

The Harbinger of Light

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A MONTHLY DIGEST DEVOTED TO
Psychical Research, Spiritualism, and
Spiritual Philosophy

*"Dawn Approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall
hail the day."*

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"The Harbinger of Light" is the recognised exponent of the SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY for the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand, and the only recording organ of the multifarious forms of PSYCHIC PHENOMENA, which are to-day astounding mankind in almost every portion of the Globe. It is, in fact, the only Magazine of the kind published in the Southern Hemisphere and has, literally, a world-wide circulation.

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SPIRITUALISM AND ITS TEACHINGS

THE principles and teachings of Spiritualism, as set forth in "The Harbinger of Light," Adelaide, may be summarised as follow:—

- 1.—That God is the Universal Spirit, in whom men, and other created things, live and move and have their being.
- 2.—That the Christ was the highest, divinest, and most perfect expression of the God-head ever manifested in human form, and that the object of His mission was to exhibit to mankind the example of a pure and spotless life, so that all men might be "saved," not from the consequences of deliberately-committed sin, BUT FROM COMMITTING SIN AT ALL!
- 3.—That death is not a cessation of life, but a mere change of condition.
- 4.—That man is a responsible being, even while encased in flesh.
- 6.—That those who have passed on are conscious—not asleep—and that their personal identity is maintained.
- 7.—That communication between the living and the "dead" has been scientifically proved.
- 8.—That there is a Light (Divine Life) that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.
- 9.—That as a flower gradually unfolds in beauty, so the soul of man continues to unfold and develop after earth-life in the spheres beyond.
- 10.—That there is hope and salvation in the next life for even the most sinful, and that the life in spirit is a life of progress towards fellowship with God the Father of all.
- 11.—That Spiritualism destroys the fear of death, which it regards as the portal to a higher and more spiritual phase of life.
- 12.—That prayer is a potent force for the uplifting of friends within the veil, and also for bringing ourselves into tune with the Infinite.

WE EXTEND TO ALL OUR
READERS, CONTRIBUTORS AND
SUPPORTERS
HEARTY GOOD WISHES
FOR THE NEW YEAR.

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Whither Bound ?

By Marcella de Cou Hicks

WILL it shock you to be told that although we are on our way, we have no destination in the sense of having a place or a condition where we definitely arrive? To definitely arrive would be to stop; to make no further progress. We are on an endless journey out of the infinite past into the limitless future, this earth life being merely one of the transient stop-overs on our eternal way.

We have objectives—purposes to accomplish—ideals to attain along our path of progress, of course, and having reached them, greater attainments ever beckon us on into the future and to the expenditure of greater effort. After each goal-post is passed we go on to bigger things, world without end.

Thus the thing most worth while is not any especial accomplishment or victory in itself but

the eternal journey and the panorama it unfolds—what it shows us, teaches us, makes of us along the way. There is no “journey’s end.” In the line of infinite progression we never “stay put” or stop on the same level for very long. To do so would be to degenerate—to retrogress. There is no such a thing as remaining stationary. We either move ahead or go backwards.

A man may work for many years, realizing most of his ambitions and achieving most of his objectives with the end in view that having attained a coveted goal he will retire to “enjoy life.” The goal having become reality, he does retire—but does he “enjoy life?” This is what usually happens: Unless in his retirement he proceeds along some new line of growth, progress, improvement or development—setting for himself new goals to reach—he inevitably loses interest in life, begins to stagnate, his faculties begin to wane, his perceptions grow dull from disuse, and not infrequently, he dies “before his time” because his incentive to live is gone.

The purpose of life is LIVING. Doing, being, creating, experiencing; finding one’s self, one soul’s identity; digging out a complete self-awareness. Likewise the Journey of Life itself, no matter what it brings of joy or sorrow, poverty or riches, disgrace or fame, is sufficient reason for human existence because it provides mortal man with the measuring stick by which to truly estimate his own ego—his own worth.

If humanity could but realize that this transient earth life is but the most fleeting stop-over on our journey from everlasting to everlasting, greater effort would be directed toward the cultivation of beauties of mind and soul—greatness of spirit. And there would be less frantic struggling to attain wealth or fame or prominence. Man would be grateful for just the privilege of living, whatever vicissitudes life might bring him and he would use the span of his earthly sojourn as an educational period during which to prepare his spirit for its transition.

Orthodoxy teaches that according as life is lived, some definite end is attained at death—definitely Heaven or Hell. In other words, at death, we either dawdle forever in bliss, or suffer forever in torment. How any mortal can revere a God so cruel as to mete out ETERNAL PUNISHMENT to any soul for anything whatever is a mystery that has no solution. And the truth is so diametrically opposite to this hideous concept as to make such a belief utterly puerile.

The purpose of our existence here and **HEREAFTER** is that of perpetual growth, ever increasing in knowledge and in graciousness of spiritual attributes. A continuous progress towards perfection in all phases of being—never, never, attaining to **ALL** that can be learned; never, never, attaining to **ALL** that may be accomplished, but on and on and on—world without end.

Whither are we bound? Into infinity!

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMSHIP

By the Rev. Loui A. Ward.

"The recognition of the things you desire, the forming of your definite purposes, establishes a condition as automatically chemical in its action as establishing the arrangements of any other chemical process, such as the release of gases or carbonisation of flame, or the boiling of water. It immediately starts toward the fulfillment of the desire in proportion to the strength, fervour and persistence of your effort toward it."

The above quotation is taken from Stewart Edward White's "Across the Unknown." While recognising that the mission of Spiritualism has been and is to establish and bring to the world the fact of the continuity of life, which has been done so ably, in spite of the handicaps, the great difficulties which prejudice inflicted and the opponent who was so certain that some new "ism" arisen must be quickly disposed of, to say nothing of "our fool friends," but all these and divers others have been met and successfully overcome.

As we know to-day, we have forced the recognition of the scientific world whose investigation and records fill volumes, and the thinking world no longer questions the possibility of not only the phenomena of Spiritualism, but is embracing its splendid philosophy, which is proving to be a practical, sane, and rational way of life.

These great truths that have filtered through have softened the utterances of pulpit and press, and as man has been able to apply them, he has found greater freedom and the principles of life re-

vealing untold beauty that invites further research and investigation, which has brought to light and understanding another statement made lucid by the "Invisibles" in "Across the Unknown."

"When a person says something true he isn't saying anything he invented. He just gives a certain shape and character to it, that's all. You can't invent truth. Anything that's truth, even if it seems suddenly true, was always true. One of the things you've got to get rid of is the idea that truth was invented by, or belongs to anybody in particular."

Certainly the facts we have gleaned along our way are for our use to further our development, broaden our scope and vision. Our spirit teachers have told us repeatedly through the years, and we find the investigators as early as 1843 to 1850-53 transcribing the teachings of the "Invisibles", and "they" have reiterated the fact that these facts we are discovering have always been. They bear a perfect naturalness and relationship to all things. How our states of mind attract to us the experiences of life, and we begin to see (perhaps somewhat vaguely as yet) the complete wholeness of life, visible and invisible, no line of demarkation anywhere.

In this recognition of the oneness, one is brought to see, as far as the individual is concerned, that he is the centre of all he hopes for or aspires to. Mr. White says: "This quality is not much recognised." Actually it is just the sureness of your belief in the existence of this greater force, active within man. This is the principal thing to begin with, and he says further: "All this is an effort to

establish us firmly in the spiritual so we can utilise its greater powers in doing the physical things we see are worth doing. This definite belief in a force assisting our best efforts, and our reckoning on its unfailing help; the establishment of this principle of the constructive, directive, forward movement which we call evolution. This condition of faith (or confidence) must at some time or other in our progression be permanently accepted by our united being.

“It is a magic touch-stone, making positive our efforts, instead of negating them constantly with doubts and waverings. There is only one important proviso. We cannot depend on this law to accomplish anything more than the complement of our own efforts. One must depend on oneself to build one’s aspirational column, knowing that at the highest stretch of one’s hopes and efforts a capital will be placed beyond one’s power to conceive.”

All these directions can be used or applied, and they become active only when we use them, thereby making them work, and this use of these faculties should be, and can be, as natural and practical as anything else we do, and just as effective.

“The emphasis in nearly all spiritual instruction is in going apart to seek, and the technique of the next sequence, the creative use of it, is often left out. A belief is not a possession unless you demonstrate its workability.” We come again to the statement quoted at the head of this article.

In our opinion, “Across the Unknown” is one of the very finest books of instruction on the development of mediumship, improvement, which is true development. —“The National Spiritualist.”

THE HYPNOTIC SUBJECT

In reply to a correspondent, a contemporary writes:—

That a hypnotic subject is under the absolute control of the operator is not true. Many things in hypnotic experiments have proved this. The subject may be influenced to do many things disagreeable to him personally, but there is always a point, dependent on the character of the subject, beyond which he will not pass. If he is honest he will not consent to commit an actual theft. If he is humane he will not be influenced to cruelty. In other words, the will of the subject does not cease to operate in the hypnotic trance. Examples of this could be quoted if necessary. As to the dangers of hypnotism, these arise generally from the same causes of danger which reside in everything else—excess and abuse. Thus, excess use of one subject may bring about a weakening of his will. It is well to remember that there is a good deal of hypnotism in everyday life, as seen in the countless examples of the influence of a strong will over the weaker ones. True, it is not called hypnotism, but in principle it is practically the same process as that employed in hypnotism proper. The chief difference is that in the one case we have a general operation of mental forces, and in the other a special and deliberate one.

“The discovery of what is true, and the practise of what is good, are the two most important objects in life.”—Voltaire.

THE CHRISTMAS WAY

Let us for once ask leave of good John Bunyan to transpose the accent of his tale's closing sentence; its essential truth will remain unimpaired, while the altered emphasis may better meet our immediate need. Looking beyond the River, the Dreamer tell us, he saw close to the entrance to the Celestial City a path leading to the bottomless pit. Being where we are and what we are, surrounded by a world-shadow of which the darkness of wintry days is but too apt a symbol, our hope of "Peace on Earth" barely creeping along like a bird with broken wing, the case surely calls for encouragement rather than for warning. Let us, therefore, with the great Puritan's permission, turn his grave thought into a sweet gospel for the sorely tried; let us say that even from the gates of hell there may be a way to heaven.

Such a way is the Christmas way. Not that it need be nor is confined to one brief season of the year, nor linked only to a special part of the Christian tradition. Good soldiers of Jesus Christ shall be forgiven if, like Nelson's sailors (as the story goes), they modestly protest against a day-signal that seems somewhat to disparage them. "This day," forsooth, "does England expect!" But have they not been faithful at their post all the days? There certainly are people, everybody knows some, who are habitually kindly, constant in love and mercy, cheerfully and even mirthfully obedient in the duty to which it has pleased God to call them. Yet these also can doubtless put on an added grace

and courtesy at such a time, or at least experience a new degree of heart's delight in being good to all around them. As for the rest of us, who may have to confess that the workaday world not seldom tends to draw us into its own drab disposition, we may rejoice in a season that not only provides an excuse but brings a demand for putting on the soul's beautiful garments.

Here are the two ways before us all—the hard, ungenerous, self-isolating way, the way of the Old Adam with his crude appetites and cruel passions; and here also, close beside it, brought so close to-day that one step suffices to place us in it, the way of the Christ, man in his measure become divine, tenderly affectioned to all, and especially pitiful to those who are infirm or immature in body or in spirit, bountiful in loving kindness, liberal-handed, strong in gentleness, a sort of manly music incarnate. To have any clear view of this winsome Christmas way is at once to wish it ours; to resolve heartily that as the great day approaches this happier way shall be ours, is the first step to festival wisdom; to be found using well the opportunities of our holidays, longer or shorter as these may be, is wisdom attained. There will invite us hours of sacred thanksgiving, in good fellowship please God—if not, in memory-lightened sanctuaries of quite thought. There will be genial greetings of words spoken, written, or flashed through smiling eyes; and, for the rest, let us hope everyone, young and old, will find some specially appropriate interest and diversion, the toy, the book, music, pictures, games—and, especially, the open air awhile and commerce with brave, brisk nature, the grandest playfellow

of all. Even those private griefs of which the heart knows, though the lip be silent, may point us the more surely along the path to that Peace in the Master's prayer, made ours, "Thy will be done." Who, being mortal, would let the Christmas way lie untrod, its priceless opportunities unused? Who, being immortal, would use them without a song in his secret soul, grateful for the loves that bless these transient years?



CHRISTMAS IN HONG KONG

(From an article by Jan Hendrik Marsman, in Saturday Evening Post. The writer escaped from Hong Kong after six weeks as a prisoner of the Japanese.)

That Christmas Eve began the saddest procession I have ever seen. It would have torn the heart out of any but a Jap. From eight o'clock in the morning until four o'clock that afternoon, without a drop of water or a bite of food, helpless young children, exhausted and ailing young mothers, the aged and infirm, we all marched over the mountainous trails bisecting Hong Kong Island to the Victoria Harbour side. It was a twelve-mile walk along the trails we took, but neither time nor distance tells the story of the anguish of that march to a Calvary made in Japan.

After a pause, we were kicked into motion, and descended the hillside to the Tai Koo light plant at the east end of Hong Kong City.

"Please can't you give us some water, at least, for the children?" I asked a lieutenant.

His lips curled into a smile, and his eyes looked hate as he shook his head and said, "No, no English water here."

At nightfall we were put into a paint factory on the water-front.

Shells were bursting all around us, and fragments spattered our building. We herded the faint, footsore and parched women and children into the main centre-staircase well, enclosed by a steel frame, for safety. There they slept in an uneasy heap throughout the night. "Silent night, holy night! . . . Peace on earth goodwill toward men."

Around 8 p.m. the Japs brought us water in dirty pails, and badly cooked rice mixed with brown hulls and water in a kind of gruel, also in buckets. We passed the water round in tin cans, and a few bowls and pots we had found in the place. That was the only food and water any of us had that Christmas Eve.

Next day a Jap officer tramped through, shouting, "Everybody line up outside!"

As soon as we did, we were hurried along to barges and ferried to the Kowloon side. On the barges we had our Christmas dinner. Water, tins of crackers, and quantities of hard tack—all looted from shops and stores of Hong Kong—were passed around. That was all.

We were packed tightly into a few big open trucks and taken to the Kowloon Hotel, on Hankow Road, our prison for the next month.

All of the 150 of us were kept on the fourth floor of the hotel. As English residents from the

outskirts of Kowlow were picked up they were pushed into the twenty rooms we shared.

We had to reshuffle room-mates frequently. During one such change, the young mother of a year-old baby was left alone in a small room with her child, through no fault of her own. That night, her clothes torn, and her face distorted with horror, her baby in one arm, she rushed in and threw herself at my feet. There she fainted. I lifted the baby from her, and finally brought her back to consciousness with a little water. She quaked with hysterical weeping. For long minutes I tried in vain to calm her.

The next morning I described the rape in writing in a formal protest, and gave it to the Japanese lieutenant in charge of the guard, for delivery to the commanding officer. I never heard anything more about it, and when I asked questions, received only empty stares.

New prisoners brought us more detailed reports of the Japanese torture, rape and murder of civilians on Hong Kong Island proper, even after Sir Mark Young had surrendered to Tokio's generals.



“For freedom, we know, is a thing that we have to conquer afresh for ourselves, every day, like love; and we are always losing freedom, just as we are always losing love, because, after each victory, we think we can now settle down and enjoy it without further struggle. . . . The battle of freedom is never done, and the field never quiet.”—From “Essays in Freedom,” by Henry W. Nevinson.

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS OF OTHER LANDS

By Marjorie Steynor.

Christmas, Noel, Weihnachts, Navidad, Natale—whatever name we give it, is the happiest and most joyful season of the year. Christmas Eve, that night of magic and mystery, when we are told even the tongues of the animals are loosed, all have the gift of speech, and oxen and asses kneel at midnight. A night of magic for children, and of mystery for devout Christians the world over.

The exact date of the birth of Christ is unknown. Some branches of the Church celebrate it in May, others in January. The final choice is probably due to the general recognition that the winter solstice is the turning-point of the year for the Northern Hemisphere. All Nature then seems to prepare for a fresh period of life and activity after the winter sleep of death.

The ancient Romans celebrated the winter solstic on December 25, and this probably influenced the early Church. Many beliefs and customs of this period have been handed down to our times, and crept into Christian use. The Roman gladiatorial games at this season have a modern parallel in football matches, which vast crowds attend at Christmas time. The custom of presenting gifts to friends also dates back to the time of ancient Rome.

The Traditional Christmas of Lights.

In the Northern Hemisphere, Christmas is a season of frost and cold, and the blazing hearth is the centre of family festivities. The lights and candles,

so necessary to brighten the dark, short days of mid-winter, are successors to the Jewish Feast of Lights, and in Christian use represent the Light of the World.

The Yule log, Christmas tree and decorations of evergreen are all pre-Christian in origin, and date back to the time of tree worship. Often the Yule log was the trunk of a whole tree, and was carefully selected some months beforehand and brought home with much ceremony. It was then lighted with a brand of the log of the previous year, and carefully kept burning throughout the twelve days of the festival.

The Christmas tree, that familiar and beautiful sight in our homes and churches, was introduced into England by the Prince Consort from Germany, where it is erected in every home, rich and poor, even when there are no children in the family.

In England, Christmas would hardly be Christmas without decorations of holly, ivy, mistletoe and rosemary. Holly is a symbol of the Burning Bush, and the sharp prickles and blood-red berries remind us of our Saviour's Crown of Thorns.

Of Mistletoe.

The romantic mistletoe is a relic of Druid worship. It was cut at this time by the chief Druid clad in white robes and carrying a golden sickle. The mistletoe was then thought so sacred that if enemies met beneath it in the woods they used to lay down their weapons and declare peace until the next day. So there grew up a practice of hanging a sprig of mistletoe over the doorway of every house to show that peace and friendship was expected of all who

entered. The mistletoe was also the all-healing physic of the Druids.

The custom of kissing under the mistletoe seems to be particularly English, as the following verses would suggest:

“When you catch a maid beneath the mistletoe,
You must kiss her, whether she be friend or foe;
For a Druid superstition sends a fellow to perdition
If he will not kiss beneath the mistletoe.”

Rosemary is said to have had no perfume until Our Lady hung the little shirt of her Divine Son on a rosemary bush to dry.

Of the Bells.

“The Ringing Island” was the name given to England long ago, because of the constant ringing of church bells. At no time of the year was the custom more prevalent than at Christmas time. The ringing began long before December 25, and was repeated at frequent intervals until Candlemas Day, the fortieth day after Christmas. There is a widespread custom of ringing the bells at midnight, for on the stroke of twelve Christ is said to have been born. For an hour before, the bell was tolled as for a dying person. This was known as Old Lad’s Bell, “Old Lad” being a name for the Devil, whose power was broken when Christ was born. Then, at the stroke of midnight, the bells rang out a joyous peal.

The Spirit of “Christmas Present.”

Long ago the angels brought the message of peace and goodwill to the watching shepherds, and still, in all the towns and villages in England carol

singers bring the Christmas greetings to the watching and waiting world.

For children of all Nations the Christmas spirit takes concrete shape in the form of Father Christmas, St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, Pere Noel, Knecht Clobes, etc. In the English-speaking world he is a benevolent old gentleman, clad in a crimson coat, and carrying on his back an immense sack of toys which he empties into the stockings of good children. He travels in a sleigh drawn by reindeer. In France the children place their wooden shoes (sabots) on the hearth, and Father Christmas (Bonhomme Noel) makes his rounds on a donkey, accompanied by the unpopular Pere Fouettard (Father Whipper). This unwelcome visitor carries a basket of birch rods on his back, and leaves one of these little whips for every child who has been naughty during the previous year. This, at least, is the theory; but though I have spent many Christmas seasons in different parts of France, I have never once heard of an authentic case of a child discovering a birch rod in his sabot on Christmas morning, instead of finding it filled to overflowing with presents and bon bons.

In Brittany, that charming province of France, where faith and fable meet, Pere Noel and the Enfant Jesus walk hand in hand on Christmas Eve dispensing gifts.

Among the Nations.

In Holland, Christmas Day is devoted to church rites and family gatherings. It is on the Feast of St. Nicholas (December 6) that that worthy saint descends to earth in person, clad in his bishop's robes, mitre and crozier. Unlike the shy spirit of

other countries, St. Nicholas visits each household in person with gifts, and is very candid with his criticisms. If a child has misbehaved during the previous year he is sure to hear about it, and the parents are advised as to the best way of dealing with the delinquent.

In Spain, presents are exchanged on the Feast of the Epiphany (Tres Reyes). Children place their shoes on the window sill, and at midnight the Three Kings ride by on white horses, and fill them with presents.

In Russia, in former years, the peasants would leave the door unlatched on Christmas Eve, a meal was placed on the table, and a bright fire kindled for the Holy Family in case they passed by seeking shelter.

In Italy the charming custom of the Visit of the Bambino (the Child Jesus) is still observed. This custom is mentioned by Axel Munthe in his world-famous Story of San Michele. The image of the Holy Babe is reverently lifted from his manger in the village church, and carried with much pomp to the house of a greatly esteemed citizen. The family clad in their best await the arrival, and a room decorated with flowers, evergreens, and candles, is prepared. Members of the family take turns to watch over the cradle, and to receive a visit from the Bambino is regarded as the greatest honour.

The Christmas Crib.

The Christmas crib, that familiar and beautiful sight in the churches and many homes of the Old World, originated in Italy. St. Francis of Assisi, most Christ-like of all the Christian saints, conceived

the idea of erecting a representation of the scene of Bethlehem to make Christmas more real for the villagers at Greccio, in Umbria. St. Joseph and Mother Mary were represented by real persons, and they knelt in adoration before a figure of the Holy Child in a manger, whilst a real ox and a real ass were tethered close by.

In Continental countries, beautiful little cribs are erected in many houses, those in Bavaria being exceptionally interesting, with lovely little figures carved at Ober-Ammergau (village of the famous Passion play). Often the Holy Family, modelled in marzipan, adorn the Christmas cake, and in France the *Enfant Jesus*, in pink sugar, and reclining in a chocolate sabot, is on sale in all the confectioners' shops.

In Brittany the peasants pay daily visits to the Christmas crib, and many elaborate tableaux of the Nativity are erected in the ancient churches.

Whilst living in Brittany I was greatly fascinated by the performance of a mechanical angel who presided over the box for the poor (*Pour les pauvres*) close by the crib. As one dropped a coin into a slot the angel would bow, play a few bars on a mechanical instrument, and then make another deep bow as the coin rattled down into the box. This angel was a great favourite, and "*Les pauvres*" must have benefited considerably.

The "Boy Bishop."

The custom of electing a boy bishop on St. Nicholas Day was observed in England until 1542, and in Spain until 1797. It was also observed both in France and Switzerland. The chosen boy was

dressed in full bishop's robes, exercised authority over his comrades, and was escorted to church, where he presided as bishop during the service. On Holy Innocents' Day (December 28) he preached the sermon, pronounced the blessing, and then his brief rule came to an end. Should he die during his term of office he was buried with the same honours as a real bishop. The tomb of one of these boy bishops is still to be seen in Salisbury Cathedral.

In former days the Christmas festivities continued throughout the twelve days of the festival, culminating with great merry-making on Twelfth Night, the eve of Epiphany. Nowadays they are confined to Christmas and Boxing Day only. In England the observance of Christmas was forbidden by Act of Parliament in 1644, but Charles II revived the feast at the Restoration.

So universal and so deep-rooted has our Christmas become that it would indeed be a brave Parliament that would dare to forbid it, for family life itself would have to be abolished first, as Christmas is pre-eminently the festival of the family.

—"The Queenslander."



What we call time is but a span between two eternities, the eternity of whence and whither. Time measures duration, or the succession of events, and is therefore related to the realm of phenomena, and has no existence in the realm of the noumenal, that state where it is recognised that "the past and the time to be are one, and both are now."

GETTING USED TO CHRISTMAS

By Dr. C. Irving Benson
(Abridged.)

It is a terrible thing to get used to Christmas. The bane of life is in getting used to things. We can get used to life and love and light until the wonder wanes and the glory fades.

When December comes we say, "Hullo, Christmas is here," and go through with it. Of course, we try to do something for others, but a tremendous lot of us have come to think that no new thing can happen at Christmas.

Christmas comes quicker than it used to do. The calendar has not shrunk, but as we grow older the days seem to accelerate their speed and flash past as if shod with lightning. That is enough to make us take Christmas seriously. We might well pray: "So teach us to number our Christmasses that we may make the most of them."

Of course, we treat Christmas-time abominably. If I were a cartoonist I should draw a double panel picture at this time. There would be a picture of one of those simple, weather-beaten Bethlehem shepherds sitting at the camp-fire. His cloak would have fallen from his head, and his uplifted face would be all lit and listening.

The other would portray a modern man lying on his back like a big Babe in the Wood, almost snowed over with Christmas cards, geese, turkeys, invitations to parties, crackers, parcels—and, of course, bills!

The Christmas spirit is lost amid the Christmas symbols.

There is a deadening power in familiarity. The thing we see very often we end by not seeing at all. The rarest sight continually seen is gradually stripped of all its grace, and we move about it uninspired and unawed. Browning warns us in his "Paracelsus" how the priceless ministries of love may be taken for granted until it is too late:

'Tis only when they spring to heaven that angels
Reveal themselves to you; they sit all day
Beside you, and lie down at night by you
Who care not for their presence, muse or sleep,
And all at once they leave you, and you know them!
We are so fooled, so cheated.

Strange it is that we should grow so dull that we need death to open our eyes to the glory that lies nearest. That is the tragedy of living.

Downright Goodwill

We greet our friends heartily at Christmas; but do we learn that downright goodwill without which there can never be an increase of peace on earth? Amiability is not the same as goodwill. Goodwill is willing good to those whom we dislike, from whom we are estranged by prejudice or misunderstanding. "If ye salute them which salute you only, what profit have ye? Do not the publicans the same?" Tit for tat, slap for slap, giving as good as you get, is attitude of the untamed, un-Christianised heart.

If the goodwill of Christmas is genuine it means unlearning that ugly temper and straightening out that twist in our nature.

"It is a duty in life," says the author of the Upton Letters, "it is a duty to break through the

crust of familiarity which tends to be deposited round well-known things."

We can become so used to Christmas that we miss the Christ.

In earthly birthdays interest centres round

The person who is born—the day is nought.

But Christmas comes, and then 'tis often found

The **day's** the thing, the **Person** gets no thought!

Too often our merriment is like the man who laughs because others laugh, though he himself has not seen the point of the story. We can listen to the old carols and the well-loved stories of the watchful shepherds, the choiring angels, the stable, the star on that clear Syrian night, and the splendour of the wise men—without being awakened in Spirit.

The Outbreak of Joy.

The birth of Jesus Christ was the birth of a new source of life and power. That is what St. Paul means when he speaks of Christ as the Second Adam. The remarkable outbreak of joy which impresses any reader of the New Testament came from the new vitality which throbbed in men's hearts. Unless we experience that inner joy our Christmas hilarity is no better than the paper flowers fastened on the boughs of a lifeless tree.

Christmas, then, bids us rejoice at the good news that we are not left to grovel in our misery; that Christ who wore our human nature can infuse into us His strength, and make us master of ourselves and the dear children of God.

We are really extraordinary creatures. Not one of us is without a secret shrine. There it is, utterly unsuspected, with the candles of hope all

burning, in a life we never thought had a single dream. There is an unkillable longing for God in all of us. Man wants God terribly; but for some reason or other we will not, or cannot, believe. We cannot believe that the best is true. That is why we say to ourselves that no new thing can happen at Christmas.

I was looking again the other day at Holman Hunt's picture of Christ knocking at the door. It suddenly dawned on me that perhaps the tragedy of the picture lay in the thought that the mind behind the door was saying to himself, "There is nothing there," or "Only the worst is there."

I am sure that if I wrote down that some calamity was waiting for you on the other side of the door, you would believe me, and say that I was quite rational. But it is just rational to believe the best. Christmas with all its magic and miracle, all its wonder and grace, tells us most surely that nothing is too good to be true. The Very Best is at the door! —"The Herald," Melbourne.

In Spiritualism, as everyone knows who has common sense to think, the teachings vary with the controlling spirit, hence there are statements as varied and numerous as there are individuals. Instead of one cult, instead of one set of principles as a foundation, we have as many different ones almost as there are religious sects, and all based on visions, spirit messages and psychical experiences. If we, through knowledge of spiritual truth, have become new beings and are living a new life, we must feel that we are trustees of that truth, and guard it as a treasure—as a part of our own life.

SPIRITUALIST CHURCHES

What is Lacking?

(An esteemed correspondent is concerned about the apparent lack of progress in our Churches. We would like to know our readers' opinions. Whilst unable to publish any or all of the replies, it will give our correspondent enough material from which to compile an article on the subject.—Ed. H. of L.)

I think in its present form the "Harbinger" is much more attractive than it was in the past. Also it is keeping up its value in every way. Of course, no one will agree with everything you see printed in it, but that is as it should be. That is what makes it so attractive to me, for we can see others' points of view, and that gives us something to think about.

You know, there is something very wrong with the way Spiritualism is presented to its own followers. We hear constantly at our meetings how the Churches have lost their grip on the people, and how few now go to church. Well, those who speak thus do not know what they are talking about. There are many Churches in this city, most of them at least once a day well filled. A little church about half a mile from where I am sitting, about 10 years ago borrowed about £6,000 to build, etc., and have in that time paid this sum, and are now free from debt. As well as this, they pay their minister £340 per year and free house, and many hundreds of pounds for missionary work. And there are no rich

people in this parish: they are nearly all just wage-earners.

Now Spiritualism started here about 60 years ago, and after this long time we have two small churches holding only one service each every Sunday, and it is very seldom you will see the seats more than half filled, and many times not one-quarter filled. I do not think either of them has ever been able to give their speaker more than they can get from the collection plate, after they pay rent for the room they use. Why is this? I don't know, but I have a pretty good idea. Why are the Churches still going strong, and we standing still? What is your idea? Is it the same in Australia? What has the Church got to give that we have not. I'd like your opinion, if you have time to give it. Christchurch, N.Z.

20/10/42.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

Prof. Max Muller used to sit for hours in Mary Anderson's house in London talking solid wisdom to that very intelligent American actress, while Alma Tadema discussed his new brass staircase, and otherwise mortals sat about listening.

Max Muller said that the old-time religions of the world were "but the milk of nature, which was in due time to be succeeded by the bread of life."

That, we must say, is not very clear or satisfactory.

Seneca's sensible definition of religion was:

"To know God and to imitate Him."

Ruskin, noble-minded, but lacking sometimes in that reverence which is the highest intellectual quality, said:

“Our national religion is the performance of church ceremonies and preaching of soporific truths (or untruths) to keep the mob quietly at work while we amuse ourselves.”

Undoubtedly formal, official religions have always been used more or less as opiates for the mob. One of the regulation signs of social upheaval is a loosening of religion's hold on the mass or an attack on religion established by infidelity.

Here are a few other definitions of religion which may be taken as typical:

Matthew Arnold: Religion is morality touched with emotion.

Comte: The worship of humanity.

Huxley: Reverence and love for the ethical ideal, and the desire to realise that ideal in life.

Froude: A sense of responsibility to the power that made us.

Hegel: The knowledge acquired by the finite spirit of its essence as an absolute spirit.

Carlyle: The thing a man does practically believe; the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe, and his duty and destiny therein.

Six able and widely different minds speak there in little space. But not one says anything very satisfactory.

Wise men who have written at their leisure, without attempt to be epigrammatic, have told us

that religion, with its belief in a spirit world, originated in dreams.

The savage, dreaming, saw strange things, heard strange voices. He grew to believe in another world, peopled by spirit beings, which could be visited in sleep. He saw, in dreams, relatives and friends that had died.

Thus, said the wise ones, he got his notion of immortality and of a world whose inhabitants had previously lived here.

But does this speculating convince or explain?

What is the deep emotion which finds its expression in religion? What is that most powerful of all passions—religious enthusiasm?

It makes poverty and hardship welcome for the sake of an idea.

It sustains the fanatic of India gazing at the sun with arms up-stretched until the sight is burned from his eyeballs, and the clenched finger-nails grow through the backs of his hands.

It consoles mothers who lose their children, and women who are childless.

Is not religion the expression of man's eternal dissatisfaction with his own imperfections and limited development?—Ex.

The Lyceum is a Spiritualist Sunday School, where is taught the Science, Philosophy and Religion of Spiritualism. Through this teaching, we gain a better understanding of Spiritual values and the laws of nature, so necessary in promoting the moral, intellectual and spiritual growth of mankind that they may more fully realise their kinship and responsibility one unto another as God's Children.

A MEDIUM ON AUTOMATIC WRITING

By Mrs. Hester Dowden (in "Psychic News").

The term "automatic writing" is used very freely in connection with psychic phenomena, but is seldom defined. Writing can be produced in trance and under hypnotic conditions, of which the medium is entirely unconscious.

This writing may well be termed automatic. Here, the question arises. Is such writing produced by seizure of the hand by some unseen force? Or is the brain controlled, and does the hand obey the impetus given to the brain by the communicator?

Again, writing is produced which is generally called "inspirational." This writing is deliberate, being the ordinary handwriting of the medium. The inspiration comes before the writing, and there is ample opportunity for the intervention of the subconscious mind.

Control of the Brain.

I do not set much value on such results. My own writing is produced with great rapidity, 2,500 words can be written in an hour with ease.

There is little chance for the intervention of the subconscious mind, but I am convinced that the brain is controlled.

I believe I hear a word at a time drop through my consciousness. The connection seems to be made when my pencil touches the paper, but who can safely analyse personal sensations?

Automatic writing, as I use the term, applies to my own type of writing, which is a half-way house between unconscious writing in trance and the far too conscious writing called "inspirational."

The scope of such writing is very varied. First, of course, comes personal evidence. The sitter is in personal touch with the communicator, as in direct voice mediumship, and great evidence of the survival of personality is shown.

Psychometry—A New Way.

Automatic psychometry is remarkable. The object is laid on the table, touched by the pencil, and then psychometrised by the control.

I am no psychometrist myself, but my control, Johannes, seldom fails with a good object.

Interesting philosophic discussion can come through automatic writing. Questions can be answered on a vast range of subjects, from the deeper philosophy to advice about material affairs.

Predictions of the future are frequent and accurate, but these I never invite.

Automatism is the best work for the amateur. It can be done at home. Conditions do not matter much. Noise upsets it, and also wind storm. Otherwise, it can be done at any time, and can be picked up after an interruption with no difficulty.

It has earned a bad name, because most amateurs either do too much of it (which is highly dangerous in the early stages), or are scared by foolish interventions of the "poltergeist" order, which can easily be got rid of if they are dealt with firmly.

FOUND IN A SOLDIER'S POCKET

These lines were found in the paybook of a South African soldier killed in Libya, six months after his marriage to a girl in Durban.

As you love me, let there be
No mourning when I go.
No tearful eyes,
No hopeless sighs,
No woe, not even sadness;
Indeed I would not have you sad,
For I myself shall be full glad
With the high triumphant gladness
Of a soul made free
Of God's sweet liberty.

No windows darkened,
For my own
Will be flung wide as ne'er before,
To catch the radiant in-pour
Of love that shall in full atone
For all the ills that I have done
And the good things left undone.

No voices hushed,
My own full-flushed
With an immortal hope, will rise
In ecstasies of new-born bliss
And joyful melodies.

Rather of your sweet courtesy
Rejoice with me
At my soul's loosing from captivity.

Wish me Bon Voyage,
As you would a friend
Whose joyous visit finds its happy end;
And bid me both adieu and au revoir,
Since, though I come no more,
I shall be waiting there to greet you
At His door.

—Children's Newspaper.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Winds are bleak and woodlands sere—
All December-nighted;
But the house is full of cheer,
Fires and candles lighted.
Hangings scarlet, green and gold
Swing from wall and rafter:
Noel brings us as of old
Love and light and laughter.

Though the years have borne afar
Old familiar faces,
Each is as a vanished star
In the cloudy spaces.
Clouds must pass, the stars remain;
Death may come, but after
Life, renewed, shall bring again
Love and light and laughter.

* * *

Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands
The chorus of all voices, the claspings of hands,
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,
Sing songs of the angels, when Jesus was born.

—Whittier.

DARK-ROOM SEANCES

A Word of Warning.

(By the Editor of "The Greater World.")

Many people new to the truth of psychic phenomena or insufficiently versed in the laws governing these manifestations, imagine that mediumship is a definite proof that the medium's spirituality is above that of the average person who is not developed psychically. We should like our readers to know and remember that this notion is false. The release of psychic gifts does not of necessity imply good character.

Experience has shown that a man or a woman may demonstrate those so-called supernormal powers and yet through his or her thoughts and deeds be known as a person possessing a low level of morality. Fortunately there are only a few who come within this class of mediums, but when their practices are detected, much damage is done to the cause of true Spiritualism by the widespread publicity given in the sensation-mongering press that has little or no room for the spiritual aspect of psychic science as evidenced by numerous honest and self-denying men and women who occupy the Spiritualist platforms.

Experience has also shown that most of the dark-room seances have practically no constructive side. The densified ectoplasm is uncanny and ugly, as compared with the ethereal manifestations perceived by the finer senses of the soul-body—clairvoyance, clairsaudience and other spiritual gifts. As

Zodiac said at Cardiff: "Not materialisation, but etherialisation, is wanted."

Uncanny Experiences.

In order to safeguard this glorious movement as much as possible, we would strongly advise all churches and societies to abstain from organising public dark-room meetings, whether for materialisations, levitations, apports or trumpet voices. Accounts of many of such sittings provide clear evidence that most of the physical demonstrations are more distracting than instructive. The dark room is best left to the "scientific" investigator who wants to see, hear and feel with his organic senses, who enters the seance room with suspicion and the idea of possibly detecting fraud. "Spiritual conditions" are meaningless words to him, for in his daily life he sees no God-power at work, and is unaware of the guidance, for good or evil, of these functioning out of the earth body. This kind of investigator usually issues the results of his experiences in book form, so that his "work" shall be known. For this reason the psychic literature comprises many worthless volumes.

————:o:————

O Soul within, how little hast thou been aware of thy grand opportunities and privileges! How thou hast timidly groped thy way through material fogs and mists when thou mightest have lifted thyself to planes of spiritual verities! How thy whole horizon has been black with clouds which were only the shadows of thy dark thoughts and imaginings.—
Henry Wood.

TELEGRAPHIC TICKS AS IDENTITY TEST

The following is taken from Mrs. Conant's "Biography":—

On a certain occasion Mrs. Conant received a call from a strange gentleman, who said he wished a particular test of identity from a friend which he had never been able to obtain. . . .

Having taken seats at the table, the Medium (Mrs. Conant) and her visitor became passive, and awaited the result. Mrs. Conant, as was her wont when anticipating the coming of the spirits, held in her hand a pencil, and had spread before her a sheet of paper, in order that, should the invisible intelligence not wish to entrance her, it might express its ideas in writing.

Suddenly her hand began to rise and fall in a singular and very irregular manner, and the pencil continued for some moments to make ticking sounds upon the paper, for which it was wholly beyond the power of the Medium to account. Finally, despairing of any influence controlling her, she said: "It's no use. There seems to be no spirit present who can communicate with you."

She expected that the investigator would express his dissatisfaction and retire, but was exceedingly surprised when he informed her that the seance had been an entire success—that he had received the test he desired from his friend, and had written it out for preservation.

On further explanation it appeared that the visitor was a telegraphic operator, and that the matter he desired to be informed about by his friend

(who was also an operator) was of a nature known only to themselves; this information the visitor wished to get by means of telegraphic ticks as used in the transmission of mundane messages.—Summarised by "Light," from "The Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy," by A. Campbell Holms.

MR. CHARLES BAILEY

The appeal made on behalf of Mr. Charles Bailey in our September issue has not resulted in the result we anticipated. Mr. Bailey was the finest apport medium known to Spiritualism. His mediumship occupied the attention of the whole civilised world, and thousands of apports received through him have been widely distributed. For some years the "Harbinger of Light" published lengthy reports of his work, and full-page photographic reproductions of hundreds of apports received through him.

Mr. Bailey is now old, and, never having averaged more than a few pounds per week during the whole of his mediumship, is now in reduced circumstances. Although the majority of those who enjoyed his work, and mentally and spiritually benefited by his gifts have forgotten their obligations to him, a few not greatly blessed with this world's good have responded to our appeal: C.A.R. (Hobart), 20/; F.H. (Windsor), 10/; J.B.H. (Wonga Park), 10/; H.L. (Adelaide), 10/; R.McF. (Maldon), 5/; M.C. (Freemantle, 5/; A.S.M. (Shepparton, 5/; H.H. Sefton), 2/6. Total, 67/6.

Further subscriptions will be acknowledged in our next issue.

“CONFUCIUS SAY . . .”

Just what is the ideology that millions of Chinese people are willing to die for? Tridemisme, or the Three Principles of the People, is a doctrine which has its philosophical source in the Confucian concept of Ta-T'ou, or Universal Union, as expounded in one of Confucius' classics, “Li Yun.”

Let me quote a few pertinent passages:—

Under the system of Universal Union the entire world becomes a single entity belonging to all the men and women who compose it. Members of the world government are to be chosen among the wisest and most capable citizens. All men and women will respect their given word, and cultivate harmonious relations with their fellows.

Men and women will not limit their affection to their parents and children. The old are to be assisted to live in agreeable retirement to the end of their lives. All adults are to be provided with work. Boys and girls are to be provided with educational facilities that will enable them to grow into useful men and women. Old widows without children, old bachelors, orphans, and the infirm are to be afforded adequate means of support. Every man will have his work; every woman her home.

The natural resources of the soil are to be exploited, but for for the individual.

If there is no reason to steal, there will be no thieves, so that police and an army will become unnecessary.

That is the essence of Ta-Ton, which in political terms resolves itself into a kind of universal socialistic democracy under which differences of boundary, race, and class disappear.

—Wou Saofong, in Free World.

A PRAYER

(Marcella de Cou Hicks.)

Dear God, I do not ask Thou shouldst spare
Me anything that others have to bear,
But only give me strength that any blow
May not embitter me—but help me grow.
I do not ask for riches or for fame,
But that there be no shadows on my name.

Dear God, I do not ask for happiness,
But rather, that in living I may bless
Others with a life of usefulness.
For hard and dreary tasks, O give me grace,
That I may do them with a smiling face;
Then, when my journey and my tasks are done,
My soul, at peace, may wing its swift flight home.

("Being 'dead,' yet speaketh."—Ed. H.L.)

AN APPRECIATION

"I want to compliment you on your selection of articles. They are evidential from the scientific and commonsense point of view, as well as their scriptural foundation being so definite."—A.S., Coorparoo, Queensland.

"THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT." AUSTRALIA.

A Monthly Digest of Spiritualist News.

Correspondents requiring a personal reply to their letters must forward a stamped addressed envelope for the purpose. Contributors must send postage if they desire their MS. returned in case it is not used.

Address all communications to the Editor and make all drafts, cheques, postal notes and money orders payable to "The Harbinger of Light."

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KEEPING THE FLAG FLYING

(In the early days of our history, when each issue of the "Harbinger of Light" was published, Mr. Terry, the founder-editor, flew a flag from the roof of his business premises in Russell Street, Melbourne. Hence the origin of our slogan, "Keep the Harbinger Flag Flying." Does any reader remember the flag?)

The Military call-up has depleted the staff of the Hilton Press so that they are no longer able to print the "Harbinger of Light." To us this is a double loss. This firm has been a very good friend to us, having printed the journal for many years at the bare cost of production. We know of no other firm who can or will do this, and in consequence we are faced with a further liability of seventy pounds per annum. In order to obtain even this price we are compelled to reduce the size of the "Harbinger" to forty-eight pages.

The total income received from subscriptions, agents' payments, and advertisements will barely

cover production expenses, leaving no margin for wages. As the editor does all the office work himself there is no staff to be paid, nor will he be able to derive any income from it.

The result of our £100 appeal will enable us to begin the year with a clean sheet, and have a small balance in hand. The editor has secured a church appointment (Congregational), which will enable him to carry on the "Harbinger", so that we trust, with the help of the Emergency Fund, to issue the magazine regularly and promptly. The change-over will result in one issue being missed, but we shall extend every subscription one month.

A further problem has to be faced. As subscribers know, the company had made no profit for years, and finally it was wound up, the present editor taking over the business and its accompanying liabilities. By the sale of the library and the balance of the bookshop stock a portion of this has been paid, but there is a balance of £265 for money borrowed from a former shareholder, and for which interest must be paid. For the reduction of this liability monies received from the Emergency Fund is being applied.

Having thus explained our position, we face the New Year with every confidence that our subscribers and patrons will co-operate with us as they always have done to keep the "Harbinger" flag flying.

THE WATSEKA WONDER.

Wanted to purchase a copy of this Book—any condition, or state price to the Editor.

"THE PERILS OF SPIRITUALISM"

(By R. C. Keast.)

In the Rev. C. Irving Benson's interesting article on the Rev. F. C. Spurr, as reprinted in the November number of the "Harbinger of Light," is to be found the well-known, oft-repeated, and almost pontifical warning, expressed in the following words: "Mr. Spurr was very wide awake to the perils of spiritualism." And as an average, intelligent person, who possesses a fairly extensive knowledge of spiritualism, I have been wondering what, in particular, these clerics, the Revs. C. Irving Benson and F. C. Spurr had in mind when they gave expression to this warning.

Living, as we are, in a materialistic age, would it not have been better, wiser and truer on the part of these clergymen, to have stressed the perils of materialism, rather than the perils of spiritualism? For it is, principally, the materialistic conception of life, as against the spiritualistic conception, which has brought the world to its present plight; which has plunged mankind into the most diabolical and least justifiable war in all history. Indeed, were the principles of Spiritualism universally applied, all war would at once be relegated, like slavery, to its rightful place in man's barbaric past.

Spiritualism, admittedly, has its imperfections; but altogether too much has been spoken and written concerning the alleged (and imaginary!) perils of spiritualism. And as a close investigator of nearly 20 years' experience, both through Spiritualism's literature and through its mediums, I am

one of many who are in a position to refute and ridicule such words and warnings. What, in my case, are these so-called perils? In a necessarily brief article, this question cannot be fully dealt with. But the greatest of the perils of spiritualism has repeatedly been declared to be of a mental nature. An intense study of Spiritualism, with all its cleverly concealed fraud and folly (it has often been affirmed) tends to induce mental and emotional instability or insanity.

The Rev. C. Irving Benson, for example, in the article already quoted, in endorsing, so to speak, the Rev. F. C. Spurr's strictures, has referred to "the fraud which so easily enters into seances." But, as great an authority on this subject as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has emphatically affirmed that the element of fraud in Spiritualism is relatively negligible. And the danger of insanity is, surely, even less!

The Rev. C. L. Tweeddale, the well-known English clergyman and author, has effectively replied to this charge. In the London journal, "Light," of May, 1938, this Anglican cleric drew attention to the fact that letters addressed some time before to the Board of Lunacy Control, had met with the following statement: "We are unable to refer to any statistics which would be applicable to the allegation that devotion to Spiritualism is a frequent cause of insanity." Similarly, Professor Enrico Marselli (director of the Clinic of Mental Diseases at Genoa, Italy), several years ago declared: "Cases of madness among those devoted to Spiritualism are very rare."

One curious fact which this inquiry into insanity revealed has, in the article already referred to, been expressed by the Rev. C. L. Tweedale in these words: "It is a fact that the percentage of lunacy cases among the clergy in this country is more than double what it is for the general population." The perils of Spiritualism, indeed! Is it not rather the perils of theological and archaeological Christianity that should cause the clergy to raise their voices in warning? For a disposition towards insanity, on the part of any religion's leaders, is scarcely a recommendation for the religion itself.

Actually, as all impartial and intelligent investigators of Spiritualism have found, it is as much the eminently rational as it the profoundly beautiful in it, that has won for Spiritualism, in addition to many ordinary mortals, a number of the world's intellectuals. And it may be that in time there will be encountered considerably fewer warnings by clerics like the Revs. C Irving Benson and F. C. Spurr about the perils of Spiritualism, and many more references and remarks by clergymen everywhere, about the pearls of Spiritualism.

PASS ON THE PRAISE

"You're a great little wife, and I don't know what I would do without you." And as he spoke he put his arms about her and kissed her, and she forgot all the care in that moment. And, forgetting it all, she sang as she washed the dishes, and she sang as she made the beds, and the song was heard next door, and a woman there caught the refrain and sang also, and two homes were happier because

he had told her that sweet old story—the story of the love of a husband for a wife.

As she sang, the butcher boy who called for the order heard it, and went out whistling on his journey, and the world heard the whistle, and one man hearing it, thought: “Here is a lad who loves his work: a lad happy and contented.”

And because she sang her heart was mellowed, and as she swept about the back door the cool air kissed her on each cheek, and she thought of a poor old woman she knew, and a little basket went over to that home with a quarter for a crate or two of wood.

So, because he kissed and praised her, the song came and the influence went out and out.

Pass on the praise.

A word and you make a rift in the cloud; a smile, and you may create a new resolve; a grasp of the hand, and you may repossess a soul from hell.

Pass on the praise.

Teacher, if the child is good, tell him about it; if he is better, tell him again. Thus you see—good, better, best.

Pass on the praise now. Pass it on in the home. Don't go to the grave and call “mother.” Don't plead, “Hear me, mother; you were a kind mother; you were a good mother, and smoothed away many a rugged path for me.”

Those ears cannot hear that glad admission. Those eyes cannot see the light of earnestness in yours. Those hands may not return the embrace you now wish to give.

Why call so late? Pass on the praise to-day.

—Kansas City World.

PROFESSOR TALKS OF GHOST STORIES

Stories about ghosts are common around Christmas and New Year. Our ancestors were very similar to us in this regard. Professor Hamilton Thomson, of Leeds University (England) declares that "the foundation of the mediaeval ghost story was the belief in the world of spirits, good and evil, which were always ready to answer the call of the magician, or, on occasion, ready to make their existence known without any intervention at all. A very thin veil divided the seen from the unseen, in the opinion of the mediaeval people."

Professor Thomson, after relating a number of stories of the appearance of the devil, suggests that "it was natural that people of that time failed to distinguish very clearly between apparitions of demons in human, or any other shape, and apparitions of the dead. Most of the stories of monks were humorous rather than terrifying. The object of the tales was pious edification. They were not written to frighten or terrify. They were tidings of an invisible world in which both the teller of the story and the bearer implicitly believed." Professor Thomson further says: "For every one direction in which people were superstitious then, there are ten ways in which they are superstitious now." We think the professor is right, and it is part of the work of Spiritualists to kill superstition, and superstition will go out of the ghost story when people are prepared to put the ghosts in the witness-box and examine them, instead of flying in terror before them.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA OF THE BIBLE

Compiled by B. F. AUSTIN, M.A., D.D.

Materialisation:

Genesis iii., 8.	Genesis xviii., 1, xxxii., 24.
Exodus xxiv., 10-11.	Ezekiel ii., 9.
Daniel v., 5.	Luke xxiv., 15, 16-29, 30, 31.
John xx., 19, 26.	

Spirit Writing:

II. Chronicles xxvi., 12. Daniel v., 5.

Independent Spirit Writing:

Exodus xxiv., 12.	Exodus xxxi., 18.
Exodus xxxii., 16.	Exodus xxxiv., 6.
Deut. v., 22.	Deut. ix., 10.

Trumpet Speaking:

Exodus xix., 13, 16, 19.	Exodus xx., 18.
Revelation, i., 10.	

Trance:

Genesis xv., 12.	Daniel viii., 18.
Daniel x., 9.	II. Cor. xii., 2.
Acts xxii., 17.	

Healing—Old Testament:

Numbers xxi., 8-9.	II. Kings v., 1, 14.
I. Kings xvii., 7-24.	II. Kings iv., 18-37.

Healing—New Testament:

Matt. viii., 5-13.	I. Cor. xii., 9-28.
Luke xiv., 2-14.	Matt. xii., 10-13.
Luke v., 17-25.	Mark iii., 2-5.
Luke ix., 11.	John iv., 47-54.
Matt x., 8.	Luke ix., 2.
Luke x., 9.	Acts iii., 1-8.
Acts xiv., 8-10.	

Healing by Magnetized Articles:

II. Kings iv., 29.	Acts xix., 11-12.
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Independent Spirit Voices:

Deut. ix., 12-13.	1. Samuel iii., 3-9.
Ezekiel i., 28.	Matt. xvii., 5.
John xii., 28, 29, 30.	Acts vii., 30-31.
Acts ix., 4-7.	Acts xi., 7-8-9.

Spirit Levitation:

I. Kings xviii., 12.	Ezekiel iii., 2, 13, 14.
Ezekiel viii., 3.	Acts viii., 39.
Possibly also Matt. iv., 1.	

Spirit Tests:

Genesis xxiv., 14-19.	Exodus iv., 14-31.
Judges vi., 36-40.	I. Sam., i., 10, 11, 17, 26, 27.
I. Sam., x., 2, 6, 9, 10.	

Spirit Communication in Dreams:

Job xxxiii., 15.	Joel ii., 28.
Genesis xxviii., 12-15.	Genesis xxxi., 24.
Genesis xxxvii., 5-8.	Genesis xli.

A Sailor Writes—

“The following was part of a letter written to me by Mrs. Marcella de Cou Hicks some time ago. It has been an inspiration and a help, not only to me, but to others that I have shared it with. We loved her work, and would have liked it to have continued for ever.

“We, who have a bit of understanding of the cosmic plan behind creation—of the purpose of it all—we, who have absolute assurance and proof of immortality, of the survival of individuality, and have a marvellous inspiration for living, being and doing, can afford to pity rather than censure those less fortunate folks who point at us the finger of ridicule.”

The day is at hand when the recognised realm of reality is to be extended into the Unseen, when the horizon line will advance, when the present environment of physical life will be so extended and the conceptions of the next stage of being become so much more intelligent, that there will be practically a new heaven and a new earth. (How far away is your horizon?)—Lilian Whiting.

God is love, and God is light; whence it results that love is light, and it is only by following the effluence of that light that intellectual power issues into intellectual pride, is out of the way to wisdom, and will not attain even to intellectual greatness.

—Henry Taylor (1800-86).

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