

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day"

THE Harbinger of Light

A MONTHLY DIGEST DEVOTED TO

Psychical Research, Spiritualism, Progressive Thought,
Healing, and Spiritual Philosophy

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Editorial

MISCELLANY

Rather than write you a formal leading article—or, as it sometimes seems, preach you a sermon—each month, I propose to use this space in each issue, at least until I arrive in Australia in July, to keep in touch and chat about this and that.

For instance, I want to thank the many readers and future friends for their very warm words of welcome to us and for the many expressions of good wishes and promises of future support. Even Jenny, our dachshund pet, has been given a welcome by one reader, who hopes that she will appreciate life in a land free from the many shortages she must have suffered from in England. I think her greed has prevented her from suffering much hardship here, but I am sure she, like us, will greatly appreciate the abundance of sunshine in her new life.

I expect quite a number of you have heard from Mr. Huston since his passing. I heard from a New Zealand reader who had made contact

with him, and he has paid a brief visit to our own home circle. I shall certainly hear much more from him as time goes on, for his great interest in the "Harbinger"—which he always regarded as a sacred trust—has by no means diminished. At the same sitting as that at which Mr. Huston appeared I heard from Northcliffe, who always refers to himself as "The Chief," and learned of his interest in my new mission, which he insisted was bigger even than I realised. He promised his aid—as he has always assisted "Psychic News" since the time when his interest in Hannen Swaffer brought him in touch with me. Mrs. Champion de Crespigny, a prominent leader of Spiritualism in London before her passing, also intimated her interest and hinted of big things in the spirit plans for the "Harbinger" and its field of influence.

A very colourful Aussie I met a few days ago is Edwin MacCullum, who has been on the wireless here, in the "In Town Tonight," as a swagman. He is a Spiritualist and he was telling me of instances of telepathy he experienced with the aborigines. I have persuaded him to write about it for the "Harbinger."

Comments in the "Harbinger" recently on the question of mechanical communication with the spirit world have drawn several protests from the members of the London Electronic Communication Society, three of whom have expressed themselves strongly in the columns of "Psychic Venture." My own view is that anything is possible, and he would be a brave man who declared in advance that any avenue of research would be abortive. All the same, the L.E.C.S. have a long way to go before they can claim to have proved their case.

A. W. AUSTEN.

The healing meeting conducted by J. J. Thomas in the Great Hall, Caxton Hall, was over. After interviewing some of the patients I folded up my notebook, stowed away my camera, donned my coat and prepared to join the last of the huge crowd leaving the hall.

Then a hand was laid on my arm. A middle-aged woman was standing at my side earnestly scrutinising me through a pair of spotless spectacles. "I see you have been taking notes of the meeting," she said, "I wonder if you would be interested in what Mr. Thomas has done for my husband and myself. It is really very wonderful."

There are always plenty of people itching to tell reporters "wonderful" stories, and somehow you develop a sixth sense which enables you to discriminate. And the sincere eyes of this woman were clearly telegraphing the importance of her news. So I reached for my notebook, and this is the story that Mrs. Madeleine Horseman, of 254 Devizes Road, Salisbury, unfolded to me.

Mrs. Horseman's husband, William, a furniture remover in his sixties, was engaged on a job about sixteen months ago and was in the act of taking some pictures from a colleague, who was passing them over some banisters, when one slipped and struck him in the eye. The glass cracked and Mr. Horseman was sure that a piece had penetrated the soft part between the upper eyelid and the eyebrow.

Doctors whom he consulted, however, said they could find no glass there. But as time went on the injury showed no sign of improving and it began to worry William, who feared that if there was a piece of glass there it might conceivably damage his sight.

Eventually, just before Christmas, 1951, a letter was sent to J. J. Thomas, at Brighton, asking

for absent healing treatment. Back came a reply stating that in two days the piece of glass would go.

Two days' time was Christmas Day. Mrs. Horseman had had a busy morning, like so many housewives at the festive season, and after she had prepared the meal she went up to her bedroom to snatch a few minutes' rest. But instead of deriving the rest she expected she became rather excited inwardly. She had a feeling that something was happening. So she came down again.

As she entered the sitting-room her husband said, "Look," and extended his hand. In the palm was a small piece of dirty glass. Mrs. Horseman took in the situation at a glance. But one question puzzled her. "How did it happen?" she asked.

"I felt some power move my hand and put it to my eye," explained William. "When it came away there was the piece of glass."

The question that then puzzled me was, why did Mrs. Horseman contact Mr. Thomas? That, she told me, took us back some years. Following a serious accident she was reduced to wearing a spinal jacket and surgical corset.

For thirteen years all her actions were governed and dictated by these aids. Doctors could do no more for her. Her job as a laundry manageress made heavy demands on her and she found it exceedingly difficult. Then four-and-a-half years after she met a friend whom she had known to be ill and who had just been treated by Mr. Thomas. She looked so much better that Mrs. Horseman could not help commenting on the transformation. "If this can happen to one woman, why can't it happen to me?" she asked herself. Why not try Thomas?

She did, and was astonished at the accurate diagnosis which Dr. Robert, German doctor control of Thomas, gave her, recalling the details of her accident, and how she frequently cried at night in distress. Mrs. Horseman received one treatment. Ten days later she left off the spinal jacket and the corset. She has not worn them since.

This case alone should spike the guns of these critics who aver that no psychic healing is ever permanent. Mrs. Horseman, a robust, healthy, upright woman, was bubbling over with her gratitude for Thomas.

"I can do all my housework without any trouble," she told me. "Before I saw Mr. Thomas I had to lean over like this. . . ." And she struck a pose showing how she had to support her weight with one arm while she grappled with the domestic chores with the other.

These healings, as incredible as they sound, are not the only occasions that the Horseman household has benefited from the ministrations of the Sussex healer. There was the time when Mr. Horseman was found to be suffering from double hernia. A serious complaint in his trade.

Doctors advised an operation. Mr. Horseman was on the point of signing the necessary documents when he thought of Thomas.

So it was to Thomas he went. The guide immediately diagnosed hernia and through his medium, Dr. Robert performed one of his spectacular "operations."

William was about to leave the couch when the guide restrained him. "Wait a moment, my friend," he said in his precise slightly-clipped English, "that is only one hernia we have done. There is another here to do," and he passed the medium's hand to the other side of William's stomach. Since then the furniture remover has had no trouble "and," Mrs. Horseman told me,

"although he is over sixty he can still help to lift the heaviest pianos without any distress." Mrs. Horseman is so thrilled about Thomas's healing powers that she is quite prepared to discuss any of these facts with readers.

Someone else who has reason to thank Thomas is 29-year-old Arthur Barker, a North London insurance agent. For years Mr. Barker has been troubled with a discharge in the ear which doctors said was caused by a perforated ear-drum. Besides the unpleasantness of it, the condition also caused deafness. It was serious enough to prevent his entering the forces during the last war.

One day a friend of Arthur, a Mr. Poole, told him how Thomas had treated him successfully for, of all things, a bad tooth. So purely on the off chance, Mr. Barker travelled down to Brighton and paid Thomas a visit. "He diagnosed everything perfectly," said Mr. Barker, whom I met in the ante-room of the hall. "His guide treated me and since then it has been quite all right: I can hear normally, and there is no discharge."

And Mr. Barker put a finger in his good ear while I spoke to him and he was able to hear every word I uttered, although I was speaking quietly.

During Thomas's public demonstration in Caxton Hall several patients received accurate diagnoses of their complaints and were treated by Dr. Robert. One of these—and he was paying his first visit to a Spiritualist demonstration—was 58-year-old Mr. Plume. That is not his name. For personal reasons he asked me to use a pseudonym. But I have his name and address which I can pass to bona fide inquirers.

As Mr. Plume lay on the healing couch, the white-coated figures of Thomas and his wife Ruby standing behind, Dr. Robert ran a medical

yardstick over the patient. Apart from a chest condition—Mr. Plume suffers with bronchial asthma—the guide correctly told him that his left ankle was rather weak, his stomach was out of order, and that he had a toe which was deformed.

Holding Thomas's hand aloft, Dr. Robert indicated the little finger and said: "It is not this toe, but the one next to it which is deformed." And the guide added that it was the right foot. Mr. Plume agreed that this was perfectly true.

The patient's wife, who was sitting in the audience, was brought into the diagnosing. Dr. Robert said that she suffered pains in the back and also had calloused skin under one foot. Mr. Plume was very thrilled with the guide's statements and, discussing it with me later, he told me how his wife had suffered from pains in the back as the result of shock. The calloused skin, too, was confirmed.

Thomas, of course, does a considerable amount of absent healing, much of which is directed overseas. It is fitting, therefore, to finish this article with a letter which Thomas has just received from Mr. W. Muttu, of Palmira, Colombia, South America. Writes Mr. Muttu:

"It is with deep thankfulness I write you once again. My wife, who was very ill when I wrote you first, has made such rapid recovery that the doctors are simply at a loss. The first X-ray plates showed that an operation was urgent; three weeks later the X-ray showed the growth almost gone. We send our heartfelt thanks to you and your healing band and to that great soul who works through you."

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MELBOURNE MEDIUM'S APPORTS

This article was written 20 years ago by W. H. Wallis, well-known Melbourne Spiritualist. Charles Bailey, the medium,

we understand, is still living in Elsternwick with Mr. Wallis.

I witnessed astounding phenomena occurring in the presence of Charles Bailey, the well-known apport medium, whilst residing in a suburb of Melbourne some time ago.

Unlike some mediums, Bailey is imbued with the truly scientific spirit, and welcomes inquiry into the many phases of his mediumship.

His strong point, of course, is the bringing of objects into the seance room whilst he is secured in a large bag, tied at the back of his neck, and carefully sealed. I arranged for a seance to be held one evening, the company numbering nine.

During the afternoon, whilst walking in the garden with Bailey, I noticed signs of control, and was not surprised when he remarked, "I feel my guide; let us be seated." We repaired to a garden seat under a plum tree, and his chief guide immediately addressed me:

"It is rather unusual to take control whilst Mr. Bailey is enjoying the fresh air and flowers, but we wanted to ask you to make this evening's seance a test seance. We have, ready to leave with you, a Babylonian tablet depicting a king seated on his throne, holding in his hand a staff. He has on a head-dress, and wears a plaited beard.

"Before commencing the seance, see that the members of the circle are searched for similar articles, and then insist on their thoroughly examining the bag before the medium is allowed to step into it, after which see that the strings are securely tied and sealed. Make sure you mention this interview before the seance begins, and also enter it in your seance book."

Shortly before eight o'clock we adjourned to the seance, taking a tablecloth, locked slates, bags, etc., and proceeded as usual. Bailey, securely fastened in the bag, took his seat. Dr.

Whitcomb, the chief control, immediately commenced speaking, and explained what was to follow. "Now please put out the light," he said, "holding the tablecloth by the corners. And be prepared to take care of the tablet on its arrival."

Before the control had finished speaking, the apport was there. Needless to say, we lost no time in brushing off the moist covering of mud, and there was the figure, just as depicted whilst Bailey and I were in the garden.

We were then asked to sing for a few minutes to enable the medium to recuperate. A lump of plasticine was now passed round for inspection, flattened out and smoothed and placed on a footstool in the centre of the circle. Very soon we heard slight noises, and on taking up the plasticine found imprints of a spirit child's hand and foot. Another spirit child was also present, but she, not understanding just what was required, simply jabbed her finger ends about a dozen times into the paste. Dr. Whitcomb remarked, "She says she has given you a lot."

At the same time as this was going on, scratching in the closed and locked slates was heard. After a few minutes, we decided to open up the slates to see if anything had been written. One of the sitters had recently lost a brother, and here was a message from him.

Prior to the commencement of the seance, we had placed a small piece of slate pencil between the slates, but the message was written in red and blue. This was very unusual, so we once more enclosed the slate pencil, locked the padlock, placed the key in my pocket, and asked the question, "Where did you get the colour from?" We again heard slight scribbling, and, on looking inside the slates, we found the answer, "From your carpet," written, leaving us very perplexed.

As a final and parting act, the two Hindustani guides, Abdul and Selim, said they would bring something that would require feeding, and that we had better bring in the cage. (We always had a bird cage handy.) Singing was engaged in for a moment, and then we saw drop on the medium's breast, and then on to his knees, two English goldfinches. These seemed to be dead, but when we reached out for them one picked itself up and flew about the room, ultimately being caught in the window. The other also came out of its stupor, and was placed in the cage, both eventually finding their way into the aviary, being company for many other apported birds, native and foreign.

The tablet weighed 1 lb. 13 oz., and is still in perfect condition; the birds soon settled down, and built a nest, rearing a brood of youngsters in due course. Amongst other apports we had brought were scores of Babylonian tablets, with cuneiform writing, Chinese books, Cyprian manuscripts, one hundred Chinese coins, Turkish, Indian, French and ancient coins, Egyptian vase, native weapons and dresses, divining cups, tortoise, fish, seawater, seaweed, piece of wreck, bucketful of blue metal, precious pieces of gold from Indian palaces, and many other objects.

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INTERSTATE TOURS

Mr. Charles Neil, who has acted as Australian Spiritualist Publicity Officer for the last 20 years, has been asked to arrange for Sydney Spiritualists to visit for one week churches in any of the following cities: Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth. He will also arrange, if requested, for Spiritualists in these centres to visit other cities.

If you are interested, write to Mr. Neil at 8 Hatfield, Waruda Street, Kirribilli, Sydney, N.S.W.

HOW I KNOW MY GUIDES

By Harry Edwards, in "The Spiritual Healer."

We know that with the transition of an individual to the spirit state his individuality continues with him. He does not suddenly change into a perfect angelic being; he continues as he is with his likes, dislikes and ideals for a time until a readjustment of values takes place; and if he is absorbed in his earthly profession he will often continue its study.

Thus we find that the spirit healing guides are often those who were doctors and surgeons during their earth existence. Their love of helping humanity and interest in research still persist. They soon see that in the spirit realm they are freed from the limitation of physical perceptions; they must see before them a new realm of almost infinite possibilities. But this knowledge they have to acquire, step by step, by trial and error, in the same way as man's knowledge has been obtained. It is logical to assume that they can attend schools of learning in the same way as doctors do on earth.

The final step in proving any healing knowledge is to apply it to the patient and on earth the human experiment is always the vital test. Thus we can understand that with spirit healing there are a number of healing guides who were doctors on earth.

In addition to the doctor class there are often what we are pleased to call the more primitive class—those who were of the coloured races when on earth. The help of these great people is invaluable in imparting strengthening and vitalizing forces. They were more close to nature during their previous life than we are and they have continued to develop that characteristic in their spirit life and are therefore able to give great help in cases of anaemia, weaknesses,

balancing of blood and nerve conditions, manipulations, etc.

For fifteen years I did not know which particular guide was operating in my healing work. I was content with this position until, being repeatedly asked who were the healing guides working with me, I began to wish to know myself. In the past I had received numbers of descriptions of spirit personalities who had been "seen" working through me. Corroboration had been given many times, but I wished for more substantial evidence.

In March, 1946, I made the first step to seek this evidence. I contacted Mr. Frank Leah, the well-known psychic artist. I had a number of telephone interviews with him. At the outset Mr. Leah was conscious of "group" influences, but from these emerged two distinct personalities.

Mr. Leah would not put pencil to paper until some confirmation could be given in support of his own psychically received knowledge. Thus it seemed like a state of stalemate and two months went by without any progress, but on May 3rd Mr. Leah telephoned to say he was more conscious of these two personalities. He gave me descriptions of them, plus the clairaudiently received names of Pasteur and Lister.

While the descriptions coincided with those given by other mediums, this was the first time for the names to be mentioned to me. I therefore could not help very much more, and we agreed to let the matter stand over again, and I began to feel I should let the matter drop.

On the next day, May 4th, I visited Mr. and Mrs. Austen to make arrangements to dedicate their new church. After tea there were six people present and a general conversation was in progress when Mrs. Austen (who is the gifted instrument of "White Ray") beckoned me to her

side. I went over and sat on the arm of her chair.

She told me she was seeing two spirit people with me. I took out of my pocket an old envelope to make notes. These notes were scrappy but contained the essentials of what she saw and heard, and these I placed in order, as I remembered them, the same night.

Mrs. Austen first described a bearded man who was a surgeon possessing great power of concentration. He was of French nationality. His work was connected with glandular research and microbes. Animals were associated with his work and the medium saw a chimpanzee, kittens and dogs. She also described a laboratory where there were wheels, scalpels and test-tubes. She said the letter "p" was before her eyes and rapidly followed the statement, "He was responsible for finding the cure for rabies." Here Mrs. Austen took my pen and envelope and wrote the name of "Pasteur."

I was more than pleased with this after Mr. Leah's remarks the previous day.

Mrs. Austen continued: "There is a second personality and he is much stronger with you. He is your principal healing guide. He was also interested in animals and research concerning them, especially with the study of gangrene. He is of this country and was a great surgeon as well as a research worker. He was also a lecturer. This one works more with you than the other one. On earth they worked in similar lines, and though they lived in the same period they never met. They now work together with you, and the first one (Pasteur) is more interested in the research for the study of cancer and brain disorders. He is further carrying on work now concerning the nerve bases and spinal and brain diseases."

Mrs. Austen then broke off, as if assailed with a pungent smell, and said it was like disinfectant. She continued: "The second one, that is, your main guide, found the way of preventing gangrene and of putting people to sleep. There is the letter 'L,' but that may be of 'Lola,' my guide." I interjected: "It may not be so, so see if you can get the name." After a few seconds she said, "I get the initials W.T.L. and I am impressed with the name of 'Lister.'"

Mrs. Austen also spoke of a Russian influence present as well, besides those of nurses and a Roman Catholic priest.

I felt very happy and straight away took a chance of finding Mr. Leah in. On arrival at his house he told me he was about to go out but was waiting, "expecting me to come." I told him I now had the supporting evidence he needed and told him the story. When I mentioned the Russian influence, Mr. Leah reminded me that he, too, had told me of another surgeon by name of Mechnikov.

Mr. Leah then went to the easel and, in my presence, sketched in a few moments the shape of the head, eyes, mouth and other main lines of a head.

I again visited Mr. Leah a few days later, when he completed the sketch of Lister which we reproduce. Some time later, but this is another story, Mr. Leah drew the head of Pasteur, which also came into my possession. Both these pictures are now on the wall of the Sanctuary.

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PSYCHOLOGISTS READ OF MEDIUM.

There has just been published in the "British Journal of Psychology," one of the learned papers of London, a hitherto unprinted account of remarkable phenomena that occurred with the medium D. D. Home at seances during a visit to Florence in 1856.

Home, a distant relation of the Earls of Home, gave seances before many of the crowned heads of Europe, and it was largely due to the investigation of his mediumship by Sir William Crookes and others that the Society for Psychical Research in London was founded.

The article in the psychology journal, written by Dr. E. J. Dingwall, noted psychic researcher, is based on the original manuscript in the library of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, having been written by Lord Lindsay, later the 25th Earl of Crawford. It describes three sittings with D. D. Home, at the last of which Lord Lindsay was present.

The seances were held in the home of Major Charles Gregorie, who had witnessed some remarkable phenomena previously with Home. Meeting Robert Lindsay, brother-in-law of Lord Lindsay, the Major invited him to attend some sittings. Later, Lord Lindsay and his wife Margaret were also invited. There are three excellent accounts of what occurred. The first two, at which Robert was present, were taken down from him almost immediately after the sittings. The third was written by Lord Lindsay himself straightaway after the seance.

Lord Lindsay begins by remarking that his manuscript will be "a letter of marvels," for "our ghosts have all appeared in broad lamplight and around the tea-table and their manifestations and communications have been unaccompanied by any of the usual apparatus of humbug and delusion." The complete manuscript describing the three seances was composed with meticulous care.

The seances were held in the drawing room, the sitters being grouped round a heavy central table covered by a cloth which hung down for about three inches. On the table stood a Carcel

oil lamp commonly used in the 19th century. Of the first sitting Lord Lindsay writes:

"After the party had sat down to the table and placed their hands on it, tappings were heard immediately upon the table and on all the tables in the room, very violent—the table then began to tremble—swayed backwards and forwards—then suddenly and violently rose up from the ground to the height of five feet, higher than the heads of the persons sitting at it, and as violently descended—but was re-deposited on the floor as softly as a feather."

There was nothing under the table during this manifestation, a fact which was proved by Robert stooping down and looking under it. This, as did the other sittings, occurred in "broad lamplight."

When the seance was over, the company sat round the fire at tea. While chatting over the events the phenomena suddenly broke out anew at the farther end of the room. A marble-topped table—the marble slab was loose—rose to a height of three feet, then descended and tilted over. A pencil and paper which was on it remained quite still. It leaned over almost touching the floor, and when Robert put questions it answered in the conventional Spiritualist "language," making three dips for "Yes" and one for "No." Robert tried with all his strength to force the table back to its upright position but had the greatest difficulty in doing so.

Believing that these phenomena might be explainable on the basis of suggestion, Lord Lindsay, at the third sitting, declined to sit at the large table and took up his position outside the circle.

Almost as soon as Home took his place taps commenced on the underside of the table. Says Lord Lindsay:

"The table began to vibrate, and then the chairs, and then the floor, and then the whole

room trembled and shook, while the china rattled on the table at the further end of the room."

Lord Lindsay looked under the table but could observe nothing but the feet of the sitters. Almost immediately after this piece of investigation the table rose straight up to a height of four feet and remained suspended in the air for about half a minute, swaying in different directions. Lord Lindsay again looked under the table while it was levitated, but there was nothing visible and again the table came down to earth gently.

Dr. Dingwall, in reviewing these events, points out that for the movements of the objects to be explained by normal means Home must have induced one or more of his sitters to act as confederates. "This appears to me very unlikely when we consider the nature of the company and the character of the event observed," comments Dingwall.

Home, he says, could not have produced the effects unaided and even if one went as far as to assume the confederacy of either Major Gregorie or Robert Lindsay, or both, this would not explain the movements of the marble-topped table as described by the latter. Moreover, Dingwall takes this sound psychological view to discredit the theory of collusion.

"Since during the whole of Home's active life, there was the most violent controversy both over his phenomena and his character, and intense jealousy on the part of the many fraudulent mediums whom he castigated so soundly in one of his books, it is, to say the least, rather curious that no reliable witness came forward to confess to active assistance during any of his seances at any time."

Dingwall remarks in conclusion that it is a pity that so many psychologists "turn away from these problems as being unworthy of attention."

SAW SPIRIT FORM OF MAN WHO HAD JUST DIED

(Reprinted from "Two Worlds.")

The fascinating story of how he saw the spirit form of a man soon after he had passed on is related by Arthur Grimble in "A Pattern of Islands" (John Murray, 18s.). The author, who first went as a "cadet" of the Colonial Service, to the Gilbert and Ellis islands in the Central Pacific, tells of the occasion when he was the district officer on an island which had a reputation for ghosts. The tradition was that when anyone died, his spirit form had to take a certain route to a spot called the Place of Dread.

The islanders would not normally travel this route. When Grimble asked for the services of a guide to accompany him, he was met with a refusal because the journey was too perilous. Finally, a policeman agreed to take him part of the way.

Leaving the constable behind, Grimble continued his journey until he saw a man coming along the track to help him. The author writes:

"Across the arc of a curving beach, I saw him appear round a point. I could follow every yard of his course as he came nearer. My eyes never left him. He walked with a strong limp (I thought that might make it hard for him to climb a tree). He was a stocky, grizzled man of about fifty, clad rather ceremoniously in a fine mat belted about his middle (a poor kit for climbing, commented my mind). As he came up on my left, I noticed that his left cheek was scored by a scar from jawbone to temple, and that his limp came from a twisted left foot and ankle.

"The question is—did he see me? He totally ignored the greeting I gave him. He did not even turn his eyes towards me. He went by as if I didn't exist. If anyone was a ghost on that

pathway, I was—for him. He left me standing with one futile hand flapping in the air to stay him. I watched his dogged back receding towards my oncoming guide. I was shocked speechless. It was so grossly unlike the infallible courtesy of the islanders."

Though Grimble shouted, the newcomer ignored him and made straight for where he had left the constable behind. Grimble ran back to the policeman and asked who the man was, but the frightened constable said he had not seen anyone and bolted in fear. When the author returned and described to the magistrate the figure he had seen, he was told this man had died that afternoon. He was easily identified by his limp and the scars.

The author also has an extraordinary story to tell about the way in which news was conveyed from island to island when normal communication was impossible. The natives insisted that the news was conveyed by whistlers who were the ghosts of dead relations.

He describes a visit to an old woman in a cave where he heard the whistling which was translated as being the news of the passing of a man on another island. The information was later confirmed.

Grimble makes strong criticism of the early missionaries whose "indiscriminate hate of everything pagan uprooted by the way much that was beautiful and useful in native custom." He met an aged pagan who told him why he had always resisted conversion to Christianity. The pagan was a kindly old man, recognised for his loving kindness. He pointed to a rectangle of coral slabs planted beside his dwelling.

"That was the shrine of my ancestors," he said. "My father's skull was buried there, and his father's, and his father's fathers' to five generations. I buried them so that their crowns stood

forth above the sand. I saw them near me as I lay down to sleep; every evening I went down and anointed them with oil; and I spoke to them, and they answered me, and I was happy with them. Thus it was until those men came and took them away from me."

One day the missionary sent a native teacher with the instructions that he should root up the skulls of his ancestors and throw them away. The pagan refused, saying, "They hurt no man and I love them."

He was told that the shrine was an offence to the Christians who dwell in the village and a sin in the eyes of "the only true God." The pagan answered, "The voices of my fathers are more precious to me than the voice of the white missionary. They are my roots and my trunk. I die without them. I beg thee, leave me alone with them."

He was told that because of his opposition God would come to the village and destroy it. "What kind of God is he who will not let me love my fathers?" asked the pagan. The answer was, "He is the God of wrath."

The following day the missionary arrived and trampled upon the shrine, crushing and dancing on the bones. The missionary shouted as he scattered the bones among the trees, "Here I am, you spirits of the shrine, strike me dead if you can." Nothing, of course, happened, which, according to the missionary, "proved" that the shrine was valueless. When all the bones were gone the missionary spat on the spot and left.

The author comments that he wishes he could add that the day's wickedness did not go unpunished. But it did, and "the noble game of shrine-ragging" in the name of Christianity flourished for a long time.

WHITE RAY INTERVIEWED BY DAVID BEDBROOK

David Bedbrook is one of Spiritualism's best-known lecturers. He is the hon. secretary of the International Spiritualist Federation, a frequent visitor to Spiritualist societies in Europe, the author of several books and a frequent contributor to the psychic press. He is perhaps as well-known for his ability to answer questions from the public platform, of which he has made a speciality, as for any other of his numerous activities. But even teachers have themselves to be taught, and to enable Bedbrook to add to his store of knowledge he was invited to attend a session of the White Ray circle and submit any questions he chose. Here is a report of the conversation, with questions and comments by sitters in *italics* and White Ray's replies in the ordinary type known as roman.

Is it you I see building up?

It is one of us. For I come to you not as one, but as several gathered together. I come to you to bring service from us, for it is our joy and our privilege to come and serve. For once we were on earth as you are now, contacting the same temptations, facing the same problems as you do.

We do not come to you as great teachers, for this is not right; we do not come to you as judges, for this is not true. We have the knowledge of time ahead of you in the world of spirit, we have the knowledge brought to us by your side and by different spheres. But we only have the knowledge that came with years and mistakes; and mistakes which you are making now we made before you. So we do not come imposing this hard-gained knowledge on to you, but we come offering it to you as blessed fruits which we have

gathered along the path of everlasting life, along the path of pain, trials, happiness and joy.

And as we contact this little circle of love we are grateful indeed; we are grateful to be allowed to come, to be allowed to speak to you—for indeed it is advancement for us. Do not forget, my friends, that when we give to you we also gain. We come to you with our hands full, but we go back from your side with our souls uplifted and our hearts moved, full of that trust and love which you give to us.

It is very wonderful that, among this world of turmoil in which you are living, your minds should still search for knowledge in sincerity. We realise the efforts that some of you have to make to teach an unbelieving world, unbelieving because of deception and ignorance, unbelieving but hungry for truth. We realise all you are doing and, if sometimes you fail, do not feel disheartened, because though you may have been sadly disappointed, though you may feel your efforts have been in vain, it is not so. No efforts are ever made in vain, all efforts bear their fruits sooner or later, but all have a meaning. And when you on your side work to bring unto some poor soul the light which you realise, indeed it is a great work.

I understand in the spirit world there are seven spheres and ninety-four divisions. Can you tell me how many divisions there are in each sphere, or are there more in some than in others?

It is so. There are in some spheres more divisions than in others.

Can you tell me how many in any particular sphere?

Yes, it is possible. You see, my friend, there are actually more than seven spheres, but there are seven outstanding spheres. There are, as you know, separations from the spheres through different vibrations. But let us first take the par-

titions, as you call them. The higher spheres have fewer partitions. The higher you go the fewer partitions will you find. It is more or less like a different control, a supervising interest that separates the different gradations, the different activities in those spheres. In the fifth sphere you will find only four definite partitions; in the sixth are only three; and the last has one central control. This is easy to understand? In your own system, I believe, you have the same thing, the same controls.

It is necessary for the power and the radiations that are directed from different directions and world planes to be controlled at first by many different intelligences that are residing in different control rooms. These are concentrated on to another plane or sphere, and as it goes on to higher spheres the control increases in its intensity, and also in its density. And it has then only to be directed by one partition, for those partitions are definite cells of life, the essence of life, into the planes of spirit. As in your world you use the word capital where the life is centred, it is so on our side in different spheres.

In the lower spheres they are not merely divided into divisions but those divisions into national zones?

Yes.

As the partitions become fewer, are the national zones absorbed into one zone?

It is so exactly. There is a process of refining, that the soul in different spheres of spirit is undergoing, until it becomes merged into just one.

People in the third sphere are in national zones, I understand, but as they get higher they are fused into great federations of spirit.

It is not a question of different nationalities altogether. The mentality has more to do with it than the nationality. You will find that after the

second sphere nationality does not matter at all, except when you might contact your earth and bring memories. It is not of any importance to us. In our world thoughts are understood and minds not in harmony with each other automatically separate.

On your side, when different nationalities have the same fundamental interests, their nationality does not matter; it is only mind that matters. It is more so in spirit. People who are more orthodox go together, though they might be just as spiritually evolved as someone not orthodox, but they go into a separate zone. But as spirits they merge together as they go along towards the same understanding, though remaining different individualities.

Am I right in assuming that very quickly realisation of spiritual understanding comes to the individual after his rebirth into the spirit world?

Yes. You see, the trouble on your side is that you have bodies and those bodies limit your understanding of thoughts. When you come to the world of spirit, you then become aware of each other's thoughts, you can read each other's thoughts without speaking. So you do not find deception by evolved spirits, though you find it in the lower spheres.

What do you mean by the lower spheres?

Spheres not included in your seven. Those seven are the average spheres of advancement. The others are many in number.

Do you mean the astral?

Yes, and also what we call the underworld, for this is very populated. We have much work to do there, and this is where we need the help from your world to contact them and to bring a higher understanding, an understanding of their own individuality, an understanding of their own greatness and possibilities of evolving, of love and intelligence.

Evolution must come from within?

It is so. There is no evolution from without. No one else can determine your evolution; you have to earn it yourself. There is no change for you but by yourself. There is no God who will sit on a throne, as you mention in your churches, and will judge you. God is creative and not destructive, and has given to each the power to assess his own thoughts.

Am I right in assuming that the microscopic world of bacilli is separate from any other?

No. It has different living conditions and it is, in a way, a well organised community, very well organised. Its growth depends on the way it is organised, but it is thriving in your atmosphere. It needs your atmosphere to thrive.

Does it depend on the type of bacilli that some thrive more lustily than others?

It does. Some need quite a different atmosphere, and some thrive better than others in warm climates, though as a rule very few thrive in the cold. Dampness is their greatest asset. Cold, bitter cold, will not help them; but heat and damp are really their best conditions. You will be able, as you observe them in your science, to follow their lives and progress, but definitely they live in your atmosphere. They have to plan their attacks upon you.

It is planned then?

It is so. The action is not an action done by individuals. These movements are definitely guided and directed by intelligence.

You mean intelligence peculiar to themselves?

It is so. It is well within their power to plan. They need your world and your atmosphere and they know that need.

Is it possible to be a Spiritualist without being a vegetarian? Some people consider meat is necessary for them.

Some people on your earth are in need of flesh food. When you truly avoid what is unnecessary, and only use when you cannot help using, what is necessary for your body, if you find that flesh is necessary then you are not committing what you call in your world a sin by eating it.

But if you unnecessarily provoke suffering in the killing of an animal, however small the intelligence might seem to you, then it is an act of guilt towards yourself.

I have been reading an article on the cruel methods used in the killing of pigs.

It is so. There is much cruelty in that, much cruelty that could be avoided. The Great Spirit has permitted certain things to be used on this earth, but does not allow cruelty to be shown to any one of His creatures. If any living thing or even vegetation is unnecessarily or cruelly destroyed, it is an act of great consequence, however small it might seem to you on earth. We often come to you telling you it is motive that counts, and it is so.

If you find that your motive is really necessary and sincere and without any form of inflicting unnecessary cruelty or suffering upon any of God's creatures, then you are justified. But if you come across a revolting act, injustice, cold-blooded murder, if it be only of an animal, you should try and rise in your world, for you have a brain, a tongue, and a hand. You can do, and write, and say many things. Many words can bear weight, and if many repeat the same plea, do you not think that this unkind attitude towards the small intelligences should stop? It depends on each one of you, and however small and unnecessary it might seem to you, it is very much true that even if it is cruelty inflicted to an insect the responsibility bears upon you all, just as it did upon us when we were on earth, and

just as it does upon us when we stay silent and do not mention these things to you.

Is reincarnation true? It seems to be the only thing that can explain the inequalities of our different surroundings.

Yes. Not in all circumstances, but in some there are previous incarnations, and what you call reincarnation does exist though much heated discussion has come into your world over it. I do not expect the medium would agree, but it is true that there are souls who have gone through trials on your earth before and are allowed to come back from the spheres of spirit to the material plane. They have themselves chosen their lives, as you all do whether you realise it or not. For not a soul comes on this earth without having chosen his life of his own free will.

Do we, before birth, choose our parents and our lives?

Yes. No one is sent. They all apply for their different homes, they all apply for their different stations of life. And they go where they think they are most needed, or where they think they can make a better evolution, where they can learn better lessons. Yes, you all choose your lives, but you do not always live them as you have chosen. And often those who fail, on coming to our plane, ask for the privilege of going back again. I daresay you do not think it a privilege now, but you asked to come.

Should we have knowledge of having lived before?

No. It is very necessary not to, for you are not meant to know the details. You see, when you come back on this earth, sometimes it is a very wonderful soul that will volunteer to come and help your world, but in most cases the returning spirits are those who have failed at some point of their lives, who are asking for another opportunity of redeeming that mistake. It would be very easy if they remembered what that mistake

was—would it not? It would be like a mistake made by a child, if you give them their copy books, they are watching for that mistake all the time. No, it is not advisable for you to know, for you can allow your better selves to do, by a sense of duty towards other creatures, what otherwise you might do by sense of duty towards yourselves.

Most people who think they remember their incarnations claim to have been somebody important. Are these mostly cases of impingement of another spirit upon them, so they gain the impression they have lived that life, but have not actually done so?

It is so, very much so. They like to take the achievements of others for their own. It is a sense of vanity that is very much awake. You have many spirits with you all. Sometimes I suppose you wonder why so many gather around to help you. It is not just you, but by your contact they contact the earth in ways they can help, ways you do not even know. You wonder why one poor little creature attracts so many evolved beings. It is only because they use you, need you.

And it is so that many who have such influence from a more evolved soul, take that influence as reminiscent of a past incarnation. And as you know the human nature is not always a very humble one. They would not choose a lower station of life on earth for their reminiscences, but rather go to one that flatters their imagination. This is very much a mistake on their part. This, I fear, will not be very popular with some.

It is very comforting to know that, though playing a humble part, we are channels to be used for other people.

It is so. And when you tell us you are grateful to us, I say, No, we are grateful to you, for it is only through you that we achieve perfect understanding ourselves. So we do owe you much.

I still think it is we who owe you more. By helping as channels, it teaches us to efface self.

It is so. But do remember that we, as well as you, are all a part of a beautiful picture, a complete picture, and all the parts of the picture are just as important one to the other. So you are just as important as we are and what we are going through you will experience. There are different stages of evolution and we are all meant to go through them. So, indeed, we are brothers—elder brothers and younger brothers—not teachers, and not masters, no!

I will depart from your company, my friends, now. I have been so very happy with you. I have, with my friends from the spirit world, been submerged in that wonderful peace and harmony which was in your world, and indeed it is wonderful when we contact your earth to find those conditions which we found tonight with you. It is well worth coming and we leave you in the truth and peace of the Great Spirit. Do not forget that our friendship is no vain word, that when you feel the need to appeal to us at any moment of your lives it is always a joy to come to your service.

—:o:—

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