful Cathedral, probably in carving and he could not bear to leave it for a strange country. Time and time again this curious reluctance to pursue his way showed itself and suddenly I became aware that I was looking at myself; that long ago I had lived through that scene, that the man who was myself, was resisting the inevitable, and that I, now facing a similar, though so much smaller problem, must not hesitate. I decided there and then to make the change, turned and went to sleep. I never regretted the change. It opened a wider field with everything new and often very difficult, so that in the end it almost finished me, but it was full of interest and I loved it. Again I had, after this experience, that great exhaustion and a curious feeling of remoteness from the immediate present, so that as I walked with my two friends on that Sunday I could take little part in the conversation. There was always a sort of space between them and me and I could not speak of what had happened.

Many a time I have had evidence of the vividness and intensity of the Unseen in its nearness to us here, and the reality of the intention

with which it touches us. There is nothing of chance about such experiences, however small they may seem. They come with some definite purpose which we do not recognise perhaps at the time.

## A Phantasm of the Living

*(The following curious incident is related by a lady well known to us who, since the death of her husband, a professional man has cultivated in some measure the extra-sensory faculty. Ed.)*

SOMETIMES I can shut my eyes and by a voluntary effort which I cannot explain "see". The "seeing" I must explain is preceded by light patches which gradually come into focus and then a picture forms very like that seen on the view finder of a camera.

One afternoon I "saw" like this, a clearly defined picture of a tall building on the left. Suspended in the air as though propelled from the building was a young woman in a sitting position, with her legs straight out in front of her. She had dark curly hair and wore a slim black skirt and a yellow duffle coat made with a collar high up to the neck.

It was such an odd sight that I mentally said, "If I am going to see things like that, I had better snap out of it", so I got up and went to get ready for a party to which I had been invited and thought no more of it. Half an hour later, I went into my bedroom to get a hat and glanced out of the window as I passed it. To my surprise there was the girl dressed exactly as I had seen her, crossing the road.

She was real flesh and blood and I watched her out of sight. Ten minutes later on my way to the party, I saw her again standing at a bus stop.

Some weeks later I was telling this incident to a friend who is very clothes conscious and she looked thoughtful and said, "I know that girl who wears those clothes. She lives near us and about a year ago she had a very bad accident. She fell heavily *in a sitting position* and injured her spine. In fact she is still having treatment".

\* \* \*

The essence of mind is design and purpose. There are some who deny that there is any design or purpose in the universe at all: but that cannot possibly be maintained when humanity itself possesses these attributes.

—*Life and Matter.* SIR OLIVER LODGE.

# Light

*Contributions of suitable length are invited and should be addressed to THE EDITOR of LIGHT, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7, Phone: Kensington 3292-3.*

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## The Silent Minute

IS another religious revival due? Dr. W. E. Sangster, former Head of the Methodists in Britain thinks one desirable, according to a report in the *Daily Express* of his sermon at the Central Hall, Westminster. He maintains that a religious revival would help to solve many problems which beset this country, including crime, immorality and the achievement of peace without war.

Any religious revival which is truly spiritual in its conception and objectives is to be encouraged, provided always that it is tempered with reason and free from bigotry, prejudice and excess. Its influence on individuals may not always be permanent, but if even a few become a thought more conscious in a spiritual sense, it is surely worth while. Revival? Yes, by all means, but let it be a spiritual revival and not an emotional one.

Gone are the days when people would respond readily to hymns and public prayers and devout expositions. The world is ill; it is suffering from an emotional disturbance consequent on two world wars. Children are accustomed to the idea of sudden and brutal death; familiarity with the idea of killing has resulted in human life becoming less sacred. The old standards of morality and religion have fallen, for human faith has been shaken by human suffering—the suffering of innocent men and women and children. It will need more than the religious revival of Sankey and Moody days to restore faith and mental and spiritual balance. It must appeal, not to emotion but to reason if it is to break down the barrier of bitterness and criticism.

What part is spiritualism likely to play in it? LIGHT does not aspire to be a religious journal; it is concerned, primarily, with evidence of survival and the possibility of communication with the

beyond. But having said that, can one stop there? The implications of survival are too immense for one to do so. It is impossible to stand aside. Spiritualism and religious spiritualism too (the adherents of which regard it as a religion, their right to do so being acknowledged by legislation) might do well to take the hint Dr. Sangster has given. The world is sick, and guns and legislation do not heal it. What then?

Is there a way? There may be; it would be worth trying. Looking up old records in the offices of LIGHT unearthed a card of dignified production. It possessed a title—"The Silent Minute," and was published by the "Big Ben Council." The idea is stated to have originated in the mind of a British Officer who was killed in action in 1917. In 1940 the Board of the B.B.C., the card asserts, agreed for "The Minute" to be signalled by Big Ben at nine o'clock each evening and the spiritual appointment is said to have been kept by people in many parts of the world.

The procedure appears to be in essence for each who will, to turn for a minute completely away from the external world and silently lay its innumerable problems and its sickness at the footstool of God. Perhaps the mistake man has hitherto made has been to believe himself capable of putting the world to rights. Spiritualists might do well to take up the story of "The Silent Minute." They are well aware of the Spiritual Power which works effectively when not interfered with by human minds and thoughts. To dwell in thought upon one's highest conception of the Divine to the entire exclusion of all else; it may well be that to do so opens an unobstructed channel for spiritual, that is, Divine, Power to heal and raise individuals and nations and the world. The Author of the words "*BE STILL*, and know that I am God," may have given utterance to a profound spiritual truth calculated to heal the world of its spiritual growing pains. It remains for spiritualists with their profound belief in spiritual power, to practise it in faith enough to believe it possible, and give the Divine Power a clear field.

\* \* \*

"... No Self of which we can here have cognisance is in reality more than a fragment of a larger Self..."

*Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death.* F. W. H. MYERS.

# The Psychic Element in the Acts of the Apostles

## PART II

BY THE REV. F. S. W. SIMPSON, M.A., F.S.A., HON.C.F.,  
Vicar of Shoreham, Sussex

In regard to St. Paul, whose personality dominates the second part of the Acts, the late Preb. E. J. Bicknell, D.D., Sometime Vice-Principal of Cuddesdon Theological College, and later Professor of New Testament Exegesis, University of London, wrote :—

“In all his activities Paul was guided by the Spirit, through prophets, or by visions and signs.” (*A New Commentary on Holy Scripture*. p. 367. S.P.C.K.).

The conversion of this great Apostle was brought about by a psychic experience of great intensity with the result that he was blind for three days. This was the result of his first seeing and speaking to Jesus after His Resurrection. Our Lord at the same time appeared and spoke to a disciple by name Ananias, whom he sent to Saul to greet him on his arrival at Damascus.

The Rev. Alfred Guillaume, D.D., Davidson Professor of Old Testament in the University of London, in the fifth of his Bampton Lectures, entitled, “Dreams and Visions,” in a series on “Prophecy and Divination amongst the Hebrews and other Semites,” preached before the University of Oxford, 1938, speaking on this passage (9. 12) said :—

“There is a clear and circumstantial account of a double vision seen practically simultaneously by Ananias of Damascus and Saul, who was not yet called Paul. Ananias was told by the Lord to go and enquire for Saul of Tarsus, ‘for behold he prayeth ; and he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight.’

“In my judgement these visions come from the source to which the persons concerned ascribe them—not because they show marks of intelligent design, nor because they were vouchsafed (or at least one of them) to a man whom the Christian Church has always called Saint ; but because those who saw them were intensely preoccupied with God . . . p. 223.

“St. Paul was preoccupied with Jesus, and the power of Jesus came to him by the hands of Ananias. The real proof that St. Paul was in contact with objective and supernatural reality is to be found in the transformation and quickening of his whole life . . .

“Where St. Paul and Ananias were concerned the agent was Jesus. He ordered Ananias to undertake a mission which was repugnant to him, and He revealed to St. Paul that Ananias was coming to his aid.

“The story is so thoroughly in keeping with Old Testament visions that they must stand or fall together. We read constantly of prophets who argued with God in their visions in the vain attempt to escape from the onerous and dangerous missions on which Yahweh would send them.” p. 224. (Hodder and Stoughton Ltd.).

Other visions of St. Paul are recorded in the Acts:—

1st. On the Second Missionary Vision at Troas. (16. 9):—

“And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us.”

It has been suggested that this man was Luke himself. If so, it is an example of the phantom of the living, many incidents of which are on record of having happened in modern times.

2nd. At Corinth on the same Missionary Journey. (18. vv. 9/10):—

“And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city.”

3rd. At Jerusalem in the Temple.

“I fell into a trance, and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me.” (22. 18.)

4th. Whilst a prisoner in the castle at Jerusalem. (23. 11):—

“And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”

5th. On the ship whilst on the voyage to Rome. (27. vv. 23/4).

“For there stood by me this night an angel of God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee.”

Of healing miracles by St. Paul, we have the following on record in this book:—

*First Missionary Journey*, At Lystra a lame man is healed. (14. 10).

*Second Missionary Journey*, At Philippi a damsel is dispossessed of an evil spirit. (16. 8).

*Third Missionary Journey*, At Ephesus not a few are cured of diseases. Eutychus is restored to life at Troas. (20. 12).

On the voyage to Rome the father of Publius, the chief man of the island of Melita (Malta), on which they were shipwrecked was cured of fever and dysentery. (28. 8).

In this book we also meet with Christian Prophets for the first time, e.g. Agabus, who foretold a famine, and the imprisonment of Paul at Jerusalem. In the latter case we have a clear case of psychometry, which is a commonplace method amongst mediums today. In Ch. 21. vv. 10/11 it is thus described :—

“And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And coming to us, and taking Paul’s girdle, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.”

It is interesting to remember that the above incident occurred when Paul and Luke were staying at the house of Philip, the evangelist, at Caesarea, who had four virgin daughters possessing the gift of prophecy. (21. vv. 8/9).

From the New Testament literature it is quite evident that in the early days of the Church there was an order of prophets ranking next to the Apostles in importance, e.g. Paul writing to the Corinthians states :—

“God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues. (I Cor. 12. 28).

Commenting on the above passage, the late Canon Burnett Hillman Streeter, D.D., Reader in Christian Origins in the University of Oxford, Fellow of Queen’s College, in his epoch making book, *The Primitive Church studied with special reference to the origins of the Christian Ministry*, being the Hewett Lectures, 1928, wrote :—

“Since Apostles obviously belong to a special class, it is evident that, even in Corinth, a church of Paul’s own foundation, the terms Prophet and Teacher represent the two most important offices in what may be called the normal ministry in a local church.” (p. 77, Macmillan and Co. Ltd.).

To the above passage we may cite two other writings of the N.T. to support this theory.

“And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion

of our faith ; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry ; or he that teacheth, to his teaching ; or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting ; he that giveth, let him do it with liberality ; he that ruleth, with diligence ; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." (Rom. xii. 6-8).

"And he gave some to be apostles ; and some, prophets, and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ." (Eph. 4 11/12).

In regard to the role of a prophet and his qualifications to assume that office in Old Testament times Dr. Alfred Guillaume, in the third of his Bampton Lectures, "Divinatory Prophecy," states :—

"An epigram which has become widely current asserts that the prophets were 'forthtellers rather than fore-tellers.' Whether this dictum can be sustained is very doubtful. There is no prophet in the Old Testament who was not a foreteller of the future, and though the saying rightly lays stress on the fact that the prophets for the most part spoke in the name of God as men declaring His will and purpose, there can be no doubt whatever that they were feared because it was believed that they knew what was coming, and even had power to bring about the events which they prophesied. When a prophet ceased to prophecy in this sense he ceases to be a prophet and becomes a preacher. Preaching occupied a prominent place in the teaching of the later prophets, but it is important to notice that (*a*) so far as we know, it held a subordinate place in the lives of the early prophets and (*b*) even as late as the Exile, after the preaching of Isaiah and Jeremiah, the Anonymous Prophet of the Exile makes a knowledge of the future the basis of his claim to speak with the authority of Yahweh. (Isa. 41. v. 22 ; 42. v. 9). This being so we are surely justified in claiming that the power of predicting the future was regarded by the Hebrews as the distinguishing mark of prophetic activity. It may be that for us the moral and ethical teaching of the prophets is of paramount importance ; but that is an indication of the purpose of God for future generations, it is not historically the element in prophecy which made Israel's teachers prophets." pp. 111/112.

These remarks are indeed revolutionary, and are contrary to the results arrived at by the 19th and 20th century rational critics who generally regarded anything that savoured the supernatural and supernormal, e.g. clairvoyance and clairaudience, as myths and legends, and not worthy of serious consideration.

Unfortunately the scriptural order of the ministry seems to have

been replaced by the traditional order of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, by the end of the second century, if not earlier.

Within a comparative short time those possessing prophetic gifts became too dangerous for an institution which commenced to look back to the past for inspiration instead of to the future. But we do not discover any petrified tradition in the Acts. The actors of this first scene in the great drama of the history of the Christian Church looked forward with confidence to the future, since they were convinced that they were under the guidance of their unseen Master, Jesus, The Christ. It was the great Biblical scholar, Adolph Harnack, who told us that the aim of the Acts of the Apostles is "to shew the power of the Spirit of Jesus in the Apostles, manifested in history." (*The Acts of the Apostles*, Crown Theological Library, p. xviii).

As Christians we claim that our faith is rooted and grounded in history. In other words, in the realm of fact not fiction.

Today men and women demand that the Church shall produce her title-deeds and justification for her existence and Gospel. To point out to the enquirer that these supernatural events occurred two thousand years ago, but ceased at the end of the Apostolic age cuts no ice whatsoever. Thinking men just regard them as the myths and legends which are common to all ancient religions, and their belief in the supernatural falls to the ground like a pack of cards. The Christian Church can no longer afford to rest secure on her scriptural laurels, which are now nearly two thousand years old. She must produce the goods, if she hopes to survive, and overcome the forces of materialism which are rampant in the world today.

Psychical phenomena, which the Church can only ignore at her peril, shows us that parallel events, similar to those recorded in the Acts are taking place in our midst today for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. They may indeed be not as perfect and complete as those described in the New Testament, but it is only a difference of degree, not kind. This is due no doubt to the lack of quality and development in the case of the medium or sensitive.

This fact has been well expressed by J. Arthur Hill, in his book, *Psychical Investigations* in which he states:—

"We cannot expect to find ancient evidence that will come up to modern standards. Consequently we can neither accept nor deny, in any dogmatic way, such psychical stories as those in Herodotus, or the miracle narratives in the world's sacred writings. But in so far as the happenings described in the old narratives conform to types which are recognisable in the phenomena of today, they may at least

provisionally be considered likely enough. For example, all the miracles of the New Testament are credible to any one who has done much psychical investigation, for he comes across more or less similar things ; things, at any rate, sufficiently similar to warrant the belief that where the modern phenomena fall short of the ancient, the reason is that in the case of these latter a higher and more powerful personality was concerned." p. 247.

Psychical Research and phenomena show us that God is just the same today by His manifestations and revelations.

## What does it all Mean ?

BY THE REV. ROWLAND W. MATTLAND

*(The Author resides in Ipswich and has personally visited the poltergeist infested house.—Ed.)*

NO doubt many readers of LIGHT have followed with interest the series of Reith lectures given by Professor Toynbee in the Home Service programme of the B.B.C., exhibiting as they do that immense erudition which is such an impressive feature in all Professor Toynbee's writings. In the last of these lectures he takes his listeners to the present day and bids them try to forecast for themselves the future, in the light of that past of which he has given such a vivid picture. He draws a very close parallel between the ancient world extending from the banks of the Ganges to southern Gaul under the spell of Greek culture and the modern world under the influence of our western civilization. He sees the same forces at work with the same results, which in the second century A.D. culminated in a condition which closely resembles that in which we find ourselves today. A spiritual vacuum in human souls, to use his own words, and that vacuum was filled in the second century A.D. by the rise of new religions of which Christianity in the west, and Buddhism in the east were to be the enduring survivals.

Once more then, as Professor Toynbee sees it, there is a vacuum, "a spiritual poverty." How will it be met? There he leaves us to answer the question, each one for himself.

As we look around today then, can we see any indication of the source from whence our spiritual wants can be supplied, or shall we be compelled to accept the arid food of Marxian intellectualism?

A new religion with a new creed? A religion based upon dogmatic teaching however inspiring it may be, can never hold its own for long in the critical atmosphere of modern thought. Wherever it does come from, it will have to be based upon facts and susceptible to proof. It was with such thoughts in my mind that I was suddenly brought in contact with a local manifestation of what is vaguely called poltergeist phenomena.

As to publicity, it followed the usual course, the Press, local and national, gave it a notice more or less brief; the nearness of Christmas may have helped to prolong the interest. Those versed in such matters found nothing outstanding in the phenomena as described by the frightened inhabitants of the house, consisting of a man and his wife, a small girl, aged eight and two smaller children. The man could be sufficiently described as simple and unsophisticated, and their home as a very humble one. His story was as follows.

A door in the old house which they had just taken possession of, opened by itself, and the man who had had psychic experiences before, at once came to the conclusion that the house was haunted. It was not surprising therefore that the small girl shortly afterwards saw a ghost in her room which was followed by poltergeist phenomena and the arrival of apports, which seemed to be connected with the man.

The ghost I do not doubt originated in the subconscious mind of the child stimulated by suggestion but the poltergeist phenomena and the apports, trivial objects in themselves, had every appearance of being genuine. That is to say they were produced by psycho dynamic power externalised from the medium, i.e., the man. The cold wind which the woman experienced from time to time, the warmth of some of the apports when they arrived, coupled with the abject terror of the unfortunate inmates, would be sufficient proof that they were not guilty of deception.

But what does it all mean? To me it seems that here amidst these poor and meagre surroundings there was being exhibited a power which the world of modern science can find no place for, a power which can truly bear the name of miraculous, breaking the chain of cause and effect which today is fundamental to all scientific reasoning.

And yet it is true! and the truth of it has been made manifest again and again, as all readers of LIGHT know.

May it not be that this power under whatever form of physical

phenomena it may show itself, may be the means of throwing fresh light upon man and his destiny, here and hereafter?

What effect then will this have upon religion as it stands today?

For an answer to that question we can turn back for a moment to Professor Toynbee and his Reith Lectures. As he sees it the new Christian Religion, and Buddhism too for the matter of that, never attempted to destroy the Greek culture of the world into which it came. For the sake of converting a Greek educated world Christianity assumed a Greek dress, and took the further step of presenting itself intellectually in terms of Greek philosophy.

And so today may we not hope to see the essential truths of Christianity clothed afresh in the light of that greater knowledge which psychic phenomena can give?

As Edmund Holmes puts it in his book *The Great Passing On*, the influence of such thinking will be dynamic. It will involve a change, however slight, in the centre of gravity of our being. It will lead in some sort, and in some measure, to a spiritual awakening, to a new way of thinking about the meaning and value of life, to a new way of ordering our goings, to a new outlook on the world.

## The Empty Bed

BY BRIGADIER C. A. L. BROWNLOW, D.S.O.

ON Saturday, 4th October, 1952, my wife and I entertained a friend about whose family affairs we knew nothing. That evening my wife suggested she might like a sitting, for though mildly interested in what we had told her of psychic matters, she had never had any personal experience.

Let the reader picture the three of us quietly seated in our sitting-room amid the glow of an electric fire. I quickly sensed the presence of her maternal grandmother; while my wife saw by me the vision of an elderly woman whom she described. To this our sitter said she had no recollection at all of either of her grandmothers. I went on to say the grandmother had come in connection with the sitter's mother. I then saw the mother's bedroom; the bed which, strangely to me, only had a modest white coverlet; and a bedside table on which were medicine bottles. The sitter's reply was that this was all perfectly correct, her mother being alive and residing in a nursing

home because of rheumatism. I then remarked: "Strange, I cannot see your mother, I only see an empty bed." Then my sensing changed and I told her the coming of her grandmother was in connection with both her mother and herself. There was a rift between her and her mother; and no matter who was blameworthy the gap should be bridged and the thorn of discord plucked from her heart. Even if the fault did lie with her mother, how sorry our friend would be supposing that, when the hour came, her mother passed over with the animosity between them unresolved. The sitter replied that my words were only too true; but there were family reasons why a reconciliation was well nigh impossible for her to accomplish.

The next day, Sunday, we took her to a spiritualist church, the first time she had ever entered one. At the opening of the clairvoyance, the medium went straight to her and gave her a remarkable summary of her life. That afternoon our friend returned to London, wondering about the events of her week-end.

The following morning at 8 a.m. her telephone rang and she was informed her mother had had a sudden heart attack. At 8.30 a.m. the telephone rang again and she was told her mother had died.

A fortnight later she went to a spiritualist church and slipped into the back row. The medium, on commencing his clairvoyance, went straight to her and said (I quote our friend's own words) "Your mother has just gone over. She suffered with rheumatism; but now is well and wants to thank you for all you have done—she has with her a Mr. M. (name correctly given)."

This Mr. M. had been engaged to our friend, a spinster, but had died before their marriage, many years ago.

She wrote to us giving her account of this final episode. The letter is before me as I now write, and closes with these words: "It's Grand to Know."

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Few as yet realise the full implications of [the discovery that the conscious mind does not exhaust the human personality. We may not see much at first in the knowledge that there is more in us than we are conscious of; but reflection shows it to be more and more significant, until the perspective of the entire human being begins to change.

—*The Personality of Man.* G. N. M. TYRRELL

# Apports

BY THE REV. W. S. PAKENHAM-WALSH

Vicar of Sulgrave, Banbury

THE article by E. M. C. in the January LIGHT leads me to tell of an experience which I have never been able to explain. About ten years ago I attended a conference of clergy which was held in a large building in Northampton, and I shared a bedroom with three other clergy whom I had not met before. When I got home I found that I brought back a sponge bag which was not my own, and so I wrote at once to the matron of the institution telling her of my mistake and asking her kindly to inquire, so that I might restore the sponge bag I had taken and get back my own. She made inquiries, but the other three men had got their own and no sponge bag was missing. There was nothing left for me to do but to use the strange bag which was like my own, and which had sponge, soap, etc. complete. Six months went by until one day in July on entering my bedroom I saw on the low window sill a sponge bag similar to my lost one. Picking it up I found that it was indeed my own sponge bag with every item complete, only that the sponge was bone dry and nothing in it had apparently been touched.

I at once went downstairs and asked my wife where she had found it. She said she did not understand, so I took her up and showed her the sponge bag, and she was more mystified than I was, for we had both been sleeping in the room and could not have helped seeing the bag as it was in a most prominent place and moreover the room had in June been given a thorough Spring clean. We called up our lady help, but she knew nothing about it and certainly had not put it there. No one beside ourselves had been in the room on the day when it was found and yet it was the sponge bag that I had taken to Northampton in February. Everything was in perfect condition, but as dry as dust and nothing apparently had been used. Fortunately with the finding of my own bag, the other did not disappear and so I was the possessor of two sponge bags with everything complete.

The mystery has never been solved, but whether it comes under the heading "Apports" I do not know, I only know that if it was an "Apport" I was very grateful for the kind "Apporter" and could do with a few more even on a larger scale.

## REVIEWS

*Tomorrow*. Published quarterly by Garrett Publications, 11 East 44th St., N. York, 17. 50c.; annual subscription \$2 in U.S.

A useful digest of psychological research and the occult. Edited by Eileen J. Garrett this journal sets itself the worthy task of assisting and interesting the layman of limited leisure who desires to learn more about extra-sensory perception and its implications. S.B.

*Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, Vol. XLIX, Part 181, November 1952.

THIS issue contains the Presidential Address delivered on 21st May, 1952 by Dr. Gilbert Murray, O.M. Dr. Murray, in the course of his address, says that he finds the statistical results of the ESP experiments at Duke University, particularly in the precognition field, quite incredible. One wonders if it may not be wiser to suspend judgement on such points until the mechanisms of the ESP effects have been discovered. Dr. Murray seems to be willing to accept the correctness of the premises adopted by the workers at Duke University but unwilling to accept the seemingly logical conclusions they draw therefrom as the result of their labours. In any case, if the statistical facts exist we ought to attend to them and try to account for them. Perhaps Dr. Murray is unwilling to contemplate what he deems to be an "antecedently improbable" notion.

D. B. STEVENS, Major R.M., A.C.A.

*In Search of the Hereafter*, by Reginald M. Lester. (Harrap & Co. Ltd., 12s. 6d.)

THE author of this book, who is a well-known journalist, lost his wife, to whom he was devoted, in 1948. He was broken-hearted at his loss, and, for a time, even contemplated suicide. He was, however, brought into touch with Lord Dowding, who advised him most earnestly not to take this desperate course. Influenced by what the Air Chief Marshal said to him, he decided to investigate the claims of Spiritualism, and this volume is the story of his psychic adventures during the past few years.

It is a deeply-interesting story, and some of the evidence the author received of the continued happy existence of his wife is remarkable. He started in his search in a very sceptical frame of mind, and it was some while before he would allow himself to be convinced that life did indeed continue after death. But having once accepted the evidence, he seems to have dropped his scepticism almost too thoroughly, and readers may feel doubtful about some of the sittings which, to him, seemed genuine. Especially they may feel doubtful about the address which was given to him through a medium whose name he says he is not at liberty to divulge, an address purporting to come from "One of the Twelve Disciples." Mr. Lester states of this that he has "authenticated evidence" that the communicator was indeed one of the Apostles. This seems to be rather a rash statement to make.

The book, however, is an important addition to the literature of spiritualism, and, since it seems likely to obtain much publicity, it should, despite some extravagances, do much good to the cause. C.C.

*Psychic Oddities*, by Hereward Carrington. (Rider & Co., 16s.).

THIS volume, which has been compiled by one of the best-known psychic researchers of the day, is a collection of strange happenings in the history of modern psychics. Strange they certainly are. The author says of them: "Some of these incidents have been of so fantastic a nature that I did not dare to include them in any book dealing with the more serious side of psychical research, in case they might discredit the phenomena I was seriously reporting." Nevertheless, incredible though some of them appear, Mr. Carrington assures us that they really did occur, and since he feels that they should be recorded, he has made a book of them—a kind of psychical anthology, in fact.

Some of the incidents included will be known to most students of spiritist literature,—the case of Jeff, the talking mongoose, for instance, the disturbed coffins in the Jamaican vault, the weird footmarks in the snow reported from Devonshire in 1855, and others. But many others appear to be new, and all are interesting to read.

Parts of the book are rather provocative. In one chapter, the author discusses the various mediums he has known, most of whom he considers to have been fraudulent. It is a little startling to find so many famous names upon his Black List—Valentine, Margery Crandon, even Frau Silbert, come under his suspicion, though of the two last he does admit that some genuine phenomena may have occurred. Nor does he apparently think very highly of most of the mediums whom he does find genuine. To Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Eileen Garrett, and Eusapia Palladino alone does he give unqualified approval, as being both genuine and remarkable. This extreme scepticism, however, with regard to mediums is perhaps helpful in persuading the reader that the bizarre incidents recorded really happened, since it implies that the occurrences vouched for by such a sceptic must be true.

Although on the light side, the book is eminently readable and will be greatly enjoyed.

*Where There is a Will*, by Maurice Barbanell. (Rockcliff, 9s. 6d.).

MAURICE BARBANELL has written many books upon Spiritualism and kindred subjects, and his latest volume will be welcomed by a large number of readers. Its theme is explained by its title—the power of the individual to shape his destiny by making a right use of his own potentialities. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you"—that, in brief, is the substance of the discourse.

Many books have been written upon this theme, and perhaps there is little fresh that can be said upon the subject. But such as there is, Mr. Barbanell says, and he says it extremely well. His writing is always clear and logical, and much of it is really eloquent and inspiring. To those who feel the need of such a book, this volume can be heartily recommended.

\* \* \*

'Deep researches into psychical phenomena demonstrate survival. This is my firm conviction'.

Ernesto Bozzano, Italian scientist.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### The "Zwann-Ray"

Sir,—Your reviewer, H. E. Yerbury, M.I.E.E., shows obvious prejudice against the Zwann-Ray.

In the Psychic field we are dealing with subtle forces not recognised by any of the official sciences and telepathy is the only thing that can be said to be established (and there is even doubt about this.)

The field of Energy which the Zwann-Ray manifests is at present outside known fields and will naturally take very delicate instruments to record. We can however, judge it by its effects, and I think this is important. Sensitives and Mediums respond to subtle vibrations and can sense things around articles, etc. The Zwann-Ray has an effect on people who are psychically sensitive and who respond to psychic vibrations, it is claimed of it that it stimulates clairvoyance, clairaudience, psychic sensitiveness and trance state, etc. The proof of the pudding is in the eating and mediums tested with it have all responded in some way to this ray. They can all feel something coming from the ray.

The Spirit Electronic Communication Society is purely a research Society and has many electronic and electrical engineers among its members. It is seeking to establish this new field of energy, and has made good progress in this direction. But it is all a matter of painstaking research and time.

But the means of electronic communication is too important to be confined to the laboratory as Mr. Yerbury suggests. Even in its present elementary stage it can be put to practical use, and is being used to good effect to produce worth while results. Surely the practical application of a thing is more important than establishing the scientific theory concerning it? If we can eventually make possible with the Zwann-Ray a spirit radio or mechanical means of direct communication with the other side of life, then all things will follow, and there will be no need to establish a new field of energy, for it will have proved itself.

If the Zwann-Ray is based on mere suggestion then it will eventually fade out, but instead of this, interest is increasing, and those who are attracted to research in this electronic field are finding greater possibilities opening out. Man has been clever enough to split the atom and use atomic energy. Perhaps if he puts his brain to it, he should be able to penetrate the different vibrations separating this physical world and the etheric world of spirit, in the astral regions nearest physical vibrations? It is possible, and spirit communicators tell us this is true! What are we afraid of? Why is there so much prejudice against electronic communication? Is LIGHT afraid to throw light on this subject?

Finally, regarding Mr. Yerbury's criticism of being warned not to sit alone with the Zwann-Ray machine, I would like to point out to him that this applies to sitting for all phases of psychic phenomena. Anyone who has a knowledge of psychic matters does not have to be told of the inadvisability of sitting alone.

JAMES M. McLINTOCK

[LIGHT is by no means afraid of throwing light on this matter, provided there is something to reflect it; Mr. Zwann is being invited to contribute an article on the subject.—Ed.]

# LIGHT

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