

# LIGHT

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## RE-UNION IN THE FUTURE LIFE THE CLASSICAL STORY OF ANTIGONE AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

By REV. W. S. PAKENHAM-WALSH,  
Vicar of Sulgrave

NO life can be complete or happy without friends. We are endowed by the Creator with social instincts, and it is only reasonable to suppose that these social instincts will remain with us when we pass on into the life which awaits us after our earthly sojourn. If, as Bishop Winnington-Ingram said, we shall awaken on the Other Side with the same characters with which we left this side, then we shall undoubtedly possess our social instincts also and shall need and value friendships. This being so, it is the more remarkable that this aspect of the future life is so seldom alluded to in Christian sacred books, hymns or addresses.

St. Paul expresses his belief that "to be with Christ is very far better" than any existence on this earth; but although he does not touch on the subject of future reunion, he must surely have envisaged something more than a solitary life of blessedness in the eternal kingdom of his Master.

And yet this inspiring hope of meeting again our earthly friends, and the possibility of making new friendships and coming to know others whom we have grown to love and appreciate through history, is sadly lacking in the thought and literature of Christendom.

There are, for example, only one or two of our British hymns which touch on the subject at all. No. 222 (*Ancient and Modern*) gives it perhaps its best and happiest expression in the third verse:—

Oh then what raptured greetings  
On Canaan's happy shore,  
What knitting severed friendships up,  
Where partings are no more;  
Then eyes with joy shall sparkle,  
That brimmed with tears of late;  
Orphans no longer fatherless,  
Nor widows desolate.

One other hymn in the *A. and M.* edition, No. 499, also touches on the theme, but robs the thought of its

value and inspiration by postponing the reunion to some far distant period of time:

On that happy Easter morning  
All the graves their dead restore;  
Father, sister, child and mother  
Meet once more.

There is also a little known poem by Duddridge in which these lines occur:—

See the haven full in view!  
Love divine shall bear thee through,  
Trust to that propitious gale,  
Weigh thy anchor, spread thy sail.  
Saints in glory, perfect made,  
Wait thy passage through the shade;  
Ardent for thy coming o'er,  
See! they throng the blissful shore.

But the most beautiful poem on the subject, to my mind, is "Resignation," by Longfellow, on the passing of a child, beginning.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,  
But one dead lamb is there . . .

And then in later verses he passes on to the thoughts of reunion and progress.

She is not dead—the child of our affection,  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ Himself doth rule!  
Not as a child shall we again behold her;  
For, when with raptures wild,  
In our embraces we again enfold her,  
She will not be a child,  
But a fair maiden in her Father's Mansion,  
Clothed with celestial grace;  
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion,  
Shall we behold her face.

A few Christian prose writers, such as Canon Fleming in his *Recognition in Eternity*, also state their belief in reunion: and Sir Oliver Lodge, who, in his book *The Destiny of Man* (page 117) perhaps puts the truth most clearly and inspiringly when he says: "On the further shore they are stretching out hands of help and welcome. If we realised the fullness of existence and all the love and help that awaits us, we should respond, we should overcome our moods of sadness and perplexity."

The neglect of this truth, which might be such an inspiration, especially in times like these of war, bereavement and distress, is the more remarkable when it is remembered how it underlay so much of the faith and hope of the Old Testament:

"Abraham died and was gathered to his people"; "Ismael died and was gathered to his people"; "Isaac died and was gathered to his people"; "Jacob died and was gathered to his people."

It might have been said that they had gone to be

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with God which was "very much better;" but these Old Testament writers evidently had in their own minds and wished to convey to their readers the great thought of reunion—being "gathered to their people"—which we seem to such a great extent to have lost.

So too in that most beautiful and pathetic lament of David for his little child, he looks forward through his tears to meeting his boy again: "I shall go to him but he shall not return to me."

With such passages before us, how can we ever doubt that not only was there a belief in a future life in those men's hearts, but also a conviction that in that life beyond they would meet again their own people.

Lately, too, I have been much impressed by the way in which this truth asserts itself even in pre-Christian classical writers—and indeed it is these studies which have made me venture to write this article.

Socrates, for example, in his *Apologia* before his judges says: "Will it not be unspeakably blessed, when, escaped from those who call themselves judges, to associate with all who have maintained the cause of truth and righteousness, men and women with whom to discourse and associate would be inconceivable enjoyment."

Again Cicero writes: "Oh, illustrious day, when I shall go hence to that divine council and assembly of souls, when I shall escape from the crowd and rabble; for I shall go not only to those illustrious men of whom I have before spoken, but also to my Cato, than whom one more excellent or illustrious in goodness was never born."

And once again, may I quote from what I believe to be a very little known passage from *The Antigone*, the famous play of Sophocles. Antigone had been sentenced to death by Creon, King of Thebes, because, against his edict, she had dared to bury the body of her brother Polyneices. There is no need here to enter into the details of the terrible tragedy upon which the play is founded, and which involved the King in the loss of his son Haemon, the lover of Antigone, and also of the Queen Eurydice, his wife. I only wish to focus attention

upon the final words of Antigone, as she is led away to death, for they are very remarkable and bear a wonderful witness to this hope of reunion beyond the grave.

ANTIGONE: "Tomb, bridal-chamber, eternal prison in the caverned rock, whither I go to find mine own, those many who have perished, and whom Persephone hath received among the dead! Last of all shall I pass thither, and far most miserable of all, before the term of my life is spent. But I cherish good hope that my coming will be welcome to my father and pleasant to thee my mother, and welcome, brother, to thee; for when ye died, with mine own hand I washed and dressed you, and poured drink-offerings at your graves; and now, Polyneices, 'tis for tending thy corpse that I win such recompense as this."

#### ALMOST UNIQUE IN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

I pointed out this passage to a classical scholar, and he thought it expressed a hope and belief almost unique in classical literature; but Sophocles would not have put such words into the mouth of Antigone had there been no such aspirations in the Greek mind.

Perhaps, as with ourselves, it was a deep though silent conviction of the soul, too sacred and intimate to be often expressed in words, an intuitive instinct of their human nature. But if the Greeks cherished such a hope and could occasionally, when need arose, express it in words, surely Christian people with a knowledge of Christ's resurrection should have much more assurance for such a faith, and not be afraid when opportunity occurs to speak of it, for it is a hope and belief which many sorely need in these anxious days.

Only a short time ago (in 1940), a very fine and promising senior Naval Officer of my acquaintance, after doing splendid work for the B.E.F. at Dunkirk, was killed by a bomb in a London raid, and in a letter of sympathy to his widow I ventured to speak of this blessed hope of reunion. I was more than rewarded for my effort by her letter of gratitude, telling me that my words had been to her both "an inspiration and a consolation," and she is probably typical of many others who sorely need comfort and would find it in this old but often forgotten truth.

But the story of Antigone teaches us also another and very practical lesson. She believed that her parents would welcome her and the earthly home be reunited, because she had been a filial daughter and also a good sister, and the reunion in the world beyond would be simply a replica of the devoted and united home on earth.

To imagine that a disunited home on earth, divided up by quarrelling, misunderstanding or worse, will suddenly be changed in its character and perfected by the mere passage of death is surely to harbour a vain delusion, and the message of Antigone ought to stir us all up to see that our earthly homes are so ordered as to be truly a preparation and a foretaste of the eternal home beyond the grave.

"Our home life and our Church life," says the Bishop of London, "are meant to be a great education for the life of a harmonious Divine society. Therefore, make this life a life of preparation for the glorious city where all live in harmony."

I would close with the well-known words of the Lord Jesus: "In my Father's House are many mansions"—or, as the Revised Version margin more accurately renders it—"abiding places," and we may think of them as rooms in a great home. We on earth are in the lower rooms, but joined even now by love and sympathy with those above us; and if we will only endeavour faithfully to make our lives in the lower rooms more worthy of the Master's approval, then we may surely, as did Antigone, look forward and upward to a sure and joyful reunion, when

"With the morn those angel faces smile,  
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

This Article may be had from the writer in pamphlet form, price 3d. (postage 1d.), Sulgrave Vicarage, Banbury, Oxon.

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## ROUND THE CORNER OF TIME

By L. MARGERY BAZETT

WE are becoming increasingly aware that we are not confined entirely within the limitations of Time, as it is commonly understood. It is well known that in dream-consciousness, and other forms of consciousness, the mind travels backwards and forwards according to a presupposed idea about Time. Man has assumed that Time looks backward and forward, in length of years; but there is a good deal to show that there are other aspects of Time.

I want here to give an instance from recent personal experience of how the mind endeavours to extend beyond the immediate moment, and by what methods it undertakes this task. There are people who will say that the future is fixed—or, to put it in other words, that what is likely to occur in the future is well known by a Higher Consciousness than our own; and this quite apart from any deduction from reasoning.

In my experience, this is both true and untrue. There have been some things as inevitable as thaw after frost, and others as unaccountable as the English weather! It would seem that the reason for this lies in our partial grasp of future Time; but I will not enlarge upon this. I merely wish to illustrate briefly what I mean.

## A CONCRETE EXAMPLE

Here is a simple and concrete example of the question in point. It was a case of rooms to be let, which had been empty for some months. I applied my mind one day to picturing what manner of people might take those rooms; and this is roughly how my subconscious mind worked upon the matter.

It came to know (psychically) that someone with a name beginning with F. or possibly E., would apply for the rooms. It then visualised a Doctor whose name began with F., slightly known to myself, coming down the front staircase of the house in which were the empty rooms. It pictured the F. and the E., rather hesitating at first between the two, and finally settled on the F. It then proceeded, without any effort, to assume that these people would be settled in the rooms well within a month.

There was then no thought of these people coming to the rooms; they did not even know that the rooms were vacant nor were they thinking of moving from where they were. So the question of telepathy, which will occur to my readers, must surely be ruled out.

The curious point about this lies in the fact that what my mind apprehended was true, and at the same time faulty; because, quite unexpectedly, this Dr. F. and his wife arranged to take those rooms at once, within a week of my perception of their doing so. The plan was accidentally prevented, if there is such a thing as accident.

To return momentarily to the visualisation of the letters E. and F. My mind further amplified the picture by adding that it was the sixth letter of the alphabet; or, if that was wrong, it was the one before or after, *i.e.*, E. or G.

On November 6th, my mind again played around these letters, and I saw two lines converging to a point, but nothing further about the letters. On November 7th, I saw three lines converging towards a given point, and I knew that coming events had moved to a conclusion and that something had been settled. Events proved that, about this time, three peoples' plans had (unknown to myself) converged to a decision. These people were then complete strangers to me, nor did I know of their existence. To return again to the letters of the alphabet: the letters involved were E. F. G. Between November 7th and 9th, my mind had fixed on the letter G., and arrived at a definite name, which proved eventually to be exactly correct, spelt phonetically. The name evolved in a curious roundabout way, from the recollection of a well-known play, in which

(Continued at foot of next column)

## A CURIOUS SITTING RECALLED

By J. ARTHUR HILL

ONCE when Sir Oliver Lodge was staying with us, I arranged a sitting for him, anonymously, with the London Medium, A. Vout Peters. So far as I could manage it, Peters would get the impression that the sitter was some Bradford friend of mine, and Sir Oliver went straight from Bradford to London, having the sitting almost at once on his arrival.

The sitting was a curious one, for most of the communications purported to come from T. H. Huxley and Charles Darwin. Huxley seemed to recognise the sitter, and said that his own mantle had fallen upon him. The Medium said, afterwards, that he had no idea who the sitter was, but that he felt afraid of him, and thought he was some important person.

I do not advance this as evidence, and it is rather improbable that the Medium was not familiar with Sir Oliver's personal appearance, even though he had not met him before. But, even if he did recognise him, and was not telling the truth when he said what he did say, I feel rather doubtful whether this Medium could without warning have invented the communications.

Few people, if any, associated Sir Oliver with Huxley; one was a physicist who was also an expert in Psychical Research and was a believer in Survival and a religious view of the universe; while the other was a biologist and an agnostic, with nothing but contempt for Spiritualism. In fact, I had not connected the two; I had thought of them as being in opposite camps.

But when I read the report of this sitting, which Sir Oliver sent me, it struck me that there was a close resemblance. Huxley in his day was the most famous living exponent of science to the general public. It will be agreed by most people, I think, that Sir Oliver Lodge was the best popular exponent of modern science for the fifty years or so after the close of Huxley's career. And, as to Darwin, there is a close analogy between the pioneer of physical evolution and the pioneer of psychical evolution, who taught that progress—evolution—continues forward into a super-physical world. Both relied entirely on facts. They theorised on a basis of facts. Observation first, then record and collation, then hypothesis in explanation of what had been observed.

Whatever Huxley and Darwin would have thought of psychical theories if they were alive now, they would certainly approve of the methods which have led up to those theories. Consequently, while I do not unquestionably accept this curious sitting at its face value, I do not feel able to dismiss it as fraudulent. I neither believe nor disbelieve that Huxley and Darwin were communicating. I simply do not know.

## (Continued from previous column)

the name was very prominent. Space forbids my elaborating the details of the emergence of the name, but it involved hard mental work of selecting and discarding.

On November 13th, a stranger bearing that name applied for the rooms, and engaged them; she was accompanied by a friend whose surname began with G. Her plans had involved three factors, *i.e.*, herself, and two friends, one whose name began with G and the other with F.

The curious thing about all this is that my mind saw the planning of the future by the people bearing the name of F. Neither they nor I saw that the idea of their taking the rooms was, apparently, incompatible with the larger general plan of their lives, and so did not come to pass.

Undoubtedly, Man may plan with his limited knowledge and is surprised when he is frustrated; it looks as if there were a far greater direction of man's life than he is aware, and that by such frustrations, as they appear to him, he is guided into wiser judgments.



## Light

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EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

### AS WE SEE IT

#### SURVIVAL AND IMMORTALITY

UNDER the heading: "Survival and Immortality," in LIGHT of November 7th, 1940, the statement was given, as coming from a Communicator on the Other Side, that "continued existence (after death) does not necessarily mean immortality to all mankind." This was the answer given to the question: "Is not every spirit on your plane assured of continued existence?" On this, a reader wrote asking: "Are all born on earth sure of continued existence?" To that question, we suggest the following answer:

Most, if not all, the Communicators from the Other Side say that Survival of physical death is general to all mankind, even still-born infants being represented as growing up in the spirit-world and being tenderly cared for. Some of the Communicators, however, say that Immortality does not necessarily follow in every case, and that those human beings who cannot or will not conform to the Spiritual Law gradually lose the power of continued existence. For instance, "Imperator" (*Spirit Teachings*, page 28) says: "They that will not seek for anything that is good, that wallow in impurity and vice, sink lower and lower until they lose their conscious identity and become practically extinct, so far as personal existence is concerned." Elsewhere, this is described as the withdrawal of the Spirit, or Divine Spark, so that the Personality built round it ceases to exist and the Spirit is absorbed in the Universal Spirit.

There have been Spiritualist writers of repute, like Stanley De Brath, who have held that the evidence justifies a belief in what is described as Conditional Immortality—that is, Immortality conditional on fitness secured by obedience to the Law of Love, which is the Law of Eternal Life. There have also been a number of eminent Christian Theologians who have put forward a similar doctrine.

Most Spiritualists, however, adopt the Universalist doctrine, believing that ultimately every human being will be made fit for Immortality; and those who accept Reincarnation regard the succession of earth-lives as part of the process of attainment to the required standard.

We do not think it is desirable to dogmatise as between these doctrines. The Conditionalist doctrine *may* be the right one. Swedenborg, who was a great Seer, taught that in the spirit-realm to which all human beings go immediately after the death of the physical body, there are many roads, some leading upwards towards development and Heaven, some leading downwards towards deterioration and destruction.

The only really wise course is to get on to the upward road *now*, so that no change in direction will be necessary when we cross to the Other Side, whichever doctrine may be the correct one.

#### SEEING THE LIGHT

IT looks as if Mr. Harry Price's book, *The Most Haunted House in England*, may be the means of extracting from Roman Catholic reviewers an admission that, after all, and notwithstanding the anathemas of their Church, there is good ground for certain of the basic claims of Spiritualism.

We noted (December 26th, 1940) the rather hesitating admission of a reviewer in the *Catholic Herald* that the evidence presented by Mr. Price of super-normal happenings at Borley Rectory, "appears to be quite reliable,"

and that some of these happenings "may be the work of spirits."

Now we have to add a bolder statement made in *The Universe* (December 6th, 1940) by "G.B."—namely, that "any reader who is not hide-bound against the possibility of such happenings *must accept the evidence*" (relating to the appearances and written messages of the Nun), "perhaps as pointing to a poor Soul's need for prayer." And, as indicating that the writer thinks a human being may really be concerned, and not a personating devil (as the "hide-bound" would no doubt have asserted), he adds the pious petition: "Requiescat in pace."

We suggested (December 26th) that Father Herbert Thurston, S.J., keeping watch on the interests of his Church from his place in the Elysian Fields (for we cannot imagine so kindly a Soul being in any place less pleasant, no matter what his views of the Hereafter had caused him to expect) would be pleased with even the guarded admission in the *Catholic Herald*. He will, we think, be even more pleased with the bold assertion of *The Universe* reviewer, conceding the Spiritualist assurance (which Father Thurston doubtless now knows to be well-founded) that Souls in the spirit-realm (including that part which Catholics call Purgatory) can and do communicate with people on this side when they feel the need and have the opportunity to do so. Whether these communications be spontaneous (as they apparently were in the case of the distressed Nun and her written messages at Borley) or obtained with the help of a psychically-gifted person called a Medium, is only a matter of detail—and it should be remembered that even in the case of apparently spontaneous communications there is almost always some mediumistic person involved, though it be unconsciously.

The important thing is that intelligible messages do come from Souls on the Other Side, proving Survival and the possibility of communication. This is what the Catholic reviewer admits.

#### AN ELIZABETHAN PRAYER

In every age there have been men (or women) who were, so to speak, Forerunners; people who were far ahead of the generality of their time and who held up a standard of outlook and morality to which only far later generations attained. Thus it is to be feared that we most of us still lag far behind the standard expressed in an old Elizabethan prayer, of which the Rev. Jack Winslow (Vicar of Hanworth) says in his November monthly *Letter*: "A Prayer so far ahead of its time that the leaders of the Churches even in these days might need some courage in recommending it for public use." The prayer runs:

"Most merciful and loving Father, we beseech Thee most humbly, even with all our hearts, to pour out upon our enemies with bountiful hands whatsoever things Thou knowest may do them good: and chiefly a sound and uncorrupt mind where-through they may know Thee and love Thee in true charity and with their whole heart, and love us Thy children for Thy sake. Let not their first hating of us turn to their harm, seeing that we cannot do them good for want of ability. Lord, we desire their amendment, and our own. Separate them not from us by punishing them, but join and knit them to us by Thy favourable dealing with them. And, seeing we be all ordained to be citizens of the one everlasting city, let us begin to enter into that way here already by mutual love, which may bring us right forth thither."

To feel that a whispered cry will bring to our aid a goodly company of those invisible beings who "walk the earth both when we wake and when we sleep," is to have our lives so changed by what seems magic... that our outlook is brighter, our ambition is higher, and even our afflictions are radiant with unwonted hopefulness.—*Rev. George H. Hepworth.*



## ST. PAUL'S APPROVAL OF SPIRIT-MESSAGES

By DAVID DUTTON

MANY Christians are only half-heartedly interested in Spiritualism because they are not really convinced that it is *right* to speak to those who have passed over. On this all-important point there is no record in the Bible of any comment by Jesus, and they cannot help thinking that if He had intended His followers to communicate with the spirit-world, He would have clearly said so.

This point of view seems reasonable, since the Christian bases his whole life on the teaching of Jesus as given in the Gospels. But, is a Christian right to govern his life by the strict letter of the Gospels? Is he to assume that any vital issue not mentioned in them signifies Jesus's disapproval?

All Christians would probably agree that it is the *spirit* of the teachings of Jesus which should govern one's life, and not the letter. This is evident, since no Christian would ever think of questioning whether it is right to read the Gospels. Yet Jesus is never recorded as expressing a wish for His teachings to be set down in writing. If He had done so, we can be sure the Gospel-writers would have mentioned it specially. Jesus's omission is no sign of disapproval.

Why, then, should Jesus's omission to speak about communications with the spirit-world be regarded as a sign of disapproval? We have strong grounds for thinking the reverse is the case; for St. Paul, who claimed a direct revelation from Jesus, actually *encourages* Christians to develop psychic gifts in order to receive teachings from the spirit-world. Would any Christian to-day say that he knows Jesus's wishes in this matter better than Paul did?

## "PROPHECY" AND TRANCE-MEDIUMSHIP

It is in his letter to the Corinthian Christians that Paul recommends them to set their hearts on "spiritual gifts." In particular, he mentions "prophecy," but does not give a definition of it, as he was writing to his friends who knew what he meant. It most certainly did not mean foretelling the future. However, we have a very clear description of "prophecy" as it existed a few generations later among the Montanist Christians. We read: "When the prophets spoke under the divine afflatus, it was not they but the Spirit that uttered the words. So entirely were the prophets separated from the Spirit who made use of their organs of speech, that the message was uttered in the first person, and the Spirit, speaking through the mouth of a woman prophet, used the masculine forms of speech."

This at once enables us to identify "prophecy" among the early Christians with our present-day psychic gift of trance-mediumship. Those who have witnessed trance will know that the personality of the medium is so separated from that of the Spirit who is using her vocal organs, that the voice is the voice of the spirit (man, woman, or child), and not the voice of the medium.

We find that Paul's letter bears out the conclusion that what we call a trance-medium is the same as he calls a "prophet." He says (1 Cor., xiv., 32): "Prophets can control their own prophetic spirits." Compare this with our saying to-day that a properly-developed trance-medium can control his or her own spirit-guides. The necessity for this is to obviate a spirit taking control at an inconvenient moment. And that is just what Paul is also stressing, so that several prophets shall not let themselves be "controlled" at the same time and confusion result from two or more spirits trying to address the congregation simultaneously.

Paul shows that he regards these prophetic spirits he mentions as different people from the prophets through whom they speak. He says (1 Cor., xiv., 12): "Since your heart is set on possessing 'spirits,' make the edification of the church your aim in this desire to excel." Similarly, we might say to-day to anyone

wishing to develop trance-mediumship: "Since your heart is set on having a spirit-guide, make the helping of others the reason for your desire." Finally, Paul shows how highly he valued psychic gifts by saying (1 Cor., xiv., 39): "To sum up, my brothers. Set your heart on the prophetic gift and do not put any check upon speaking in 'tongues.'"

Communications from spirits, then, were a regular and valued part of the services of Early Christians. Their purpose was to bring spiritual teachings to those who listened. The fact that messages from relatives are not mentioned by Paul does not necessarily mean that they were not received. The spirits who spoke through the prophets were regarded as representatives of the Holy Spirit,\* frequently referred to as "the Comforter." If the spirits did, in fact, give messages to the bereaved from relatives, it would perhaps indicate the reason for the use by the Early Christians of this title "The Comforter."

To bring comfort to mourners and help people to gain a greater understanding of the Love of God is to do the Will of God. If messages and teachings from the Spirit-World are doing this to-day, they are in accord with the spirit of the teaching of Jesus. And those who cultivate the psychic gifts whereby such comfort and teaching may be received are following the advice which Paul, the greatest of the Apostles, so earnestly recommended to Christians.

(The Biblical quotations are taken from Moffatt's Translation).

\*An article entitled "What Is The Holy Spirit" will appear in next week's issue).

## ART AND INSPIRATION

I THINK the happiest people I have met on this side have been the Painters. Our matter is so light and subtle and so easily handled, that it falls readily into the forms of the imagination. There are beautiful pictures here. Some of our artists try to impress their pictures upon the mental eyes of the artists of earth, and they often succeed in doing so.

There is joy in the heart of one of our real artists when a fellow craftsman on your side catches an idea from him and puts it into execution. He may not always be able to see clearly how well the second man works out the idea, for it requires a special gift or a special training to *see* from one form of matter into the other; but the inspiring spirit catches the thought in the inspired one's mind and knows that a conception of his own is being executed upon the earth.

With Poets it is the same. There are lovely lyrics composed out here and impressed upon the receptive minds of earthly poets. A poet told me that it was easier to do that with a short lyric than with an epic or a drama, where a long-continued effort was necessary.

It is much the same with Musicians. Whenever you go to a concert where beautiful music is being played, there is probably all round you a crowd of music-loving spirits, drinking in the harmonies. Music on earth is much enjoyed on this side. It can be heard. But no sensitive spirit likes to go near a place where bad strumming is going on. We prefer the music of stringed instruments. Of all earthly things, sound reaches most directly into this plane of life. Tell that to the musicians. If they could only hear our music. I did not understand music on earth, but now my ears are becoming adjusted. It seems sometimes as if you must hear our music over there, as we hear yours.

(From the book, *Letters From a Living Dead Man*, written down by Elsa Barker. Published in 1915 by Rider and Son).

A four-page Index for 1940 (volume LX.) is sent out with this issue.



## OBITUARY

## MRS. ROSE LIVINGSTONE

IT is with very sincere regret we have to announce the passing of Rose Livingstone, at Guildford, on Christmas Eve, December 24th, 1940, after a severe illness. The regret is lessened by the knowledge that, had she recovered, in all probability she would have been unable to live an active life.

This is a loss that will be felt by many who have benefited by her gift and who, in their grief, have so found great solace. Mrs. Livingstone's mediumship was capable of transmitting evidence of good quality. She was particularly successful, too, in the case of those who had passed suddenly and tragically. She had much sympathy for all in trouble, and her emotional nature, quickly stirred, seemed to offer an easy channel for messages of comfort and spiritual import.

This aspect of her work usually reached its best expression in private sittings, but many who attended the Tuesday evening Public Meetings of the London Spiritualist Alliance, at which she often gave demonstrations, will specially remember the few last occasions when her powers and insight appeared to be raised to a level at which she sensed beings of loveliness and peace. That was undoubtedly her experience, for it brought to her a transforming blessing, the influence of which was conveyed to the whole audience, who voluntarily remained seated in silence for a few minutes at the close of these particular meetings. So beautiful was the influence conveyed through her that our desire was to rest undisturbed. In retrospect it has become clear that her soul was in those days being prepared for her passing.

She was open-hearted and generous to a fault; she treasured her gift of mediumship, and her life was mainly dominated by the desire to do all that should prove best for her work.

It is some twenty-five years ago since signs of promising mediumship were noticed in her by Miss Emily Gray, who introduced her to a circle held by Mr. and Mrs. George Terry, the brother and sister-in-law of the great actress, Ellen Terry. At this circle her powers were much developed. She was next introduced to Miss Estelle Stead, who helped her further and made possible the public work which has proved so valuable.

May all the blessings she deserves be upon her in her new life. Our sympathy is extended to her husband, two daughters and a son. M.P.

## MR. WILLIAM E. BENTON

It was recently announced in *The Times* that William E. Benton, aged 85, had passed away on December 13th, 1940, at Chinnor, Oxon. This announcement called to mind a very genial personality who was at one time a subscriber to *LIGHT*, and a member of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

Mr. Benton became a friend of Mr. David Gow, and the two enjoyed many a long discussion on the problems of mediumship. Mr. Benton was particularly interested in physical mediumship, and considered that a physical Medium might be likened to a catalyst in chemical activity. In catalysis "many reactions proceed with a marked increase of velocity in presence of many foreign substances . . . 'Catalysis' . . . that general acceleration of reactions which also progress when left to themselves in the presence of certain bodies which do not change in amount (or only slightly) during the course of the reaction." (*Enclo. Brit.*).

This was a favourite theory of Mr. Benton. Certainly a circle of ordinary non-mediumistic people may be the unconscious aid to psychic activity in the presence of a physical Medium. The Medium provides the greatest amount of power. He possesses an inherent quality which loosens in others a similar power which is

(Continued at foot of next column)

## BOOK SHELVES WANTED

THESE are days when much furniture, pathetically following the example of its possessors, is being "chivvied" about from one place to another, and much of it, of course, unlike its possessors in this respect, "never would be missed."

It may be that many members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance are finding they are encumbered with unwanted book shelves, or simple book-cases which could easily be converted into shelves, and to these we would make the plea that the Alliance is urgently in need of such.

Even if we wanted to dispose of our money—which we do not—for such a purpose, wood at the present time is well nigh unprocurable except for the national need.

Our purpose at this moment is to extend our Library in readiness against the day when very many bereaved and troubled people will find their way to us. The Alliance is the happy possessor of a very large reserve of valuable books for members' use by post and personal exchange, and for which we have no shelf room. These reserves have recently received a handsome and much-prized addition in practically the whole of the library of psychic literature which belonged to Sir Oliver Lodge, with the exception of a few books presented to the Society for Psychical Research and to the library of the Birmingham University.

The walls of our inner library could be entirely fitted with shelves had we the shelves or wood for the purpose, and thus add to the convenience of the library in circulation. One whole wall is occupied with the Reference Library in a very large bookcase which belonged to the Rev. Stainton Moses, and which was bequeathed to the Alliance. This could be placed in an upper room of the house.

This extension and preparation of the Library which we have in view represents a great deal of work which could not be undertaken by the staff when we are much busier. Therefore, we are anxious to get ahead with this improvement while we are relatively quiet and able to cope with the work which it will entail. We therefore do not hesitate to appeal very urgently to members' generosity for a gift of all the shelves they possess which they can without inconvenience do without. We would ask them to remember that such shelves as they can spare will be put to valuable use. M.P.

(Continued from previous column)

ordinarily pent up. It has been proved that during a sitting the Medium sometimes loses weight, although usually less than the equivalent of force exerted by the psychic manifestation. After a sitting the Medium regains his normal weight, and he shows no physical effects of the strange things that have happened.

Mr. Benton was a versatile student, and wrote a book entitled "Man Making; From out of the Mists to Beyond the Veil," published by John M. Watkins in 1919. The book "is merely for casual readers" in Mr. Benton's own words, but it traces evidences of man from the time when the earth was young to eternal regions, passing Psychical Research and Spiritualism by the way.

As a chemist he would naturally know something of fuels, and so he was taken one day by Mr. Gow with myself to the home in Nottingham Place, of that enchanting creature, the famous palmist, Cheiro. Cheiro, half Irish and half French, had bemused himself with Irish peat, and had invented a new briquette, of which peat was the basis, to be a cheap substitute for coal, out of which he hoped to make a fortune. Peat fires were burning in the rooms. Mr. Benton observed and examined and made the discovery that these peat briquettes emitted heat only at certain angles from the centre and not radiantly as does coal. It was never rumoured that Cheiro made a fortune—out of briquettes. M.P.



## WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE AT BORLEY

MY own connections with the Borley Rectory phenomena were all at second-hand, but seem worth recording as an addendum to statements and omissions that have occurred elsewhere.

I was in touch with the case from various sides. From the Archdeacon and other friends, clerical and lay, I heard of the difficulties that arose on the parochial side, and details of the disquieting experiences that befell successive occupants of the Rectory. A lady friend supplied me with personal impressions of Rev. Harry Bull and other members of the family, who bore witness to the various haunts described in Mr. Harry Price's volume.

These so much interested me that I got into communication with Mr. C. W. Warren, a capable and courteous tradesman, who kept a general store, and was well known as Postmaster, at Marks Tey. Mr. Warren was possessed of remarkable psychic gifts, and was a leader in the domestic seances held in his back-parlour on Saturday afternoons and evenings. His own mediumship (sometimes under trance conditions, and sometimes not) was responsible for the materialised forms who from time to time appeared to members of the circle. He said he would gladly welcome my attendance, in company with a friend, on any Saturday that I could go over. This I tried to arrange, but circumstances (chiefly my friend's illness) stood in the way.

Mr. Warren, I gathered, had throughout been in touch with Borley phenomena, but seemed to think that the occupants of the Rectory made rather a needless fuss about harmless poltergeist freaks. He spoke disdainfully of attempted Anglican exorcisms, conducted by psychical ignoramuses (as recorded at p. 79 and 82-3 of the *Most Haunted House*) on the initiative of Rev. L. A. Foyster and his friends. But, in the summer of 1929, in response to their appeal, he consented to secure the services of a Medium versed in the lore and treatment of Exorcism. This he did, and was himself present, with the Rector and one or two others, at the Exorcism. As they stood in a circle, there was ringing of disconnected bells, violent poltergeist noises and disturbances, and a quantity of apports—"a barrel full or more"—of broken bottle-glass showered about their feet, which seemed to agitate the Rector. The reference to these proceedings in Mr. Price's volume seems to me rather slighting, considering that for the time being, and for two years or more afterwards, they appear to have proved effective.

At my last talk with Mr. Warren, he told me that the spirits were disposed to resent his intervention, and that he would be well advised for the present to abstain from any form of trance that would place him in their power.

Mr. Warren's own death, which took place within a few weeks or months later, put an end to further opportunities for action on my part. The recrudescence of manifestations, after long intervals and under wholly changed conditions, is one of the most noticeable features in the case.

GERALD H. RENDALL.

Dedham. (Hon. Canon of Chelmsford).

## MR. HARRY PRICE'S CONCLUSION

Sir,—In his Borley book, Mr. Harry Price finds that the spirit-hypothesis best covers many of the phenomena. In *LIGHT* of December 12th he qualifies. The hypothesis now is that "something survives" (perhaps for a limited period). This trimming down and hedging is highly characteristic.

The purpose of the parenthetical phrase is clear. Clever people, scientists, "thinkers," have always impressed Mr. Price by *argument* against the hypothesis of survival (the "argument" really being assertion antecedent to personal investigation, the very clever and profoundly scientific assertion: "Of course it is not true, for the simple reason that it is preposterous!"). Lately these mental giants have had so much evidence to the contrary thrust at them that they have begun

to show signs of compromise, leading to the grudging admission: "Oh, well, perhaps a vital residuum, some memory traces, a something of some sort, may hang about in space for a little while after the death of the body." So they can remain essentially Materialistic (which means, to me, that they are young souls) and retain their scorn for the believer in Survival; for on this theory it is not the real man that survives, but only a sort of vapourish psycho-mental puffball which soon disintegrates. And in order not to incur the scorn of these colossi of the intellect, Mr. Price interpolates his parenthetical but significant "perhaps for a limited period."

*Yet, nota bene, the principal figure in the Borley hauntings, whose case must have done more than that of any of the phenomena to lead Mr. Price to his acceptance of the spirit hypothesis, was declared to have passed in 1667. Is two-and-three-quarter centuries a "limited period?"* No, it is clear that Mr. Price has become scared of his own conclusion, lest he lose caste with those "scientists."

CHARLES J. SEYMOUR.

(Note.—In his article, "Why I Wrote the Story of Borley Rectory," in *LIGHT* of October 17th, 1940, Mr. Harry Price wrote: "I have not hesitated to declare in my book that the spirit-hypothesis best covers all the facts of this truly remarkable case of hauntings." That is a clear statement without any suggestion of "trimming" or "hedging," and readers will be justified in regarding that statement as expressing the conclusion to which Mr. Price has come.—EDITOR).

## PREDICTION AND FREE-WILL

Sir,—I must express my regret to Dr. F. H. Wood (see *LIGHT*, December 12th, 1940) for wrongly attributing to him the statement that the distinction between prediction where *objects* are concerned and prediction dependent more or less on human free-will was drawn by "Sinim." The reference to "Sinim's" article by Dr. Wood in connection with "Rosemary's" expression of this distinction seemed to imply that Dr. Wood considered that "Sinim's" theory found some support in "Rosemary's" statement.

The error is, however, of minor importance and does not invalidate the point made in my letter: that the Lodge prediction to which Dr. Wood referred is not a fitting illustration of the distinction drawn by "Rosemary," and also that it cannot be accounted for by "Sinim's" theory.

I would suggest that the "Rosemary" distinction is incorrectly stated by Dr. Wood, and that it was really drawn between cases of prediction in which objects were concerned, the ultimate fate of which was not in any way dependent upon acts of free-will, and cases in which the fulfilment involved a foreknowledge of free-will actions, which might or might not be concerned with objects.

The case of Sir Oliver Lodge's Wiltshire house would fall in the latter and not the former class. The suggestion now made by Dr. Wood—*viz.*, that Sir Oliver's greater self may have known all about the house he would occupy several years later, does not in any way serve to provide a key to the root problem, *viz.*, the conflict between prediction and the idea of free-will.

If it had any validity at all it would imply that the greater self (subconscious mind) of any individual was endowed with an unerring power of foreseeing in minute detail his future material conditions—an assumption or theory which would in no way lessen the original difficulty of reconciling such powers of prevision with the generally accepted idea or belief of free-will.

It is, however, invalidated by the fact that the ultimate fulfilment of the Lodge predictions involved a foreknowledge of acts of free-will not merely of Sir Oliver Lodge himself, but of two other persons, the owner of the property and the owner's wife, matters which could not be within the knowledge of Sir Oliver Lodge's greater self. I would also point out that the prediction was not made to Sir Oliver personally, but to Lady Lodge at a sitting held in his absence.

W. HARRISON.



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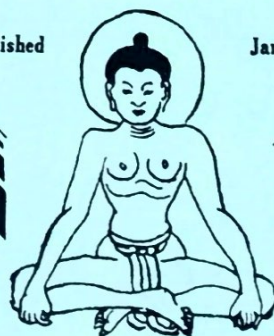
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