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THE SPIRITUALIST

C. P. CHRISTENSEN, Editor

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MARCH, 1916

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Member of the

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VOL. II.

MARCH, 1916

No. 3

Spiritual Lessons from the Writings of Marie Corelli

By W. J. Colville.

Among the many authors who have made a profound and definite impression upon contemporary thought, Marie Corelli may well be regarded as one of the foremost in the rank of novelists, and it is through the medium of works of romance that a vast multitude of readers is continually being reached, to whom great ideas presented in the soberer and more didactic form of the essay make no direct appeal. We all know how suddenly Marie Corelli in early youth leaped into fame through the agency of her first book "A Romance of Two Worlds", which was first published in 1886, at a time when the so-called "occult" romance was just about to spring into popular vogue.

William Stead and a few other enterprising journalists were calling public attention to the mysteries of "Borderland." The works of Bulwer Lytton had already achieved wide circulation and contemporary interest had been deeply aroused on behalf of Spiritualism, Theosophy, Christian Science, Spiritual Science, and much else (speaking technically) which carried

the minds of readers far beyond the pale of ordinary subject matter for romance; the time therefore was ripe for a gifted young woman to step into the literary limelight and startle the world with a novel on an unusual line, one, moreover, which far transcended in interest, and most of all in daring, works of so-called fiction which had preceded it in somewhat similar directions. It would seem incredible that a girl could write so wonderful a story without assistance from generally unknown and unsuspected sources of information, but once let it be granted that there are two definite sources whence extraordinary information can proceed—Mystic Brotherhoods who impart instruction to receptive disciples and Unseen Intelligences from whom information can be psychically derived—and the mystery of the production of so amazing a novel is greatly reduced if not completely dissipated. After the lapse of fully a quarter of a century Marie Corelli produced "The Life Everlasting," subtitled "A Peal of Romance," which proved to be the logical sequel to her earliest literary

venture, for in that later and maturer volume we find the same ideas promulgated with all the oldtime vigor and enthusiasm, and while Heliebas, the leading character in "A Romance of Two Worlds," has departed from scenes of terrestrial activity he has a competent successor, Azelzion, who carries the same mysterious work forward and initiates a few worthy candidates into a knowledge of some of Nature's mighty secrets. These secrets cannot be supernatural in the conventional meaning of the term, but they are indeed miraculous in the etymological meaning of the word because they excite great surprise, causing all who beheld them, or listen thoughtfully to a record of their occurrence, to marvel greatly. Between the periods which gave birth respectively to the two wonderful books just mentioned their author passed thru many literary experiences. In the Prologue to "The Life Everlasting" she takes readers into her confidence, treating them to intensely interesting morsels of autobiography, from which we learn that she considers herself to have written two distinct classes of stories, one far more serious and important than the other.

The less important series started with "Vendetta," which is a lurid romance very powerfully written, founded upon incidents gathered from the tragic days in 1884 when Naples was afflicted with a terrible pestilence. Though very unlike "A Romance of Two Worlds," this weird tale of a man buried alive who escaped from a vault and returned home to find that his wife had always been unfaithful to him, introduces many an ethical consideration displaying a matured intellect coupled with a keen moral sense.

Marie Corelli was reared in a literary atmosphere; she was devoted to fine literature and music in her early girlhood, and was a devoted student of Shakespeare; it is therefore not so very difficult to admit that in her dawning womanhood she was easily capable of doing really strong work with her pen even when treating of themes for which no special spiritual illumination was necessary.

In the list of definitely occult or psychical romances we must place "Ardath," "The Soul of Lilith," "The Sorrows of Satan," "Ziska," "The Master Christian," and in a

place entirely alone we may find "Barabas," for though it certainly belongs in the serious category (It is indeed the most serious and the most wonderful of all the books that its fertile author had yet published.) it is in subject matter unmistakably unique. Among the most impressive works in the secondary list we must place "Thelma," "Boy," "The Treasure of Heaven," and finally "Innocent."

Though all the books included in the two sets of volumes are different each from the other in many distinctive features, there is a thread of definite teaching running thru them all. Whenever Marie Corelli writes she always moralizes, and she always scathingly rebukes hypocrisy and holds up mere frivolity to scorn. Though the purpose in some of her books may be much more clearly defined or definitely stated than in others, the purpose is never absent and never very deeply hidden. That is undoubtedly one of the principal reasons why whatever she publishes is widely read and extensively reviewed and also sharply criticised. Critics who love to tear books to pieces have found in Marie Corelli an object of attack who must have convinced them that gifted authors can succeed without their patronage and in defiance of their condemnation. Nothing has been more conducive to this intrepid author's extensive popularity than her extreme boldness of utterance and superiority to dread of critical condemnation. It is by no means necessary to agree with a writer in everything to admire her frankness and pay tribute to her manifest ability. Marie Corelli makes people think while they are being entertained with a well executed romance, and that is doing a great deal educationally for the multitude.

A very noteworthy feature of this distinguished woman's successful career as a writer is that she has enlisted the attention of all sorts and conditions of people from the comparatively illiterate to the most highly placed in scientific and in social circles. It is a great triumph to interest statesmen and stable boys, scientists and scrubwomen, but Marie Corelli has done it easily because of the wide scope of her sympathies and her frequent direct appeals to the fundamental feelings of our common humanity. This very versatile literary

genius, who has lived for several years at Stratford-on-Avon, has many points of contact with the great poet in whose famous birthplace she has made her home and it may safely be affirmed that the scathing strictures made upon the more luridly outspoken parts of her most unprudish modern novels would apply equally to many a fine passage in a Shakesperian tragedy.

The controversy over Marie Corelli's method of dealing with "delicate" problems suggest, and to an extent necessitates, a candid answer to the ever-recurring question as to where we shall draw the line between moral and immoral literature; between what should be censored and what should be esteemed as possessing genuine educational value.

A very simple answer to this perpetual inquiry is that motive must always be considered. When an evil is exposed and denounced and the direful consequences of treachery and impurity are presented in a disturbing light, the fair inference is that the author is intentionally moral and seeking to warn readers against errors into which many unsophisticated youths and maidens unthinkingly plunge; it is only when immoralities are justified, and sometimes even sophistically glorified, that we have any valid grounds for pronouncing a description salacious. A novelist who writes dramatically must describe situations as they actually exist; but much more is required than merely vivid portrayal of existing conditions. It is only when we reach transcendence that we approach genius, which is always prophetic, and this prophetic insight whenever and wherever exhibited wins for a descriptive writer well merited celebrity.

Thirty years ago the uses of electricity as practically applied were comparatively few. Radium at that time was undiscovered; wireless telegraphy was generally unknown; yet we may turn the pages of "A Romance of Two Worlds," published in 1886, and read accounts of electrical appliances in actual working order which clearly reveal the fact that somebody knew more than the majority of commonly well informed persons concerning radio-activity, and much else that in this 20th century is frequently mentioned as an accepted verity, but which in the preceding century

was scarcely ever hinted at except in exclusive and highly advanced scientific and psychical societies.

As the question of bodily welfare is always of great interest to the masses, and rightly so, we can readily understand the avidity with which Marie Corelli's earlist romance was seized by sufferers from obscure and baffling disorders which had long defied ordinary medical treatment, and refused to yield even to those mental and magnetic operations which were receiving great attention thirty years ago.

There is always some lack of definite instruction in all works dealing with the "occult" by reason of two sets of facts, one relating to the secret (or private) manner in which unusual knowledge is obtained; the other referring to the impossibility of administering spiritual healing successfully after the manner of an apothecary.

In the case of sufferers from deep-seated "nervous" difficulties, and in all definitely "mental" cases, there is crying need for methods of treatment altogether supramedical. However, much good may be temporarily accomplished by bathing in electrified water, by taking mental suggestions from psycho-therapists, or by submitting to manipulative treatment given by competent magnetic healers, the results are only superficial unless the life of the patient undergoes a radical change. This is abundantly revealed in the typical case of Mortin Harland and his daughter Catherine, two prominent personages in "The Life Everlasting." These chronic invalids are in the hands of a supercilious would-be scientific physician, Dr. Brayle, a type of man who lowers the dignity of an honorable profession by lack of conscientiousness coupled with pretention claims to scientific knowledge, and a contemptible habit of sneering at everything beyond the range of his extremely narrow mental vision. Such hireling doctors are always a disgrace to the medical profession and it seems strange how they can succeed, as they often do, in holding wealthy patients in their clutches. Rafael Santeris is a splendid example of real scientific attainment; a man of this type is rare but not impossible to discover; he is a true healer working harmoniously on the various planes of nature simultaneously, consequently he does not ignore or despise the findings of

physical science, but he far excels the average scientist both in actual knowledge and in ability to translate acquired information into beneficent activities.

The character of Santories is one which every reader will do well to study deeply, for this truly marvelous Initiate into Nature's discoverable and practically employable mysteries, combines all the good qualities of the typical man of worldly affairs. Too long has the public been led to believe that no mystic can be practical in everyday life while the successful man of business can give true heed to the call of the indwelling Spirit. This delusion works incalculable harm in two directions; it causes many sincere aspirants for spiritual development to shrink therefrom, fearing that it would disqualify them for business activities or professional requirements, and it also leads many workers in the realm of commerce to stifle their higher aspirations on account of their erroneous belief that business and spirituality are forever incompatible.

In the case of so unusual a character as Santoris we are introduced to a marvelous but perfectly logical combining of mystical attainments with qualifications for active service in the external world. We may certainly not respect the average student of the philosophy of life to measure up to so high a standard as Santoris had reached, we are nevertheless completely justified in holding up a goal, a glorious ideal in vision before every aspirant for honors is such a school of initiation as the House of Azelzion. At the close of an exceptionally powerful account of methods employed for development of invincibility to "influence" we are treated to a very direct statement concerning the special work which can only be performed by exceptional men and women who betake themselves to a certain kind of retreatful solitude, by no means associated with an ascetic life, whither are drawn to them a few disciples who can truly profit by their wise instructions. Such highly developed initiates can accomplish a spiritual work for humanity far transcending all commonplace philanthropical achievements; but though it is undeniably demonstrable that greater spiritual work can sometimes be accomplished silently, and in comparative solitude, by persons specially qualified for

esoteric ministrations, we make a great mistake if we ever disparage the efforts of more nearly ordinary workers in the external world because we know there is a higher and a deeper method of serving humanity than most honest strivers for human betterment are yet aware of.

The question of material prosperity, equally with that of bodily vigor maintained indefinitely, is treated by Marie Corelli in nearly all her books in a masterly manner. Two directly opposite views of worldly prosperity are commonly tenable; one elevating, the other sordid. The sordid view is that of the slave to money who is a veritable mammon-worshipper, whether he adores or despises external gold; the elevated view is that of the master of circumstances who dominates material conditions, never letting any external thing or circumstance appear either a hindrance or an idol.

Heliebas, Azelzion, Santoris, and indeed all the characters held up by Marie Corelli as exceptionally developed spiritually as well as mentally, are in good financial circumstances; they may indeed be called exceptionally well off in worldly goods, and there is always something of mystery attaching to how they come to be so opulent. The suggestion is that they are in possession of certain scientific knowledge, coupled with splendid executive ability, so that all they undertake prospers on their hands, and they are never guilty of mistreating others to enrich themselves.

There is nothing beautiful in sordid poverty; nothing holy in rags; and it is the merest cant to be prating about the sanctity of destitution, though it is soundly ethical to insist that whenever the alternative is presented of gaining wealth by dishonorable means or going without it, we should not hesitate an instant before accepting honest poverty in preference to dishonest wealth. That such an alternative is sometimes presented we frankly admit, and greatly must we honor those brave faithful souls who prefer starvation to dishonesty. But it is the mission of all true sociologists and political economists, and most of all of those who undertake to set unusually high ideals before humanity along "occult" lines, to show that material competence can be secured and maintained in ways not simply honorable but positively helpful to

society at large. Marie Corelli, who always speaks of the Christ in terms of unqualified reverence, must have accepted the reasonable view of superiority to limitations intimated in the much perverted saying "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head;" words which are quoted time and time again with intent to prove that a great Master, who could multiply food with his commanding word, was himself in a poverty-stricken plight. The intelligent cosmopolite; the true internationalist; the super-sectarian worshipper of universal Deity in place of some tribal divinity, can interpret this saying aright, for birds and animals with their holes and nests correspond with narrow limitations of nation, sect and party, while having no defined place of abode, in the spiritual sense, signifies being equally at home everywhere. To be happy among the rich and poor alike; to be in vital sympathy with seekers after righteousness regardless of creed or clan; this is to be superior to the trammels of worldly convention and the dictatorship of an assumed authority.

The poverty question is to be settled scientifically or not at all, just as the health question must be settled. We can derive from Marie Corelli's vivid descriptions of wealthy persons of high intelligence teaching glorious truth and pointing the road to emancipation from all kinds of physical thralldom, much helpful food for thought along lines both idealistic and practical, and it is practical application of transcendental theory of which the world today stands very greatly in crying need.

Wealth acquired by oppressing the workers can only bring a curse upon its accumulators, but wealth gained by applying knowledge to the further development of natural resources, while all who work for a benevolent director are well housed, well fed, well clothed, and in every way treated as fellow human beings deserving of neighborly regard, must bring a blessing upon all who thus produce it and increase it.

A perfect democracy is thinkable only in connection with equal human development; for so long as there are only a very few men and women in the world capable of inventing, designing and overseeing

great enterprises, there must be acknowledged leadership in the ranks of industry, but true leaders are always superior in attainment and the direct reverse of tyrants and demagogues. To seek health in the abominable ways in which vivisectioners seek it is all on a par with endeavors to make fortunes in the dishonorable ways in which plutocrats are to-day making them, save in instances where some highly intelligent man or woman sees and follows the more excellent way of profit sharing, which is a great step upward. Without claiming that Marie Corelli is an infallible guide or that all her opinions are to be accepted, we can without exaggeration declare that she has given her numerous readers not only a great deal of entertainment, but an unusually vast amount of real instruction, and that in a form in which the public is not only willing but even eager to receive it.

On the question of Spirit-communion we confess to finding this author unsatisfactory at certain points. Evidently prejudice has somewhat warped her judgment in some directions; but whatever may be said concerning her caustic comments on certain aspects of mediumship, it is only fair to say that she upholds faith in human immortality in no equivocal manner and urges all her readers to grasp the tremendous thought that we can will and achieve our own destiny; that we are not puppets of fate, or even slaves of Deity, but individuals capable of reaching the goals we steadfastly determine to reach, but only by making the necessary faithful effort. The genuine essence of true Occultism is clearly revealed near the end of "The Life Everlasting," where the following words occur, put into the mouth of Azelzion who has married Santoris whom she sincerely believes to be her soul mate, her true spiritual counterpart.

"The chief point of Azelzion's instruction was the test of the brain and soul against "influences"—the opposing influences of others—and this is truly the chief hindrance to all spiritual progress. The coward sentiment of fear itself is born in us thru the influence of timorous persons—and it is generally the dread of what "other people will say" or what "other people will think" that holds us back from performing many a noble act-

ion. It should be thoroughly understood that in the eternal advancement of one's own Soul "other people" and their influence are hindrances to progress. It does not matter a jot what anybody thinks or says, provided the central altar of one's own Spirituality is clear and clean for the steadfast burning of the dual flame of Life and Love. All opinion, all criticism becomes absurd in such matters as these and absolutely worthless." From the foregoing we may profitably summarize the following salutary doctrine, practically applicable to all the affairs of daily life: To be faithful to the inner light, true to our highest convictions of right and duty regardless of the fluctuating views of the changing world around us. Advice is often useful, guidance often needed, but no true adviser or guide ever proves less or other

than a helper along the road to eventual self-reliance which, as Emerson long ago proved in one of his most instructive essays, is a royal spiritual independence fully compatible with all reasonable co-operative effort, but utterly alien to all that borders on servility. The object of life's experiences for every one of us it to develop a noble individuality. Teachers farther advanced than we can blaze the trail and point the way, but the pilgrim-feet of each pedestrian must tread the pathway of initiation individually till finally each becomes a Hero, who according to the ancient teaching of Scandinavian mythology from which Richard Wagner drew copious material for his magnificent operas, is a greater being than any of the old gods and goddesses whom the new Heroes must eventually supersede.

Life

By N. M. GEER, M. D.

What is life? Many good scientists have confessed themselves unable to state definitely. When any one is asked to define it, he usually enumerates some of the phenomena by which it is accompanied. But many of these are present also in bodies that are universally considered lifeless. If we speak of growth according to a definite plan, crystals grow, according to more definite plans than any animal. If we speak of the power of choice, the smallest atom seems to have, under the law of chemical affinity, the power of choosing the atoms of other elements with which it prefers to unite, as well as those with which it will unite, and those with which it will not unite. And all substance seems to have, under the law of gravity, power to move toward other bodies, and something that informs it as to which body is the greatest, and which the nearest, for it chooses which it will approach according to those two circumstances.

We say that life is attended by consciousness. But can we really prove the negative fact that inanimate bodies have not any sort of consciousness, and vegetables have life without consciousness. We say this because animals have a nervous system, and vegetables not, as far as we can discover. But would the vegetables

be compelled to use the same implements as the animal in manifesting its consciousness, or otherwise have none? The greatest scientists state that thought in man's nervous system is inseparably connected with chemical processes, and there is very much chemistry going on in all vegetables. Our ignorance of these subjects seems quite dense, and the more we grope in the darkness the deeper it seems. What is it that enters into the fertilized ovum of the animal, that makes it grow and develop and become a perfect individual of the species when the process is fulfilled. And why does the animal stop growing when of mature age? Why does it not keep on, as long as food and surroundings favor it? Physiologists can find no physical reason. We know that the mature animal organism is constantly losing particles that have become useless, and replacing them with new ones, by the process of growth and repair. Given proper food and surroundings, why not keep this up forever, why die?

Let us leave this maze of things we know not, and pass to the reasons why such things are. Our explanation will not appeal to any of those who hold that man has no spirit that can exist outside of his body. But it will be received by those

who have opened their eyes, spiritually speaking, and allowed the facts concerning the immortal part of man to get entrance.

Can we prove our theories? Not by purely physical means. Neither can any one prove, in any way, the existence of all pervading ether that scientists talk of. You can say that if the ether exists, it explains certain facts. And if it does not exist, the facts need to be explained some other way. Yet any scientist of the colleges will throw you out of the discussion if you dispute the existence of the ether. And the facts that we now set forth are attested by more evidence by far than the existence of the ether. That which causes any animal to grow and develop, which is really life, is the spirit. This is what enters into the primal germ, and causes it to pursue its course of growth, and development. Chief of all the spirits of earth, and God-like in comparison to all

the rest, is that of man. Individually it has dominion over the mortal body it inhabits. Collectively, it has dominion over all other animals of earth, and a fast increasing dominion over the elements of earth. This is the real life that abides within the body of man, of which the body is but the clothing or abiding place. No, does the spirit of man cease with the dissolution of the body. It still exists, is still an intelligent being, and still takes a fraternal and kindly interest in its fellows that are as yet in earth life. To those who will listen with the ears of the soul, the spirits of those who once trod the paths of earth will still speak. Oh, reader, withdraw sometimes from the distracting circumstances of life in the material world, and open your mind to those who, though dead, yet speak, and see if you do not become convinced that life is not of the body so much as of the soul, and that those we call dead are still alive!

The History of the Earth As Seen In a Psychic Vision

(Continued.)

THE CYCLES OF THE YEARS.

The surface is melted by the heat and the forms changed. It shoots away from the sun, and starts again on its long journey, in obedience to the unerring law that governs its course. As it travels on its trip of eighteen thousand years once more, its inhabitants to go through what we have gone through, only with more intelligence.

It is certainly true that the objective mind of man is now keyed to a point which has never before been equaled. This generation is witnessing wonders of inventive genius which can only be surpassed by the generations of the future.

But, as life becomes more complex and feverish in its activities, it also grows shorter. Children mature earlier in mind and body, reach their prime, and pass into old age and decay before they have lived more than a small fraction of the time which was ordinarily allotted to human life. The tendency to longevity may seem to revive at times, but on the whole the average of human life is certainly growing

shorter, and the race is becoming physically smaller and weaker. In olden times, men lived to be hundreds of years old, and enjoyed a measure of physical strength and power to which we are strangers.

As life grows more brief and concentrated, we see evidence of cumulative intelligence. The child of to-day absorbs a larger measure of knowledge and exerts a keener perceptive power than the child of fifty years ago. His mental food must be given in larger quantities and more rapidly. As the forces of evil have kept pace with those of good, it does not follow that this precocity necessarily results in a higher order of moral or spiritual life. It is merely an additional evidence of the fact that we are approaching that time wherein "the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

Geologists teach us that thousands of years must have been required to give to the earth its present structure. The school boy of this day knows that the continents have been gradually lifted from the water;

that the rivers which were large streams a hundred years ago are small streams now, and that the amount of land is increasing.

Travelers through our Western valleys, like those of the Yellowstone and Yosemite Rivers, have been perplexed by the appearance and texture of the walls of rock, the sides of the gorges and canyons. Could they have seen, as it was my privilege to see, the inevitable transformation of the earth into a ball of fire as it comes into the direct rays of the sun's terrible heat, and the cooling as it shoots off into space, they would not marvel at the wonders of these valleys.

Our little planet is a mere speck in the vast system of worlds which move under the guidance of the great Hand. The comet which is hurled through space appears at regular intervals. Certain stars are visible only once in scores or hundreds of years and they delay their coming not a moment beyond the appointed time. Everything has its time and season, its course to run, yet no atom is destroyed.

Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for a new Heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

ADDENDA.

Since passing through this experience, a great many inquiries have come to me from persons interested in the study of psychic science, as well as from others who view the matter from a negatively critical standpoint. Many of these critics say that they can have no conception of the subconscious state, and do not believe in the reality of such an experience. They believe it to be an ordinary dream state, or a peculiarly nervous condition resulting from some morbid physical cause.

There is a decided difference. In the subjective state the house of clay is really deserted for the time by its immortal tenant. In all times there have been individuals who have proven for themselves the reality of the experience. They have been a blessing or a curse to their age according to the purpose for which they have used their powers. For the past fifteen years I have made use of psychic power in the diagnosis of disease and I know what can be accomplished by its use.

In olden times, subjective intelligence was more active than it is now, because the forces of life were not drained by its conscious powers as they are today. Then the subconscious mind developed first. There was not the excess of hard work, worry and excitement which there is today, and the two minds worked in harmony. The result was long life and health.

After passing through this, as through my former experience, my body was in a strange condition. For a long time after consciousness returned I was unable to move hand or foot. Very slowly my muscular powers were restored, but every detail of the vision was plainly before me. There was not the indistinctness which is common in dreams.

Why should a mere human being—the veriest atom in the universe—doubt the reality of everything which is outside the realm of his little personal experience? If the soul is, ultimately, to be released from the limitations of the physical life, why should it seem unreasonable that, in obedience to some law which we may not understand, it may sometimes experience a temporary release, bringing back to the realms of the conscious the results of its freedom?

The greatest healer and teacher of all times made a continuous use of subjective powers in his work, and he looked forward to a day when there would be a scientific basis upon which his work would rest, and find an accurate understanding in the hearts of man. "When he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."

Blindness of spiritual vision—which in reality is like a wall—is the most real of all the enemies of soul development. It is the limit of finite mind; it gives no proof that there is aught beyond itself. When this is once accepted by the physical brain further growth is impossible until the spiritual germ of life is shocked into a semblance of wakefulness. "Where there is nothing, there is God." Remember this, which is just as true, indeed if one is true the other must be true. Where there is nothing, at the standard of carnal mind and human judgment, there is all that is real life.

The Psychology of Jackie Roosa's Toys

By FELIX J. KOCH.



Put very bluntly, the matter might be said to resolve itself, in the mind of the professional psychologist, to THIS, and no other:

Why is a toy? What's its real, psychological use?

In all nations, in all climes, there are toys for the children, and where toy-makers and toy-dealers are unknown, in the wilds, the little folk take sticks and pebbles and shells and, somehow, make of them toys of their own. Wherefor, after all, the toy is not an artificial product, an outcome of civilization, but something demanded by the very nature of the genus to which all Man belongs.

Why, therefore, to repeat, IS a toy?

At the University of Cincinnati, Professor Slaughter, of the Department of Psychology, has given an interesting explanation of the need of the toy to the young of the race, tracing it to certain distinct characteristics to be found among all peoples and in all places.

To begin with, the use of the toy is as a corollary to that side of the child nature

which the psychologist terms "productive imagination." This form of imagination is one of the essentials of childhood; it predominates at a time when the child is in a period of fancy and one where the real world is overlaid with the products of the imagination.

"This stage of child-nature," he relates, "is at its height at the age of three and a half to five years; decreases toward seven, then remains at a low level until the time of early adolescence. Thence on, it rises again, though to be amused with other things than what we know as toys. It makes one wonder if it represents, in its course, the ages of the development of the race; the experiences the race passed through in its earliest history. For example, there were the ages when the myths had their hold on the early peoples, this epoch may be portrayed again here.

Watch the children with their toys and you find that some of them appear to have substantially no imagination whatever. They search for what Ruskin would have called the "visible fact"—the given toy is the given kind of toy with them, and not a "pretend this or that" at all.

Still, again, the degree of the child's imagination, as exercised with its toys, may vary with the mood of the child. So, within a short time, a little one will turn from devouring fairy-tale booklets and the like, to playing only with the quasi-scientific machines and toys of that hard and fast kind.

More than this, the imagination varies with the temperament, the feeling of the child, for feeling is, after all, the great force behind, and he who would choose a proper toy for a given child, cannot make hasty generalization from children of the given age as a whole, but reckon with the individual feeling here.

Given these facts, and the part of toys in the life of a child is not hard to see: The first step in the growth of productive imagination is the transformation in objects, for the world of objects, for children, is different from the world of objects for adult man; the toy-horse is to their play a REAL horse, and this develops

rapidly, and they draw comparisons from moving objects, toy-trains, to the birds, or they may liken the butterflies to pansies that will fly in the air, and so on. Out of all of which, the play with the toys leads to developing a perception, as it is called, certain groups of experiences, reacting on new experiences, due to association and similarity, thus showing the retention of the previous experience, by which the present one is now being interpreted.

Thus, also, there enters in the personifying element. Children delight to personify their toys—they will tell you that the alphabet blocks are talking. Other children have an underlying belief that the creatures in the toy books may change positions once the page is closed, being thus endowed with form of life, and the like.

Given, then, these basic features of child-psychology and the development of imagination, the hold, *par excellence*, between child and toy, is not rare to find.

Imagination is of two sorts in the child, productive and reproductive. The reproductive implies the revival of images which are copies of sense impressions. In play, the imagination is, necessarily, at almost all times involved, for in what is termed imaginative play the child always tries to realize a fancy.

Fancy, in its own good turn, converts all sorts of objects into other things. The child gets the fancy, first of all, then tries to realize it in its play. That is to say, there comes a fixed idea, which it strives to carry out.

The use of this imagination in play is made independent of all surroundings, often transforming them into an environment fit for the scene to be enacted. Thus, with the proper toys, the ordinary floor becomes a battlefield; a sofa, with a turned-up head, is a most important, pedagogical tool, a "toy" every nursery should possess, since the child's imagination can convert it into so many things.

"Stevenson's Child Poems" give one a foretaste of play as play should be.

This imaginative play, it is patent, however, is at its best when the child is alone. He must be freed from the friendliest interference of mother or nurse, for they are skeptical in this imaginative play and will ask embarrassing questions. So soon,

then, as the child begins playing to *show some one else* something, it ceases to be play, is no longer spontaneous, and turns to acting, exclusively. So again, if the elders prove unsympathetic, they, too, spoil the play!

The child passes out of himself in play, he becomes something else, he pretends to be Robinson Crusoe and the like. But child play differs from animal play in that, while playing, animals always represent themselves, whereas the child always acts the part of someone else and usually this someone in different surroundings from the real ones. Occasionally a child will insist on maintaining such role for a long, long time.

Thus, too, in their play, children will have imaginary companions—practically all children have these at some time, and it is especially true of an only child, such a one will almost always have more such fictitious companions than one with whom there are other children in the family. These companions are consulted and made to do what the child wants, wherefor they seem very real to the child.

Children, again, like to play in more or less remote places, or places which are screened off, under a table and the like. The scene itself is really unimportant, there they will talk to anything, a chair, even, and the like.

Thus, actual surroundings not mattering much, the kind of toys desirable for these, the sort of playthings a child should have, becomes of importance here.

Where a child can have a great many toys, each toy of course stands for a specific thing. It is then made not to stand for anything else but itself. If, however, there be but few toys, these are put to a great number of uses of the imagination.

Wherefor, shapes of toys often determine their psychologic value. Thus, a rocking-horse can only be a horse to the child, and so is really a poorer form of toy than say the sofa, which is adaptable to a thousand uses. Soldiers can only represent soldiers, rather than any number of human forms, and so with other things!

Toys, in brief, to summarize, should, therefore, cultivate the free use of the imagination and yet must be a trifle suggestive of the parts they are to play.

A handful of shells form an ideal toy.

Dolls, too, it will be found, are as characteristic of boy-play as of girls at one time, but with the boy the period does not last as long. Dolls of all kinds are most useful, in that they are in the human form, and so can become a companion, one with whom one can fancy endless roles, one that can be addressed, and, as result, the doll is generally well treated by the child, except in moments of rage, or battering.

Thus the toys bring out imitation and imagination, they present opportunity for the first extension of the child's self and are taken into the child's most intimate confidence, and the child's self-expression, becoming, to it, actual! The child will make the doll live over its owner's own experiences, it will paint the doll, after

its own case of measles and treat it as it had been treated itself.

Girls play most with dolls at the ages of nine to ten. Occasionally the period will run to fourteen or fifteen. Even then they stop largely through sense of shame of it. Boys, too, stop much before because of this sense of shame.

So, doll or whatsoever other toy, is a pedagogical instrument of most vital sort. It must not be too fine, lest the child fear of spoiling it, not too close a representation of some given thing, lest it be that and only that; and of such sort as to entice the fancy to weave round and play, till it develop, far as possible, the imagination of the little one in charge.

Such, then, the ideal toy of the psychologist, at least!

Spiritualism

By KATHARINE LENOX.

The belief that many things really happen, and which point to the continued activity of minds when no longer in the fleshy body, is shared by many estimable people, although there seems to be so much fraud and great credulity among the ranks of those who call themselves Spiritualists that many of us have a strong repugnance to seem to have a common cause with them. Many cultured minds, athirst for knowledge and light on the subject of Spiritualism, are studying for evidence for possible communications with deceased human beings and think that after death conditions are very like the present ones, so that our future state depends upon how we have used our opportunities here. They feel convinced that we do not possess the same sort of body, but our real selves, the real ego, has not gone out of existence. The inquiring mind believes that because we do not actually see things does not mean that they do not actually exist. The electricity in a wire cannot be seen, but we know that it exists in the wire, so although we cannot see spirits, this does not disprove them.

The teaching of modern Spiritualism is that we survive death and that the future life is very much like our present life. Our future condition, the life beyond, depending upon how far we have developed here.

The Spiritualist also believes that the dead are among us. Many prominent men are Spiritualists and are zealous in the cause. Societies exist in all countries, but the greatest interest in the movement is in France and England. A very early writer in France believed in reincarnation, so that the spirits communicating through French mediums teach reincarnation. Many of us, however, although not particularly interested in Spiritualist lore believe in reincarnation, for must we not live through several incarnations for true development and are not some of us great-minded because we have gone through many such phases? And the wondrous geniuses such as Shakespeare, are they not the most developed of all? The poor common-place people who never had any great real thoughts of their own, are they not the undeveloped souls who haven't as yet had their chance?

There has been very much good evidence in Spiritualist phenomena although many skeptics declare them cases of telepathy, but many instances have seemed to exclude telepathy. Disillusioned investigators often claim that the spirits seem to be occupied in mere trivial pursuits and that they ought to give us sublime communications if they give any at all. The stories told of the tiresome tricks of some

spirits, of mysterious knockings in empty rooms, blowing out of candles, etc., are not as we have thought "old wives' tales" merely, but they are the actions of a lower order of spirits. Then there are the malignant ones, who are inimical to men, and who seek to enter the physical body of human beings. These are also those who are friendly to us and who give warnings of possible disasters. "Coming events cast their shadows before" is the belief of clairvoyants and that all events which happen on the physical plane happen first on the astral plane and that they see there the things that are going to happen on this plane.

The orthodox belief is that death is followed by a long sleep, then a resurrection of the body, and that the dead are unable to communicate with us. This is after all rather a comfortless belief. May we not all assume that those who have passed over are still in touch with us. May we not find much solace in theorizing, for there is much truth in the statement of Hamlet, "that there are more things in the world than are dreamed of in philosophy."

There is a comforting and inspiring book called "Our Life After Death." Here

is a résumé of this writer's revelations.

"In passing through what we call death we still continue to live as a conscious personality and that maintaining this conscious personality we enter at once into an Intermediate or Hades-life. Hell, or Hades, being the Intermediate world or state. That there is no break in the continuity in passing from our earth life into the Hades-life. In this Hades-life we shall recognize and be brought into relationship with those we have known in our Earth-life. That there are different spheres in this Hades-life."

These thoughts before us should surely impress upon us the vast importance of cultivating in this life a beautiful character and lofty spirit. This belief also dispels the horror of death which most of us feel and mitigates the pain which a separation from those we love must bring to us.

Spiritualism is still in its infancy. We can only theorize, but when the longing of the soul mounts upwards we realize that "we are more than what we seem," so in the words of Bacon, "Read not to contradict and confute nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."

How to Investigate Spiritualism .

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one, to see how to conduct seances. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experience in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative temperament and preferably of the female sex; the rest of a more positive type. Sit positive and negative alternately, in subdued light, around an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon the upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those

of his neighbors, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Skepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will, may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it is agreeable to all and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If, after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful seance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motion. After some time you will probably find that the move-

ment will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given, as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for no, three for yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the Medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals and ask as the raps become clearer that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room, where they are demonstrably not

produced by any natural means, but avoid any voracious impositions on free communications. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous or even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the Medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing trance-mediumship is one that might disconcert an experienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you may get by the light of reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning Spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity and error, and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wide and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for that which is pure, good and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

Experience at a Trumpet Seance

Letter to the Editor.

Williamsport, Pa.

To the Editor of THE SPIRITUALIST:

I am a recent subscriber to your paper and I feel I would like to relate to your readers the experience we have had in our city with a trumpet medium. One of our people conceived the idea that our old dry bones needed a little stirring up, so he got in communication with Mrs. Helen Moore of New York City. After all the arrangements had been made she said she would be in our city on a certain date. As she was a total stranger to all of us, Mrs. Moore described, through writing, what she would look like, so that the gentleman who was to meet her at the

station would recognize her. Upon the appointed time she arrived. That night a seance was to be held at one of the hotel parlors. She was very tired and worn out and, as the room could not be gotten into the required condition, it was decided to postpone the same until the following night. On seeing Mrs. Moore, I felt sorry to think she was alone in a strange city, so I extended to her an invitation to come to my home and be my guest during the remainder of her stay. She graciously accepted, and I was very much pleased. The following night she gave a seance at my home which was more than satisfactory. The trumpet would come up before our face and hold a con-

versation with us, answer questions, and gave information to a gentleman and his wife upon business matters which were of great importance to them. One of my friends came and sang through the trumpet in a soprano voice, it being as clear as a bell. If the friends could not be understood through the trumpet, they would speak in an independent voice so that every one in the room could understand. The results of that evening's seance soon became noised about, and Mrs. Moore was besieged by people coming to make arrangements to hold seances at different homes; every night was filled. The results at all of the seances were most wonderful and the greatest satisfaction given. During the early part of her stay many of the sitters would ask Dr. James, her managing influence, many scientific questions, so it was decided that, before the psychic should take her departure, one night would be set aside for the answering of scientific questions, and the patrons were asked to prepare their questions in their

minds in advance. The night set was Friday, and by eight o'clock the large parlor was packed to capacity with intelligent people ready to propound the questions. The seance was opened in the usual form, prayer and singing, several spirits singing through the trumpet, then personal friends took up some time talking to their friends. The doctor then said he was now ready for the questions. For one hour and a half questions of all descriptions were propounded, and the doctor never faltered or hesitated in the answer of one. The verdict of every one as they shook Mrs. Moore by the hand, to wish her a safe journey home, was "I am more than pleased." Among her patrons were attorneys, physicians, business men and earnest and sincere people, who were seeking for the truth.

Arrangements are being made to have her with us again for a longer stay in the very near future and we are all looking forward to that time with great anticipation.
Mrs. M. J. Jobson.

Psychic Phenomena: Does A Spirit Project Itself?

At a recent gathering of the International Club of Psychical Research, the members, who are well known in society and the professions, gathered together in a room overlooking Piccadilly, London, and told stories of extraordinary happenings, of wierd hauntings and of things strange and most unaccountable, says the *London Observer*.

Lady Muir Mackenzie related that of a missionary in Mauritius who was known to Sir Harry Johnston. He had managed to convert one of the native chiefs, and after a time left for Australia. One day there was a knock at the door and to his surprise in walked the chief, who begged him to read the communion service and certain prayers.

It was not until the chief left that he began to wonder how he could have got there. He wrote to his friends in Mauritius, and they replied that after he left the chief went to the bad, was arrested, and was hanged the same day as that on which his ghost appeared to him in Australia.

Most of the ghosts of which we heard

were seen at night, but Mrs. Irwin described a daylight ghost.

Her grandfather, she said, had an old farmhouse in Worcestershire. Near it was the manor house, in which lived Captain Preedy and his sister. Miss Preedy disliked the lady whom her brother had married, and some time after her death sardonic laughter used to be heard in various parts of the house. The servants began to complain that some one pulled the clothes off their beds at night, and after a while Miss Preedy herself was seen in broad daylight, dressed as she used to dress in life, with a mob cap and lace round her shoulders.

When the ghost approached Mrs. Preedy on the stairs or in the rooms it had the disagreeable habit of bursting out laughing. Sometimes it would be seen looking out of a bedroom window, and it was in this position that Mrs. Irwin herself saw it.

A clergyman was called in to lay the ghost, but his ministrations had no effect. The ghost continued to haunt the old manor house until Mrs. Preedy left.

"That shows," remarked Miss Scat-cherd, who presided over the gathering, "that, as Mr. Stead has said to me since he passed over, hatred as well as love is a compelling force in psychic phenomena."

A haunted house in Bristol was the subject of a story by Elliott O'Donnell.

For many years the house stood empty. Mr. O'Donnell interviewed the family who once lived there, and they told him that one of the phenomena was that of a servant with flaming red hair, whom three members of the house had seen in the kitchen. A friend visited the house with him one night, but they were disappointed; nothing was seen.

Three nights later Mr. O'Donnell went to the house alone with a dog. After waiting for some time he heard footsteps coming up the stairs of the empty house and saw a big, whitish light.

As the footsteps came nearer he saw first the head of a woman and then the rest of her body. The figure corresponded exactly with that which had been seen by the former occupants of the house—just an ordinary looking servant with very red hair.

The figure passed him very slowly, went upstairs and vanished. His dog was very uneasy all the time and he himself confessed to a feeling of panic.

An Indian experience of a headless man was given by Mrs. Buck.

"It was race week," she said, "in a large military station in the north of India. My father and mother having a great number of guests, it made it necessary for my sister and I to share the same room, our beds being placed two feet apart.

"One night we came home very late from a ball. To my horror, as I lay in bed, not knowing whether my sister was asleep or awake, and being too terrified to speak, I heard a sort of uneven footstep crossing the room, and I was just able to define an awful sort of hunchback figure coming from the bathroom toward our beds. It was like a pair of legs and a great hump, which, arriving at the foot of the beds, came gradually up the narrow opening between them."

Mrs. Buck got more and more terrified, but presently the awful figure disappeared,

and she was relieved to hear her sister ask if she had seen anything. Her sister had been lying awake and seeing it, too, but was unable to speak.

At breakfast next morning, while relating their experience, they noticed two of the servants exchanging glances. Their father wanted to brush the story aside as rubbish, but it soon appeared that the servants knew all about the ghost and had seen it frequently. It was that of a man who had had his head hacked off by an enemy, and his ghost still haunted the house and went about without a head, filling the bath at night and doing other work to which in life he had been accustomed.

In the smoking room, after the stories had been told, one or two members remained to find an explanation of the phenomena.

One of them recalled a story which left a great impression on F. W. H. Myers. It was that of a citizen of London, well known to his friend Edmund Gurney, who, after reading an author who treats of the power of the human will, determined with the whole force of his being to be present in spirit, and if possible perceptible, to two sisters of his acquaintance. They were aged twenty-five and eleven, and lived about three miles off. Without mentioning his intention of trying such an experiment, he decided to appear to them at 1 o'clock in the morning, and at that hour projected his mind toward them with great force.

"Besides exercising my power of volition very strongly," he said, "I put forward an effort I cannot find words to describe. I was conscious of a mysterious influence of some sort permeating my body, and had a distinct impression that I was exercising some force with which I had been hitherto unacquainted, but which now I can at certain times set in motion at will."

A day or two afterward he called on the two sisters, but kept silent about what he had done. They, on their part, had intended to keep silent, too, but their resolution gave way, and they told their friend that at 1 o'clock on Monday morning they had seen his phantom. The elder girl was awake, but the younger one was asleep.

Upon seeing the apparition, which was in evening dress, the former aroused the latter, who saw it also. The gas was burning low, and the phantasm was clearer than a material figure would have been. Both sisters were much terrified.

The same man appeared once again to the elder sister at a time agreed upon between him and Edmund Gurney. He succeeded upon this occasion also, but the percipient was so shocked that he had to relinquish the experiments.

The question then arose that if a living

man can thus project an image of himself to a distance, why should not a departed spirit do the same? This, it is thought, would give a rational explanation of ghosts. Such, indeed, is the explanation given by Myers.

[The editor would be pleased to receive personal experiences of psychic phenomena from readers for publication in THE SPIRITUALIST. Any reader who does not wish his or her name to be published should make a request to that effect.]

Message Department

We have secured the valuable services of Mrs. H. Morris, Medium, New York.

Acknowledgments should be sent to this office.

Charlotte, N. C.

S. M. Crowell.

Dear Sam:

A long time has passed since I have been over on this side and yet it seems such a short time indeed, but as we do not measure time we cannot tell. We have found so many wonderful and beautiful things here that you do not wonder that we do not want to come back on the earth again to live. All of our cares and sorrows are at an end and all we need to think of is to help ourselves spiritually. We must work out our own sins, for there is no one to do it for us. We want to help you as much as we can, for you have many unpleasant things to come into your life. Jackson and Maggie send their love to you, and John R. Morris says he wants to be remembered. With much love

A. S. Crowell.

Boston, Mass.

Maggie Butler.

My dear Mother:

I am going to give you a surprise by sending you a letter. I know you welcome us no difference how we come to

you. We have been closer to you than usual here of late, for we felt you needed us so much more. We will never forsake you, no difference what happens. Be of good cheer, mother. We are all with you. With much love Anna Danaforth.

I do hope this will reach Leila Silverwood, for I know it would please her so much. This is only to give you the assurance that we are still with you in all you do and to give you encouragement so that you may not feel the burdens so much. It is our pleasure and our duty to give you a helping hand, for there are so many things which come up to perplex you, but when you feel us around you the feeling of strength comes to you and you can go on. Arthur P. is here with me and he always stays near you in all you do. Aunt Alice wants to be remembered to you. With much love J. S. Kirth.

We come with the hopes that this will reach our father Charles Loffler, of Wheeling, W. Va., for we want to make his heart glad. We were children when we came over on this side, but we have grown just the same and are matured spirits now. We are in such a beautiful land that we would not want to change our life. When we look on the earth and see the many trials you have we feel so sorry

that we are not able to help you any more than we do, but there is always some way out of difficulties. Always give us your best thoughts and we will stay close to you. Nellie sends her love to you.

George Loffler.

I send this with the hope that it reaches Margaret Zorat of Chicago, Ill. We have come many times to send a letter in this way, but were not successful until now. If you could but see the large number of friends who want to have a line sent to their friends, you would be astonished. I have been with you much here of late trying to guide you in the best way you should go. We want to do all we can for you and make you know that we are just as much alive now as we ever were, and that we see many things in an altogether different light to what we once did. Cousin Dora Mathison sends her love to you and Uncle Hans Jacobson says he wants to be remembered. And J. T. is here also. With much love

Helen Thomas.

Acknowledgment of messages are given through the mediumship of Mrs. H. Morris, of New York City, in our message department:

1926 Reed St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:

I acknowledge the correctness in every particular of a spirit message through Mrs. H. Morris, Medium, that appeared in the columns of this month's (January) magazine.

Please thank the medium for me, and tell her she has helped me greatly to hear from father, mother and husband.

Ophelia A. Reason.

Many, many bridges cross the river of your life in its advance. If they are well built, enduring and harmonic, they reach you from God—the source of your river—while you stand far down the stream. Although the current flows toward you and you must advance slowly, at each bridge stands a band of teachers or guides whose strength is sufficient to bear you onward and upward from the bridge on which you stand to the one above them all.

* * *

Voices From Beyond

Shall we listen to the voices
Of our friends across the way?
Shall we listen, heed and profit
By advice bestowed each day?

They have known the joys and sorrows
That come to us, each one;
Of pleasure, pain and anguish
That follow with the sun.

Ours is the narrow vision,
Theirs the brighter way,
From the radiance of the glory
That shines from One alway.

Can we doubt their interest in us?
Their wish to help us on our way?
To light our burdens, counsel,
Cheer us day by day?

Let us then with hearts of gladness,
Keep up courage—struggle on,
Till at last, our conflict over,
We pass the border—Victory won.

F. E. S.

* * *

The Year Lives

The year is glad and bright and new,
Peace, Power and Plenty reign;
The good and true are here in view,
Man's best is first again.

The year is full and firm and strong,
Truth, Love and Light are ours;
The heart's glad song swells loud and long,
Joy's balm fills well the hours.

The year of Trust, of Hope, of Cheer,
Health, Wealth, Prosperity
The things most dear are always near,
Hearts strong as hearts should be.

The year for you and me and all,
Rich, Fruitful Bounty gives;
What e'er befall, the cheerful call
We'll sound *The New Year Lives.*
John W. Ring.

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