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FAMOUS NORTH COUNTRY SEER RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF AARON WILKINSON

By J. ARTHUR HILL

Author of "Psychical Science and Religious Belief,"
"Letters from Sir Oliver Lodge," etc.

I WISH to put on record a few facts and impressions about that remarkable Medium of whom I have written in preceding issues of this paper, under the heading of "Further Evidence of Survival."

Aaron Wilkinson lived, all his life, in or near Halifax, Yorkshire. As a child he had little schooling, on account of his defective sight. Several operations were performed on his eyes—for cataract, I think—and though he was enabled to see his way about, and to read a little, he was unable to recognise anyone across a road, and he had to use a hand magnifying-glass for reading, in addition to the thick spectacles which he wore habitually. While still a child, he began to see things which other people did not see and was duly spanked when he told his experiences. No doubt his parents thought it well to discourage what they took to be the exercise of a too exuberant imagination. Accordingly, he soon learnt to keep his experiences to himself.

I have heard him say that one of his grandmothers was psychic; but, if his parents knew anything of the subject, they must have thought that psychic power as well as imagination, is not a thing to be cultivated.

Before he was out of his 'teens, Wilkinson went to a Spiritualistic seance, taken probably by someone who knew of his clairvoyant faculty. The things seen must have been evidential, even in those early days; for he was soon in request, as speaker and clairvoyant, at Spiritualist meetings. As time went on, he became widely known, and was away from home most of his time, fulfilling engagements from Paignton in Devon to Aberdeen in the north and from London to South Wales, where he was particularly well known.

He came to see me, as I have said, when he could, in his home interludes. For a long time—and indeed to some extent all his life after I came to know him—he

was insistent that his visit should not be thought of as a seance. He said that he would not give sittings in the customary way, for a fee, because he would feel upset if people paid money and he happened to fail. He came to me in a social way, for a chat and a cup of tea, and if he got no clairvoyance I expressed no disappointment—though I felt it!—and in that event he would accept no money, not even his railway fare of a shilling or so.

DEFINITE INCOME REFUSED

I often wished that he would give up his fatiguing travels and settle down at home, giving regular sittings to me and to friends of mine. We promised him a definite income at least for a trial year, if he liked the idea. It would have been an easier life for him, and it might have led to an improvement of the evidential quality of his clairvoyance, for his mind would have been quieter than it was when he was continually travelling about, staying with all sorts of different people. But our proposal did not appeal to him. He rather liked change of company, and he had become accustomed to the travelling, though he did say sometimes that he was getting tired of it. Moreover, the financial side did not interest him much. He had inherited or saved enough for his modest wants.

He lived with sisters—he never married—in two cottages made into one, in an outlying part of Halifax, with an acre or two of land, which had been in the family for some time. So he went on with his public work until the end of 1929, when he began to feel unwell. He came to see me a few times, getting no clairvoyance, and obviously feeling ill. He died in March, 1930, aged fifty-one.

I need not describe the average kind of sitting, for I have done so in various books. Generally, the communications were from our own relatives or friends, and were always of evidential character. If a friend died,

even at any distance, he usually turned up not long afterwards.

Sometimes, Wilkinson would get impressions concerning me when he was away, and would write to me. Once, when he was at Bournemouth, he wrote that he had an impression of the presence of an old man who had known me, name William Parberry (pseudonym). He felt that this old man was waiting about for some old chum who was soon to go over. The facts were that William Parberry Leather (Wilkinson had got only part of the name) had been well known to me; and, at the time of this incident, Mr. Leather's brother-in-law and life-long chum was dying; he passed over about a week later. I have no reason to believe that Wilkinson knew of the brother-in-law's existence, or indeed of Mr. Leather's until after he appeared at my sittings.

WAITING FOR RELATIVES

I had much other evidence of this "meeting" kind. It is one of the things which seem most certain to me. Over and over again Wilkinson has described and named some spirit who, he said, was waiting about for some near relative or dear friend to pass over; and it always was so, though I was sure that the medium could not know anything about the people concerned. I am sure that we are met and helped by those we should most wish to meet us. It is a comforting thought.

Another interesting feature in Wilkinson's mediumship was his power of determining the length of time since the death of the person whose form he saw. He was extremely correct in this, and I think he usually got it by impression or clairaudience. But he often said that he could make an estimate, from the appearance of the form. A recently-departed person seemed solid—as solid as the sitters, he would say—while a long-dead person seemed ethereal and tenuous, difficult to see. I suppose this was because the latter had got further away from earth conditions. Wilkinson was always right in this also. He saw and described hundreds of forms of people, during the twenty years that I had sittings with him, and they had died at various periods; some only a few days before the sitting, some twenty or more years before. His estimate from appearance was always right, and when he gave the number of years, as he often did, that was never far out either—never more than a year even if the person had been dead twenty years.

And what about conditions on the other side? I have not asked many questions about this, for my main object was to get evidence for the survival of human personality. But there was a certain amount of incidental information. It seems certain that the state following death is one of sleep or convalescence. The length of this period varies, and it is determined at least partly by the nature of the illness. After long and exhausting illness there is a long rest; after a sudden departure there is a speedy waking, usually after a few weeks or even days. Then, in one case known to me, the spirit was taken away, "to scenes fair and fresh," where he would rest, in the company of those who had met him. It reminded me of the island-valley of Avilion, "Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, Nor ever wind blows loudly"; where King Arthur would heal him of his grievous wound. And after convalescence on the other side, there seems to be progress in knowledge and spirituality, towards a goal unthinkably remote, as Myers said. But I heard nothing through Wilkinson of planes or physical distances. There is still some connexion with

time and space, but those bonds are looser than with us. This is about as much as I have learnt, and it is enough to be going on with. We shall learn more in due time.

I conclude with a few more words about Aaron Wilkinson, to whom I owe so much. He was one of Nature's gentlemen. Unschoolled but intelligent, he had picked up much in his travels, and was always interesting in his talk. And above all he was a man of sterling honesty. Evidently he often pondered over the queer gift that he possessed, and he said to me more than once, with a half-puzzled, half-confident air: "Well, if it isn't what it purports to be, I don't know what it is." I think it was what it purported to be. To his gifts, mainly, I owe my conviction of survival, and my gratitude to him is greater than I can express in any words.

I have said much about Wilkinson's powers, but I have not described his personal appearance. There is not much to say, except that he was clean shaven, very short in stature, rather light-haired, and of a build which inclined to portliness. He had nothing of the wild or weird about him. He had the ruddy face of a farmer, and until his last illness he seemed to have perfect health, both of body and mind. It is sometimes said that trance mediumship weakens the personality, because the will is given up to another control. Well, Wilkinson was to some extent a trance Medium, but there was no doubt about the strength of his character. He knew his own mind, and could assert himself. Along with this went an exceptional scrupulousness about accepting money, and the two characteristics once made me the object of a rebuke from him. I had felt that he was not fair to himself in accepting nothing or next to nothing for his visits to me, so I sent him two pounds at Christmas. He replied that he would not return the money, since that would seem ungracious, but he desired me not to do such a thing again. I felt rather crushed, but I respected him for it.

ESTABLISHED FACTS

A VIGOROUS defence of Mediumship appeared in the *Daily Mirror* (February 8th) from the pen of Dr. Frederick H. Wood, of Blackpool—a writer well-known to readers of LIGHT. Dr. Wood's conclusion is as follows:

"As a problem, mediumship is not a question of belief or assumption, but of fact. And among the facts now established through mediumship we can assert the following with confidence that further research will probably corroborate and amplify them:

1. We do survive death.
2. There is a future life, for which we should make preparation now.
3. We can [and do, frequently] communicate with "our dead," Actually, of course, there are no "dead."
4. There is an unseen world, into which we sometimes pass during the hours of sleep, though the conscious mind seldom remembers it.
5. We have a spiritual body which does not die; as distinct from a physical one which must die when it has served its purpose.

"These five claims are sufficient to make men and women think. Once the fact is grasped that the whole of this material world is governed by vibration—and the latest science has established this—it requires very little imagination to perceive the possibility of other worlds, interpenetrating it and functioning upon other vibrations."

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MEDIUM OR CONJURER?

MASTER MAGICIAN ON RUDI SCHNEIDER'S POWERS

By Prof. D. F. FRASER-HARRIS, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.S.E.

THOSE who deny that the telekinesis of Rudi Schneider is produced by an "unknown power" (Osty, 1931) must hold that he makes the objects move about by the activity—physical contact—of his hands and (or) feet.

There is no escape from this dilemma both horns of which are well marked—he either possesses paranormal power or he is an extremely accomplished conjurer.

Confining ourselves for the moment to the series of 54 seances which Schneider gave in London in 1932, I can speak with certainty of 37 of them at which I was present and in which I controlled (or sub-controlled) the teledynamist on 29 occasions. I am positive there were no accomplices present, with or without apparatus.

I shall take only the major phenomena—billowing of the curtains, levitation of solid objects, the production of phantoms, raps sounded to order and the production of cold—these were either brought about by the agency of a hitherto unrecognised form of force or "power" or by trickery, legerdemain or conjuring, call it what you will. The latter would mean that Schneider is an extraordinarily expert conjurer who has for years deceived some of the most experienced psychical researchers in Europe, including Mr. H. Price.

The longer he practises this (hypothetical) legerdemain, the more accomplished he should become; but, as a matter of fact, his powers would seem to be waning. Now, surely practice makes perfection in conjuring as in all else.

Curiously enough, it so happens that an expert conjurer, Mr. Will Goldston, on one occasion took the trouble to examine Schneider with the express purpose of ascertaining how much knowledge of legerdemain he possessed. The incident is described in *Secrets of Famous Illusionists* by Will Goldston, founder of the Magicians' Club (John Long, 1933).

This world-famous conjurer visited Mr. Price's laboratory on December 16th, 1929. Arriving before anyone else, he contrived to be in the seance-room before Rudi entered and was the last to leave it. Mr. Goldston searched the cabinet and found no trap-doors or other apertures in its solid walls. Rudi was searched by two persons who found no appliances whatever on him. During the seance, when Mr. Price controlled Rudi, Mr. Goldston sat next but one to the Medium—the sub-controller, a lady, being between them. The phenomena that evening were excellent; and so impressed Mr. Goldston that he wrote an article describing them in the *Sunday Graphic* (Dec. 22nd, 1929).

Mr. Goldston's words in his book just referred to are (p. 124): "I persuaded him (R.S.) to let me show him a few sleight-of-hand tricks. He knew nothing of the principle of mis-direction, for he followed my movements with the eyes of a child." In the *Sunday Graphic* we have the following testimony: "I am convinced that what I saw at the seance was not trickery. No group of my fellow magicians could have produced these effects under such conditions."

This opinion of an acknowledged master of legerdemain is an unexpected confirmation of our view that the telekinetic and teledynamic performances of Rudi Schneider are not produced by his hands or feet. For that is the point at issue—these amazing happenings are either due to paranormal power or to human intervention. The latter means superb conjuring, and an expert conjurer assures us that Rudi does not know the first thing about conjuring.

Mr. Richard A. Bush, leader of Wimbledon Spiritualist Church and author of several books on psychic subjects, left estate valued at £37,136. He was a member of the L.S.A., to which he bequeathed £100.

MARQUIS OF DONEGALL

IMPRESSED BY MRS. ESTELLE ROBERTS' CLAIRVOYANCE

THE MARQUIS OF DONEGALL (whose part in the sensational alleged "exposure" of Mr. John Myers, the photographic Medium will be remembered) announces in the *Sunday Dispatch* (February 11th) that he has begun to investigate Spiritualism and intends to continue over the next two or three months, in his spare time, "to collect evidence which will satisfy him of survival."

He began his investigation, it appears, on Monday night last week, when he "went to hear Mrs. Estelle Roberts do clairvoyance" at a meeting which (although he does not say so) was no doubt held at the headquarters of the Marylebone Spiritualist Association.

Commenting on what he heard, the Marquis writes: "I do not propose to say much about Mrs. Estelle Roberts's clairvoyance. It was an ordinary meeting of one of the psychic societies, where the Medium, from a platform, describes the spirits which she apparently sees and gives messages from them to members of the public. It all happens with the electric light on. So far as I could judge Mrs. Roberts produced a very large number of facts about members of the public and their dead relations, which she could not possibly have known before. She certainly saved one woman's mother from suicide. That, I think, is fair enough comment and is as far as I am prepared to go at the moment.

"My experiences of investigating Spiritualism, until last Monday, have been singularly unfortunate. That is not my fault, but it has given Spiritualists the idea that I am 'anti' and out to 'expose' people. Nothing is farther from the truth as I made quite clear in print after one of my 'unfortunate' experiences."

The Marquis of Donegall adds that on Friday night last week he lunched "with a materialistic sort of man-about-town" who surprised him by talking about psychic experiences. His Medium was Estelle Roberts.

"What Mrs. Roberts, in trance, told my man-about-town friend," the Marquis writes, "was much more interesting and evidential than anything at the open meeting. She did not know his name and had never seen him before in her life."

At a meeting of the Scottish Psychical Society in Edinburgh, Mr. H. Scott Harrison said the use of ultra-violet light and a camera in microscopy had made visible a whole new world of structure too fine to be seen by the eye even under the highest magnification, and when the demand for more sensitive plates was met, the scientists might find themselves in a realm which Spiritualists recognised as the psychic.

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EARTHBOUND SPIRITS

STRANGE STORY OF RESCUE TOLD BY THE LATE
ALFRED KITSON

EARTHBOUND spirits and their rescue through the efforts of early Yorkshire Spiritualists, are dealt with in an autobiography written by the late Alfred Kitson, founder of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union, and quoted from at considerable length by the *Dewsbury Reporter* (February 3rd).

Mr. Kitson relates that, following a gathering at Howley Ruins (a mansion said to have been destroyed by Cromwell) near Batley, Yorkshire, it was decided to hold a meeting in the cellars where, it was rumoured, there still lingered earthbound spirits of people formerly associated with the mansion. Mr. Kitson did not approve of this proposal and went away, but was called back by one of the party who told him that some of the Mediums "were under control, screaming and kicking." Therefore he hastened back.

"When I arrived on the scene," he writes, "all was in wild commotion and confusion. Those under control were fighting desperately with all who tried to hold them in restraint. Miss Atkins (the Medium of his home circle) was one of the worst affected. I advised the friends to get all those under control out of the cellars into the open air as quickly as possible. In my efforts to rescue Miss Atkins I got severely kicked on the shins. When I succeeded in getting the Medium into the open air I was unable to induce the spirit to quit control. It was afraid of being dragged back into its cell of long confinement. So, assisted by our local friends, we led her (the Medium under control) to Mr. J. W. Gales, the caretaker of our meeting place at Batley Carr.

"Even then we had much difficulty in inducing the spirit to withdraw. I had to explain matters very fully to it, and assure it that we were its friends to help, and not enemies to hurt or injure in any way, and so it would not be dragged back into captivity. . . . At a late hour it withdrew, and we were able to return to our homes."

"Mr. Kitson goes on to explain that they were told that, in the days when the hall was inhabited, this spirit (who gave her name as Evelyne) lived with her husband at Soothill Hall, Oak Road, Batley, and was in the habit of paying friendly calls at Howley Hall. On the occasion of what proved to be her last visit, having her little baby girl with her, she was grossly insulted by the master of the hall, and because she indignantly resented his actions and threatened him with exposure, she was deprived of her baby—which was subsequently killed—and incarcerated in the cell in which the meeting had been held, and after being subjected to many more indignities she was put to death. Strange to say, she had continued to think herself a prisoner and had remained there in a kind of coma, from which she was awakened by the singing and by the magnetism of the visitors, and perhaps aided by spirit people. "As the 'law of control' is to enter the organism of the Medium by similar sensations as those experienced at death, the spirit lived over again when controlling Miss Atkins, her desperate struggles with the jailors who had murdered her. Hence her screams and frantic kicking."

Following this, according to the story told by Mr. Kitson, a number of other earthbound spirits were rescued from the cellars, including the husband of Evelyne and two jailors.

"They (the jailors) proved to be rough, rude fellows, without any compassion," says the writer. "Each one in turn was full of antagonism, and threatened us with severe punishment for daring to bring them forcibly away from their post of duty. They, too, seemed to be unaware of their ceath and of the lapse of time. They were also unaware that the hall, once so large and imposing, was a mass of ruins."

WAS IT "WALTER"?

QUESTION AND ANSWER AT LONDON VOICE
SEANCE

IN addition to acting as "control" for his sister "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon), in Boston, U.S.A., "Walter" is very much in evidence at the experimental sittings held by Dr. Glen Hamilton in Winnipeg, Canada. Now we are informed that his voice has also been heard in London.

Writing to *LIGHT* from 101 Guilford Street, W.C.1., Mr. L. Page says:—

"On the 1st January, I was at a direct voice seance in London at which 'Walter' Stinson spoke. Being the first time I had personally encountered the famous 'Walter' I was rather interested. He gave a sardonic laugh such as I had read about, and others present immediately knew who it was as he had spoken before.

"It so happened that I had just finished reading Mrs. Hack's book on the Millesimo seances, and being much interested in the apport mediumship of Madam Rossi, I wondered if she were still in London. It occurred to me that 'Walter', if it was really he, would probably know, and asked him the question: 'Can you tell me where the Rossis are?' His reply was: 'They are half-way between two countries; write to Alassio.'

"After a good deal of trouble, I found out Mr. Rossi's address and wrote to him for verification. It appears that 'Walter's' reply, though not quite accurate, was a natural one for a person who did not know exactly but could put me on the track. The Rossis live at Genoa, which is sixty miles from Alassio; but Mrs. Hack (who wrote the book and knows their address) lives very close to Alassio at San Remo. Mr. Rossi thinks it is excusable to mix up these two places—I suppose much as one might be uncertain whether an address was Brighton or Hove. Also he thinks that when 'Walter' said 'Half-way between two countries,' he was thinking of the fact that Alassio and San Remo are exactly half-way between Genoa and the French frontier. 'Walter's' answer seems sufficiently good to be evidence of his *bona fides*."

HAUNTED HOTEL ROOM

A STORY bearing on the sinking of the "Titanic" (the disaster in which W. T. Stead was drowned) is told in *The Daily Colonial*, of Victoria, British Columbia, by Mr. H. G. Anderson, of Courtenay, B.C., who says that "with age coming along fast and poor health," he feels the urge to relate the incident.

Mr. Anderson says that, at the time of the disaster (1913) he was in charge of the Balmoral Hotel, Victoria, in which a Mr. E. P. Colley had a room reserved. Mr. Colley had been in Ireland and was returning to America by the "Titanic." On the night before the ship sank, a lady came to the hotel, and as the only vacant room was that of Mr. Colley, she was put into it. What followed was related in the morning by the night clerk.

"Some time after midnight," he writes, "the clerk was surprised to see the lady from 43 come into the office. She explained that she could not sleep, that she appeared to be suffocating in the room. At first she had thought the hotel must be on fire, and opened the door and went into the hall. Everything was all right. After an hour the lady returned to the room, but soon came down again. This happened three times, I believe. On the last occasion she asked the clerk who was the absent tenant of the room. The clerk told her about Mr. Colley being in Ireland and soon to return. The lady replied: 'You many depend upon it that Mr. Colley is in trouble of some kind. His presence was in that room to-night, and he is worried and wishes to draw attention to something or other in the room. He was there to-night.'

"The next afternoon we got news of the Titanic. It might have been coincidence, and it might not; the answer will depend upon the mental viewpoint."

ANCESTRAL MEMORIES

A RIVAL HYPOTHESIS TO REINCARNATION

By DR. NANDOR FODOR

THAT enchanting book *Peter Ibbetson* by George du Maurier is a splendid stimulant to languid psychic imagination. It is a novel on *dreaming true*, the art of carrying your waking consciousness into your dream life without a break. The technique is thus described:

"You must always sleep on your back with your arms above your head, your hands clasped under it and your feet crossed, the right one over the left, unless you are left-handed; and you must never for a moment cease thinking of where you want to be in your dream till you are asleep and get there; and you must never forget in your dream where and what you were when awake. You must join the dream on to reality."

The technique might be wrong, as the story is pure fiction, and it differs from true *dreaming-true* experiences inasmuch as Peter Ibbetson and his lady-love only move in the shadow world of their own memories. They enter ghostlike into a world which is alive but unchangeable, as if they had gone to see a film of their past and found themselves suddenly projected on to the silver screen. They can hear, see and smell, but they "must not touch nor pick flowers or leaves, nor move things about. It blurs the dream, like breathing on a window pane."

No other living being, with a consciousness of the waking world shares their adventures, but they can mutually open up the magic portal of their individual conscious and subconscious memory life, with every sensation of reality and waking recollection, by holding hands. They see themselves as children, and a strange psychometric element even enables the ghostly observers to listen to the conversation of their elders which only the walls and furniture could have heard. They discover other strange things. Practice helps Peter Ibbetson to be more, for a second or two, than a mere spectator. He can become his old self to be touched and caressed by those he had so loved, and hold the sensation just as long as he could hold his breath, before blurring the dream. He learns to touch things, too. He picks up a stone and throws it at the wall where it disappears without a sound. And the same stone still lies at his feet. But if he throws something belonging to himself (his penknife or any such personal dream property) it would rebound from the wall as in real life, fall on the ground and remain there until he picked it up.

No news can reach these dreamers from the world outside except what they themselves bring from their waking life: Peter Ibbetson from the penitentiary where he serves a life sentence for murder, and the Duchess of Towers from her own particular sphere. The Duchess of Towers creates for Peter Ibbetson a dream palace with the best that the world has ever offered to her eyes in memories; and just when all that splendour begins to pall for want of having someone else to share it, there comes a portentous discovery.

Concentrating their united will, by slow degrees, they can evoke the memories of their ancestors till at length the day arrives when they can move among them and hear them and see them as distinctly as they could their own immediate progenitors. As they could also identify themselves occasionally with the actors of this pre-natal past, the conclusion is impressed on Peter Ibbetson that a "little live spark of your own individual consciousness, when the full, quick flame of your actual life here below is extinguished, will be handed down mildly incandescent to your remotest posterity."

At this stage of Peter Ibbetson's narrative an imaginative reader hardly can escape associations suggested by psychic lines of thought:

1. If such ancestral recollections could become a possibility, an encompassing knowledge of the history

of more remote humanity would unfold to exploring minds. For, to quote Peter Ibbetson: "At the seventh century there was not a person living in France (not to mention Europe) who was not in the line of our direct ancestry, excepting, of course, those who died without issue and were mere collaterals." Ancestral recollections would furnish the same link to the distant past as a piece of stone furnishes to our psychometrists.

2. If it were possible for us to *go back*, we could not deny that a spark of the ancestral spirit may *go on* in us. To be more concrete: we could presume that our earthly experiences, while they are entirely our own, could, unknown and without a loss to us, also feed an ancestral spirit.

This latter presumption emerges from the world of dreams as a practical thought.

The fundamental argument for Reincarnation is that no other hypothesis has ever been put forward which sufficiently explains, and makes compatible with divine justice, the inequalities of life. I venture to submit that here is a scheme which, as a pure hypothesis, may claim equal place with Reincarnation. For an ancestral spirit, through that handed-down spark of his consciousness, could share, while evolving on extra-terrestrial planes, in all the experiences which the plane of matter can offer. Moreover, it might, previously to birth, exercise a directive influence, to the good of all concerned, over the environment it was to be born into.

Indeed, preservation of the species, that blind instinct for which we cannot account, would in this light assume a tremendous spiritual significance. It would stand for the at-one-ness of departed beings with the sum-total of human experience for aeons to come. It would knit the two worlds into closer bonds than ever suspected, leaving the necessity, if at all, of reincarnation to those whose lines become prematurely extinct. If at all, because the argument of the survival of the fittest, for aught we know, may have some mysterious application to the species of *Homo Sapiens*.

I do not put this reasoning forward in an attempt to disprove Reincarnation (which it could not) or to argue for the possibility of ancestral recollections (which I do not wish to). Both class of explanations lend themselves to less stupendous explanations (overshadowing, latent memories, dream adventures, etc.). All I wanted to show is that it is unwise to ascribe a special virtue to any system of thought because an alternative explanation does not leap to the eye.

Lady Carey, presiding at a propaganda meeting in connection with Leeds Central Spiritualist Society on Sunday last, said her husband, Sir Willoughby Carey, spoke to her three weeks after his death through the mediumship of Mr. Collen-Smith and told her of papers in India of which she knew nothing. Later this information was confirmed. Mr. Collen-Smith delivered an address and gave clairvoyant descriptions.

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ANOTHER MYERS "EXTRA"

MR. J. B. M'INDOE SATISFIED IT IS GENUINE

MR. J. B. M'INDOE, Secretary of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists and President of the National Spiritualists' Union, sends us a signed description of the circumstances in which a photographic "extra" was obtained by Mr. John Myers at Holland Street Spiritualist Church, Glasgow, on Sunday, February 4th, in the presence of a crowded congregation. He also sends a copy of the photograph, on which there appear six faces of varying sizes embedded in a white cloud-like material. Mr. M'Indoe's description is as follows:

Mr. John Myers arrived in Glasgow on Friday evening. On Saturday at 6.30 p.m. he went with me to the shop of Mr. R. Hunter, photographic dealer, West Nile Street, where we purchased a packet of plates. Mr. Myers and I initialled it and then asked Mr. Hunter to seal it up and place it in an envelope, which he also sealed, to retain possession of the packet and bring it with him at 6 p.m. to Holland Street. At 6.30 p.m. a Committee of seven was selected from the audience, including Dr. J. Cranston, D.Sc., Dr. Robertson (who are members of the Association), the photographer of the *Evening Times*, and the reporter of that paper. Mr. Myers had previously been in a very excited condition and bleeding severely at the nose just before going on to the platform, from which he spoke, and the direction of the experiment was in his hands. Along with Mr. Myers, the Committee retired to an upstairs room, which has a dark room in it. Mr. Myers asked Dr. Robertson and Mr. J. M. Clark to go with him into the dark room to load the slides, and Mr. Hunter handed over the sealed packet of plates to them. It had not been out of his possession till then. Mr. Myers requested that three slides be loaded with a fourth for emergency. He said he would ask the Guide to try to produce "extras" on No. 2, and to leave the others without "extras." The slides were placed in separate envelopes after being loaded, and these were numbered. *Mr. Myers did not handle the plates at all.* Dr. Robertson and Mr. Clark were specifically asked on their return to the rest of the Committee if they were quite certain the plates in the slides had been taken from the packet handed to them by Mr. Hunter. Both replied that they could swear to it.

It is only fair to point out that, although not noted at the time, Mr. Myers' statement as to "extras" on No. 2 plate left some grounds for legitimate difference of opinion as to whether it was No. 2 plate loaded, or the second plate exposed that was to have the "extras."

The party returned to the Church. Mr. Myers remaining at the entrance end with some members of the Committee.

I asked the *Times* men to decide the order in which the plates were to be exposed. Mr. Hunter exposed the plates accordingly in the order of Nos. 1, 3, 4, and 2, returning each slide to its envelope. Mr. Myers' camera was used, focussed on the audience. The exposures were all under thirty seconds—No. 2 plate, the fourth exposed, having 23 seconds. Mr. Hunter carried the slides to the dark room, accompanied by the Committee. Mr. Myers asked Mr. Hunter and the *Times* photographer to conduct the developing, etc., which he watched in the dark room. Plates 1, 3 and 4 were normal, plate No. 2 (the fourth to be exposed) had an "extra" on it.

No claim has been made by me that the experiment was carried out under 100 per cent. conditions. That is a term which in any case requires precise definition. Personally, I am satisfied that a genuine psychic result was obtained.

It may possibly save space in your column if I add that some photographic experts have already discovered the "cut out" effects of the extras, the decided "cotton wool effect," and indications of "double exposure"; also the theory has been advanced that Myers produced the "extras" by using some radio-active substance, either

(Continued at foot of next column)

GHOST OF A MONK

STORY OF A LUMINOUS APPARITION IN A COUNTRY HOUSE

"THE Ghost that Killed a Dog" is the startling title of a long "story" in *The Passing Show*, in which the occupant of a country house in East Anglia tells of the appearance to herself and her daughter of the luminous figure of a cowed monk.

Several times, the writer of the story was awakened by a mysterious blue light. Then the ghost came.

"I was sitting alone at dusk, half asleep in the warm and cosy ingle-nook of the dining room," she writes, "with 'Ruff' [her dog] lying at my feet. Suddenly 'Ruff' sprang up from the hearthrug, his back hairs all abristle and his teeth bared. Then he gave a low growl, put his tail between his legs, and went cowering into a corner. Looking up I saw again that sickly pale bluish vapour, and making luminous the figure of a cowed monk. "Who are you?" I cried out. "What do you want? Why do you come here? This is a private house."

"There was no reply. The figure stood stock still with its back towards me, at the far end of the room where the flickering firelight did not penetrate. And as I thus saw it all luminous, I can describe the figure exactly: It was very tall, very upright and very thin. The monk's habit—with the cowl fully drawn—was rusty brown and tied about the middle with a frayed and faded brown girdle, the knot being drawn to the right. Suspended from the girdle was some sort of outside pocket, pulled together with string. I saw a quill pen sticking out. The arms hung loosely down and gave an impression of unspeakable dejection. I thought that the figure would turn round, and that then I might hear the swish of the robe, and the slither of the sandals. But, before I could rise from my seat the figure had gone.

"And as the figure vanished, so poor 'Ruff' came out of his corner and licked my hand.

"It is curious that I myself experienced no sensation of fear. The Brown Monk had aroused in me an intense feeling of pity. And I was deeply interested in the experience. Therefore, as before, I decided to say nothing to anybody else in the house. But my elder daughter—a particularly level-headed, matter-of-fact modern type of young woman—came to me that same evening and said: 'Mother, I have just seen the ghost of a brown monk going up the stairs surrounded by a little cloud of pale blue white light. It went into your bedroom, and I didn't know it was a ghost until I followed it in, and found nobody there.'

"And that's how, one after the other, we all began to see, to be sorry for, and to grow fond of 'Our Ghost Monk.'"

The visitor adds that 'Ruff,' the dog, was terrified by the ghost and soon died—killed by fright.

EMERGENCY CASES

A correspondent who signs herself "Unfortunate Sufferer" writes suggesting that provision should be made by Spiritualistic Societies for those urgently needing the help of Mediums. She says that a relative who died left instructions that her body was to be cremated. This instruction she (the writer) wished to cancel as it distressed her greatly, and after a Sunday evening meeting in London, she approached the Medium who had been giving Clairvoyance asking to be put "in touch" with her relative, but the Medium declined. The writer suggests that, to meet such cases, Societies should make emergency arrangements.

painted on to the No. 2 slide or on to some fabric inside the slide. Apart from other considerations, anyone who favours such a theory will very greatly oblige by producing a photograph similar to that obtained by Myers, and under similar conditions—including the time element.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE "WALTER" THUMBPRINTS

Sir,—On pp. 52, 56, 65 (January 26th and February 2nd), and I might add p. 86 (February 9th) of your current volume, it is stated, or implied, that there is no foundation at all for the identification of either of Walter's thumbprints with those of a living man (Dr. "K"). May I point out that this is not the opinion of Professor Harold Cummins who was expressly consulted by the A.S.P.R. as an eminent expert in these matters? He has insisted that his reports should be printed entire and with their diagrams in the recently issued volume *The Walter Hands*. They will be found on pp. 201-208. His conclusion is that the right thumb imprints of Dr. "K" and Walter originate from the same digit, and also that in certain of the Walter imprints "there is evidence indicating that they are produced by a replica rather than the actual thumb" (p. 208).

For my part I am quite prepared to believe that these and other "Margery" phenomena are of supernormal origin, but I also submit that the entity, whom we agree to call "Walter," has for some reason found it convenient to reproduce Dr. "K"'s thumb as his own.

(REV.) HERBERT THURSTON, S.J.

* * *

ETHERIC VISION

Sir,—The experiments made by Professor Callegaris in Rome for stabilising thought-forms transmissible by telepathy appear to be welcomed by Mr. Thorpe as corroborative of his own experiences recorded in his book, *Etheric Vision*. What is needed at this juncture is a statement by the Italian Professor as to whether those stabilised thought-forms are visible objectively or subjectively. In the case quoted of the "blind" nurse, the vision was obviously subjective; but Mr. Thorpe has always denied that his was subjective vision, and asserted that with his physical sight he was able to read the psychic messages he received. The parallel between the two experiments cannot be established until the conditions in both cases are clearly established.

Hurlingham, London. E. ASHTON JONSON.

* * *

THE G. R. S. MEAD MESSAGE

Sir—In LIGHT for February 9th you publish a letter written over the signature of Florence Hodgkin in which "Chang" and G. R. S. Mead are mentioned.

I do not know the writer of the letter, nor am I personally acquainted with Miss Cummins who reported a few weeks ago that she had received a message from G. R. S. Mead, which you published at the time and agreed that it was very characteristic of the man. The message was amusing, but at the same time disconcerting to a large body of thinkers and could not be called helpful to anyone in particular.

For nearly seven years I have been able to communicate with my husband, and have received many proofs of his intimate knowledge of my own life, while he has been able to give me knowledge of his present mode of life and far-reaching philosophical teaching, that has opened avenues of thought that must otherwise have remained closed to me.

After reading Miss Cummin's communication I asked my husband why G. R. S. Mead had been *allowed* to give the message, since it was detrimental rather than helpful. He replied: "We cannot interfere with the free-will of any individual; such power as he possesses he may use, and in Mead's case the mental power is highly developed and he naturally rushed to take his opportunity, but we have *persuaded* him to hold back until he becomes better

acquainted with the real conditions of life on our side." I think it is only fair to Miss Cummins that I should publish this conversation, and incidentally corroborate Chang's statement to Mrs. Florence Hodgkin.

ANNIE C. CLARK.

* * *

IMPLICATIONS OF SPIRITUALISM

Sir,—I was much surprised by Mr. Robert A. Whitmore's letter (LIGHT, January 12). He cannot conceive "why a man cannot believe that it has been scientifically proved that human personality survives death, and that it is possible to communicate with the departed, and also believe in the Catholic Religion."

If the implications of Spiritualism were restricted to the proof of survival and communication with the so-called dead, I would be in perfect accord with Mr. Whitmore. But this is not the case. Those implications reach out to such an extent that they sweep clean away nearly the whole of Catholic dogmas, creeds, beliefs and ceremonies.

DANIEL L. DOD.

Serantes, Coruna, Spain.

* * *

WHY POLTERGEIST ?

Sir,—Poltergeist is a German word, meaning "noisy ghost." It is good as far as it goes, but the chief characteristic of the Poltergeist is not the racket which it makes but that it is always attached to a particular person. As there are haunted houses, so there appear to be haunted men, with a periodical affliction. Why not use the term man-haunter instead of Poltergeist?

(DR.) NANDOR FODOR.

* * *

AN UNEXPECTED REFERENCE

Sir,—The current economic Supplement to the *Journal* of the Royal Economic Society contains an article on Robert Owen by Dr. James Bonar. It takes the form of a dialogue between two University students who begin by speaking of Jeremy Bentham. But on the first page we get:

"VOICE FROM BEYOND: Surely I, Robert Owen, might expect to be chosen before Bentham. . . ."

"STUDENT: I was prepared for your intrusion, Mr. Owen, knowing how greatly you and your son Robert Dale Owen have enlarged our communications with the regions beyond. . . ."

There is a footnote reference in connection with the foregoing to a book *Communications* (vol. 1, p. 193) and the article contains numbers of references to Owen's *Life*, and Dale Owen's *Threading My Way*, both of which are in the L.S.A. Library. This rather unexpected reference to our subject may interest some of your readers.

J. D. TURNER.

Merton Park, Surrey.

* * *

BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT

Sir,—I am glad to see that the subject of the meaning and definition of words relating to Spiritualism is being taken up in earnest at last. So much mixed-up nonsense is constantly being written by the thoughtless!

Andrew Jackson Davis, the great American Spiritualist and seer, stated the facts, logically and beautifully, years ago, as follows: "The human soul is an organised 'silver lining' to the outer form, which at death serves as a beautiful body for the clothing of the 'golden spirit,' which is still more interior and divine—the 'dweller in the Temple.'"

The Spirit—the Divine spark, functions through the material body on the earth plane, and through the soul on the etherial plane.

If Spiritualism is to become the "World Religion" as it should do, a correct definition of terms as a solid foundation is absolutely essential.

Los Angeles, U.S.A.

ARTHUR K. VENNING.

Light

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CHURCH "HERESY-HUNT"

SPIRITUALISTS will watch with keen and sympathetic interest the coming "heresy-hunt" in the Anglican Church. Nominally, the charge brought against the Bishop of Liverpool by Lord Hugh Cecil is that of refusing to take disciplinary action against the Dean of Liverpool for permitting two Unitarians to preach in his Cathedral. Actually, when it comes before the Northern Convocation in June the case is expected to raise doctrinal issues of the utmost importance as between Modernists and Traditionalists. Should the decision of Convocation be in favour of insistence on acceptance of the literal meaning of the creeds on the part of all Church preachers, advanced men like the Bishop of Birmingham, Dean Inge, Canon Streeter and Dr. Major will almost certainly find compliance difficult and the Church may have to face disruption—indeed, this possibility is being seriously discussed. Possibly, however, some middle way may be found, for the Anglican Church has always aimed at being widely comprehensive. Possibly also some good may come out of the turmoil; for, as a way to the reconciliation of conflicting beliefs, attention may once more be turned to the helpful light thrown on the Resurrection and other disputed New Testament incidents and doctrinal difficulties by Psychical Research. Here, indeed, if they will accept it, Churchmen may find a way towards agreement on essentials.

HYPNOTISM

ANNOUNCING the death of Dr. Bernard Hollander, *The Lancet* (February 10th) records that, although an exponent of Hypnotism, he "denounced Spiritualism." Dr. Hollander was not singular in this respect. Numbers of medical men who practise Hypnotism think it "explodes" Spiritualism by providing a natural explanation of so-called Spiritualistic phenomena. This as we

understood him, was the view advanced by Professor C. G. Seligman in his broadcast talks (February 2nd and 9th) on practices amongst primitive peoples. The trance of a "medicine man" (or of a Medium), he said, might be genuine without being "occult," being in fact induced by hypnotic suggestion. Without saying so, he left listeners to suppose that this explanation applied also to all the "messages" coming through the Medium—which is by no means the case.

It has to be recognised that this is the line along which opposition to the Spiritualistic theory is being chiefly developed in scientific and semi-scientific circles. The reality of super-normal phenomena, physical and mental, is being grudgingly but generally admitted, and Hypnotism and Telepathy are held up as providing a sufficient explanation. This attitude is not new. Most scientific investigators who have been convinced of Survival began with it and held it until compelled by the weight and nature of the evidence to give it up. So is it likely to be with new investigators.

It is well to remember that, as the result of his long and careful study of psychic phenomena, F. W. H. Myers used Telepathy and Hypnotism as parts of the foundation on which his ultimate assurance of Survival was based. Quite rightly, he explained much of the phenomena by "the action of man's spirit without invoking spirits external to himself," but he recognised that this did not render the spirit hypothesis unnecessary. On the contrary (*Human Personality*, Introduction) he reasoned that

"If our incarnate spirits can act thus [under hypnosis] in at least apparent independence of the fleshly body, the presumption is strong that other spirits may exist independently and may affect us in similar manner."

Quite recently a well-known London practitioner, Mr. Alexander Erskine, in *A Hypnotist's Case Book*, recorded many incidents which led him to agree with F. W. H. Myers's reasoning and to regard the subconscious mind (by which hypnotic suggestion is accepted and put into action) as synonymous with "the soul."

"If," he writes, "when a man's body is in a hypnotic trance, the subconscious mind can separate itself from him and depart to its own world" (as some of his experiments indicated), "what is to prevent that mind taking flight to that world when death, instead of a hypnotic trance, lays its hand upon the physical being?"

Actually, by demonstrating the possibility of human consciousness being able to function otherwise than through the physical senses, Hypnotism provides good scientific reasons for accepting as genuine the clear evidences of Survival which have come to man all through the ages and which come to him still in a never-ending stream. Many individual scientists have already recognised this; others are in process of being convinced; by and by, recognition will be general and complete.

LUCIDITY IN ROMANCE BOOK REVIEW

By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

DR. MARGARET VIVIAN'S novel* is by no means the first to weave spirit voices into the substance of its fabric, it merely presents anew the problems of a spiritual technique.

One observed a somewhat similar enlargement when the telephone drew an invisible world within the dramatist's horizon. In his case, too, there were voices "off" the stage, inaudible to the audience, and yet often profoundly affecting the progress of the story.

It was a godsend to him, an economy of scenes, exits and entrances. Is his spiritual telephone, his clairvoyant apparatus, going to be that to the novelist?

The dramatist could, if required, materialise his voices; more important still, the audience could picture the speakers, even if they were neither seen nor heard. They were often as memorable an influence as the foot-lit players.

But when the voices come from beyond the horizon, where they can operate unconditioned by time and space, won't they savour too much of a *deus ex machina*? Will it not seem, romantically, to be hardly "playing the game?"

One is speaking of the present. In days to come, carnate and discarnate may be mixed up indifferently in a story without injury to a sense of its values; but to-day, even Spiritualists are so critical of "evidence" that ghostly aid to an entanglement would not increase their interest in the tale.

Dr. Vivian does not employ it with that intent. The spirit world for her is no more than a background, and its efforts to influence the course of events are not successful.

Aurelia, Dr. Jaz, goes to the station to meet a friend of whose death she has just heard. She meets his wraith, which smiles, raises its hat, and vanishes. She dreams that she has passed her Inter. M.B. examination, and that her room-mate has failed; and it is so. She obtains messages by planchette which prove correct: the marriage fortune of a friend is foretold, the death of a brother, the help needed by a patient; even her dead dog arrives, tries to write his name, but only achieves a picture of tail-wagging.

She is cheered to be told by the control that her lost pet will live for her eternally, and that his destiny is in a far better state than hers. He arrives later at a seance.

She is given a constant warning to repulse the matrimonial advances of a Bishop, but she pays no heed to them. We are shown how her parents pass from virulent opposition here to anxious communication on the other side; but the story runs its course unhindered and unhelped by its spiritual environment.

In *David** on the other hand, a Medium is used to give a dramatic shift to the climax.

Lady Mildred Partington, described by her husband as "so sensitive and so delicate and so altogether lovely in mind as well as body, that she could not face the ugliness of London and the inquisitive minds of chance callers or acquaintances during the sacred time" before the birth of her baby, loses him five years later in a street accident, and, after a broken-hearted period, finds consolation from a Medium.

The Medium is quite faithfully drawn; one of those too numerous people who are faintly psychic, exploit their gift for money to the point of exhaustion, and fill in its lapses with fraud.

She succeeds in keeping her dupe deluded by tapping any available channels to her past and her surroundings, but the comfort of messages from her lost son, which restores Lady Mildred to sanity, have an estranging influence on her husband, who hates to see her made a

(Continued at foot of next column)

PROFESSOR RICHEL AND SPIRITUALISM

PROFESSOR CHARLES RICHEL'S latest book, *La Grande Esperance*, is reviewed in the *Revue Spirite* for January and, in view of Professor Richet's statement of his beliefs published in LIGHT last week, the comments of the reviewer, M. Gaston Luce, will be read with interest. They bear out the suggestion that Professor Richet is approaching closer to the spiritualistic position.

"In this work," says M. Luce, "the great Scientist goes as far as he could do as a member of the 'Institut.' Though his conclusions are not those of a Spiritualist, they are none the less an indirect and magnificent homage to Spiritualism. He would impose embarrassing restrictions upon our position—a position which he himself adopts and attacks by turn; yet towards the end of his book it is Richet, one of the most illustrious living scientists, who accuses materialistic science of having failed: which is itself a sign of the times.

"What his statements amount to is this—that the laboratory is definitely only one limited corner of the life of the universe, and that there are certain experiences which are not detectable by any instruments ever made. On the whole, however, Professor Richet remains the scientist. Non-religious on principle, he nevertheless has his own religion, and that is science.

"But he is humble on its behalf. He says: 'On one side we have Nature, the sphinx, and on the other, man, that feeble and inefficient reader of its riddles. And how much does he know? In spite of our extensive discoveries, these in reality tiny achievements of our senses and our learning, we actually know almost *nothing* of the universe.'

In spite of all the Professor's prejudices, M. Luce considers that this last book shows a more conciliatory attitude. "Have not facts now been established which no loyal scientist can ignore? Again, with all his accumulated data, what does Professor Richet really know of the Spiritualist position? He declares that all he has ever seen has been trivial and insignificant; therefore what has he to go upon? Such knowledge as he has is negligible. It is evident that the Spiritualist attitude no longer appears to him as pitiable as it once did.

"The Professor's main objections to our beliefs are not free from puerilities. Take, for instance, the question of the survival of memory without the physical brain. M. Richet admits the existence of phantoms, of angels, of invisible forces all around us—why should he deny the possibility of the spiritual body?

"He objects that the beings one has summoned are seldom the ones that manifest: but he forgets that the human will is not the dominating factor in control of the Spirit-world. The clothing of the Spirit forms offends him: he knows the *ideo-plastic* theory—where, therefore lies his difficulty?

"It all goes to show that in the mind of this famous biologist there remain certain great lacunæ; a fact that can readily be believed when we consider the vastness of those fields of knowledge which are open to him."

fool of, even for her own and his good.

At last a sitting is arranged in his house as a decisive test; and though the Medium prepares the ground carefully for his deception, at the critical moment, when about to be turned out of the house, clairvoyant vision comes to her, and husband and wife are convinced and reconciled.

The story is quite skilfully told from three points of view; it is short and slight; and its acceptance of lucidity even in the fraudulent, may be reckoned a mild sort of propaganda.

**Dr. Jaz.* Margaret Vivian. London. 1934. 6/-.

**David.* Naomi Royde-Smith. London. Ernest Benn, Ltd. 1934. 3/6.

A "GUIDE'S" TRAINING AUDIENCE OF OVER 2,000

HANNEN SWAFFER ON HIS "GUIDES"

"THE Training of a Guide" formed the theme of an interesting conversation reported by Mr. Guy P. J. L'Estrange in the "Psychic Corner" which he conducts in the *Yarmouth Independent* (February 10th).

Conversing with his own guide, through a "powerful trance Medium," whose name is not given (but who, it is stated, is well-known to Yarmouth Spiritualists), Mr. L'Estrange asked:

"Can you take up any kind of work you like in the Spirit World, Marcus?"

"More or less, yes. Of course, there are duties which one cannot fulfil adequately without proper training, but if a soul is prepared to undergo the necessary tuition he (or she) is granted every facility to the desired end."

"Give me an example, will you?"

"Well, take the task of developing a psychic Medium, for instance. Obviously, the would-be guide must possess a knowledge of psychology and be conversant with the methods by which one assumes control over a human instrument. There are certain technicalities to be mastered, of course, and, in any case, the aspirant must prove himself a fitting person to undertake the highly responsible business of influencing his charge for the latter's good."

"You make the matter very clear, Marcus," I said. "I suppose a spirit has to serve some sort of apprenticeship before he can become the chief guide of a Medium, then?"

"Yes, he will, for a time, be attached to a group working in connection with some Medium, under the leadership of an experienced guide, in order to acquire knowledge. After a reasonable period he will be asked to try his hand at controlling the psychic, so that his aptitude for the task may be put to the test, and later on, if he shows ability, he is appointed a deputy-guide. All this time he is gaining useful experience so that, eventually, he becomes fitted to shoulder the responsibilities of a chief guide."

"Did you have to study before you could 'control' a Medium?"

"Of course, I did!—Everybody must. We have to be methodical in the spirit world, especially where the carrying out of important work is concerned. Naturally we cannot afford to make slips."

"Suppose a spirit gets tired of the particular job he has adopted?"

"Then he had better relinquish it, for he will never make a success in that direction. No man, over here, is bound irrevocably to his task, so he can leave it for another kind of work as soon as he likes."

"That's interesting to know. I daresay you have come across such cases, haven't you?"

"Oh, yes; quite a number," laughed the guide. "Some people, in their anxiety to be of service, try all sorts of different tasks before they find themselves suited. In the end, they always manage to discover work which appeals to them more than anything else, however."

Mr. L'Estrange explains that the Guide with whom he talked was a clergyman during earth life and has been passed over about 60 years. His real name is not "Marcus," though that is the pseudonym by which he prefers to be known.

DR. J. STENSON HOOKER

We are asked to state that the presentation fund for Dr. J. Stenson Hooker (advertised in *LIGHT*, January 12th) is still open. It will be recalled that Dr. Hooker (who is over eighty years of age) was struck off the medical register some years ago following advocacy of what is known as "Nature Cure." Contributions may be sent to Dr. Flora Ames, West Lodge, Pembroke Gardens, Kensington, London, W.8.

AN audience of over 2,000 took part in the Marylebone Spiritualist Association Service at Queen's Hall, London, on Sunday evening last, under the leadership of Mr. George Craze.

The speaker was Mr. Hannen Swaffer and he replied very effectively to the oft-repeated accusation that the "guides" and other intelligences manifesting at Spiritualist gatherings are evil. In his own case he was sure his "guides" were not evil, because they prompted and pressed him to do all he could for the betterment of the people.

Mrs. Estelle Roberts' clairvoyance was dramatic and convincing. Her first description was that of a young soldier, whose name, age and date of "passing out" in the great war were given, and who claimed a man in the audience as his uncle—all being confirmed by the man to whom the message was directed. Other descriptions were equally successful.

SOUTH-WEST LONDON PSYCHIC CENTRE

Mr. John Myers, the photographic Medium, writes to us as President of the South-West London Psychic Centre, whose headquarters are at 5 Spencer Park, Wandsworth Common, S.W.18.

Referring to the announcement (quoted in *LIGHT* last week from *The People*) that a school for Mediums was to be opened at Wandsworth, Mr. Myers says: "The Centre is opened for the purpose of bringing the truth and reality of Spiritualism to this very large district through lectures, seances, developing and healing classes." He adds: "It is my sincere belief that a great many good and useful Mediums are needed and are to be found, and it is my sincere and earnest desire to help forward the development of such, in every branch of mediumship."

A NEW AND OUTSTANDING NOVEL

DR. JAZ

by

MARGARET VIVIAN

Cloth bound. Coloured wrapper. 6/- net.

Dr. Jaz is the story of a medical woman's life, and it starts with a vivid description of pre-war life in a country vicarage. Jaz's impetuous temperament and her passionate love of animals lead her into various situations that are handled in a brisk, lively style. From first to last, the interest does not flag, and the heroine's experiences at a women's college, as a medical student in a London hospital, and later, in a French military hospital, will appeal to a large circle of readers. Jaz's eager enquiries into spiritualism betray the author's sound knowledge of this interesting subject.

FROM ALL BOOKSELLERS.

WHAT SURVIVAL MEANS TO SPIRITUALISTS

AT the Spiritualist Community service at the Grottrian Hall, London, on Sunday evening, Mrs. Hewat McKenzie dealt with the fact of Survival and its desirability only if it had as content that which provided progress and happiness. Continuity alone meant little. Some thinkers allowed survival but made the other world one of "shadows" and grey ghosts.

Spiritualists were the only group who attempted to rationalise the state beyond death, and they were often sharply criticised for this definiteness and called materially-minded.

The records of the appearances of Jesus to his friends provided very definite proofs of identity, of retention of interest in their doings and thoughts, and hints of work to be done in association with them and of other work to be undertaken in the invisible world. These records compare happily with much verified by Spiritualists to-day, who hold that though their friends are invisible neither their identity nor their activities are diminished. The etheric body with its finer senses and wider range of vibration may increase and enhance activity. Reunion with friends, progress, achievement, creative work, a new use of all the virtues that lie behind the activities and businesses and labour and home-making, unstinting service of the chance to make good—these were some of the other-side aspects which made survival seem desirable.

Death was not the end of adventure, but the beginning of many more—adventures which must be begun here and now by intelligence and vigilance, by the development of spiritual as well as psychic gifts, and by finding a place of service to others. Spiritualists with their knowledge of the fact of Survival had an incentive denied to others to make such preparation.

"FADING OUT" AND "FADING IN"

"WHAT Happens After Death" was the subject of Mr. Shaw Desmond's Survival League Lecture at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Thursday evening last week.

Mr. Desmond said they now knew definitely what did happen because of information conveyed in communications from the other side—chiefly by the "Direct Voice," or in books dictated from the "other side" through the voice of a Medium or through automatic writing.

At the moment of death, the dying persons just "faded out" from the earth life and "faded in" on the other side as in a film. They were often conscious of the voices and faces of those around them, although unable to make this understood. The ghost or etheric body remained connected to the physical body for periods varying greatly, but usually after five or six days the "silver cord" was cut and they passed to the astral. That was the moment of actual physical death.

The astral realm was a "clearing house," and the first thing that happened there as they woke up was that they saw their doctors and nurses, often accompanied by their friends, whose job was to free them from the astral shell.

On the "other side" they found houses, trees, a sky—everything we have here; but they discovered they could build their own houses and other things by the power of thought, which varied according to the place they reached. This gave them plenty of occupation after they got their bearings. Then they found they were really "at home," the earth being only a migrant dwelling-place for the human soul.

None of this, Mr. Desmond said, was any longer in opposition to the known facts of physical science.

The last lecture of the series was given last night (Thursday) by Mrs. Estelle Roberts—a trance address in which "Red Cloud" spoke of after-death conditions.

PROBLEMS OF PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY

This week, Mr. T. A. Davidson continues his examination of the problems of psychic photography and sums up his conclusions.

By THOMAS A. DAVIDSON

13.—CONSIDERATION OF TYPES OF SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS

If we compare the photographic extras obtained by different spirit photographers, as for example in Dr. Coates' book "Photographing the Invisible," we observe that almost full length draped figures are shown in the case of Mumler and Hudson (about 1840 to 1873), and that in later cases (1900 onwards) Wyllie, Martin, Hope, Mrs. Buxton, Mrs. Deane, Myers and others, the extras are mostly in the form of faces only, and then are mostly surrounded by an ectoplasmic cloud.

In some of these photographs there is evidence of what I might term "semi-materialisation" of the spirit form. This is indicated in Miss Houghton's book, pp. 254/5, by the fact that in one instance two cameras of different size were used, and both plates had the same extra, in the same position allowing for the difference of angle of the cameras. In some photographs taken in the presence of Robert W. Gibson, the transfiguration Medium, by Mr. W. G. Mitchell of Darlington, the extras show as faces surrounded by an ectoplasmic cloud, which connect by a wisp of ectoplasm to the sitter. This suggests that in this case also, there may be a semi-materialisation.

In most other cases, the ectoplasmic cloud shows up quite detached and not connected in any way with the sitter.

There are many other cases quoted in the literature in which the camera lens appears to have been unnecessary. As mentioned before, the use of a quartz lens, which passes U.V. light of smaller wave-length than a glass lens, does not appear to have led to any elucidation of the problem.

Julia, the spirit guide of the late W. T. Stead, states:—

"Whenever any spirits on our side manifest themselves, either by means of photography, or by materialisation, it is necessary for them to prepare what I may call a 'mould,' by which they can impress themselves upon the photographic plate, or make themselves visible in a materialisation seance." (*Borderland*, 1895, ii., p. 249.)

This is the explanation generally accepted for a large number of the spirit extras. Sometimes it is called a "psychic transparency," which is merely an alternative name.

There seems to me to be something lacking in the way of scientific proof with any of the hypotheses so far offered; and such explanations as have been suggested of the *modus operandi* are as yet largely matters of opinion. It seems desirable that some further attempt should be made to reach scientific precision. As a step in this direction, let me postulate and discuss the two following types of extras:—

1. External to the camera: lens necessary: semi-materialisation.
2. Internal to the camera: Lens may or may not be necessary, psychic moulds used.

14.—TYPE EXTERNAL TO CAMERA

In case 1, external to camera, where the spirit form is more or less materialised, it ought to be possible to arrange the conditions of test exposures to prove that the spirit extras are external to the camera. There are three ways in which such evidence may be obtained:

1. DIFFERENT VIEW-POINTS. By the simultaneous use of several cameras at different angles, say three cameras set at angles of 90°, 60° and 30° to the sitter. The spirit extra should appear on each plate, and differ only by the difference of view-point.

2. THE FORMATION OF A SHADOW. If an extra reflects light, or if it absorbs light, then it must reduce the amount of light passing through it, even though it be invisible U.V. light, and therefore, if the source of light be in front, throw a shadow upon a suitable

(Continued on page 110)

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March 8th. MISS OLIVE PEXLEY on "The Law of Transmutation." Chair: DR. FIELDING-OULD.

March 22nd. MR. CYRIL SCOTT (Composer) on "Some Occult Aspects of Music." Chair: LADY HARRIS.

SYLLABUS ON APPLICATION.

DOCTRINE OF KARMA

THE subject of Mr. W. H. Evans' address at the Free Public Lecture on Tuesday evening last was "Karma." There are two views of this subject, he said, which may be regarded as the mechanistic and the dynamic respectively. The former view has led to much unnecessary suffering. If we consider the condition of the people of the East, it does not convey the impression that they are the custodians of a lofty philosophy or ethic. The social conditions do not impress a Westerner with any profound respect.

If we regard Reincarnation and Karma in the mechanistic sense, the logical result of it is fatalism; whatever happens is one's Karma, to be accepted with a resignation that is the death of effort. One may say that its symbol is the prayer-wheel. The caste system, against which enlightened Hindus struggle, is another result of the mechanistic interpretation. Even amongst Western people the law is interpreted in this way, and I have heard earnest Theosophists declare that, even if they had the power to relieve suffering by the laying on of hands, they would not do so as it would be an interference with the law of Karma. When a doctrine is made the excuse—it can be called no other—for shirking responsibilities, it is time that it was either scrapped or reinterpreted.

Some years ago Mrs. Besant uttered a warning against this view, pointing out that if we have any power, the right use and exercise of it is our responsibility, and if one has the power to heal by the laying on of hands, or any other method, the law demands its exercise and use for the welfare of the community. Of course, people who reason in the manner described above are no worse than those Christians who make the doctrines of predestination and election an excuse for wrong doing.

Referring to his remarks of the previous week, Mr. Evans said it was a mistake to regard Karma as a pressure from without, it was rather a compulsion arising from within. Man is his own fate or destiny. He is not brought to earth for the purpose of discharging debts, but to develop his powers. In so doing, he establishes

relationships with other souls, but is not bound by them. His relationships are for the purposes of all-round development, not only of himself but of others. To speak as if one is bound to the wheel of rebirth conveys an entirely wrong impression. If Reincarnation is rightly understood the individual sees how great are his responsibilities. To be constantly seeking for a method of escape is wrong; to see in life glorious opportunities for helping others and developing the spiritual man is surely the healthier and saner view. The law can only express itself through us, therefore we are greater than the law.

Instead of lying down and whining about the frustrations and rebuffs of life, one begins to see in all these things splendid opportunities for growth.

"I am convinced," said the speaker, "that we have misunderstood the function of Satan. He is not from below, but from above; and anyone reading the Book of Job must see that, in saying that Satan is a Son of God, we have a view of one who is doing a very unpleasant work—that of testing souls, and not seeking to destroy them. May we not regard him as our examiner, one who tries us from time to time to see what progress we have made. In short is he not the personification of what we call Karma?"

* * *

A CHANGE FORETOLD

One of our Members had two sittings at the L.S.A. recently without having told anyone that since her last visit she and her husband had moved to an entirely different part of the country. Her sittings, she writes, gave her "ample proof that they know all about such things on the other side." Still more striking was the fact that this change was foretold long before she or her husband knew anything about it, during a sitting with Mr. Austin, last June. The Medium then said that a change would come into their lives in the autumn, and that it would have some connection with the Law. This prediction was "quite unintelligible to me," says our correspondent, as was also her little son's remark that she was not to worry about his grave. "I can now quite understand it," she concludes, "for it has all been literally fulfilled."

* * *

DR. ALEXANDER CANNON

As announced in LIGHT of February 2nd, Dr. Alexander Cannon (author of *The Invisible Influence*) found it necessary to withdraw from his undertaking to lecture at the L.S.A. on Thursday evening last week (February 8th) on "Telepathy, the Master of Destiny." This was a great disappointment to a large number of members and friends who had been anxious to hear him; but he provided an excellent substitute in the person of Dr. Millauro, who lectured on "Hypnotism" and related a number of most interesting personal experiences. Dr. Fielding-Ould presided, and there was a large attendance.

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In sleep and shadow and stillness comes the message from those on high—

Not where the hucksters haggle and their wares in the market cry.

Very small is the Voice at first, and many are unaware, For they look for the sound of a Stentor's tones or a bugler's brazen blare.

But there comes a day when the Voice arrives with the power of an earthquake shock.

And the cities blaze and the plagues descend and the strongholds quiver and rock.

Very sore is the judgment then—to the whole of the world displayed—

Which follows the warning set at nought and the Word that was disobeyed.

D.G.

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18th, 1934.

11 a.m.—Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Rose Livingstone.

6.30 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Estelle Roberts.

Sunday, Feb. 25th, at 11 a.m. Mr. ERNEST HUNT
Clairvoyante: Mrs. Grace Cooke.

Sunday, Feb. 25th, at 6.30 p.m. Mr. LEWIS JEFFERSON
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6.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in the Grotrian Hall.

7 p.m. Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appoint-
ments write to Miss Robertson (Hon. Secretary).

8 p.m.—Mr. Hendry's class for development of the
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Tuesday. 2 p.m.—Mrs. Gray's Private Healing Treatment.
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Wednesday. 12.30—1.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in Grotrian
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Thursday. 7 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Mixed Healing Circle.
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PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY

(Continued from page 107)

background. If a photograph of a shadow can be obtained, corresponding to the extra, it will be a proof of an 'external' spirit form.

3. REFLECTION. By suitably arranging a system of mirrors it should be possible to reflect back on to the same plate, or another plate in a second camera, reflections of the front and of the back of the ectoplasmic extra. It is possible that the intensity of the light reflected back may become diminished, but the usually prolonged exposure generally given, should allow these reflected images to affect the plate, and so prove their presence.

15.—TYPE INTERNAL TO THE CAMERA

In case 2, "internal to the camera," we have a number of confusing conditions to reconcile; such for example as:—

1. Varying size of extras in different negatives by the same Medium.
2. Varying size of extras in the same negative.
3. Different angle of lighting of the extras in the same plate.
4. Occasional examples of distortion.
5. Screen marks on the extras.
6. We almost invariably have prolonged exposure—what would be considered normally as gross over-exposure—yet the sitter is seldom over-exposed.
7. We have the extras produced generally with the lens shutter open, but very frequently excellent extras are produced in the camera with the lens shutter closed, as for example in the photo published in *LIGHT*, 17th Nov., 1933, p. 737.

The use of a psychic mould or transparency as already described by Julia, Stead's control, seems best to fit the facts. The only practicable position in which such a psychic mould could be used, is in actual contact with the plate. It is not practicable for it to be used in any other position between the lens and the plate, or to utilise the light passing through the lens, because the lens, considered as a source of light is a surface, and not a Euclidian point. In consequence, there will be a confusion of image and a complete loss of detail. We are then bound to conclude that the psychic mould or transparency must be used in actual contact with the plate.

There is no reason to consider ordinary light necessary, even when used, except to record the sitter. It is simpler, and quite logical, to consider that the psychic mould prints itself on the plate by its own luminosity, and that this action suffices to explain all internal photos and skotographs. It is suggested that the psychic mould must be temporarily self-luminous, being luminous whilst in contact with the plate; and that the light emitted is in the U.V. (and so invisible) and that its wave-length must lie between 220 mm, the point of total absorption of U.V. by the gelatine, and 390 mm.

I have a print by me of a very interesting photo taken by John Myers recently, with Lord Kitchener as one of the extras. There are five extras, and one blank hole,

which leads one to wonder if the mould for which the hole was arranged was not available when required. There is also a clear streak of finger width across the top of it, just as though (assuming a luminous mould to be used) a finger had been wiped across the ectoplasm and had rubbed out the luminosity there. The background shows through the streak and also through the blank hole.

16.—SUMMARY OF AGREED FACTORS

Let us now summarise our inferences, as far as they affect the factors.

1. Medium. Essential.
2. Spirit Controls. Essential.
3. Sitter. Doubtful if necessary.
4. Light. U.V. light considered responsible for effect on plate at wave-lengths between 220 mm and 390 mm.
5. Plate. Ordinary type; high speed; sensitivity range 220 mm to about 520 mm: response to U.V. decreasing to extinction with decrease in wave-length.
Possible use of special Schumann plates; sensitivity range, say about 185 to 590 mm; minimum gelatine content, therefore effect on U.V. absorption minimised.
6. Camera. As a dark cabinet, very helpful for internal photos.
7. Lens. Apparently unnecessary, except for external photos.
8. Unknown factors. The extraction of ectoplasm from the Medium and the manner in which it is employed.

17.—CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions which follow logically from the available evidence are as follows.

Spirit photography may be divided into the two kinds, external and internal to the camera. The case of external photographs is merely that of ordinary photography. The case of internal photographs appears to resolve itself into two phases, the exposure time being divided between them, viz., (1) the lens being used to impress a normal photo of the sitter on the plate; and (2) the passage of light through the lens being cut off by a psychic screen: a psychic mould or transparency being now used, being supported and surrounded by ectoplasm which can be rendered luminous as and where required by the spirit operators.

The wave-lengths of the effective radiation used should lie between 220 and 390 mm in the ultra-violet.

Further work, utilising suitable light filters in contact with the plate, should result in reducing this broad range of wave-length to a comparatively narrow band. The information so gained would enable greater attention to be focussed upon the most suitable materials to use, with probable improvement in method and result. The use of light filters will afford scientific proof, in that, though positive results may be obtained with a filter passing the effective radiation, a negative one will be obtained with a filter which does not transmit these rays.

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