

# Light:

## A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

"Whatsoever doth make Manifest is Light!"—Paul.

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### CONCERNING PREVISION.

A recent article in our contemporary, "The Two Words," remarks that there is "something obnoxious to the rational mind about the whole question of prophecy." Quite naturally, if accurate prediction of future events really implied that human life is entirely under fate and the events of the future fixed and unalterable. That, as we have the best reason to know, is not the case. All the events of the future are potential in the past and present, but there is no mathematical certainty about any of them, although in some cases the chances for a particular event may be as 999 to 1. There is always, as we have observed, some little element of fluidity. We have seen a prediction fulfilled to the letter—we have seen another in which the events foreseen did not fall out exactly as forecast. Some little uncalculated fact came in at the last moment and deflected the current of events. As to an explanation of prevision, we can think of two. They seem different but may not be incompatible—the same thing expressed in two different ways. One is the working out of a chain of sequences, a reasoned statement of the future worked out from the facts of the present. The other refers to the possibility that the human spirit which is outside of and above time may occasionally view the future with the same clearness as that with which the embodied consciousness views the present.

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### SUPERSTITION AND SENSATION.

To a rather dubious story of haunting in a newspaper is attached the description, a "creepy tale." There are so many stories of ghosts and apparitions nowadays, however, that these cheap thrills are soon likely to pall on the public, which will decline to have its flesh made to "creep" in this easy fashion. There is a point beyond which these sensations cease to be child-like and become merely childish. There is a Latin proverb to the effect that everything which is unknown is taken to be magnificent. It certainly seems that the unknown is usually regarded as anything and everything which it is not. Certainly the world of spirits is no longer an unknown region. We have at least learned sufficient of it to know that it contains nothing fearsome and supernatural—nothing to give any sensible person "the creeps." Indeed, some of us are beginning to suspect that the world in which we live holds many things which we have more reason to fear than anything which belongs to that Unseen World which ignorance and superstition between them have embroidered with so many terrors.

### TRUTH.

No matter though it towers to the sky  
And darkens earth, you cannot make the lie  
Immortal; though stupendously enshrined  
By art in every perfect mould of mind;  
Angelo, Raffaele, Milton, Handel, all  
Its pillars cannot stay it from the fall.

GERALD MASSEY.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

### SIR OLIVER LODGE AND "THE BOOKMAN."

The February issue of the "Bookman" contains an article by Mr. Alfred Noyes on "Sir Oliver Lodge's Correlation of Science and Religion"; a portrait of Sir Oliver appears on the cover, and there are other excellent photographs of him in its pages. In his admirable "Appreciation" of the great scientist and his work, Mr. Noyes deals with the changed attitude of science in regard to religion, and the metamorphosis in both which has taken place of late years. Dealing with the exploration of the unseen world upon which advanced science is now entering, Mr. Noyes remarks:

Many unimaginative people are still at the childish stage where they think any attempt in this direction a symptom of insanity. Those who scoff at Sir Oliver Lodge's attempt will do well to remember that he was one of the great pioneers of wireless in the days when fools would have scoffed at this also.

Mr. Noyes also expresses the view that Sir Oliver "is doing for our age what the Greek philosophers did for theirs . . . for he points to a future correlation of science, philosophy, and religion, with an earnestness of purpose and a sincerity of conviction that place him among the prophets of our time."

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### A WIRELESS COINCIDENCE.

Writing in one of the radio newspapers, Mr. K. Lewis Wright, who is the South African Trade Commissioner for Belgium, tells of an astonishing coincidence. He was reading the back page of the "Cape Argus" of October 2nd, and had just reached the line: "the Gila Monster wears a flashy suit of orange and black, or crimson and black," when, to his amazement, he heard the same words coming from the loud speaker of his wireless instrument which happened to be in action at the time. The fact was that the same article was being broadcast from Daventry, and the broadcaster there reached the same line in the article at the same moment as Mr. Lewis Wright, who was then in a Belgian village. An odd coincidence, indeed: although of course there is nothing supernatural about it. Our acquaintance with supernormal or psychic coincidences has taught us that such things are always designed to serve some particular need. We rarely seek to make them public. For one reason they are sometimes too astonishing to be credible.



## THE "MORNING POST" ENQUIRY.

By STANLEY DE BRATH.

## I. THE REPLY BY RELIGIOUS LEADERS.

(Continued from page 75.)

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE says, "I believe that only three supremely great things have ever happened in the history of the world. The first was the monotheistic ideal, which standardised, so to speak, the Central Power: the second was the coming of Christ with his code of ethics which has given us the ideal of human conduct. The third was the coming of Spiritualism, which has opened up another plane of being and has rendered accessible sources of wisdom and guidance which are destined to save the world."

PROFESSOR J. W. GRAHAM (Society of Friends) pleads for the Religion of the Spirit, experimental, independent of external doctrine, ritual or history—however valuable—which needs no clergy, and esteems various parts of the Bible only according to their proved utility. (A formless religion, but desirable.)

MR. HAMILTON FYFE (as a representative agnostic) says, "Christianity, like all other religious teaching, has failed to effect any lasting improvement in human nature because it is based on an idea which cannot be squared with human experience." This idea is that "God is Love," which is incompatible with the war in Nature. It should be reversed—Love is God. "Christ said 'God is within you, not outside.' He implied that there could be no external proof of God, since God had no existence apart from the thoughts and acts and impulses of men." (One would like to see the references in support of these astonishing statements. I wonder to whom Jesus *prayed*!) "The impossible cosmogony was invented in order to subjugate the human race." (!)

THE PRINCIPAL OF LICHFIELD salutes the influence of women as the most effective helpers of the higher humanity. The great fact is the Revelation of Christ. He refers readers to Bishop Gore's *Reconstruction of Belief*.

SIR REGINALD CRADDOCK says that the man who acts on the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man may make valuable contribution to the spiritual life of the nation even if an agnostic on all other points. (True, but the question is how is that belief and action to be brought about with the mass of the indifferent?)

THE ARCHDEACON OF CHESTER calls for a Return to the Gospels and a ministry of preaching.

THE RT. REV. BISHOP W. J. CAREY (Bloemfontein) says, "Many a man who now thinks that religion is personal piety, or (I regret to say) only a sort of fire-insurance, would feel far differently if he would realise that his religion includes the gigantic attempt to alter the whole spirit of the world, and make humanity really human to itself, which at present it certainly is not."

DR. W. E. ORCHARD agrees with Mr. Dark, but admits that men cannot start at this point. We must *all* repent for the sins which have written out their consequences in personal unrest, international warfare and industrial life.

THE BISHOP OF CASHEL AND WATERFORD finds that "the Reformation rendered inevitable all that has since come to pass; authority in religion has been shattered." He asks "Did Christ give authority other than to be good and to do good in His Name?"

CANON OLIVER QUICK thinks there is no patent cure for spiritual unrest. Economic pressure, cheap journalism and expensive amusements are combining to make people more and more incapable of serious thinking upon great issues.

CANON LACEY laments that the tide of emotion produced by the war left "a featureless sentimentality." Belief in God and patience will rebuild.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH (second letter) pays a tribute to Science, and deprecates the confusion of Religion with Theology. He thinks that objections based on the Uniformity of Natural Law, the discrediting of mediæval Theology and of Divine (physical) interventions have little force.

THE REV. HUBERT L. SIMPSON (Presbyterian) predicts the turn of the tide towards spirituality. (Preparations all over Europe for poison-gas war do not look like it!)

CANON GOUDGE (third letter), summing up, gives a definition of "orthodoxy"—assent to the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds; considers all attacks on Christianity strangely antiquated; thinks that the correspondence reveals a new poignancy to the difficulty of believing that "God is Love"; states that this assertion is "based wholly on the Incarnation and the Cross"; recognises that the war and other sufferings are due to misuse of man's moral freedom; and commends the "gay and gallant Christian" who would deify Love and make our action one with our worship. (Assent to the creeds includes the Virgin Birth, the Deity of Our Lord, His Ascension into heaven, the return for an Assize of Judgment and the resurrection of the bodies of the dead. Surely these articles need some explanatory re-statement?)

While I have made some comments, it is not my intention to criticise any of these pronouncements; but it is, I think, obvious that two salient points emerge in which all these authorities are in agreement—devotion to the Person of Our Lord and Master and the necessity for some working philosophy of religion. The same may be said of the bulk of the less authoritative correspondents, though in the agnostic and humanitarian groups devotion to the Personality is replaced by acknowledgment of the ethic; but, surely, if the ethic is supremely true, acknowledgment of the Supreme Personality should naturally follow.

It would be easy to criticise particular points—such as that "Christianity has failed to effect any lasting improvement in human nature." A very slight knowledge of real history (not the lifeless shell taught in schools) confutes this. No doubt dogmatic Nicene Christianity failed to save the Roman Empire, as it may fail to save the British, and the reasons may be found in Gibbon's second volume (ch. xxxi.); but this is precisely because Creed had displaced Religion. Still, when we think of the Roman Coliseum and its "Games," would its gladiatorial fights and spectacles of men and women torn to pieces by wild beasts be tolerated now? Was not this horror actually stopped at the cost of his life by the Christian monk Telemachus? Did not the labours of Celtic and Latin missionaries lay the foundations of civilisation amid the welter of the tribal wars of the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th centuries? Did not Norway emerge from piratic vagabondage by Olaf's introduction of Christianity? A Frenchman who was recently asked what most impressed him in England, replied, the inscription "Supported by Voluntary Contributions" on so many Hospitals and Homes of Refuge. Who laboured most for the welfare of our soldiers and sailors in the war? The Socialists or the confessedly Christian people? But space forbids further analysis.

The very existence of humanitarianism is evidence of the permanent improvement of human nature by Christianity, though it is true, as Mr. Sorabji (an



Indian Christian), says in his most interesting letter, that this sentimentality has produced imaginary pictures of Christ from which all strength and sternness has disappeared. (The Crucifixion has been degraded from a heroic climax to the refusal to play into the hands of a ruling priesthood into an imaginary sacrificial atonement to an offended God; and his love for man is represented as that weak tolerance of evil which Dostoevsky foresaw would be the ruin of Russia.)

The main interest of these letters is that they are typical percentages of current attitudes of mind, but there is one more special point: I pass over the mass of dogmatic letters which, whether Christian or agnostic, merely affirm the writers' convictions, often at issue with physical, natural and historical science. They are summed up by "Traveller" as—"And that's that." I would point out that the concept underlying so many is that Religion is a system of *beliefs*. This vitiates at least half the arguments, even making allowance for the Editor's blue pencil, which may well have emasculated them. Religion, whether Christian or any other, is founded in spiritual intuitions and affinities. It must, of course, have an intellectual basis also, not disparate to the world of sequence and sensation—agreeing with the facts of Nature and History—but these beliefs are Creed, not Religion.

In the next articles I shall endeavour to show that recognition of facts—natural, biologic, historical and super-normal—leads to a religion which is in agreement with them all, and, like early Christianity which it so closely resembles, is "understood of the people," appeals to their spiritual commonsense, and restores "faith" to its proper meaning of trust in the Divine Fatherhood instead of adhesion to such highly metaphysical statements as are contained in the document known as the Athanasian Creed, and there described officially as "The Catholic Faith which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved."

#### DEAN INGE ON THE MYSTIC AND THE INNER LIFE.

In the course of an article in a recent issue of *The Evening Standard*, on "The Man With no Religion," the Very Rev. W. R. Inge defines the Mystic as one "to whom the unseen world is more real than the visible": whose temperament "is a gift like a taste for music or like Wordsworth's insight into the heart of Nature; in its highest form it is a kind of genius." Later on in the same article occurs the following significant passage:—

But it does not follow that all who have something of this gift use it well, or that those who have it not are morally on a lower level. Religion misused is a very evil thing indeed, though it retains all the outward marks of religiosity.

The whole article affords the reader further evidence—if that were necessary—of the learned Dean's deep insight into human nature. There are several other noteworthy passages, one of which is quoted below, as it has a special significance of its own:—

But what, it may be asked, are we to say of those who have no inner life at all, whose whole existence is immersed in external activities, who work and play and chatter incessantly, as if they were afraid to be alone with themselves? Well, there is not much to be said about them; as Matthew Arnold says, they "never once possess their souls before they die." They may think themselves very practical people; they may have a good time, or they may make money. God "gives them their desire, and sends leanness withal into their souls." Whether they call themselves Christians or not, their opinions are of no importance whatever.

Are not these people the very ones to whom the phenomenal aspects of Spiritualism would especially appeal in a beneficial way? Would not their spiritual eyes be opened? It is, at any rate, worth while to bring such matters before them.

L. H.

#### HOUDINI THE MAGICIAN.

By JAMES COATES.

Houdini is dead. Houdini was great. I would speak well of Houdini now. Houdini was a specialist among conjurers all of whom will admit he was an outstanding personality among them. His was the unbeaten track; he was a man of great skill and ability. There was only one Houdini, "Houdini, the Handcuff King."

The world, or "the man in the street," is prepared to accept self-assertion from a man who is able to mystify, excite and humbug it with wonderful performances. Houdini could do that and well deserved his title, "Master Magician." He was a showman—in a dress-suit—who knew "the uses of advertisement," and employed every device to gain publicity. Although his feats had nothing to do with Spiritualism he attacked the subject in order to gain publicity for himself. That was unfair and unjust, but in this respect Houdini was no worse than many others of his profession. Whether he was a psychic or not is of no moment. All his performances and their success were due to skill, *nous*, audacity, courage, physical training and ability. He had great experience. He did nothing without training, forethought and preparation.

To claim that he was a medium or psychic and was therefore helped in his performances by spirit people—good or evil—is only an assumption for which there is neither evidence nor necessity. A similar claim was made by some Spiritualists in the days of the Egyptian Hall. To make a claim of the kind not only shows great lack of the sense of proportion, but a credulity most deplorable.

Maskelyne and Cook were clever conjurers and entertainers. There was no occasion to call in spirit-agency to account for the performance of their marvellous tricks. No wonder conjurers smile and denounce Spiritualists as a deluded lot.

To assert that Houdini dematerialised his body in order to escape from handcuffs, police cells, boxes or tanks and then materialised it again, is absurd. To suppose that spirits train conjurers to do marvellous tricks is ludicrous.

It is credulity of the worst kind—unworthy of men of intelligence—to conclude that because one does not know how certain clever feats are performed, they were therefore produced by spirit-agency. No wonder there are some frauds abroad and at home playing on this unhappy credulity.

Houdini is dead. Houdini was a prince of conjurers and he spoke truthfully when he said, "I am human," and disclaimed doing his works by "Divine power." That his character showed flaws is only to say that, like the rest of us, he was not perfect. But he was a magician, he was unique, and we can give him his due recognition.

#### WORLDLY WISDOM AND SPIRIT GUIDANCE.

By EVA CLARK.

"I have lost a lot of money through following the advice of A's control. She must be a bad spirit."

That was the story with which I was greeted on going to conduct a meeting recently. It raises a question which has caused many Spiritualists much thought: "Are spirit people able to give reliable information on material things?" It depends largely on the nature of the controls. In the case I have quoted the spirit helper was in earth life a little girl belonging to a rather primitive people. To consult her on complicated legal and financial matters was foolish.

On the other hand, there are controls who had and have retained a large amount of worldly wisdom and who take pleasure in giving guidance to those in need of it.

Many people have experienced most valuable guidance as to material things from the spirit world. Frequently it comes unsought. Most often it is given to those who hold this world's goods very lightly. The principle contained in the exhortation to put spiritual things first, with the attendant promise that all needful things will be added, is one on which all the more highly developed spirits act. They do take the trouble to get into touch with earth-conditions, in order that they may give such assistance as will leave us free to attend to more important things. Help and guidance in times of perplexity we can rightly expect, but to go to mediums whose helpers are unknown and untried, and to accept their counsel as infallible, is absurd.

In any case, the final responsibility for any decision we may make rests upon ourselves; it cannot be shifted on to other shoulders, either incarnate or discarnate.



## BEHIND THE SCENES.

BY NEIL GOW.

## A DISCUSSION ON BADGES.

There was a note of genuine regret in the voice of the Sub-Receiving Officer, quite different from his habitual tone of bland and polite indifference.

"That's quite all right!" answered the Young Spirit as he rubbed his streaming hair vigorously with a towel.

The two young men were seated upon the sun-bathed lawn which frames the swimming pool of the Arrival Station at which they were both posted for duty. The apology arose out of the light-hearted action of the Sub-Receiving Officer, who, while disporting himself in the swimming pool in company with the Young Spirit, had held his companion's head under the water for a longer period than that startled young gentleman considered reasonable. Water, in the celestial country, is much like it is with us; it is wet, and can be used for drinking and swimming; on the other hand one cannot drown in it, although a too prolonged submersion may in some cases be followed for a short period by a condition of coma—not unlike a temporary drowning.

"So you see," explained the Sub-Receiving Officer, as he elegantly mopped the streaming moisture from his shoulders, "you couldn't have *drowned*. If you didn't realise that, no wonder you were startled! Anyhow, I'm profoundly sorry."

"Quite all right, old man!" grinned the Young Spirit. He generously decided to change the conversation, feeling that his debonair companion was suffering from a slightly remorseful embarrassment. "In a way," he said lightly, "it's a disadvantage—not being able to drown!"

The Sub-Receiving Officer ceased mopping and stared questioningly.

"I mean," went on the Young Spirit, "it cuts out Heroism. No drowning—no heroic rescues!" He hastily slipped on his tunic as he spoke. "How can I plunge gallantly into the raging torrent and save a drowning man, if the chap can't really drown? There's no credit to it."

"Quite so," agreed the Sub-Receiving Officer, with whimsical seriousness. "Cuts the ground—or rather the water—from under one's feet; the agonised cry for help—the drowning figure going down for the third time—the dramatic and gallant rescue—all this is cut out at one fell swoop." He climbed rapidly into his clothes.

"To be followed," continued the Young Spirit in the same lighthearted strain, "by the interview in the local gazette, with photo (usually a highly libellous effort) and the subsequent presentation of a parchment certificate by the secretary of the Life Saving Society."

"Or better still, a gold medal," retorted the Sub-Receiving Officer, with suitable gravity, as he idly threw a handful of pebbles into the limpid water. "I would insist on the gold medal. What's the use of a certificate? You can't hang it round your neck to attract the admiring gaze of the multitude, whereas a medal —." He broke off and stared curiously at an approaching figure, who bore down upon them from the direction of the Station buildings.

The newcomer was clothed in the earth garments of present day fashion. He was an unassuming, amiable man, to judge from his clean-shaven face, with no special claim to distinction beyond a pair of unusually eager eyes, and a pleasantly naive manner.

"One of the Arrivals," remarked the Young Spirit, glancing over his shoulder. "Hasn't been here very long to judge from his aura," he added.

The Sub-Receiving Officer made no reply. He was staring fixedly at the approaching figure with an air of unusual curiosity.

"Extraordinary coincidence!" he said. "We were just talking about medals."

The Young Spirit followed his companion's glance, which was directed towards a small gold-and-enamel badge which decorated the lapel of the newcomer's coat.

"Good morning, sir! Morning gentlemen!" said the New Arrival briskly. "I'm just looking round the place. Beautiful spot is it not? May I—is it permitted for me to sit on the bank and enjoy the view? I'm an 'Arrival' you know!" Without waiting for permission, the eager gentleman seated himself on the grass and inhaled the warm, scented air with gusto.

"Ah, I see you've noticed my badge," he said affably.

"What is it—life-saving or boy scouts?" asked the Sub-Receiving Officer, showing his white teeth in a half-ironic smile.

"This," said the stranger, swelling his chest with evident pride, in an effort to show his badge to the best advantage, "is my Spiritualistic badge. This badge proclaims my proud and unalterable adhesion to the principles of Spiritualism." He polished the shining emblem with his sleeve and then added, "Of course, this is only the *astral* part of my badge, the actual material portion having been left behind on the earth-plane."

"So I gathered," murmured the Sub, dryly polite. "And may I enquire what are these principles of Spiritualism, your adhesion to which this gaudy decoration bears witness? His voice was gravely courteous, but the Young Spirit, who was listening with great interest to the conversation, seemed to detect a faint note of amusement in his comrade's speech.

The New Arrival, nothing loth, explained to his two listeners what Spiritualism meant. Both the auditors maintained an air of courteous impassivity.

"It seems to me, sir," remarked the Sub, lounging back on the grass, which he plucked at idly from time to time, "that your conception of Spiritualism is, at bottom, the acceptance of a certain fundamental and universal principle of Life."

"Thoroughly universal," agreed the New Arrival, evidently pleased to find his point of view thus interpreted.

The Sub-Receiving Officer remained in thoughtful silence for a few moments. His customary pose of elegant whimsical indifference had temporarily been replaced by one of his rare moods of serious reflection.

"If a thing is *universal*" he went on slowly and thoughtfully, "I hardly see how —." He threw a stone into the swimming pool and looked intently at the rapidly-forming circles on the surface of the transparent water. "I mean to say a badge or a medal—well, they're so definitely *not* universal." He spoke slowly and reflectively, more as one who speaks his thoughts aloud unheeding whether there may be a listener within hearing.

"A medal!" The Sub-Receiving Officer's voice was cogitative. "The whole essence of a medal or badge is that it shall be exclusive. It testifies to something which is not universal, but which is special and particular. The Victoria Cross cuts its wearer off from the common herd. There's no suggestion of 'universality' about it. That's why I hardly see the artistic and poetic justification for wearing a medal for what you call Spiritualism, which—so far as I can understand it—is emphatically *not* special, particular and exclusive."

"Oh, but you don't understand," broke in the New Arrival eagerly, "This badge that I wear enables Spiritualists to recognise each other when they meet."

"Like a secret society," murmured the Sub.

"Not exactly a secret society," protested the visitor. "But it keeps us Spiritualists together; it shows the world that we are not ashamed of our belief; it advertises our cause, and arouses curiosity in the minds of the passer-by."

"Precisely the arguments that one would advance for a medal to be worn by the 'Good Templars,' the 'Independent Workers of the World,' or the exponents of the Flat Earth Theory, or even the members of a ladies' knitting guild." There was no suggestion of irony in the voice of the Sub-Receiving Officer. His tone was gravely polite, but a faint twinkling of the eyes betrayed an inward enjoyment.

"Pardon me," said the New Arrival, "but I fail to see how that affects the case."

"Oh, it *doesn't* affect the case," agreed the Sub, "except upon what I should term interior aesthetic lines. But the 'Independent Workers of the World,' the 'Tram Drivers' Association,' the 'Ancient Order of Bisons,' the 'Grin-and-Bear-It Club'—all these obscure but worthy bodies may appropriately wear badges, medals, sashes, special hat-bands and exclusively patterned neckties. But Spiritualism—as I understand it—seems to be somewhat beyond those types of movement. It seems to carry with it a gigantic and universal idea, something vast and cosmic, something so overwhelmingly removed from these obscure (but, as I said before) worthy movements —."

He broke off musingly. "It's like wearing a medal to advertise the Law of Gravitation."

"I don't agree at all," persisted the New Arrival. "Why should I not prove to the world that I am proud of my beliefs?"

The Sub-Receiving Officer did not reply. He appeared to be immersed in thought.

"Anyway," continued the Arrival, by way of a parting shot. "I know many people who share my ideas on the subject—whatever *your* views may be." Saying which he rose, nodded amiably to the two companions and walked away rapidly.

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"I think," said the Sub-Receiving Officer, with a return to his customary air of disdainful elegance and detached courtesy, "that you and I ought to get up a society of our own, with a fraternal-grip, a hailing-sign, and a highly decorative badge, calculated to 'arouse curiosity in the minds of the passers-by.'"

The Young Spirit giggled. "What shall we call ourselves?" he said.

The Sub-Receiving Officer stifled a yawn. "I suggest," he said languidly, "*The Ancient and Celestial Order of Astral Frothblowers.*"

## NOTES ON THE QUARTERLIES.

### II.—"PSYCHE."

*Psyche* is indeed a remarkable quarterly. It gives one the general impression of being a "most robustious" intellectual country, containing great citadels, from which issue forth giants sword in hand to mighty combats. Sonorously roll the thunders of its vocabulary, and brightly flash the lightnings of wit in its pages. There are also calm periods in which the radiantly obvious comes into its own, and the humble fool "contented if he may enjoy, the things that others understand," can really make out what it is all about—for a time. Dr. Hartgenbusch, for instance, in "Gestalt Psychology in Sport" is quite interesting. We may be puzzled by "Gestalt Psychology," but we can quite grasp that the crowd knows it must hold its peace when the high jumper is collecting himself for his jump, and that it may shout freely when it is encouraging a runner. Also the description of the bicycle race is quite good, except that one would like to know who *does* win in the end.

There is a frontispiece portrait of Mr. John B. Watson, the Behaviorist, who, says the Editor in his own brilliant niche of two pages in the forefront, "must be astonished at his own success. He made a special study of Thought, and loudly declared—first in 1912, and again in 1919—that there was no such thing." Naturally, out sally various professors in the succeeding pages, and treat him, or rather his theory, as Kingsley's creatures treated the Hairy Oubit:—"They tigg'd him a' to pieces sma'," and very well and truly is the "tigg'ing" done. But all extremists are valuable, because they stand for the logical terminus of some line or system, and we can see clearly where to stake our claims by the light of them. But this "Psychology—sans Psyche" makes rare sport for Professor W. B. Smith, who it "reminds too forcibly of 'snakes in Iceland.'" Professor W. M. Wheeler's address at the International Congress of Psychology held in the U.S.A., last autumn, is given in full, on "Emergent Evolution and the Social." Here he leads us gently up, or down, an inclined plane to the conclusion that the remarkable increase in the fore-brain, coupled with a possible lack of fertility, may consign us to extinction with those races of animals that perish of special overgrowth. There is one point in which compensation may be found, however. Turning to Mr. Richard Hope on "Laughter and the Comic," we read, "Man is still very infantile, and those who have taken the next step up the evolutionary ladder, those rare souls in whom a sense of the comic has developed into a sense of humour, are still, alas, very few and far between. Still, the history of the comic shows that they are steadily increasing."

A note in the "Current Intelligence" (p. 99) is likely to be of great interest to our readers, since nearly every name in it is well known to us. Under the heading, "Symposium on Spiritualism," we read:—

"The first practically international symposium on Spiritualism is to begin shortly at Clark University, Worcester, Mass., where authorities in the field will argue the case, both *pro* and *con*."

"Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has already sent his manuscript to be read, and Sir Oliver Lodge has written that he approves the conference. A MS. prepared by Harry Houdini before his death will be read at one of the sessions."

"Other speakers will be Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, husband of the medium "Margery," Prof. Joseph Jastrow, of the University of Wisconsin; Dr. Walter F. Prince, of the Boston Society for Psychic Research; Professor F. C. S. Schiller, Professor of Philosophy at Oxford University; Dr. Gardner Murphy, of Columbia University, Frederick Bligh Bond, Mrs. Margaret Deland, and Prof. Hans. Driesch, Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig University and President of the British Society for Psychical Research."

F. E. L.

THE REV. F. FIELDING-OULD is exhibiting a collection of his Italian sketches at the Walker Gallery, 118, New Bond Street, W., from February 22nd to the 28th, and invites any readers of *LIGHT*, who would care to do so to look in and see them.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(The Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by Correspondents.)

### MRS. ROBERTS JOHNSON'S VOICE MEDIUMSHIP.

Sir,—Referring to Mr. R. H. Saunders' communication in a recent issue of *LIGHT*, pointing out that Mrs. M. I. Ellis was in error in stating that "Joe Watkins" is my guide, may I be permitted to say that the name should read Joe Griffiths. He is a Lancashire lad who attached himself to my spirit group a few years ago. I may add that I obtained several clear records of his conversation each month, also the voice of David Duguid and other spirit communicators.

On the occasion of my next visit to London those desirous of hearing these records will be afforded an opportunity of doing so and also of witnessing the process of record-production, on receipt of personal applications addressed to me, care of The Open Door Library, 69, High Holborn, London, W.C.

Yours, etc.

(Mrs.) ROBERTS JOHNSON.

Stockton-on-Tees.

### THE LATE DR. FELKIN.

Sir,—There may be other readers of *LIGHT* who will recall Dr. Felkin, who passed away in New Zealand on December 28th, 1923. Not only was he formerly an explorer and a missionary, but he was one of the most marvellous psychics that I have ever met. I was not only treated successfully by him on those lines, but he restored to health a very bad victim to dipsomania and drugs, but who, alas, left his care and relapsed into his former evil habits.

Dr. Felkin was much interested in Dr. Kilner's investigations regarding the human aura and had a demonstration in his study at which the late Dr. Lloyd Tuckey, and many others interested in psychical research were present. He lectured on that subject in a most interesting manner, and his knowledge of the anthropology and psychology of native races was very profound.

Yours, etc.,

PAX.

### THE MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.

Mr. George Craze, President of the M.S.A., writes:—

The report of the work of the M.S.A. for the year ending December 31st, 1926, submitted by the Hon. Sec., Mr. F. W. Hawken, to the January meeting of the Council, was one full of encouragement to Spiritualists. It shows steady and consistent progress in every branch of the Society's activities. This is due, in great measure, to the high standard maintained by the speakers and mediums, whose services the M.S.A. have been fortunate enough to secure.

In this connection the Association desires publicly to express its grateful thanks to the following lecturers and mediums who have helped them during 1926:—

*Lecturers.*—Her Grace the Duchess of Hamilton, Mrs. E. A. Cannock, Mrs. Hester Dowden, Mrs. Kelway Bamber, Mrs. Champion de Crespigny, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, Miss Florence Morse, Mrs. B. McKenzie, Miss F. R. Scatterd, Miss Estelle Stead, Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, Mrs. Lucy Smith, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Messrs. Barbanell, H. Boddington, Bligh Bond, Rev. H. Browning, Harold Carpenter, Rev. Drayton Thomas, W. S. Hendry, E. P. Hewitt, K.C., Ernest Hunt, Rev. G. Hall, Rev. J. Lamond, Horace Leaf, Rev. G. Vale Owen, Ernest Oaten, A. Vout Peters, George Prior, G. Simpson, Edmund Spencer, Hannen Swaffer, Frank Vernon and R. H. Yates.

*Mediums.*—Mesdames Barker, Baylis, Brittain, Campbell, Cannock, Cantlon, Collins, Gladys Davis, Hadley, Annie Johnson, Kingstone, Kent, Mansfield, Morse, Mills, Marriott, Neville, Annie Patterson, Taylor Woodhall, Frances Tyler, and Messrs. Colman, Glover Botham, Leigh Hunt, Horace Leaf, Maskell, Melton, Harvey Metcalfe, Vout Peters, Punter, Edmund Spencer and Albert Taylor.

And, finally, the Council would like to express its great appreciation of the valuable help which the M.S.A., and the Spiritualist movement generally have received from *LIGHT*.

MR. R. H. SAUNDERS, writing in reference to the article, "A Christmas Tree for the Children of Two Worlds," which appeared in our issue of January 8th, says:—

"I have heard from many parts of the world where the little story of the Christmas Tree has been read, but I was surprised to find that *LIGHT* has penetrated to that lonely isle in the South Atlantic, Tristan da Cunha, and I should think *LIGHT* is more needed there than in any other part of the world."

Tristan da Cunha, it may be added, is one of the loneliest colonies in the world, having a total population of about one hundred and fifty souls, who rely for many of the necessities of life upon the one or two ships which call there in the course of the year.



## LIGHT.

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## "CLEARING THE LINE."

### CAUSES OF CONFUSION IN PSYCHIC MESSAGES.

Those who study the subject of spirit communication are familiar, either directly or indirectly, with the question of nonsensical or deceptive messages. There are instances of each—sometimes it is mere rigmarole, and sometimes an intelligible communication which turns out on examination to be spurious. Opinions vary as to the cause or causes. Recently we listened to a group of Spiritualists who were discussing the subject and a gentleman of long and wide experience gave his view: it was that these errors and failures were always the result of the "power" at the seance being weak. It seemed a rough and ready generalisation, but when we came to reflect on the point we began to realise the truth of it. We remembered that spurious messages in our own experience had always or nearly always happened in circles where the "power" was feeble, either from discordant conditions or for other reasons. We had frequently noticed that in such cases, either nothing at all happened, or that if an attempt was made to force the manifestations the results were unfortunate—the communications became confused and misleading. What little "power" was present was scattered or used at random.

Daily experience shows us that for good and accurate work of any kind there must be concentration. A writer, for instance, must focus his mind on his task. If his mental energies are low or his mind distracted, queer blunders make their appearance in his writing. In extreme cases, it may become wild and erratic. It seems highly probable that something of this kind may happen in the case of at least some of the failures and defects in psychic messages.

We are still very much at the beginnings of what has been called "spirit telegraphy," and it is always profitable to examine the causes of errors in transmission. The one we have noted probably covers a very large part of the question, viz., failure of "power." That "power" depends very much on the degree of rapport between the medium and the circle, and those unseen communicators who, as we have every reason to know, have their own difficulties, the precise nature of which we cannot always comprehend. They have told us that apart from the special conditions of a circle, unknown factors may come in. There are times and tides and seasons—sometimes these are favourable, sometimes they are adverse. More than once spirit communicators have

compared the matter to the ebb and flow of a tide, which alternatively carries them towards us and bears them away—speaking figuratively, of course.

Those who have sat in circles where the communications by independent voice or otherwise have been clear, vigorous, and sustained, answering every test of genuineness, and who can compare such experiences with others where the messages have been broken and confused, will know how the standards of communication can vary. Nor is it always easy to discover the cause of the failure, for the sitters and the conditions in each instance may be very much the same, yet the "power" on some occasion has broken down for no detectable reason. It may well be that in such failures there are large impersonal causes outside of our knowledge, but comparable, as suggested, to the ebbing and flowing of some cosmic tide.

Meanwhile, it is worth considering whether the explanation of confused and deceptive messages, viz., defective psychic power, is not, as a general rule, the true one. We know how readily the mind will fabricate ideas when there is a lack of conscious control and direction. Then it is the fertile source of what have been called "subliminal romances," stories which hang together but have little or no basis of fact.

Science is slowly leaving the realm of matter for the region of mind. There is much exploration to be done in the new territory, and we doubt not that the scientific spiritualist is amongst those best equipped for bringing it "under rule and chart." And no small part of the work will lie in the direction of "clearing the line" in this matter of spirit communication.

### THE PORTAL.

O, what a lovely West!

The little golden clouds are all adrift,  
In opal space, where colours change and shift.  
And upwards, spreading o'er the tender blue,  
Like wings, are lines of silver white, and through  
The whole a peace no words may say,  
Over this first sweet autumn day,  
The sky that you loved best!

Surely some quickening breath,  
But now, thro' all the garden moved, for there,  
The poplars at its breath bent as in prayer!  
Here the same flowers you loved a year ago,  
Are all aglow again, smiling as though  
No change had come. A songster trills,  
In the remembered key. It stills  
But me this wind of Death!

For I have left all fears.  
No passion stirs, no hope and no desire,  
Only a round of thought that wakes to tire!  
In trance I seem to trace the season through.  
Dreaming, 'twas here we planned what we should do,  
When summer should have come again—  
My life with silence is o'er-lain,  
And being spent with tears!

You could not hear my call?  
The spire, as then, stands clear against the sky;  
Your pigeons, as of old, about their dovecote fly,  
And the great world beyond our garden space,  
We queried of, keeps the same dazzling face.  
Your silence, 'tis that makes the pain—  
If you could speak from out your plane,  
And free me from this thrall!

Only this chill despair!  
Yet even as I stood, I felt the change,  
For life grew warm! And, wonderful and strange,  
A something touched me from your dwelling-land—  
A voice, a movement. Some sweet life-wind fanned  
My brows, and I was borne to you,  
Or else you came the sunset through,  
Though viewless as the air!

FRANCES TYRRELL



FEBRUARY 19, 1927

# LIGHT

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## FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

The "subconscious mind" is so far from being generally understood that it may well be looked at again and again from different angles, and as envisaged by various minds. In *The Banner of Life* there is an interesting article on Dual Minds, by Edward C. Randall, quoted from *The Harbinger of Light*. Here are a few excerpts from it:—

It is now known that we have two minds as well as two bodies. The sub-conscious mind functions in the etheric brain of the inner body; the conscious mind functions in the physical brain of the outer body. . . . The conscious mind is something else besides being a centre of nerve impulses controlling the action and movements of the body. It has a far greater relationship to the universe, to our fellowmen, and to God. The mind is the dynamo that is constantly generating thought forms. These thought forms have shape, size and colour, and potentialities appalling to those who understand clearly the functions of the conscious mind.

\* \* \* \*

To what extent the conscious mind penetrates and records its action on the other mind is not yet agreed; but in the article from which we are quoting the author says it is the subconscious mind which survives death, "carrying the imprints made on it by the conscious mind, which does not survive." Whether there is in his view some confusion of the concept "conscious mind" with the ordinary action of the brain (which is physical, and must die) we cannot here inquire. Let it be noted, however, that the term "mind" does not belong to the same category as "brain." *Mind* is not physical. As regards the subconscious, Mr. Randall writes:—

The sub-conscious, or super-sensitive mind, which so many people know not, although they possess it, is a fourth dimensional mind, or the mind of the astral body, contained within your three dimensional, physical body. The sub-conscious mind, being fourth dimensional, is subject to that unerring law of accuracy, which is dominant in the fourth dimensional or etheric plane. Therefore, the sub-conscious mind, because it is accurate, should dominate the conscious mind, which is likely to be inaccurate because it operates only in the third dimension and is subject to the desires of mankind, limited by environment and by all sorts of conditions.

\* \* \* \*

Troubled with the proposition that man has two minds as well as two bodies, Mr. Randall referred his difficulty to Dr. David Hosack, an inhabitant of the spirit world, for more than a century, with whom he had been in communication for thirty years, and whose statements had always been found to be reliable. Abbreviated, Dr. Hosack said:—

As you have two bodies, the material and the spiritual, so you have two minds. The spirit mind is that which comes from the infinite, and is clothed with the material at conception. It is life-force, and cannot be destroyed. . . .

The material mind is the conscious mind. It functions through the direction of the spirit mind, unconsciously, of course, as the spirit mind, in the majority of men, is enwrapped so closely with gross material folds that it is rarely discernible. However, the two are as separate and distinct as your two bodies.

\* \* \* \*

*The Daily News* (8th February) has an article concerning the mediumship of Mr. George Valiantine, through whom the voice of Confucius, the Chinese philosopher who died in 478 B.C., is claimed to have been heard at recent séances in New York. Dr. Neville Whymant, assistant in Chinese at Oxford University from 1913 till 1915, was present. The New York correspondent of the *News* says that Dr. Whymant believes he had heard recited in Chinese one of the poems edited by Confucius in the Chinese classics, and "heard it recited in a way which, for the first time, makes it an intelligible whole and clears up difficulties which have hitherto puzzled experts in the language." Voices speaking languages of which Mr. Valiantine is entirely ignorant were listened to by Dr. Whymant, who speaks thirty Oriental and other tongues:—

For some minutes he carried on a conversation with a voice purporting to be that of an Italian. Then he heard a voice speaking a language which puzzled him till he realised that he was listening to Chinese of a refinement and delicacy, he says, which is spoken nowhere to-day.

The voice asserted that it was that of the spirit of Confucius and answered questions about the classics of ancient China. After a conversation in Chinese had lasted for some minutes, Dr. Whymant said there were many poems in the classical poetry unintelligible to readers.

"Such as?" said the voice.

Thereupon Dr. Whymant recited the first line of one such poem, the spirit voice at once continuing it to the end of its sixteen lines, the translation differing from that by Professor James Legge, whose version has been regarded as the best one.

Mr. Valiantine has just arrived on a visit to this country for the purpose of psychic research work.

\* \* \* \*

From an article by Dion Fortune in *The Occult Review* we take a passage on the Group Mind, a phase of psychological action too little considered:—

One may conceive of the group soul of our race lying deep down, below sub-consciousness; but one may conceive of the group mind of any organised body of people as an oversoul, a vast, brooding, artificial elemental, potent for good or evil, under whose light or shadow each individual member of the group carries on his life. The influence of a group mind is incalculable and but little understood. It must suffice to say that whenever anyone joins an organisation he comes under the influence of a group mind, and the more closely knit and more highly emotionalised the organisation, the stronger the influence over its members. Therefore, it behoves us to be very careful what groups we join, for there are few souls who can maintain themselves untouched by group influence.

\* \* \* \*

In the correspondence columns of the above *Review* is a rather important communication by Iona Davey on the new edition of *The Secret Doctrine*:—

As one of those who helped in the work of comparing Mrs. Besant's Edition of *The Secret Doctrine* with the original, I can testify to the accuracy of the statement made by Dr. Stokes in the *O. E. Critic*, of October 21st, 1921. He had received a letter from one who was doing this work, who wrote as follows: "We have been checking Mrs. Besant's Third Edition of *The Secret Doctrine* against the original text. It is a big task and takes time. So far the comparison has been made of about four hundred pages of Vol. 1, and that comparison shows more than eight thousand actual variations from the text of the original edition. . . ."

A page of examples is given in the *Review*, and the writer in concluding says:—

The disfigured pages reveal how terribly the original MS. has been tampered with, and would shock any unbiassed person even if it concerned the posthumous work of an ordinary writer. How much more shocking is such an act of vandalism in connection with *The Secret Doctrine*, which was so largely inspired and corrected by the Master Himself!

\* \* \* \*

The *Evening Standard* tells "two creepy stories" taken from the *Gazetta del Popolo*, of Turin, obtained at an interview with the Countess Napierkovna, formerly at the court of the Tsaritsa. Referring to the late Tsar as a believer in spirits, and in the goodness of their power, he is thus reported:—

One evening I was in my study when I heard a noise in the next room, which I knew to be empty. I summoned the sentry and opened the door. My blood became frozen with horror; for there on a bier, surrounded by lighted candles, was my dead father, just as I had seen him for the last time in the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul.

I turned round and saw the sentry pale as death, his rifle in his hand. I commanded him to remove the bier. He advanced with his weapon and touched the bier with his bayonet. It immediately disappeared, and the sentry fell to the ground dead. My doctor who afterwards examined him said that death was due to a terrible shock.

\* \* \* \*

The *Sphere* repeats the story told by Archdeacon Lovett in the parish magazine of St. Thomas' Church, Portsmouth, concerning the experience of a friend who was sitting in the unlighted church at dusk on December 29th, which is the anniversary of the murder of St. Thomas á Becket by four knights of Henry II., more than seven hundred and fifty years ago:—

Suddenly he saw a tall figure dressed in the habit of a monk of the Middle Ages. His habit was torn to shreds and bloodstained, while his arms were wounded, and the crown of his head most terribly injured. At first the onlooker was afraid and covered his eyes, but when a deep voice began to utter over and over again in Norman French the prayer, "Keep, we beseech Thee, this church with Thy perpetual mercy," he joined in, and so they prayed together until the verger entered to prepare the church for evening service and the figure disappeared.



## THE ENLARGEMENT OF LIFE.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. F. FIELDING-OULD, M.A.

To the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Wednesday, 9th inst., the Rev. F. FIELDING-OULD delivered an address, which the Chairman, the Rev. Dr. JOHN LAMOND, at the close of the meeting, described as one of the most inspiring and illuminating to which he had ever listened.

Mr. Fielding-Ould's subject was the "The Extension of Consciousness," and he enriched his theme with many illustrations from the lives of the saints, from history sacred and secular, and from the experiences of daily life. He treated his subject more from the philosophical than the scientific standpoint. He began by asking, "What is consciousness?" Consciousness was not simply knowledge, if by knowledge we mean mere cognisance of facts (for example, the historical fact that Rome was sacked in 1527). It really meant *digested* and *assimilated* knowledge, knowledge pondered over, understood in its relation to other facts and fully realised, the conclusions arrived at rather than the facts upon which they are based, the mental product of the manifold experiences of life. Facts might be forgotten, but each in its moment of activity had its appropriate effect upon the consciousness.

"Thus," said Mr. Fielding-Ould, "Napoleon in my consciousness is the conception of him to which a thousand facts have contributed, and a new fact—the discovery for instance of some kind deed which he did—would involve a revision of my mental picture. Evelyn Underhill speaks of those who 'live in a stuffy world, while their inheritance is a world of morning glory,' because they have not 'opened the windows' of the spirit."

Proceeding, the lecturer said that the general impression, the floating atmosphere of consciousness, was more important to the character than knowledge. Apart from all dogmas and details, the consciousness of Christianity was *love*, and when it first came to this country its genius overwhelmed the religion it found here. Christianity had taught the absurd doctrine of the return at the last day of the disembodied soul to seek its old body. The Druids, on the other hand, taught emphatically that the next life is already an *embodied* life, that the soul was no wraith or spook, and that the other world was like this but better; very much the same teaching as Spiritualism gave. Although the Druids were thus in advance of their Christian teachers, they were soaked in blood, they practised human sacrifice, accompanied by tortures. What one might call the "consciousness" of Christianity therefore was immeasurably superior; mere knowledge, however exact, was of no avail against it.

Consciousness sometimes *opened*, not as a door, but as though a fold were smoothed out. Something with which we had previously been quite familiar was suddenly found to have a new meaning, a depth and importance which we had never suspected. This was especially common in religious matters. Such phrases as "The Father," or the "Good Shepherd," suddenly revealed a new significance. An idea such as that of the *Presence of God* with which we might have toyed for years, came to be a moving truth. It had penetrated from the outward vestibule of unrealised knowledge, into the inner sanctuary of the soul. We were suddenly enriched; the personality became endowed as with a legacy, we had assimilated and made our own another aspect of truth.

It was for lack of such experiences that the creeds and dogmas of religion might become stale and meaningless, without influence on the mind or life. That was the common experience with those who had brought it upon themselves by neglect of what are called "the means of grace."

The pleasures of existence were on a sliding scale and a person's enjoyment was determined as much by his *capacity* as by his *environment*. Circumstances could not give a man pleasure apart from the co-operation of his own consciousness. At the bottom of

the scale were the animal satisfactions—to be warm and well-fed. The mental and emotional pleasures were on a higher level, but were only possible to the awakened capacity. The spiritual joys were higher still, but the consciousness of many persons was as firmly closed against them as that of the monkey content with a straw bed and a mouthful of nuts, and incapable of enjoying poetry. The various grades of the emotion of love were a good example of this truth. At its lowest it was mere brutality, the stimulation of the rudimentary nervous system. Then choice and selection entered; predilection grew into affection; affection deepened into real love. It was no longer self-seeking and a means of self-gratification; it became more and more desirous of securing the well-being and happiness of its object.

At this point the lecturer gave some remarkable illustrations from the love of Dante for Beatrice, Petrarch for Laura, Leonardo dei Medici for Lucrezia Donati, Michael Angelo for Vittoria Colonna.

Our heaven must be determined by our *capacity* as well as by our *merit*. We might ask ourselves what kind of heaven would content us, and in the answer we should see the level of our aspiration and the condition of our consciousness. We should enlarge our receptiveness in order to attain a finer sense of apprehension and to make ourselves capable of nobler contacts.

There were people who suddenly attained wealth which they did not know how to use. The extremely expensive but deplorably tasteless furnishing of their houses portrayed their inner nature. They would buy a library, having themselves no inclination or power to gather the treasures which it held. They bought pictures, but their only pleasure in these was to hear their guests praise them. So might a man find himself at a level hereafter, whose possibilities he was quite unable to appreciate. The thought life was the real life: "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

Many ideas and impressions wandered into the vestibule of the outer mind, and we were at liberty to reject them or to admit them into the treasure-house of the consciousness. Unwise reading and degrading companionship were apt to fill the consciousness with much undesirable matter, and we ought to guard carefully the portals of the mind. The knowledge of evil was not necessarily in itself defilement. There was no foul mud turned up by the waves of human depravity which was not perfectly known to God; but there was a mental process, analogous to that of the white corpuscles which destroy disease germs, by which a man might know, without the sympathetic participation which shared the crime, as Milton had said:—

Evil into the mind of God or man  
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave  
No spot or blame behind.

Everything pointed to the fact that the next life would be much more essentially than this a *thought-life*. We were told that even now we were making the conditions, the very environment of our next life, that we were developing a consciousness which would be able to receive certain impressions there, and be blind to and unconscious of others. Heaven or hell and any intermediate place or condition were in man's own consciousness, in his power of response to impressions elevated or debased. We should give scope to thoughts and deeds of love and appreciation, and one might even in this world feel a magic change in our environment as though a soft, rosy light had begun to glow round about us, and we breathed a balmy and health-giving atmosphere.

Man's progress was accompanied by the gradual opening out of his consciousness. Indeed, it might be said that his progress consisted essentially in this process. There were numbers of people whose whole ambition was to get rich. They imagined that if only they could have enough money they would have access to everything. It was of course an utter fallacy. Real riches alone were possessed by the man with a widely-extended consciousness, and if he had raiment and food he might be content.



His vision of truth was man's own possession. It was unalienable and incommunicable. He could tell someone of it in broken phrases, but he could not share it with them. One reason was that we could not accept a truth until we were ready for it. The martyrs died, as was supposed, by sheer obstinacy, holding an opinion and an argumentative position in spite of overwhelming reasons to the contrary. It was, however, a much stronger thing than a mere opinion which the martyrs held. They *knew*, they had *seen*. Faith might seem a flimsy speculative faculty, but it presently made its object a solemn reality.

The imagination was a faculty which had to be taken seriously. It was not a mere weaver of baseless fiction, it might be used to clothe what came from the other side merely as an impulse or a wave of power.

We needed before all things a widening and enriching of consciousness. This was doubtless the aim of the rituals, and the initiations of the old religious ceremonies such as the Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries.

Amongst the forces which had proved themselves to be powerful levers for opening the door of consciousness, the lecturer cited Spiritualism, which sometimes effected remarkable changes in the mental and spiritual outlook of its students. Beauty, again, might act on certain sensitive and appreciative spirits as a wonderful opener of consciousness. Another potent means of opening the inner possibilities of the soul was music. But all these modes of soul-growth were somewhat spasmodic. The normal and sure method was by the exercises of religion. Prayer was the essential and fundamental factor. It was the spiritual urge which was of the first importance.

Religion was the science of the approach to God, the gradual moving from the circumference towards the flaming centre of all things.

In conclusion, Mr. Fielding-Ould said:—

It is infinitely important that we should store our consciousness with beautiful and healthy ideas, and use those well-tried means which will open up new and undreamed-of vistas of splendour. We have a house to furnish and shall be very foolish if we fill it with any rubbish which comes to hand.

"I am as God made me," says a man in excuse for some fault.

It is false. We make ourselves. We are the product of innumerable thoughts, and "if you are ugly at sixteen, you can't help it, but if you are ugly at sixty, it is your own fault!" (Applause.)

A vote of thanks to the lecturer was moved by Dr. Robert Fielding-Ould, and seconded by Mr. Henry Collett. Grateful acknowledgements were also given to the chairman, the Rev. Dr. Lamond, and with a general sense of the impressive and interesting nature of the occasion the meeting dispersed.

THE NATIONAL LABORATORY OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH may be congratulated upon the issue of their new "Proceedings," the first number of which has just been issued, and a copy of which is being forwarded gratis to all members of the Laboratory. The current "Proceedings," which is well printed and excellently got up, contains an exhaustive report of the telekinetic and other phenomena of Eleanore Zugun, and is illustrated with photo plates and diagrams as well as being provided with a useful index. The price to non-members is 3s. 6d. net.

MRS. PHILIP CHAMPION DE CRESPIGNY, the well-known novelist, artist and psychical researcher, has found time in the midst of a busy life to embark upon another field of activity—the dramatic. "The Spanish Prisoner," a romantic costume play of which she is the author, will be presented at the Little Theatre, Leeds, by the Leeds Repertory Company, on Wednesday, the 23rd inst. Mrs. de Crespigny is also exhibiting, at the Ridley Art Club, Spring Gardens Galleries, London, a group of pictures among which two very charming water-colours, "A Busy Corner" (No. 238), and "The Condamine, Monaco" (No. 178) deserve particular notice.

MESSRS. THE GEM SUPPLIES, LTD., 67, Southwark Street, London, S.E.1, will be pleased to forward upon request a free booklet giving information about their portable Turkish baths, which they recommend as a means of toning and stimulating the physical system, and safeguarding against rheumatism, sciatica, lumbago, nervous depression and influenza (Advt.).

## RAY'S AND REFLECTIONS.

We are in February—"moon of half-candied meres, and flurrying, fading snows," as Henley called it. It is the month of "unkindly rains," when "the lawns grizzle o' nights and wet fogs search the fold." Its psychic significance, according to the astrologers, is that it is the month of the zodiacal sign Pisces, in which many mediums and psychic people are born. A watery month, it abounds in that element which is said to be the negative symbol of Spirit. Did not the ancient Greek mystic—his name has for the moment escaped me—say that the Soul desired always to be wet?

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Arthur Machen, whose stories and essays have met with wide appreciation, occasionally discourses in the *Observer* on occultism. Indeed, some of his books have dealt with the occult and mystical side of life, but these have usually been along romantic rather than realistic lines, their literary charm being their essential quality.

\* \* \* \*

In one of his recent essays in the *Observer*, under the general head of "Queer Things," Mr. Machen says that a correspondent sent him an account of two gnomes which she saw at Saffron Walden some years ago. It is an interesting little story, especially when I compare it with the many stories I have listened to from persons who claim to have seen fairies.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Machen puts his correspondent's vision of the gnomes down to hallucination—mental images projected from the mind. As he well observes, "it should always be our practice to accept the more probable rather than the less probable theory." That is a good rule, and I wish some of the more obstinate sceptics would observe it, instead of trying to account for well-authenticated psychic facts by theories remote and improbable to the last degree.

\* \* \* \*

On this question of gnomes and fairies, however, we have to proceed with extreme caution, even at the risk of annoying some good people who are ready to take oath that they have seen the elves. They are not at all fanciful or imaginative, some of these people. I know one burly man, a practical matter-of-fact person who follows the law and is good at field sports, who tells a circumstantial story of meeting a gnome in a wood. The little creature ran in front of him and guided his steps to a flint arrow-head. My friend collects these ancient flints.

\* \* \* \*

Now I find it almost as hard to disbelieve this story as to believe it. On the whole, I am disposed to take the view of a famous scientist who, discussing the question of seeing fairies, said that for him the problem was not so much whether the seers really saw anything as what it was that they really saw.

\* \* \* \*

If what they see is something projected from their own minds, well, that is a phenomenon worth investigation—there is something very suggestive about it. And when fairies are not only seen by more than one witness, but actually photographed as in the case of the famous fairy photographs, the question becomes more interesting than ever. But we are not likely to settle it until we have more knowledge of our minds and their possibilities as creative agencies.

\* \* \* \*

Some remarks in a Sunday paper on the subject of fear have not only a general but a psychological interest. Thus, it is stated that a person rarely suffers from fear when it is useless and can no longer serve any purpose in protecting one from danger. In a situation in which death appears inevitable, fear goes and its place is sometimes taken by curiosity. We remember how David Livingstone when in the jaws of the lion felt no sensation but that of a languid curiosity as to how the lion would eat him. And we know how sick people in danger of death ordinarily behave—they are serenely indifferent. That this should be the case, even when in the sufferer's mind the shadow of death is blackened by the superstitions of the old theology, shows the providence of Nature and the triumph of the spirit over the falsities of the mind.

D. G.



## PUNISHMENT IN THE NEXT WORLD.

The following is sent us by Mr. Duncan Campbell, of Glasgow, who states that it was received through automatic writing by a member of the Glasgow Society for Psychical Research on Christian Lines:—

Upon their arrival here, we often find that newcomers are overcome with a terrible dread of immediate and overwhelming disaster. Many indeed who have led wicked and sinful lives, feel not unnaturally so. We also observe that many whom we could not class as wicked and sinful persons, upon arrival here anticipate nothing better than immediate consignment to all the torments of Hell. Why this should be so, we cannot exactly tell, since nowhere in His teaching does your Saviour ever lead you to think that such will be the case. Perhaps it may be due to wrong teaching or instruction; but in any case, it is wrong.

Your conception of your Saviour is sadly at fault if you can only conceive of Him as a revengeful Deity, only awaiting your arrival here in order to demand immediate expiation for all the sins you have committed during your stay on earth. Do you think when He commanded you to forgive your brother unto seventy times seven, He Himself had no intention of practising the advice He gave you?

I am not here going to tell you about the love of Christ for all His people; I could tell a very great deal about it, and give you many remarkable instances to prove it.

Well, such being the case, how can you conceive of a loving and long-suffering Father merely awaiting your arrival in these spheres in order to wreak vengeance upon you, and render your future life a misery? No, the conception is entirely wrong and quite inaccurate; I want you to dismiss it from your thoughts, both now, and upon your arrival here. No one is condemned to eternal perdition here, saving indeed those who may voluntarily elect to be subjects of Satan and work his will; even in their case, we always look forward to the time when the misery of their lives, after years of wrongdoing, will one day lead them back to our fold.

Eternal punishment may exist for all we know, since the conditions in these far off evil spheres are only imperfectly known to us, but we are fully aware of the misery, torment and degradation to be found there.

## SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY SERVICES

REV. G. VALE OWEN ON "THE WORD OF GOD."

In the course of his address at the Grottrian Hall on Sunday morning last Mr. Vale Owen said that the word of God is perfect and infallible, but the Bible is not, though it is the most wonderful book in the world, and the most perfect record of psychic happenings. In 1325 after the Council of Nicea, the Scriptures were handed to Scholars or Correctors, and they had to correct and alter the Sacred Writings in order to bring them into conformity with the doctrines lately compiled by the Council. This is stated to be the case by the late Archdeacon Wilberforce. One of the texts that anti-spiritualists quote is "The soul that turneth after familiar spirits, I will turn my face against that soul" (from Leviticus), and is repeated in Deuteronomy, but this was given to the Israelites for their guidance when they should occupy Canaan. Now the Canaanites were among the lowest and most debased of the human races that were inhabiting the earth at that time, and it would have been a terrible thing should the Israelites have had private séances or gone to any of the existing mediums that were living in the land, as owing to the terrible conditions, nothing but evil could have ensued. Moses therefore forbade them to do so at all, telling them that the Lord would provide right mediums whom they could consult. Minute instructions were given as to the thorough cleansing of the ground where the Séances were to be held in order to get rid of sordid and evil conditions. Another episode that Mr. Vale Owen took was the much maligned "Witch of Endor." She was not a witch at all, but a woman of good education and breeding. The word was used by the compilers of the Bible at the time of James the First in order to please the King, as he had written a book against witches. Paul, in the New Testament, gives the list of various Mediumistic gifts which he affirms are all from the self-same spirit, and St. John told his followers to test the spirits, and see whether they were God-sent, otherwise to have nothing to do with them.

M. J. C.

FITNESS FOR THE HIGHER COMMUNION.—"In the prayer for intercourse there must be no tinge of claim, of jealousy, or selfish desire. Nothing must remain but a pure and utterly disinterested love which, while asking for this supreme consolation, is prepared to submit should it be withheld. When in all humility the stricken heart is ready to surrender, to accept, to renounce all passionate claim, all self-pity, then indeed it may be possible for a few moments, to experience and endure the vibrations of a wider life, and unresisting, uncomplaining, be raised to a sudden realisation that he who loses his life does literally find it, and that underneath us are the Everlasting Arms."—"The Faculty of Communion," by EDITH LYTTLETON.

## MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.

MISS ESTELLE STEAD AT ÆOLIAN HALL.

It was owing to the efforts of past generations, said the Speaker that the world had reached the present stage of knowledge in matters psychic; and, upon the progress made by this generation depended the psychic and spiritual status of those who came after us.

Hidden within each one of us were centres of psychic force awaiting intelligent encouragement; every one of us was capable of a greater psychic sense than we at present realised.

Many of us, said Miss Stead, were like houses with all the blinds drawn, and admitting neither light nor heat from the sun's rays. We should raise the veil of our consciousness, accept the gifts of the spirit, and develop these psychic powers. With patience and self-sacrifice this spiritual awakening was within the reach of all. But, indeed there was no use in joining a developing circle unless the development was also practised in the home. Each soul must be its own Saviour, and must continue to advance in spiritual progress towards perfect union with the Soul of the universe.

That sanctity which was within the soul was the only reality. It was written over the doors of certain ancient temples: Man know thyself; knowing thyself, thou knowest all mysteries.

Miss Stead read messages of hope and encouragement from her Father, and quoted, too, his words: "Spiritualism is the teaching of Christ brought up to date."

The service concluded with descriptions and spiritual messages given by Mrs. Annie Patterson which were much appreciated.

V. L. K.

## NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"HEALING THROUGH SPIRIT AGENCY." By R. H. Saunders. (Hutchinson & Co., 3/6 net.)

Mr. R. H. Saunders has a clear and concise style which adds considerably to the interest of this book, which deals mainly with the beneficent activities of the Persian philosopher and physician, Mowaffikeddin abu Mohamed Allatif ben Yussef, known as Abduhl Latif. This personage was born in the twelfth century, and is recognised among scholars as a man of distinguished parts; an original manuscript of Abduhl Latif, says Mr. Saunders, now rests in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Many details of his earth life are given in this book, the main interest of which, however, centres round the manifestations of the Persian doctor through the agency of several well-known mediums.

Some of the cures affected by Abduhl, as set out by the author, are strikingly dramatic. Mr. Saunders states that he is not authorised to publish the names of all the patients at present, but is in possession of every detail of these cases as well as a large number of grateful letters from those who have benefited by the healing powers of the Persian spirit and his assistants. The unseen operators specially requested that there should be submitted to them cases of serious disease such as could not easily be dealt with by the medical profession, and in the instances quoted there are records of septic poisoning, paralysis, consumption, cancer, and other dread afflictions, which have been removed or alleviated through spirit agency.

Of no less interest is the portion of the book in which are quoted the answers given to questions submitted during séances upon the conditions in the next state of existence, as well as upon a host of other topics which students of other-world matters find perplexing. The subjects are dealt with simply and convincingly, and in a manner that will not strain the credulity of the uninitiated.

Mr. Saunders, as is known by most readers of these pages, has done much valuable active work for the cause of Spiritualism. The public attention which was called to our subject by the late George R. Sims, who testified to the relief he obtained from the Spirit doctor, Abduhl Latif, was indirectly due to Mr. Saunders, who induced the veteran journalist to inquire into the matter and gave him facilities for investigation. Considerable public interest was also aroused by the "Christmas Tree" séances (a record of which appeared in LIGHT, and which are referred to in detail in this book), which were inaugurated by Mr. Saunders, who may now be further congratulated on the authorship of a work of considerable importance.

J. A. N. C.

## NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"Azal and Edras." Vol. 2. By Frederic Irving Taylor. Selwyn & Blount, Ltd. (6/-.)

"Monkeys of Hai Tu." By Maxwell Carnson. Hutchinson (7s. 6d.)

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

INQUIRER (Canterbury).—Thank you. The experience interesting but too slight to justify publication.

F. J. ATKIN.—We are obliged for your letter, but the message, although sound and sensible, is hardly worth repetition, as the advice in it is so often given.



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 Thursday, Feb. 24th, at 8.30 p.m.  
 Group Psychometry. (Bookings) ... MRS. ANNIE JOHNSON  
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#### Public Clairvoyance.

Friday, Feb., 18th, at 8 p.m. ... MRS. BRITTAIN  
 Friday, Feb. 25th, at 8 p.m. ... MRS. TYLER

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 Spirit-descriptions and messages.  
 " " " 6.30 p.m. Mr. ALFRED VOUT PETERS,  
 Address, Spirit-descriptions and messages.  
 Wednesday, February 23rd, 7.30 p.m. ... Mrs. FRANCES TYLER,  
 Address, Spirit-descriptions and messages.  
 Healing, Tuesdays, 7 p.m. Wednesdays, 3 p.m.

## THE LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION,

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Sunday, February 20th, 11 a.m. ... Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT  
 " " " 6.30 p.m. ... Mr. MILLS TANNER  
 Wednesday .. 23rd, 7.30 p.m. (Clairvoyance) .. Mrs. CHARNLEY  
 Wednesday Services at 7.30 p.m.

## Worthing Spiritualist Mission Church, Grafton Road.

Sunday, Feb. 20th, 11 and 6.30, Mr. Ella; Feb. 24th, Miss Scoggins.

## SUNDAY'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—February 20th,  
 11.15, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. W. Ronald Brailey.  
 February 23rd, 8, Mr. Harry Boddington.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—February 20th,  
 11, service; 6.30, Mrs. Croxford.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow Road.—February 20th, 11,  
 public circle; 6.30, Mrs. Stephens. February 24th, 8, Mrs.  
 Holloway.

Peckham.—Lausanne Road.—February 20th, 7, public meet-  
 ing. Thursday, 8.15, Miss L. George.

Richmond Free Church, Ormond Street.—February 20th, 7.30,  
 Mr. Newman, address and clairvoyance. (Doors close 7.40.)  
 February 23rd, 7.30, Mrs. G. Kent.

L.D.C.—Debating Section.—114, High Holborn, W.C.1.—  
 February 21st, 7.30, Mrs. K. Fillmore, "The Place of Jesus  
 Christ in Spiritualism."

Bournemouth Spiritualist Mission, Charninster Road  
 (opposite Richmond Wood Road) Bournemouth.—Sundays at 11  
 and 6.30, address and clairvoyance. Local clairvoyant, Mrs.  
 W. G. Hayter.

Croydon Spiritualist Church, New Gallery, Katharine Street.  
 —February 20th, 6.30, Mr. Horace Leaf.

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 Tuesday, Feb. 22nd, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. ANNIE PATTERSON  
 Thursday, Feb. 24th, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. E. M. NEVILLE

### Séances for Normal and Trance Clairvoyance.

Monday, Feb. 21st, at 7.30 ... MRS. ANNIE JOHNSON  
 Wednesday, Feb. 23rd, at 3 ... MRS. CANNOCK  
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**ENQUIRIES.** The Secretary, Miss Mercy Phillimore, attends every day, except Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and until the conclusion of Meetings, and is at all times willing to meet inquirers and to render such help as is possible. It is, however, desirable that appointments be made, when convenient, after 11.30 a.m.

**LECTURES.** Wednesday, Feb. 23, at 8 p.m. Rev. H. BYERLEY THOMSON on "The Psychic Experiences of a Parson." Chair: Mr. HENRY COLLETT. (Members free).

Note: Tickets (3/-, 2/- and 1/-) are now ready for members and their friends for the Lecture by Sir OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S., on "Possibilities of the Human Spirit," at the Grotian Hall, Wigmore Street, W.1, on Wednesday, March 2nd, at 8 p.m.

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DISCUSSION CLASSES. Wednesdays, 5—6 p.m. Feb. 23rd, Rev. C. DRAYTON THOMAS, subject: "Does the Soul Travel from the Body during Sleep?"

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