

SURVIVAL

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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SURVIVAL

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DEDICATED TO ALL
WHO IN DIVERS WAYS
HAVE SOUGHT TO BRING
IMMORTALITY TO LIGHT

Contents

	PAGE
THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL IN TERMS OF PHYSICAL SCIENCE	I
By Sir Oliver Lodge, D.Sc., F.R.S.	
SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES IN THEIR RELATION TO SURVIVAL	21
By Stanley de Brath, M.Inst.C.E.	
METAPSYCHICS AND HUMAN SURVIVAL	42
By Lady Grey of Fallodon.	
SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS	59
By Prof. Camille Flammarion.	
EXPERIENCES WITH AUTOMATIC WRITING	85
By Sir Edward Marshall-Hall, K.C.	
PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES	95
By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, M.D.	
ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL	117
By F. R. Scatcherd.	

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE PHILOSOPHY OF SURVIVAL	134
By David Gow.	
RELIGION AND SURVIVAL	148
By Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.	
PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL	162
By J. Arthur Hill.	
METAPSYCHIC SCIENCE AND SURVIVAL	181
By Prof. Charles Richet, M.D.	
ON BEHAVIOUR TO THE DYING	188
By the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, D.B.E.	

Note by the Editor.

THE Editor wishes to state that each writer is alone responsible for his or her own contribution, and for that only.

The Rationality of Survival in Terms of Physical Science

By Sir OLIVER LODGE

I

MATTER AND ENERGY

THESE are days of astonishing progress in physical science. Every year almost can be credited with some notable advance of a momentous kind. The twentieth century was heralded by the discovery of the atomic nature of electricity, which, long suspected by a few, then became the common property of all those who were in the van of progress and were actively engaged in investigation, whether in the study or the laboratory. Not only was electricity proved to consist of small particles, whose size, weight and velocities could be definitely ascertained and measured, but it was found that the very atoms of matter were electrically composed; and the foundation was laid of the Electrical Theory of Matter.

The atom of matter, which had been regarded from time immemorial as a genuine entity, had begun to be shown, by the chemical genius of

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

Dalton early in the nineteenth century, to be responsible for every kind of chemical combination and for the building up of the molecules of familiar substances. Progress in this direction continued throughout the nineteenth century, revolutionising the ancient chemistry, and making it clear and numerical and definite. The atom then seemed to be an indivisible and ultimate unit, of which everything material was made, but which itself could hardly have any structure; it seemed hard, definite, and unchangeable; and it was difficult to explain why, or wherein, the seventy or eighty kinds of chemical elements differed from each other. The idea of interchangeability or transmutation seemed alien to science; transmutation of elements was regarded as a fanciful superstition; and the building up of the atoms themselves from some fundamental substance, by any sort of evolutionary process, was but the dream of an occasional visionary.

The twentieth century has changed all that.

The atom is no longer a hard impenetrable ultimately indivisible unit, like, for instance, an ultra-microscopic diamond point. It is known now to have a complicated structure, to be penetrable to an extraordinary degree, to be able to take on additional ingredients, or at times to fling away portions of itself, and so to change its chemical nature and properties. Moreover, the fundamental substance of which all atoms of matter are composed has been tracked down; and lo, it is electricity!

SIR OLIVER LODGE

Definite and measurable specks of electricity group together and build up the atoms ; and the number of specks which go to make the atom of any specific substance has actually been counted. They range, in one sense, from 1 to 92 ; proving that there are ninety-two chemical elements, and no more, unless a ninety-third and others be hereafter discovered. The number 118 has been looked for, but not found ; the reason apparently being that these extra complicated atoms, if ever existent, are too unstable for a long life. If they only last for a fraction of a second, or even for a few seconds, they will be hard to discover ; for with such a high death-rate they must be exceedingly rare.

Rare or not, elements with a short life have been discovered. Radium is the best known, for its life is not very short ; but there are a whole family of substances that behave similarly, and by flinging away a portion of themselves turn themselves into an element lower in the scale. These are said to be spontaneously radio-active, and some of them have a lifetime of only a few minutes. The wonder is that they can be observed at all. Only by electrical means, in a vacuum, with instruments of the utmost facility for rapid response, has the feat been accomplished.

To go into the details and methods of discovery here is impossible ; though it is possible to summarise some of the results. It must suffice to say that one main method of investigating the structure of atoms is by a glorified kind of spectroscope ;

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

that is, by analysing the radiation which they emit, and measuring the length of the ether waves which the vibrations of their electrons generate.

For when electrons quiver, or leap from point to point, they inevitably disturb the ether in which they move and of which they must in some way be constituted. Their vibrations may be likened to the quiver of the strings of a piano, which, being immersed in air, emit waves of sound; while the hammers leap from point to point and by the sudden percussion excite the struck strings to emit waves.

It used to be said by that brilliant mathematician of fifty years ago, W. K. Clifford, that having regard to the multiplicity, not of tones, but of what in the ether correspond to tones (some of them visible instead of audible), an atom must be as complex as a grand piano; but the analysis of the structure by merely observing the waves it emits, when subjected to artificial stimuli and violence, requires exceedingly skilful and difficult and delicate deduction. Indeed, as someone has recently said, the problem set to physicists is as if one was called upon to ascertain the constitution of a piano by listening to the noise it makes when thrown downstairs! However, it has been done, to a most extraordinary extent; for not only have observed spectrum lines been accounted for, but other series have been predicted and subsequently found, of exactly the right wave-length and with all the peculiarities which had been laid down beforehand

in the light of theory. There can be no reasonable doubt that the atom has now yielded up the main secrets of its general constitution, not only in the rough but in accurate detail; though some important features of the theory, which are undeniable but puzzling, still require further elucidation.

But a still more extraordinary advance has been made, or at least so clearly indicated that we are justified in accepting it as a working hypothesis until it is contradicted.

Matter has been added to the forms of energy.

Hitherto energy has been known to be protean in form. It has long been familiar in the forms of locomotion and elastic strain, of spin and contortion; energy is recognised in such forms as raised weights and falling water; and likewise as heat, light, sound, chemical action, and also as electric charges and currents. All these forms are interchangeable; a given portion of energy is at one moment the motion of a projectile, and at the next it is converted into heat and sound. A strained bow has static energy; a liberated arrow has kinetic. Such examples of transmutation, with conservation, are perfectly familiar. But now Einstein's method of analysis, in confirmation of the electrical theory, tends to show that matter itself is but one of the forms of energy: a peculiarly permanent form. The static energy of an electric charge accounts for the mass and material aspect of an electron. Liberation of energy ought to be accomplished by the disappearance or rearrangement

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

of matter ; and by the supply of appropriate energy it is probable that matter could be reconstituted. The latter has not yet been proved.

To form a physical representation or image of the process, we find ourselves compelled to attribute to the ether of space the only substantial and fundamental existence in the material Universe ; and we must seek to resolve and explain everything else in terms of that. It is to be modified into electrons ; these are known to build up the atoms ; and thus the energy of their constitution can be part of the pristine energy of the ether. A great unification is proceeding before our eyes ; it is by no means yet complete, it is only beginning ; but the ideal is to resolve all material phenomena into manifestations of ether in various types of motion. That is what is looming before us, as a representation of the whole material Universe, from stars and nebulæ, from atoms and electrons, down to the homely blocks of matter with which we daily deal, including our own bodies.

II

LIFE AND MIND

But what else is there ? Is the material Universe the whole ? Is there nothing else of which we are conscious ? Have we exhausted existence, when we resolve matter into energy, and both into ether in whirling motion ?

Everyone knows better than that. The very

SIR OLIVER LODGE

fact that we can *know* these things shows that there is something more. The material Universe has no knowledge of itself; it is a pure mechanism, perfectly obedient to what we call its laws, absolutely free from consciousness or will, without a sign of rebellion or protest, or of caution or pity or hesitation; following its appointed path, not to the end—for there is no end—but for ever. But with live creatures that is not so. They can rebel, they can hesitate, they can consider, they can abstain. Stimulated into activity, yes; but into partially self-controlled activity. Actuated by their desires, yes; but not governed wholly by the past, guided by anticipation of the future, even if their action be only hunting for a meal. There is no hunting or anticipation with the inorganic; nothing but blind response to *vim a tergo*.

Is the apparent foresight of a bird building a nest for unborn progeny, conscious anticipation? It is difficult to say in what rudimentary form consciousness emerges. Animals have memory undoubtedly; their actions demonstrate a rudimentary form of mind. A dog remembers where he has buried an economic and thrifty bone. All life would seem to be the rudiment of mind; and mind involves anticipation: the absolute slice called the present, without time-extension, would be meaningless.

But we need not speculate about attributes of the lower creatures: we know perfectly well that we ourselves possess mind and consciousness as well as life; and yet no elaboration of the physical universe has

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

so much as touched the operations or the nature of any of these things. We only know that they all utilise common energy, and obey all ordinary physical and chemical laws. In so far as they go beyond that, and exhibit supplementary peculiarities distinct from those of mere mechanism, we are in a wholly new aspect of the Universe, and must explain it by other means. The same weird powers which have enabled us to perceive so much will surely enable us to perceive still more. Why should we be so limited as to be able to explore only the external and the alien ?

Well, it is always easier to explore the foreign than the home surroundings. The latter we take for granted ; we are so familiar with them that they fail to attract our intelligent attention. In foreign travel, things may be fresh, unexpected, and striking ; they have to be fitted into a frame outside and beyond our normal circumstances. That is why the exploration of the physical universe has made such strides, and why the mental universe is comparatively unknown.

We cannot tell how life is handed on ; we know the material vehicle, from seed or egg, to plant or animal. Very much on this side is known, but the essential part of the process eludes us. Biologically, we do not even know whether, like energy and matter, we persist. Biology does not tell us whether our personality is but a simulacrum, a vanishing temporary appearance, or whether it is a fundamental reality. Are our memories

SIR OLIVER LODGE

stored in the brain only, so that when that is destroyed they are all blotted out and we cease to be? Or do memory, character, disposition, affection, intelligence, will, belong to that other aspect of the Universe which is independent of matter, and which only interacts with matter for a time, as if to get the benefit of conflict and struggle with its alien, inexorable, and yet docile and tractable processes? Do we use matter as a painter uses his pigments, or a sculptor his stone, in order to express ourselves in intelligent form, in order to convey our ideas to others, in order to realise our conceptions in incarnate form? If so, we may thereby train ourselves to better accomplishment hereafter, by encountering and overcoming the difficulties of moulding matter to our will.

It may be said, we do not know whether we thus use and dominate matter, or whether we are wholly dependent on matter for our ultimate existence and without it are nothing. But some of us do know; and all might, if they studied the facts. There is no need for speculation in these matters. It may be argued, and often has been, in support of the doctrine of survival, that it is vain and discouraging to suppose that all the achievements of man have come into being as a mere temporary sport, of no more permanent value in the universe than grass of the field. But we go beyond all that; we have more direct evidence. How do we become conscious of the co-existence with us of reasonable beings, and of their feelings and hopes and mental

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

activities? Surely by direct experience, not by speculating about them. We can, it is true, speculate ourselves into solipsistic isolation and uncertainty about the existence of anybody but ourselves; we can try to imagine other people as mere images or duplications of ourselves; but the effort is artificial and essentially absurd. So, when we enter into communion with friends who have lost their material vehicle, but who still display all the characteristics—memory, personality, affection—by which we knew them here, we can argue ourselves into disbelief if we try; but the effort is a stultifying one when the evidence is really good.

If there is good evidence, why should we not accept it? The contention presumably is that we do not see how it is possible; we can form no theory (or let us suppose that we cannot) of how they can possibly retain memory when they have left their brain behind, how they can possibly hear without ears, speak without larynx, write without muscles, and so on. If we take that line, and discard good evidence on that ground, we are opposing a theory—or rather a lack of theory—to facts.

I reply that we cannot explain how we do these things here and now. We cannot explain the interpretation of material and electrical vibrations as sound and light. Only the physical part of our sensations is known to us. How can we be sure that memory is stored in the brain and in no other way? How can we tell that mind must necessarily be associated with an organ built of carbon and

SIR OLIVER LODGE

hydrogen and oxygen, with a trifle say of phosphorus and other constituents superadded, to complete its composition? What sort of consciousness is to be expected from a complicated assembly of molecules? How can such an instrument think? How can a piano, or even an electrically driven pianola, compose music? It can reproduce music undoubtedly; it can make manifest the soul of music to a room full of people, but the composition of the simplest air is beyond it. It has to be manipulated, guided, controlled; aye, itself has to be designed and put together.

We have put together and built up our brains, molecule by molecule, out of food; not like a crystal out of some particular pabulum, but out of any kind of wholesome food. The constructive faculty, however unconscious, is ours. What we construct and use is a representation of ourselves. Why should we give away the deep secret of our nature, and imagine that the house we have built, the weapon we have forged, the instrument we play upon, is all of us that exists? Why consent to hand over our personality to its fragile keeping, and look forward to the inevitable day, twenty, thirty, fifty years hence, when it will be worn out, and assume that we shall be worn out too?

This sort of supposed domination of mind by matter is a curious perversion. Yet it is not uncommon. The fact is that the material mechanism is so marvellously interesting, it absorbs so closely the life-long labours of industrious and highly

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

gifted workers, that they ultimately get impressed or even obsessed with its unique and sole importance. They fail to look beyond it, and to realise that after all the zinc and acid and carbon of a battery is not everything. They can, we will suppose, put the materials together ; they can at any rate take it down and dissect it ; but the essence, the electric fluid, that which activates and enlivens the whole, escapes them. Where shall they find the essence of life and mind ? Not by groping amid the material relics of discarded carcasses ; that is only a part of the whole economy. If they want to find the permanent essence, they must commune with other minds, and learn, from the facts, about the possibility of such communion. They must not *assume* that mind can be found only in association with matter : that is just what has to be ascertained. They should not enter on an inquiry full of prejudices and prepossessions—a fixed conviction of the impossibility of any but one solution. For a new inquiry, an open mind !

But they will say—anyone will say—how can we, with our limited material senses as our channel of information, be open to impressions save those that come through those senses ? And how can those senses be affected save by some material organism ?

I reply in double form. First, that our sense-organs may not be our only mode of recipience. Poets and saints have been conscious of inspiration, coming they know not how or whence. Let us not

SIR OLIVER LODGE

reject their testimony on theoretical and unsafe grounds, but try to learn from them about facts of experience. Inspiration, apart from the organs of sense, may be a reality. And on a lower plane, the discovery of experimental telepathy, as a bare fact, without dogmatising on any theory to account for it, tends to prove that mind is accessible, that mind can apparently communicate with mind, apart from material concomitants.

That may be all very well, but how can the possessor of ideas, the originator of messages, make them known to us? Unless he speaks, or writes, or telegraphs, we uninspired people can know nothing about his thoughts or experiences. A material organism *must* be utilised, if any impression is to be made upon our senses. Granted. And so, on a plane lower than inspiration, it is found by those who have lost the old familiar instruments. They find that they can think and feel, they can will and plan, much as they did; but in order to tell us about it they must be supplied with an instrument. No material instrument is needed for their present life; it is only needed for purposes of communication. They are still themselves; and if they had strong affections, those affections endure. So do their tastes and character persist, for better for worse.

How do we know? Because they tell us so. They tell us by means of a material instrument. A material instrument is necessary; but plenty of such instruments exist. Brain-nerve-muscle

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

mechanism is possessed by every one of the higher animals, and in man they have attained a standard capable of conveying ordinary human thoughts. The only question is—Can such an instrument be lent or borrowed? Can its normal possessor vacate a portion of it, for a time, and allow another intelligence to use it. The phenomena of sleep and trance seem to suggest such a possibility. The pathological phenomena of multiple and dislocated personality seem to exhibit it in undesirable unhealthy forms. But again, we need not speculate on possibilities; we must be guided by the facts. Certain people do have this power of vacating portions of the organism and leaving them open to vicarious control. Certain of the discarnate do make use of them, in order to give us information and prove their own identity. That is certainly the appearance. Is it the reality?

Here comes the question of volume and cogency of evidence. To go further leads us into the library, the study, or the psychic laboratory. We can, if we like, shut our ears to all the testimony, and murmur—Impossible! Absurd! So might our predecessors in physical science have rebelled against the extraordinary conception of the physical universe at which we have gradually arrived. The structure of the atom, as now known, would have seemed grossly imaginative, absurdly impossible. That specks of which there are a greater number in a tumbler of water than there are tumblerfuls in all the oceans of the earth—that specks such as these

SIR OLIVER LODGE

should have a structure analogous to a solar system, and be composed of electric charges so small that even inside the atom the distances between them are comparable to the distances between the planets, in proportion to their relative size—would have seemed utterly preposterous. The idea that matter itself can be resolved into energy, and be but one of the forms with which the whirling motion of an otherwise unknown ether appeals to our senses and conscious experience, would have seemed, and perhaps still seems, rather the dream of a visionary than a prospective or reasonably anticipated result of science. To me it seems a likely direction of advance; and I suspect that in, say, fifty years, the necessary dynamics of the ether—differing apparently from ordinary dynamics—will have been mathematically worked out, and that a theory will be capable of being formulated not vaguely and hypothetically and generally, but with the clear and definite precision aimed at in physical science.

However that may be, long study of psychical facts has convinced me—not doubtfully or apologetically or tentatively, but with the most profound and deep-seated conviction—that memory does not reside in the brain, though channels of easy traffic may be worn in it by habit; that character and affection are not attributes of the body, but are phenomena of the mind or soul. The complete man is not body alone, or soul alone, but both. The soul dominates and has constructed the body,

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

as a physical representation of its own appearance and properties and powers, to serve as a temporary instrument on this planet; and it is equally able to construct another instrument—probably has already done so before the one built of atoms has worn out. With that more permanent instrument, the essence of personality, in its full sense, survives and operates in its new sphere, quite independently of its discarded physiological machinery. The remarkable thing is that it still retains the power of, with difficulty, making use of similar machinery belonging to another individual, when that is made available; and thereby we are supplied with a demonstration of continuous existence, as a fact of experience and not of unsupported theory. It is true that some working hypothesis is inevitably commingled with this or any other attempt at presenting the facts in a rational garb; but the element of hypothesis is manifest, and should always be held lightly, ready to be discarded or amended as experience grows.

When we have grown accustomed to the idea, it will seem simple enough. The difficulty of accepting it is partly one born of habit—the habit of ignoring anything outside our daily experience. But the eyes of some are open to things hopelessly beyond sensuous experience. Atoms, electrons, ether, and all their determined laws, are not the product of direct observation; they are deductions from facts interpreted by refined intelligence. The facts I now speak of are much simpler and more homely.

SIR OLIVER LODGE

They are not really in themselves simpler, but they are of the kind to which habit has made us accustomed ; and occasionally they have been understood, or at least accepted and assimilated, more freely by the plain man accustomed to intercourse with his fellows—by the shrewd man of business and the lawyer—rather than by those whose work has lain in the intricacies and laborious exploration of animal tissues, and who know so much about the functions of the different parts of the material organism that attention to the animating soul and the psychic aspect of all their phenomena would seem irrelevant and distracting. These will deny, perhaps fiercely, perhaps pityingly ; but the facts, as now becoming more widely known, will in the long run prove too much for their negations and prepossessions.

The human soul or spirit is not extinct at death ; it does continue with its aptitudes and character preserved ; and, under certain conditions, it can get into touch with those left behind, so long as affection lasts, and until they too take the inevitable step into the more or less unknown region or conditions beyond.

If we find that region more like the present than we had imagined, I shall not be surprised. For our interpretation of the Universe depends mainly upon ourselves. Itself is probably infinite and with infinite aspects. The aspect which we and the animals have grown accustomed to has been ingrained during our earth existence ; and if we

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

remain ourselves, our powers of interpretation will only gradually enlarge. For a time they will remain the same, and hence our interpretation of conditions round us will remain much the same.

When we go to the dominions beyond the seas we are struck mainly I think with a sense of similarity. So at first, when we emigrate beyond the confines of the present body, it is similarity which will strike us. But gradually we shall find that our powers are enhanced, and our opportunities for further progress gradually enlarged, beyond our present imagination. This Universe is not a small thing; it is not in the least likely to be limited to our present conception of it. The ether permeates it, and may be a vehicle for our future use, as matter is here. This lump of matter on which we and others live, is very beautiful and interesting and astonishing, but it is not the whole. Away and beyond our finite slight conception of reality lies the realm of the infinite. Humanity is as yet but little risen above the animals, and what it has already accomplished is but a trifle to the splendour that lies before it in the infinite future.

So now we may summarise our main contentions:—

(1) That survival of personality beyond bodily death is so much the simpler explanation of a great mass of observed phenomena that by many careful students it is held to be demonstrated as a fact.

(2) That the known properties and functions of the universal ether of space supplement the

SIR OLIVER LODGE

properties of matter to such an extent that, by postulating its possible animation, a rational and almost physical view of survival may be expected gradually to emerge.

(3) For we are unconsciously utilising the ether in our every-day actions even now, and will go on using it with equal ease when the slight material concomitant or accretion which now looms so large to our senses is left behind.

(4) Nevertheless purely ethereal intelligences, though they may have a complete system of existence of their own, can make no impression on our senses, and will be unable to communicate with us, unless they can find a physiological mechanism in good order and suited to the purpose ; so that they can become temporarily and partially incarnate.

(5) That as a matter of experimental fact we find that they do occasionally make use of such mechanism to demonstrate their continued activity and affection ; and accordingly we need no longer regard ourselves as so isolated from the main body of existence as we thought we were. The flesh, though hampering, is not an impenetrable barrier ; the veil between the two states can be pierced, the gulf bridged, and communion restored, under the urgent potency of love.

(6) That etheric existence is continuous with this material existence, the change of conditions not being such as to destroy or injure personality ; so that those who have passed on can continue to take an interest in our doings, and find themselves able

THE RATIONALITY OF SURVIVAL

to guide, help, and inspire, to an even greater extent than when they too were subject to the discipline and restrictions of the flesh.

(7) That the majesty of the Universe is so far beyond our largest conception, that anything is possible ; and that by mutual help, both here and hereafter, humanity can advance to heights beyond its dreams.

Supernormal Faculties in their Relation to Survival

By STANLEY DE BRATH, M.Inst.C.E.

SURVIVAL of bodily death, which under one form or another has been believed since neolithic times and in all nations as the foundation of all religions, is now seriously called in question. A number of persons eminent in physical and biological science do not hesitate to define the soul as "the sum of the functions of bodily life," and therefore consider its separate existence a contradiction in terms.

The present reference does not extend to an inquiry how this scepticism has arisen, but it is obviously the result of two main factors—(1) the textual criticism which, by proving the composite nature of the Sacred Scriptures has accentuated the human element in them and deprived the Bible of much of its old authority ; and (2) the Evolutionary Theory, which by proving the derivation of the human organism from a lower form has accentuated its animal aspects. This solidarity with the animal kingdom is generally felt to negative any claim to human survival. Haeckel, who may be taken as

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

the most authoritative exponent of the materialist philosophy, says in his *Riddle of the Universe* (1901), that its development

“ is a monistic mechanical process in which we can discover no aim or purpose whatever. . . . Our own human nature which exalted itself into an image of God in an anthropistic illusion, sinks to the level of a placental mammal which has no more value for the universe at large than the fly of a summer’s day or the smallest bacillus ” (p. 87).

He claims that science has “ ruled out God, Freedom and Immortality.”

In the middle of the nineteenth century, just when this philosophy had received general acceptance among men of science, there appeared a whole group of phenomena which were destined to shatter it by proving the existence of a mass of facts which could find no place in it and were therefore strenuously denied. These facts are the “supernormal faculties.”

The term carries with it a certain ambiguity. It is ordinarily understood to mean faculties of cognition independent of the normal senses, and as a popular rendering this may pass. But any accuracy of thought will recognise that faculties independent of the physical senses are not only older than history, being referred to in the most ancient Assyrian and Egyptian inscriptions and found in the most uncivilised races, and in that sense, normal ; but are

STANLEY DE BRATH

closely paralleled in the animal world by many instincts, especially in insects, migratory birds and fish, which are equally independent of the physical senses, are perfectly normal in each species, and moreover, have a very high survival value in its existence, though it is not easy to see how they could be produced by Natural Selection or by the compulsion of the environment. For instance, it would seem that these two factors should operate to produce eels accommodated to fresh-water life rather than compel them at maturity to seek the deep sea where, under enormous pressure they procreate and die ; the young elvers in their turn seeking the rivers, unguided save by inherent faculty, to repeat the cycle. These "instincts" are now more usually referred to subconscious mind than to heredity.

In the human being, however, the supernormal faculties have totally different objects: they are personal, not common to the race, they have no apparent relation to the continuance of the species and they involve cognitions that are remote from bodily life. They are comparatively rare among individuals, they are sporadic and unusual, and in that sense supernormal.

The chief of those faculties are Cryptomnesia—a hidden memory that seems almost infallible with regard to the events of a lifetime; Thought-transference—reproducing in one mind the perceptions of another; Psycho-cognition—by which events distant in time or space are present to the percipient; Prediction—by which events not yet

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

come into realisation are present to the seer ; and Automatisms in speaking and writing, presenting facts that cannot be accounted for by "split personality" inasmuch as the phenomena are much greater than the undivided personality is capable of.

These are the chief indications of supernormal faculty. They take many forms: Clairvoyance, crystal-vision, telepathy, dowsing, and cryptesthesia generally—are modes and phases of psycho-cognition, and need not be separately considered in relation to survival.

Cryptomnesia.—The *British Medical Journal* of January 31st, 1919, has some details of a most interesting instance of this faculty. It is that of a signaller in the R.F.C. who was buried in a trench by the explosion of a heavy shell. When dug out, the objects that he saw seemed to him to be displaced at right angles. This dislocation persisted, and he could not remember when this displacement, which had happened before, had first occurred. The medical treatment was hypnotic; the hypnotist, endeavouring to trace the first occurrence of the kind, carried him back through his past life. On suggesting to him that he was six years old, he lived very vividly through his old experiences. "He is sitting on a wooden horse in the dining-room; his aunt comes in and wishes to wash him before going to bed: he declines, and edges away from her; the horse catches on the hearthrug, and he falls against the fender, striking his temple. He knows no more till he finds himself in bed, his aunt

STANLEY DE BRATH

bathing his face." After this incident the displacement first occurred. Further suggestion carried him back to five, four and three years old, in each of which states he recalls their experiences.

De Rochas made a special study of this regressive memory, and found that it can always, or nearly always, be brought to the surface under hypnotism. It has also been deeply studied by Flournoy with similar results, and there is good reason to think that all the events of a lifetime which have affected the development of the personality are ineffaceably stored in the hidden memory long after the brain memory has let them slip.

Psycho-cognition.—Dr. Eugene Osty, a Parisian neurologist of high standing and in large practice, has experimented for twelve years past on this. He has recently published a monograph* on one single aspect of supernormal cognition—that in which the faculty is directed on a human personality. Instead of heaping up instances at random, he has collected an immense mass of data by varying the conditions of delineation, submitting the same object to different percipients, and different objects to the same percipient, collating the results and verifying the answers by ascertained facts. Having the pleasure of Dr. Osty's acquaintance, I can testify to the care with which he has eliminated the possibility of

* *La Connaissance Supranormale.* (Alcan. Paris.) Translated as *Supernormal Faculties in Man.* Methuen, 1923.

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

thought-transference between experimenter and percipient by ensuring that neither shall have any but the very slightest knowledge of the personality to be delineated. In most cases the percipient had no normal knowledge whatever. It is not necessary that the person delineated should be present to the sensitive; any object touched by the former will suffice as a clue; usually an article of clothing or a piece of writing is a good object for the purpose, but in some cases the necessary link is surprisingly slight, even a mental connection being sufficient. A few instances will convey more than any amount of description.

EXAMPLES OF SUPERNORMAL COGNITION.

Clinical Cases.—These are very numerous, mostly dealing with obscure diseases. The sensitive on being given a few lines written by the patient, was able to describe accurately, but in non-medical language, the state of every organ in the body. These take up too much space for reproduction here. One, however, is brief enough for quotation:—

“ In September, 1920, Mme. de D., came alone and for the first time to one of Dr. Osty’s sensitives who had never seen her and did not know her even by name. The percipient proceeded as usual to delineate the life, spoke of Mme. de D.’s recent loss of her husband during the war, and in the course of her talk said: ‘ I see by you a little boy about eight years old . . . (physical and moral

STANLEY DE BRATH

description here followed). . . his health seems good and you have had no anxiety . . . but believe me ; have the child's blood examined and put him under medical care . . . his blood is affected and great trouble might arise in the future.' Mme. de D. took her child to a physician asking him to examine the blood ; a very serious state was disclosed by the Bordet-Wassermann reaction, which was a most painful surprise, there having been no reason to apprehend a syphilitic taint."

A servant's character (abbreviated).

" On December 30th, 1921, Mrs. H. C., of Paris, received a short letter from Emily V. in the Ardennes, applying for a place as cook. This letter was placed in the hands of Mme. Fraya, who knew nothing of the girl, had never seen her, and was only aware that the matter concerned domestic service. She said : ' This young person is very honest and painstaking. She will be devoted to her employers. I can assure you of her mentality ; she will give no trouble with lovers, she is afraid of men. She is anæmic, and will often complain of being tired . . . thinks herself unlucky . . . self-distrustful . . . honest though fond of money . . . has little intelligence and no memory. It will take time to accustom her to new ways. Very reserved, obstinate and slow to learn ; but there is an ideal in her simple mind. In spite of all this I advise you to engage

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

her, she is not the perfect servant but is very sincere.' Not much encouraged, Mrs. H. C. decided to engage the girl, who proved exactly as described—about 20, anæmic and needing care, speaking very little except to complain of being tired; and so slow in getting the run of things that after six months Mrs. H. C. was doubtful if she could keep her. Dominant characteristics—an absolute terror of men, and an idealism manifest by assiduous attendance at the Salvation Army and constant singing of hymns."

Delineation of character (much abbreviated).

" Mr. G. was engaged to a very attractive lady whom he had met on his travels. Part of a letter was placed in Mme. Fraya's hands; she knew neither the person nor her handwriting; she was only asked to describe the character of the writer. She said: ' This person is imperious, overbearing, and devoured by pride and ambition . . . it would be well to distrust her gentle and graceful manners, for these show great powers of dissimulation to gain confidence for self-interested ends. . . . In intimacy this manner gives place to an irritable and despotic temper. Too satisfied with herself to doubt her own charm, she thinks no one can resist her. Changeable, impulsive, and incapable of moderation . . . she constantly twists the truth, and has no scruple in calumniating others to clear herself.' Mr. G. was stupefied, and entirely refused to believe the portrait. He said he had

STANLEY DE BRATH

complete confidence in his fiancée. A month later the lady showed some unexpected traits ; he made cautious inquiries, and found that she had been divorced ; had wounded her husband with a pistol shot, and was engaged to another man besides Mr. G. with the view of marrying the richer of the two."

Premonition of accommodation (abbreviated).

" Mrs. M., an American teacher of singing, had long been seeking a flat in Paris, and despaired of finding one. She visited Mme. de Berly, who said, among other things : ' You will very shortly get the flat you are seeking. You will have it offered you . . . it is small, very white and clean, very bright, there is no house fronting it . . . one sees trees ; there is plenty of light. The people who live there have a stroke of luck. . . . A letter comes to them from a far country, it has five seals . . . they are offered a brilliant situation over there . . . their mother is there, she is ill. You do not know these people, but this will come to pass through people that you do know, who will tell you to take the flat, it being just what you want. I see that they will leave some little things in it.' This was on January 10th, 1922. On February 25th, Mr. and Mrs. S., living in a flat in the Rue Lafontaine, unknown to Mrs. M. and to Mme. de Berly, received a letter from a relative in Mexico owning large properties there, making them most attractive proposals. Mrs. S. mentioned

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

this to a friend who happened to know Mrs. M. All the prediction was exactly verified."

Other delineations refer to recovery of lost property, foresight of children's development, malversation of funds, detection of crime, mode of approaching death, occupations during the war, and a number of other incidents, some long past, some present, and some still in the future. Dr. Osty concludes from his long series of experiments that the faculty is not only independent of time and space, but of brain-action also; the information arising in a plane of consciousness that transcends Time, Space and corporeal limitations. For his proofs I must refer readers to the book itself; all that can be said here is the highly suggestive fact that the information rarely comes in words, but in a series of symbolic pictures that are interpreted correctly by the conscious mind of the percipient, though they would mean little or nothing to another. This, as will be seen later, is a very important clue.

Dr. Osty says that anyone can verify the reality of the faculty by going to two or three good percipients, asking them to give a delineation of his own past and immediate future without any suppressions. By comparing the results with each other and with the facts, the reality of the faculty will be apparent. Very few persons however seem to care to do this—perhaps they do not fancy a private rehearsal of the Day of Judgment!

Prediction.—This is the most astounding form

STANLEY DE BRATH

taken by this faculty. I will supplement Dr. Osty's cases by an experience of my own. In 1897 I was employed as Technical Assistant to the Uganda Railway Construction Board at the Foreign Office, and though the work was far advanced I had no thought of leaving it. But in December of that year, Miss B., a friend living with my wife and myself, went on a visit to a lady whom I will call Kate (not a professional clairvoyante), who very rarely exercised her power. She shut her eyes, took Miss B.'s hand, and said :—

“ Now I see you going overseas ; now you are living in a large house, it looks like a barrack or institution of some kind, and it has two towers. Now I see you driving in a country lane with a stout elderly lady who has curls all over her head, in a curious vehicle like a large bath-chair drawn by a pony.”

On Miss B.'s return nothing more was thought of this prediction which seemed quite wide of any probability. Shortly after, in March, 1898, quite unexpected events took me to the Channel Islands, where I was offered a single storeyed house unsuitable for the purpose under discussion which concerned the son, N., of the owner who suggested that the house might be remodelled and asked me to draw the plans. These involved raising the house one storey and adding a new wing. I drew the plans for him in May, cutting out a low tower then existing. To my drawing *he added two towers.*

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

The alterations were completed in September, and we went into residence.

Some weeks later Miss B. found herself driving with a lady, the wife of the owner, precisely as described, and in a vehicle as specified. The prediction, till then forgotten, flashed into her mind. I suggested laying before Kate a photograph of the house along with others, but giving no hint of the purpose. This was done, and Kate at once picked out the photograph, saying, "Why! that is the house I 'saw' you in."

The points of interest are that the house was not even designed at the time of the vision; the people were unknown to us all even by name; I had no thought of going overseas; the house was not built till six months later; the drive in the lanes was later still; and the vision in this case was precise, not symbolical.*

* Confronted with such facts some persons seem unable to perceive any solution but sheer Fatalism. The truth seems to be that we act from *conditioned* choices, the conditions being inherent in the mentalities we have made for ourselves, and in the enviroing circumstances.

Miss B., deceased in 1913, having been a most valued colleague in my educational work from 1898 to that date, and one whose loss affected me greatly. Some years later, when my military duties during the war were ended, I received through a very passive automatist who is ignorant of what she writes, frequent communications purporting to come from the deceased lady. Among many other questions I put the following, and received the answers appended:—

- Q. Can you explain *how* Kate could foresee in January the house not built till September?
- A. I cannot say *how*, but although you did not know it, those events were bound to follow the workings of the minds. It had nothing to do with Kate, really.

STANLEY DE BRATH

Osty's proof that the supernormal faculties are ultra-cerebral, and many scores of instances similar to the above, make the inference that these faculties are inherent in an objective soul almost inevitable, and support Flammarion's contention that the soul is a real being independent of the body. The body lives in Time, and is related to *phenomena*; the soul lives in eternity here and now, and is related to *noumena*. Eternity is not boundless time, it is a state in which time is replaced by the fullness of life. That fullness of life is the larger Consciousness which brings past, present and future into the awareness that is the eternal NOW. The past has its record in other memories and what we call the future is determined by the causes that will bring it into manifestation. The soul's perception of causes is not inerrant and seldom extends to detail

Q. Then whom had it to do with?

A. You and me, with N.'s need, and his father and mother. Kate was only the medium.

Q. How was she impressed?

A. She was clairvoyant, and the link came through me as being closely associated with you.

Q. That agrees with Osty's conclusions, but what is so difficult to get at is—How could the fact of your connection with me bring the future into vision? "Clairvoyance" is only a word expressing a fact.

A. I am not able to say more than our Lord said—"Ye are all members one of another," and as colleagues, of course my personality showed signs of your future and mine.

The automatist certainly had not read Osty's book, the English translation not having appeared; and I, as certainly, did not connect the prediction with any theory. My own state of mind was rather a hope that I might get some new light on the nature of Time. This, it will be noticed, was not referred to in the answers, and whatever the source of the information, the facts remain.

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

of large events : hence prophecies, unless of trivial things, are seldom fulfilled after the manner expected.

Newman, in *The Dream of Gerontius*, makes the Angel say to the questing Soul that though men measure Time by the sun and moon and swinging rod, it is not so in the immaterial world, for there intervals are measured by living thought and grow or wane with its intensity.

Dr. Geley, the Director of the International Metapsychic Institute (Paris), said at the Warsaw Congress, that he considers survival probable on purely scientific grounds in the light of the facts. He finds strong indirect proof in the existence of faculties that out-range Space, Time and the sensorial and cerebral faculties of the individual. In his opinion "the metapsychic facts show that that which is essential in the human being do not depend on the organism, and should therefore both pre-exist and survive it." Ethical capacities, genius and memory—all indeed that is essential in humanity as an ultra-physical principle—do not depend on organic function.

There is also some direct evidence. It is true that Osty's investigations, showing that information concerning living persons, equally detailed as that conveyed through Mrs. Piper on deceased persons, is given by sensitives, and therefore such communications as those from "George Pelham" can no longer be taken as *proofs* of telepathy from the discarnate, though they may probably have that

origin when they show volition and purpose. But there is more decisive evidence. Mr. Bligh Bond's *Gate of Remembrance* (Blackwell, Oxford) is a most remarkable record of memories conveyed to him by automatic script, giving the dimensions and position of Glastonbury ruins of which all trace had vanished, and were verified by actual excavation. Some of the information so given was opposed to archæological records and traditions, and "Brother Johannes," the alleged transmitter, claimed to gather his knowledge partly from his own memory and partly from group-memories to which he had access ; and the curious thing here is, that the information was conveyed partly in modern English, partly in mediæval diction, and partly in monkish Latin. These communications show *volition* and *purpose* as well as occult information. The study of cross-correspondences is even more conclusive in this respect.

Objective phenomena (ectoplasmic materialisations, hyper-physical photographs and manual impressions on wax or on the photographic plate) scarcely fall within the definition of supernormal faculties, though they are necessarily connected with these as being obtained through the agency of persons of peculiar constitution, but in connection with survival it is necessary at least to mention them. I have myself seen on three occasions the materialised face of a deceased brother. I have also had the portrait of a deceased lady recognised by five persons who knew her well (three of them

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

being non-spiritualists, one being her own brother), and have seen many such portraits taken under strict supervision. But perhaps the most cogent proof of individuality comes from finger-prints on wax and on the photographic plate. These show all the delicate markings of the skin that are relied on by the Criminal Investigation Department as absolute proofs of normal individuality. It would be curious if final proof of survival were given by this humble means. Certainly the finger-prints are not those of any persons present in the laboratory during experiments conducted under the strictest possible conditions to make fraud a physical impossibility. It is probable however, that the conviction of a surviving soul will be brought about more by the harmony which that hypothesis brings between the new concepts of Matter, philosophical determinism, religious ideas, and a true historical exegesis, than by scientific proof more direct than that already given and outlined above. The faculties of cryptomnesia, clairvoyance and telepathy, supernatural to our present state, if really faculties of the soul would be, as Myers thought, normal to the discarnate state, and would furnish quite adequate explanation why life and character should be naked and open in the Beyond. The soul is its own "book of record," and we are told that communication is by projection of ideas, translated into language by the recipient.

I frankly confess that the proofs of personal survival seem to me overwhelming, and I see in

them the verification of the fundamental postulate of all religions, the basis for a restored belief in religious sanctions, and a criterion to discriminate between legendary marvels and genuine supernatural possibilities. I agree with Myers that without the metapsychic facts a century hence no educated man would believe in the Resurrection of our Lord, whereas with those facts there will probably be none who will disbelieve it, and they seem to me to verify Jowett's prediction—"What will be the deepest, most useful, truest and most lasting form of Philosophy? Commonsense idealised: or rather a meeting of commonsense and metaphysics; well expressed by Coleridge—'Commonsense is intolerable when not based on metaphysics.' But are not metaphysics intolerable when not based on commonsense?" (*Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol College, Oxford. Life and Letters.* Vol. ii, p. 77. Murray. 1897.)

II. OBJECTIONS AND THE ANSWERS THERETO.

I take no heed of objections to the actuality of the facts. The exhaustive and detailed experiments by Crookes, Wallace, Myers, Zöllner, Aksakoff, J. Maxwell, Hyslop, Boirac, Flammarion, Barrett, Lodge, Geley, Schrenck-Notzing and Richet, and testified to by many other men of high scientific standing in England and abroad, are conclusive against those who advance mere negations and theories of a "cosmic reservoir" into which the clever subconscious can dip at will; not to speak

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

of the vast numbers of sane and competent witnesses mentioned in the Proceedings of the American and British Societies for Psychological Research.

There is however, one very cogent objection. If the current idea of every human being as "an immortal soul" be true, it would seem to imply that all the untold myriads from the anthropithecus onwards through all primitive and savage races up to the morally undeveloped of the present day are all existent as personalities somewhere or other. This is quite incredible.

The answer lies in the profound distinction between the Self and the Personality that is its presentment in the material world. This distinction may be illustrated by the fact that if a new-born baby of British parentage were brought up in France, Spain, India, China or any other country apart from its parents or native associations, it would grow into very different persons, while remaining the same Self.

Oriental and Platonic contemplative intuition have alike reached the same solution to the objection stated above—that the Self, after a certain period in the discarnate state, is re-born and moulds for itself a new personality in a new environment.

The objection to this solution is, that superficially at least, it appears to be merely fatalistic and applicable to all without distinction. That the normal personality should have no memory of a previous existence is to be expected, seeing that all normal memory is cerebral and therefore could not transcend

STANLEY DE BRATH

one life's experience. It is alleged that some cases of cryptomnesia hypnotically evoked do carry back to antecedent lives, and that these have been verified by registers of births and deaths; but very much fuller experimental evidence is required before this can be accepted.

There is, however, another line of reasoning that bears on the subject. A. R. Wallace, in his *World of Life*, gives his grounds for the conclusion that Evolution shows a purpose—the development of a spiritual being. A spiritual being is one possessed of high moral qualities—courage, truthfulness, justice, mercy and unselfish love.

Dr. Geley* has thrown a clear light on the process of this evolution. He points out in his book *From the Unconscious to the Conscious* (II., ii, chapters 2

* Since the above was written has come the news of the disastrous crash of the aeroplane in which Dr. Geley was travelling from Warsaw to Paris (July 15th, 1924), by which his unrivalled services were lost to metapsychic science. In some obituary notices he has been called a "spiritualist." He would not have accepted a label which includes, beside those who are convinced of survival on perfectly sane and rational grounds, also a number of superstitious persons who have given unfortunate implications to the name. A strict man of science, the intimate friend of Professor Richet and of some of the most distinguished men in the scientific world, he was concerned only to establish the facts that he had experimentally verified in the laboratory of the International Metapsychic Institute of which he was the Director. To facts thus established by months of careful research he bore witness as fearlessly as he denounced fraudulent imitations that impose upon the credulous. He was a man of science of the high type that does not prejudge; and he eminently deserves the title—*Ami de la vérité*—given him by Professor Richet. In him one of my most intimate and valued friends has passed into the Beyond.

S. DE BRATH.

18th July, 1924.

SUPERNORMAL FACULTIES

and 3) that it consists in the interplay between the subconscious and the conscious. He says :—

“ There is no abyss between the conscious and the unconscious, for, in the individual, they constantly interpenetrate and mutually condition each other.

“ There is an uninterrupted transition from unconsciousness to consciousness ; and the primitive unconsciousness tends more and more to become conscious by an undefined and uninterrupted evolution ” (p. 221).

He shows that every faculty such as mathematical or artistic skill, moral qualities and general experience, at first consciously and even painfully acquired, becomes subconscious in its uses and in due course develops into a factor of permanent character. Even in this life those who have acquired such character do not remember all the steps that led to it.

There is therefore no contradiction involved in the effacement from memory of the steps by which a re-incarnated Self might attain the character it has reached. Its experiences have been transmuted into qualities. The return to earth-life to acquire new qualities need not be a retrogression in any sense. According to this theory, survival involves the immortality of a growing Self, but not of the personality that expresses it at any stage of its career. This latter is durable to the precise degree of its evolutionary development, and all

STANLEY DE BRATH

human evolution is but increasing consciousness till the soul has learned the lessons of earth-life and is fit to survive in a higher range of being in an environment of peace and good will. This theory meets the objection to an impossible mass of survivals and makes immortality a correlative of ethical development (*cf.* Matt. vii, 13-14: Phil. iii, 11-12).

The present condition of the world is the direct consequence of the lack of principle resulting from the undermining of religious belief. Concentration on personal and physical aims is all but universal: rivalries and antagonisms threaten the very existence of civilisation. The peace and good will that are so earnestly desired will return when the conviction of survival is general and when men are convinced also that the surviving soul by its visible character, its faculties, and its preferences reaps exactly as it has sown and learns that the Law of Spiritual Consequence expresses the Divine Justice and the Eternal Mercy which are one and the same.



Metapsychics, and Human Survival

By PAMELA GREY

THE value of such a work as that which has just appeared from the pen of Professor Richet, is inestimable.* It is an outstanding evidence of the hold which the subject of Metapsychics has acquired in the scientific world, and unquestionably the matter is lifted and set in a clear light.

Of late years the subject has taken a leading place in the public mind, whether it was regarded as a science, or as a quasi-religious movement; and to anyone who has been in touch with it for some time, it is interesting to notice the development. Let me outline the general position as it presented itself just before the outbreak of the War. To the casual observer, Spiritualism was little more than a matter of hearsay and vague rumour. Such publicity as it gained in the Press was mainly in connection with raids on fortune-tellers, conducted by enterprising newspapers in association with the police. It is significant of the general ignorance of psychic matters, that in these prosecutions genuine and

* Charles Richet. *Thirty Years of Psychical Research.*

reputable mediums were classed indiscriminately with the harpies and humbugs who trade on psychic gifts, real or pretended. The older generation—as Mr. Gow writes in an admirable article on the subject—who had memories of the 'seventies, could speak of Sir Wm. Crookes' experiments with the materialised spirit of Katie King. They knew of the prosecution of Slade, the visit of the Davenport Brothers, and the law-suit in which D. D. Home was defendant. But these were old, far-off, forgotten things, and very few people had ever read, far less seen, the two struggling papers that represented Spiritualism in the Press, or knew of the London Spiritualist Alliance, that was originally founded in 1884, and incorporated under the Companies Acts two years later.

Soon after this the Society for Psychical Research was founded, and although this was sponsored by a roll of distinguished names, the casual observer would still have been impressed but slightly, and would have yet classed Spiritualism with those communities of "queer folk," the followers of Joanna Southcott, the Shakers, the Jezreelites, and other examples of what the sergeant at the military Church Parade described as "fancy religions."

To-day there are some 370 societies throughout the country, with a membership in round numbers of 30,000; and this is not to count many independent societies who are holding meetings for investigation.

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

There are societies throughout the world; the United States, France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Poland and Iceland; Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa each has its Spiritualistic Society, and many have an academic group as well, for scientific research in the realm of the more obscure mental phenomena.

This is a change in the public consciousness that claims and deserves attention. That it is one of the results of the War is clearly shown when we take that cataclysm of civilization as our focusing point, "looking before and after." Before the War, among the early school of Spiritualists, the matter was pursued uncritically, and to excessive lengths. The character of a small intelligent army of pioneers was seriously affected and sullied by the sordid stamp of its camp-followers; and because the subject was not narrowed to the hands of the intellectual group that existed to test and enquire, Spiritualism may rightly be said to have earned and deserved the disrepute in which it was held. There is the story of the Hunt household (we will call them the Hunts, the name here is entirely fictitious), which, though it may be well-known is unpleasantly, though amusingly, illustrative. The usual circle had gathered in the house in Maida Vale. A tweeny slung her head round the door and said, "Mister 'Unt 'ull be 'ere in a minute"; and soon proceedings commenced. After a little a blue

phosphorescent cross moved, rather rigidly, against the darkness, and Mrs. Hunt was heard to remark pleasantly, "Ah, I see we have Cardinal Newman among us to-night." Whereupon a voice said, unctuously, from—was it under the sideboard?—"Benedictine, my children." The more familiar word!

That was how things went then; and yet, tawdry, grotesque, ignorant, alloyed, ugly and suspicious, Spiritualism ramified its way here and there in some form or another, for it derived its tenacity from the central truth it taught, the demonstration of Human Survival. This was at a time when the Church was more than usually eclectic, and given over to doctrinal dispute. It was an age of materialism. As a result of the attitude of Science of that day, there had been a great waning of faith in a future life. There was a vast indifference in the mass of civilised people to spiritual things. The generation was busily occupied in making the most of the only world of which it could be sure. Then the War came.

"—and it came as a great explosion of spiritual forces pent up by the growing sensuality of the race. There was a panic at the World's Banquet Table from which the viands gradually vanished, leaving only the Death's Head grinning insistently. The mourners went about the streets, and the old question was no longer put by. It was brought home to men's business and bosoms at every turn. It fell to the part of millions either to face the grisly thing in the field in their own persons, or to suffer the loss of kinsfolk or friends. Now although Spiritualism, as

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

we have seen, had made no large utterance, most people had heard of the subject as something connected with life after death, and the signs of a wide-spread interest were soon perceptible. Multitudes of women visited people advertised as having, or being known to have, psychic gifts whether real or reputed. It was inevitable that scandals should arise, for little or no attempt was made to discriminate. The honest possessor of the clairvoyant faculty was classed with the ghouls to whom the War brought a chance of battenning on the purses of people crazed with grief. Once again psychic avocations of all kinds were denounced, and good and bad alike suffered under the wholesale bludgeoning. Concurrently, however, there happened spontaneously, in the lives of many people, some psychical manifestations that were sufficiently remarkable to those to whom these experiences occurred. They proved the turning point to many, and the ranks of the Spiritualists were reinforced by a considerable number of persons who had the matter brought home to them as directly and forcibly, as it was to Saul of Tarsus himself."*

Such examples are typical ; and whether through the cumulative force of individual experience, or by the results of group investigation, it is a fact that the idea of Human Survival as a proven matter, instead of simply an article of faith, has made an advance in the public consciousness vastly greater in the

* I quote, here and elsewhere, from an article by Mr. David Gow, editor of *Light*, to whose kindness I am indebted.

last fifteen years, than in the fifty years preceding ; and it is advancing still.

Let us turn again to the subject of Professor Richet's book. This eminent scientist has affirmed unequivocally that the activities known as the material phenomena in Spiritualism are true. That he should deny the spiritualistic hypothesis only heightens the value of this work, for while his testimony as to the validity of the objective metapsychics is an important contribution to the mass of evidence collected and examined by the S.P.R. and other bodies, his attitude as to the origin of these activities preserves his authority in the orthodox scientific world. His word will carry further so. Moreover he illumines this subject most usefully for all who study it, by his comprehensive treatment, and lucid classification of the various forms it takes ; for many a Spiritualist, albeit holding to his belief in the possibility of spirit communication under certain conditions, will recall nevertheless, how often he has left some séance room where objective phenomena have been demonstrated, and has found himself wondering what connection, under Heaven, these activities could possibly have with the souls of the risen dead ?

Metapsychics is a subject that naturally divides itself into two questions : (a) the reality of the phenomena, and (b) whether they prove human survival or not. Immortality is another matter. It is a transcendental question outside time, and space, and human thought ; and must be left

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

out of account here. As to the first question it is an immense advance that it may safely be affirmed that the material phenomena are valid. Their truth is now established beyond all serious cavil, though their origin is still veiled ; but it is likely that in the next ten years there will be a prodigious further advance made in our knowledge of this subject, for the technique of investigation is constantly improving. A system of rigorous and yet sympathetic control, in regard to observation of the mediums, has been established ; and this at least in Paris, Berlin, Munich, and Warsaw, is in adequate hands. In Germany, belief in the actuality of parapsychic-physical phenomena gains new adherents every day ; and we may be confident the knowledge of the nature and source of these activities will be ours in time. Until then, there remains to us who believe we have had communication with the dead, an extraordinarily interesting problem ; it is, as to in what manner, and in what measure the power that supplies the objective activities may, conjecturally, be the channel of this communication when obtained.

In nine cases out of ten the one has nothing to do with the other ; but then there is the tenth case that gives pause at least, if it does not bring conviction. When a re-presentation of a known personality is given, the flavour of some special characteristic is suggested, or a unique peculiarity recalled. Such a thing may suddenly illumine the long and tedious inanities, or merely dull irrelevances

PAMELA GREY

of trance-mediumship, and then it is like when a thin pencil of light pierces a thick canopy of obscuring cloud. It stands out from the surrounding patter as definitely as a fragment of spar from the earth surrounding it; or it is like the sudden glint of a morsel of silica seen gleaming in the sunlight among dull pebbles of a gravel path. I sometimes think that the continuous stream of talk is necessary as a means of conveyance, and that we should not be able to get the one without the other, just as children may watch a quantity of water flow by in the rivulet, before the especial paper-boat or rose-leaf message they are waiting for, is borne along.

Still better, from an evidential point of view, are those other rare occasions when some information is given, or an allusion is made to an incident unknown to the recipient, and which is only verified by subsequent inquiry.

In the physical phenomena, group investigation is essential; but in subjective metapsychics it is on the patient and intelligent work of individuals that progress depends; and this work must be carried on in the spirit of experiment, entirely apart from religious or mystical speculation. Its study should be as exact on its own lines as chemistry, physics, or physiology. Careful and full notes should be taken at every trance sitting, and filed for reference or re-reading after a lapse of time; for it is often found that remarks or allusions, pointless or speculative when made, may swing up suddenly into

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

unexpected clarity ; or by the passage of time be found to have been just.

Notes taken, *verbatim*, at my sitting with Mrs. Leonard in the late summer of 1922, led to holding the written evidence of this interesting case. I was told of a doctor who took a special interest in some family well known to my husband in his childhood. "Ask him," Feda said, "if he remembers any doctor whose name began with B. Broad man, broad shoulders, broad forehead, rather broad-looking"—the medium made the gesture to convey breadth as she spoke—"This was long ago ; but a link existed ; and he has always followed and taken an interest in the eldest son of that family ; though the connection he says was closer with the other members of the family than with him."

On my return I asked if there was any meaning in this, and I was told that the local doctor in the neighbourhood during my husband's childhood, had been called Broadbent. The family referred to was clearly recognised, and he told me this doctor had attended at the birth of every member of it—which no doubt was the link alluded to—except the birth of the eldest son, who alone of them had been born in London. It is the first syllable of this name—Broadbent—being used as an adjective that makes this case peculiarly interesting.

Now, although the doctor and his name had been familiar to my husband in his boyhood, over forty years ago, he had never mentioned it to me, nor had it been in his mind for many years past ; and

PAMELA GREY

he was greatly interested at it being recalled to him in this way. There will be some, no doubt, who will say the medium had taken the trouble to look up old annals. Well ; then here is another case in which people concerned are sufficiently obscure as to invalidate this particular criticism ; and it is the solitary instance in which their names or concerns have been mentioned to me in all the trance sittings I have had, nor is Mrs. Leonard known to them.

“ Just before this person died,” I was told, “ she had some trouble connected with suffering about her hair. Tell her aunt ; she will remember. This person cried, and was so troubled over her hair.” About three months later I saw the one alluded to as the aunt. I read that portion of my notes aloud to her, and she confirmed the incident, and gave me particulars. She said the night before her niece died the patient had been very restless ; her head was constantly moving on the pillow, and her hair became so enmeshed that it was utterly tangled, and gave great distress when combed. The doctor rebuked the nurse for having let the hair get into this state, and gave directions it should be cut off closely, as is done in fever cases. The patient fretted, and insisted her hair should not be cut. She refused to allow it, and her distress was such that her aunt took upon herself to disobey the doctor’s orders, that the sufferer might, at least, have what peace she could. This happened the night before the patient died.

I have another case in mind. While travelling

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

in the United States I made acquaintance with a lady whose only son had been killed in the War. She took a great interest in Spiritualism in a strong-minded rather than an emotional way, pursuing the subject with high intelligence ; and her opinion, on any point connected with this subject, would always be worth having. She had a compound name each beginning with the same letter : a name like Mrs. Burton-Bainbridge, or Mrs. Barton-Burnand, let us say, and her son's Christian name began with the letter W. She expressed great interest in my experience of Mrs. Leonard's mediumship, and on my return home I fully expected to hear of her son when I should again sit with Mrs. Leonard. You may say this alone was sufficient to ensure such a happening ? I agree—as far as his initials were concerned, but of the message that followed I had no knowledge. I was told my son had brought someone who was a stranger to Fedá. He had never been to us before. He gave the letter W, and this was to be followed by B, and again B. "Would I write down his message ? for his mother was known to me ; I had known her in America." I did so ; and subsequently, from the notes made at this sitting, I copied out the part that concerned my friend in America and posted it to her. In her reply she told me that excepting one or two further initials given which were obscure to her, the main message dictated to me was verbally identical with the last words he had said to her before leaving for France.

Here is a case that touches on the more obscure

PAMELA GREY

side of mental phenomena, and which has no connection with Human Survival at all, but which is germane to the theme if it helps to prove to the reader some aspect of those supernormal faculties that Mr. Richet deals with, so closely, in his book. For given it be once established we possess these faculties which enable us to arrive at ideas or to be aware of facts, in some other way than by the accepted channels of bodily sense, then may we not urge that it is through such faculties—if we receive them at all—that we get communications from the dead?

It was on January 23rd, 1915. At that date *The Times* was publishing excerpts from the letters of officers at the Front. I was reading to myself before going to sleep the account of a search party, who came by night with spades and picks to lever up the débris of their ruined home, in order to find their buried money. The scene was described in full detail, the group of searchers, their anxiety, and finally their success. The passage concludes as follows:—

“They went out to a wall, and as the whole farm is nothing but a huge pile of bricks, they unearthed another box of jewellery. In a cellar place we used to meet at sometimes, they dug down and unearthed a large box of money; rolls and rolls of it, and French coin. Three times they did this, then left. You can imagine their joy at recovering their hoard of wealth! It was most exciting.”*

In the morning my son of twelve years old, who

* Anyone sufficiently interested as to desire to verify this excerpt may trace it in the issue of the *Times* of that date.

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

had been sleeping in the room with me said, "I had an exciting dream last night. It was about some people who were looking for treasure. They were in a cave of some sort, or a kind of half-open place, and they had great sticks in their hands, and torches. They were so eager to find something hidden in the ground, and do you know! they found it! and then they all went away, carrying their treasure."

It was clear what had happened. The story I had been reading had crossed the room, and got itself made into an excellent dream. In a new form perhaps, but entirely recognisable.

Here is another story of thought-transference. I had it from the woman to whom it befell.

There was no medium present, but the channel of communication between her and the spirit of her son, is so well established that a medium is not essential; often she has such testimony of his presence as well satisfies her. She was lying on a bed of sickness; her thoughts, though they turned from death, were greatly occupied in setting her house in order, that she might leave nothing to give trouble to others if she died. Then there came the conviction that her son was present; the sign was given her that comes when he is there; so she spoke to him, and the sense of exhilaration that always accompanies his presence, was over-poweringly strong. She said aloud, after welcoming him, "I keep thinking of you as when you were a little child; and I keep thinking of that three-legged horse you used to draw."

PAMELA GREY

She laughed as she lay there, completely at rest, and contented. Always she saw him drawing; and she remembered a conversation she had heard between his two brothers, years afterwards: "Do you remember how — always used to draw, and couldn't draw a bit?" And again she saw the drawing of the three-legged horse clearly. Thinking he wanted to get a book message to her (which means that a passage in some book would be indicated, as it might be in a Book Test), she remembered a selection of books was lying on the table beside her bed, two from the London Library, and three from Hatchards, which had only that morning been sent. Stretching her hand for these books, the one she lifted was "The Tale of a Manor," by Selma Lagerlöf. But which page would he want her to turn to? She thought the number 55 was given. Still the sense of high elation. By this time she was confident she would be led. She opened it at page 55, and read—how "Ingrid" had found herself in the churchyard, but she was not then to die. And there, under her chin, it is told in the story, she felt something hard, *and lo! it was the three-legged horse that Lillbror, the little boy, had placed beside her. That was very good of Lillbror* [the story continues] *Ingrid felt much inclined to cry when she thought how he had wished to comfort her.*"

* * *

There is nothing evidential in this story; then what is the point of recording it, you will say? For there are no witnesses to vouch for the book

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

mentioned having been hitherto unread by her. Yet let it stand ; for if it is not a case of fantastic self-deception, it may be a good instance in proof of the faculty of cryptesthesia.

But to the woman it concerns, it stands for an earth memory retained after death.

Professor Richet writes of mediums most admirably. For this passage alone he deserves great thanks :

“ Mediums have not hitherto,” he writes, “ been treated with justice ; they have been slandered, ridiculed, and reviled. When their faculties faded, they have been left to die in obscurity and want. It is time this inhuman treatment should cease. If by any chance a powerful physical medium or sensitive were discovered, instead of leaving such an one to the curiosity or ignorance of journalists, they should be claimed for science, instead of allowing their wonderful faculties to be prostituted by childish credulity or damaging contempt. Let us experiment with these rare, privileged and wonderful persons ; and remember, that if [in the cause of scientific investigation] they must never be trusted, that they deserve to be treated with all respect.”

Would that every medium might read these words ! and would that they might recognise anew the reason why their clients demand test conditions. Seeing in this stipulation no insult ;

but the only sensible procedure, if the truth is to be advanced, and their claims to psychic gifts substantiated. Would also that the average journalist might be reached, that they might perhaps—Oh, vain thought!—be led to study the subject before they lash into it with such blistering ink, seeing only turpitude in the medium, credulity in the sitter, and triviality in the whole. Then might they become aware this is no subject for their petty pens to be approached in levity and ignorance, but rather that it is a wide field of research opening only before those who fit themselves to approach it, and which is now, happily, claimed for investigation by leading intellects of the scientific world.

Those who see in these phenomena what appears to them proof of Human Survival, are often charged with desiring to lay the foundations for a new religion. It is not always so. Many study these things who are quite free from any religious pre-occupation, and they greatly deplore the waste of time that has been the result of this confusion of issues. Again others, beyond finding a useful light shed on the narratives in the New Testament, do not think of confounding their religion with their interest in Spiritualism. Why should they? Certainly they may deplore the Churchman's infatuation with the cemetery, just as they may regret the pre-occupation of the Physiologist, in this matter, with the brain; but none the less many Spiritualists are able to appreciate, at their true value, such books as this one by Professor Richet, and the volume

METAPSYCHICS, AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

by Oesterreich,* just as they do the work of Freiherr von Schrenck-Notzing, Sir Oliver Lodge, Docteur Geley,† and the other *savants* who are giving their valuable time to this research. It is these who are going to clear the truth, following in the pioneer steps of Sir William Crookes and F. W. H. Myers. They disentangle, by a system of definition, elimination, and classification the strange medley of facts and fancies, vagaries and verities, that obscure this fascinating and mysterious field of thought. Science, in their hands, has become "the precious visitant" that the prophetic vision of the poet, foretold it would become.‡ They penetrate our "dark foundations"; and if some of them do not discover "that all-pervading Spirit upon which our dark foundations rest," yet in contemplating these forms in the relation which they bear to Man,

"they build for us the Being that we are."

* Konstantin Oesterreich. *Occultism and Modern Science* Methuen & Co.

† Gustave Geley. *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*. Wm. Collins & Sons.

‡ Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, 4th book, line 1251.

Spirit Communications

By CAMILLE FLAMMARION

THE question under consideration is, what light does psychical research throw upon the solution of the problem of survival, a problem which human intelligence has sought to solve ever since there were thinking men on this planet of ours.

To ask if Psychological Research can be used to discover evidence of human survival is like asking if the light of day is useful for photographing a landscape. The reply is obvious. But what we want to know is, what is its practical application in the rational establishment of the doctrine?

Let us first adopt as our principle a truth which is so elementary as to be commonplace. It is that one knows only what one has learned. Observation, careful study, free and complete examination, critical discussion, can alone lead to knowledge. *Ad veritatem per scientiam.*

However, another way of knowledge has been thought of—viz. spiritual and divine revelations. All religions have been built on the acceptance

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

of these revelations. In our Western civilization we have the Bible, then the Gospel. Let us take, first of all, these two fundamental elements.

* * * * *

(1) It must be stated at once, from the religious point of view, that Moses, the great Hebrew law-giver, does not lay down the principle of the belief in immortality. He does not speak at all of another life, there is not a single word in the Pentateuch to confirm this doctrine. He only knows and holds out in accordance with the law, material rewards or punishments which are inherent in earthly life.* Bossuet was puzzled by this and tried to excuse Moses by saying that the law-giver inspired by God wished to awaken sensual and brutalized man by earthly rewards. It was necessary first, he says, to appeal to his senses, it was left to Jesus Christ to inspire man with higher thoughts and to bring to him the knowledge of the dignity, immortality and eternal happiness of the soul.†

The books of the Old Testament, after Moses, Joshua, Judges, Kings and Chronicles, Ezra, Tobias and even Job himself, are also materialistic. The Psalms of David, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are on a slightly higher level, but the Song of Songs, however one may deceive oneself, is remarkably sensual. The book of Proverbs is the first which

* See Leviticus, chapters xxvi, vii and xi, and Deuteronomy, chapter xxviii. There are enumerated only earthly good and evil. It would seem that the Jews were only attracted by material interests.

† Bossuet. *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, 2nd part., ch. xix.

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

speaks expressly and in plain terms of the immortality of the soul. (Ch. ii, v. 23 ; ch. iii, v. 1-4 ; ch. v, v. 16, and ch. xv, v. 3.) There we find noble thoughts, for instance in chapters xi and xii, the inexhaustible goodness of God, where the fierce dogma of an eternity of punishment seems rejected.*

It was the captivity of the Jews in Babylon which spiritualized their religion and showed them a future life and a resurrection, derived from Persian belief. The doctrine of immortality entered on a new phase when the end of human destiny was fixed in a future life, when the life beyond the tomb was considered as the supreme reward of devotion to the revealed religion. The Israelite knew how to die for God, and for recognized truth to go courageously and joyously to death ; he learned what he had previously hardly realised before, to be a martyr. This idea of immortality, having become popular in the nation, inspired the Israelites with that heroic courage thanks to which they dared, under the Maccabees, to sacrifice all to God and the law : to defy Antiochus Epiphanes, to reconquer their liberty ; later even to resist the Romans, the ever-victorious conquerors of the world.†

Though in the time of David the ideas of the Jews upon the survival of the soul were essentially anthropomorphic and associated with earthly imagery,

* Patrice Larroque. *Critical Examination of the Doctrines of the Christian Religion*. Paris, 1864.

† Dr. Brecher. *L'Immortalité de l'âme chez les Juifs*. Translated from the German by Isidore Cahen. Paris, 1857.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

and although the belief in a spiritual life beyond the tomb was not taught, it was believed that the dead still existed, and more or less vague impressions of posthumous manifestations grew up in popular ideas, the memory of the dead took shape in dreams and the possibility of evoking them was admitted. This evocation, however, was rigorously forbidden. In spite of this prohibition, however, we see Saul calling the spirit of Samuel in the house of the Witch of Endor. This Biblical episode deserves our attention for a moment.

Open the first book of Samuel, at chapter xxviii. We read that Saul, fearing to fight the army of the Philistines, consults God as to what he should do, but he received no message, "neither by dreams, nor by priests, nor by prophets." And this is what took place.

Saul was King and the prophet Samuel had just died. He was uneasy about the future, above all about his rival, the young David, his neighbour. He had forbidden the evocation of spirits on pain of death. But let us refer to the text :

"Then said Saul unto his servants: Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.

"Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went and two men went with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

spirit, and bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee.

“ And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land ; wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die ?

“ And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

“ Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee ? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

“ And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice : and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me ? for thou art Saul.

“ And the King said unto her, Be not afraid : for what sawest thou ? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

“ And he said unto her, What form is he of ? And she said, An old man cometh up : and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground.

“ And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up ? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed : for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams ; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

“Samuel said, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy ?

“And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me ; for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David.

“Moreover, the Lord will deliver Israel with thee into the hands of the Philistines, and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me : the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

“Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel ; and there was no strength in him ; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

“And the witch brought food before Saul and before his servants ; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.”

* * * * *

Such is the Biblical history of the evocation of Samuel. What is there of truth in the story ? We do not know exactly what happened. We could, of course, suppose all sorts of things : a political invention concocted by the author of this chapter ; exaggeration of a consultation which was kept secret ; the trickery of a witch ; a ventriloquial scene ; or the credulity of a terrified king in thinking he recognised the prophet after the witch's description. Yes ; we can suppose all that, but we must

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

also admit that the story is not merely an invented fable, and that the evocation did take place under the influence of the medium of Endor. This Biblical story, whatever its interpretation may be, forces us to concede that even in that age it was believed to be possible, and no one can deny that the Bible is a serious work. Evocations of the dead, then, were practised three thousand years ago.

Human survival was admitted by the Hebrews at least as a possibility.

Judas Maccabæus saw in a dream the dead High Priest Onias, praying with upraised hands for Israel, then giving him a golden sword and promising him victory.

We can hardly think of the Hebrews without remembering the Egyptians of the same epoch and even before. More than among the little Jewish people the annals of the great and glorious Egyptian dynasties show us a perpetual association of the cult of the dead with all the affairs of the living. Their religion taught that the future life was the continuation of this life, with the same elements and the same customs. Have there not been recently discovered (1920) in the ancient necropolis at Thebes, models of people, animals, common objects, boats, houses, buried with the mummy of a rich landowner, who made sure that he should want nothing in the other world. Everybody, moreover, knows about the sacred rites of the Egyptian religion, four thousand years ago.

They believed, let us say, that the future life

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

was a continuation of this. Was this simply an interpretation of their desires? Was our natural love of life the sole inspiration of such a belief? Or had they received, in experiments similar to those of modern spiritualism, certain more or less authentic echoes of posthumous communications? It is remarkable that more than one contemporary spiritualist sees also in the other world, dwellings and customs such as are on this earth.

Everybody (we are speaking of learned people) has read Homer and Plato, and knows the beautiful conversation of Socrates on the day of his death. Greek and Roman history has preserved for us all kinds of stories connected with the cult of the dead and the future life.

Nobody has forgotten (we speak again of the learned) the episode of the poet Simonides, told by Cicero. This is an outline of it : *

The poet Simonides found stretched on the ground the corpse of an unknown man, and he had it buried. When he was about to take a journey by sea the man whom he had buried appeared to him in a dream and warned him to go no further, adding that if he set out he would be shipwrecked and perish. Simonides retraced his steps, and in fact, all those who set out were drowned.

We know that Simonides lived in the time of Pausanias and Themistocles, five centuries before Christ.

Valerius Maximus and other writers also narrate

* *De Divinatione*, ch. xxviii.

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

this story, well known to antiquity and admitted to be true. Simonides of Ceos, a Greek lyrical poet, was born in the island of Ceos about 556 B.C., and died at Syracuse towards 467, recorded it in a little poem, and at the same time records his escape when the roof collapsed during a banquet of the family of Scopades, which was due to another apparition, attributed then to Castor and Pollux, which had saved him by calling him out of the house.

Even during the time of Christ, Roman history is full of accounts of all kinds of posthumous manifestations.

Caius Caligula, born in the year 12, and who died in 41, a murderous and criminal lunatic, possessing a physical ugliness as well as mental deformity, an infamous epileptic, a worthy successor of Tiberius, lived in Rome until the age of 29, and after a ludicrous reign of nearly four years was assassinated by two brave citizens, who then stabbed his body with thirty dagger thrusts. Suetonius tells us that his body was carried secretly to the garden, half burnt on a hastily made pyre, then buried and covered with turf. The gardeners, he added, were alarmed by apparitions, and the house where he was killed was each night alarmed by certain terrifying noises, *nullam noctem sine aliquo terrore transactam*, until at last it was destroyed by fire. The wife of Caligula, Cæsonia, had been assassinated the same day as he, by a centurion, and her daughter crushed against a wall.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

That phenomena of different kinds were constantly being manifested is quite evident. The historians are all before us and many different accounts are extant.

Everyone knows Pliny the Younger, nephew of Pliny the naturalist, whose death in the eruption of Vesuvius which destroyed Pompeii he recounts; and all the world has read his very interesting letters, in which we notice the almost classical adventure of the philosopher Othenodorus, who rented at Athens a haunted house where no one would live. He received, in fact, a visit from a spirit who led him into the courtyard, and there he found a skeleton.

These psychical facts, the study of which seems new to most people, were almost common ground in ancient literature.

But we now come to Christianity and its teaching with regard to the future life.

* * * * *

In the time of Jesus Christ, we see by the Talmud and the writings of Flavius Josephus, that a belief in immortality had been adopted by a certain group of thinkers. Born in the year 37, and living till 95, Josephus was almost a contemporary with Jesus and lived in Jerusalem itself. He speaks of all the events of his time, even unimportant details, including the prophesy of John the Baptist, but he does not say a word of Jesus Christ (the passage where he is mentioned having been interpolated by a copyist) from which we can conclude that the crucifixion

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

of the prophet was not even noted. The best means of making us acquainted with the ideas prevalent at that time among the Jews with regard to the future life, is for us to remember that Jesus belonged to the sect of the Essenes, and to read what an historian has written about these religious philosophers :—

“ This sect,” he says, “ is more perfect than that of the Pharisees or Sadducees. They are of Jewish nationality, living in very narrow bounds and looking upon voluptuous pleasures as vices from which one should flee, and chastity and victory over passion as virtues which could not be rated too highly. They reject marriage, but receive the children which were given into their charge with benevolence. They scorn riches, dividing everything between themselves equally and stripping themselves for the sake of the sect and living together like brothers ; they lived in no particular city and spread abroad, living with their brothers.

“ They are very religious towards God, praying each morning for God to make the sun to shine, taking their meals together, praying for blessing on their bread and meat before the meal, and afterwards thanking God. They were very abstemious. They help the poor, love peace, are faithful to their vows, study the writings of the ancients, principally those which they looked on as useful to body and soul, do evil to no one, but shrink from sinners.

“ They scorn the ills of the earth, triumph over pain by their constancy and prefer to die for their

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

faith rather than to live. The war with the Romans showed that their courage is unshakable. They suffered the sword and fire, and have had their limbs broken sooner than say the slightest word against their rulers, or eat meat which they were forbidden, without even in the greatest torment having shed a single tear or said the least word to try to soften the cruelty of their torturers. On the contrary, they mocked them, smiling and giving up their lives with joy, because they hope to pass from this life to a better, and they believe firmly that, if our bodies are mortal and corruptible, our souls are immortal and incorruptible, that they are of an aerial and fine substance, which are shut up in our bodies as in a prison, and they are no sooner freed from the bonds of the flesh than they rise in the air and fly joyously away.

“These same Essenes believe that souls are created immortal and that the good live in the hope of becoming happy after death and that sinners are punished by eternal torture.”*

After reading this description of the character of the Essenes, of their faith and their detachment from the good things of the world, and their martyrs, does it not seem that they were the first Christians in point of fact? According to Josephus, this sect was founded in the reign of Augustus, by a Galilean named Judas. We are all the more surprised that he says no word of Jesus in the reign of Tiberius, even nearer to him.

Flavius Josephus. *Jewish War*. Book xii, chap. 12.

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

Religious cosmography in the time of Jesus Christ and of Josephus consists in the idea of an immovable flat earth at the base of the heavens placed on it like a dome. Jewish theology allocates the lower regions, the Scheol, as the dwelling place of the shades.

The Christian doctrine teaches that Jesus descended into hell from Good Friday at 3 o'clock to Easter Sunday morning, and states that in this limbo the Redeemer discovered the Patriarchs, Adam, Noah, Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and other saints awaiting him for the resurrection. In my childhood I have often seen in pictures illustrating pious books, Jesus descending into Hades, holding in his left hand a tall and fine cross with oriflamme, and blessing with his right hand. I learnt also to say by heart certain unforgettable words: *Descendit ad inferos et resurrexit tertia die, et ascendit in cælum.* Above all these sayings used to interest me from the point of view of cosmography.

In the catechism of the Council of Trent, in the Apostles' Creed, everyone can read:

“Descendit ad inferos, tertia die resurrexit a mortibus.”

“Descended into hell, the third day rose again from the dead.”

The dogmatic explanation is “The word hell signifies here those hidden places where those souls which have not yet attained eternal bliss are imprisoned. Before the coming of Jesus Christ, they

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

rejoiced there in quiet rest, free from sorrow, comforted and sustained by the hope of their redemption. It is the saintly souls who waited for Jesus Christ in the bosom of Abraham and who were delivered when he descended into hell . . . *quæ in sinu Abrahamæ Salvatorem expectabant, Christus Dominus ad inferos descendens liberavit.*"*

In the preface of the book, composed towards the end of the Council (1563-1566) it is written that a Catholic believes as unquestionable truth all that is taught him by the Church.

The Council of Trent further shows us Jesus Christ resurrected, then mounting to heaven, body and soul, and carried to the right hand of God His Father: "*Ascendit in cælum, ex Apostoli sententia, et apud Patrem advocati officio ferugatur.* There He will be the Judge of all who believe in Him, and He will descend from there at the end of the world to judge the quick and the dead: *Inde venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos.*"

Even before these articles of faith, cosmography and astronomy must have been associated with the teaching of the Christian religion. How could believers have a reasonable basis for their beliefs without bringing them into agreement with astronomical truths? It is the same, moreover, for all religions.

If we enter into details of ecclesiastical history, we see that the oldest and best-known oriental

* Catechism of the Council of Trent. Approved by Pius V, Gregory XIII and St. Charles Borromeus. 2 vols., 8vo. We know that the Council of Trent is considered as having fixed the dogmas of the Catholic Church.

creeds, that of the Council of Nicæa, in 325, and that of the Council of Constantinople in 381, as well as the oldest Western creed, that of the first Council of Toledo, in 400, do not say a word of this descent of Christ into hell, which is mentioned in a creed attributed to a father of the Greek Church, Saint Athanasius, probably written in Latin towards the middle of the fourth century.* Do not let us forget, either, that in these remote times the structure of Christian society did not exist. The Christian era was only proposed in the sixth century by the monk Denis the Less; before his time years were reckoned by Roman epochs.

On the subject of Hades and the limbos of the time of Jesus Christ, Christian opinion had changed very little. I recall what I was taught in 1850. You can read in a work published in 1761 (*Dictionnaire théologique*): the descent of Christ into Hell is a truth of faith. This truth is insisted upon by all creeds. Its anonymous author slightly lacks learning, but that is frequent enough and of no importance.

At the time of Jesus, Hell was placed inside the earth, below the ground, in the lower regions (*infern*) and Heaven above our heads. To-day, through scientific and philosophical evolution, we do not place Paradise or Hell in any definite places, but only interpret them as states of the soul.

* * * * *

(2) We have just gathered, though very summarily,

† V. Patrice Larroque. *Doctrine de la Religion Chrétienne*. Paris, 1864. Tome II, p. 304.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

a general idea of religious opinion on the survival of the soul. Let us now see what light psychical research can throw upon the solution of the problem.

It is the experimental method applied to a subject which has remained until now in the realm of metaphysics, and which, however, can only be applied to survival and not to immortality, since it is a question of *observations*. But it can open up certain avenues.

I do not think I am making a mistake in affirming that scientifically, strictly and positively, direct observation of phenomena puts into our hands incontestable proof of this survival. I shall bring some of these before the notice of the reader.

One of the most conclusive manifestations of the dead which I know is that which was vouched for by a sincerely materialistic positivist, Dr. Caltagirone of Palermo, as having been witnessed by himself.* Listen to the personal version which he has given of it. This took place in December, 1910:—

“I was,” he writes, “the friend of Benjamin Sirchia; I was, in fact, his doctor. Sirchia, very well known in Palermo, was an old patriot and extremely popular there. He had excellent moral and civic qualities; he was like myself an unbeliever in the fullest sense of the word.

“One day, in May, 1910, it happened that we were discussing psychical phenomena. I answered his questions, assuring him that according to my own

* Flammarion. *Death and its Mystery*, III. *After Death*, p.10.

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

experience certain of these phenomena were true, but their interpretations were disputable. In the course of conversation he said to me in a bantering tone :—

“ ‘Listen, Doctor; if I die before you, as is probable, as I am old and you are still young, strong and healthy, I give you my word that I will come to bring you proof of my survival, if I still exist.’

“ Smiling and in the same playful tone, I replied, ‘Then you will come and manifest yourself by breaking something in this room, for instance, this hanging lamp, above the table.’ (We were then in my dining-room) and for the sake of politeness I added, ‘I pledge myself also if I die before you to come and give you some similar sign in your house.’

“ I must repeat that all was said rather more in a joke than seriously. We separated and he left some days afterwards for Licata, in the province of Girgenti, where he went to live. From that day I had no news of him, neither directly or indirectly. This conversation took place in May, 1910.

“ In the following December (the 1st or 2nd) towards six o'clock in the evening I was sitting at the table with my sister, the only person with whom I lived, when our attention was attracted by several little taps upon the lampshade above the chandelier hanging from the ceiling of the dining-room, and on the movable china protector above the lamp and the glass chimney. At the beginning

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

we attributed these little taps to the noise made by the heat of the flame, and I tried to adjust it. But the knocking grew louder and continued with a kind of rhythmic noise. I climbed on to a chair to carefully examine what was happening, and I concluded that the phenomenon could not be attributed to the heat of the flame, which was burning exactly as usual. For the rest, they did not seem like the noises made by extreme heat, but rather short taps of a special tone, reminding one of those which could be made by one's knuckles or by a little stick with which someone was intentionally tapping on a china object. I tried to find out the cause of these strange taps. I saw nothing. By this time dinner was finished, and the phenomenon ceased.

“The following evening, the same tinkling was repeated and went on thus for four or five days following.

“But the last evening, a loud and sharp rap broke in two the movable cap, which remained caught on the hook of the counterpoise. This was what I found on mounting on the table to look nearer to see the effect of the last tap. I even remember, and so does my sister, quite exactly, that although we had turned out the central light round which the phenomenon had taken place, and had lit another branch of lights, the taps continued with the same intensity.

“I must also declare and affirm on my word of honour that throughout these five or six days of seeing this strange thing which I could not explain,

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

I never thought of my friend, Benjamin Sirchia, and still less of the conversation of the preceding May, which I had entirely forgotten.

“ The day after the last night, when, as I had said, the china reflector was broken, about 8 o'clock in the morning I was in my study, and my sister was on the balcony looking at something, I know not what, in the road ; the servant was out, when we heard in the dining-room a *tremendous noise*, as if a violent blow from a club had struck the table.

“ My sister heard it from the balcony and I from my study, and we both ran to see what had happened.

“ It is strange, however fantastic it may appear, but I swear to the truth of it, on the table, and *as if it had been placed there by a human hand*, we found half of the movable reflector, whilst the other half remained hanging in its place.

“ Evidently such a violent blow was entirely disproportionate with what had happened. This was the last crowning phenomenon of the strange things which had been repeated for five or six days, and this last in broad daylight, and without any action of heat.

“ The fall of this half china reflector could not have been perpendicular to the table, for it would have to pass through the centre of the lampshade, and would have hit the chimney of the chandelier with its edge, which would have broken under the shock, in trying to let pass through it the half reflector of the smoke consumer. Now, these two objects were perfectly intact and the empty space

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

was not large enough for it to pass through. If it had fallen obliquely on the china lampshade, a thing as large as the half reflector in question would have broken or would have smashed the lampshade ; or, admitting that it had slipped without breaking, it would have fallen and rebounded to a point further away from the centre of the table, and not perpendicularly under the central bar of the lamp.

“Consequently, the noise was a warning of an accomplished phenomenon, the piece of the reflector placed in such a way that one had to conclude that it was not due to an accident, which otherwise would have been directly in opposition to the laws governing falling bodies.

“I ought to avow again that I had absolutely forgotten Sirchia and the compact which we had made in the preceding May.

“Two days after, I met Professor Rusci, and he said to me, ‘Do you know that poor Benjamin Sirchia is dead?’ ‘When?’ I asked anxiously. ‘In the last days of November, the 27th or 28th.’ ‘The last days of November? Strange!’ I thought. Could the phenomena which had happened in my house have had anything to do with his death? (The memory of our last conversation, with its characteristic details came back to me.) They had started on the 1st or the 2nd of December and continued for five or six days. The attempt to break something on the gas lamp in the dining-room had been discussed between us in May, and this manifestation had not ceased until the final

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

letter of the agreement had been carried out. The strangest thing of all was that when the compact had been carried out almost to the point, a terrific noise had warned us of it. The carrying of the reflector to a place where it could not have normally fallen by itself, excluding chance, completed this strange manifestation.

“That is my personal observation.

“My sister and I have chosen to keep the souvenir of this inexplicable phenomenon and the two pieces of reflector are among the most precious and dear of our possessions.”

DR. VINCENZO CALTAGIRONE.

Such is the story of this witness.

It seems to me logical to draw from this observation the resultant conclusions as we do in an experiment in chemistry or physics—(1) This friend existed for four, five, six, seven or eight days after his death. (2) He kept his conscience and his individuality. (3) He remembered his promise. (4) He was able to keep it.

Certainly, we do not know under what form we can exist after this life, what faculties our psychical monads are endowed with, and how it is possible for them to act materially, mechanically, as in this very characteristic example. But the fact remains. There is no getting away from it. Explanation is impossible in the present state of our knowledge, but although explanation is impossible this does not lessen its value. We are in the study of the

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

psychic world in the same stage as Newton was in trying to explain the system of the physical world, and we can apply here his own method of reasoning:— “Things happen,” he wrote, “as if the bodies attracted each other directly as their masses and inversely as the square of their distance apart. As to knowing why this is so, I cannot tell.” Let us say the same: “*These things happened as if the deceased had acted.*”

To criticise the logic of this argument seems to me indefensible. The old hypothesis of casual coincidence is really no longer acceptable. The most far-fetched combinations do not come to anything. We must not deny the observation, or declare that it is inexplicable.

* * * * *

This observation proves survival. It does not give us, however, any indication of the state of the survivor. I will complete it by the following, which shows that the feeling of justice continues in the spirits of the physically dead. This is taken from the same work (p. 80) and is an extract from the well-known book by Robert Dale Owen, “The Debatable Land.”

“A young lady of my acquaintance,” he writes, “young and cultured, belonging to one of the oldest families in New York, and whom I will distinguish by the initial Miss V., was staying for a fortnight with an aunt who owned a very large and old house on the River Hudson. This house, like many

80

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

European castles, had the reputation of being haunted. It was spoken of as little as possible in the family, but the room was never used, save in exceptional cases. During the stay of Miss V. so many guests arrived that there was not enough room, and the aunt asked her niece if she was brave enough to exchange her own room for the haunted one, thus running the risk of being visited by a ghost. Miss V. consented without hesitation, adding that visits from spirits would not worry her very much.

“ When night came Miss V. went to bed and slept without the least apprehension. She awoke at midnight, and saw a form of a woman of mature age who passed to and fro in the room, dressed in clothes suitable to a chambermaid, though of rather an old-fashioned style. At first she was not at all frightened, supposing that it was somebody belonging to the house, who had come in to look for something, but on reflection she remembered that she had locked the door. This thought made her tremble, and her fear grew when she saw the form approach the bed and bend towards her, trying in vain to speak. Seized with an absolute terror she hid her face under the bedclothes, and when a moment later she looked again the ghost had disappeared. Then she jumped out of bed and ran to the door. She found it locked with a key on the inside.

“ Some time afterwards, finding herself with one of her intimate friends who was interested in spiritualism, she was curious to take part in these same

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

experiences. Now, one evening there manifested itself a spirit who declared itself to be named Sarah Clarke, a name unknown to the experimentalists. This personality explained that, a long time before she had been a chambermaid in the household of Miss V.'s aunt, and that when she had visited this relation, she had in vain tried to speak to her in order to confess some thefts which she had committed from her aunt and to ask her pardon. She added that the desire to confess her fault was so strong in her that it had constrained her in spite of herself to haunt the room where she had lived during her life. She said at last that she had abstracted several household utensils, among them being a silver sugar-basin and other things which she enumerated. She concluded that she had kept an everlasting remembrance of Miss V., whom she wished to be kind enough to convey her message to her aunt, explaining her deep repentance and imploring her pardon.

“ At first opportunity Miss V. asked her aunt if by chance she had ever known someone named Sarah Clarke.

“ ‘ Certainly,’ she replied, ‘ she was a chambermaid which we had thirty or forty years ago.’

“ ‘ What kind of character had she ? ’

“ ‘ She was good, diligent and faithful.’

“ ‘ During the time when she was with you, did you never happen to miss silver table-articles ? ’

“ After a moment's thought the old lady cried :

“ ‘ Yes, I remember now, during that time a

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

silver sugar basin and several articles of that kind disappeared in a mysterious way.'

" 'Did your suspicions never fall on the chambermaid, Sarah Clarke?'

" 'Never. It is true that she had access to everything; but we knew her to be very honest and above suspicion.'

" Then Miss V. confided to her aunt the medium's message and verified it by the list of thefts committed by the self-speaking spirit of Sarah Clarke corresponding to the objects which had been stolen from her aunt's house. After this discovery, the old lady was content to say that 'if Sarah Clarke was really the culprit she forgave her with all her heart.'

" The crowning point of this episode is that from that day the manifestations ceased in the haunted room; Sarah Clarke did not appear again to anyone.

" I reaffirm that this seems to me to guarantee the truth of these facts, knowing personally the two protagonists."

In this example, besides the manifest proof of the causal connection between the fixed idea of the dead person and the phenomenon of the haunting, a proof borne out by the words of the communicating spirit, that "the wish to confess her fault was so great that she was constrained in spite of herself to haunt the room which she had occupied during her life," we must also note the very important "counter-proof" of the immediate cessation of the manifestations in the haunted

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS

room when the haunting spirit had been granted her supreme desire to obtain pardon.

These posthumous communications of which I have just given two examples, can be counted in hundreds. I do not wish to impose on the reader's attention in citing any others, for he can find them in special works in all countries and in all periods. They prove survival and logically lead one to believe in the immortality of the soul, which cannot be demonstrated by observation, this not being able to be applied to anything but what is contemporary. The conclusion is that psychical research ought to be contested by no spiritualist.

Experiences with Automatic Writing

By SIR EDWARD MARSHALL-HALL, K.C.

AS BEARING ON THE QUESTION OF SURVIVAL
AFTER DEATH

I AM asked to give my reasons why I attribute certain messages that have come to me to a spiritual, rather than to a material, source. I find this somewhat difficult, as the direct source of the information was of course material. I believe, however, that the power which inspired the individual, through whom the message came, was spiritual, that is to say, from outside this earthly sphere, and so I will endeavour to give my reasons for this belief.

First let me say that I was a most hardened sceptic before the message came through to me which converted me.

My sister, to whom I was greatly attached, as she had really brought me up since I was quite a small boy, had for many years prior to the date of which I am going to speak, been in close touch and affectionate friendship with a Miss Wingfield, who possessed in a very high degree the power

EXPERIENCES WITH AUTOMATIC WRITING

of what, for want of a better name, is called "automatic writing," by means of which she was able, so my sister told me, to convey messages from unknown sources to those who were seeking information.

Now, I want it to be clearly understood that Miss Wingfield did not claim to be able to communicate with specified individuals who had "passed over to the other side," but certain messages did come through having direct reference to such persons.

The manner of this writing was quite abnormal compared with her usual writing. The way in which it was written was different and the actual writing was entirely unlike her ordinary writing. It was written at a very fast pace, whereas she ordinarily wrote slowly, and was thin and spidery, very difficult to decipher, instead of being round and well-formed letters, as in her normal hand. As Miss Wingfield was a constant visitor at my sister's house I had many opportunities to see her write, but much to my sister's chagrin I could not believe as she believed.

The first thing that gave me "very furiously to think" was that certain messages kept coming through, all bearing the same signature, and purporting to give information as to the state of health of the persons on whose behalf the inquiries were made. My sister told me that she had asked a question as to what was the matter with a great friend who, though not actually ill, seemed very

SIR EDWARD MARSHALL-HALL

far from well, and that the reply was that the person in question had had a very bad fall out hunting and that an injury to the head would be found on examination.

On investigation being made, it was found that this information was entirely accurate, there was a mark of a somewhat serious injury at the back of the head, and another mark on the body, and, in fact, there had been a serious fall out hunting which had been concealed from everybody. Proper treatment was at once used and our friend got much better. Still I was not convinced, and though many minor communications were brought to my knowledge all pointing in the same direction, it was not until March, 1894, that something happened which compelled me to believe what I now do believe.

On Saturday, March 10th, 1894, I was at my sister's house at Hampton. Miss Wingfield was there, and was answering questions put to her by means of automatic writing. My sister asked me if I would ask a question, some form of test question, which, if answered satisfactorily, must prove to me that there was some power of communication outside the ordinary natural means. I remember well refusing, and saying in a joking way that I had often asked Miss Wingfield questions of interest to me, such as, who was likely to win some impending race, and that never did I receive a satisfactory answer. My sister seemed so pained by this irreverence on my part, and I was so deeply attached

EXPERIENCES WITH AUTOMATIC WRITING

to her, and willing to do anything to oblige her, that I consented to ask a question.

In order to make the matter quite clear to my readers, I am afraid I shall have to go into a matter of family history which is not altogether a pleasant recollection. For some time previous to this date in March, 1894, a brother of mine, much older than myself, who, after great prosperity, had fallen into great poverty, was in South Africa in receipt of an allowance, and this allowance was paid by me on behalf of the family in small sums through a kind friend, Archdeacon Gaul, who very reluctantly had accepted the somewhat disagreeable task.

To put it very shortly, my brother was an inebriate, and as is always the case, any money coming direct to his hands went in drink. To avoid this, Archdeacon Gaul had kindly procured a lodging where the unfortunate fellow could be looked after, fed and clothed and, as far as possible, deprived of the means of procuring drink. As so often happens in this class of case, the recipient of this form of assistance resented very much that the payment should be made in that way, and demanded that the money should be paid to him direct. There had been some considerable correspondence between us on this subject. I had absolutely refused to accede to his request and the tone of his letters had become more and more unpleasant. He had even gone so far as to write and threaten me with an action, unless I paid him a

SIR EDWARD MARSHALL-HALL

sum approximately £50, being, as he alleged, the arrears of an agreement which I was said to have made with him, that if he would go to South Africa I would give him £1 per week. The unpleasant details of this correspondence I had never communicated to my sister, but of course she knew that he was in South Africa, and she also knew that Archdeacon Gaul was interesting himself on his account.

On the Friday or Saturday, March 9th or 10th, I had received from South Africa a short and insulting letter from my brother, again demanding that the allowance should be paid direct and threatening all sorts of pains and penalties if I refused. This letter happened to be in my pocket, I had not answered it, and I had not mentioned it to my sister, nor made any reference to our brother. As a matter of fact I had only been in the house a few minutes. I realised that here was an opportunity of testing Miss Wingfield's powers. I took the letter out of my pocket ; it was in an envelope ; I folded it with the address and writing inside, I then placed the whole in another envelope which I sealed. I wrote nothing, there was no writing on the outside of the outer envelope and I handed the envelope so sealed to my sister, desiring her to give it to Miss Wingfield and to ask her—" where is the writer of the letter contained in that envelope ? " It will be noticed that I made no mention of sex and I am absolutely certain that my sister had no knowledge as to who was the writer of the

EXPERIENCES WITH AUTOMATIC WRITING

enclosed letter. After considerable delay, a message came through in the automatic writing, "The writer of the letter is dead." This message was passed on to me by my sister, and naturally caused me considerable surprise. In order to make a further test, I asked another question: "When and where did the writer die?" Again the answer came back, stating that "*he* had died yesterday in South Africa." Again I had mentioned no sex and given no indication of the place of origin of the letter, and the answer I remember seemed to me so ridiculous, because there was a letter from South Africa which I had just received. For a moment, by that curious lapse of memory which sometimes affects us, I did not realise that the letter, although received by me on the 9th or 10th March, had in fact been written some three weeks before. I frankly admit that I was puzzled, for the letter about which I was asking was undoubtedly from South Africa, where my brother, as to whom I was inquiring, was, for all I knew to the contrary, then alive. My sister asked me if I wished to put any more questions. I simply said, "No," and I never told her anything about the facts of that letter till some weeks later. In the evening I returned to London, and on the Monday morning I dictated a letter to my confidential clerk addressed to my brother, a letter which in fact was not sent. The following Saturday, March 17th, I received a letter of small importance from Archdeacon Gaul having reference to my brother's

SIR EDWARD MARSHALL-HALL

affairs. About a week later I received another letter from Archdeacon Gaul, it is dated March 5th, and the envelope bears the postmark of Kimberley, March 5th, 1894, and the London postmark of March 27th, on which day I received it. This letter, which I have in my hands at this moment, gives me an account of monies that had been expended for my brother, but complains very much of his conduct and practically requests that definite arrangements should be made as to remitting regularly through the Standard Bank of South Africa. So incredulous was I of the message that I had received that, though I remember having a qualm on the subject, I actually wrote a long letter to the Archdeacon on the 29th March, 1894, in which I put the position plainly before him, and promised to do as he asked. The draft of that letter in my then clerk's handwriting I have now found. On the 2nd April, 1894, I received another letter from Archdeacon Gaul, dated Kimberley, March 8th, 1894, which begins: "Dear Sir,—I little thought when I wrote last week that I should have this week the melancholy duty laid on me of informing you of the death of your brother, which occurred yesterday," and he goes on to say that my brother had been found lying dead on the early morning of that day and was going to be buried that afternoon. I need hardly say that this communication staggered me, and after considering every possible explanation of the communication, and making every allowance for my imagination,

EXPERIENCES WITH AUTOMATIC WRITING

I was convinced that the message I had received on the 10th March had come through some agency outside this material world.

Telepathy, Clairvoyance and Thought-reading are absolutely eliminated. I was ignorant of the fact, when I asked the question on the 10th March, that my brother was dead. My sister did not know that I was asking any question about my brother or even about a letter written by my brother, and certainly she did not know that he was dead. Miss Wingfield had never seen my brother, I doubt if she ever knew of his existence, and she certainly had no knowledge whatever that he was in South Africa at the time, so the fact remains that on Saturday, 10th March, 1894, I was told that my brother had died in South Africa yesterday. I quite admit that this is not strictly accurate, for in point of fact he had died on the early morning of the 8th, but that in my opinion does not weaken the conclusion I have formed, and it is quite possible that the word my sister read as "yesterday" may have been "Thursday," which was the day of the death. If I am right in saying that this phenomena cannot be explained by any natural process, then I consider that I am justified in continuing to believe, as I do believe, that it was a supernatural communication.

Since that time many occurrences have happened to me and much more information of a similar kind has been given to me from the same source. I will only quote one: A relative of mine was in great

SIR EDWARD MARSHALL-HALL

distress because her little child was ill and the local country doctor appeared unable either to cope with the illness or diagnose its apparent gravity. The child got no better, and so we got into communication with Miss Wingfield, who as a result of a message delivered through the same means said that the child must be taken at once to a specialist in a neighbouring town, some twenty odd miles away. This was done, the child was taken by motor, and a very serious intestinal condition was diagnosed. The child's life was saved, but the specialist said that a few hours' delay would have been fatal. The signature to this communication was identical with that to which I have alluded earlier, when our attention was called to the hunting injury to the friend there referred to.

As I have said before, I do not know what laws govern the transmission of these messages; just as wireless telegraphy is powerless to affect an instrument which is not tuned to the corresponding wave lengths, so I take it these messages can only be received by those who are specially privileged, and attuned to receive and understand them. One thing I do know, that they must never be used as a means of making money, and that is why I mistrust so much these alleged communications passing through professional paid mediums.

For myself, I realise I am not a fit and proper person to be trusted with these messages direct, I am only too thankful that on occasions I have been permitted to receive them through the

EXPERIENCES WITH AUTOMATIC WRITING

intervention of another. I can only speak for myself, and I have no wish even to suggest that my opinion is infallible. All I know is that I believe in my heart in the truth of what I state, and to me it has been a source of great happiness under circumstances of often great difficulty.

Some day the true explanation of these phenomena will be demonstrated, and if it is not on the lines that I have indicated, and there is some other means of accounting for it which does not involve survival after death, I am convinced that we shall learn something even more marvellous, more improbable, and certainly less acceptable to those who, like myself, find comfort in our belief.

Psychic Experiences

By SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

I AM happy to give some general idea of my psychic experiences and conclusions, but cannot in this limited space go into very lengthy detail or complete argument upon the subject. It is the more unnecessary since I have already in successive volumes outlined very clearly how I arrived at my present knowledge. Of these volumes the first and second, called respectively "The New Revelation" and "The Vital Message," show how gradual conviction was given me of the continuation of life, and how thorough and long were my studies before I was at last beaten out of my material agnostic position and forced to admit the validity of the proofs.

In the days of universal sorrow and loss, when the voice of Rachel was heard through the land, it was borne in upon me that the knowledge which had come to me thus was not for my own consolation alone, but that God has placed me in a very special position for conveying it to that world which needed it so badly.

I found in the movement many men who saw

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

the truth as clearly as I did ; but such was the clamour of the "religious," who were opposing that which is the very essence of living religion, of the "scientific," who broke the first laws of science by pronouncing upon a thing which they had not examined, and of the Press, who held up every real or imaginary rascality as being typical of a movement which they had never understood, that the true men were abashed and shrank from the public exposition of their views. It was to combat this that I began a campaign in 1916 which can only finish when all is finished.

One great help I had. My wife had always been averse from my psychic studies, deeming the subject to be uncanny and dangerous. Her own experiences soon convinced her to the contrary, for her brother, who was killed at Mons, came back to us in a very convincing way. From that instant she threw herself with all the whole-hearted energy of her generous nature into the work which lay before us.

A devoted mother, she was forced often to leave her children ; a lover of home, she was compelled to leave it for many months at a time ; distrustful of the sea, she joyfully shared my voyages. We have now travelled a good 50,000 miles upon our quest. We have spoken face to face with a quarter of a million of people. Her social qualities, her clear sanity, her ardent charity, and her gracious presence upon the platforms, all united with her private counsel and sympathy, have been such an aid to

96

me that they have turned my work into a joy. The presence of our dear children upon our journeys has also lightened them for both of us.

Apart from the two small books in which I have unfolded my argument, I have written "The Wanderings of a Spiritualist," where the reader may accompany me in my propaganda work in Australia and New Zealand. Then in my "American Adventure" he can read how we carried the message to the eastern portion of the United States, the land whence this great breaking of barriers was first effected.

Now, in a second volume of "American Adventures," I have put on record all that befell us during our long and arduous tour of 1923, when we crossed the United States and returned by Canada, lecturing in every large city on the way. I will not go into these matters, since I have already dealt with them in such detail, and I can only refer the reader who is interested to the volumes which I have named.

For the moment, the real importance of such records is not comprehended, but the day will come, and that speedily, when people will understand that this proposition for which we are now fighting is far the most important thing for two thousand years in the history of the world, and when the efforts of the pioneers will have a very real interest to all who have sufficient intelligence to follow the progress of human thought.

I am only one of many working for the cause,

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

but I hope that I may claim that I brought into it a combative and aggressive spirit which it lacked before, and which has now so forced it upon public attention that one can hardly pick up a paper without reading some comment upon it. If some of these papers are hopelessly ignorant and prejudiced, it is not a bad thing for the cause. If you have a bad case constant publicity is a misfortune, but if you have a good one its goodness will always assert itself, however much it may be misrepresented.

Many spiritualists have taken the view that since we know these comforting and wonderful things, and since the world chooses not to examine the evidence, we may be content with our own happy assurance. This seems to me an immoral view.

If God has sent a great new message of exceeding joy down to earth. then it is for us, to whom it has been clearly revealed, to pass it on at any cost of time, money and labour. It is not given to us for selfish enjoyment, but for general consolation. If the sick man turns from the physician, then it cannot be helped, but at least the healing draught should be offered.

The greater the difficulty in breaking down the wall of apathy, ignorance and materialism, the more is it a challenge to our manhood to attack and ever attack in the same bulldog spirit with which Foch faced the German lines.

I trust that the record of my previous life may show that I have within my limitations preserved

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

a sane and balanced judgment, since I have never hitherto been extreme in my views, and since what I have said has so often been endorsed by the actual course of events. But never have I said anything with the same certainty of conviction with which I now say that this new knowledge is going to sweep the earth and to revolutionise human views upon every topic save only on fundamental morality, which is a fixed thing.

All modern inventions and discoveries will sink into insignificance beside those psychic facts which will force themselves within a few years upon the universal human mind.

The subject has been obscured by the introduction of all sorts of side issues, some of interest but not vital, others quite irrelevant. There is a class of psychic researcher who loves to wander round in a circle, and to drag you with him if you are weak enough to accept such guidance. He trips continually over his own brains, and can never persuade himself that the simple and obvious explanation is also the true one. His intellect becomes a positive curse to him, for he uses it to avoid the straight road and to fashion out some strange devious path which lands him at last in a quagmire, whilst the direct and honest mind has kept firmly to the highway of knowledge.

When I meet men of this type, and then come in contact with the lowly congregations of religious spiritualists, I think always of Christ's words when He thanked God that He had revealed these things

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

to babes and withheld them from the wise and the prudent. I think also of a dictum of Baron Reichenbach: "There is a scientific incredulity which exceeds in stupidity the obtuseness of the clod-hopper."

For really the matter is so simple. A child can understand it—indeed, my children do understand it in a practical way a good deal better than the average man of learning and science. One needs no experience oneself—though experience is always helpful. It is a question of evidence.

If a man can carefully read such first hand experiences as Crookes' "Research upon Spiritualism," Crawford's two books upon physical phenomena, and the chapters in Wallace's Autobiography which deal with the subject, and if a comparison of these documents does not convince him of external intelligence, then I claim that that man's mind is not well-balanced, and his logical sense is wanting.

But once you have got so far as to realise that we are in touch with outside intelligences, then to ask their views upon religious truth is clearly the most natural thing in the world. In their answers to these questions lies the purified and inspired religion of the future, which shows how far mankind has in the course of centuries forgotten and misread the earlier message, losing touch with that communion which is the very essence of all things spiritual.

This is the work which we are doing, and woe to the man who deliberately stands in the way of it!

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

Often the judgment falls upon him in this earth. Always it does in the next. Those who have had experience of the work of rescue circles* will know the truth of what I say. There is a responsibility there which has not yet been recognised. People think they are judging the unseen, when in truth the unseen is judging them.

But what I say in no way applies to the reasonable researcher whose experiences are real stepping-stones leading to his fixed conclusion. There must to every man be this novitiate in knowledge. The matter is too serious to be taken without due intellectual conviction.

My own state of probation, starting as I did from pure theism, was a long one. I recognise now that it was far too long, and that I was greatly to blame. Still I did get there at last, and I endeavoured to atone. So it was with some great open-minded men like Myers, Hodgson, and Hyslop, who waited far too long, and yet did in the end show that they had an earnest purpose in view. I have not spoken of such, for I respect them. But I do not respect many of our opponents. They are often dishonest in their methods. In some cases, I am sorry to say, they will go the length of committing fraud upon mediums, or of sending in deliberately false reports in order to maintain their negative conclusions.

* Rescue circles are those séances where undeveloped spirits return in order to seek the advice and teaching of living men and women who are above them in spiritual knowledge. A typical rescue circle is described in my "Wanderings of a Spiritualist."—A. C. D.

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

I could give several cases of this which have come within my own knowledge. A classical case, obvious to all the world, was that of Sir David Brewster, who denied in the Press certain phenomena shown him by D. D. Home. After his death his sister published his letters, and lo! there was one to her in which he admitted in private these very same phenomena! And yet Brewster is still held in honour, and Home in many quarters is even now regarded as a charlatan! So, too, Robert Browning wrote a poem "Mr. Sludge the Medium," to celebrate how he had exposed Home, without one word of truth in it from start to finish. We have to watch our mediums, but even more we have to watch the so-called "exposers."

It must not be imagined that I entirely deny the existence of fraud. But it is far less common than is supposed, and as for its being universal, which is the theory of the conjurors and some of the researchers, such an opinion is beyond reason or argument. In an experience with mediums which has been excelled by very few living men, and which has embraced three continents, I have not encountered fraud more than three or four times.

There is conscious and unconscious fraud, and it is the existence of the latter which complicates the question so badly. Conscious fraud usually arises from a temporary failure of real psychic power, and a consequent attempt to replace it by an imitation. Unconscious fraud comes in that curious

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

half-way state which I have called the "half-trance condition," when the medium seems normal, and yet is actually hardly responsible for his actions.

At such a time the process by which his personality leaves his body seems to have set in, and his higher qualities have already passed, so that he can apparently no longer inhibit the promptings received from the suggestion of those around him, or from his own unchecked desires. Thus one will find mediums doing stupid and obvious things which expose them to the charge of cheating. Then, if the observer disregards these and waits, the true psychic phenomena of unmistakable character will follow as the medium sinks more deeply into trance.

This was, I gather, noticeable in the case of Eusapia Paladino, but I have seen it with several others. In those cases where a medium has left the cabinet, and is found wandering about among the sitters, as has happened with Mrs. Corner, with Madame d'Esperance, and with Craddock—all of them mediums who have given many proofs of their real powers—I am convinced that the very natural supposition that they are fraudulent is really quite a mistaken one.

When, on the other hand, it is found that the medium has introduced false drapery or accessories, which has sometimes occurred, we are in the presence of the most odious and blasphemous crime which a human being can commit.

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

People ask me, not unnaturally, what is it which makes me so perfectly certain that this thing is true. That I am perfectly certain is surely demonstrated by the mere fact that I have abandoned my congenial and lucrative work, left my home for long periods at a time, and subjected myself to all sorts of inconveniences and losses in order to get the facts home to the people.

To give all my reasons would be to write a book rather than an article, but I may say briefly that there is no physical sense which I possess which has not been separately assured, and that there is no conceivable method by which a spirit could show its presence which I have not on many occasions experienced. In the presence of Miss Besinnet as medium and of several witnesses I have seen my mother and my nephew, young Oscar Hornung, as plainly as ever I saw them in life—so plainly that I could almost have counted the wrinkles of the one and the freckles of the other.

In the darkness the face of my mother shone up, peaceful, happy, slightly inclined to one side, the eyes closed. My wife upon my right and the lady upon my left both saw it as clearly as I did. The lady had not known my mother in life, but she said, "How wonderfully like she is to her son," which will show how clear was the detail of the features.

In the presence of Mr. Evan Powell my son came back to me. Six persons heard his conversation

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

with me, and signed a paper afterwards to that effect. It was in his voice and concerned itself with what was unknown to the medium, who was bound and breathing deeply in his chair. If the evidence of six persons of standing and honour may not be taken, then how can any human fact be established?

My brother, General Doyle, came back with the same medium, but on another occasion. He discussed the health of his widow. She was a Danish lady, and he wanted her to use a masseur in Copenhagen. He gave the name. I made inquiries and found that such a man did exist. Whence came this knowledge? Who was it who took so close an interest in the health of this lady? If it was not her dead husband then who was it?

All the fine-drawn theories of the subconscious go to pieces before the plain statement of the intelligence: "I am a spirit. I am Innes. I am your brother."

I have clasped materialised hands.

I have held long conversations with the direct voice.

I have smelt the peculiar ozone-like smell of ectoplasm.

I have listened to prophecies which have been quickly fulfilled.

I have seen the "dead" glimmer up upon a photographic plate which no hand but mine had touched.

I have received through the hand of my own wife

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

notebooks full of information which was utterly beyond her ken.

I have seen heavy articles swimming in the air, untouched by human hand, and obeying directions given to unseen operators.

I have seen spirits walk round the room in fair light and join in the talk of the company.

I have known an untrained woman possessed by an artist spirit, and rapidly produce a picture now hanging in my drawing-room which few living painters could have bettered.

I have read books which might have come from great thinkers and scholars, and which were actually written by unlettered men who acted as the medium of the unseen intelligence, so superior to his own. I have recognised the style of a dead writer which no parodist could have copied, and which was written in his own handwriting.

I have heard singing beyond earthly power, and whistling done with no pause for the intake of breath.

I have seen objects from a distance projected into a room with closed doors and windows.

I have seen bright lights shooting round the room, or darting in long flashes from the medium's head.

If a man could see, hear and feel all this, and yet remain unconvinced of unseen intelligent forces around him, he would have good cause to doubt his own sanity. Why should he heed the chatter of irresponsible journalists, or the head shaking of

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

inexperienced men of science, when he has himself had so many proofs? They are babies in this matter, and should be sitting at his feet.

It is not, however, a question to be argued in a detached and impersonal way, as if one were talking of the Baconian theory or the existence of Atlantis. It is intimate, personal, and vital to the last degree.

A closed mind means an earthbound soul, and that in turn means future darkness and misery. If you know what is coming you can avoid it. If you do not, you run grave risk. Some Jeremiah or Savonarola is needed who will shriek this into the ears of the world.

A new conception of sin is needed. The mere carnal frailties of humanity, the weakness of the body are not to be lightly condoned, but are not the serious part of the human reckoning.

It is the fixed condition of mind, narrowness, bigotry, materialism—in a word, the sins not of the body, but of the spirit, which are the real permanent things, and condemn the individual to the lower spheres until he has learnt his lesson.

We know this from our rescue circles when these poor souls come back to bewail their errors and to learn those truths which they might have learnt here, had their minds not been closed by apathy or prejudice.

We have ample cause and material for appealing to mankind through their fears rather than through their reason if we are forced to such a course. So

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

stringent is the law that even spiritualists suffer if they have allowed the scientific side of the subject to outweigh the religious.

I know no more remarkable dialogue than that between the "dead" Hodgson and the living Hyslop through the entranced Mrs. Piper, as recorded in Funk's "Psychic Riddle." It is a lesson for all of us. If Hodgson had bitter regrets, who is safe?

The whole record of science in connection with this subject is very analogous to its record with mesmerism, and it is curious that no lesson was learned from that humiliating incident.

For seventy years the existence of this strange power was denied, its advocates were told that they were either cheats or dupes, its marvels were treated as fraudulent, its medical use was branded as quackery, and papers upon the subject were forbidden in learned societies.

Finally there came a time when every visitor to a village fair could see the force in operation, and a few surgeons in advance of their day, like Braid and Esdaile, began to use the power instead of an anæsthetic for small operations. What were the opponents to do? Braid gave them their chance, for he had named the coma produced by mesmerism hypnosis. The new word caught on, and the whole world began to agree that hypnotism was a fact, without mentioning that the mesmerism which they had denied so long was exactly the same thing.

Of course, it is not to be denied that Mesmer

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

made mistakes, just as spiritualists have made mistakes, but in each case the essentials were permanent. Some of these days perhaps history will repeat itself. Spiritualism will change its name, which is certainly a very clumsy one, and then everyone can save their face and admit its existence.

It would surprise scientists if they realised that it is on their attitude to this despised subject and not upon their own special work that their future name and fame will rest, among the bulk of the people.

At the present moment, great as is the position of Wallace or Crookes, they are quoted a hundred times on psychic subjects for once that their material work is alluded to. As to men like Brewster or Carpenter, it is not too much to say that they would be practically forgotten were it not for their unenviable hostility to spiritualism.

The reputation of great men like Huxley, Tyndall and Lord Kelvin will suffer from their obstructive attitude; while Hare, De Morgan, Zöllner and others will be immortalised by their support of the rising truth. Crawford, I will venture to predict, will stand in the very forefront of our science in the eyes of our descendants, as will another spiritualist, Drayson, the astronomer. It may be countered that these are only my individual impressions, and this of course is true, but I set them down for future reference.

It is a curious and suggestive reflection that the

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

psychic truth of 1850 stands where it did, with some important additions but no subtractions, while the science which derided it, has so changed that there is hardly one point which has been able to hold its place. The changing of species, the divisibility of the atom, the transformation of one metal into another, are but a few of the revolutionary views which have supplanted the old doctrines.

The radical mistake which science has made in investigating the subject is that it has never troubled to grasp the fact that it is not the medium who is producing the phenomena. It has always treated him as if he were a conjuror, and said, "Do this or do that," failing to understand that little or nothing comes *from* him, but all or nearly all comes *through* him. I say "nearly" all, for I believe that some simple phenomena such as a rap, can within limits be produced by the medium's own will.

It is this false view of science which has prevented sceptics from realising that a gentle and receptive state of mind on the part of sitters, and an easy natural atmosphere for the medium are absolutely essential in order to produce harmony with the outside forces.

If in the greatest of all séances, that of the upper room on the day of Pentecost an aggressive sceptic had insisted upon test conditions of his own foolish devising, where would the rushing wind and the tongues of fire have been? "All with one accord," says the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, and that

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

is the essential condition. I have sat with saintly people, and I too have felt the rushing wind, seen the flickering tongues and heard the great voice, but how could such results come where harmony did not reign?

That is the radical mistake which science has made. Men know well that even in their own coarse material work the presence of a scrap of metal may upset the whole balance of a great magnetic instalment, and yet they will not take the word of those who are in a position to speak from experience that a psychic condition may upset a psychic experiment.

But indeed when we speak of science in this connection it is a confusion of thought. The fact that a man is a great zoologist like Ray Lankester, or a great physicist like Tyndall or Faraday, does not give his opinion any weight in a subject which is outside his own speciality. There is many an unknown Smith and Jones whose twenty years of practical work have put him in a far stronger position than that of these intolerant scientists; while as to the real spiritualist leaders, men of many experiences and much reading and thought, it is they who are the real scientific experts who are in a position to teach the world. One does not lose one's judgment when one becomes a spiritualist. One is as much a researcher as ever, but one understands better what it is that one is studying and how to study it.

This controversy with bumptious and ignorant

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

people is a mere passing thing which matters nothing. The real controversy, which does matter very much, is between the Continental school who study ectoplasm and other semi-material manifestations, but who have not got the length of seeing independent spirit behind them. Richet, Schrenck-Notzing and other great investigators are still in this midway position, and Flammarion is little more advanced. Richet goes the length of admitting that he has assured himself by personal observation of the materialised form that it can walk and talk and leave moulds of its hands. So far he has gone. And yet even now he clings to the idea that these phenomena may be the externalisation of some latent powers of the human body and mind.

Such an explanation seems to me to be the desperate defence of the last trench by one of those old-time materialists, who say with Brewster: "Spirit is the last thing which we will concede," adding as their reason, "it upsets the work of fifty years." It is hard when a man has taught all his life that the brain governs spirit, to have to learn after all that it may be spirit which acts independently of the human brain. But it is their super-materialism which is the real difficulty with which we now have to contend.

And what is the end of it all?

I have no idea. How could those who first noted the electric twitching of muscles foresee the Atlantic cable or the arc lamp? Our information is that

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

some great shock is coming very shortly to the human race which will finally break down its apathy and which will be accompanied by such psychic signs that the survivors will be unable any longer to deny the truths which we preach.

The real meaning of our movement will then be seen, for it will become apparent that we have accustomed the public mind to such ideas, and provided a body of definite teaching, both scientific and religious, to which they can turn for guidance.

As to the prophecy of disaster, I admit that we have to be on our guard. Even the Christ circle was woefully deceived, and declared confidently that the world would not survive their own generation. Various creeds, too, have made vain predictions of the end of the world.

I am keenly aware of all this, and also of the difficulty in reckoning time when seen from the other side. But, making every allowance for this, the information upon the point has been so detailed, and has reached me from so many entirely independent sources, that I have been forced to take it seriously, and to think that some great watershed of human experience may be passed within a few years—the greatest, we are told, that our long-suffering race has yet encountered.

People who have not gone into the subject may well ask: "But what do you get out of it? How are you the better?" We can only answer that

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

all life has changed to us since this definite knowledge has come. No longer are we shut in by death. We are out of the valley and up on the ridge, with vast clear vistas before us.

Why should we fear a death which we know for certain is the doorway to unutterable happiness?

Why should we fear our dear ones' death if we can be so near to them afterwards?

Am I not far nearer to my son than if he were alive and serving in that Army Medical Service which would have taken him to the ends of the earth? There is never a month, often never a week, that I do not commune with him. Is it not evident that such facts as these change the whole aspect of life, and turn the grey mist of dissolution into a rosy dawn?

You may say that we have already all these assurances in the Christian revelation. It is true, and that is why we are not anti-Christians so long as Christianity is the teaching of the humble Christ and not of his arrogant representatives.

Every form of Christianity is represented in our ranks, often by clergymen of the various denominations. But there is nothing precise in the definitions of the other world as given in the holy writings. The information we have depicts a heaven of congenial work and of congenial play, with every mental and physical activity of life carried on to a higher plane—a heaven of art, of science, of intellect, of organisation, of combat with evil, of home circles, of flowers, of wide travel, of

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

sports, of the mating of souls, of complete harmony. This is what our "dead" friends describe.

On the other hand we hear from them, and sometimes directly, of the hells, which are temporary spheres of purification. We hear of the mists, the darkness, the aimless wanderings, the mental confusion, the remorse.

"Our condition is horrible," wrote one of them to me recently at a séance. These things are real and vivid and provable to us. That is why we are an enormous force for the resuscitation of true religion, and why the clergy take a heavy responsibility when they oppose us.

The final result upon scientific thought is unthinkable, save that the sources of all force would be traced rather to spiritual than to material causes.

In religion one can perhaps see a little more clearly. Theology and dogma would disappear.

People would realise that such questions as the number of persons in God, or the process of Christ's birth, have no bearing at all upon the development of man's spirit, which is the sole object of life.

All religions would be equal, for all alike produce gentle, unselfish souls who are God's elect. Christian, Jew, Buddhist and Mohammedan would shed their distinctive doctrines, follow their own high teachers on a common path of morality, and forget all that antagonism which has made religion a curse rather than a blessing to the world.

We shall be in close touch with other-world

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES

forces and knowledge will supersede that faith which has in the past planted a dozen different signposts to point in as many different directions.

Such will be the future, so far as I can dimly see it, and all this will spring from the seed which now we tend and water amid the cold blasts of a hostile world.

Ectoplasm as Associated with Survival

BY F. R. SCATCHERD
Editor of the Asiatic Review.

I.

“ If the red slayer think he slays,
And if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep and pass and turn again.

“ Far or forgot to me are near,
Shadow and substance are the same.
The vanished gods to me appear,
And one to me are shame and fame.”

Emerson.

THE term ectoplasm is made up of two Greek words, *έκτός* (outside) and *πλάσμα* (a thing formed).

Prof. Chas. Richet was the first to use the word as applied to the substance out of which materialisations are produced.

An objection urged against the term is that it is already in use in connection with zoology.

Madame Bisson prefers the word “ substance,” and invariably refers to “ *la substance* ” when describing the phenomena concerned with the manifestation of ectoplasm. She was the first investigator to place these phenomena on record in such a manner

ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL

as to compel the attention of the scientific world. In a sense the term substance seems preferable to that of ectoplasm, as being more inclusive of the ascertained facts concerning this living mode of matter in its various degrees of manifestation. American investigators have tried to popularise the terms *plasma* and *plasmology*, with regard to objective psychic phenomena, but the term ectoplasm has caught the popular fancy, and those who denied all reality to psychical phenomena talk glibly about ectoplasm and think they know all about it. In truth, up to the present very little is known about this "basis" of objective psychical phenomena. One of the oldest and most illustrious of living investigators tells us :

"We must not hide from ourselves the fact that these phenomena cause us to penetrate another world, a world unknown and as yet entirely unexplored."*

If real progress is to be made in the exploration of this unknown world, ectoplasm, and its kindred psychic problems, must be studied with dispassionate ardour and due observance of the conditions essential to secure results.

Dr. Franz Hartmann was of the opinion that all psychical phenomena were to be attributed to a nervous force producing mechanical and physical effects outside of the human body.

Even a limited experience of the phenomena in

* Camille Flammarion. *Les Forces Inconnues*.

F. R. SCATCHERD

question would prevent the acceptance of this hypothesis rejected by Flammarion, Mme. Bisson and other investigators, including Dr. Geley.

All theories of the subconscious are seen to be equally inadequate to explain the facts as observed with Eva C. and other mediums.

“A portion of force, intelligence and matter can be exteriorised from the organism, act, perceive, organise and think outside of the muscles, organs, senses and brain. It is none other than the lofty subconscious portion of the Being. It constitutes truly a subconscious exteriorisable being, co-existing in the ego with the normal conscious being.”*

The word *being* or *être*, is evidently used as our word self, and should be thus translated.

Dr. Geley, however, has himself modified this view so as to cover the whole field of phenomena. In a later work† he expresses himself thus:—

“During the whole time that the materialisation lasts it is in obvious physiological and psychological relation with the medium . . . every impression received by the ectoplasm reacts on the medium and *vice versa*; the extreme reflex sensitiveness of the forms is closely connected with that of the medium. Everything goes to prove that the ectoplasm is in a word the medium herself, partially exteriorised. I am speaking of

* Dr. Geley. *L'Être Subconscient*.

† *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*.

ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL

course only from the physiological point of view and not at present from the purely psychological side of the matter " (page 63).

All experiences in materialisation phenomena tend to demonstrate the existence of one primordial substance, of which living forms are but representations. Dr. Geley, a consistent and clear thinker, goes on to complete his views of the problem thus :—

(a) The essential unity of organic substance.

(b) The evidence of a superior dynamism implied by the necessity of admitting a superior, organising, centralising and directing dynamism.

(c) The conditioning of the dynamism by the idea.

The third factor is the most important of the three, maintains Dr. Geley. It implies the complete reversal of materialistic philosophy, for it means "the modelling of living matter by an idea"—ideoplasticity, and when to this is added the fact of teleplasticity, denoting the same phenomenon of ideoplasticity taking place at a distance from the dematerialised organism, the ground of ascertained facts with regard to materialisation he holds is fully covered.

Baron von Schrenck-Notzing, whom I have known longer than almost any of the other eminent psychical researchers, was one of the few who did not accuse me of inventing excuses for fraudulent mediums, when I brought forward this fact of

ideoplasticity as an explanation of what seemed fraud on the part of a medium. I had discovered independently this fact of ideoplasticity (calling it the image-forming faculty) as possessed by myself and other sensitives when dealing with certain phases of ectoplasmic phenomena, especially that of psychic photography.

In his foreword to Mme. Bisson's work on materialisations published in the same year as his own volume, Baron von Schrenk-Notzing singles out this ideoplasticity as the most mysterious of all the enigmas associated with the marvellous living substance known as ectoplasm.

II

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH REGARD TO ECTOPLASM.

Emotion—sympathy—releases, if it does not actually generate, ectoplasm. The first time I ever saw ectoplasmic vapour was when I was sitting by the fireside, in intimate conversation with an elderly governess who was deeply attached to me. A white mist slowly stole up between us heavy and thick against her dark clothing. I at first thought she had set herself on fire, but it was not so, and the "smoke" continued to curl up between us until she broke "conditions" by leaving her chair. In other words, the ectoplasm, out of which a form might have appeared, was dispersed.

ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL

Years later, at a materialising séance, the phenomena had died away when two ill-formed female materialisations shot up in front of me in violent dispute.

“ I knew her mother before she was born. I am Tempy. You go away.”

“ I was Miss Scatcherd’s maid. I am Louisa of Ebenezer Chapel. I want some of the chocolate she has in her pocket.”

Our laughter greatly shocked a French visitor. Then the cultured deep voice of a spirit who called himself Charles Darwin, and frequently stood behind my chair, with his hand on my shoulder during the whole time of the séance, was heard by all present :

“ Tell her that we allowed those humble spirits to manifest because you were all too solemn and tense. Tell her that laughter releases the etheric force at the nerve centres and gives us the material wherewith we can manifest.”

Countess P.W., the visitor in question, understood English imperfectly. “ Tempy ” was the name of a confidential maid with whom my mother had parted before her marriage. I remembered a nurse, Louisa, and used to think her name rhymed with that of her chapel, which I preferred to our church. Also I had chocolate in my pocket, for the only time I believe during that series of séances.

I saw ectoplasm in solid form for the first time when looking for rooms in the neighbourhood of Russell Square. My friend, many years older than myself, was tired. She wore a black velvet cloak

F. R. SCATCHERD

and was sitting on a high chair so that her mantle hung in long folds to the ground, while the light from the large windows fell full on her face. Suddenly I observed, on her left side, just above the waist, a patch of cloudy white substance, becoming bigger and denser as I watched its uncanny growth. Meanwhile I was discussing terms with the landlady, a frail little woman, when a look of terror came into her eyes. She, too, was staring transfixed at the globular mass of white substance on my companion's black mantle. For out of it looked a living face, normal in size—a man's face with rolling eyes and a leering grin that made one's blood run cold. When I mentally ordered him away he grinned defiance. Fearing to startle my friend, I took the landlady aside and asked what was the matter. She burst into tears.

"Oh, miss! did you not see him? He was my first. He's come like this several times, and has never forgiven me for marrying again."

"What do you mean?" I asked again, very severely.

"Oh!" she wailed. "You must have seen his wicked face glaring at us from your friend's cloak, and now you will not take the rooms!"

I saw ectoplasm in the form so much discussed to-day for the third time on the occasion of a hurried summons to Paris in December, 1906, when, through the kindness of Mme. X, I spent some time as her fellow-guest with the celebrated medium, Eva C., then known as Mlle. Marthe B.

At the circle experimenting with Marthe the phenomena were fitful. The medium's control reiterated one sentence, "Il nous faut la dame qui rit." ("We must have the laughing lady.") No one could guess what was meant. One day the control lost patience.

("Bêtes que vous-êtes!") "Foolish ones that you are! You call her Felitzia; we call her the laughing lady."

"There is a member of the Society for Psychical Research in London, a Miss Scatcherd, whose name is Felicia," said one of the circle.

"That is the person we need," replied the control, so I was telegraphed for, and was given the above statement as to the reason why.

One afternoon we had sat three hours without results. The sitters had left. After supper, Marthe insisted on giving me a séance for myself. I objected, but the hostess said she must not be opposed. Marthe was soon in a state of deep cataleptic trance, her head thrown backwards so that, even if normal she could have seen nothing in front of her. The curtains of the cabinet—merely a corner of the room—were not closed, and the light was only slightly lowered. Madame X, her daughter and myself, sat in front of the cabinet, talking in low tones. Suddenly I saw a large mass of luminous substance, about 18 inches away from the medium's chair, on the floor to her left. *I thought:*

"How was that managed? Is it attached to her in any way?"

"There is no attachment" ("Il n'y à pas de

F. R. SCATCHERD

lien ") said the control. " You may pass between us." Which I did, completely encircling the medium.

I imagined my sight must be deceiving me as to the whiteness, but a new lace handkerchief looked grey when held beside the ectoplasm.

I was in a position to be able to touch the ectoplasm unperceived by the others or the medium. When I approached my hand within a few inches of the substance, the medium's body was contorted with spasms and the control cried out :

" Do not touch me. That is my very life " (" Ne me touchez-pas. C'est mon vie à moi.")

Conscience-stricken, I apologised. Later on I was permitted to touch the ectoplasm, to test it in other ways and even to weigh it.

My observations, then recorded, are confirmed in every particular by the experiments of later investigators of the same medium. The air in the neighbourhood of the ectoplasm was slightly colder than that of the rest of the room, and its resistance varied. On that occasion it felt like passing one's hand through the beaten white of an egg, and its weight was very slight in proportion to its volume.

" How I should like to weigh it," I said to the hostess one evening. " But that is impossible as we cannot touch it without hurting the medium."

With an amused smile Mme. X sent her daughter to fetch the scales from the kitchen. Meanwhile the uncanny substance was squirming and changing form in a reptilian sort of fashion. I felt it understood what was going on. But I had the shock of

ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL

my life when it wriggled itself off the ground, and like a huge slug, stood on end and mounted into the tray of the scales, which rested on a stand about ten inches from the floor. There it remained until we had recorded its weight. It then wriggled and squirmed backwards from the scales on to the ground, reassumed its former shapelessness, and while we were watching *it was gone*. It did not melt. It disappeared.

It is difficult to credit such things, but others have recorded similar phenomena. We must remember, as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* tells us, that ectoplasm

“ is a new order of matter, and it is clearly derived from the subject herself, absorbing into her system once more at the end of the experiment . . . it is soft and glutinous to the touch, but varies in form and even in colour. Its production causes pains and groans from the subject, and any violence towards it would appear also to affect her. . . . The most marked property of this ectoplasm . . . is that it sets or curdles into the shapes of human members—of fingers, of hands, of faces . . . which develop until they are indistinguishable from those of living beings.”

* Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. *The Vital Message*.

III

ECTOPLASM AS USED TO DEMONSTRATE SURVIVAL.

It was in the late Sir William Crookes's little dark room, at 7, Kensington Park Gardens, that I finally verified certain surmises as to the use made of ectoplasm as a means of demonstrating survival.

No reference has been made to these latest experiments by Mr. Fournier d'Albe, in his "Life of Sir William Crookes," except on one page and that reference is couched in vague and misleading terms.*

There were present Mrs. Z, the medium, Sir William and myself. Sir William having injured his leg by a fall, was in need of skilled attention. Otherwise his health was perfect. The nurse objected to his psychic activities, and together with others like-minded, made things difficult.

Once Sir William had arranged himself in his long chair, in the dark room, there was just space for two other persons to be seated, and no room for moving about without detection. One afternoon, after the lights were out and the phenomena had started, some one opened the door. A shaft of light fell full on the medium, who gave a gasp of agony, while I called out: "Shut the door. You are spoiling our experiment."

But the door was not properly re-closed. By

**Life of Sir William Crookes*. p. 405.

ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL

means of the crack of light I saw a bulky mass pass between Sir William and myself, partially obscuring the light, in places shutting it out completely. For a moment I thought the medium had left her chair, and stretching out my left hand, struck the knee of the entranced sensitive rigid in her place. At the same time a voice said :

“ You have hurt my medium. You have been told you should never touch her when we are working. She was already suffering on account of the light. No, do not close the séance. We will shield her from the light, and will do our best to carry on.”

Sir William was literally enveloped in the ectoplasmic mist which was apparently weightless, as he felt nothing, though it seemed to be resting on his injured leg. But the substance was so arranged as to cut off the light where it struck the medium, while leaving enough for me to see, to some extent, what was occurring.

Meanwhile a lively conversation was in progress between Sir William and the spirit of his late wife, who seemed to be most dexterous in managing the ectoplasmic column and manipulating it according to the slightest expressed wish of the sitters.

I did not see the formation of the hand that caressed her husband's forehead and greeted myself with a touch, but I heard Lady Crookes say, in answer to Sir William's regret that he could not see her (he had his back to the door), “ I am here

F. R. SCATCHERD

beside you, Willie dear. Listen while I carry the musical box round the room."

But I did perceive the upper end of the ectoplasmic column form itself into a rough gripping apparatus and heard it groping for the musical box at our feet.

By means of the bar of light I saw the musical box as it was whirled past the door and round and round Sir William's head.

The box had been purchased for the purpose, a day or two earlier, at Gamage's, and was wound up and stopped at our request, or at that of the unseen intelligences in a way impossible to ourselves, on account of the nature of its mechanism. It was passed gently up and down his injured leg and most of the time two or more voices were speaking with Sir William and myself. But I concentrated on observing as far as possible the behaviour of the ectoplasm, and did not make my usual record of the conversations.

I had known Lady Crookes during her lifetime, and was now witness of her attempts to make use of ectoplasm as a means of demonstrating her survival, by actions and effects that needed only the register of the normal five senses for their perception.

The medium was ill for some time as a result of the shock caused by the sudden letting in of the light. Also where I had placed my hand on her knee in order to ascertain whether she had left her chair, was a huge dark bruise which only gradually

ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL

disappeared during the next few days, and was at first painful to the touch.

Nine months of concentrated study has taught Mr. Dennis Bradley what many investigators of fifty years' standing still ignore :—

“ It is a scientifically established fact that ectoplasm comes from a medium's body, and that the effect of light, on some mediums, is to cram this ectoplasm back into the body with a terrific shock.”*

Ectoplasm was at first understood to indicate the substance exuding from a medium in visible form, perceptible to all the sitters and capable of being photographed. It is now applied to any mode of mediumistic emanation which renders possible the various forms of physical phenomena (including psychic photography) from simple raps to partial or complete materialisations, the latter in every way resembling a normal human being.

Prof. Chas. Richet, when describing the Bien Boa materialisation,† stated that it possessed all the attributes of life, walking, speaking and breathing, just like a human creature—having a body that manifested both resistance and muscular strength.

During the series of materialising séances before referred to, it was interesting to follow the progress of the intelligences in the art of materialisation. In one of his first attempts my special friend,

* H. Dennis Bradley. *Towards the Stars*, page 168.

† *Annals of Psychic Science*, April 1906.

F. R. SCATCHERD

claiming to be Charles Darwin, fell to pieces in front of me. I was covered with an unpleasant cobweb-like substance, and was upset for several days as a result of the shock. One of his latest feats was a demonstration of the muscular strength referred to by Prof. Richet. I had refused to obey his orders to leave the circle, when he lifted me from my chair and deposited me on the couch at the other side of the room.

So perfect often were these full-form materialisations such as Crookes's Katie King and Richet's Bien Boa, that, as Prof. Richet himself has pointed out, the choice lies between two hypotheses, and two only: that of a phantom possessing all the attributes of life, or of a living person simulating a phantom.*

The average outsider usually adopts the second hypothesis.

Commenting further on the subject, Prof. Richet said that as a physiologist he could not make up his mind to admit the fact of materialisation. He would only assert that it was a profound mystery that must change our ideas of nature and of life from top to bottom. This was written in 1906. I met him in the early part of December of that year when we discussed the question of survival. I wonder whether he remembers saying:

"Oh, mademoiselle! I sometimes almost wish I could do violence to my conscience as a physiologist and accept the hypothesis of human survival. You ask me why I feel like that? Because I might then

* *Annals of Psychic Science*, 1906.

ECTOPLASM AS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVIVAL

entertain the hope, even if it were only for once, of shaking hands with Socrates."

Prof. Richet has now admitted the facts of materialisation, though he still rejects the only adequate, explanatory hypothesis, that of survival.

Madame Bisson met Eva C. in 1910, and her observations were published in 1914, as were those of her fellow-observer, von Schrenck-Notzing. Their careful records confirm and illustrate, in every essential detail my own sporadic experiences of 1906, and onwards. Until these studies were published, my statements were received with amused contempt or crude denunciations, and I utterly failed to interest any member of the S.P.R. except Sir W. Crookes, who had his time fully taken up with other matters.

Dr. Geley's conference at the College de France, on "So-called Supernormal Physiology"* further elucidated and confirmed the observations of Bisson and von Schrenck, whose names, together with those of Richet and Geley, will for ever be associated with those discoveries which are making possible a new biology and a new physiology.

Ectoplasm as such does not demonstrate survival. But when, with more than the rapidity of thought, it builds up and breaks down, or dematerialises *at the word of command*, producing by means of materialised hands and feet, seamless wax gloves, from which no living hand or foot could be withdrawn without

* Gustav Geley. *La Physiologie dite Supernormale. Bulletin de l'Institut Psychologique*, 1918 (January, June).

F. R. SCATCHERD

damaging the glove, it demonstrates intelligence other than that of the experimenters.

When it reproduces by the agency of a temporary materialisation, or of a supernormal photograph, a death-wound, unknown to any of those present, but afterwards verified, survival as associated with ectoplasm is as clearly proved as any fact can be in this wonderful but relatively imperfect world, for here we have an instance of memory. Memory pre-supposes mind: both imply thought and all three demand conscious life, or rather self-conscious existence, as an essential pre-requisite for any similar manifestations whatsoever.

The Philosophy of Survival

By DAVID GOW

Editor of "Light."

WHEN one has spent many years in the study of investigation of a great subject from all points of view, examining it both in the grain and the bulk, it is perhaps natural that finding it essentially true and its principles sound, the attitude taken up by such a student should be large and inclusive. It is certainly so in my own case.

Hence in the statement which I am desired to make I propose to deal only with the fundamentals of the matter, and in a manner that shall be more in the nature of a talk than of a thesis.

The smaller aspects of the subject abound with controversial matter—partly by reason of the fact that it is customary to isolate each from its context, a convenient method for the disputants as giving definition to the questions considered, but usually unprofitable, as I have many times observed.

To give an instance by the way, the question, say, of a table rising in the air apparently without human agency, a phenomenon which in earlier days was not unfamiliar to me. The deductions drawn

DAVID GOW

from this were various, and sometimes droll. To one it proved a life after death, to another a force unknown to science, to a third it represented an inexplicable conjuring trick; to yet another an illusion or hallucination of the senses. Even if the table manifested the influence of unseen intelligence and the fact were indisputable, it would be claimed that this was due to some composite and automatic action of the minds concerned in the experiment, and arguments would proceed *ad infinitum* with apparently no possibility of ever reaching a settled conclusion. For the fact of the levitated table was regarded apart from a vast variety of phenomena of all kinds occurring in all ages, of grades low and high—both mental and physical—all more or less inter-related and only really intelligible when taken in the aggregate as linked and complementary with and to each other.

I have taken the instance of the levitated table to put the matter on an elementary ground, but the illustration will serve *mutatis mutandis* in almost every case of phenomenal manifestation.

It is a long way from the ape to the angel, and a reasoned and comprehensive view of life can only be gained by taking in each and seeing the relationship as it extends along all the intermediate gradations. The ape in the nature of things does not recognise the angel, but the angel will include the humble simian even fraternally in the scheme of life.

So in this subject of Spiritualism one grows to perceive that in what has been called its "morbid

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SURVIVAL

domesticities," complicated, as they frequently are, with much of delusion and much that is grotesque, there is the germ of things to be evolved to splendid shapes—the great sanctities, the high spiritual achievements. It is a mistake to isolate, as a subject of contemplation, either the ape or the angel, if a well-rounded and coherent philosophy of life is to be achieved. It may shock the æsthetic sense to mention colloidal slime in the same breath with celestial effulgences or even the light that never was on sea or land, but the links are always there.

When we hear a certain class of self-styled mystics talking with high disdain of earth and the common things of existence we may reflect on the attitude of the really great spirits of humanity, St. Francis d'Assisi and his like, who despised nothing, but saw everywhere the Divine Presence. The earth was certainly not the throne of the Most High, but it was conceivably His footstool—it was His and He made it no less than the highest of His heavens.

It is in this mood that I have long been led to contemplate the subject of Spiritualism with its scientific auxiliary—more respectably titled—Psychical Research. As a subject of inquiry it is regarded from an almost infinite number of stand-points, nearly always partial and departmental—a newly discovered force in nature, a drawing-room pastime, a personal hobby, a means of consolation for the bereaved seeking comfort and counsel from departed friends, or it may be a vocation for those possessed of psychic gifts. It is needless to canvass

DAVID GOW

the whole list of motives or points of view. However we may regard them severally, they can be easily unified. They represent in effect a reaction from the old materialism of the past century or two—a mighty evolutionary tide carrying with it not only great and splendid argosies but a vast amount of miscellaneous flotsam—driftwood and detritus.

What, it may be asked, is the central deposit of truth in this continually enlarging movement? It may seem a large claim, but I advance it with the confidence born of many years' strict and searching examination and reflection, seeking always to be impartial, and ever willing that the claim made should be destroyed if it is not truly based.

I claim, then, that the central truth which emerges is the spiritual nature of Man and the Universe, involving as a corollary the perpetuation of life and consciousness beyond the grave, and the possibility—growing with the advance of evolution in the physical world—of communication between the two states of existence, terrestrial and extra-terrestrial.

That is to put it very briefly. But such a claim if it be truly based must needs affect every circumstance of existence.

It may be objected that these claims were already maintained by Religion—Christianity in especial. Truly, but never in any scientific sense. They were matters of faith and doctrine—subjects of revelation—not to be scrutinised or tested by

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SURVIVAL

intellectual and physical methods such as are now being employed by Psychological Research in this and other countries.

Some years ago it fell to me—a temerarious task—to suggest to a body of prelates assembled to consider the existence (I think they regarded it as a menace) of Spiritualism, that death was a *biological* and not a *theological* event in human life. I was relieved to observe that the proposition did not meet with any marked dissent. True, the same proposition might have been offered by a materialist. It would have been his own view. But the implication that beyond somatic death there was a continuance of personal life in the *natural* order carried a significance of its own. It suggested the gradual solution in the advanced thought of the time, of the old arbitrary boundaries and lines of demarcation—the coming of a time when it would no longer be said, *This is Natural—that is Miraculous*: when, in short, it would be seen that the natural world is truly miraculous and the miraculous no less natural. There may be and are degrees in the divinity of the Universe, but in the broad sense death can be no more sacred than birth and no less a suitable subject for the investigation of the human mind. And if, as in the present instance, it is found that death is part of an evolutionary process carried above and beyond the physical order, the inquiry is clearly justified.

I was asked by one of the bishops on the occasion to which I have referred whether the post-mortem

experiences of the spirit, as recorded in the way of spirit communications, so called, corroborated the Christian view. To this I could only reply that experiences necessarily differed. Some communicators reported wondrous glimpses of the majesty and presence of the great Founder of the Christian Faith. These appeared to be sporadic and fragmentary. It seemed no more than natural that multitudes should themselves know nothing of such an experience—it was so clearly a matter of spiritual fitness, of growth in holiness. It was to me certainly a matter very much outside of purely theological and ecclesiastical considerations. The man “went on,” not as a matter of any special belief or any miraculous fiat, but simply in the process of natural law.

I have long ceased to consider the question of *Immortality* in such an association. All that is logically proved, whether by psychic science or psychic philosophy, is human survival of physical death, the perpetuation of personality, the continuation of consciousness beyond physical dissolution. Immortality is a term very loosely used. I am tired of hearing enthusiastic claims that “Spiritualism proves immortality.” It depends upon what is meant by “proves” and what is meant by “immortality.” To the old parson in the story eternity was a question of millions and millions of years and then millions and millions of years again, endlessly repeated. I fancy the idea is very prevalent—it is expressed in the

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SURVIVAL

Irishism, "endless time." But it must be apparent to those who think intelligently on the subject that immortality is not a question of time at all. It relates to existence outside of time and space. It belongs to the spiritual order and to those things which are most true because they can never be proved. The subject, then, passes out of the arena of logical discussion; although I would hazard the reflection that if there is a principle in man which survives the shock of physical dissolution, it may reasonably be expected that it will survive all other ordeals which may await it in the hereafter. I have heard Spiritualists discuss speculatively the possibility of the Divine Spark being quenched by persistence in evil living. The argument ran thus on one occasion: If man is immortal then he can continue in evil courses beyond the grave and defy his Maker to extinguish him! But that argument appeared to me to be double-edged. For I reflected that in a long association and much conversation with those on the other side I had discovered the existence of spirits whose lives on earth had been such that they would welcome nothing so much as utter annihilation—the flames of a materialistic hell-fire are but a pale representation of the pangs of an outraged conscience. It would seem then that if extinction were possible such hapless spirits might impiously defy their Creator to prolong their existence as immortal beings. No, I could not see the force of the argument for extinction—especially as it implied the extinction of a *Divine* spark.

To turn to another aspect of the question, I am little concerned with that school of scientific psychical researchers numerous represented amongst Continental savants who, while admitting with Professor Richet the reality of psychical phenomena, will by no means concede the claim that it demonstrates the survival of death. They will accept Spiritualism, but without "the spirits." I am little concerned, I say, because it is abundantly clear that the main principle of Spiritualism is not a matter of pure logic or scientific reasoning. It is invariably truncated and impoverished by the exclusion of the philosophical and especially of the religious element. The utmost that the intellectual process can achieve in the matter is the recognition that something of man survives death in a kind of mechanical or galvanic fashion. The sanctities, the splendours, the poetry and the vision of life are beyond its ambit. It can take no account of them, any more than it does in this life where a man is a creature (with no apparent Creator) of body and brain, a temporary agglutination of troubled molecules—of painful dust—classified for scientific convenience as *homo sapiens*. *Homo sapiens* it seems may go on living somewhere in some vague fashion—the errant shadow of what he was. That, as I see it, is the meaning of human survival for the purely scientific mind. How could it be otherwise?

One need not quarrel with such a view. It forms some kind of a substratum for that dim hope

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SURVIVAL

which is now beginning to form in the minds of the million—that death after all is *not* the end. It is a way of approach for many. The scientists are beginning to admit that there is a reality *behind* Spiritualistic claims. It arouses a wistful thought in the minds of the unlearned who have not lost their ideals: If this is so, may it not be that there is a life beyond? Certainly there are those in the Church who say that the reality is of a diabolical character. But even that is a relief to many despairing thinkers; as a sad Rationalist once put it, “I would like to know that there is something beyond this life—even if it is a region of devils!”

Spiritualism on its phenomenal side—“with its gymnastics of tables and tambourines”—(rather a grotesque travesty of the facts) has had a sorely needed part to play in the world of to-day. The world sought a sign—it wanted proof. Its intuitions, blunted and sometimes altogether deadened under two generations of materialistic science, soulless industrialism and a mechanistic philosophy, there was no possibility of approach by those channels. Civilised humanity was on the whole spiritually deaf as well as blind.

This was nowhere so apparent as in the attitude towards death. To Theology it was a problem to be solved (perhaps) by erudite speculation, a scrutiny of the opinions of the past and a comparison of texts. Science regarded the question with supercilious indifference. A life after death was antecedently improbable. The theory of such a life was

DAVID GOW

in contradiction to all experience and altogether anomalous. If it were a fact then it would be miraculous and there were no miracles!

It was no wonder that under such tutelage ordinary minds became sceptical, until amongst the baser sort it became a by-word, "Have a good time while you live for you'll be dead a long while."

It is a strange satire upon civilisation and learning that the primitive races did not see things in this way at all, but had a far clearer vision of the true state of the case.

Let us take a single instance, the Scottish Gael. Even so recently as the middle of the eighteenth century it was not customary to use the Gaelic word for death when it was the death of a man. The beast died—but as to the dead man, he had "changed" or "gone on a journey."

These races lived near to Nature, who taught them better than could the sages and divines of the modern world.

Let us review the position in a broad way, even if it involves for the sceptic a little begging of the question.

Here is a humanity hemmed in with a degree of material grossness which increases instead of diminishing with the advance of knowledge. The outlook is dark for any spiritual progress. Yet humanity is compassed about with an unseen world and "millions of spiritual creatures" of all grades. It is desired by the higher and wiser minds of the spiritual host to awaken men to a knowledge of

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SURVIVAL

their true nature and destiny. A plan is concerted by which the interior mind of humanity shall be reached through the senses—by physical contacts and physical demonstrations, by those sources of communication to which they are most accustomed. The scheme was perfected and launched—it came in the shape of Modern Spiritualism, with a whole train of strange consequences, misdirections, perversions and misunderstandings of all kinds. That was only to be expected in the circumstances. But through it all there persisted the central purpose, only to be seen plainly by the few who can take comprehensive views and detach the essential principle from its accretion of facts, some of them pointing one way and some another, and all more or less arresting, except to the most obstinate sceptic; and he, commencing with a general denial of everything, was forced from stage to stage of concession until to-day he is frequently in the position of accepting Telepathy as an explanation of psychic phenomena, and thereby unconsciously cutting the whole ground from under his own feet, for telepathy means the transmission and feeling from mind to mind without physical agency, so that the very admission of its existence involves the idea of a world beyond the physical order.

It is, indeed, a "flowing point," the idea behind Spiritualism. It has all the dynamic energy of truth. It makes its way against all obstruction, and its opponents are continually forced to give ground, yielding place stage by stage, surrendering

one position that they may conserve another, disguising their retreat by an adroit change of terms. Telepathy, in effect, concedes the whole question, as was well shown by an article from the pen of the Right Hon. Gerald Balfour in the *Hibbert Journal* some years ago. We saw much the same thing on a smaller scale in the case of Mesmerism, which, classed at first as an imposture, became in the end a recognised therapeutic agency adopted by medical science under the name of Hypnotism. Careful and impartial investigation might have settled the question at the first onset ; but scientists are only human. Prejudice, tradition, conservatism and intellectual pride were, as always, the main barriers, but facts—those “ chieils that winna ding ”—are stronger than all the forces that can ever be arrayed against them. Spiritualism embodies a great truth which presents itself in a thousand facets—some of them seeming to be in the nature of a distorting mirror. They must be united in order that a clear picture may be seen.

Taking it “ by and large,” as an American would say, it is a cosmic movement, an evolutionary impulse, resisting all efforts to make it run into any single mould. In its modern expression it is doubtless in the nature of a reaction against the materialism of the past. But even that materialism doubtless had its purpose in evolution. It had a solidifying effect—it gave a definite and concrete form to the science of the physical order and provided foundations for the spiritual superstructure.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SURVIVAL

The framework of a new social order is being erected, and this would be incomplete—nay impossible—without the recognition of a spiritual realm to give meaning and consistency to human life. A sense of eternity has to be gained, and for the most it cannot come by intuitive and transcendental processes. It must begin for these with some lowly, perhaps grotesque fact; with phenomenal manifestations which prove in the end to have been the “pot-hooks and hangers” of the spiritual alphabet.

We begin with spooks and poltergeists; we proceed to “intelligent entities”; we move on to spirit friends (and sometimes unfriends). Later there are hints of angelic faces, the celestial guides and ministers of poor humanity—members of the heavenly hierarchy. It needs religion—spiritual vision—to integrate the matter truly. Science, I doubt not, would progress little beyond an order of alleged human intelligence, making a wry face even over that. Philosophy would see the human element with greater fulness. But Religion would give the full contours, and see in the matter yet another example of that Divine Beneficence which gives men revelations fitted for their growth, and never leaves itself in any age without a witness.

The poets have had a full measure of understanding of this all through the ages. A knowledge of the literature and philosophy of Spiritualism throws a wondrous light on Dante, for example, revealing how truly he saw, within his limitations,

146

the conditions of the superphysical order. And no student of Tennyson could fail to see how clear were *his* perceptions of the spiritual, and its relations with the life here and now.

From whatever viewpoint Spiritualism is regarded, it becomes apparent to the earnest student that it contains within it the seeds of a coming synthesis of Religion and Science—partly by the processes of natural evolution and partly by that conscious co-operation of human purposes with the Divine Purpose, which is at the root of all religion—that blending of the human will with the Divine will which makes not only for Progress, but for Harmony and perfect freedom.

Religion and Survival

By the REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS

Author of "Some New Evidence for Human Survival."

IN Scripture we read of residents in the world invisible being seen and heard on earth. Although exceptional this happens still; it happens more frequently than is generally supposed. The number of well authenticated instances is immense. It has been the experience of people personally known to me, people who were unversed in Psychological Science and who knew nothing of Spiritualism. Without expectation or conscious co-operation they suddenly found themselves in communication with near relations who had died; good evidence was given in each case, and it was not imagination.

The spontaneity of these communications indicates that they are legitimate; it is not we who have sought to lift the veil that hides our friends; it has been lifted for us. It is on record that similar intercourse brought comfort to Our Lord during difficult hours in His earthly ministry, and it is certain that many of His followers have been aided in times of darkness by these unexpected visits.

Such manifestations take place under conditions which we neither foresee nor wholly understand. Were knowledge greater it might explain the non-appearance of those who are longed for, but who do not come visibly or audibly. It is evident that something more than longing on our part, and desire on theirs, is indispensable if they are to achieve communication between their world and ours. Doubtless their success is as strictly dependent upon law as are our usual methods of intercourse on earth, where speech, hearing and sight operate according to laws which we utilise even when not understanding. Instances of unexpected communication depend on the presence of special factors, or essential conditions, and these may seldom be available apart from co-operation on our side.

Experiment conclusively shows that we can do certain things which make it possible for spirit friends to speak with us. There are persons naturally endowed with faculties which can be utilised for this purpose. As yet we know all too little of the scope and nature of these powers; but working hypotheses are being tested and corrected by experiment, and we are learning under what conditions these powers can be more effectively used.

It is a matter of experience that our friends willingly make use of the opportunities thus provided, and that they sometimes indicate ways by which the difficulties of communication can be lessened.

RELIGION AND SURVIVAL

What is said in these conversations. What new facts are revealed, what is told us about life and occupation in the spirit world? It will be convenient to present the answer as follows:—

They give—

- (a) Personal reminiscences of life on earth.
- (b) Experiences since leaving the body.
- (c) Their present opinions.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF LIFE ON EARTH.—
When friends meet after any considerable separation it is usual to touch upon matters of mutual interest, to revive old memories, to evince continued interest and affection. We should expect to find it thus after the unique separation resulting from death, and we are not disappointed. All happens according to the dictates of affection; relations are named, old interests referred to, in some instances regret is expressed for faults committed, and intimate knowledge is shown about those in whom the speaker was interested.

In most of these conversations the speaker is invisible and his thoughts are transmitted through an intermediary or medium. Hence it is imperative to look for evidence of identity; we must know with whom we are speaking. Some succeed better than others in thinking out and presenting this class of evidence. Some listeners are more cautious and exacting than others. But when on both sides there is intelligence and patience, and the difficulties

of transmission are not too great, it is usually possible to establish the identity of speakers who have been personally known to us. To say more on this point would lead beyond the scope of our subject; adequate treatment of personal identity would require a whole chapter.

Before taking a survey of experiences described and opinions expressed it is necessary to remark that as communicators are not all in the same region their experiences will vary; some are in the "hells," others are in the earlier "heavens." Those in the lower place know little of life above them. Nor can those more happily placed tell all; for they give glimpses of height upon height of attainment and joy to which they have not yet attained.

We must admit the probability that our friends may retain many of their former views. Death has not made them omniscient, nor given them an infallible judgment. Some will be slower than others in revising prejudiced and partial views held on earth. Only gradually do strong prejudices yield to larger conceptions of reality; but, as we are told, each one who is bent on taking the upward way outgrows former limitations and learns to unite with others in higher realisations and in new forms of service.

There have been communications from those whose position affords little opportunity for learning more than they had known while on earth; beyond a description of their sombre surroundings these had nothing of value to impart.

RELIGION AND SURVIVAL

Among the Christian communities of the first few generations there would be many whose friends had died firmly adhering to the tenets of Judaism. It would be natural that when these spoke shortly after death they should, in their communications, stoutly maintain the old orthodoxy and deny the central truths of Christian revelation. Hence St. John's counsel that all spirit utterances should be tested ; he deprecates an easy credulity, and indiscriminate acceptance of every statement merely on the ground that it came from the spirit world. This advice is sound. Opinions upon some subjects will have weight only when we are assured that they originate from one who enjoys opportunity for gaining clearer knowledge of facts.

For many years I have received at frequent intervals communications upon many subjects. They were, for the most part, given by my father* after he had satisfied me as to his identity by many and various proofs. Having been a Christian minister for more than forty years he is naturally interested in everything relating to character and religion. I owe much to his help and influence while on earth, but my greatest indebtedness is for inspiration and illumination received through his conversations from the Beyond. There is a conviction derived from this personal intercourse which cannot be conveyed to other minds. For myself I am satisfied that it is my father who speaks,

* My father passed in 1903. His communications have extended from 1917, when my investigations commenced, to the present time 1924.

that he is able to impart in human words something of his present experience, and that he has learnt much since passing which has expanded his conceptions of divine truth. I am not aware that he has had to discard any doctrines which he preached on earth excepting that of a personal devil and never-ending punishment, and this he certainly renounces with emphasis.

Although statements upon life and religion cannot be "proved," yet in every instance these were given in conjunction with evidential matter which I subsequently found to be correct.

What could be tested was found to be true, and this gives weight to the unverifiable matter. There is also the outstanding fact that his statements are in substantial agreement with those made to others by numerous communicators through different channels. Communications may perhaps derive a slight "colour" from the human mind which transmits them, but we are able to compare statements given by many communicators through many mediums and their general agreement is a striking evidential fact.

EXPERIENCES SINCE LEAVING THE BODY.—They found themselves in a world which seemed as real and solid as the one they had left, and their body was almost a duplicate of the one that died.

They had no difficulty in recognising old friends and acquaintances, and they enjoy social intercourse with them and also with others to whom they are

RELIGION AND SURVIVAL

drawn by like interests and sympathies. They can meet those whom they admired and revered while on earth, whether contemporaries or of earlier generations.

They enjoy full opportunity for the exercise of their attainments, and also for powers which had lain dormant during earth life, but which now emerge and expand.

Life is full, but without weariness, satiety or sickness, and each finds occupation suited to his abilities and preferences. My father tells of a ministry of help to unadvanced persons both in the lower "heavens" and in the "hells." There is, too, a ministry of help to friends on earth in which many can bear part; it would appear that this help consists largely in giving mental impressions.

While the foregoing particulars might have been omitted as not bearing upon our ethical or religious interests, it seemed well to include them because they suggest the naturalness of the life which follows death. It is our present life continued, and continued under more favourable conditions. We remain ourselves, and carry over our individual character and qualities of mind. Whoever receives some such description in an undoubted conversation with a speaker who has passed through death, can no longer retain mental reservations as to the reality of life beyond. The indispensable foundation for a real religious outlook on the present life remains thenceforward well and truly laid, and laid not upon

hearsay, but on evidence. The attainment of this first-hand and personal conviction may well commence a new era in a man's life of faith and thought. Practical scepticism as to a future life is probably more common than the average churchgoer realises, and this uncertainty militates against the attainment of that "eternal life" which can be enjoyed while yet on earth. Faith is more vigorous when its roots grasp a certainty. I believe that such first-hand experience as has been given me would, to multitudes, be an inspiration second only to conversion.

There remain three statements for which words are inadequate to convey the sense intended:—

Prayer becomes a new activity there; so great is the sense of joy and power resulting as to surpass all earthly experience.

God is not seen, but yet His all-pervading presence is easily and delightfully felt.

Our Lord is not visible to all at any and every time; but there is a special means, scarcely even glimpsed on earth, by which at any moment they can obtain touch with His mind and receive from Him a vitalising energy. But beyond and above this there are occasions when, after due preparation, they have been permitted to see Him and hear Him speak.

I am conscious how completely the printed page fails to convey even so much of realisation as was apparent to me during the moments when such things were told. That brief interval of time

RELIGION AND SURVIVAL

became one of life's landmarks. Despite the circuitous channels of its transmission I was able to catch the thrill of ecstasy which my informants felt when recalling their glimpse of Our Lord. Quibbles as to the exact nature of His relation to God, or about the words in which His divinity should be expressed, sank into insignificance before that echo of reality.

PRESENT OPINIONS.—Omitting many opinions upon science and philosophy I select those which bear directly upon conduct and religion. The word *convictions* would better represent the intensity of certitude with which they are held. They are, with the exception already mentioned, the truths which my father had proclaimed throughout his ministry; new knowledge has but served to strengthen them.

The supreme importance of character—it is character which automatically assigns us to our fitting place on entering that life, which qualifies us for happiness and service, or condemns us to their opposites. Nor is there any conflict between this and those other truths relating to repentance and pardon; they find perfect harmony in the actual experiences of that life.

Stern discipline awaits those whose character necessitates this, but the discipline, however painful, is directed by divine love, and is designed to reform and ultimately to elevate. The duration of the discipline is decided by the will of the individual

156

undergoing it; he is left free, within limits, to decide his course.

Endless progress in character and attainment is the destiny of each and all. Everything is of value which serves to expand the nature in genuine love for others and which advances the realisation of individual relationship with God. The supreme means known on earth for effecting this is that relation with Our Lord which makes us receptive to His uplifting influence.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.—When Our Lord walked the earth, and taught among men, His hearers did not all benefit alike. Many turned away with a sense of antagonism, some were but slightly influenced. But others realised in His message the satisfying of life's deepest need. It has been thus with each successive unfolding of God's purpose in all the chapters of religious history. It is so to-day. Many resent the idea of conversations across the gulf of death, some treat it academically as a scientific problem only. But others find what they had instinctively hungered for, the lost note of the Churches. To each is given according to his receptivity; the will-to-disbelieve enables men to grope blindly despite the sunshine which floods their pathway.

Where opposition to Spiritualism is intelligent and honest it would seem to result from a too exclusive attention to vagaries which have accidentally, and for the moment, associated themselves

RELIGION AND SURVIVAL

with it, but which are in no way related to its essentials. A like restriction of view has repeatedly provided supposed justification for opposition to Christianity. Follies of thought and of conduct have too often excused themselves under that great name. Whoever wishes to know Spiritualism will study it *at its best* ; for, like all things high and good, it can be degraded to unworthy use.

Demonstrations of conversation with those beyond death, and a study of the experiences and teaching they give, furnish new aids for mental and spiritual life. Yet they are but aids, and have no compelling force. One still elects whether to live in harmony with this knowledge, or to compromise between lower impulses and the higher aspirations. Only by thought, prayer and resolute endeavour can the full benefit be assured. Yet the logical result of Spiritualism applied to life would be persistent resolution to play an active part in working out the divine purposes, strong desire to make the best of self and others, and increasing receptivity to guidance and spiritual power. A Christian Spiritualist would be a better Christian, a Jewish Spiritualist would be a better Jew, a Mohammedan Spiritualist a better Mohammedan, and so on through all the varieties of religion.

Students of psychical phenomena, in their wide and varied range, are enabled to understand many passages in Scripture which remain enigmas to others, even to authors of commentaries. While writing this article a letter reaches me from one

who recently began this study; it says: "The Bible is transformed . . . one sees easy explanation of what often seemed so difficult of comprehension." Many express themselves so. The Bible becomes a new book.

In the above list of experiences I have omitted one which may be fittingly recorded at this point. Our friends insist that, while appreciating the opportunities of mediumistic intercourse, they find that in the quiet of our home life they are able to come into closer relation with us than is possible through the restricted channel of a medium's brain; that in our times of mental calm, when we are undistracted by hurry and care, they hold communion with our inner being, they "get nearer" to us. Nor is such communion entirely one-sided; some of us have periods of "awareness."

Is there not here a clue to much which the Mystics have described? Have they not found the possibility of this inward communion, which is something quite different from mediumistic communication by spoken words? Those who experience this "communion of saints" (and saintship has many degrees) can, and certainly should, make it a step towards "the practice of the presence of God"—and of Jesus; for so the habit of conscious reliance upon the divine activity, operating within us and around us, becomes instinctive.

A FORECAST OF THE FUTURE.—I see reason to anticipate that when the truth which Spiritualism

RELIGION AND SURVIVAL

can demonstrate has become a common heritage of all races, "Bear ye one another's burdens" will become a popular principle of conduct, and that cruelty, ignorance, superstition and war will cease to be common. It certainly should make for general betterment when such facts as the following become personally provable to every man:—

Life beyond death is a continuance of this one.

The character formed here decides the place and condition in which we begin there.

Goodwill and service qualify for happiness; while hatred, revenge, cruelty and selfishness leave scars in the character as automatically as when fire burns the hand placed within it.

And the value of Christ's teaching must surely become more intelligently appreciated when men can convince themselves personally that the will-to-love expands life into conditions of happiness and progress which continue unchecked by death. It is one thing to receive this on hearsay, and another to have it personally demonstrated.

Questions of character complicate our social and international difficulties.

Social problems are at bottom problems of character. Teaching which reveals, in fresh and convincing ways, how men may so live as to obtain happiness in harmony with eternal laws, will tend to solve difficulties which are rooted in ignorance of those laws, or in collective and personal selfishness.

International problems are, at bottom, related to fear and greed, and will be progressively overcome as individuals composing nations realise the fundamental law of progress which is that the good of others must be striven for equally with our own.

Information from the Beyond combines with all that is best in man's previous knowledge to form a body of truth, of working principles, within the comprehension of all; and this truth, sooner or later, will be universally accepted. The Churches can accelerate this by spreading the knowledge, or they might delay it by opposition. But, in either event, the truths already established by research will eventually be accepted; then, as mankind succeeds in harmonising thought and conduct therewith, the human race will more rapidly advance upon its divinely ordered path.

Psychical Evidence for Survival

By J. ARTHUR HILL

Author of "Psychical Investigations."

A FAMOUS philosopher of the early part of the nineteenth century said that we could never know anything about the nature of the heavenly bodies outside the solar system. Not long afterwards, the spectroscope was invented, and the light from the stars revealed their chemical composition. Until recently it seemed that we could hardly hope for knowledge concerning the question of human survival of bodily death. It seemed a religious question ; a matter of faith ; to be decided, positively or negatively, by the individual's temperament rather than by his judgment. But it is now evident that the subject is capable of being treated scientifically, and that conclusions may be arrived at by consideration of certain facts and inferences therefrom, quite apart from faith or the particular religious or non-religious temperament which we may happen to possess. No coercive proof is possible, no conclusion is likely to become universal for a long time yet ; there will be many hypotheses, and the true one will emerge as criticism

eliminates the others. It has been thus with all new branches of science, and we may reasonably expect it to be the same with psychical research. But it is now agreed by all who have given much attention to the subject that it really is amenable to scientific treatment, and that is the main thing. When once this is generally seen, natural human desire for knowledge will ensure that the inquiry shall be pressed to a conclusion. Most investigators who have given a few years to the subject are convinced that telepathy between the living is a fact, and that telepathy from the "dead" is at least a reasonable hypothesis in explanation of some of the ostensibly spiritualistic phenomena. But not many people have the opportunity of first-hand investigation, and the general public is inevitably though regrettably dependent on the testimony of those who have been able to work at the inquiry. However, the same thing occurs in other branches of science. Few people can find out for themselves the distance of Sirius or the laws of Mendelian inheritance; they have to accept the findings of the experts. In astronomy and biology this is fairly easy; but psychical research results run counter to ideas which have been scientifically orthodox for some time—ideas such as "no mind without brain" and the like—and it is natural that the average reader should hesitate to follow the experts until a very considerable body of evidence is available. But the body of evidence is becoming considerable. The publications of the Society for

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

Psychical Research amount to more than fifty volumes, and a careful reading of their contents would mean a year of study. Probably most readers, after such a course, might be more or less impressed, for the contributors to these volumes are many and distinguished. As to the membership list of the Society, it has been said to contain more well-known names than any other scientific Society except the Royal Society itself. Taking names at random, there may be noted the Earl of Balfour, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Barrett, Sir J. J. Thomson, Professor Gilbert Murray, Professor McDougall, and Professor Richet of Paris; but these are only a few out of many.

Perhaps the best way of approaching the subject is from the side of telepathy or thought transference. There is reason to believe that in certain circumstances ideas may pass from mind to mind by channels other than the known sensory ones. But it is necessary to be critical. If you are talking to someone, and he says: "I was just going to say that," it is not necessarily a case of telepathy. It is much more likely that the conversation had led both minds to the same thought, or that some similar train of association had been started somehow or other. Still, there is a considerable amount of real evidence for telepathy. Professor Gilbert Murray, perhaps the most distinguished Greek scholar in this country, recently carried out some interesting experiments of this kind in his own family. He would go into another room, leaving his

164

J. ARTHUR HILL

wife and daughter to decide on something which they would try to communicate to him on his return. They chose the most absurd and unlikely things, including scenes out of books which Professor Murray had not read, but in a large number of cases he was successful in "sensing" what they were thinking of. He made his mind as passive as possible, and said the first thing that came into his head; in many cases he reproduced the idea with startling exactness, though not always fully at the first attempt; the thing came in bits. For example, the "agents" thought of Savonarola at Florence, and the people burning their clothes and pictures and valuables. Says Professor Murray: "I first felt 'This is Italy,' then 'This is not modern,' and then hesitated, when accidentally a small tarry bit of coal tumbled out of the fire. I smelt oil or paint burning, and so got the whole scene. It seems as though here some subconscious impression, struggling up towards consciousness, caught hold of the burning coal as a means of getting through."

This was an episode known to Professor Murray, but I quote it because it is brief. Some of the other experiments were much more striking, but are too long to include here. Other investigators have sometimes used cards, drawing one at random from a shuffled pack, the percipient then trying to say what it was. The chance of success by accident is one in fifty-two for each single guess, and the amount of success that we might expect by chance in any series can be mathematically determined.

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

In one series of successful experiments conducted by Sir Oliver Lodge, the odds against an explanation by chance alone were ten millions to one. In ordinary matters this would be regarded as proof. Other experiments have been carried out by other workers. Details may be found in the "Proceedings" of the Society for Psychical Research.

And if it is possible to convey to another mind—sometimes so vividly that the thing seems to be seen out there in space—an image of scenes thought about, may it not be possible to convey an image of oneself? This has been done. By strong willing a man has produced a hallucinatory image of himself which was seen by two people three miles away. And if a living man can by force of will project a telepathic phantasm of himself, it is reasonable to suppose that a so-called dead one can do the same, if he is still mentally in existence. Telepathy does not seem to be a physical process of ether-waves; it seems to occur in the mental world, between mind and mind rather than between brain and brain. Thus telepathy itself suggests the reality of the soul and its independence of the physical body. But there is definite evidence which goes beyond this mere suggestion. There are many cases of the apparition of a deceased person. The difficulty about accepting the evidentiality of some of them is that if the percipient knew that the person appearing was dead, the apparition may be merely a subjective hallucination. And even if the death was not known, it might be surmised, and the

166

J. ARTHUR HILL

apparition might be due to expectancy, if the person appearing was known to be ill or in any danger. But there are some cases in which these factors are not present. Apparitions sometimes appear to several people who did not know that the person appearing was ill or in any sort of danger, and the death was found to have occurred just before the visions were seen. In one recent case the death occurred in France, and one of the percipients was in India, others in England (*S.P.R. Journal*, Vol. 19, pp.39-46). Some years ago the Society for Psychical Research made a careful inquiry, receiving answers to a questionnaire sent out to about 17,000 people, and tabulating the results in Vol. 10 of the "Proceedings." The final conclusion, expressed in weighed and guarded words, was that "between deaths and apparitions of the dying person a connexion exists which is not due to chance alone." This was signed, along with other members of the Committee, by Professor Sidgwick, to whom Professor William James once referred as "the most exasperatingly critical mind in England." Some of these apparitions occur before the decedent's actual death, but usually in such cases he is already unconscious and the spirit may be assumed to be practically free. As to those occurring after the death, the main difficulty about accepting them as proof of survival is the possibility that though they appear after the person's death, the telepathic impulse may have been sent out before, remaining latent for some time in the mind of the percipient. This

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

has been borne in mind by the investigators, and in many cases there are reasons for considering it an insufficient hypothesis. On the whole, the evidence tends more and more to suggest that at least in some instances these happenings are due to the agency of a mind that is no longer in the flesh.

There is another class of apparition which seems dependent on locality. This kind occurs chiefly in connexion with what are called haunted houses. The evidence for this kind of thing is not very abundant, but it is considerable. I know of a case which occurred in the house of a doctor. Half a dozen different people saw the ghost, and the cause was not fear or suggestion, for several of the percipients did not know that anything of the kind had been seen by others in that house. It is questionable whether any spirit is concerned in a persistent local haunt. It seems more probable, for various reasons, that some impression has been left on local material objects, somewhat as each of us leaves an impression on an old suit of clothes, and that this impression, in a house where perhaps specially stressful things have happened, produces hallucinations in people of sufficiently sensitive nature. But in some cases of temporary haunt, it does seem possible that a discarnate person is the cause.

But no single case can prove anything, in an inductive inquiry. Alternative hypotheses are always possible and indeed are to be welcomed, for we shall get at the truth only by considering all

168

J. ARTHUR HILL

possible hypotheses and eliminating those that seem least likely. But those who have considered the subject most carefully, those who are acquainted with the largest array of data, have come to the provisional conclusion that in some cases the most reasonable supposition is the agency of discarnate human beings; more particularly in the sporadic veridical apparitions such as are seen by several different people who were not expecting the death of the person appearing.

So far, we have been dealing with apparitions which occur spontaneously—that is, without any seeking. Sometimes the percipient has only one such experience in his life; in some cases he has several, for the seeing power is more or less constitutional. With some few people the experience is fairly common. And in a very few persons the power is so strong that it will manifest itself to some extent whenever suitable conditions are given. I know several people who, by putting themselves into a passive and receptive state, can get evidential things from somewhere, almost every time. By evidential things I mean matter which the sensitive did not normally know and which cannot satisfactorily be explained by chance coincidence. Some of this matter seems to be due to telepathy from the “dead.” It is however in most cases mixed to a greater or less extent with matter derived from the sensitive’s own mind, and in the case of some alleged mediums it is probable that everything is the product of the supposed sensitive’s subliminal consciousness.

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

Many professional "mediums" who are probably honest enough, are under the impression that they get messages from the other side while as a matter of fact their own minds are responsible. Professor Murray, when saying what "came into his head," did not know, until he was told, whether he had got his idea telepathically or whether it was an idea thrown up by his own imagination. So with professional mediums; they give out the ideas that come to them, but as a rule they cannot distinguish. I know only one exception. Mr. Aaron Wilkinson, with whom I have experimented for sixteen years, is able to shut out his own mental activity almost entirely; and in the majority of my sittings with him there has been no admixture of his own imaginings at all.

At sittings with this medium I have introduced, anonymously or pseudonymously, people who were strangers to him, from distant towns, and they have had descriptions and correct names of many deceased friends and relations, the results completely excluding fraud. I have had many pieces of evidence which equally well exclude the hypothesis of telepathy from the sitters. To explain all the facts on a telepathic hypothesis it is necessary to suppose that the medium can read the minds of many distant persons whom he has never seen and of whose existence he is normally ignorant, the facts then being palmed off as purporting to come from some deceased person of whom they are perfectly characteristic. This hypothesis is more or less

J. ARTHUR HILL

tenable, but it seems as difficult to believe as the spiritistic one—or more difficult.

The sort of thing I have described is usually known in Spiritualist circles as normal clairvoyance, though the term clairvoyance is used in psychological research in a different sense, meaning supernormal perception of distant scenes by some means other than telepathy. However, the term "normal clairvoyance" has its uses, indicating that the medium exerts these powers in his normal state or at any rate without trance. But sometimes the medium in question does pass into the trance state, in which his ordinary consciousness is abolished and a change of personality takes place, a spirit purporting to speak or write with the medium's organs. In Wilkinson's case the control purports to be a Scots-woman; and certainly the speech could not be imitated by the medium in his normal state. There is nothing weird or uncanny about the trance. Most trance mediums sit still, but Wilkinson often walks about the room while under control. The evidential quality of the trance is no better than that of the normal clairvoyance, and I do not encourage it; for it makes reporting more difficult. Ordinarily I take verbatim notes of all that the medium says, also of everything the sitters say, so that I am sure of knowing if anything has been said which may have given away any indications. But when the ostensible Scots control is speaking it is more difficult because of the changed language and accent. As to what these controls are, differences

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

of opinion exist; some think they are spirits, others that they are secondary personalities—fragments of the medium's mind. I have not been able to come to a conclusion. In automatic writing, especially, there is often reason to doubt the genuineness of the claims that are made as to authorship. I think that when Julius Cæsar or Shakespeare turns up we may safely put him down as a secondary personality, especially if his communications are on the level of the medium rather than on that of the august supposed communicator. But whether all controls are personations of this kind, I am not sure. I incline to think that some of them are genuine.

The most important trance-medium in modern history is still Mrs. Piper, concerning whom there are many reports in the "Proceedings" of the S.P.R., notably in Vols. 6, 8, 13, 16 and 28. Fraud was excluded by introducing sitters anonymously, Dr. Hodgson himself introducing over 150 persons in this way, and taking careful notes. Some sort of supernatural perception of their affairs was obvious in a large number of these cases, and generally some spirit purported to send identifying messages. In the case of the spirit "George Pelham," he recognised the people he had known in life, with only one exception—that of a girl who had grown up since his death, changing a good deal in appearance. He never made the mistake of saying he had known a sitter who as a matter of fact had not been known to George Pelham. It is

J. ARTHUR HILL

clear that a very complicated and difficult hypothesis of mind-reading is required if these facts are to be explained without recourse to a spiritistic hypothesis. It still seems to me that the Piper evidence is the best we have. The medium is still under S.P.R. control more or less, though her powers have waned somewhat and no systematic investigation is now being carried on. And we must remember that the Piper evidence does not depend on the (unquestioned) ability of Dr. Hodgson or even that of other more famous members of the Society for Psychical Research. Her sitters had included such distinguished psychologists as Professor William James, before the S.P.R. investigations began; and it is safe to say that all who had a long series of sittings were driven to the admission of some supernormal agency in the phenomena.

To those who object to results obtained through professional mediums—though there is no valid reason for such objection if the conditions eliminate the possibility of fraud—the reply is that there have been many private persons with similar gifts, whose phenomena provide material pointing in the same direction. Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Verrall may be instanced. Volume 17 of the "Proceedings," S.P.R., dealing with the trance phenomena of Mrs. Thompson, is a good second, in evidentiality, to those dealing with Mrs. Piper; and Volume 20 has some good evidence secured through the automatic writing of Mrs. Verrall, a classical lecturer at

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

Newnham College. It is quite likely that some of the best mediums are private persons who exercise their gifts for the benefit of their friends only. And in some cases they do not exercise them at all, if their near relatives look on such things as uncanny and perhaps diabolic. I have known cases in which even the possessor of the gifts felt rather uncomfortable about encouraging such strange powers, and accordingly kept them as quiescent as possible—very regrettably, from the point of view of science!

Of late years the best evidence obtained by the S.P.R. has been through the professional medium, Mrs. Leonard—the medium of Sir Oliver Lodge's book "Raymond"—and the non-professional sensitive Mrs. Willett. In the case of the latter some well-known scholars such as Professors Butcher and Verrall, now on the other side, have purported to give identifying evidence of a rather new kind; consisting mainly of veiled references to incidents in the writings of little known ancient authors such as—in one case—Philoxenus. The difficulty, of course, is that the medium *might* have heard or read of these things; and though we may waive the idea of deliberate fraud, there are the possibilities of subliminal memory to take into consideration. Admittedly some of Mrs. Willett's sittings were noteworthy, but the results can hardly be regarded as conclusive. The "Ear of Dionysius" incident, reported by Mr. G. W. Balfour, is perhaps the best.

Through Mrs. Leonard another new kind of evidence has lately appeared, known as the

J. ARTHUR HILL

“book-test.” Communicators will tell a sitter to take down a book, number so-and-so from this or that end of a certain shelf in his library at home, and he will find in a specified part of a certain page a reference which will have pertinence to the communicator. This is a puzzling phase, and it is difficult to come to conclusions. In some cases it seems impossible to stretch the long arm of coincidence far enough to include all the facts, yet, as we have no means of knowing how many of these shots are wrong—for many may be given to sitters who do not publish them—we cannot make any mathematical judgment. An extension of this kind of evidence has occurred in a few cases when the contents of a certain part of a newspaper to be published the day after the sitting, were described; and it was settled in some instances that the type was not set up at the time, so the information could not have been derived telepathically from any living mind. Whether these new kinds of evidence are devised by some of our more recently deceased researchers who see that a variety of evidence is desirable, we do not know. There is reason to suppose something of the sort with reference to Mr. Myers, for after his death the series of cross-correspondences began, apparently initiated from the other side. These consisted of a sort of mosaic pattern, messages being distributed among several professional or non-professional sensitives; bits being given here and there, the whole lot being incomprehensible until

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

the scripts were put together by the officials of the S.P.R. This evidence seems to have been started by Myers and Professor Sidgwick, and it is possible that the book-tests may have been due to the initiative of the same group or of a more recently departed member or members. As the working members of the S.P.R. go over to the other side, with their knowledge of the kind of evidence that is desirable, and of the conditions and difficulties of the whole subject, it is reasonable to suppose that the evidence received will improve both in quantity and quality—and new kinds of evidence will be thought of, thus eliminating thought-transference from living people ; for if no one on this side has thought of a particular kind, the initiative must have come from the discarnate side of life.

Most investigators eventually come to the conclusion that the hypothesis of survival and occasional communication is at least reasonable, though not established. Alternative hypotheses are always possible, in all inductive problems. The main alternative to a spiritistic interpretation of the phenomena is the hypothesis which attributes many hitherto unrecognised powers to the incarnate human being. Professor Charles Richet, for example, has studied the subject at intervals for many years, and he accepts practically all the phenomena which are alleged to happen ; but he explains them by assuming powers of "lucidity," etc., in the minds of the living people who produce these phenomena. Sir Oliver Lodge has pointed out that the

facts given by a medium are usually *characteristic* of an ostensible communicator, and he asks Professor Richet who it is that selects these personal and characteristic facts, if it is not the mind of the person himself. To this there seems no adequate reply. All that can be said is, perhaps, that we have to decide, provisionally, which seems the more credible, the supposition that incarnate minds can do the selecting in some unknown way—extracting the right facts from many different minds if necessary—or the supposition that human beings survive death and can sometimes communicate. To a physiologist, accustomed to microscopes and test-tubes and unaccustomed to believing in anything that he cannot see or at least conceive of as visible, the idea of survival is difficult ; more difficult, perhaps, than the attribution of any amount of unrecognised power to living beings ; for the brain is there, and we do not know what undiscovered properties it may have. To a physicist, on the other hand, there are things unseen yet real, in the physical world. He is accustomed to dealing with electrons and ether and what not, things that are beyond the range of the senses. Accordingly he has not the physiologist's difficulty in believing in survival. The physicist is perhaps the less prejudiced of the two ; he can follow the evidence without being biased by his special training, while the physiologist, though admitting no doubt the reality of electrons, and the possibility of other unseen things, has a difficulty in getting, so to speak, beneath the surface

of sense-perception. However, it is a remarkable and welcome thing that Professor Richet accepts the facts. Most physiologists do not; they tend to dismiss the subject, without inquiry, as an outworn superstition. Sir E. Ray Lankester does not believe in telepathy. It will be a shock to him to find that Professor Richet accepts telepathy and much more. And indeed it is true that in order to escape a spiritistic explanation, telepathy and much more has to be admitted. Truth will eventually prevail, and all psychical researchers, it is to be hoped, are ready to change their present views, whatever they may happen to be, on sufficient reason shown. But even if Professor Richet's view is correct, and human beings have all these queer powers in their subconsciousness, it is arguable that the very fact is an evidence of a spiritual world, for the exercise of some of the powers seems to take place in some world not physical. Telepathy, for example—as already said—does not seem to conform to physical laws; it appears to be a process between mind and mind rather than between brain and brain. So we are in danger of being brought round to a survival theory by another route. And if we are so brought round, the *prima facie* explanation of veridical apparitions and the like, again becomes reasonable. Given a spiritual world, the main difficulty is overcome, and the evidence for human survival of bodily death may well seem overwhelmingly strong. To a considerable extent, then, our estimate of psychical research evidence

will be influenced by our general philosophic scheme. But probably there are very few true materialists left nowadays ; most people admit the possibility and perhaps the probability of Mind existing without accompaniment of sense experience such as that of our present condition. Indeed, some philosophers—Fechner in particular—have evolved a scheme according to which the whole material universe is ensouled, Mind existing behind all phenomena. In any case, philosophy is now moving in an idealist rather than a materialist direction, and it is likely that the next generation will be open-minded enough to consider psychical evidence fairly on its merits and to recognise the *prima facie* interpretations as at least possible.

As to the nature of the future life, psychical research has little to say. Probably those on the other side find it as impossible to describe their mode of existence as a butterfly would find it to describe its life to a caterpillar or a chrysalis. In each case the language of the lower state has no terms for the experiences of the higher. But there is at least reason to believe that there is a considerable degree of continuity between the two states. We seem to carry with us the character that we have developed here, and apparently we continue to progress. Æonian evolution, from sphere to sphere, as Tennyson says, seems to be the order of things, so far as we can understand it. " In My Father's house are many tarrying-places," said Christ ; many stages upon the upward way. We

PSYCHICAL EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

shall meet our loved ones there, and many other like-minded friends; and shall journey forward under happier conditions than those in which we find ourselves at present, towards some goal which we cannot fully understand, but which may well be best pictured as the heaven of religion and of the world's best poetry; though even a Dante's Paradise has the defects of its time and of humanity's weakness in portrayal of what the mystic may dimly perceive; its standards of rewards and punishments are not ours, its theology is mediæval. But perhaps the Paradise is the best presentation of the state that we can have, if we must have pictorial detail. It may however be wisest to dispense with detail of the picture kind, resting content with the general belief that survival is a fact, that progress continues, and that we are in the hands of a friendly Power which is working out purposes greater than we can conceive.

Metapsychic Science and Survival

By PROF. CHARLES RICHTER

MY distinguished friend, Sir Oliver Lodge, in his various writings, has given a lucid exposition of the essential features of the spiritist hypothesis apart from its too common crudities. I am sure that he will forgive me if, after having read and meditated upon them, I am unable to share his opinions. Taken as a whole the facts—whether they be called spiritualist or metapsychic—are true, authentic and indisputable. Doubtless there are among them errors, illusions and frauds, but there is a residue of undeniable phenomena before which all authority, however well-established, must bow.

For those who hold the spiritist hypothesis the explanation is relatively simple—personality is not extinguished by the death of the brain; George Pelham's consciousness reappears when Mrs. Piper speaks in his name; that of Raymond Lodge appears through Mrs. Leonard and Feda; that of Myers when Mrs. Verrall writes.

The hypothesis is bold and clearly defined. It is supported by some very remarkable semblances which may be briefly summed up by saying that

METAPSYCHIC SCIENCE AND SURVIVAL

the words of George Pelham, Raymond Lodge and Frederic Myers are such as they would have uttered if they were living among us. The intimately personal memories, the highly characteristic phraseology, constitutes so coherent a whole that the simplest hypothesis is that of the survival of the personality.

It is here to be understood that I pass over all the innumerable trivialities, often crude and absurd, which are attributed by the medium to the spirits of the dead. For reasonable discussion it is but seemly to set aside these foolish utterances and to consider only valid instances in which the spirit, supposed to be speaking through the medium, reveals particular facts known only to the deceased. Such cases exist; they are not numerous, they are indeed extremely rare. But their frequency is of little consequence. It would suffice that there be some duly verified cases to warrant the hypothesis of survival. I say to *warrant*, I do not say to *justify*, for other explanations than survival seem to me possible or even probable; and it is at this point I find myself unable to concur with Sir Oliver Lodge.

Moreover, since the very numerous cases detailed in the work of my very good friend Dr. Osty, it is obvious that sensitives can revive memories, knowledge, and events equally unknown to the percipient and to the questioner.

I can add nothing to the opinions that I have published in my Treatise on Metapsychics A
182

perusal of that book will make my intentions clear. I endeavoured to write on science, not on dreams ; and I therefore confined myself to a statement of facts and discussion of their actuality, not only without advancing any theory, but scarcely mentioning theories. Facts are permanent, and for them I have profound respect, but theories change from year to year or even from day to day.

As for the explanation of the metapsychic facts on which many men of science are still sceptical, I can only say definitely that I believe in the hypothesis, now unknown, which the future will establish—a hypothesis that I cannot formulate, for it is unknown to me.

Among all these perplexing phenomena there is one that is more perplexing than any others—Prevision. It is established by proofs that are absolutely certain, but it remains totally incomprehensible.

There are also a few cases, rare no doubt, but of an importance that I do not disguise—in which there are, or seem to be, intelligent and reasoned intentions, forces, and acts of will apparent in the phenomena produced, and these have all the characteristics of being due to extraneous action. I allude more especially to the visions of young children when dying. These facts would be exceedingly curious and noteworthy if they stood alone, but *they do not stand alone*. I have mentioned two precisely similar ; and their similarity, or rather their identity, is so definite that it is impossible to

METAPSYCHIC SCIENCE AND SURVIVAL

admit chance or imaginative fancy as their cause. Such facts are highly important. They are much more explicable by the spirit-hypothesis than by that of cryptesthesia. It even seems to me that among all the facts adduced to prove survival, these are the most disconcerting; I have therefore been scrupulous to mention them. Nevertheless, despite their spiritoid appearance these facts are not sufficient to make me infer that the consciousness of deceased persons appears as a phantom at the death of a relative.

Sir Oliver reproaches me with an obsession on the subject of the brain—that I consider cerebral integrity essential to human conditions. That other intelligences under other conditions than those of our animal organisation in terrestrial life, may exist in nature, is possible or even probable; but *they will be no longer human intelligences.*

Maeterlinck has expressed this admirably—"This 'I,' so uncertain, so fugitive, and so precarious, evading all definition, is so entirely the centre of our being, and interests us so exclusively, that all the realities of life fade when confronted with that phantasm. If remembrance of certain facts, nearly always trivial, does not accompany us . . . it is nothing to me that the highest, free-est and noblest parts of my mind should shine, living and eternal, in supreme bliss; they are not me; I do not know them. Death has severed the links of nerves, or the memories that bound them to that unknown central point at which I feel myself complete."

This does not signify negation of any intelligent energies apart from a brain ; but such hypothetical intelligent forces, independent of a material substratum, have nothing in common with human intelligence. We may well suppose at the outset that intelligent beings other than men are about us and may be associated with our evolution, although they be free from the mechanical, physical, anatomical and chemical conditions under which we live.

Why should not intelligent and powerful beings exist apart from the worlds of which our senses inform us? By what right can our limited senses, our defective intelligence, warrant us after a bare three centuries of scientific thought, in affirming that in the immense Cosmos Man is the only intelligent being, and that all intellectual reality necessarily implies nerve-cells nourished by oxygenated blood? That there should be intelligent energies other than man, constructed on a wholly different plan, is not only possible, it is extremely probable. It is absurd to suppose that ours is the only intelligence in Nature ; and that every intelligent energy is *necessarily* organised on the animal or human mode, with a brain as its organ. It is immediately obvious how deep the mystery is : for, when we speak of "intelligence" our inevitably anthropomorphic conception of things leads us to suppose that such intelligences must have human memory, a verbal terminology, logic, and affectivity like our own. But intelligence (in the human sense) is so imperfect, so specialised in humanity, that we can

METAPSYCHIC SCIENCE AND SURVIVAL

only appreciate intelligent energies by assimilating them more or less to those of mankind: which is probably a grave mistake.

Even the spirit-hypothesis, stripped of its simpler concepts, would, up to a certain point, be compatible with these conclusions. According to some well-informed Spiritualists, the "spirits" do not use words to express their thought; they act by projecting ideas or symbols which the medium subconsciously translates into human language. Their alleged communications assert the impossibility of expressing their environment in terms of Space and Time. That is to say these "spirits" are no longer under human conditions. That the consciousness of the liberated Self should retain love for its kin, may pass as a reason for attempting communication.

But these are somewhat mystical speculations. I stand on facts alone, and I take no pleasure in polemics. I do not seek to persuade journalists, nor even to convince my colleagues in science, but I am entirely set on proving facts to myself. I will let discussions and arguments *pro* and *con* follow their course. I have no desire to proselytise—my own convictions are sufficient for myself. The important thing is to define the conditions under which the facts are manifest; to found them on solid ground; and (which is the supreme purpose of science), to establish new truths which will certainly open new horizons, instead of keeping fruitlessly in the old rut and the old track.

Therefore until some approach to proof comes

before me, I shall consider the Spiritualist theory as a *working-hypothesis*, moderately probable, convenient and perhaps of use for the study of the phenomena. That is all.

Sir Oliver thinks that theory true; I think it neither demonstrated not even provable. But that will not prevent either of us from trying the same experiments, for neither he nor I make experiments to support or disprove any theory. We observe and experiment in order to know and understand. Whither that research will lead us we cannot either of us guess; but what we are fully convinced of is that we shall accept positively established results, for both of us are ready to adopt, integrally and resolutely, whatever may be conformable with experimental truth.

On Behaviour to the Dying

By EDITH LYTTELTON

THE transference of an emotional or intellectual belief to a practical action is difficult and testing. Lip service and even mind service is often given without conduct being affected. The implications of a faith are not consistently thought out and followed up, or its meaning as applied to daily life realised.

People, for example, profess that wealth does not make happiness, yet they pursue money with unabated avidity; or they say that they believe in the power of thought and of silence, but most of them neither think unduly nor do they indulge much in silence. Belief in the soul is affirmed by people who have never tried to imagine what the soul is like—certainly not an easy matter—or have never wondered if it has a separate existence from the body and mind. The word soul is used vaguely to express personality, and is not necessarily connected with the idea of immortality at all. In the same manner people declare their belief in a future life, but they speak and act as if death were indeed

complete annihilation, and many professing Christians, for all their asseverations, do not believe in the immortality of the individual soul. If they did, is it credible that they should speak so often of the departed, in spite of that conventional phraseology, with a great pity and a curious sense of superiority, an implication that death is an unexpected failure or calamity? Would they hold up as the tribute of perfect love, the crushed life, the absorption in sorrow?

Speculation about the state of the dead is discouraged by most Christian churches. We can know nothing definite, it is said; the path of investigation is beset with delusions and dangers; the Devil himself takes a hand in the game. Altogether it has come to be thought hazardous and unwise to wonder too much, and the mark of a true believer to be content with such vague generalities as that the dead are in a place of blessedness or torment according to their lives. As for the possibility of continued intercourse with them, most of the reformed churches not only deny the possibility of such a thing, but shackle the imagination and forbid any attempt at establishing contact. The dead are in the hands of God and that is enough.

In this short paper I do not intend to go into the general evidence for communication and intercourse with the dead. I only briefly allude to it because the attitude to the dying and the dead is often so utterly at variance with professed beliefs

ON BEHAVIOUR TO THE DYING

that in many cases it seems questionable whether the belief exists at all.

But since almost all those who are face to face with the fact of death at least do lip service to the theory of an after life, and often cling desperately to hope, if they have not faith; and since even those who do believe in survival have little idea how to imagine a future state, it seems permissible to indicate certain ways of facing the crisis of loss. In doing so it must be clearly stated that assumptions are made quite deliberately and with full admission that they are only assumptions; for even granting the existence of the soul as a fact, we must also grant that we do not know what a soul or spirit looks like; we do not know just what happens when a soul leaves the body, where it goes, how it adjusts itself, and to what form of life. There are certain prevalent ideas, some foolish, some beautiful, but generally inadequate and rather childish, which have governed speculation. Out of these presumptions have sprung customs varying slightly in different races, for the most part concerned with the situation of the dead rather than of the living. In Turkey a corpse is rushed to the cemetery; bearers run with a coffin through the streets so that no time may be lost, for it is believed that until the body is buried the soul cannot get free. The ancient Egyptians held an opposite view; they believed that the soul would wither and perish unless the body were preserved, and so they embalmed the corpse. Later, when the belief became

190

EDITH LYTTTELTON

stereotyped, it was deemed wise to have representations of the body in the form of statues, so that the soul might always find an anchorage, and in the course of time the rich and great were buried with thousands of little figures to ensure against accident.

The Chinese worship their ancestors, reverence and fear them; Mahomedans believe in a heaven where all their material needs and passions will be gratified. Christians believe, or believed, in the actual resurrection of the actual body; believed that on a particular day soul and body would be re-united. In spite of the obvious decay of the physical body, the belief persists to this day and governs much of the ritual of burial. If the actual body is to be taken up again on the last day, it becomes important to mark the grave and secure its inviolability, to tend it, and care for it. One could cite minor differences in the attitude towards death for ever.

This paper, however, is written for those who in some form or other believe that the spirit or soul of a man *is* the man, is the formative principle; for those also who believe that the spirit or soul has used the body for a time only, and may use another body in another world; believe too that its destiny is great and its future immeasurable, believe finally in the evolution of spirit.

When someone we love lies dying the whole of our own being suffers an insurrection, which affects us in different ways. Where there is love there is

ON BEHAVIOUR TO THE DYING

bound to be intense suffering, however firm and shining may be the faith in survival, for let the Future hold what it may, the Past and Present are irretrievably slipping from our grasp. Nothing can ever be the same again. Whatever intercourse the future may have in store it will be utterly different from anything we have known before. We shall probably not even experience any intercourse at all until we too slip into the conditions beyond death ; and even then we do not know certainly that we shall be with those we love. Herein lies the anguish of separation. Imagine a mother parting from her child of four with the knowledge that she will never see him again till he is forty ; her anguish will be intense, but at least she knows that the child lives, and that if he survive she may one day see a man, who was that child ; she may write to him, she may have news of his progress. But all the dear daily intercourse and contact is destroyed. This would be painful enough, but it is nothing compared to what all go through when they lose someone by death, and give him up to a dim uncertain region where the future can only be imagined with a vagueness which is anguish, however deep and real the trust in God may be.

It is my firm conviction that the days of that vagueness are slowly passing away, and the time gradually approaching when we shall know not only that our dead are not dead, but that they can still be near us and influence our lives. We should have a greater certainty, through this belief, than the

192

EDITH LYTTTELTON

mother, imagined in a former paragraph, who parted with her child of four without hope of seeing him again till he was 40. She had to reckon with the chances of death for herself or for him. She could send and receive letters it is true, but we also may be able to send messages and receive messages from our dead with the knowledge that we shall meet them again when we pass into whatever vehicle is the next one provided for the soul. Let us be quite sure however that anything we may learn about the dead will and can only be a mere glimpse into the mystery of being. We are in Eternity now; we are part of Infinite mind now, just as are the dead. Our knowledge may be slightly widened, that is all. But if the fact of survival can become a part of our experience, a new sense of proportion, and of values, will become a part also of our very constitution.

In this belief the few things I am about to say are formulated. I also have a hope that communication between the living and the dead may become more frequent.

A woman once told me that she was watching by her sick father, and seeing a change, sent immediately for her mother. The mother entered the room and declared that she saw a large oval-shaped light emerge from the head of her husband and float out of the window; she went up to him and found he was dead.

Now this was very likely nothing more than a subjective vision, but it will serve for the moment

ON BEHAVIOUR TO THE DYING

to illustrate the possibility that there is an actual parting between spirit and body which takes place at death.

Our attitude when we stand by someone who is dying should be governed by the desire to help the soul in this proceeding, which may be difficult and painful and may also be conscious. There seems to be some evidence that the soul or spirit is peculiarly sensitive to vibrations, and indeed this is so universally felt that noise is always hushed when death is imminent. But the soul may be sensitive to more than physical vibrations; our very thoughts may affect it. We must beware of a selfish desire to hold back the departing soul, or to express the agony of our grief. I am not speaking of the moments when there seems to be still a chance of saving life, for every thought and effort must be directed to that end, although even then it is probable that the soul is in an unusually sensitive state, and our thoughts of encouragement and hope may affect it and help to turn the scale. It is however the period of seeming unconsciousness of which I am writing, when hope is abandoned and everyone waits for the end. It is then that the thoughts of those who love may be directed away from self and concentrated on the effort to help. Let us quite simply, and without for the moment obscuring our ordinary human ideas by those of superstition or even religion, try to imagine what departing spirits would want to hear from us. First, I think, they will want to know that all our

194

EDITH LYTTTELTON

love goes with them, that we shall never forget, that we shall try to be open to their influence and to any thought they may wish to impress upon us. Further, that they need not be worried about us ; we can face the future ; we can resign. And as a positive action we send them thoughts of courage ; we surround their soul with a halo of loving thoughts and aspirations ; we let them go, we even urge them forward ; and in so doing we forget our own sorrow and think only of them and of what may help them.

We do not know how long it takes for the spirit to get free of the body. The evidence such as it is points to many variations, as in most other human operations, but it does seem that the process is a slow and gradual one in the generality of cases. There may not, of course, be any consciousness, but there is some ground for believing that departing spirits are often aware, and are held back either by the desire of those around, or by their own unwillingness to float away from all they have known and loved. How can we help ? By complete self-abnegation, by prayer, by calm. The sense that there is still something we can do to help a being we love, is the best possible support. There should be no vibrations of agony or yearning ; nothing but peace and calm and a selfless attempt to speed the traveller forth.

The Christian Churches have always understood this, but the Roman Catholic ritual embodies the effort most plainly. The insistence upon the last

ON BEHAVIOUR TO THE DYING

rites, the extreme unction, the commission to nuns and monks who watch by the body and put up a chain of continual prayer, the masses for the dead, all these testify to a profound knowledge of the needs of the travelling spirit, frail but irrefragable, sensitive but indestructible.

For those who are to be left behind, as has been said, the best assistance is forgetfulness of self and desire to help forward the loved being. But there is a technique in thought which may be recommended. As soon as possible, immediately in fact, memory and thought should be detached from the body and transferred to the spiritual personality of the being we have known and loved ; and most certainly the cold, still, unresponsive body is not that being. Somewhere, perhaps quite near to us, he is still smiling, thinking, loving as before ; that personality, that being, is no longer in the body, and the sooner we can detach our thoughts and imagination from the corpse the more quickly shall we be able to realise a continuity of existence. It is terribly difficult ; it seems impossible. Yet it is a fact that gradually the sense of a loving personality can assert itself, and we may picture an etherealised form of the being we loved. Of course, this is only a piece of mechanism, because we do not know the shape or colour or size of that form at all. But since personality marks unmistakably these bodies of ours, it is at least credible that it marks the next vehicle also, and that we shall recognise a personality

196

easily enough when we ourselves have moved into the same condition.

There is another imperative reason why we should strive to preserve our calm, and keep our thoughts on the released spirit, and away from the dead body. There is a possibility when the heart is still and the mind at rest, of getting into communication. Probably everyone who dies, leaving somebody deeply loved behind, tries to get into touch at first, and it is one of the tragedies of that time that the very grief which needs consolation, itself forms a barrier. Strong vibrations, made by passionate emotions, seem to create an impassable zone, and just at the moment when the stricken heart would be ready to listen and to receive, its own sorrow interferes. Here again the best remedy is to forget self and try and help the possible loneliness of departed spirits. It may well be that their motive for trying to get into touch with the living is not merely to give consolation, but to receive it also. For the possibility must be faced that those who leave us do not at once pass into a state of happiness. The meagre news which has come back to us seems to indicate a greater happiness, but we do not know by what stages it has been attained. Consolation, a sense that loneliness is not perpetual, a mutual heartening may be ardently desired by people on both sides of the veil.

It is possible, as many can testify, to have an overwhelming sense of the presence of those who have gone beyond our sight. If this privilege is

ON BEHAVIOUR TO THE DYING

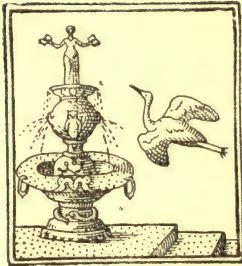
grasped, if quietly and submissively those who are still in this life welcome, wait, and listen, they may attain to a wonderful and comforting sense of nearness. Love is a great bridge and across it thoughts and feelings can meet. From the side of the living can come the assurance of faithful love and memory and hope; from the side of the dead an affirmation of life and courage—and a triumphant vindication of love. Those who have experienced these moments long anxiously for others to experience them also. They feel that many, if they would but submit, resign, expect patiently, and receive lovingly, might not only console those who have gone, but themselves become permeated with a fresh appreciation of values, and a wonderful new joy.

For it is not merely our own individual fate or survival which is here involved. In the realisation of contact with another world, less material than our own, we attain to some perception, however dim, of the greatness of our destiny; we feel that we have plunged into the main stream of spiritual influences; we are one with the stars and the night. We understand that all down the ages there have been men who have had glimpses of reality, and have striven to put their vision into words. And with a fresh wonder we discover that our little portion of experience fits into theirs. Suddenly we understand the meaning of such phrases as that he who loses his life shall save it, or that underneath us are the everlasting arms. We find

198

EDITH LYTTTELTON

that the ancient beliefs of the human race are shadows of truth, and that through our own personal sufferings and abnegation we have stepped into the same light which has illuminated countless lives.



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Contents

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... matter appropriate] -
6. Ether.

18. Lodge's contentions

30. reincarnation

47. Metapsychics

55. Spiritualism

56. Theosophy & related

64. Spiritism & related

67. Theosophy & related

71. Theosophy & related

87. Theosophy & related

195 - Cells. etc.



Lodge, Sir Oliver.

BJ

1031

The survival of man.

.L7-



