

The Wayside Philosopher

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COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEAD—A VIEWPOINT

Sir Oliver Lodge's visit is past history. To many it has ceased to be of interest. To others it has been a source of disquietude. To still others a keen disappointment. Few apparently had had any near conception of the man and his message. While many appreciated his sincerity and frankness the number who grasped his doctrines as to death and disembodied spirits was very limited.

Yet on this point Sir Oliver Lodge kept well within the limits both of scientific discovery and Scriptural revelation—in the last analysis ever one and complementary or supplementary, as you will, the one to the other.

It was on the more sensational subject of communication between the dead—so-called—and the living that most people sought to hear him. They perhaps expected a decided assertive after the style and manner of the pin point enthusiast who having made certain of an extremely unimportant fact or matter, proceeds to dogmatize thereon in the most generous manner.

Men of Sir Oliver Lodge's eminence in scholarship are humbler. They realize the tremendous greatness of the unknown, even in those subjects with which they are most familiar, and Sir Oliver gave simply, unaffectedly as a personal thesis, not as an unassailable doctrine, his views of this somewhat discussed subject.

And who shall say as to the correctness of his belief. Who is there, save God Himself, who can attest or deny its correctness? One and all can accept or reject them on grounds of seeming probability or improbability and there the matter must rest. In God's Providence it is an individual question.

Personally the writer's position is this. Death commonly so-called is not death. Life ceases not for an instant. Changed from a form capable of visualization by ordinary eyesight to such form and condition as God wills the life commenced here continues uninterruptedly. Neither asleep for aeons in a narrow grave, nor transported to an illimitable distance from Earth the disembodied spirit remains invisible but persistent like the Great Creative Spirit.

"Nearer than breathing,
Closer than hands and feet."

Communication is a very comprehensive term and one has to travel carefully in dealing with such terms. Taken from the standpoint of intelligible language conveyed or transmitted from the dead—so-called—to the living the writer never expects to receive any such communication, never expects to be brought into personal contact with anyone who has had such a communication.

Will such communication take place? Who can tell? It is possible beyond question and will take place whenever and wherever God permits or desires it. In His hands lies the whole question. Not until He so wills can it happen.

The writer therefore, can but frankly admit the possibility of such communication and state that, in the nature of things, and for the reason that God never acts without a sufficient reason, such communication is improbable. The writer cannot attempt to measure God's mind or fathom His plans. It can only be said that reported communications are to be very doubtfully received, very critically examined, can be generally predicated to be highly improbable. When such are reported as coming through a medium, whether with or with-

out mysterious frippery, one can safely designate the hundred and ninety nine as absurd mummeries. One could not say, however, that God might not sometimes and under some circumstances allow communication.

Whatever may be thus allowed the overwhelming mass of humanity will neither share nor benefit by such communication. We need no such happenings to enable us to accept the central truth of life, viz. that God is the source of all life directing it at will, changing it (by sleep or death as you will) in His own time and according to His own laws. From Him it came and to Him it will return and He has shown abundantly both by His law (Science) and His Word (Revelation) that in Him it lives for ever. More important question by far than Shall I ever in this life hear from the so-called dead? is Am I by my life, preparing myself for such accord as will make eternal companionship with Him a source of constant delight?

When for each of us the summons comes to pass through the valley of the shadow of death (not the valley of Death mark) to those lands whereunto the Lord our God alone is Sun and each one stands naked and alone before the throne of the Eternal it will be asked not, What did you think of Spiritualism in any form? but, What think ye of Christ? And when the sin-burdened soul, conscious in the extreme, of imperfection, of wasted opportunities, of selfish forgetfulness of God and man, hears this question, happy if it can say, in a sincerity that will stand the searching gaze of the Great Judge, "I think of Him as Brother, Saviour, Friend, my plea for pardon and my hope of Life."

PROHIBITION OR GOVERNMENT CONTROL—WHICH?

Government control or prohibition? the issue will soon be in our hands. Are we prepared for it? What has Government control meant when limited by the Prohibition Act to dispensing to such as had medical need and to repressing illegal manufacture and sale of liquor?

It has meant that men paid to the Government and doctors \$8.00 for liquor which should have been theirs for some \$4.00 to \$4.50, at the most, and, even then, the liquor was watered down so that in some cases there was nothing but water and not clean, pure water at that.

It has meant either that the Government extorted a profit of about \$750,000 out of the liquor-needing sick or it has meant that the Government realized that there was no such need and sold for the profit, keeping within certain bounds for simple shame's sake.

Taken either way does Government control appeal to you? Apart from the absence of the bar is there any difference between the conduct of the liquor business by the Government or by the licensed traffic? Is it any gain to the consumer to pay high prices for poor liquor to the Government? Is it good government to have the sick made the subject of profiteering or, to adopt the other suggestion, a huge profit made under the fraudulent pretence of meeting a necessity?

If government control within the limits set by prohibition means this, and it has so meant, what will happen if that control is freed of the restrictions of the Prohibition Act? Would it be safe or desirable? That is the issue. Consider it thoroughly.

Has Government control stopped illicit manufacture and sale? If it has not done so under present conditions how will it do so when the aids of the prohibitory law are removed?

Ponder these questions and vote your honest convictions.