

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

'TIS THIRTY YEARS SINCE.

The International Spiritualists' Federation, which is held this month, recalls to mind the great Congress of 1898, convened by the London Spiritualist Alliance, under the Presidency of Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers. It began on Sunday, June 19th, with a religious service at St. James's Hall, conducted by the Rev. John Page Hopps. This was followed on the Monday by a Reception attended by people from most of the European countries, the British Dominions, and the United States. On the succeeding days at St. James's Hall, addresses were given by Dr. J. M. Peebles, Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, Dr. Helen Densmore, Dr. Georg von Langsdorff, Col. de Rochas, Dr. Encausse ("Papus"), M. Gabriel Delanne, Professor Alexander, Dr. Moutin, and the Rev. T. E. Allen amongst others. The chairmen at the successive meetings were Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mr. E. W. Wallis, Mr. J. J. Morse, Dr. J. M. Peebles, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace and Mr. James Robertson (who took the place of Mr. W. T. Stead, who had met with an accident). The Congress came to a brilliant close with a *Conversazione* in the great St. James's Hall, when 1,200 people, representative of all phases of the subject and many nations were present. Probably most of them have joined the "great majority" since those days, but the memory of many of the departed is still green with us, and it seems appropriate at this time to recall an event so full of promise for the future we have lived to see.

* * * * *

ERRORS IN TRANSMISSION.

We have got rather beyond the stage when the public supposed that in getting into communication with the spirit-world it was in touch with something supernatural and infallible. Under such an impression it was naturally difficult to understand how there could be any mistakes or misunderstandings, and many times some error, which a little patience would quite easily have cleared up, led to a sweeping charge of fraud and imposture. There is, however, still a disposition to put down mistakes and mis-statements in mediumistic communications to "faking" on the part of the medium, arising out of the failure to obtain results in a legitimate way. A recent writer has observed that mediums may have perfectly genuine mediumistic powers but cannot resist the temptation to deceive when those powers are in abeyance. That

is not quite true. Some mediums are never tempted in this way. And it is only of late years that we have begun to realize the extraordinary difficulty on the part of spirit communicators in giving messages relating to material things. The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, in his "Notes on Trance Communications" in the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research for July, referred to a statement given through Mrs. Osborne Leonard to the effect that it would be more difficult for a spirit to say, "An apple on your plate this morning", than to give a long, philosophical discourse or analysis on character. Those who have any long experience in mediumship will know how true this is, and how in a flow of inspiration there can be high moral teaching and sound spiritual counsel in circumstances where it would be nearly impossible to communicate anything relating to concrete facts, such as names, dates and places. Nowadays, we are getting at close grips with this question of the machinery of spirit-communication and are learning a great deal which not only explains the source of many errors formerly attributed to fraud, but also prepares the way for more exact and trustworthy communications.

* * * * *

THE PERSECUTION OF MEDIUMS.

It will probably be long before the echoes of "the police court case" have died down. Col. Sir Walter Shakerley, writing from Bournemouth, remarks that a magistrate should surely know that the office of an *agent provocateur*, or police spy, is a degraded one. This is undeniable; but we should hardly blame the agents for that for which their chiefs are primarily responsible. In *The Greater World*, the new journal, which records the messages of the now well-known Zodiac Circle, appears a letter, the writer of which is anxious to allay the prejudice against policewomen aroused by this case. It points out that the movement to appoint women police was originated by Margaret Damer Dawson, and refers to her spirit of unselfish devotion. Those who would study the matter are recommended to read the book written by Commandant M. S. Allen, entitled *A Pioneer Policewoman*. In the meantime, we may take comfort from the knowledge that Spiritualism is "known to the police" in the best sense of the word, for there are in the Police Force several who have discovered the truth behind a subject which is sadly misrepresented not only by its enemies but also by some of its would-be friends.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S LANTERN LECTURE.

In connection with the International Spiritualists' Federation Congress, now in progress in London, a lantern lecture will be given at Queen's Hall, Langham Place, at 7 p.m., next Sunday, September 9th, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who will exhibit on the screen his unique collection of psychic photographs. Tickets of invitation are being issued to delegates and congress members. Dr. Abraham Wallace will preside.

The Marvel of Spirit Materialisation.

AN INVESTIGATOR'S EXPERIENCES AND CONCLUSIONS.

By "R.J.S." (Pennsylvania, U.S.A.).

Some years ago I became acquainted with a kind old gentleman, a physician by profession, who, as I had been secretly told by a friend, was a good materialising medium. "Has absurdity no limit," thought I, "when yet at the nineteenth century people still believe in seeing dead people 'spooking around'?" However, I asked the kind doctor to let me see the "spooks", which he promised.

After several months of waiting, I received a private invitation to attend my first materialising seance. Upon arriving at the place I hid in the darkest corner of the room. Finally, the "spooky" things commenced. To overcome my feeling of shame, I kept saying to myself, "I know electricity, physics and chemistry; they cannot put anything over on me; I shall make them prove it, before I believe."

At his own invitation, I tied the doctor strongly into the chair, and bound his wrists together so tightly that blood was almost seeping through the skin. Then I tied his hands to his knees, so that he could not move. The knots were then sewed with thread and needle.

The phenomena commenced. At the doctor's invitation, I went to the cabinet, examined the back and sides, outside and inside, looked at the doors, windows and under the carpets for trap doors, or other devices, but in vain; and during all this time the phenomena kept on all around me.

I became puzzled. There was not any electrical or chemical apparatus, as I had anticipated. I went back to my seat much disturbed, dissatisfied, but not convinced. I had set my mind on finding fraud, and fraud there must be, I concluded, although I could not explain or find how.

I sat a little while. Everything was very quiet. Suddenly I observed a small, triangular-shaped, self-luminous spot appear upon the floor, about four feet in front of me. The length of each side of the triangle was about three-quarters of an inch. After a few moments three distinct raps were heard from that self-luminous spot, which was starting to grow larger. About twenty of us were intently looking at that strange appearance. Gradually it grew larger and larger, until it was about six inches in height, always vibrating vividly all over, as if it were undulating in a lively breeze, which seemed to come from all sides toward it, except from the top. The vibration of that self-luminous, pure, white, fluffy, fog-like substance which was similar to a puff of white steam in sunlight, was self-contained; there was no force from the outside source. It seemed to grow larger and larger, the material coming apparently from nowhere; at the height of about ten or twelve inches it appeared to take the approximate outlines of human form; like a vividly-living fairy it waved, swung, bending, and undulating in all directions.

The hands and head were not yet visible from the white fluffy-like substance, which was like a brilliant, white soap-lather. It grew very gradually to about forty-eight inches in height, the shoulders, arms, elbows, and hands becoming visible and distinct; the arms were lifted upward, and the hands were sunk into the fluffy, white substance.

At this point it appeared like a very beautiful lady washing her hair; her head was covered all over in brilliant, white, self-luminous soap-lather, although there were no bubbles; the hands were manipulating very rapidly within that supposed lather, which was not seemingly moist.

Eventually there appeared a lovely girl's face, and, finally, after a few more strokes along the top of her

head, there appeared beautiful golden hair. These phenomena had taken about eight minutes.

She stood facing the spectators, about four feet away from them, hands lifted up and outward as if in exaltation. Then she drew the first audible breath into her newly-made lungs, and smilingly said, in a sweet, tender voice which could be heard all over the room, "How do you do, friends?" Her cheeks and lips were a beautiful red, and her eyes were very clear. With light, running steps she reached to the table which was filled with flowers. She took some of the pink roses and put them in her hair, and some of them she kept in her hand. She took several members of the audience one after another to the centre of the room, gave them a flower, and told them a story or greeting, and kissed some of the little girls on the cheeks; then she wrote letters. She stayed in the room about fifteen minutes, always busy with someone. Then, finally, she stood in the centre of the floor and started to dematerialise, gradually becoming transparent, so that articles could be seen through her body on the other side of the room; then she grew smaller and smaller, and finally disappeared. The total phenomena had taken about half an hour.

I had demanded a proof, and I received it in full measure. I was satisfied. The phenomena lasted four hours, and there were about twenty spirits who materialised, sometimes two or three at once. In a later seance my sister materialised and spoke a language which only I in the whole audience was able to understand. That language was unknown to the medium.

I attended these seances regularly from two to four times per month, sometimes oftener, over a five-year period.

Naturally, my attention was mainly concentrated upon the study of the forces and the working process of the phenomena. For such is in line with my natural tendencies and my everyday work. The observations are too large in volume to be presented here, but I shall bring a few main points.

(1) Each type of phenomenon requires its own special type of mediumship, and no other type occurs through the medium than he is organically suited for.

(2) The physical species of psychic phenomena such as materialisation occur on the principle analogous to electro-plating process, in which the medium's physical and psychic organism takes the place of an electro-plating tank in which various substance solutions are alloyed and refined.

(3) The substances taking the place of the electro-plating solutions are not provided by the spirits, for the simple reason that they have not eaten a physical meal since casting away their physical bodies. Thus they cannot perform the *perpetuum mobile* or produce something out of nothing. Nor can they perform an act, analogous to alchemy, of transforming any kind of substance suitable for materialisation.

(4) The substances taking the place of the electro-plating solutions are supplied solely by the circle atmosphere, also the medium's personal magnetism as a binder for them. When a person thinks, he uses some higher kind of mental substance or energy for the work of thinking and registering the thoughts in his brain. This substance is susceptible to man's will, because he is able to use it by the exercise of his will in thinking. It is susceptible also to the will of spirits, and thus the spirits are able to control and to collect it.

(5) This wasted mental substance is collected by the spirits from the atmosphere around the circle, and is carried to the medium's body, which is used as a chemical tank for mixing, alloying and refining them, suitable for materialisation.

(6) The will-power of the spirit takes the place of the electric current of electro-plating process. The spirit steps in the middle of the refined materialising substance, which flows out of the medium's body, and which substance is susceptible to the will-power, as explained in Clause (4). Then he concentrates his will-power upon the materialising substance, called ectoplasm, with the strong intention of causing it to flow all over his spiritual body, thus making his otherwise physically invisible spirit body visible to us, although we do not see even yet his spirit body, but merely the physically visible coating or "electro-plating" over it, just as we physical beings do not see even our own spirit body, but only our physical coating over and through it, until the physical coating is removed also from our senses at the transition, when we will see the spirit body. To me this is a proven fact. I have checked and re-checked it many a time, through the phenomena, but I offer it to others merely as a working hypothesis which all can check for themselves, if they get such rare opportunity.

(7) I have also found that just as every person, or every medium, is not suitable to be used as a materialising medium (such mediumship is very, very rare), so it is that every kind of circle is not suitable for materialisation, since it plays a very important biological part in the phenomena, supplying the "electro-plating solution" of materialisation. Any well-informed person in science knows that any kind of a solution is not suitable for electro-plating.

(8) The intelligent beings who do the scientific work necessary for every successful phenomena, are the spirit professors, or well-informed spirits in that branch of science.

ISOLATED OBSERVATIONS FROM PHENOMENA.

(9) I have found that a steel knife is rusty the next day after being handled by a materialised spirit; that proves some chemical action of ectoplasm upon cleah steel.

(10) I have found that the smaller the circle, the weaker the phenomena, which proves point (4).

(11) Excessive rain and fog (moisture) make the phenomena more difficult, and sometimes a touch on the hand of a more positive person on a materialised spirit causes the spirit to lose his materialised arm, etc. Thus there is some likeness in it to electric tensity which leaks out upon a touch.

(12) I have found that when touching a materialised spirit finger, I felt a cool effect upon my finger a little afterwards; that proves refrigeration through the evaporation of materialised body.

(13) When I placed my cheek against a materialised spirit's cheek I felt a peculiar, clammy sensation, but no moisture in it, similar to touching a spider's web.

(14) In shaking hands with a materialised spirit I always felt the slightly sticky spider's web effect upon my hand, apparently due to the structure of the materialising substance. Sometimes the materialised spirit hand was hard, sometimes soft and tender, and sometimes my hand went right through it.

(15) At one time a spirit foot, in hitting against my shoe, was hard like a wooden shoe.

(16) Sometimes the spirit could produce a beautiful, glowing light, by simply stroking his hand in the air and then place that radiance upon a flower so that for a little while the flower shone like a great fire-fly.

(17) Sometimes the materialised spirit was able to stretch his hands up to three or four times longer from normal size and then to shrink them back again.

(18) Often a spirit sat down on a chair and wrote a letter at the table to some absent friend, and even to someone present. Many of my secret thoughts and mental questions, of which no other physical person knew, outside of myself, were answered by the materialised spirits in writing. I still have hundreds of such letters in my possession. Even artistic pictures were drawn by them.

(19) I saw once the head only of a lady (a friend of mine) materialised, lying on the floor in a vertical position; and in the neck where the body should start

was only a narrow rim of some white materialising substance. This was not at a medium's home, but at the house of a friend we were visiting. There was no trap door through the floor, for we examined the floor, etc. The materialised head was living; the face was pretty, and the eyes were dark, deep, clear, living eyes. She looked up to me and whispered something; I bent my head closer to the floor, about a foot away from her mouth, and she said to me encouragingly, "Courage", for just that day I had received a letter from home in which was the news that my brother had been killed in war. I had not yet told anybody.

(20) But without the aid of the mental and physical organism of the medium, and without the little-known mental substance or energy from the circle, the spirits are utterly helpless even to lift a pencil upon the table, or even to cause any tiniest rap or the slightest physical manifestation whatsoever. For, theoretically, any slightest physical movement whatsoever represents physical work, and thus requires a proper amount of physical power to do that work, as we know from physics and mechanics. Just test it for yourself, and you will find that the "will power" of man is not able to lift a pencil without any physical aid; in other words, any physical matter is not susceptible to any mental power, such as "will power", which is the only force or tool the spirit possesses for any spirit manifestation, including materialisation. The higher mental substance is the only substance susceptible to man's will. It is a little-known and not physical substance, in the sense that we call physical, but it is the connecting link between physical and non-physical substance or energy. It usually is invisible, but by some little-known process spirits are able to make it visible in materialisations for a little while; but the visible state is not its natural state, and thus it becomes invisible when the factors making it visible are released. It also is constantly evaporating. The greatest law in chemistry is that "*we cannot destroy matter*", but how and why it is so, science does not know. The greatest law in physics is that "*we cannot destroy energy*", but why and how it is so, science does not know. The greatest law in this as yet little-known subject of "Spiritualism" is that "*we cannot destroy Life*", but how and why it is so, science does not know. We only know that the same "Great Law of Indestructibility" penetrates logically and majestically through all these branches of science. It may be that these are mere fractions of some much greater science of which this "Law of Indestructibility" is one of the basic laws.

I have visited the headquarters of the Psychic Research Society of America in New York, and found that there is a record of the above materialisation medium in their files. The record was not made by that society, but by some other investigation committee which reported it to that society.

This record does not make any claim or bring any proof of fraud against this medium, whom they had investigated. The committee did not dare to make any claim of fraud, first, because they were confronted with the truth, and, secondly, because the medium threatened to sue the members of the committee in court for any false report. So they slipped out of the case as quietly as they could, by saying something like this in their report: "There occurred something which we could not explain nor understand, but the medium did not give us enough time to study". These are not the exact words, but they convey the gist of the report.

According to the medium's own statement, the above report was untrue, because he had given any amount of time and any number of sittings wanted.

Is that a scientific method of research? The medium who was a physician did not refuse any further research; in fact, he was the one who forced the said research by threatening court action against those parties who held a \$50,000 trust fund given for psychic research, and which sum they were very inert in using for the given purpose. So it is entirely absurd on the part of that committee to use such an excuse in their report.

FRAU GUNTHERS-GEFFERS.

BERLIN POLICE CRITICISM AND BRITISH PRESS COMMENTS.

The Berlin correspondent of the *Morning Post*, in the issue of August 25th, reports that the clairvoyante Frau Gunthers-Geffers, whose psychic powers have been used in connection with German criminal inquiries, and who was acquitted triumphantly when charged with fraud in the German courts, has been made the subject of a special article by Dr. Weiss, the Berlin Vice Police President, in the *Kriminalische Monatschrift* (Criminal Monthly Review), in which the writer seeks to discredit the medium's powers. Says the *Morning Post* correspondent:

"Dr. Weiss, in the case he describes, declares that the first action of the medium was to indicate that the murdered persons were driving along the road in the opposite direction to that which they were proved later to have taken.

"Secondly, she went up to a bush in her trance and asserted that the murderer had stood behind it. Police evidence, Dr. Weiss declares, proved that this was impossible. It also indicated the correct place, which was behind an elder tree.

"The clairvoyante then gave a description of the horse and carriage in which the murdered persons were driving and of the site of the murder. This was mostly correct, but the Police President declares that she could have read all the details in the newspapers and come to her conclusions by a clever piece of deduction.

"Furthermore he said that she had seen a police notice of the murder before going into her trance.

"Dr. Weiss's last point is the most important. Frau Gunthers-Geffers gave the name of the murderer and details of his past life. These statements the Police President declares were carefully examined by the criminal police and found to be entirely wrong.

"Moreover, Dr. Weiss maintains that the clairvoyant had most probably read the details about the supposed murder in a paper and described them later in her trance.

"From the Police President's report 'clairvoyance' evidence, which was becoming popular in Germany, will doubtless be discredited; but it remains to be seen whether similar evidence may be given from such a high source to prove that Frau Gunthers' other clairvoyant feats, which were accepted in the law courts as genuine, were accomplished by deduction or other means."

In a leading article dealing with this matter, the *Edinburgh Evening Despatch* says, in the issue of August 24th:

"The Law Courts have accepted her clairvoyance as genuine, and as a consequence of that decision and the remarkable feats credited to this woman, conviction has taken firmer root in the public mind.

"A reaction may, however, set in after the report drawn up by the vice-president of the Berlin police. He has gone carefully into the ascertained facts of one crime and compared them with the assertions made on the same case by the clairvoyante, and has found the latter to be wrong in the most important details.

"This conclusion, however, will have no effect upon those whose convictions are based upon a wider field of investigation. They will not pronounce clairvoyance to be a fraud because one woman, in one case, has been found at fault. Moreover, they will not admit that a police officer, accustomed to deal with evidence according to certain set principles, is the person best qualified to make inquiry into such a matter. And we may be sure that other persons of as high intelligence will forthwith set themselves to prove the weakness and inconsequence of this official's decision."

PSYCHIC FACTS AND SUPERSTITION.

In the course of an unusually long and interesting letter in the *Times of India* (July 23rd), a contributor named J. D. Jenkins, dealing with the subject of psychic phenomena, says:

"A chance coincidence is to the superstitious a law of nature. Nor is this irrational habit of mind confined to the credulous and the ignorant. Voltaire, for instance, went home out of humour always when he heard a raven croak on his left. I have met many gallant officers who have faced unremoved the terrors and the horrors of the battlefield, but dread to sit down thirteen to a dinner, and many clever women have I known who actually dread to hear the screech owl.

"But who are the superstitious? A Doctor of Science called the other day and asked me: 'How long are you going to continue with this tom-foolery? The whole thing is exaggeration and erroneous observation! It is sheer credulity! It can be easily explained by ordinary laws of physics!' and so forth. He also suggested something about an Asylum. 'Very well,' I said, 'I have heard all that before; let us see!' I took a small cane table, and asked this man of science (he is also a man of letters) to put his finger lightly on the table. I did the same. Nothing at all happened. I then called Master 'G. Morton' (who has no knowledge of English), and asked him to place his one finger on the table lightly. This he did. The small table at once began to turn, and tilt and rap out replies to questions put in English according to a prearranged code. The table would also rise a good six inches from the floor at a word of command and by a mere touch of the lad's finger. Now, Faraday, the famous chemist, with that quick insight and wonderful experimental skill he possessed, long ago showed that the unconscious muscular action of the sitters—when their fingers ever so lightly touched the table—was sufficient to account for the motion. But the muscular hypothesis completely fails in the case of a heavy table which moved a distance of over three feet before my very eyes and those of others, in a well-lit room, without anyone touching it, except presumably by some unseen agency. This happened at 1.30 a.m., Monday, July 16th. Further, the lad was lifted, placed on the floor, and had his bedding removed from underneath him, by an unseen agency. And . . . I saw a pillow carefully aimed at my head approaching me, and the only animate being in the room at the moment was a scared dog.

"If, therefore, the explanation for all this is that I am simply drifting towards a lunatic asylum, then I must most emphatically insist upon being accompanied by that dog—the poor beast was a thousand times more scared than I was, and why should a dog only come whining when these disturbances arise, or are about to arise? We are almost driven, therefore, to the conclusion that there certainly is some active intelligence at work behind, and apart from the lad or lads concerned—an intelligence which is more like the deceased person it professes to be than that of any other we can imagine. And though the intelligence is, on rare occasions, provokingly irritating in the way it evades direct replies to a question, and its everlasting boisterous behaviour—(lately, by night as well as by day)—yet it is extremely difficult to find any other solution to the problem, than that there is a persistent and intelligent co-operation—(though one of them is certainly a 'non-co-operator')—between certain disembodied minds and our own. . . . Difference of opinion may exist and must be allowed as to the interpretation of the phenomenon, or as to the weight of evidence required to establish a definite conclusion. But I cannot allow a dispute about the facts."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

PROFESSIONAL MEDIUMSHIP.

Sir,—In your issue of August 18th I note the following statement made by a Harley Street practitioner :

I feel in a position to state, without fear of contradiction, that the only reliable communications are those received through unpaid mediums, and then only those who work in the same home circle.

This statement appears very sweeping when we consider that almost the whole Spiritualist movement depends on the work of professional mediums. Without them there could be, I think, practically no psychical research, at least from the scientific point of view. The statement that "the only reliable communications are received through 'unpaid mediums'" is surely incorrect in view of the amazing evidence obtained by Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Wriedt, Frau Silbert, Valiantine, Mrs. Osborne-Leonard, Mrs. Dowden and Mrs. Barkel, to mention but a few.

I understand that Mrs. Osborne Leonard was largely instrumental in convincing Sir Oliver Lodge, also Mr. Dennis Bradley, Mr. Hannen Swaffer and innumerable others, of survival after death. Surely we owe a great debt to professional mediums; at least, I myself can never be grateful enough for the opportunity afforded me by Mrs. Leonard and Mrs. Dowden, through whom, amongst others, I became convinced of survival. I have no experience of a home circle and, personally, should feel more inclined to distrust evidence received in this manner than through the professional medium, who has no knowledge of the identity of the sitters, and who is, therefore, quite unable to obtain information about them beforehand.

Yours, etc.,
E. B. GIBBS.

A SPIRITUALISTS' NURSING HOME

Sir,—For some time past I have had in my mind the question of the foundation of a Nursing and Rest Home for Spiritualists. At a recent direct voice sitting with Mr. Maskell, the Blind Medium, Florence Nightingale spoke about the project, and the medium could not possibly have known anything about my idea.

Recently a valuable property, standing in several acres of ground on the sea front in North Wales, has been offered to me. With others, I have just been to inspect it, and there is no question that it is an ideal place, suitable in every way.

The property, which is of modern construction, and in excellent repair, can be purchased freehold for £10,000, which is £6,000 less than it cost to build just before the war.

I think all Spiritualists will agree with me that we badly need a Nursing and Rest Home, and I shall be glad to hear from those who are willing to help me in securing the necessary capital.

Yours, etc.,
W. HAROLD SPEER.

Founder and Life President, Temples of Light.
Founder and President, Christian Spiritualist Federation.
58, Southwark Bridge Road, S.E.1.

PSYCHIC OBSESSION AND ITS CURE.

Sir,—The July 7th number of LIGHT contains the very interesting article by Mr. Horace Leaf on "The Obsession Theory of Dr. Titus Bull." In this article reference is made to the good work that is also being done by Dr. Carl A. Wickland and his wife in Los Angeles, California.

In addition to the information that Mr. Leaf gives, it should be more generally known that the *origin* of this theory of obsession as a cause of insanity came through communications received by Dr. Wickland *over thirty years ago* through the trance mediumship of his wife. He was not then a medical student, but he immediately took up the study; and when admitted to practice, he at once began his work with those suffering from mental derangements.

During all the years that have followed, first in Chicago and later in Los Angeles, he and his brave wife have devoted all their lives to this much-needed benefaction, helping most who have come to them, and curing many who would have otherwise ended their existence in some asylum.

In the autumn of 1906 Dr. James H. Hyslop, then Secretary of the American Society for Psychical Research, was informed of the work that Dr. Wickland was doing. This information came to Dr. Hyslop from Lyman J. Gage, formerly Secretary of the United States Treasury. I have before me a letter to Dr. Wickland from Dr. Hyslop, dated October 4th, 1906, in which he mentions this, and makes inquiries about the experiences of Dr. and Mrs. Wickland.

Some months later Dr. Hyslop called on the Wicklands in Chicago, but was not then convinced of the obsession theory, saying as he left, that even if it were true, the Wicklands were ten years ahead of the times.

Nearly ten years, later, on February 6th, 1916, there appeared in the public press an article by Dr. Hyslop, in which he said: "There is growing evidence of the fact of obsession, which lies at the base of much insanity so-called. The medical world will have to wake up and give attention to this problem, or *materia medica* will lose control of the subject. . . . This factor (obsession) is indubitable in some instances, and will have to be reckoned with in the near future."

During these many years Dr. and Mrs. Wickland have proven the truth of the obsession theory over and over again by every means that science or scientific research can suggest. And, best of all, they are continuing to prove it by curing many sufferers from all forms of mental aberrations. And so long as life and health will allow, they will continue their wonderful ministrations.

Meantime they are carrying on propaganda to encourage medical and scientific investigation the world over. As a part of this effort, and as an aid in their own research, Dr. Wickland some years ago organized The National Psychological Institute; and also published a book, "Thirty Years Among the Dead", a record of evidence obtained, which is receiving much recognition from scientific institutions.

Yours, etc.,
FRED RAFFERTY.

Santa Ana, California.

"RESCUE WORK AND MEDIUMSHIP."

Sir,—Your article on this subject covers most of the ground which it seems safe to touch upon.

A certain percentage of the people who "go across" are unprepared for the change, and the easiest and most helpful way is to put them into conscious touch with people still here who know how to handle them.

What people of little or no experience in such procedure think ought to be, or ought not to be, makes no difference to the facts. Personally, I don't care a "hoot" what they think. The less this matter is talked about outside the circles in which such work is done, the better. Gossip should not make them its subject. It should be considered a point of honour to act as doctors, lawyers and priests act with their consultants.

As for putting any cases on public record, I question the judgment of the people who do so; I would strongly object to be associated with such sitters.

Yours, etc.,
W.

PROPHETIC DREAMS.

Sir,—In my letter to LIGHT (August 25th) on "Prophecy and Sectarian Opposition", I stated that I had not generally, in my own case, found the prophecies of mediums borne out by fact. Quite the contrary, however, is the case with regard to future events as revealed to me upon rare occasions in sleep. Though a medium may be summoned for foretelling the future, it is some humorous satisfaction to know that no legal restriction can be laid upon dreams. One cannot arrest a dream!

Here is a striking instance of a prophetic dream. From an early age, I was frequently terrified by it, and always dreaded its repetition. I dreamed that my mother was seriously ill, and attended by two nurses. The conclusion was ever the same. I saw a black-draped hearse passing along our narrow street; it was of such a mammoth size that it hid all else from view.

My mother died when I was about seventeen years of age. She was, during her long illness, attended by two nurses. Since her release from the earth body, I have never been troubled by that dream again.

Yours, etc.,
FRANK LIND.

Shoe Lane, London, E.C.4.

LIGHT.

Editorial Offices, 16, QUEENSBERRY PLACE,
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THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.

A glance at the titles of the Papers to be read at the International Spiritualists' Federation Congress this month suggests that our stock of knowledge may soon be considerably advanced, both as regards the phenomena and the philosophy of Spiritualism.

We have still an immense amount to learn, but the advance during the last few years has been distinct and definite. What was formerly vague and speculative is now beginning to assume clear outlines.

We have learned how great a part the ether may play in the question both as regards the habitat of spirits and methods of communication. True, there are some speculations regarding "an ether within the ether"; but it is wise to keep well within the limits of the known—even the ether itself is still rather hypothetical!

But we are well assured of the reality of ectoplasm, or teleplasm, and we have a rough working acquaintance with the methods, mental or physical, by which the inhabitants of the other world communicate with their brethren in this.

We have learned that a spirit can make no impression whatever on the physical world, except by the agency of some element taken from it to form a link or nexus between the two states. At a seance, for instance, some substance is taken from the medium or the sitters which, being "worked up" by some form of transcendental chemistry, is known (rather vaguely) as "power". We are all more or less familiar with the fact. But we are getting gradually towards a solution of the problem as to just what this "power" is. It seems to take various forms, such as an influence or atmosphere—a kind of electro-magnetic field—used in mental manifestations, and to pass through descending grades until it becomes visible, tangible and audible, and then it is the prime agency in physical manifestations.

We have learned that the next world is, so far as defective human words can express it, a mental world, and to that extent the poetical figure of speech which deals with it as "dream" is justified. But although it is dream-like and phantasmal to us who must perforce look at it from the physical side, it is intensely real to those who dwell in it, and who assure us that to them *we* are the phantoms, and our seemingly solid world the baseless fabric of a vision. But modern science quite justifies such a view, having discovered that matter is not so real as it looks. In fact, as Sir William Crookes remarked once, he was not at all sure of its existence.

Psychic research has done invaluable work on the scientific side of the matter, but the students of life at large will do more. For it becomes increasingly clear as we go on that we are dealing with living things, with an infinite region of life-forces, and that although we may go a certain distance by dividing and classifying and tracing lines of separation between one thing and another, these divisions do not exist in reality. There is *one* life expressing itself in innumerable forms, and the line of continuity, although we seem to lose it at intervals, as for instance between mind and matter, runs through all. The further we advance, the greater becomes the wonder, and the more do we learn what an infinity lies beyond us, and how little we really know. After a time it seems that the reality of a next world and the survival of the soul after bodily death are not relatively more wonderful than this world or this life. Our psychic facts come more as confirmations of the truth than as the original announcements of it. We feel that it could not be otherwise.

In a little while we shall see our "new world" accepted as part of the every-day knowledge of mankind. It will come naturally as the result of an expansion of the general mind, aided by those psychic evidences which, however disputed in some quarters, have always the result of making people think. They look for a "better world to come", and we point them to one actually in existence, the promise and prophecy of a better world yet to be established on earth, for, working with the explorers of the world beyond, are the pioneers and builders of the new civilisation.

THE SECRET OF METAL DIVINING.

OFFICIAL SCIENCE CONFIRMING PSYCHIC SCIENCE.

The fact that metals give off emanations has long been familiar to psychic investigators. The researches of Von Reichenbach many years ago proved the fact, and it is the secret of metal divining. Modern science has now discovered that these emanations affect photographic plates, and we find that Lundy Island, off the coast of Devon, is being examined from the air to discover the existence of precious metals. Mr. Martin Coles-Harman, a London financier, who owns the island, is reported by the *Daily Mail* of August 29th as saying:

"It is perfectly true that an aerial survey has been made of Lundy Island.

"Good friends of mine claim to have discovered a means whereby, as a result of taking a very large number of photographs with a special camera, the shutters of which are mechanically driven, the emanations from the metals in the earth below can be photographed. . . .

"It is generally known that radium is constantly throwing itself off in small particles. It is not so generally known that other metals are also giving off emanations.

"Tests carried out on certain South American gold-bearing streams have given results closely corresponding to the results subsequently discovered by boreholes."

LUNCHEON TO SIR ARTHUR AND LADY CONAN DOYLE.

A farewell luncheon to Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle, prior to their departure for South Africa, is being arranged for Wednesday, October 10th, at 1 p.m., at Holborn Restaurant, London. All leading London Societies and the National Spiritualist Union are co-operating.

Applications for tickets, 10s. 6d. each, should be sent to Hon. Sec., The British College of Psychic Science, 59, Holland Park, London, W.11.

SIDELIGHTS.

More "haunted houses" are reported in the Press, one of the latest being a tenement house in Hamilton, says the *Sunday Chronicle* of August 26th. The manifestations include "a white object 'swishing' past, a baby snatched from its mother's arms, caps lifted off people's heads, and eerie noises at night." The ghost of an old minister, a former occupant, is supposed to haunt the place.

* * * * *

"Sceptics arrived on the scene and questioned the spirit, and went away prepared to admit that there was something in it," says the *Weekly Record* (Glasgow) of August 25th, describing a "haunted house" in Buckie, in which strange messages are rapped out by an invisible agency.

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The *Daily Express* of August 25th publishes a letter from a Buckinghamshire reader who states that the ghost of a man with outstretched arm holding a pistol was reputed to haunt a wood in a village where the correspondent had lived for many years. There had been a legend that a certain man had been buried locally in a standing position with his arm out, and his finger on the trigger of a pistol. It was decided to dig for this body to ascertain if there was any foundation for this strange legend. Sure enough, the skeleton of a man, buried in an upright position, and holding a rusty pistol, was unearthed, and after this had been reburied the ghost was not seen again.

* * * * *

An amusing story is recalled in the *Daily Chronicle* of August 27th. A former Earl of Airlie, whose home, Cortachy Castle, in Forfarshire, was said to be haunted by a ghostly drummer who always beat his drum when a death in the family was expected, became apprised of the fact that this traditional death warning had been heard, and thereupon insured his wife's life for a considerable sum. The then Lady Airlie died shortly after, but the insurance company, hearing that the policy-holder had been warned by the mystic drumming before insuring his wife, refused payment. The Earl then brought an action at the Court of Session, and the judge, without calling on counsel, found for his lordship, remarking that, the law of Scotland took no cognisance of the supernatural.

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A writer in the *Daily Express* of August 29th, who signs himself "The Taxi-Captain"—an ex-officer who describes his post-war experiences as a taxi-driver—tells the story of two passengers who chartered a cab, and on tendering the fare at the end of the journey, were astonished when the driver said, "Excuse me, sir, but what about the extra passenger?" "What extra passenger?" replied the "fare", who asserted that only two people had occupied the vehicle. But the driver insisted that three people had entered the cab, describing the third passenger as a lady wearing "one of those floppy straw hats . . . and she had her hair plaited-like over her ears, and earrings down to her shoulders almost". The effect of this statement was to reduce the passenger's wife to tears, but beyond that no explanation of the mysterious third passenger is disclosed.

A ghostly Dominican friar who solemnly intoned a Latin text, and then disappeared, greatly upset a woman visitor to Seigneurie, Isle of Sark, reports the *Evening News* (August 23rd). Priory buildings at the Seigneurie estate are in process of demolition, and it is suggested by local residents that a former prior of Sark, who lived about seven hundred years ago, has returned to protest against the removal of these buildings.

* * * * *

"Entities when communicating for the first time often present their sentences in such a jumbled manner that first attempts are no criterion of the genuineness of the spirit personality who has to transmit his thoughts through an unaccustomed channel." Thus says Mr. Florizel von Reuter in a letter to the *Referee*, in which he expresses his appreciation of the fair-minded way in which that journal reviews his book of psychic experiences.

* * * * *

Dr. Alexis Carrel, surgeon of the Rockefeller Institute, U.S.A., who has successfully kept alive a portion of a chicken's heart for a period of sixteen years, has experimented for many years with a view to determining the life power inherent in the cells that make up the human and animal body, records the *Sunday Chronicle* of August 26th. "Human cells," he concludes, "are potentially immortal; detached, one might, under right conditions, go on living and having descendants for ever. Combined by Nature into bodies, into a system so marvellous and intricate as to produce our brains, they produce also decay and death."

AN ENCOUNTER WITH FAIRIES.

Mr. F. J. Atkin writes:—One day during the early spring of this year I met my fairies while I was walking in a cherry orchard.

I was running over in thought a step just taken towards renewing friendly relations with a neighbour with whom I had had a disagreement, and was returning to work in a happy frame of mind, when I became aware that others were also happy. Round me danced a ring of little people, circling in an unbroken chain. Apparently they never touched the ground, but, keeping pace with me as I walked, allowed me plenty of time to observe them. Almost at once I discovered that the ring was composed entirely of fairy forms, with not a gnome or elf or brownie among them.

This was not at all according to my preconceived idea of the matter and, mentally, I questioned: "Aren't there any elves with you?" At once I heard a clear voice give the surprising answer: "Of course not, Silly!"

Perhaps the word "Silly" was not actually used, but the tone conveyed it perfectly.

"Oh!" I replied, "Why?"

"We don't have anything to do with elves. They are of a different order."

More questions were asked and more answers given—one fairy seemed to do all the talking—and the little folk were with me for several yards before I ceased to sense their presence.

It was only in thinking it over later that I realised how unusual had been my experience. Knowing that I am not clairvoyant, I had hardly expected to meet any of the Little People. Now I am hoping I shall meet them again.

I heard the small speaker as clearly as I should have done were a spirit-friend talking, but how I was made aware of them I do not yet know.

F. J. ATKIN.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

"SAFEGUARDED" SEANCES.

By LEIGH HUNT.

It is a little tiring to hear from some present-day investigators accounts of the elaborate means which they adopt so as to preclude fraud at physical seances. All too often such accounts are accompanied by plain inferences that early investigators did not take necessary precautions in this direction. I know there were, and are still, careless investigators, but the fact that an investigator into psychic matters is not fully versed in orthodox scientific methods does not debar him from taking adequate precautionary measures against possible fraud. I claim that the arrangements described below were, in the circumstances, fraud-proof.

With some stout timber we had partitioned off a top room of a large house where I lived for many years with my people. On one side of the partition were two chairs and a large store box—only. The other side of the partition we used as a room for private seances—no one was ever allowed there except members of the circle; even the cleaning and preparing of the room was always done by one or other of the sitters. There was an oval table in the room which had been specially strengthened by iron rods so that possible creakings, etc., could not occur, and eight strong, wooden-seated chairs were the only other articles of furniture with the exception of a curtain, loosely hung in one corner, which served as a "cabinet" for the medium when required. A large piece of zinc formed a protection from the heat and blaze of the fire which was, of course, only lit in cold weather.

In this "partitioned room" unmistakable evidences of spirit return and intelligence were manifested weekly throughout a period of four years. The sitters were members of my own and my wife's family, and three friends, whose mediumistic gifts were placed at our disposal from time to time.

We never bound our medium up with cords, etc., for such a precaution was unnecessary as the partitioned room was so small that even if the medium moved unduly in the slightest way instant detection would have resulted. The whole circle, including the medium, linked hands, each sitter making it a rule to report when any necessity compelled a temporary unlinking. On the table were (1) a musical box, (2) two "luminous slates", (3) a trumpet which I had made out of stiff brown paper—nothing else.

It would be absurd to imagine for an instant that the varied and striking phenomena which took place during these weekly seances were not as fool-proof as it is reasonably possible for such phenomena to be, and when I state—as was the fact—that the communicators were nearly all relatives and personal friends, who again and again showed the customary intelligence and acumen which was theirs while on earth—well, I think the person who disregards such evidences as we had is not worth troubling about.

I have sat at seances with scientific men and women of some eminence, and the precautions they have taken and imposed were not in my opinion anything like as satisfactory as the methods we adopted.

We had materialisation phenomena. On one occasion a spirit girl friend showed herself between myself and the sitter next to me, and put in front of us some sweets which she had abstracted from the pocket of another sitter. I felt her little warm hand on mine: her features were plainly visible to us, and her childish voice and manner unmistakable. The "voices" were numerous and varied; very many things were said which conveyed to us clear evidence that the spirit speaking was the one he or she claimed to be; the musical box was on many occasions taken to the ceiling of the room—a feat impossible for any sitter to accomplish; at one seance a tune *not on this box* was picked out in the dark, the teeth of the "comb" being "plucked" by unseen hands. (By the "comb" I mean, of course, the steel strip cut into

narrow teeth, comb-fashion, each tooth being tuned to a note of the scale.) The fine mechanism was in no way damaged. I might add that I tried to do this *in the light* and promptly broke one of the tiny teeth on the "comb".

The luminous slates were used on numberless occasions to light up the materialised faces of spirit visitants. My own father came to me in this way and spoke a few words. I plainly saw his lips moving as he said, "Now boy, look hard at me; satisfy yourself that it is indeed I who am speaking".

Some spirits used the trumpet to speak through, but many dispensed entirely with this means of conveying their messages. Matters of most intimate nature were often referred to, things which were only known to the spirit and the sitter addressed. The tramp of feet was heard on several occasions, apparently on the *other* side of the partition. (The room door was always locked, with the key inside, at these seances.)

I could continue to fill pages of LIGHT with details of the happenings at this series of seances, but enough has been given, I think, to justify my claim that, although we were not what are termed "scientific investigators", the phenomena provided full and complete evidence of the action of discarnate spirits.

AN ELECTROCUTION REMEDY.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATOR'S STATEMENT CONFIRMED.

LIGHT published, on July 14th, an extract from notes of a spirit communication dealing with the subject of electrocution, in the course of which the communicator (through the mediumship of Mrs. Mason) said: "When a person is electrocuted he or she must be stripped of all clothing and laid bare on the earth (not on pavement or wood), and water must be kept continually flowing over the naked body whilst artificial respiration is resorted to as in the case of drowning. The flowing water must be kept up all the time as this passes the electricity out of the body to the earth."

A South African reader, Mrs. B. G. Raubenheimer, supplies an interesting illustration of the efficacy of this remedy in the course of a letter in which she says: "I read the paragraph with particular interest as I happen to know of a case where a man and a boy were accidentally restored to life after being electrocuted, in exactly the same way.

"This happened about twenty-five years ago on my father-in-law's farm, Klipdrift, Dist. George, and yesterday his son, Mr. Meyer Raubenheimer, who was on the farm at the time, again gave me the exact facts of the occurrence: a coloured man and his son were leading water in one of the lands (fields) when there was a severe thunderstorm, and both man and boy were struck. No one saw this happen. When the man recovered consciousness he found himself and his son lying in the water-furrow (fortunately on their backs). He then went for assistance. The boy also recovered, but was ill for some time and, curiously enough, they used to put him into the same furrow every morning until he was quite restored. The man had no external wounds, but the boy was scorched from his lower lip to his stomach. They were most likely standing in water when struck."

MRS. E. HALL HAINS, whose verses printed in LIGHT from time to time have given pleasure to many readers, has issued a new volume, *A Handful of Dreams*. Some of the poems have been reprinted from the journals *The Poetry Review* and *Poetry of To-day*. The book is published by Cecil Palmer at the price of 5s.

MORE THAN PALMISTRY.

By MRS. L.W.

In 1919 I met by accident in London an old friend whom I had not seen for many years. I had known her as a very clever palmist in the past, and had often wondered what had become of her. The surprise and pleasure at meeting was mutual. I was living at a ladies' club at the time, and should have been delighted if she had accepted my invitation to call and see me. She said it would be impossible to call, as she was only staying in London for one night, but was so glad to have seen me, having been worried, because every time she used her Ouija Board it wrote my name. She inquired why my name was always used, and it wrote "In trouble". We said good-bye and parted, not expecting to meet again for some time. I was working at the Ministry of Finance at the time. In the evening, after my return from the office, who should be ringing the bell at my club but my palmist friend! I was delighted, and, of course, asked her how she had managed it. She answered: "I had to come."

We had our dinner, and afterwards retired to my room. I asked if she would read my palm.

Madam — took my hand and at once said: "You are going to Canada," and then she described a man who had suffered a great shock, and who was dreadfully ill at the time. Madam then stopped talking to me, and spoke to someone in the room, saying: "No, I cannot receive you, friend."

I did not understand Spiritualism then, neither did I know that Madam — was a medium.

Again she turned to me and said that I should sail for Canada in three weeks, etc., etc. And again she turned from me, saying: "I am really very sorry, friend, to send you away, but I am busy."

Then, to me, Madam said: "It is a sweet little dark woman who is here, and she wants to speak to you."

I became nervous, and in my surprise said: "Oh! don't send her away." Instantly Madam took both my hands, and someone said: "Mother! Mother! Alex! Alex! he wants you; go to him; Oh! my little baby! my little baby! Mother! tell him—I am not dead! I am not dead! I love him and shall be near him always—he wants you."

I put my arms around the medium, who seemed to me then as if she were fainting; her head fell upon my shoulder, and I said: "Yes, darling, I will go to him as soon as I can get my passport." Then I heard a long-drawn sigh and "Go! Go quick!"

Madam soon revived and was surprised to find me in tears. She said: "Have I said anything to hurt you, dear? I have had a wonderful control; it was a little dark woman who had only passed over a few weeks. She ought never to have gone; she was so strong and happy."

Then I explained to Madam that my only son, in Canada, had cabled that his little wife had just died of the black 'flu, after giving birth to a little boy, leaving him when he was three weeks old.

I sailed in the *Megantic* to Canada on the 1st April with a company of 1,200 Canadian boys returning from the Great War.

When I arrived at Toronto I was met by a stranger, who turned out to be my dear little daughter-in-law's brother, my own son being too ill to meet me, proving what Madam — had told me about him. I commenced to nurse my son at once, but the baby was a frail, wee mite that was not expected to live.

The English nurse and a lady friend told me that my darling had cried for her baby with her arms outstretched, just as Madam had done in my room at Earl's Court.

I stayed in Canada three and a half years, leaving my precious baby boy—a lovely little chap of great promise, who is now eight years old.

Since I became a Spiritualist, my daughter-in-law has come to me, and thanked me for going to Canada.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

The picture of the old gentleman with his spectacles on his nose looking through them in search of his spectacles is funny enough. But it is not more droll than the idea of a man who is seeking his soul and using the powers of his soul to assist him in the quest.

* * * * *

An ape-gland to prolong human life is nicely balanced by a poison-bomb to abbreviate it. Both are about equally imbecile, and deserving of the contempt of all persons of reasonable intelligence, and these are always in the majority, otherwise the race would have perished long ago.

* * * * *

I find in LIGHT of thirty years ago a protest against those books of "occult" sensationalism with flaring covers depicting slimy snakes, skulls, and other hideous things, designed to work up the horror to its full intensity. Such things are not unknown even to-day when the subject is treated more sanely and seriously. We can all agree with the writer of the protest in his plea that it is better to present the beautiful, and so make beautiful thoughts and imaginations normal, rather than exhibiting morbid things and so promoting morbidity.

* * * * *

Looking backwards, one is continually meeting with points of contrast between the present and the past. Thus, in some notes on the great International Congress of Spiritualists in 1898, the Rev. John Page Hopps, in LIGHT, remarked that the London Press had for the most part ignored us, devoting its attention to sport, gambling, "and every species of murder, robbery, accident and abomination". Things are rather different to-day, but there is still room for improvement.

* * * * *

When it is found necessary to "boost" a thing by violent publicity and propaganda, it is usually the case that the thing—whatever it may be—would fail if it were not continually "buttressed". But the thing that is needs no props—it has not to be "shored up", like a tottering house. That Spiritualism is progressing is not so much a result of its publicity as of its inherent truth—much of its publicity has done it more harm than good, by emphasizing its merely temporary aspects, and their relation to some craze of the hour.

* * * * *

There is occasionally a demand—usually on the part of some rich American—for an old castle, or manor-house, with a ghost in it, because the ghost is supposed to confer a classic dignity on a house. Now that the poltergeist has become fashionable we may perhaps look for a demand in that direction. A house with a performing poltergeist (accompanied by a jazz-band) would be quite in keeping with the spirit of the age which, by the way, is a very unquiet spirit; quite a "racketty ghost" in itself.

* * * * *

I once met a jovial man who, visiting London from the North, was seeking employment. He told me he had decided to go to sea, but could not tell in what capacity, having no sea-faring experience. Remembering my Robinson Crusoe, I playfully suggested that he might apply for the post of "supercargo". "Supercargo, is it?" he said, "now that's a very good word—I like it. I'll go as a supercargo!" I was reminded of this drollery by hearing that someone, after considering the choice of an occupation, had decided to be a trance-medium. One choice was almost as random as the other—"supercargo" is an obsolete post, and mediumship is a gift, and not a state of mind.

D.G.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Where Are the Dead?" (Cassell & Co. 3s. 6d. net.)

The widely-read series of articles issued over a period of several weeks by the *Daily News* has now been put out in book form. Although this series throws, in actual fact, no particular light on the question, it is of great value as indicating an enormous interest among serious thinkers in the subject which LIGHT represents. It is not too much to say that such a newspaper series as this, in which eminent scientists, novelists, divines, men of letters—persons of intellect, experience and culture—have set down in all seriousness their theories and speculations upon a subject which has until recent times been regarded as the exclusive property of the theologian, could scarcely have been published in pre-war days.

J.

"Miracles in Modern Life." By the Rev. Dr. John Lamond. (Simpkin, Marshall. 3s. 6d. net.)

Dr. Lamond is well known for his study of and experiences in all branches of Psychic Phenomena, and his two recent books, *Jour of Arc and England* and *Kathleen*, have been widely read. The latter book was more of a philosophical discussion than a book of evidence. His new book, *Miracles in Modern Life*, goes into the details of his various experiences and is entirely devoted to evidence. Dr. Lamond gives especial attention to the evidence he has received as to his daughter Kathleen's continued existence, and also devotes a chapter to what he calls "David Duguid's Return", in which he gives one of the most evidential incidents in his whole collection. The book contains a number of spirit-photographs and a considerable amount of space is given to the consideration of these, especially the one Lady Palmer obtained at Domrémy. It is written in a free and readable style and can be recommended to all in search of further evidence.

J.A.F.

"The Return." A Play in a Prologue and Three Acts. By Charles Bennett. (Ernest Benn. 3s. 6d. and 5s. net.)

The Return, the impressive play produced at the Everyman Theatre in May, 1927, now appears in book form in the Contemporary British Dramatists Series. The main theme—a spirit who returns from the ethereal world to take up earthly life, for a period, clothed in the fleshly garment of mankind—is difficult enough to appal the most competent dramatist, but Mr. Bennett handles this *motif* with skill and plausibility.

The spirit Ishtar had been—to use the commonly accepted phrase—born dead. Knowing nothing of earth life except from observation, he returns, out of curiosity, to our world, in the body of a young soldier killed on the battle-field. The resulting events are interesting, sometimes pathetic, and occasionally very funny. The returned spirit's lack of practical experience of earthly ways leads to some amusing situations. The scene in which the masquerading spirit meets a war comrade—a typical Cockney "Tommy"—is intensely human. Interwoven with the main theme are subsidiary threads of drama, and the whole is worked out to a dramatic and by no means far-fetched conclusion.

Sir Oliver Lodge's comment upon the play is given as follows: "The whole play is thoughtful and interesting. The first message of the play, I take it to be, is that normal life furnishes an ideal opportunity which no spirit or anyone else can emulate or replace, and the second is that the consequences of our acts live after us, and only by love can be gradually effaced."

One special feature of Mr. Bennett's play which struck the present reviewer favourably was the absence of any propagandist note. Numbers of psychic plays that have come before the present writer have been obviously "written with a purpose". Propaganda is not a suitable ingredient for the drama and usually ends in killing interest. Mr. Bennett, however, uses the psychic theme merely as ordinary dramatic material with no apparent desire to teach a lesson, and thereby gains an artistic advantage.

N.

"Beyond Death." By Anna Hude. (C. W. Daniel Co. 3s. 6d. net.)

Dr. Anna Hude abandoned Christianity, investigated Spiritualism in a sympathetic mood, and finally adopted what she calls Pantheism, a word having more than one definition but which, one gathers, the author uses as implying unity with the world-soul. "Pantheism and the doctrine of reincarnation is a religion for those who think," says Dr. Hude, a statement which, perhaps, is a little sweeping. She sees this earth as "a place of work where one is trained for new and greater fields of activity". The author quotes a number of cases of psychic interest, among them the following:

Two sisters, Anne and Harriet Pearson, had lived together the whole of their lives until Anne died at a great age. Six years later Harriet was lying ill in their old home in London, nursed by her three nieces. The last night she lived none of them had gone to bed. One of them sat up with the patient, the other two were in the next room. Suddenly they saw a figure enter at the door. "Why, that is old Aunt Anne!" exclaimed one of them. "Yes, that is old Aunt Anne," exclaimed the other. "Then Aunt Harriet is going to die; she has come to fetch her." At the same time the third niece came and told them that Aunt Anne had been in the sick room. The patient died at six o'clock in the afternoon.

The book is translated from the Danish by A. Kroman.

IS LEIGH HUNT ALIVE?

Professor Asano, the head of the Spiritualist movement in Japan, was an interesting and interested listener, on Thursday, August 30th, to a lecture given by Mr. H. J. Osborn, on the above-named subject, to the Spiritual Fellowship—in the house where Leigh Hunt lived and worked, over a hundred years ago in Mortimer Terrace, Highgate Road, London. Mr. Osborn's address covered a good deal of ground, beyond the range of the article given in LIGHT for September 1st.

Mrs. Smedley, in the chair, read appropriately Longfellow's poem "Haunted Houses." At Mr. Osborn's invitation, Professor Asano spoke a few sentences to the meeting, in Japanese, and then translated them into English. After expressing pleasure in being at the meeting, and in hearing Mr. Osborn's address, Mr. Asano imported added interest by explaining that he had himself translated into his own tongue the poetry of Keats, and Shelley, and some of the essays of Leigh Hunt.

THE CHURCH'S ERROR.

Rev. F. C. Spurr, preaching at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, recently, says the *Christian World* for August 23rd, said that he had personally witnessed authentic spirit demonstrations. The Church, he said, had made a mistake in allowing this phase of spiritual life to fall into the hands of those who made it a distinct and separate religion. "The Churches were wrong in handing over to Spiritualism what they should have retained as part of their own inheritance."

THE REV. GEORGE FRANCIS, Spiritualist Minister of Los Angeles, U.S.A., lectured on "Do the dead live, and where are they?" in the Druids' Hall, Redruth, Cornwall, on Sunday, August 26th.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"A HANDFUL OF DREAMS." By E. Hall Hains. (Cecil Palmer. 5s. net.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"RALPH BARRACLOUGH" (Surrey).—We still have your article, "The Pursuit of Truth", but as you do not disclose your real name and address, and we are unable to consider anonymous contributions, we have not been in a position to deal with the matter. Perhaps you will let us know your real name and address?

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 Friday, September 7th, at 8 p.m. ... MRS. NORDICA
 Tuesday, September 11th, at 4 p.m. ... MRS. NORDICA
 Friday, September 14th, at 8 p.m. ... MRS. ROUS

MR. J. LEWIS, of S. WALES (PHYSICAL MEDIUM),
 will be at the College for Demonstrations from 7th to 12th of Sept.
 Applications to the Hon. Secretary.
NOTE.—The College has occasional accommodation for Students or
 interested visitors from the Country or Abroad.

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 Tuesdays, 3 p.m., Class for Psychological Development—
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 Wednesday, 3 p.m., Circle for Clairvoyance, Sept. 12th,
 MRS. CAMPBELL
 Thursdays, 3 p.m., Circle for Development—
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 13 PEMBRIDGE PLACE, BAYSWATER, W.
 Sunday, September 9th, 11 a.m. ... MR. ERNEST MEADS
 Sunday, September 9th, 6.30 p.m. ... MR. ERNEST BEARD
 Wednesday, Sept. 12th, 7.30, Clairvoyance, Mrs. ANNIE JOHNSON

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 No Admittance to Services after the opening hymns.
 Sunday, September 9th, 11 a.m. ... MRS. L. HART
 Address, Spirit-descriptions and messages.
 Sunday, September 9th, 6.30 p.m. ... DR. W. J. VANSTONE
 Wednesday, September 12th, 7.30 p.m.
 MR. E. H. PALMER & MRS. McARTHUR
 Address, Spirit-descriptions and messages.
 Healing (free), Tuesdays, 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesdays (free), 3 to 5.30 p.m.

Worthing Spiritualist Mission Church, Grafton Road.
 Sunday, September 9th, 11 and 6.30, Mrs. Ruth Darby. Thursday,
 September 13th, Mrs. Fillmore, 3 p.m., Members only; 6.30 for Public.

SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—September 9th, 11, open circle;
 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. Carrie Young. September 12th, 8, Mrs.
 Nellie Melloy.
 Gamberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—September 9th, No
 services. Wednesday, 7.30, public circle at 55, Station Road.
 Peckham.—Lausanne Road.—September 9th, 7, Mr. T. W. Ella.
 Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. S. Podmore.
 Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—September 9th, 7.30,
 Mrs. F. Kingstone, address and clairvoyance. September 12th, 7.30,
 Mrs. Fillmore, address and clairvoyance.
 Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—September 9th, 3,
 Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. A. Vout Peters, address and clairvoyance. Wednes-
 day, 7.45, at Wellesley Road, Mrs. Carrie Young, address and clair-
 voyance.
 Fulham.—12, Lettice Street (Nr. Parsons Green Station).—September
 9th, 11.30, circle; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mrs. E. Clements. Thursday, 8,
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 investigate Psychic Phenomena will be restricted to Members and
 Associates.

MEETINGS.
 Monday, September 10th, at 3, Psychometry ... MRS. NUTLAND
**RESERVED FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL
 PSYCHIC CONGRESS.**
 Monday, September 10th, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MR. VOUT PETERS
 Tuesday, September 11th, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. ESTELLE ROBERTS
 Thursday, September 13th, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. LOMAS
**Group Seances Reserved for the Members of the International
 Psychic Congress.**
 Wednesday, September 12th, at 3 ... MRS. LOMAS
 Thursday, September 13th, at 3 ... MRS. LOMAS

PRIVATE SITTINGS.
 Daily ... MRS. ESTELLE ROBERTS, MRS. ANNIE JOHNSON
 Mondays and Fridays ... MRS. CANNOCK
 Tuesdays ... MR. GLOVER BOTHAM
 Wednesdays ... MRS. BARKEL
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 Wednesdays, at 6.30, Leader ... MRS. ESTELLE ROBERTS
 Wednesdays, at 7.30, Leader ... MRS. KINGSLEY
 Fridays, at 7.30, Leader ... MRS. KINGSTONE
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 Clairvoyante: Mrs. Estelle Roberts.
 6.30 p.m.—*Speaker*, Mr. G. Hodson.
 Sept. 16th, 11 a.m., Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30 p.m., Rev. G. Vale Owen.
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The Council express their gratitude to all friends and sympathisers for the donations already sent, and will be pleased to accept and acknowledge all further amounts towards the remaining portion of the costs.

The total costs exceed £800—a very heavy sum, which the Alliance has had to meet.

All donations should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, Captain A. A. Carnell, 16, Queensberry Place, S.W.7, who will acknowledge.

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NOTICES.—No ordinary sessional work is arranged for the summer months. The Autumn Session will commence on October 4th.

During the intervening period Members may arrange sittings with mediums on the staff. The Library and Rooms will be open all the year round.

No Private Sitting can be definitely booked until the fee is paid.

EXPERIMENTAL WORK.

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