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THE BRIDGE OF DEATH DOCTOR TELLS OF DYING SOLDIER'S MESSAGE FROM THE OTHER SIDE

By HELEN ALEX. DALLAS

SECOND ARTICLE

THE following case is well authenticated. The narrator is a medical man; it shows (like the case recorded in last week's issue of LIGHT) that when the physical powers were at the lowest ebb, consciousness and the faculties of memory and observation were in active operation.

The narrator, Dr. O. B. Ormsby, wrote from a place called Murphysborough, Illinois, U.S.A., in 1884, and the account appeared some years later in *Phantasms of the Living* (a book now out of print).

In 1862, Dr. Ormsby was acting as Assistant Surgeon to the 18th Illinois Volunteers; the regiment having gone forward to attack Fort Henry, he was left behind in charge of the sick. Among these was a young man called Albert Adams, a Sergeant-Major, in whom the doctor seems to have been specially interested. He removed him from the hospital and took him into a private house; the adjoining apartment to that occupied by the patient was divided from his room only by a thin partition; this other room was occupied by the doctor's wife.

The man was dying, and all the afternoon he could only speak in whispers; his father was sent for, and at 11 p.m. the soldier to all appearance died. Dr. Ormsby, who was at the time standing beside the father by the bed, states that, thinking the bereaved man might faint in the keenness of his grief, he led him away to a chair in the back part of the room, and himself returned to the bedside, intending to close the eyes of the man who he thought had expired.

As I reached the bedside (said the doctor) the supposed dead man looked up, and said, "Doctor, what day is it?" I told him the day of the month, and he answered, "That is the day I died." His father had sprung to the bedside, and, turning his eyes on him, he said, "Father, our boys have taken Fort Henry, and Charlie (his brother) isn't hurt. I've seen mother and the children, and they are well."

He then gave quite comprehensive directions regarding his funeral, speaking of the corpse as "my body,"

and occupying, I should think, as much as five minutes. He then turned towards me, and again said, "Doctor, what day is it?" and I answered him as before. He again repeated, "That's the day I died," and instantly was dead. His tones were quite full and distinct and, so loud as to be readily heard in the adjoining room, and were so heard by Mrs. Ormsby.

(Signed) O. B. ORMSBY, M.D.

In reply to further questions, Dr. Ormsby wrote that he had no opportunity to learn whether what was said about the mother and children was correct, but that he learned afterwards that Fort Henry was taken and the brother was uninjured.—*Phantasms of the Living* (Vol. II., p. 307).

No stress need be laid on the question as to whether the man had actually died or not; the point to bear in mind is, that so complete was the collapse, that to the medical eye of one who probably had often seen death, the man appeared to be dead, and yet just then he was able to "visit" his brother at a distance and note his condition, and to see his mother who was elsewhere; moreover, when, after a moment or two, he returned to bodily consciousness, he returned like one refreshed, speaking no longer in a feeble whisper but clearly—although, in spite of his lucidity, he seems to have lost all count of time, alluding to the "day I died" in the past tense.

All these circumstances are very significant, and the difference between this narrative and the previous one not less so. This man's consciousness, when liberated from the body, was directed first to those he had left on earth; in the other case the attention of the apparently dying person seems to have been wholly directed towards another sphere.

It is probable that the experiences of those who pass over differ widely; that some linger longer with the friends they have left, and for some time interest themselves in their former pursuits, whilst others withdraw from earth's associations and carry their interests and thoughts into another sphere. I do not mean to suggest that these forget their friends on earth, or cease to love them, but they do not seek to communicate by outward

signs, though they probably watch them and wait for them with the same affection as those who linger.

Perhaps those who venture to decide which course is the better make a mistake. Each spirit ought to follow the path of *service*, but who shall say that those who voluntarily "absent themselves" from the "felicity" which belongs to higher stages of advance are less well pleasing to God than those who go up higher. All depends on the motive; in God's sight "higher" or "lower" is determined wholly by God-likeness, that is to say, by *love*. Some of those who linger may do so because they are not ready to go on, some because they still care too much for earth, but many doubtless linger because they "love much." Christ Himself lingered (St. Luke tells us for forty days), and by so doing He gave His sanction to all who from motives of love and service remain in touch with those on earth, "Lest in our lonely way we faint."—KEBLE.

APPEARANCE AFTER DEATH

Many persons know of instances of appearances after death which corroborate the view that the spirit can and does visit friends when it leaves the body, and any one who has had experience of, or closely studied, this subject knows that there is abundant evidence that those who are called "dead," or "departed," are often with us and know our thoughts and needs. I will cite one case of appearance after death out of many hundreds that might be mentioned if space permitted.

This incident is quoted in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* (October, 1915); the Editor of that Journal, the late Prof. James H. Hyslop, corresponded with the subject of the experience, a lady called Mrs. Alice L. Bayles, and questioned her on the matter; she assured him that she was able to answer his question correctly as she had kept a daily memorandum of events at the time.

This lady was in the habit of meeting a young friend on Sunday evenings for twilight talks. On the last occasion the friends parted with the promise to each other that whoever died first would immediately appear to the other, if such a thing were possible. This promise does not seem to have sprung out of any apprehension that they would not meet again, but was suggested by the turn their conversation had taken. Mrs. Bayles continues:—

"It happened that I was away from the city the following Sunday on which she was to spend the twilight hour with me, and I did not see or hear from her

for the lapse of almost three weeks, but on the next Saturday evening (the day before which she was to come), on sitting in my room alone, I was disturbed several times by distinct raps on the door of the wardrobe in the room. Finally, thinking that some one must be playing me a trick, I got up, looked in the press, under the bed, and around everywhere, but nothing did I find that could in any way make the noise. About ten I prepared for bed, and still hearing the raps, I did what was unusual for me to do—locked my door. I had no sooner turned the light out and lain down in bed, than a hand was gently placed on mine, and, looking up, there stood my young friend by my side. She was so distinctly visible that I exclaimed, 'Why, Lillie, what are you doing here this time of night, and how did you get in?' She stood for a few minutes longer and then disappeared.

"Notwithstanding the room was very dark at the time, she so illuminated it that she was as distinct to me as in a bright light. Having parted with her three weeks before in perfect health, it did not occur to me even then that this could be a visit from the 'Spirit Land.' My astonishment can be understood the next day when I took up the morning paper to see the notice of her death on Saturday afternoon, just two hours before the first raps came to me."

Mrs. Bayles states that she could not find out about the manner of her friend's death and being anxious to learn more, she decided to visit a psychic in the town on the chance that he might be able to tell her something about the matter. She says:—

"As soon as I took my seat he went into a trance and right off began telling me that the presence of a young girl who had lately passed over was there, and, calling her by name, said that she wished to say to me that I did see her on Saturday night and that she rapped to call my attention to her being with me, that she came immediately to keep a promise that we had made to each other.

"He then went on to tell me all about her illness and her death . . . which I afterwards verified to be true in every detail. This is one of many similar experiences I have had. Having had no witnesses to the above, I herewith attach my affidavit that every word is true and a personal experience. If necessary I will give the names of several persons who will vouch for my word."

Mrs. Bayles adds that she is sure she did not mention to anyone her experience of the raps and vision, so the psychic could not normally have known of the incident.

[Another article of this series by Miss Dallas will appear in LIGHT next week. The three articles are being issued as a pamphlet by L.S.A. Publications Ltd.]

WHAT DID THE PONY SEE?

In *The Listener* (April 29th), Mr. Harry Price tells the following story:

"As a boy, I occasionally rode a pony between Wellington (Salop) and Walcot, a distance of about five miles. Near the village of Admaston was a lengthy stretch of road which ran through a small copse or spinney. Sometimes it was dusk when I began my return journey, and always, without exception, this particular pony would shy at some unseen object when it approached the spinney and refuse to proceed. After much coaxing and some crab-like careering about the road, the animal would finally race through the wood, obviously terrified at something which was not sensed by me."

Introducing the story, Mr. Price says "cats are notoriously sensitive to super-normal influences, and so are horses." So that his suggestion is that his pony saw something "super-normal." Unfortunately, he does not give any hint what he supposes this "something" might be.

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PSYCHIC ATMOSPHERE OF CHURCHES

By JAMES McLINTOCK

I HAD occasion to visit a Roman Catholic Church with a friend. I had never entered the precincts of a Roman Catholic Church before. I did not know what to expect. I certainly did not anticipate spiritual upliftment from the fact of going into this House of God. Being Scottish, and brought up in the faith of the North, with its antipathy towards display and sensuous worship, I did not go into this Church with a mind favourable and receptive to whatever form of worship it practised.

I had really no desire to enter a Catholic Church; I only did so to please a friend, who, though not a Catholic, enjoys the atmosphere of the Catholic Church and its services. This friend, a good clairvoyant, often spoke about the psychic conditions in Catholic Churches, and the beautiful visions and clairvoyant sights he always witnessed in them. I was sceptical of this. It seemed to me impossible that psychic conditions there should be more harmonious and beautiful than in our own Protestant Churches, especially so with the history of the Roman Catholic Church, and the way it plays on the fears and ignorance of its followers.

I was much surprised when I was actually inside the Church. I could not deny there was something about it I had not hitherto dreamed of. There was no service on at the time we entered. The place was almost empty, except for one or two persons on their knees at different places. We sat down quietly.

Sitting in the quietness of the undisturbed stillness of the place, one could not but feel, after a time, the sense of mystic intensity. Never before had I felt this feeling so keenly. The very air seemed charged with a sense of unworldliness. There was a strange calmness and indefinable peace which seemed to enter me. One could not deny that here were ideal conditions for the opening out and the operation of psychic faculties.

My friend whispered to me about the many things of a beautiful nature he saw clairvoyantly. I concentrated but could not see anything where my friend pointed.

Sitting back, however, in quiet contemplation, mental visions of startling beauty, and colours more vivid and brighter than any ordinary ones, came before me. I seemed eventually to be lifted out of myself and be wandering in lovely gardens, with white marble temples in the background. People were walking about in loose flowing robes of all colours. They were pleasant in features, and their eyes were sparkling and clear. They were moving about with dignity and calm, and no one was in a hurry. From these temples in the background, I clairaudiently heard music coming. It was not like any music we usually hear. It had a transcendental quality, and a calm, soothing, yet inspiring rhythm. Listening to it, one got a feeling of well-being and happiness.

I was, indeed, very sorry to leave the Church, but we could not sit there all day. My friend remarked on my preoccupation. He had whispered to me many times, but I seemed to be in a dream, for I did not hear what he said.

Analysing the situation at the time, I thought it was indeed strange that the atmosphere of a Catholic Church should prove so conducive to clairvoyance, even of the finest type. How could this be? Surely, a Spiritualist Church, with its consciousness of the existence and possible contact with the higher planes of life, should produce a better psychic atmosphere than a Catholic Church, with its ignorance of the higher planes, and its absurd ideas of heaven and hell.

Unfortunately, many Spiritualist Churches have a very poor psychic atmosphere. Going into them, one does not feel uplifted in any way. In Protestant Churches of the more Puritan type here in the North, the atmosphere to the psychically sensitive is not in any way conducive to contemplation. Oft-times there is a distinctly jarring note.

The whole secret, I think, lies in the fact that, psychically and religiously, we are emotional creatures.

In fact, we might say that man is primarily an emotional being. Where man cannot find emotional satisfaction in the matter-of-fact, every-day conventional world, he can find it in religion.

Those who go to extremes in intellectualising religion take the very basis away from it. They destroy its true purpose. The highest qualities of man are not intellectual, but emotional. No amount of logic can explain such things as Beauty, Love and Understanding. Intellectual reasoning is a cold thing, devoid of feeling. Brought into religion, it spoils it and lessens its value.

That is why the atmosphere of the Catholic Church is more congenial, more peaceful, and more satisfactory than the drab Scottish Protestant Churches. It appeals to the emotions, by carefully produced ceremony. It touches the higher senses of feeling and gives a warmth of sensation which no cold intellectual process can give.

I believe that emotion in its higher spiritual and religious sense is something which transcends reason, and that reason is a much overrated faculty.

Psycho-analysis has done much to disprove the idea that the emotions can be effectively suppressed by reason. It shows clearly that more harm is done by the so-called conquering of emotion by logical thought than by giving emotion free expression. What is more, it points out that emotion *must* find expression in one form or other.

PURPOSE OF RELIGION

Religion which is so adapted as to contact the emotional qualities of its worshippers, gives an outlet for the expression of these emotions. This is the true purpose of religion. If there are emotional and spiritual qualities in man higher than perfect reasoning, then there must be means to bring them out, other than an intellectual appeal.

Christ's message to the world was principally centred on the value and necessity of Love. He reiterated, time and time again, that we should love more—not only our friends and neighbours, but all people, including our enemies. All human beings yearn for sympathy and love, and those who can understand them. The satisfaction of this need is of more value than position, wealth and fame. Love is not a thing of reasoning and intellect, but of emotion and feeling.

A religious atmosphere charged with devotional feeling like some Anglican or Roman Catholic Churches is more apt to give emotional sympathy, and open up the way to Spiritual contemplation and upliftment.

So far as I understand, on the other side of life they have their temples or palaces of worship, just as here, and, over there, colour, music and ceremony play a dominant part. Discussing this subject with spirit friends, they tell me that these are necessary in helping the higher emotional part of one's being to contact the inspiration of higher planes. They prophesy that, in the future, our Churches on the earth will make more use of colour and music in services; probably also of form and scent.

THE "MARGERY" MEDIUMSHIP

There has recently been a lull in the news about the doings of "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon) and her circle in Boston, U.S.A.; but occasional notes in the American S.P.R. Journal indicate that the activity of the circle continues. Mr. Bligh Bond—who was until recently Editor of that Journal, and who had many opportunities over a number of years of witnessing the "Margery" phenomena—is now in this country, and is to lecture on them at Queen's Gate Hall, South Kensington, on Friday, May 22nd, under the auspices of the International Institute for Psychical Research.

We understand that only passing reference will be made by Mr. Bond to the finger-print problem, and that his lecture will be devoted to the general phenomena of the circle. Particulars will be given (by advertisement) in next week's issue of LIGHT.

THE DOCTOR AND THE DEVIL

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

SPIRITUALISTS have small need to heed the warning of "woe, when all men shall speak well of you," but they could wish for a larger measure of intelligence in men who do the opposite.

Dr. Harold Dearden's latest effort* is very much a case in point. Its title raised one's hopes. It would be amusing to find Science joining with the Church to accuse us of dealings with the Devil. But the title proved as pointless as the rest of the volume. The only meaning it has is the opposite to its pretension, for Dr. Dearden considers Spiritualism neither devilish nor true.

His mind seems to be still befogged by the Middle Ages. The illustrations which he considers the most suitable to a scientific work depict witches riding on broomsticks, and engaged in a preparatory toilet; hobgoblins and ghastly deformities portraying the "Powers of Evil;" the devil and his satellites pursuing a traveller on a horse: all suitably exemplifying Dr. Dearden's immersion in the delusions of ages darkened by ignorance and superstition.

The samples which he offers to his readers in this year of grace range from Dr. John Dee and Mr. Edward Kelly in the days of Elizabeth; Miss Sawyer, who, a century later, sold her soul to the devil; Mr. Matthew Hopkins, about 1650; to a "certain Richard Hathaway" in 1700.

He may well feel himself safer in those far-off days; but some knowledge of their literature might have saved him from the ludicrous statement that "Up to the year 1848 the possibility of deliberate communion between the living and the dead had never occurred to anyone."

Even if he feels himself too scientific to consider the early annals of the Church, he might, in the century of which he is so fond, look up a work published in Paris in 1588, by the learned and highly esteemed Noel Taillepied, *Psychologie ou traité de l'apparition des Esprits*, which should enlighten his ignorance on the subject.

He is, he tells us, "a reasonably successful practitioner in the special department of psychological medicine," which explains a good deal; for professional psychologists and psycho-analysts are so carried away by the additions recently made to their knowledge as to think that everything psychological will finally be explained by material processes.

Meanwhile it would be prudent to refrain from scoffing at processes he cannot understand. He is scornful of cures achieved by "absent treatment." But such cures are wrought, often by and on the most unlikely people; and if he had had experience of a world that lies outside the complacent assurance of "civilised" psychology, he might have learnt that life can be tragically and criminally at the mercy of "absent treatment;" and one would have thought that even a superficial enquiry would have saved him from his unfortunate sneer at the work of Dr. Carl Wickland.

He tells us that "nowadays witchcraft is utterly discredited." If by witchcraft he means the practice of magic, one might rather say that it is only beginning to be investigated.

How limited is his experience is emphasised by the statement that: "There can be nothing in the world so colourless and saddening as the spirits who take part in the average seance . . . one is painfully reminded of old ladies in almshouses. Spiritualists have added a new terror to death." The knowledge that on the Other Side he may be required to give an explanation of *Devilish But True*, may well have added a terror to Dr. Dearden's expectations, but he seems to have been unfortunate in the seances from which he has compiled an average.

He tells us that "there can be no humbler creature

Devilish But True, by Harold Dearden. London.
Hutchinson and Co. 1936. 15/-.

alive than the average psychologist." Here, again, one would like to know from what data the "average" has been compiled.

Remembering the bitterness with which the psychologists attacked, and, maybe, are still attacking the "superstition" of dowsing, and their present attitude to any scientist who, like Prof. J. B. Rhine, tries to throw some light on their pet aversions, one can note little advance in humility since the days of Sir William Crookes.

How inaccessible are minds like Dr. Dearden's to evidence they are determined not to accept is well illustrated by a case of apparition which he was able to test exhaustively.

He concludes—the case is too long to quote—"It would appear, at first sight, to be impossible to avoid the conviction that some supernatural phenomenon had indeed occurred, and I confess that I am still unable entirely to resist this conclusion."

He then proceeds to put up a very voluble resistance, "along normal psychological lines," which wanders off into thought-transference and homing pigeons, without facing the problem from which it started.

Though, like most psychological materialists, he hardly seems to know whether he does or does not believe in telepathy, he takes refuge behind it from inconvenient conclusions. He will even descend to telepathised hallucination where two, three or more people are independently aware of the same happening. One would like to see him, or any other unskilled performer, try to telepathise an hallucination! Yet that is how he would explain the conviction of Commander Stoker and his two companions that they were accompanied by a spirit presence when escaping from the Turks; though not one of the three mentioned what he had seen till the apparition had vanished.

He would attribute their telepathised illusions, as well as that of Sir Ernest Shackleton during his famous boat voyage, and that of a friend on a dangerous job in Russia, to an upset of the mind under the stress of peril and privation; not, apparently, being able to conceive that it is, indeed, that very stress which, shaking the mind loose from its carnal hampering, sets it free to function in a less coherent dimension. Clairvoyant aptitudes have frequently been produced by a prolonged fast.

One wonders if it can be his medical preconceptions which make the author so quaintly intolerant of psychical therapeutics. He tells us that "reputable healers, whether at Lourdes or elsewhere . . . are providing a large number of hysterical sufferers with a cheap and happy release from their troubles . . . but they can only get it with hysterical persons. Make no mistake about that."

Of course, it is always possible to accuse a person of hysteria whatever the disease or whatever the cure. Varicose veins, suppurating fractures, local tuberculosis, double clubfoot, recurrent epithelioma, cancer, snake-bite—to choose but a few of authenticated cures—cannot all be labelled neurotic; or, if they can, there is no ill that cannot.

"If the earnest enquirer into the supernatural is really in earnest," says the author, "he would be by no means ill-advised to leave Spiritualism severely alone."

Whether Dr. Dearden be earnest or not, he would be well advised to apply to himself his counsel to the enquirer, if he finds it impossible to clear his mind of psycho-medical prejudice. His unfitness for his task is well illustrated by the futile bitterness of his attack on Daniel Home, which is nearly a century out of date.

One really wonders he has refrained from acclaiming the explanation of the old woman in America, when confronted with Home's achievements. "Lor, sirs," she said, "it's easy enough, he only rubs himself all over first with a gold pencil."

SUPERNORMAL DRAWINGS

A STRIKING CASE OF BYGONE DAYS

THE recent recrudescence of this phase of psychic phenomena, as instanced in the remarkable paintings of Miss Willis (see LIGHT of 31st October, 1935), and the closely parallel case of the painter referred to under the heading, "Italian Notes" in LIGHT of 7th March, and the case of the Medium in Derby (see LIGHT of 26th February), is sufficient excuse for bringing to the notice of readers particulars of a very striking case of bygone days falling in the same category.

The record of this case is contained in a book written by W. M. Wilkinson, the head of the family in which the manifestations occurred, entitled *Spirit Drawings: a Personal Narrative*, first published in 1858. The author writes:—

"In August, 1856, a heavy and sudden affliction came upon us, in the removal of a dear boy—our second son—into the spiritual world. He had passed about eleven years in this world of ours, and was taken from us in the midst of the rudest health, to commence his spirit-life under the loving care of his Heavenly Father.

"Some weeks afterwards his brother, then about twelve years old, went on a short visit to Reading; and whilst there, amused himself as boys of his age are used to do. One morning he had a piece of paper before him, and a pencil in his hand, with which he was about to draw some child's picture, when gradually he found his hand filling with some feeling before unknown to him, and then it began to move involuntarily upon the paper, and to form letters, words, and sentences. The feeling he described as of a pleasing kind, entirely new to him, and as if some power was within him, apart from his own mind and making use of his hand. The handwriting was different from his own, and the subject matter of the writing was unknown to him till he read it with curiosity as it was being written.

"On frequent occasions, whilst on this visit, his hand was similarly moved in writing; and afterwards he went to stay with some other friends in Buckinghamshire, with whom he did not make a trial of this new power; but on his return home, after some weeks' absence, we, for about two months, watched—with deep emotion—the movement of his hand in writing; for sometimes, when he wished to write, his hand moved in drawing small flowers—such as exist not here; and sometimes, when he expected to draw a flower, the hand moved into writing. The movement was, in general, most rapid, and unlike his own mode of writing or drawing; and he had no idea of what was being produced until it was in process of being done. Often, in the middle of writing a sentence, a flower or diagram would be drawn, and then suddenly the hand would go off in writing again.

"I have not mentioned the nature, or subject-matter of the words thus written, nor is it in this place necessary to do so further than this: that they purported to be chiefly communications from his brother, our dear departed child, and were all of a religious character, speaking of his own happy state, and of the means by which similar happiness is alone to be attained by those who remained here to fight out their longer battle of life."

Subsequently, after trying for some weeks, the boy's mother, who had had no experience in drawing, manifested the same faculty, and executed automatically a large series of drawings of flowers and geometrical designs and symbolical sketches, together with automatic explanatory writings. Mr. Wilkinson, the father, also later developed the same faculty.

These extraordinary drawings were inspected by upwards of two thousand persons of all classes, in most of whom they induced an inward yearning after more knowledge of, and contact with, spirit life.

A very curious feature of the record is the statement of the author that many persons he knew in the locality also developed the faculty, both of drawing and writing,

and that of the first seventeen who sat down with a pencil, the hands of fifteen were moved in less than five minutes. The author further states that:

"Amongst all the new things that these wonderful drawings and writings have brought to us, not the least strange, nor the least striking has been the circumstance that of the great number of persons who have come to see them, and who have fought against all spirit developments as the mere imaginations of a diseased mind there is hardly one who has not finished by narrating to us some private family experiences even more wonderful in degree than those we had to show."

He then goes on to quote an article which appeared several years earlier in *Tait's Magazine*, in which mention is made of this subject under the title of "The Lost Faculty, or Sixth Sense," which the writer says existed in the early ages of the world, and consisted in the power of perceiving by the "mind's eye" spiritual beings with the same ordinary faculty with which the corporeal eye perceives material substance.

"This mental vision we believe to have been an ordinary endowment of humanity in its original state of innocence, and that, had man continued in that condition, it would still have been enjoyed; but that by the fall, and the consequent corruption of our nature, it was lost, or held in abeyance as a common attribute of our nature, being, however, occasionally and temporarily restored, or imparted to individuals for special purposes."

The article proceeds to give a wonderful collection of instances of spirit-appearance, dreams, visions, and second-sight; which last faculty, he says, is beyond a doubt the result of mental vision, and the possession of it by certain persons so well authenticated that it cannot be denied; and he asks: "Who will have the temerity to affirm, in the face of all the positive and negative evidence to the contrary, that it is either impossible or improbable that the spiritual beings of another world can return to this earth, and be permitted on special occasions to become visible to the mental perceptions of the still living?"

The Editor of the magazine complained of the mass of letters which he received on the subject, and inserted one apparently from a medical man, in which he attributes all the appearances to indigestion, the wonderful creations of an overloaded stomach, and no doubt to be cured by a dose of medicine.

The author also quotes the following utterance of Charles Dickens:

"It would almost seem as if our better thoughts and sympathies were charms in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we dearly loved in this life. Alas! how often and how long may those patient angels hover over us, watching for the spell which is so seldom uttered and so soon forgotten!"

In the following paragraph the author relates instances of the gift of tongues:—

"It is only a few years ago that the northern world was startled by the evidence of one of these gifts—that of speaking, and which took the name in Sweden of "the preaching epidemic." It was in 1842 that in the province of Skara the bishop of that diocese, in a published letter addressed to the Archbishop of Uppsala, tells him of numbers of the peasant class who effected much moral good by their eloquent harangues, preaching some of them with their eyes open and some in trance, in a state of perfect insensibility to outward impressions, and opening to their hearers the Word of God. I myself have seen many such instances of speaking in both states, in the cases of both gentlemen and ladies, of the year 1864, to whom it has come not as an epidemic, but has been recognised as a gift, and one that I believe is open to all."

W.H.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(The views and statements of correspondents are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, who occasionally prints, in the interests of free discussion, letters with which he does not agree).

"LINKED" TELEPATHY

Sir,—I am interested to see from Mr. Soal's letter in LIGHT of April 30th, that he is able to accept, at least provisionally, the belief that a sitter can act as a rapport-object which can enable the Medium to obtain information about distant people—information which the sitter did not possess consciously, and perhaps not even subconsciously.

Anything is possible, of course, except a contradiction in terms. As Huxley used to say, there are impossibilities logical, but none natural. A round square is impossible, but turning water into wine or walking on the sea is not impossible. So I agree that this "linked" telepathy is not impossible. But I have been on the look-out for evidence for it for many years, and have not found any that convinces me. I am sure that a handkerchief or tie belonging to an absent person will enable a good psychometrist to give true details to the sitter concerning the owner, and these may go beyond chance coincidence; but this kind of thing falls very far short of the supposed telepathy by links which Mr. Soal is speaking of.

In my book, *Experiences with Mediums*, I describe several cases in which the hypothesis of this telepathy from distant persons seems too far-fetched to be credible to a cautious mind—e.g., in one case we received communications purporting to come from a Mrs. Bubb, and the details went far beyond chance coincidence; and all turned out true. I had never met any relative or friend of Mrs. Bubb, to the best of my belief. I had corresponded with her step-daughter to some small extent.

Anyone who will read the case carefully, and can then believe in any sort of telepathic "explanation," seems to me not sceptical, but credulous or biased. I do not know what Mr. Soal thinks of the case; probably he has not read it. Again I say that each has a right to his own views, and we believe mainly according to our own experience; my experience has been specially rich in telepathy-eliminating facts.

Thornton, Bradford.

J. ARTHUR HILL.

A SITTING WITH MISS BESINNETT

Sir,—In confirmation of the letter you published by Mrs. Madge Donohoe (LIGHT, April 30th), I should like to add my testimony as to the character of the seances given by Miss Ada Besinnet.

My sister and I sat with her at the British College of Psychic Science when she was in England some years ago. The first to appear was an old man, recognised by the sitter on my right as his father. Next came a girl much more naturally coloured. My sister and I simultaneously whispered to each other: "Maggie Hyde." This girl was the niece and an occasional visitor of an old servant living with us. We knew her but slightly. She had died about five years before. Certainly she was one of the last persons we should have expected to see.

Next came our mother. Her face was almost too close to ours. We were on the side of the table opposite to the Medium. Our mother looked at us with an eager expression of keen anxiety to be recognised. An aunt also appeared.

These were all we got personally, but we saw the figures holding a light to their faces, who came for other sitters.

My mother spoke to me at some length through the trumpet before the end of the sitting on items of family matters, and sent messages to persons at home, by name.

A point I wish particularly to emphasise is that the figures appeared directly above the heavy mahogany

table; ending in mist at about knee length, where the light was reflected in the polished surface. It is impossible that the figures could have been produced by the Medium leaning over the table—at least on the occasion when I was there.

I cannot do better than end with Mrs. Donohoe's words: "My grateful thoughts will always go out to Ada Besinnet, Black Hawk, and Pansy, and I thank God for them."

Highgate.

S. M. BOWLEY.

ANOTHER READER'S EXPERIENCE

Sir,—Concerning Dr. Dingwall's article on Miss Besinnet (LIGHT, April 23rd), I had a sitting with Miss Besinnet at the British College for Psychic Science some 14 years ago, at which my late wife materialised to the extent of one-half of her face, which I recognised. She caressed my face with her hand, which was the same soft hand as she had on earth-life, and afterwards sent me a note that she had showed me part of her face. This is simpler to believe and receive than Dr. Dingwall's overstrained theory.

J. W. MACDONALD.

"PSYCHOLOGICAL ILLUSION"

Sir,—With regard to the phenomena of the late Miss Ada Besinnet, there is, I think, little doubt that Dr. Dingwall's view is the correct one. After a long study of her mediumship, Dr. Hyslop came to the conclusion that she was an hysterical subject who whistled, sang, moved tambourines, etc., in the darkness while in a state of auto-hypnosis. Nevertheless, Hyslop admitted that he was unable to imitate successfully her "spirit-lights" by any means known to him—though, of course, this does not necessarily mean that the lights were supernormally produced.

The recognition of the illuminated faces by many sitters was, I believe, a curious example of psychological illusion. The sudden lighting up of the Medium's face and the varying intensities of illumination no doubt combined with an atmosphere of eager expectancy to play strange tricks with the imagination. What, I suggest, Mrs. Donohoe actually saw were two illuminations of Miss Besinnet's face in slightly different positions following each other in rapid succession, thus producing an illusion of simultaneity. A similar illusion not infrequently occurs at "direct voice" seances when a supposed "spirit" voice is sometimes imagined to be simultaneous with that of the Medium.

In 1921, I attended three sittings with Miss Besinnet, and my notes are beside me as I write. On two of these occasions the control, "Black Hawk," warned me that I was to see the face of "a young man," and I naturally expected my brother Frank. In my notes I observe that the "young man's" face which appeared for a few seconds at the second sitting was "a distinctly feminine face resembling in some respects that of the Medium," while that of the third and last sitting is described as "undoubtedly Miss Besinnet's face with a halo of white material draping the head."

And yet, upon the girl's face which appeared at my first sitting, I lavished such extravagant terms as "etherealised as of finer clay," "grave yet full of personality," etc., which seem to indicate that, at first, even I was not immune from the atmosphere of imaginative contagion. The progressive disillusionment, in fact, is precisely similar to that of a lover who at first is unable to see the loved object as it really is.

S. G. SOAL.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CONDITIONS OF THE AFTER-LIFE

Sir,—Those who heard Captain Bland at the Grotrian Hall on Wednesday, 29th April, got some food for thought. But many evidently agreed with Mrs. Stobart in not accepting all the views expressed. The speaker was only offering "speculations"; but even these must have a basis of some kind. His basis seemed to be that, after passing over, we are so very much like what we were here, in body, mind, and conditions, that we are entitled to go on building our "speculations" as if life in the next stage were practically the same thing as it is here.

But is not this entirely at variance with the messages received? Are we not assured that there are many things so utterly different from here that it is impossible to make us understand them; just as it would be impossible to make the caterpillar understand the life of the butterfly, or to make a fish realise the life of a bird? Captain Bland assumes that, if the body there is a duplicate of the earthly one, there must be a similar muscular system, etc.

Is not the word "duplicate" merely used to indicate that there is such a likeness *in appearance* that we are able to recognise those we knew? In the National Portrait Gallery we say we see Gladstone, Nelson, Florence Nightingale, etc. We recognise them at once, but what we see is only paint, and has no muscular system. Is there not a large amount of evidence that the spirits can and do travel hundreds or thousands of miles at lightning speed? That one fact is enough to prove the existence of conditions utterly different from here.

Again, to say that taste and smell in this life are so closely allied that, if one goes the other must go, is like saying that a man's hands are so similar that if one is cut off the other will drop off. Is there not also a great deal of evidence that the sense of beauty, with the means of gratifying it, is much greater there than here? And surely this covers sights, sounds and perfumes. Indeed, one might turn the tables and say that, as the senses of taste and smell are so closely linked, it will be enough if we merely retain smell and do without taste; especially as the latter is bound up with the sustenance of a heavy material body, no longer in existence.

It was suggested that, as we progress here by wrestling with difficulties, so we can only progress there by wrestling with similar difficulties. Is it not better to say that progress depends on effort? None of us believes that happiness is to be found in idleness. But, here again, is not the evidence that has come through all to the effect that those who have led worthy lives here shall have occupations calling for the best use of their own special talents, and for such efforts as they are glad to be allowed to make? Finally, to say that, if there is love there must be hate, is like saying that, in a household, the more mutual love there is, the more mutual hate there must be between the same people. There, as here, life is an individual matter; and let us believe that, as love increases in the Beyond, so hate will go on withering and at last cease to be.

C. FERGUSON.

WORK ON THE OTHER SIDE

Sir,—I see no reason for Mr. Charles de Wolff's protest (LIGHT, April 30th). It is no refutation of what I said. He admits that "it may take a long time" before a spirit can do valuable work. I agree. What I said of my grandfather applied to some time after his passing; he could then do no more than show his identity, as is very often the case. Mr. Purchas' grandfather had been longer in the spirit-world. All depends on willingness to learn. I asked: "Does anyone suppose that *mere transition* would make him a good adviser?"

STANLEY DE BRATH.

A RECOGNISED DEANE "EXTRA"

Sir,—Some months before we left England for our trip in the U.S.A. and Canada, we had a visit from a Canadian lady, the wife of one of the principal Mediums of the Glen Hamilton Circle at Winnipeg. She desired to have a sitting with Mrs. Deane at the Stead Library, and asked me to accompany her. This I willingly did, and, as a result, she obtained an "extra" of the well-defined face of a man. She was unable to recognise it, and was greatly disappointed, as she hoped that someone near and dear to her would manifest.

On leaving to return to Canada, she gave me a copy, which I added to our collection which we took with us on our trip, to show to the various groups of interested people we met on our travels.

Whilst we were in Calgary last summer, we had occasion to show these photographs; and a gentleman in the group, when he saw the one referred to, said: "I feel sure that is a likeness of old Mr. X., who lived here for many years, and whose son, in Winnipeg, is one of the most famous lawyers in Canada. He also is keenly interested in the work of the Hamilton Circle, and has from time to time acted as an expert witness during the production of specially important phenomena so that he might be in the position of an unbiased judge of their authenticity."

I accordingly wrote to my Winnipeg friend and requested her to make enquiries as to whether the statement was correct. I have recently received a letter from her in which she says:

"We gave Mr. X. the photograph with the 'extra' I got in London, and he recognised it as being his father. Shortly after Christmas he was in Minneapolis, visiting his sister, and showed her the photograph without saying anything as to who it might be. She said at once it was her father. Recently, the X.'s and some other members of the Hamilton Circle were here for dinner, and Mr. X. brought with him all the photographs he could find of his father. The resemblance is quite remarkable, even to us who did not know him."

This is a case in which it is impossible for the greatest sceptic to attribute the result to the building up of a thought form by the sitters, and I consider it desirable to place the facts on record, as it is a great tribute to the genuine powers of mediumship of Mrs. Deane.

San Diego, California. (Mrs.) CECILIA F. HAYWARD.

AN "OXFORD GROPER'S" BELIEFS

Sir,—In an argument with a young man (cultured and highly intelligent), he spoke of the Bible as being the very first authentic account of Christianity. Also, he argued that the Jews brought evidences into being concerning the writings of the Bible. He is an "Oxford Grouper," and I was trying to bring him into my line of thought as a Spiritualist. He dwells much on the Acts of the Apostles. Perhaps some reader, far more versed in arguments for Spiritualism than I am, could kindly advise me as to the best replies.

On my contention that the Gospels were not absolutely authentic in parts, having been written so many years later, the young men said the Jews were proved by experience to have memorised everything perfectly.

E.W.

SELECTION AND DESIGN

Sir,—In considering Mr. Soal's suggested explanation of the cases reported by "Rusticus Expectans," is it reasonable to ignore the fact that the references in question were definitely given as *tests*? Moreover, selection and design were both obvious. If this theory is to be accepted, then the subconscious mind of the Medium must have presented two incidents culled from all the life experiences of the absent husband, and in a manner calculated to give a false impression of being a spirit communication. I find this incredible.

CHARLES THORNTON.

Light

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHEM

As We See It

CREepy PSYCHIC STORIES

ALTHOUGH the B.B.C. refuses to broadcast a Spiritualist service and seldom permits any direct reference to Spiritualism in talks, it cannot keep Spiritualism out of its programmes. And, usually, the manner in which the subject is introduced is not helpful to listeners or fair to Spiritualism.

The three "Macabre" stories presented last Saturday night (May 2nd) provide a case in point. In one of these stories Spiritualism was discussed. "I would rather follow Einstein than Sir Oliver Lodge in regard to Spiritualism," said one of the characters, "but I don't understand either of them." In the third story, the dramatic interest turned on the ghostly "return" of an old lady in the house she had occupied for many years and the consequent bewilderment of the new occupants.

Before the stories were broadcast, the announcer advised nervous people not to listen to them—a suggestion which would, of course, have the effect of causing many impressionable people to listen intently; and to those who had no knowledge of the real facts of Psychical Research and Spiritualism, the result might quite easily be upsetting. Certainly it would set up the suggestion that Spiritualism is associated with fear—which, as all Spiritualists know, is the opposite of the truth.

The only people able to listen to the "Macabre" stories with pleasure, as well as interest, would, in fact, be those with some knowledge of Spiritualism. However nervous, they would not be frightened or upset by talk of "ghosts," or even by the dramatic representation of ghostly words and music, because they understand that—however mysterious psychic appearances and communications may be—there is nothing about them of which one need be afraid.

Admittedly, "Macabre" stories and plays in which "ghosts" take a part are of great human interest, and many of them lend themselves admirably to the technique of broadcasting. We do not for a moment suggest that such entertainment should be abandoned. What we do suggest is that, before each broadcast, instead of nervous people being frightened by the suggestion that something terrifying is about to be put on the air, someone conversant with the subject should give a brief account of the facts on which the stories are based and explain that there is no reason whatever to be afraid. This would, of course, be equivalent to broadcasting a talk on some aspect of

(Continued at foot of next column).

LOURDES CURES

NOT MIRACLES, BUT DUE TO PSYCHIC HEALING

"TO Roman Catholics, Lourdes remains a miracle; to me, it is not a miracle but simply psychic healing," declared Colonel N. P. Clarke, of London, when he spoke on "Some psychic observations on the Lourdes Pilgrimage," at a meeting of the Sheffield Society for Psychic Research.

Colonel Clarke described a visit to Lourdes and the things he saw and heard. He spoke of the extraordinary reverence and sincerity, the singing and praying. There was no question, he said, that cures were effected, but they constituted a very small proportion, having regard to the numbers of people who went to Lourdes. Three years had to elapse before a cure could be regarded as permanent. All "cures" which might be due to suggestion or hysteria were eliminated.

Throughout the ages water had been used for curing, and, in the Bible, water was associated with healing. The plunging of the patient into cold water, after the singing and praying, gave a mental relaxation and it was then when the cures usually took place.

"I sometimes wonder whether we could not get better results in healing by the judicious use of water," he observed.

Direct Divine healing, the lecturer claimed, would be perfect, and not leave scars and other imperfections, which were regular features at Lourdes. He put forward the theory of a possible band of spirit doctors, working as a group to heal humanity.

An Anglican clergyman present at the meeting related the case of a woman who was declared to have only 24 hours to live. With silent prayers, God's blessing, and the laying on of hands which he gave prior to leaving the sick room, the woman became healthy and strong. No powers associated with him accounted for that.

An interesting incident was the unexpected presence at the meeting of a man who had himself been cured at Lourdes, and from the audience he gave a fully detailed description of his case. He had been completely paralysed on one side for a long period of years. Doctors could do nothing more, looking upon him as incurable. Liquids were the only form of nourishment he could take, and all waste liquid in the system had to be drained away through a tube in the side. Under pressure from friends, as a sort of last resource, and without much hope or faith, almost without desire to live, he went to Lourdes, helpless and firmly strapped down on a stretcher. His cure was complete, and practically instantaneous, and immediately following it he was able to eat an unusually large meal of solid food.

The Chairman (Mr. O. J. Wendlandt), on the discussion, put forward a theory that the fact that new material and parts (as in the healing of fractured bones and new flesh) could be provided by nature, under natural laws, but very very slowly, indicated that in these Lourdes cases there would seem to be a tremendous speeding up of the healing process, presumably by a rapid rise in the vibrations which lie at the base of all life, thus bringing the patient under the range and control of vibrations prevailing, and only normally possible, on the higher planes of spiritual life.

The reason so many were not cured, was possibly that the great stress and strain under which they laboured often inhibited that mental and physical relaxation necessary before spiritual exhilaration can function. We often find something similar in our psychic investigations.

O.J.W.

(Continued from previous column).

Psychical Research or Spiritualism, but it need not be on propagandist lines—it need only deal with the facts (real or alleged) on which the stories or plays are based.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

SPIRITUAL HEALING

IN his broadcast talk on "Spiritual Healing" on Sunday afternoon, the Rev. Fr. J. P. Arendzen, D.D., as was to be expected, set up the claim that Roman Catholic healing, such as occurs at Lourdes, is quite distinct from Faith Healing (and, presumably, from the Anglican healing described on the previous Sunday by the Rev. J. Maillard)—that, in fact, it is miraculous and due to the direct intervention of the Deity in answer to the prayers of the Faithful.

Fr. Arendzen explained rather adroitly that this did not involve the breaking of any natural law—it only meant that God, in response to prayer, sometimes acts "outside" natural law; and he claimed to be able to state that God from all eternity had willed to perform such miracles occasionally, to let men know in these days that they are not enclosed in a cast-iron system that cannot be varied.

MIRACLE OR LAW?

This is a view of Spiritual Healing that few people outside the pale of the Roman Catholic Church will be able to accept—and even inside the Church there must be many who question it.

That healing is effected by Spiritual (as distinct from medical or surgical) means is certain—not only at Lourdes under the aegis of the Roman Church, but in many other parts of the world, in Churches and outside Churches; but there is every reason to believe that such healing is accomplished, not "outside law," but by means of laws which are as yet only dimly sensed.

In this, as in many other respects, the Roman Church claims a monopoly of God's grace. That claim is not admitted by the Anglican Rev. J. Maillard, who in turn claims that his work of healing is superior to Spiritual Healing as practised by Spiritualists and others.

And, we need scarcely add, neither of these claims are admitted by Spiritualists. The facts show that in this, as in other respects, "God is no respecter of persons" or even of Churches. Where the means are provided—as, for example, at the L.S.A.—the healing work is accomplished, as hundreds of thankful people are ready to testify. Probably—as Col. N. P. Clark suggested in his recent address at Sheffield—all Spiritual Healing is Psychic Healing.

THE QUEEN'S HALL SERVICES

Once more, Marylebone Spiritualist Association draws attention (in *Service* for May) to the fact that the collections at the Queen's Hall Sunday evening services are not sufficient to cover the cost of the gatherings, and that the "continuous weekly loss . . . is having a serious influence on the Association's finance." The attendance is well maintained—usually over 1,200, sometimes 2,000, and on special occasions to the full capacity of the hall; but the cost is heavy, and we are not surprised that an appeal is being made to those who attend "to increase the average individual contributions to the collection, and so make it possible for the services to be run without a loss."

We hope the appeal will be heeded, for the Queen's Hall service holds an important place in the Sunday Spiritualist propaganda activities in London.

A GHOST GOING WEST

There is a possibility, it seems, that a ghost will be given the opportunity of "going West" in the manner portrayed in the now famous film, "The Ghost Goes West." As if copying the film story (which was originally a story in *Punch*), an American millionaire proposes to buy Shanganagh Castle, in South County Dublin, pull it down, take the stones across the Atlantic and re-build the castle in America. As this castle has had a ghost associated with it for several generations, the hope is that it may emulate Murdoch Glourie and become American. Whether, like Murdoch, it will add to the gaiety of the nations, remains to be seen.

STILL ACTIVE

WHILST it is true (as we announced some time ago) that Mr. Stanley De Brath has thought it desirable to seek relief from the work and responsibility attaching to the Editorship of *Psychic Science* (the organ of the British College of Psychic Science) on account of his advancing years, it is fortunately also true that his mental and physical activity enable him to continue to work for Spiritualism with voice and pen. Readers of LIGHT have proof of this, for there is rarely an issue in which his name does not appear as the writer of some interesting letter or article.

Now we learn that Mr. De Brath has arranged to deliver two addresses at the L.S.A. Wednesday afternoon meetings—the first on May 27th and the second on July 15th. His subjects are not yet announced; but since his knowledge covers the whole field, from the crudest psychic phenomena to the loftiest philosophy, there need be no doubt that the addresses will be both interesting and helpful.

These meetings are held at 5 o'clock each Wednesday afternoon at the L.S.A., and are preceded by a Quest Club "at home" (from 3.30), which is deservedly very popular with members and their friends.

PSYCHIC FACTS

"Psychic Facts and their Spiritual Meaning" is the subject chosen by Mr. Shaw Desmond for the address he is to deliver at Caxton Hall, Westminster, next Monday evening (May 11th, at 8.15). This is another of the popular meetings arranged by the L.S.A.; and Mr. Desmond will be assured of an audience at once sympathetic and discriminating. Following the address, Mrs. Helen Hughes is to give a demonstration of clairaudient evidence for Survival; and, as announced in LIGHT last week, it is intended to take a full note of all she says, so that recipients of messages may afterwards have an opportunity of attesting or criticising them. Experience has shown that messages given through Mrs. Hughes are nearly always evidential; and it is hoped that, by getting them on paper, their usefulness may be enlarged.

RECOVERING A "DEAD" LANGUAGE

Ancient Egyptian has been a "dead" language for hundreds of years; for although scholars can "read" the hieroglyphics, they have no idea what the sound of the words may have been. By psychic means, there is a prospect that this difficulty may be overcome. Through "Rosemary" (as recorded by Dr. F. H. Wood, of Blackpool, in the *Rosemary Scripts*) what are said to be Egyptian words and phrases are clearly spoken by the Lady Nona, who claims to have been an ancient Egyptian Princess; and on Monday, at the International Institute for Psychical Research, South Kensington, a sound record was made by "Rosemary" of from 150 to 200 words. A copy of this record will be examined by Mr. Howard Hulme (who has collaborated with Dr. Wood in elucidating these language tests); and should he be satisfied that the words are Egyptian, other Egyptologists will be invited to hear the record and to express their views.

"Rosemary" and Dr. Wood attended an "At Home" at the American Women's Club, London, in connection with the Institute on Monday evening, and contributed to the musical programme.

NEW PSYCHIC JOURNAL

We have before us the first number of the first volume of yet another psychic journal, *Fiat-Lux*. This paper calls itself an "International Monthly Illustrated Review of Experimental Psychic Research." It is under the joint Editorship of M. Cornelius Ver Heyden de Lancey and Mlle. Marita de Hutschler, and is published at Monte Carlo. The illustrations in this first number are good; but it is to be regretted that the translations which are printed alongside most of the French articles have not been put into better English.

IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MR. AND MRS. WRIGHT CONTINUE THEIR PSYCHIC PILGRIMAGE

AT the end of a pleasant fortnight of ocean travel, we landed at Fremantle, and, although the hour was 7.30 a.m., we were met by representatives of Churches here and in Perth, who gave us a cordial welcome.

Later, we sought out the various Spiritualistic agencies in Fremantle—the reason for the term “agencies” being that in many cases this is more appropriate than “churches,” they being what is known at home as “one-man” affairs (though here it is “one-woman”), having no officers or committees, no organisation of any kind. Some have hired halls, others meet in the houses of their respective leaders. There are various activities during the week, chiefly on the lines of phenomena. Even at the Sunday services it would seem that for the majority of the people present the important feature is that of “flower reading,” a form of psychometry that is pursued with insatiable avidity. Before the service, and even while it is proceeding, the “libation bearers” come forward and lay upon the table their own offerings and also a number of others, in respect of which they act as proxies for absent friends. In this way there are presented a considerable number of flowers for the Medium to deal with, and records are said to have reached as high a figure as 150, all of which secured a reading. At intervals, a break is made to afford those who have received messages to go home and think about them or to pass on what they have garnered as proxies.

The so-called messages are of an illuminating order, not greatly differing one from another, conveying scarcely any spiritual guidance or reference whatsoever, but teeming with promises of employment, change of residence, success in the latest venture, and so forth, *ad nauseum*; the most hardly-worked promise being: “everything will work out satisfactorily.”

Normally, we are told, the attendances are not large, and even in the larger meetings which we held we noted particularly the absence of men.

At the Sunday services which we were invited to take, we made it clear that there would be no flower reading on our part; and we rejoiced to find that, notwithstanding the disappointment of the message-seekers, many people expressed their appreciation of our English methods; which appreciation discounted considerably the excuse offered by Mediums for the prominence given to material messages—namely, that this is all that people want. A further excuse was that the people had not been educated up to anything higher; which, so far as it is true, obviously reflects on the Mediums themselves, whose business it should be to undertake such education rather than pander to the popular taste. However sincere the leaders may be, these methods tend to bring the sacred cause of Spiritualism into disrepute in the eyes of the general public.

After spending twelve days in Fremantle, we moved on to Perth, where we found much evidence of conditions similar to those already described, with, also, a larger following. Here, however, most of the Churches are well-housed in large halls; and a few of them at least are certainly endeavouring to maintain a higher spiritual standard. Here, again, with two or three exceptions, the Churches are in the hands of individuals who are not responsible to any committee, but retain in their own hands the sole governance of the Church, including its financial aspect.

In respect of the giving of messages, some of the Mediums in Perth seem to have surpassed anything that we have met with hitherto. In some few instances they do not hesitate to introduce the giving of tips for the races, generally in a symbolical form, as, e.g.: “I see a man packing a box. Among the articles that he is placing in the box there is a green coat with yellow sleeves.” Prophecy is not neglected, and many instances have come to our notice in which people were

suffering great distress through having been told of the impending passing of some dear relative. The law here is very vigilant in respect to fortune-telling, therefore it is safer to ply the trade under the protective cloak of Spiritualism.

In Perth, we took a number of services and meetings; but, although we devoted four weeks to this city, we were not able to accept all the invitations that we received. The services were well attended, in some instances beyond the seating capacity—a fact which seems to show that there is a real desire among the people for a type of service which does not include the undesirable features of which we have spoken.

Some of our most pleasant experiences were provided by invitations to visit people in the surrounding neighbourhood, particularly in Harvey, some 80 miles out, where we spent a week-end among a band of very earnest people who, working under great difficulties, are striving to build up a Church on purely spiritual lines. Here the setting was more like an English countryside than any that we had seen since leaving home, the verdancy being due to an elaborate system of irrigation provided by the Government. Among those who received messages at the Sunday service were a doctor, an officer of the Government Health Department, and a Civil Engineer—all interested in social work, and, at the moment, in the theory of Social Credit. So much impressed were they by these personal messages that they sought a private reading, each one separately at first, and then collectively; with the result that they were highly gratified with the spiritual enlightenment which they received in respect of their humanitarian activities.

HOME CIRCLES

In view of the general conditions existing in the Perth area, it was not surprising to find a number of Spiritualists who, having no use for the Churches, are contenting themselves with such Home Circles and private gatherings as they can arrange; in some of which we were permitted to take part. With this attitude we could not fail to feel a certain degree of sympathy; yet we could not help thinking that there might be “a more excellent way”; and the course that we tried to urge upon these friends was that, instead of “shaking off the dust of their feet,” they should endeavour to substitute something more worthy, by themselves uniting to establish a Church composed of people whose aims and aspirations would be a guarantee of high ideals and pure teaching; or, alternatively, to associate themselves with one or other of the better type of Churches which already exist.

Among the Home Circles existing in Perth, some are sitting for the Direct Voice. We attended two of these, and at one of them received messages through the trumpet from relatives of whom no one but ourselves had any knowledge, and who gave their names and spoke of matters of mutual interest.

One of our most pleasant evenings was that on which we were invited to dinner to meet the Vicar of the parish. A typical Australian, lithe and manly, this cleric has taken a long stride towards Spiritualism, though perhaps falling short of actual conviction; and it was interesting to note also the extent to which he had travelled from the narrow course of Orthodoxy. On the other hand, it was pathetic to hear him speak of the bondage, as he termed it, of tradition and dogma which still encumbers his Church, and of the obligation resting upon him to subscribe to an archaic system, the written word of which, in his own mind, he has to a large extent jettisoned and forever discarded. He deplored the fact that, whereas science, when it receives a new revelation, readily abandons that which is thereby rendered untenable, Orthodoxy, bound by the “dead hand of tradition,” continues, outwardly at least, to bear the incubus of authorised doctrine as contained in the stereotyped statutes and ordinances of the Church, however obsolete the spirit of them. G. E. WRIGHT.

LADY DE BRATH

THE genial, kindly personality of Lady De Brath, who passed away in London, will be felt as a loss by the many friends whom she indoctrinated in Spiritualism, of which she was for many years a keen supporter. She was specially well-known at Monte Carlo, where she had a Healing Centre, frequented by a large group of Spiritualists and enquirers.

It will be remembered that her husband, Lt.-Gen. Sir Ernest De Brath, passed over on December 12th, 1933. She has been in constant communication with him, as she has frequently told me. I also have had messages from him in my own home. STANLEY DE BRATH.

MR. WILLIAM TOULMIN, OF SHEFFIELD

The death occurred at Sheffield last week of Mr. William Toulmin, brother of Sir George Toulmin, one of the proprietors of the *Lancashire Daily Post* and the *Preston Guardian*. Mr. Toulmin was a Bank Manager, who took a leading part in public affairs in Sheffield. A life-long abstainer, he did much useful work for the temperance cause. He was also keenly interested in Psychical Research, and was for many years Senior Vice-President of the Sheffield S.P.R., his sister, Miss M. Toulmin, with whom he lived all his life, being the only woman Vice-President of the Society. At a meeting of the Sheffield Society for Psychical Research in the Builders' Exchange, Mr. O. J. Wendlandt (Vice-President) said that Mr. Toulmin had done a great deal of work for the Society in various ways, especially by entertaining Mediums and holding seances in his home.

MRS. H. L. BATIE, OF HALIFAX

The transition is announced of one of the earliest subscribing members of the S.N.U., Mrs. Hannah L. Batie, who passed on at the age of 92 in a Halifax nursing home on April 26th. Mrs. Batie, in the story of her life (which she wrote some years ago), tells how her psychic powers were first manifested at the age of five. Her first platform experience came at the age of twenty, and her fame as a Medium grew, and she was invited to tour in the Northern counties, Lancashire and Yorkshire. She gave up public work at the age of seventy-five, but even in her last years she was a remarkable woman.

B.B.C. AND SPIRITUALISM

The *Sunday Referee* is providing what it describes as "News for Spiritualists." Last Sunday, it had the following announcement :

"Repeated appeals have been made to the B.B.C. that a Spiritualist service should be broadcast. Always they have been ignored. Perhaps the B.B.C. is ignorant of the strength of Spiritualism in this country to-day. It has at least one million adherents. Every week hundreds more are being converted. At more than 2,000 Spiritualist churches throughout the country the average attendance at Sunday evening service totals a quarter of a million."

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SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

H. ERNEST HUNT

XIII.—DISSOCIATION

POLARITY in mind implies that the conscious and subconscious departments are respectively like the North and South poles of one bar magnet; and the seeming duality is but an aspect of an underlying unity. These two divisions of mind are intended to work together as complementary functions of the whole, with the important proviso that central control and direction rests with consciousness.

Anything that interferes with this normal relationship, promoting independent and dissociated action, is working for the disintegration of mind. Mental "woolgathering," for instance, means that the individual is supposed to be giving conscious attention to one thing, whilst in reality the interest is bent upon something else. The result of this is that ideas which are registered by the senses fail to make adequate record in the subconscious, and the first symptom of trouble is that the memory begins to fail. No power on earth can make a gramophone reproduction better than the original record, and similarly, diffused attention naturally produces a worthless impression in mind which can yield no clear memory.

This "woolgathering" is not as a rule due to the fact that there is no interest and no attention, but more frequently to the fact of a divided interest which promotes dissociation. The ultimate end of this harmful course, when the dissociation is complete and the subconscious runs riot, is the lunatic asylum. Consciousness and reason are then abrogated, and the primitive instincts of the subconscious get out of control. Then we witness the spectacle of the instinct of self-preservation growing into a perverted and exaggerated self-appreciation, finally culminating in the delusion that the individual is King, Emperor, or even God Himself.

This dissociation is the great danger attaching to those practices which we hear advocated under the advice of "let yourself be passive," or "wait and see what comes." Negativity is being raised to the dignity of an accomplishment, the natural armours of the mind are doffed, an open invitation is issued to the forces of unbalance, of which they are only too ready to take advantage. Meditation, poised on a note or an idea, is not to be confused with this neutral passivity which we are now calling in question.

The normal functioning of the mind is by consociation; to cultivate dissociation is to ask for trouble. When the memory begins to become unreliable, the fact should be taken as a warning. Many Mediums are notoriously prone to dissociation; it seems rather to be indicative of the type of mind which makes for good negative mediumship. It may be definitely suggested that this is one of the sacrifices that the Medium makes for this type of work. But the loss of memory is only the symptom of the graver evil of dissociation.

On the other hand, there is a type of positive and active mediumship which is certainly not subject to the same criticism; it promotes the natural consociation of the two departments of mind, and raises the whole mental tone and activity. It leads on towards a working partnership between the world visible and invisible, and makes for those conditions which enable genuine inspiration to function. When combined with a developed sensitiveness, this type of mind is able to work fully conscious on a high level, somewhat like the "superior state" of Andrew Jackson Davis. In this there is neither loss of memory nor any other symptom of dissociation.

On psychological grounds, therefore, one must deprecate the advice so frequently given in developing circles of the baser sort to adopt the passive attitude, and so to develop a tendency towards dissociation. Finally, these considerations apply in degree also to those who in other directions wait passively for "guidance" with the same lowering of the safeguards of the normal critical faculty.

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DIARY OF EVENTS.

Monday, May 11th, at 8.15 p.m., at CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER.
Mrs. HELEN HUGHES. Demonstration of Clairaudience, preceded by an Address by Mr. SHAW DESMOND.

"**Psychic Facts and their Spiritual Meaning.**"
(See special announcement, page 290)

Tuesday, May 12th, at 7 p.m.—
Miss LILY THOMAS. Group Seance (limited to six sitters.)

Wednesday, May 13th, at 5 p.m.—
NO MEETING.

Friday, May 8th, at 7 p.m.—
Mrs. LIVINGSTONE. Group Seance (limited to six sitters).

Friday, May 15th, at 7 p.m.—
Mrs. BRITTAIN. Group Seance (limited to six sitters)

SYLLABUS OF SUMMER SESSION OF APPLICATION.

Devotional Groups for Absent Healing :

Conducted by Mr. W. H. Evans; Sitters invited.
Mondays, 2.15—2.45; 6.30—7. Tuesdays, 6.45—7.15. Wednesdays, 3.30—4. Animal Group, 4.30—5; Thursdays, 3.45—4.15; 7.45—8.15. Fridays, 2.30—3, 7.30—8. Obsession Group, Saturdays, 3.30.

ABOUT CLAIRVOYANCE

By LEIGH HUNT

I AM venturing to give some hints and conclusions based upon my own experience of mediumship in general and clairvoyance in particular.

No one at all acquainted with clairvoyance needs to be reminded of its two aspects—objective and impressional. That these two aspects seem to merge into one, at times, is evident to any careful observer.

The seeing of lights, colours and symbols is a phase of objective clairvoyance which is well worth cultivating and which often precedes the actual seeing of spirit people.

The discerning of people who are in the physical body, and of places, etc., not within the Seer's normal vision, is a phase which I think can best be included in the impressional aspect of clairvoyance, though the Clairvoyant will, at times, feel himself transferred, as it were, to the actual vicinity of the scenes, etc., he is describing, and to be seeing objectively.

The (comparatively rare) seeing of spirit-people in their own spheres of spirit-life is another instance of this merging of impressional and objective sight.

Some people have the ability of normally visualising incidents in ordinary life to a far greater extent than others, and it is because of this difference in people's "make-up" that it is so useful for the would-be Clairvoyant to gain his development at the hands of an experienced teacher who is not only well acquainted with what may be termed the technicalities of clairvoyance, but who also possesses that quality of psychic discernment—which I regard as distinctly psychometric—so that he can sense, with a fair degree of accuracy, his pupil's power of visualising.

It is of great advantage to the budding clairvoyant if he is able to have the co-operation of spirit-helpers during his development: this is often offered voluntarily

by spirit-people, who, I have ever found, are only too eager to assist. (My own opportunity of obtaining such help came from the guide of a then well-known Medium, Mrs. Treadwell, who introduced me to the one who has, now for many years, co-operated with me from spirit-life in every way possible, considering my own limitations.)

I would like to suggest to any reader who is developing mediumship that he might do as I was advised to do—and did. I asked the one who was brought to me from the other life whether he would gain a fair knowledge of the English language, so that if he ever spoke through my own organism he might be clearly understood (he is a North American Indian). He readily agreed, and very soon after my request he showed marked progress in the learning of the English tongue, and now it is quite unusual for him to make any glaring mistake, although he retains a certain quaintness of utterance, which is not, however—as a rule—very disquieting. It greatly interested me on one occasion when he spoke in the "direct" voice (no trumpet!) through Mrs. Everitt's mediumship, to hear him revert to his native tongue, and yet at the same seance he spoke through my own organism in fairly good English, saying that he could not manage "English through that other channel" (the words quoted were, I was told, the actual words he used). I particularly mention that incident, as I think it may open up to the student of psychic matters yet another avenue of study.

And now, just one more suggestion to the developing Clairvoyant, which I hope may be helpful.

It will be found, at times, that the clearest psychic vision is that which is experienced almost momentarily. If the Clairvoyant will strive to attune himself effectively to that higher rate of vibration which relates to all that is psychic, he will find that he can remember, in almost full detail, particulars of his psychic visions (in this his spirit co-operator can be of great assistance), and thus more evidential matter may be given.

I have been told by more than one spirit communicator that it is not unusual for a spirit person to bring himself within the range of the Clairvoyant's vision, only to find that he can do so for but a moment or two. Hence the need for the Clairvoyant to attune himself as effectively as possible to the higher vibrations when exercising his gift.

This attunement may be likened to a refined concentration which enables one to appreciate more fully the beauty of a natural landscape, or the charm of melody or song. And so the proper and not undue exercise of mediumistic powers should be beneficial to a person's well-being, just as the appreciation of the beauty of Nature and Art gives an additional zest to life's activities.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND

Up to Monday, the following donations had been received in response to the Appeal for LIGHT Sustentation Fund :

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
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Mrs. Russell	2 2 0	Mrs. Vesel ... 10 0

As already explained, donations to the Fund are greatly needed, not only to meet expenses of publication, but to secure adequate publicity for LIGHT; and friends of LIGHT and of the L.S.A. are asked to contribute generously to the Fund, by means of which the interest and scope of LIGHT may be sustained and extended. Contributions should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer of the LIGHT Sustentation Fund, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, S.W.7.

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MONDAY, MAY 11th, at 3 p.m.—Mrs. LILIAN PHILLIPS
FRIDAY, MAY 15th, at 5 p.m.—Mr. GEORGE SWIFT

DISCUSSION TEA

(Visitors 1/6)

Thursday, May 14th, at 4 p.m.—**Mr. W. S. HENDRY**
Paul Brunton's "Search in Secret Egypt"

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SUNDAY, MAY 10th, 1936

11 a.m.—Dr. H. P. SHASTRI
Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.
6.30 p.m.—Mr. HAROLD CARPENTER
Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes.
Sunday, May 17th, at 11 a.m. Mrs. HEWAT MCKENZIE
Clairvoyant: Mr. R. E. Cockersell.
Sunday, May 17th, at 6.30 p.m. Captain E. J. LANGFORD GARSTIN, m.c.
Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas.
Silver Collection on entry.

OPEN MEETINGS

Mondays, 6.30 p.m. **Wednesdays, 12.30 p.m.**
Organ Recital, Address, Questions Answered and Clairvoyance. *Admission Free*
Monday, May 11th—Speaker: Mr. James Leigh
Clairvoyante: Miss Eveline Canon.

Wednesday, May 13th.—Speaker: Mrs. Marjorie Livingston
Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas.

Monday. WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

2.30—4 p.m. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.
2.30—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write to
Mrs. Moysey (Hon. Secretary).
2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes enquirers.
6.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in the Grotrian Hall.
Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.
Mrs. Helen Spiers, by appointment.
Wednesday. 12.30—1.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in Grotrian Hall.
2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes enquirers.
6 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write
to Miss Robertson, Hon. Sec.
Thursday. Miss Lily Thomas, by appointment.
7 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Mixed Healing Circle. For appointments write
to Miss Michell (Hon. Secretary).
Friday. 2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes enquirers.

WEDNESDAY CIRCLES (limited to eight sitters)

Members, 3s.; Non-Members, 4s.
May 13th 2.30 Mrs. Livingstone. 6.30 Miss Lily Thomas.
May 20th 2.30 Mrs. Graden Thomas. 6.30 Mrs. Filmore.

Private Sittings arranged daily with the following Mediums:—Mr. Glover Botham, Miss Frances Campbell, Mrs. Esta Cassel, Mrs. Fillmore, Mrs. Hirst, Miss Jacqueline, Mr. Horace Leaf, Mrs. Rose Livingstone, Mrs. Helen Spiers, Mrs. Graden Thomas, Miss Lily Thomas and Mr. Frank Leah (Psychic Portraiture).

Friday, May 15th, at 7.30 p.m.

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Friday, May 22nd, at 7.30 p.m.

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Subject: The Dangers of Popularity

Afternoon at 3. Clairvoyance, by Mr. GEORGE DAISLEY

Evening at 7. MASS MEETING

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Mrs. HEWAT MCKENZIE,
Rev. G. MAURICE ELLIOTT,
Mr. J. M. STEWART, Pres. L.D.C., S.N.U.

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NEW VIEW OF REINCARNATION

THE Rev. C. H. Young (Retired) of Warminster, had the following letter on "Reincarnation" in the *Morning Post* of April 30th:

"Reincarnation or even incarnation does not convey the idea that has in some mysterious way come to me, and has been held by me for many years. Incarnation implies that a spirit has entered our body of flesh and inhabits it. I regard the reverse to be the case.

"We have, at least, if we are conscious of it, a subliminal self which we call our soul or spirit. This does not inhabit our body, but it takes the body to itself to express itself on this earth. It exists apart from the body, but may be inseparably associated with it as long as the body exists. The body with its brain, and all its faculties, has its own characteristics which it has inherited, and this is used by the subliminal self as an instrument.

"This will explain the meaning of inspiration and genius, which is otherwise impossible to account for.

"This I believe to be the experience of all the greatest thinkers: of Plato, of St. Paul, and, above all, in the teaching of Jesus. I cannot expand this idea now. It would take too much space. I have often lectured on the subject to societies who are prepared to receive it.

"It also makes the doctrine of evolution appear in a new light. All that we call matter is probably a manifestation of a force that is not matter. It may all be the making of the instrument by which the environment of Spirit is able to express itself. But whatever experience or hints about the meaning of the unseen we may have had, life remains a mystery. A hint, however, has an extraordinary ethical and spiritual value, and sometimes enables us to refashion our lives according to a spiritual ideal."

CHURCH AND SPIRITUALISM

The Ven. A. F. Sharp was present at the dedication of the Victoria Sanctuary of the Spirit, Buckingham Palace Road, London, on Sunday evening, April 26th. Speaking of those who had abandoned the Church because she had set her face against Spiritualism, he said freedom from creed and dogma had become a sort of slogan. Yet each of the Seven Principles accepted by Spiritualists constituted a dogma, and to put those dogmas together was to have a creed. "You cannot get along," he said, "without believing something; because on what you believe you base your line of life and your sense of duty. So we have all got creeds and dogmas."

Mr. Sharp congratulated Mr. de Beaurepaire (the President) on providing a Sanctuary of the Spirit to which all could come, and said he looked forward to the time when there would be many such sanctuaries, supplementing everywhere the work of the Church, and eventually working as part of the very machinery of the Church itself. "That will come," he said; "and when it does come, there will be a great reunion of millions of souls on the basis of spirit communion. That is my vision."

In conclusion he adjured his hearers to keep their Sanctuary as a very lovely place, and by their prayers and their contact with God in His spiritual world to give it an atmosphere that would impress everyone who came into it.

DEATH-BED VISION

My mother passed on just over a month ago. Two or three days before the passing, she kept saying there was a large heart hanging at the foot of her bed. She also saw trees, birds, scented flowers, and heard lovely music. Also drums by themselves. Can you or any of your readers tell me if this heart was a symbol, and what it really meant?

N.E.A.

LIGHT

HOLMDAKOPIN COMES TO LIFE

on the beautiful Isle of Wight, through the mercy of the God.

You must not believe all I tell you (I'm sure you won't!), but I think it is correct to say that there can be few places so attractively—dare I say, so beautifully?—situated as this new place Providence (or what you will) has placed in my charge, on this alluring isle, at Ryde. To me it still seems too good to be true! Below you will find full details, if you are interested.

I shall try to use my new place for the highest purposes, not first to make money, but first to be of service to my fellows—like you, I expect, I get a nice satisfied feeling when I am able to spread myself in the service of humanity, and possibly that is why I engage in altruistic endeavour. My motive is entirely selfish, I must regrettably but truthfully confess.

Holmdakopin at Ryde, will, I hope, do much more than give happy holidays to many people. I hope it will be a centre for physical regeneration as well, and perhaps also I shall be able to lighten some people's burdens. I know life as it is, how terribly hard it can be at times, and what knots we get tied into, and how sometimes we seem to be hemmed in on all sides. It gives me great pleasure to be of service in the deeper, more spiritual difficulties too, as well as in matters of physical health.

You probably feel that all this talk about "nature-cures," diet reform, etc., is nothing but the silly chatter of cranks and fanatics. That would be only natural. Ten years ago I felt the same myself, until I looked into things more thoroughly. Since then, after years of personal experience and the curing of many sick people, I am convinced that in Nature Cure and food reform lies the way to the eventual abolition of this dreadful scourge of disease which pesters our very existence and demands such an awful toll, in human misery and pain. And so each fortnight (or week if I can afford it) I hope, in these columns to tell you about our ideas so that you can judge for yourself whether there is anything in them or not. And I hope you will be helped. But I certainly shall not expect you to agree with all I say, or act on my suggestions, unless you are convinced that they are founded on common sense.

DUDLEY CROFT GOODE, M.N.C.A.

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