

The Spiritualists' Congress (Page 458.)

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

“LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!”—Goethe.

“WHATSOEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!”—Paul.

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OCT., 1928.

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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"LETTERS FROM THE OTHER SIDE."

Some nine years ago there was published by Mr. John Watkins (of 21, Cecil Court, London, W.C.2.) a book with the above title. It contained a Foreword by Dr. W. J. Geikie Cobb and consisted of a series of messages given by a communicator calling himself Philemon. Many people felt themselves able to identify Philemon as a well-known preacher who had passed away some years before, for the clues were apparent in the messages, but on this point nothing definite was ever stated by those concerned with the production of the book. But one interesting fact which we are authorised to make public, is that the automatist through whom the messages were given was Miss Felicia Scatcherd. This was unknown even to some of her most intimate friends, so carefully was the secret kept. LIGHT reviewed the book at the time of its appearance, and on a second reading can confirm all that was then said regarding its high quality and the depth of interest it inspires. The information it gives regarding the after-life and the wisdom of its teachings are invaluable. We learn that the book, which was published at 5s., is now being offered at the reduced price of 2s. 6d. in order to bring it within reach of a larger public than that which it at first commanded.

* * * * *

IN UNEXPECTED PLACES.

It is remarkable how much of psychical experience is found outside of Spiritualism, amongst people who have no particular interest in our subject and who may even look at it with dislike. Many instances of this have come under our observation. Here are three taken without selection as they come to mind. First, there was the West Indian planter met casually in a bookshop. He was of Highland stock, which may partly account for his supernormal experiences. Telepathic communication with distant friends was to him quite a commonplace matter. On meeting with strangers he sometimes found himself prompted to tell them things about their personal history, and he could read their minds in an uncanny way. He gave us some curious instances of this and expressed the view that these powers are becoming more abundant to-day as a new development in human evolution.

Then there was the well-known literary woman in whose family clairvoyance and clairsaidence developed, and became quite recognized features of the domestic life. The third case was a young Society woman who had for years been accustomed to be guided and helped by an unseen friend with whom she was able to converse freely. All the cases were genuine. But the odd circumstance is that none of these people became acquainted with Spiritualism as a subject until after they had thus gained unsought practical experience of its reality. Thus do psychic powers manifest themselves in quite unexpected places.

* * * * *

PIETY AND SELF-CONSEQUENCE

There is a type of mind, pious but with little sense of humour, which regards itself as the special object of providential care even in rather trivial circumstances. The vendor of patent medicines is not unfamiliar with that kind of testimonial in which the grateful patient records that after long suffering he procured the world-renowned pills or potion which, "under the blessing of Divine Providence", effected a complete cure. People of this kind regard any good fortune which befalls them—as for instance the escape from a bad accident—as a special interposition of the Deity on their behalf. When, as occasionally happens, they are drawn to the investigation of Spiritualism, they show a curious distaste for recognizing those human agencies which we know as spirits, and report special communication from God, or at least an archangel. We should not charge them with insanity, but merely with the lack of a sense of proportion. They have their facts, but they interpret them wrongly, generally as the result of an exaggerated self-regard. While they confine themselves to patent medicines or special providences, they are relatively harmless. But in Spiritualism their eccentricities become conspicuous, and afford a convenient weapon for its enemies.

THE PASSING.

The irresponsive throbbing of my heart,
Which hungers only now for Peace and Rest;
A faint and feeble fluttering in the breast,
And one swift prayer that terror may depart,
While I reach out to Realms Unknown, Apart;
A mind that gropes; a spirit sore oppress'd,
In search of hands unseen; and then the zest
Of Realization—Birth's sweet counterpart!

For voices whisper, drawing nearer, near,
Like waves that wash from unimagined seas,
Half-poised I wait, as if with wings
outspread . . .
A shock of pain; a cord that snaps with ease;
Faces that fade in earth's dull atmosphere;
Then Light, and Life, and Love . . . and
. . . am I dead?

—J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

International Spiritualists' Federation Congress.

(Continued from page 447.)

J. B. McINDOE. (Glasgow.)

"INDEPENDENT OBJECTIVE VOICE PHENOMENA."

Supernormal voices had been heard in all ages, but were more prevalent to-day than ever before. This branch of knowledge has received but little scientific study, although much had been written of late years on the subject. Psychic research had practically ignored the independent voice until a few months ago, when it paid a passing glance at the phenomena of "Margery". Voice phenomena necessitated (a) originating a stream of air or making use of an already moving current of air; (b) imparting to it vibrations of three qualities, pitch, loudness and timbre. The speaker said that he approached the subject with much diffidence, realising that a number of highly-experienced experimenters, such as the late Admiral Osborne Moore, had been quite unable to say in what way the medium was used in this form of phenomena. A variety of tests had established the reality of the voice with different mediums, but the results had not been the same in different cases. With some mediums a hand or a thick cloth placed over the medium's mouth produced no apparent change in the voice; with other mediums it did. Thus Mrs. Everitt's own hand did not interfere, but the hand of her husband stopped the voice. The voice continued even while Mrs. Everitt's tongue was held between her teeth; voices have also manifested when the medium's mouth was filled with water. Voice control apparatus had further established the independent quality of the direct voice. Voices have been transmitted by wire and recorded on gramophone records, so that their objectivity cannot be questioned. No time need therefore be wasted on considering hypotheses of ventriloquism, trickery or auditory hallucination, still less the weird suggestion of Mr. McCabe that Mrs. Wreidt produced voices by means of chemicals in her trumpet!

No distinctive physical qualities had been noticed in the case of voice mediums, though it had been observed that Mrs. Wreidt has an unusually large larynx. Several voices could be heard simultaneously. "I noted four voices on one occasion with Mrs. Wreidt," said the speaker, "while she herself was conversing volubly with me. They come in any language, sometimes the voices come from the trumpet and other times they seem to be 'in the air'."

Certain physical effects on the sitters have been observed, some indicating that the sitters are involved in the phenomenon. Admiral Osborne Moore noted an irritation of the throat during a series of sittings.

Although the direct voice usually came in the dark there were numerous instances where the voice was produced in full light, either artificial or daylight.

Mrs. Blake, an American medium, always sat in light and used a double trumpet. Another American medium used a very long trumpet in light.

It was possible that the stream of air which reached the sitters might come from the medium's lungs. Mrs. Everitt's control objected to her talking as this appeared to interfere with the phenomenon. In the case of the medium Bastian the voice manifested when his mouth was filled with water, but if his nostrils were temporarily closed the pheno-

menon ceased. There seemed no definite evidence that the medium's lungs were not at least a partial source of the air stream. But in the case of Miss Ada Bessinet the continuous singing and whistling without pause for breath suggested a supernormal source of air. It might be that if the medium's lungs were a possible source of the air stream, his vocal organs might also be a source of the vibrations, but this in no sense implied trickery.

The phenomena of Miss Ridley, of Buffalo, seemed intermediate between automatic utterance and independent voice. The medium goes into trance and voices in a muffled whisper are heard, even when the medium's mouth is filled with water. One observer concluded that the larynx was the source, the lips and tongue not being used. A doctor who attended sittings at the British College of Psychic Science thought the sounds were such as might come if the larynx were destroyed. Another emphasised his observations of movements of the medium's lips and laryngeal muscles; he considered that the tongue was out of use. A suggestion was made that the muscle movements might be mimetic. The speaker himself had noted faint, almost imperceptible sounds apparently in rhythm with the voices coming from near the medium. These sounds had been described by other observers as either resembling faint, suppressed sobbings, or a faint humming.

It seemed reasonable to conclude (1) that the ultimate sources of the communications were the same as those of other "controlled messages" and that at least some part originates in intelligences extraneous to the medium; (2) that the personality of the medium and the sitters may tinge the communication; (3) that some material structure is employed either to convey and/or concentrate whispers by the medium, or to impart sound vibrations to a current of air emanating from the medium or elsewhere. We might assume that this mechanism emanated mainly from the medium's body.

The speaker dealt with a series of voice experiments conducted by Mr. G. Garscadden that were reported in *LIGHT* (p. 494) 1921. By these experiments, at most of which the speaker was present, it was hoped to use the telephone to magnify whispers otherwise inaudible and to obtain voices in light. Telephone transmitters were employed in a small, locked cabinet, with the necessary connections to receivers which were held by the sitters around it. The medium was out of the circle. Voices resembling loud whispers were heard from the receivers, and also singing. Mr. George H. Lethem, who was present, said of these experiments, "Writing with a full sense of responsibility . . . fraud was impossible." Experiments were made by exhausting the air in the cabinet, but no voices were obtained, which seemed to rule out any hypothesis that the sounds previously heard were due to magnetic or electrical effects. Specially sensitive telephone apparatus had not been found especially advantageous. In some of the experiments radio waves were used to transmit to the receivers.

In another series of experiments the medium was covered with heavy, light-proof clothing, and a sensitive transmitter placed under the clothing near the larynx; voices were also obtained. On another occasion medium and sitters were placed inside a kind of tent, from the interior of which light was excluded; loud, clear voices were received by this arrangement in a room brilliantly lit by electric light.

It seemed justifiable after considering all the facts to conclude that some essential part of the structure previously postulated might emanate from the medium near the throat. We might conceive alternative structures: (1) the simplest would render audible the unconscious whisperings of the medium; (2) would impart the necessary vibrations to a current of air from the medium's lungs; (3) would produce air currents and impart speech vibrations to them.

As to type 1, for whispered sounds reaching the sitters' ears, it would be sufficient to have the psychic equivalent of a speaking-tube, a sound lens, or sound-reflecting mirrors of suitable foci.

As to types 2 and 3, something corresponding to a psychic replica of the vocal organs would be required, including vocal cords, also resonating cavities with a movable tongue or its equivalent. The mechanism for providing the air stream apart from the medium's lungs need not be enlarged upon.

In conclusion the speaker suggested further experiments which might yield valuable results. These would include the use of a microphone to detect movements of the medium's laryngeal muscles; tests with resonators to locate positions of maximum intensities of the sounds; tests as to the effect of darkness; tests with gramophone records, and tests as to the presence of more than one medium during the production of simultaneous voices. He agreed that further research might negative the hypotheses put forward. This mattered little as long as fresh knowledge was gained. "Such a result is one of the fruits which stimulate the physical scientist. Should we desire to place our science on a less attractive plane?"

M. HENRI REGNAULT. (France.)

A NECESSARY MODIFICATION IN SCHOLASTIC TEACHING.
(In collaboration with M. Milliery and M. Mongel.)

THE SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF MEDIUMISTIC FACULTIES.

(In collaboration with M. André Richard.)

In the first paper a plea was made for an alteration in the present system of religious teaching in schools. While it was recognised that crime and immorality must be combated, and while sociologists agreed as to the evil, they are not in agreement as to the remedy. Official teaching neglected a knowledge of mankind. Léon Denis had pointed to the necessity of "giving the people a new education based on a large and rational Spiritualist doctrine". This would lead to a better understanding of humanity. It would perhaps be too much to expect public authorities to accept so radical a suggestion, but could they reasonably refuse to teach the children the history of religions? Psychic facts abounded in this branch of study; also by this means the youngsters would receive ideas of religious tolerance and of neutrality which would, however, not be a negation of all spiritual life.

The second paper was concerned principally with the payment of mediums. It might reasonably be considered that a distinction should be made between the psychic healer and the possessors of other kinds of psychic gifts. It was necessary to guard against trafficking in mediumistic gifts, and the writers of the paper called upon the Spiritualist organisations to combat all abuses in that direction. For several years the Fédération Spirite Belge had excluded from its association all persons known to be exploiting mediumship. Similar steps had been taken by psychic and Spiritualist groups in Lille, Roubaix, Cambrai, Douai, etc. This question, of course, was a delicate one. It was probable that many protestations would be made against the views put forward. Allen Kardec had written that "serious mediumship can never be a profession, not only because it would be discredited morally, but because of a material obstacle: it is an essentially mobile, fugitive and variable faculty on

the permanence of which no reliance can be placed."

There was an animated discussion on the two papers.

Regarding the first paper, Mr. Knott referred to the difference between the French and English systems of education, M. Ripert, the chairman, having pointed out that in France the influence of the State in education tended to give it a materialistic and sceptical bias.

MR. BLAKE held that, instead of directing attention to the history of religions, as a branch of school study, the child should be instructed in the knowledge of psychical faculties as throwing light on the miraculous and supernatural elements in the history of religions. That would leave the pupil free to form his own judgment and to choose his own religious faith. A knowledge of psychical facts would provide the clue to those miraculous elements which were regarded as the sanctions of different religions. In England the tendency as regards the religious part of education at a school was mainly determined by the principal of the school, his attitude tending to be reflected by the various teachers under him. The question having been discussed from various angles by the Chairman, Mr. Blake, Mr. Knott and others, the expression of collective opinion to be submitted to the Congress took this form:

That in the opinion of this Congress it is desirable that the history of religions and the evidences for psychic or psychological faculties of the human mind should form part of the curriculum of primary and secondary education in all State schools, according to the possibilities of each country.

The paper read by M. Regnault on the social uses of mediumship was closely debated, the Chairman, Mr. Keeling, Mr. Blake, Mr. R. Boddington, Mr. Grimshaw, and others, taking part.

Mr. Blake referred to the system pursued by the Bournemouth Society to which he belongs. A medium is attached to the Society and paid an annual stipend and thus relieved from the necessity of commercializing his gifts. Where a sitting is abortive, the matter is referred to the council of the Society and the fee paid is either returned or the sitter given the choice of taking another sitting. He disagreed with Mr. Keeling that questions concerning mediums should be decided by the sitters. He thought that the sitters should be under examination equally with the medium.

Mr. Knott thought it was eminently necessary that there should be some authoritative body to control the position between the medium and the sitters.

The various systems at present in force were compared and discussed, and their advantages and disadvantages reviewed.

Finally the sense of the meeting was embodied in the following conclusion to be submitted to the Grand Committee:

In the opinion of this Congress it is very desirable that all interviews with mediums should be controlled financially and in every other respect by recognised societies and organizations.

(To be continued.)

THE innate divinity works from within outwards; the mind moulds the body, though there is always a reflex action from the body to the mind. The vibration rate of the body is largely determined by the thoughts. High thoughts refine, coarse thoughts degrade. See the fibre of the drunkard who besots himself in the public-house and watch it coarsen with the degradation of his mind, while the beauty and refinement of the flesh keeps pace with the spiritualising of the mind. The body is often the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual disgrace. —"Self Training," by H. ERNEST HUNT.

"WE KNOW WHEREOF WE SPEAK."

RECEIVED THROUGH THE INSPIRATIONAL MEDIUMSHIP
OF AGNES JUDSON.

We of the higher Realms are trying to impart to the children of Earth many of the so-called "hidden" truths, truths which you are intended to know, in order to enable you to live better lives upon earth and to visualize something in regard to the life ahead.

An open mind, like an open confession, is good for the soul; an open mind is the first requirement when one is seeking for truth, and the willingness to receive that truth from whatsoever source it may come; for truth is not limited to any one particular creed or doctrine, it comes in many ways through many channels.

The closed, prejudiced mind erects a barrier through which nothing can penetrate, and from which no growth of soul can come.

He whose mind and heart are both open to what the world terms "new" truths (but, as a matter of fact, there are no "new" truths), will indeed find himself travelling the road of Progression.

To such a soul will be given from those in higher spheres and from the Great Eternal Source of all Truth, information and guidance impossible of attainment through earthly channels.

We who have travelled ahead of you are able to bring back to you a larger degree of knowledge than you deem possible, but in order for you to receive perfectly that which we have to bring, there must of necessity be co-operation on your part.

We often hear it said, "Why must there be certain conditions and development in receiving messages from a Spirit?"

"Why cannot those we love come directly to all of us, why do so few receive communications?"

In answer to these questions we would ask:

"Why do you think that we can come from a spiritual plane of great harmony and peace into a material one of discord, unrest, and unbelief?"

The conditions we ask are spiritual ones, for spiritual truth must be spiritually discerned.

We must have quiet, peaceful vibrations, and minds attuned, so far as is possible, to our own.

"Except ye become as a little child ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

First of all there must be the desire to receive, and the faith in unknown possibilities.

Then, unless one happens to be from birth highly-developed psychically, there will have to be the regular, determined effort put forth, the effort necessary to develop any gift—psychic or otherwise, for the psychic or Sixth Sense is inherent in all, and requires only perseverance to bring it forth in full power.

The Open Sesame to the realm of Spirit and all things pertaining thereto, is faith.

Enter into the Silence of the soul, at a given hour always; let there be a period, not exceeding one hour and preferably less at first, of complete relaxation of both mind and body; cast aside all material thoughts and affairs of your everyday life, and reach out mentally to the spiritual.

You will gradually feel an influx of spiritual power, permeating your whole being, mind, body, and spirit, and with that force will come revelations you know not of. It requires patience, to be sure, for soul-growth and spiritual illumination take time.

When you have once entered the Pathway of the Spirit the way will be made easier and the understanding greater by loving hearts already there, those who have put off the mortal and clothed themselves in the immortal.

Pray always for only the highest and best, and allow no fear to enter in. Concentrate upon the spiritual, and lift your consciousness to the Heights, refuse to accept anything destructive or detrimental, and in due time the illumination will come.

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF THE SEANCE ROOM.

BY R. H. SAUNDERS.

Attached to Mrs. Roberts Johnson's Circle on the spirit side is a lad who passed over during the War. On Earth, Joe Griffiths held a lowly position in a cotton mill; in the Spheres he takes rank as a humorist with a specific object. He combines much homely shrewdness with a fund of dry humour. I have known sitters who resented the laughter caused by Joe's sallies; they considered that spirit intercourse should be conducted with all solemnity. A reverent attitude is undoubtedly the proper one, but this is quite compatible with harmless fun. Every sitter does not know that a too serious attitude of mind begets a strain in the seance room which stands in the way of the best results being obtained. When this happens it is the duty of this spirit to lessen the tension, and it is invariably found that immediately after some hearty laughter caused by a shrewd hit of Joe's, the voice of some spirit which had been trying to manifest, attains strength and comes through with a burst. In addition to being the wit of the circle, Joe Griffiths claims to have acted as a matrimonial agent, and was instrumental in uniting two mortals in holy wedlock.

Joe has often some funny story to relate, and recently at a sitting with Mrs. Roberts Johnson he posed me with "Hast thee heard this? A man hadn't spoken wi' t' wife for 13 years". "How was that?" I asked. "'Cos he wouldn't interrupt her," replied Joe. We protested against the libel upon womankind, and the conversation led to Joe relating the following:

"A lass was sittin' wi' Mrs. Johnson, an' ah was sayin' ah foond 't difficult to wed t' widows, an' the lass said, 'Well, I'm not a widow', 'Eh, ah'll soon find thee a hoosband', ah said. 'I'm going to Brighton for a month's holiday,' said 't girl, 'find me one there'. 'No, no,' ah said, 'thee moost go to Margate'. She went to Margate, an' ah impressed her to go to hotel where ah knew her affinity was stayin', an' she was married to the lad afore her moonth was oop."

"That's true," observed Mrs. Johnson, "and I have a piece of the wedding cake addressed to Joe Griffiths, care of myself."

Mrs. Johnson then related that when the young lady became engaged she told her fiancé what Joe had said, and he wrote the girl's father that as the spirits had arranged it, he hoped there would be no opposition. The father replied that it appeared extraordinary to him that so short an intimacy should result in betrothal, but if enquiries proved satisfactory he would give his consent. The match was a most suitable one in all respects, and a very happy couple thank Joe Griffiths for his effective efforts as a spirit "go-between!"

It is a mistake to imagine, as some do, that no material benefit is obtained through spirit intercourse—I have been a witness on many occasions of the planning of "conditions" by our spirit friends, leading to some material advantage to sitters. As David Duguid once observed to me, "And why should we not help our friends, provided in so doing we do not injure others?"

There is another interesting point revealed in this story. Our auras, which indicate our natures, are clearly visible to spirit sight. They are ever reaching out, ready at any propitious moment to mingle with the auras of those in affinity with ours, and our spirit friends realize far better than we ever can where harmony is possible between two natures. The reason Joe Griffiths was able to "work it", as he phrases it, is due to the simple fact that he found the lady susceptible to impression, and influenced her to go to the place where he knew her "affinity" was staying, and propinquity gave the opportunity of the two auras blending, as Nature intended.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AND
MR. HARRY PRICE.

Sir,—You were good enough to publish a letter of mine in your issue of September 15th in which I showed that the statement of a man named Hartman who was a member of a circle in New York, in which he said that I had kissed the hand of an ectoplasmic image thinking it was my mother, was false, and that Mr. Harry Price had no right to repeat it. It is the sort of invention which is gross and palpable, for how could anyone kiss a flesh and blood hand and mistake it for an ectoplasmic one! The last thing which the fraudulent medium would do would be to allow me to touch her. Apart from this I had three independent witnesses who were present. I have now, in the face of my denial, received a letter from Mr. Price in which he says: "I am giving this same lecture again in Vienna and Copenhagen, and in future I shall read out Dr. Hartman's version of the Thompson story and let my hearers judge for themselves." After this I think that I can also let *your* readers judge for themselves. No comment is needed, when a man reiterates what he knows to be false.

Yours, etc.,
ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

15, Buckingham Palace Mansions, S.W.1.

A VICAR'S EXPERIENCE IN PREVISION.

Sir,—It seems to me that the practice of telling fortunes should not be confused with the possibility of the future being foreseen or foretold. Although the prophet's primary duty was to "forthtell", there are a good many instances in the Bible of foretelling, such as Micaiah's foretelling the death of Ahab, while announcements of future events, such as the birth of St. John the Baptist, are fairly numerous in the New Testament.

An experience which I had some years ago makes me think that in certain conditions and in certain circumstances the future may still be foreseen and imparted.

I was in great trouble about my own future, having to resign a position I had long held, and hoping against hope for a suitable sphere of work. Daily I knelt with my wife in prayer, but the heavens seemed as brass, and no cloud appeared, when, suddenly, one day I met a lady who was possessed of clairvoyant powers in which I did not then believe. As she was speaking to me at 10 a.m. in the morning, she described a beautiful figure standing beside me, a figure from the normally unseen world, whom, by her description, I recognised. This figure, or angel, though it was a woman, spoke words of comfort to me, saying that I must not be so anxious as the way was being opened out before me, and I should soon be offered settled parochial work. I asked how I should know the right parish when it came, and she gave me a number of signs which would guide me. I then asked this angel whether it was possible to tell me how long I should have to wait, and she replied that I should be offered the parish when the snowdrops came, and would go to it with the daffodils. She then said, "Speak from the deeper reaches of your soul, and you will be used to bring blessing to many." Then this angel visitant vanished.

Six months went by and then, with the snowdrops, came to me the offer of no fewer than three parishes. Round one of these parishes all the signs gathered, and to that parish I went, and to my amazement, when I reached the Rectory, the garden was a perfect blaze of daffodils, so that the old gardener who had been there some forty years exclaimed. "I tell ye, sir, I never seen the like."

How is such an incident to be accounted for? I could not have imagined it, and the parish was one of which I had never even heard; the clairvoyant lady could hardly have imagined it, for she knew nothing whatever of my circumstances

or that I was seeking for a parish, and even had she seen this in my mind, how could she describe to me a parish not then offered to me, not then even vacant, and tell me the very time when I should go there?

I can personally see no explanation but the Scriptural idea of guardian angels, who, under certain circumstances, however rarely, are permitted sensibly to guide us.

Yours, etc.,
A VICAR.

FINGER-PRINTS—A SUGGESTION.

Sir,—Would it not be a good idea if a number of persons prominent in the Spiritualist movement had their finger-prints taken so that after they had passed over they would, if able to return, be in a position to give convincing evidence of identity by reproducing the finger-prints in dental wax?

Yours, etc.,
H. J. NORTON.

Eastchurch, Sheerness.

[A scheme of this nature is already in operation. An official of the London Spiritualist Alliance has for some considerable time been recording thumb-prints, with the object of establishing a basis for possible future identifications in the seance room.—Ed.]

A HEALING EXPERIENCE.

Miss C. RUGG writes:

Some time ago, when I was lying in bed helplessly ill with my heart, the following occurrence took place in full daylight.

The room was suddenly filled with a deep, golden light. I looked about the room in surprise, at first, and then, thinking it must be reflected from something outside, I turned my head and looked out of the window, fearing that the house opposite must be burning, but there was no sign of any such thing. The light continued to fill the room and was quite steady; it soon, however, collected into a cloud high up at the foot of my bed, and descended on to me in a shaft of light. In this condition I fell asleep and awoke next day almost completely recovered. I got up and went to business.

I think this is a case of spiritual healing.

LITTLE IRONIES.

By E. W. DUXBURY.

Solomon is reputed to have said: "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." There are few signs of shame in many modern offenders, but it may be otherwise as to the folly.

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If you wish to know the truth about psychic phenomena, you can always obtain a definitive judgment from some one who has never seen a medium nor attended a seance.

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If you want to know the truth about a medium, ask a policeman!

* * * * *

There is a Latin proverb which says: *In medio tutissimus ibis*. In view of the state of the law, this does not mean that you will be particularly safe with a medium, but that "Along the middle path you will find the safest way."

* * * * *

In the eyes of the Law "the King can do no wrong", and in the same eyes, apparently, a medium can do no right.

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Two swallows do not make a summer, and three seances do not make a psychic expert.

LIGHT.

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THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

Whosoever would read a full, true and particular account of the papers and conferences dealing with Spiritualism in its religious, philosophic and scientific aspect must await the official record to be issued some few months hence by the International Spiritualists' Federation (Fédération Spirite Internationale) of which the General Secretary is M. André Ripert, of the Maison des Spirites, 8, Rue Copernic, Paris, 16e. No mere newspaper could adequately chronicle the multitudinous and many-coloured particulars of the event.

To many of us the main importance of the matter is the event in itself and its impact on the thought of the world, especially as reflected in the world's Press. The various foreign Press agencies, notably those representing the United States and South America, were kept busily engaged in reporting some of the features of the Congress to their various countries, most of which were represented by delegates at the meetings at Queen's Gate Hall and social gatherings in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Mr. Hannen Swaffer, whose personality might be held to represent the Press at large, and who spoke at the *Conversazione*, with its overflowing attendance, on Wednesday evening, 12th inst., referred to the great international gathering as "this League of Nations"—a not inapt description of it. Mr. Ernest Oaten, editor of *The Two Worlds*, spoke of the International Federation as being still in its infancy—which is true enough—but if the devotion and self-sacrifice on the part of the promoters and workers, and the ardour and enthusiasm of all concerned in the enterprise have any meaning we may expect the lusty infant to grow at last into sturdy manhood.

One of the notable features of the Congress regarded from the standpoint of its international character was the speech of Dr. Johnson, a coloured gentleman from West Africa, whose eloquence and attractive personality made a deep impression. That episode may be left to provide its own comment, especially amongst those to whom native Africans of Dr. Johnson's type are considered as savages.

It was a happy circumstance that while the Congress was sitting, Sir Oliver Lodge at Glasgow was delivering in a more exalted way from the pulpit of

the Wellington United Free Church, the same great message to the world—the tidings of human survival and immortality.

Looking over the whole range of activity—Spiritualism, Psychic Research, Theosophy and a vast multitude of organizations all over the world more or less associated with the question, we see a gradual convergence to the essential subject. We see that, by the process of time and much contentious and apparently destructive effort, the main theme will gradually "run itself clear". The formation of the International Federation with its ideals of construction and unity will undoubtedly do much to bring about this great end. Meantime as one of the leading representatives of Spiritualism remarked of the Congress "It is not so much what is said or done here that is important, it is the fact that there is a Congress and that the event has been recorded in every quarter of the globe". In short, the ball has been set rolling on a larger field than ever before, and like the proverbial snowball it will gather as it goes.

THE COMING BROTHERHOOD.

We have never been amongst the Jeremiahs, for, although the events of to-day abound in things disquieting and ominous, there are clear signs of a spiritual awakening in many directions. That finer and higher type of Spiritualism, which is in such sharp contrast to certain rather squalid and repellent manifestations which come under the same heading, is making itself felt in all quarters of the globe. Many men and women of goodwill are being attracted to our ranks, their only motive being to answer the call to service and to join the forces of those who are endeavouring to build up a bulwark against the acute materialism of the age. For some years past we have received letters and visits from people of many countries, some of them persons of high intelligence, who have become conscious of guidance and direction from the Unseen World. They have a deep, interior sense of the spiritual link connecting them together and breaking down the old barriers of race and caste. It is in our view a remarkable sign of coming changes, moving through trial and calamity, to great ends. Some of those people have given themselves wholly to the work, renouncing worldly prospects and sacrificing their wealth to the cause of humanity. They have found in Spiritualism a movement to which they are impelled to devote their best energies. It is all very significant to those who can understand.

BORING SPIRITS.

From the remarkable little book *Listening In* by Olive Pixley, we quote the following:

"When I first realised that I could write automatically I was pestered by a young woman who signed her name 'Hester'. She never tired of telling me how she had fallen into the river one day, when she was picking forget-me-nots, and had most lamentably been drowned. I was terribly sorry for Hester when she first told me her tale, but grew exceedingly tired of hearing it over and over again. She had no tact. She would suddenly interrupt a most interesting communication; I would become aware that the handwriting had changed, and on asking who it was, Hester would reluctantly declare herself.

"We can (sometimes) deal with bores in our world, but we cannot cope with bores (and frankly there are colossal ones) on the other side, too. *Death alters nothing.*"

SIDELIGHTS.

The *Daily Chronicle* of September 12th devotes a half column to the case of a young French book-maker, known locally as the "Lyons Fakir", for whom some sensational curative powers are claimed. He cured, it is said, a tumour in his own foot, by simply laying his hand on the affected part, and states that he possesses the power of mummifying dead birds, fruit, meat, etc., by placing his hands on them, through the action of a current or fluid that retards decomposition. Dr. Locard and Dr. Biot, a former chief of Lyons hospital, observed some of the experiments, and are stated to have been much interested. In an interview the young healer said, "I only take patients whose cases doctors have practically abandoned".

* * * * *

Father Thurston, in the course of an article in *The Month* on "Ghosts that Tease," recalls a sensational case of poltergeist activity which took place in Styria, Austria, about a century ago. The manifestations were recorded from statements by an eye-witness, H. J. A. Schauer, a teacher (afterwards professor) of mathematical physics. The affair caused an enormous sensation at the time, and was the subject of an official enquiry. Loud knockings and the flinging of stones by unseen hands took place, and it was noted with astonishment that a dog on the premises never barked during the manifestations. Close watch, and elaborate precautions against fraud were maintained, but no trickery could be discovered. During a search for the mysterious culprit by a number of persons, headed by one Koppbauer, stones began to strike the kitchen windows.

* * * * *

Koppbauer, it is stated, put his head out of one of the windows and at once a large stone smashed the glass of the window through which he was craning his neck; this stone, and several more, appeared to come from inside the building. The stone-flinging went on until evening, and was resumed next morning, by which time a crowd had assembled outside. Later, it appears to have been established that the missiles came from a heap of substance, corresponding to washing-soda, which was kept under a settle on the same side of the wall as the windows themselves. Fragments of this material, some weighing several pounds, struck the windows, and must therefore, apparently, have followed a semi-circular path from the settle to the window.

* * * * *

These phenomena, however, were only the beginnings of the disturbance. Windows were smashed, and a miniature storm raged in the kitchen, which seems to have been the focussing point for the manifestations; almost every breakable article was destroyed; spoons, dishes, saucepans, and other utensils were seen to fly through the air; while attempts were being made to rescue the plates by removing them to another room, those who carried these articles declared that they were snatched away from their hands. A stopper in an empty decanter was seen to jump out and fall on the table three times in succession. One curious piece of evidence was to this effect: that though the flying objects, which included a big iron spoon weighing about a pound, came travelling with great velocity against living persons, nobody seems to have been hurt, or even bruised. On coming into contact with a human body, the moving objects "fell dead as if a hand had arrested them in their flight".

The British Association meetings recently ended at Glasgow caused the names of three scientists to be thrown into newspaper prominence; these three were Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor F. G. Donnan, and Professor A. V. Hill, and their subject which aroused so much public attention was—the production of life. Professor Donnan propounded the question: What is cellular death? It was upon this point, he said, that Professor A. V. Hill was on the verge of making a discovery of astounding importance. The *Glasgow Herald* of September 12th, which gives a very full report of Professor Donnan's lecture, paraphrases a portion of the lecturer's speech in these words: "If they could find a complete continuity of dimensions between the living and the non-living, was there really any point where they could say—Here is life, and there is no life? That would be a daring and perhaps a dangerous theme to dwell on at the present time."

* * * * *

Sir Oliver Lodge, who seconded the vote of thanks proposed by Dr. N. V. Sidgwick to Professor Donnan, is reported as saying that it was easier to say what life is not than what life is. He sometimes ventured to speculate on its being something that crystallized out of the ether of space. The *Daily Chronicle* of September 13th publishes an interview with Sir Oliver following this statement, and quotes him as follows: "We do not understand the mystery of life, but I think the solution may lie in that direction. Men of eminence are studying the mechanism of life, but it is not the whole truth that is involved in the mystery."

* * * * *

"Materialism has been scotched but not killed", was one of the striking remarks made by Sir Oliver Lodge in the course of an address at Wellington United Free Church, Glasgow, on Sunday, September 9th. The *Church of England Newspaper* of September 14th reports the address fully, and the following is a brief résumé: Sir Oliver pointed out that certain perturbation had been caused in the past by presidential addresses of the British Association, but it had been stated this year, by way of allaying such perturbations, that any pronouncement by a man of science is only a partial announcement. Modern discoveries did not throw away or discredit the accumulated witness of humanity.

* * * * *

There was a truth, Sir Oliver said, in the facts of materialism; but the facts had been wrongly interpreted. The universe was a going concern; the reign of law and order was complete. "The truth is that we are souls which have a body," he said; "the soul has made the body, which is a mere instrument. . . . Life and mind are by no means limited to our earthly manifestation."

* * * * *

The difficulty at present was to explain how life got into matter, went on Sir Oliver. The attempt to explain consciousness materialistically had been conspicuously futile. A scientific demonstration of the essential immortality of man was beginning; it was being conducted with difficulty and met with opposition. An answer was beginning to appear to the question: What is the object of life? It was to form a character that should continue, to train ourselves by meeting difficulties, and not to be defeated by pain and trouble. "We have reached a stage," he concluded, "at which we can realize that pain and trouble and effort are worth while. Our privilege is to explore with patience and diligence the vast extent of the universe to the thread of simplicity, amid its marvellous intricacy to apprehend glories beyond the utmost stretch of our imagination, and thereafter to revel in the enjoyment of its infinite beauty."

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

LEIGH HUNT AND HIS CIRCLE.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM A. REID, GLASGOW.

The very interesting article in the issue of *LIGHT*, dated September 1st, under the above heading, by Mr. H. G. Osborn, set me hunting among my old psychic records of 1912-5; particularly as the subtitle reads, "Do they come back?" Perhaps a few extracts from my records may help to answer the question. I may mention that I have no acquaintance with Mr. Osborn whatever.

From 1911-13 I lived in Philadelphia, and got to know, among other psychics, a Mr. McDowell, one of the finest men I ever met. He was of mixed Irish and Scots blood, a joiner in a small way, intelligent, well-read, a bit of a mystic, a non-professional medium, and one of the most unworldly men I have encountered. He died several years ago in Philadelphia, over 70, unmarried. No surviving relatives could be found. I corresponded regularly with him up to his death; and to him and other American Spiritualists I owe a debt of gratitude for opportunities to study Spiritualism at first-hand.

Now, McDowell believed that he got into communication with Leigh Hunt and Shelley; and I have in my possession some of these communications. Mr. McDowell told me that he generally got these communications direct, and wrote them down without a single slip or correction. Occasionally he got them through a ouija board in collaboration with a cultured day-school teacher. I shall give two examples of the first method, and one of the second. The first, you will observe, is individual and solitary; the second is in collaboration with another medium.

Wise and weighty words in prose, either from Leigh Hunt or from Shelley, even if expressing ideas characteristic of these writers, would not be evidential; but verse which bore evidence of the style and imagery of the poets, and up to the standard of their versification would carry weight, I think.

I propose to give my readers three examples in verse.

First Example.

This is marked as coming from Leigh Hunt on September 5th, 1913, and is a farewell to my wife and myself when we left Philadelphia for Scotland, and was written without a correction by Mr. McDowell.

A PARTING IN TIME.

Not like to arrows in their flight
That passing leave no trace behind,
Or days wrapt in oblivion's night
That memory's vision ne'er can find,
Are some we've met in days gone by,
Who left their impress as the seal
Upon the wax or clay ere dry
As bond of hearts that tell of weal.
No more their hands we grasp again,
No more the converse like a cup
Of nectar filled by richest brain
Is passed 'twixt hand and lip to sup.
No more, you say? What? Not no more.
I see the veil is drawn aside,
And hands are grasped, the cup runs o'er
Where separation can't abide.

The pointing is Mr. McDowell's.

Second Example.

Date, September 3rd, 1915, got by ouija board as described above. I quote the extract:

Then Percy Shelley was announced, followed by
When the lamp is shattered,
The light in the dust lies dead
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed
Read my writings.

The question was put, "Where can they be found?" (I presume this poem is referred to). And the reply was spelled out:—

English Literature of early nineteenth century.

None of the sitters knew the poem or the book, if book is intended. I have not verified the quotation. It may be known to some of your readers.

Third Example.

This is marked as coming from Leigh Hunt in January 22nd, 1912. It seems to me outstanding, as it does to others to whom I have read it. Indeed it is an almost perfect lullaby, good, whoever the author may be, and fully worthy even of Leigh Hunt.

NURSERY LYRIC.

Sleep now baby close your eyes
Never mind where pussy lies
Or your toes how pink they be
May I play bo-peep with thee
Cunning cunning though your look
Sleep will catch you with his hook
He is coming don't forget
Two bright stars are going to set
While the cradle rocks and swings
Baby is forgetting things
And is going where they say
Pleasant dreams are wont to stray
Leaving beauty like a flower
Pluckt unblown from Eden's bower
That unfolds its leaves in prime
When awakes my babe in time
Hear his breathing soft and low
Happiness has come below
Wrapping you around my dear
This is mother's highest cheer
Richest treasure from above
Gift of Everlasting Love
Bless all little lambs like thee
A shepherd cares for thee and me

In the poem as sent me by Mr. McDowell there were no punctuation marks; so I give none. The meaning, however, is quite clear.

I leave this brief record with your readers. Little links make a long chain. From what I have written I feel like saying that if there is a Leigh Hunt Circle, John McDowell must be in it. Now if our friends could get a description of Mr. McDowell, I shall with pleasure send a photograph for comparison.

THE CANDLE SYMBOL.

BY A. HORNGATE.

Has it not been rather too readily assumed that the simile of an extinguished candle tells against Survival? May it not, on the contrary, be a strong argument in our favour?

What do we know, as yet, about candle flames? Is it not likely that, when the Great Victory of Life is understood, the jet of flame that suddenly appears, seizes on fuel prepared for it, and when vanished into the Unseen leaves an evil-smelling wick behind, may represent our lowest form of visible life?

When we strike a match, or flint upon steel, it is possible that our friction scratches a hole down into the Ether of Space, setting up so violent a tension among the atoms of matter that a jet of etheric vitality bursts through from amongst them. This suggestion is in harmony with modern discoveries, and also with the instincts of primitive Man.

One of the primary arts discovered by savage man was the use of fire; and the earliest civilized communities guarded a "sacred flame" among their inner mysteries of religion, fed it with more care than any sacred ox, and put out all their other fires at certain times in order to re-kindle them from the steady central flame that they regarded as a Manifestation

of Deity. Is it not possible that this vital urge that consumed our fuel *does* come direct from the Centre of Creation, up through the first and second dimensions, into our third dimensional world?

But what happens when the candle is put out? Does the vital urge reverse the order of all creation and go back into the second dimension, the hole in the Ether of Space building itself up as though it had never been? That seems unlikely. The vital jet's experience of a three dimensional existence probably imparts to it a new oscillation, a new type of motion; so that when it vanishes from our sight, it proceeds through creation as a fourth dimensional motion.

Before you express scorn at this suggestion, pause to consider whether we do not already have another type of fire—incandescence. Whatever this may be, it does not run riot like common flame, but is made use of by certain animals and fish as if it were one of the ordinary modes by which life can be manifested. And has anyone noticed that in the Vale Owen Scripts ordinary flame and smoke are constantly referred to in the Underworld scenes, but never once in any description of the Heavenly Countries—though various forms of incandescence and radiance are there continually described?

You may say: "Even if a candle flame were to pass out into a higher existence on being extinguished here, it would be a mere vital motion like electricity; so the simile tells against the survival of any one recognizable man."

But what individuality has a candle flame here? If we regard a flame as a kind of inverted plant, its circular head (or ego-ring) slowly burrowing downward, while its root lashes the air in search of fresh nutriment, we have perhaps a manifestation of the most elementary kind of life, capable of originating other flames by snapping holes through into the ether, but all fires being as much alike as the letter "e", which can be used in any arrangement of words. All plants make use of the principle of combustion; a rose may be said to write a poem, with the letter "e" constantly occurring at definite points. A man's spirit may be like the spirit of a whole book, capable of translation into many languages yet essentially the same.

Of course, this theory regards plant-spirits as surviving death and taking lovelier forms in their next existence—as it is certain we do ourselves. There is surely plenty of room in the spheres centred upon this earth for all forms of existence manifested here, and some kind of magnetic connection with the central axis of our earth may be necessary for every kind of birth—even the birth of a candle-flame. These ideas are not likely to find ready acceptance, hence my hesitation in expressing them.

THE USES OF MORTALITY.

Amid the fret and fume, the hurry and the rush, the passion for speed in order to journey nowhere in particular, it is refreshing to contemplate the leisurely progress of Nature. She is never "rushed", having all Eternity to work in. But probably it was wisely designed that man should suppose that his whole future career must turn upon the little span of his mortal life—between two Eternities. It gave him the necessary sense of responsibility; and indeed it is true that his mortal life is an important period, for the opportunities for development it affords are of a special kind. Hard as it may be to form the character here, it is harder still in the world beyond. So, at least, we are told by those who maintain that matter affords a kind of grip or "purchase"—something that gives us foot-hold and leverage. But haste and strain are not the best methods of utilising those opportunities; they tend to waste energy, and Nature (lavish as she seems of power) never wastes a grain, but always conserves her gains.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

A big volume might be written on the process of "speeding-up" through which the world is passing to-day—faster and faster travel by automobile and aeroplane, swifter and more efficient methods of doing the world's work in home and factory and office. Doubtless it is the outward and visible sign of a clearing of mind and a quickening of soul, with which the external side of life tries to keep pace. It is a crucial time in human evolution, the breaking away from old bounds and limits, with a goal not too clearly apparent, except to those who see in it the working of that Spirit which doeth all things well.

* * * * *

Demand always produces supply. Some years ago a friend of mine occupied the house in which a century or so previously there lived one of our greatest poets. My friend preserved the house with religious care, but on one occasion he had to employ a builder to repair the front door. In the course of the work the builder begged that he might remove the knocker and substitute a new one at his own cost. He explained that a wealthy and titled collector of curios wished to buy from him a knocker which the great poet had handled. He begged and pleaded, but my friend was inflexible, and finally remarked with a twinkle, "Lord — wants a knocker, can't you supply him with one?" The builder grinned—he understood—and Lord — was supplied with a door-knocker, which he placed with great joy in his collection. But it was not *the* knocker!

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I think of this story—a perfectly true one—when I read of the fraudulent manifestations often reported, especially in poltergeist cases. The medium, or supposed medium, is surrounded by people eagerly and anxiously demanding marvels. And in the result what they get is not the real thing. As in the case of the poet's house it is a spurious knocker and not the genuine article.

* * * * *

A certain amount of the adverse criticism directed against spirit communications arises from the honesty of those who record them. The messages are not "edited" to make them seem plausible. They are given exactly as they are received, and where the phrasing is such as to rouse suspicion as to the identity of the sender, a psychological puzzle is presented which is just as much a matter for solution by the critics as by those who receive and publish them. In a long and favourable criticism of Mr. Florizel von Reuter's *Psychical Experiences of a Musician*, it is observed that a communicator, supposed to be Charles Dickens, transmitted the sentence, "I have known you since many years". The reviewer remarks of this: "That *since* is a trap from which, apparently, no German can escape, but into which no Englishman ever falls." That is true enough; but the colouration of messages by the mind of the medium in the direction of words and turns of phrase is a fact with which all experienced investigators are familiar. I have seen a great deal of it in my own experience: but then, on the other hand, I have had messages from departed friends which reproduced all their own mannerisms and familiar phrases with no apparent tincture from the medium's own mind. It is very like wireless telephony. Sometimes you get "clear reception" and sometimes you don't. There are innumerable grades between hearing clearly and hearing nothing at all. If we look at it from that point of view the question is immensely simplified.

D.G.

CONGRESS ECHOES.

It is said that the recent Congress was rendered possible by the generosity of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. As not everyone knows, for years past he has devoted not only his time and energy but also all his profits from his lectures (and probably more) to the furtherance of the movement he has so much at heart.

* * * * *

The many visitors from overseas—some of them seeing London for the first time—found a warm welcome, not only from the weather but from the host of friends whom they met, anxious to aid them in making the most and best of their visit. The house of the London Spiritualist Alliance in Queensberry Place—which had been thrown open to the Congress delegates and friends—was thronged daily.

* * * * *

It was noticeable that the Pressmen most interested in the Congress were the representatives of the newspapers of the European Continent, the United States, South America, India and the British Dominions. So many reports were despatched, by the cable or the postal service, to these countries that the public in each will probably have learned more about the movement as it exists in their midst than ever they would have gathered from their local news.

* * * * *

This close intercommunication between widely-separated countries has several times had curious results. For instance, some event in Spiritualism or some new book on the subject has passed with little comment in the country of its origin. But the news has been cabled abroad, and then copied by the Press of other countries, thus bringing under public notice in those countries things happening in their own land, of which otherwise they would have been unaware. This method of gathering home news from abroad has had some queer illustrations of late years, as Mr. Hannen Swaffer could testify. The present Congress has yielded some striking examples.

* * * * *

The munificent gift of M. Jean Meyer was the subject of much admiration. He has allocated property to the value of 4,000,000 francs to the support of Spiritualism. The income (which arises in part from vineyards) is devoted to the support of the Société d'Etudes Métapsychiques, which includes the Institut and the Maison des Spirites, the trustees of the fund having also the power to endow any branch of Spiritualistic activity outside those institutions.

* * * * *

Amongst the many visitors from distant lands, was Mr. Einar H. Kvaran of Iceland whom it was pleasant to meet again, for he visited London some years ago at about the time when the late Professor Neilsson, of Reykjavik University, an occasional visitor from Iceland, became personally known to many of us. Mr. Kvaran said that there was more Spiritualism in Iceland—relatively to the population—than in any other country in Europe.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Critics of the Christ Answered by Spiritualism." I. T. Warner-Staples, F.R.A.S., with Foreword by Rev. G. Vale Owen. (Rider & Co. 4s. 6d. net.)

Few books could be more helpful to those wishing to know what light is thrown upon the New Testament by Psychical Research and Spiritualism. The author quotes freely from the works of those modern theologians who are unable to accept the truth of the Gospel story because it seems to them that it is contradicted by our observations of Natural Law. Their confused and mutually contradictory conclusions are contrasted with the perfectly natural account of the Gospel writers, as understood by those familiar with the repeatedly proven results of psychical investigation. It is made clear that New Testament scholarship can neither be deemed complete nor trustworthy while it fails to include a study of psychical phenomena. Some idea of the excellence of this little book can be formed by comparing its study of Our Lord's after-death appearances with the gropings and hesitations which mark an article upon the same subject in the *Modern Churchman* for August 1928.

C.D.T.

SPIRITUALISTS AT THE POLLS.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's proposal that the united force of organized Spiritualism should be used as a political lever at the coming general election has caused widespread comment. His suggestion was to support whichever party would pledge itself to remove from the statute books the Acts which impede religious freedom. Interviewed by an *Evening Standard* representative, Sir Arthur said: "I estimate that there are at least 200,000 Spiritualists eligible to go to the polls; they would be capable of deciding the issue in a number of constituencies." The *Standard* of September 14th prints in italicized type Sir Arthur's remark: "We do not seek privileges for Bond Street fortune-tellers. We seek ordinary rights for our religion and its followers."

In a leading article on Sir Arthur's political proposals the *Referee* of the 16th September approves the idea of action at the polls as the most practical method of righting injustice. "The politician must be moved by the lever of votes if he is to go to work on any reform," says the leader-writer, who goes on: "Some of the laws which affect honest inquirers into matters occult are not only absurd and irritating obstructions to honest investigation, but are scandalously unjust in themselves. . . . We hold no brief for Spiritualism, but we do claim one for justice, and therefore we are exceedingly glad to see that their very practical leader, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, intends, with the help of his half-million or so of followers, to make 'psychic freedom' an issue at the forthcoming general election."

SHEFFIELD.—The Sheffield Society for Psychical Research has an unusually attractive programme of lectures for the coming Winter session, and the Spring session of 1928. Among the speakers will be Mr. G. R. S. Mead, editor of *The Quest*, Mr. J. Cuming Walters, editor of the *Manchester City News*, Mr. Staveley Bulford, Dr. F. Ballard, Mrs. Rose Champion de Creepigny and others.

SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—September 30th, 11, open circle, 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. Podmore, October 3rd, 8, Mrs. Edey.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—September 30th, 6.30, Mr. W. A. Coda, Wednesday, 7.30, public circle at 55, Station Road.

Peckham.—Lausanne Road.—September 30th, 7, Mr. Stephen Foster (Australia). Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. E. Clements, D.N.U.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—September 30th, 7.30, Mr. E. Hunt, address, October 3rd, 7.30.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katrine Street.—September 30th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mme. Esta Cassel, trance address and clairvoyance.

Fulham.—12, Lettice Street (Nr. Parsons Green Station).—September 30th, 11.30, circle; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. John G. Pollard, Thursday, 8, Miss M. Mills.

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Friday, Sept. 28th, at 8 p.m. ... MRS. CAMPBELL

Tuesday, Oct. 2nd, at 4 p.m. ... MRS. CANNOCK

Friday, Oct. 5th, at 8 p.m. ... MISS CLARKE

NOTE.—The College has occasional accommodation for students or interested visitors from the Country or Abroad.

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Thursday, 4th, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. CANNOCK

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The Council desire to tender their hearty thanks to the numerous friends who have made such a splendid response to the appeal made for the Spiritualists' Defence Fund.

Many of these generous donors are non-members and others are complete strangers, some of whom live in far-off countries.

The total amount received to date is £688 6s. 10d. The cost of the prosecution was £879 19s. 2d. This includes the whole of Mrs. Cantlon's solicitor's costs and the Court charges both before and after the separation of the defence in the two cases.

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OCT., 1928.

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Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"LETTERS FROM THE OTHER SIDE."

Some nine years ago there was published by Mr. John Watkins (of 21, Cecil Court, London, W.C.2.) a book with the above title. It contained a Foreword by Dr. W. J. Geikie Cobb and consisted of a series of messages given by a communicator calling himself Philemon. Many people felt themselves able to identify Philemon as a well-known preacher who had passed away some years before, for the clues were apparent in the messages, but on this point nothing definite was ever stated by those concerned with the production of the book. But one interesting fact which we are authorised to make public, is that the automatist through whom the messages were given was Miss Felicia Scatcherd. This was unknown even to some of her most intimate friends, so carefully was the secret kept. *LIGHT* reviewed the book at the time of its appearance, and on a second reading can confirm all that was then said regarding its high quality and the depth of interest it inspires. The information it gives regarding the after-life and the wisdom of its teachings are invaluable. We learn that the book, which was published at 5s., is now being offered at the reduced price of 2s. 6d. in order to bring it within reach of a larger public than that which it at first commanded.

* * * * *

IN UNEXPECTED PLACES.

It is remarkable how much of psychical experience is found outside of Spiritualism, amongst people who have no particular interest in our subject and who may even look at it with dislike. Many instances of this have come under our observation. Here are three taken without selection as they come to mind. First, there was the West Indian planter met casually in a bookshop. He was of Highland stock, which may partly account for his supernormal experiences. Telepathic communication with distant friends was to him quite a commonplace matter. On meeting with strangers he sometimes found himself prompted to tell them things about their personal history, and he could read their minds in an uncanny way. He gave us some curious instances of this and expressed the view that these powers are becoming more abundant to-day as a new development in human evolution.

Then there was the well-known literary woman in whose family clairvoyance and clairaudience developed, and became quite recognized features of the domestic life. The third case was a young Society woman who had for years been accustomed to be guided and helped by an unseen friend with whom she was able to converse freely. All the cases were genuine. But the odd circumstance is that none of these people became acquainted with Spiritualism as a subject until after they had thus gained unsought practical experience of its reality. Thus do psychic powers manifest themselves in quite unexpected places.

* * * * *

PIETY AND SELF-CONSEQUENCE

There is a type of mind, pious but with little sense of humour, which regards itself as the special object of providential care even in rather trivial circumstances. The vendor of patent medicines is not unfamiliar with that kind of testimonial in which the grateful patient records that after long suffering he procured the world-renowned pills or potion which, "under the blessing of Divine Providence", effected a complete cure. People of this kind regard any good fortune which befalls them—as for instance the escape from a bad accident—as a special interposition of the Deity on their behalf. When, as occasionally happens, they are drawn to the investigation of Spiritualism, they show a curious distaste for recognizing those human agencies which we know as spirits, and report special communication from God, or at least an archangel. We should not charge them with insanity, but merely with the lack of a sense of proportion. They have their facts, but they interpret them wrongly, generally as the result of an exaggerated self-regard. While they confine themselves to patent medicines or special providences, they are relatively harmless. But in Spiritualism their eccentricities become conspicuous, and afford a convenient weapon for its enemies.

THE PASSING.

The irresponsible throbbing of my heart,
Which hungers only now for Peace and Rest;
A faint and feeble fluttering in the breast,
And one swift prayer that terror may depart,
While I reach out to Realms Unknown, Apart;
A mind that gropes; a spirit sore oppress'd,
In search of hands unseen; and then the zest
Of Realization—Birth's sweet counterpart!

For voices whisper, drawing nearer, near,
Like waves that wash from unimagined seas,
Half-poised I wait, as if with wings
outspread . . .
A shock of pain; a cord that snaps with ease;
Faces that fade in earth's dull atmosphere;
Then Light, and Life, and Love . . . and
. . . am I dead?

—J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

International Spiritualists' Federation Congress.

(Continued from page 447.)

J. B. McINDOE. (Glasgow.)

"INDEPENDENT OBJECTIVE VOICE PHENOMENA."

Supernormal voices had been heard in all ages, but were more prevalent to-day than ever before. This branch of knowledge has received but little scientific study, although much had been written of late years on the subject. Psychic research had practically ignored the independent voice until a few months ago, when it paid a passing glance at the phenomena of "Margery". Voice phenomena necessitated (a) originating a stream of air or making use of an already moving current of air; (b) imparting to it vibrations of three qualities, pitch, loudness and timbre. The speaker said that he approached the subject with much diffidence, realising that a number of highly-experienced experimenters, such as the late Admiral Osborne Moore, had been quite unable to say in what way the medium was used in this form of phenomena. A variety of tests had established the reality of the voice with different mediums, but the results had not been the same in different cases. With some mediums a hand or a thick cloth placed over the medium's mouth produced no apparent change in the voice; with other mediums it did. Thus Mrs. Everitt's own hand did not interfere, but the hand of her husband stopped the voice. The voice continued even while Mrs. Everitt's tongue was held between her teeth; voices have also manifested when the medium's mouth was filled with water. Voice control apparatus had further established the independent quality of the direct voice. Voices have been transmitted by wire and recorded on gramophone records, so that their objectivity cannot be questioned. No time need therefore be wasted on considering hypotheses of ventriloquism, trickery or auditory hallucination, still less the weird suggestion of Mr. McCabe that Mrs. Wreidt produced voices by means of chemicals in her trumpet!

No distinctive physical qualities had been noticed in the case of voice mediums, though it had been observed that Mrs. Wreidt has an unusually large larynx. Several voices could be heard simultaneously. "I noted four voices on one occasion with Mrs. Wreidt," said the speaker, "while she herself was conversing volubly with me. They come in any language, sometimes the voices come from the trumpet and other times they seem to be 'in the air'."

Certain physical effects on the sitters have been observed, some indicating that the sitters are involved in the phenomenon. Admiral Osborne Moore noted an irritation of the throat during a series of sittings.

Although the direct voice usually came in the dark there were numerous instances where the voice was produced in full light, either artificial or daylight.

Mrs. Blake, an American medium, always sat in light and used a double trumpet. Another American medium used a very long trumpet in light.

It was possible that the stream of air which reached the sitters might come from the medium's lungs. Mrs. Everitt's control objected to her talking as this appeared to interfere with the phenomenon. In the case of the medium Bastian the voice manifested when his mouth was filled with water, but if his nostrils were temporarily closed the pheno-

menon ceased. There seemed no definite evidence that the medium's lungs were not at least a partial source of the air stream. But in the case of Miss Ada Bessinet the continuous singing and whistling without pause for breath suggested a supernormal source of air. It might be that, if the medium's lungs were a possible source of the air stream, his vocal organs might also be a source of the vibrations, but this in no sense implied trickery.

The phenomena of Miss Ridley, of Buffalo, seemed intermediate between automatic utterance and independent voice. The medium goes into trance and voices in a muffled whisper are heard, even when the medium's mouth is filled with water. One observer concluded that the larynx was the source, the lips and tongue not being used. A doctor who attended sittings at the British College of Psychic Science thought the sounds were such as might come if the larynx were destroyed. Another emphasised his observations of movements of the medium's lips and laryngeal muscles; he considered that the tongue was out of use. A suggestion was made that the muscle movements might be mimetic. The speaker himself had noted faint, almost imperceptible sounds apparently in rhythm with the voices coming from near the medium. These sounds had been described by other observers as either resembling faint, suppressed sobbings, or a faint humming.

It seemed reasonable to conclude (1) that the ultimate sources of the communications were the same as those of other "controlled messages" and that at least some part originates in intelligences extraneous to the medium; (2) that the personality of the medium and the sitters may tinge the communication; (3) that some material structure is employed either to convey and/or concentrate whispers by the medium, or to impart sound vibrations to a current of air emanating from the medium or elsewhere. We might assume that this mechanism emanated mainly from the medium's body.

The speaker dealt with a series of voice experiments conducted by Mr. G. Garscadden that were reported in *LIGHT* (p. 494) 1921. By these experiments, at most of which the speaker was present, it was hoped to use the telephone to magnify whispers otherwise inaudible and to obtain voices in light. Telephone transmitters were employed in a small, locked cabinet, with the necessary connections to receivers which were held by the sitters around it. The medium was out of the circle. Voices resembling loud whispers were heard from the receivers, and also singing. Mr. George H. Lethem, who was present, said of these experiments, "Writing with a full sense of responsibility . . . fraud was impossible." Experiments were made by exhausting the air in the cabinet, but no voices were obtained, which seemed to rule out any hypothesis that the sounds previously heard were due to magnetic or electrical effects. Specially sensitive telephone apparatus had not been found especially advantageous. In some of the experiments radio waves were used to transmit to the receivers.

In another series of experiments the medium was covered with heavy, light-proof clothing, and a sensitive transmitter placed under the clothing near the larynx; voices were also obtained. On another occasion medium and sitters were placed inside a kind of tent, from the interior of which light was excluded; loud, clear voices were received by this arrangement in a room brilliantly lit by electric light.

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It seemed justifiable after considering all the facts to conclude that some essential part of the structure previously postulated might emanate from the medium near the throat. We might conceive alternative structures: (1) the simplest would render audible the unconscious whisperings of the medium; (2) would impart the necessary vibrations to a current of air from the medium's lungs; (3) would produce air currents and impart speech vibrations to them.

As to type 1, for whispered sounds reaching the sitters' ears, it would be sufficient to have the psychic equivalent of a speaking-tube, a sound lens, or sound-reflecting mirrors of suitable foci.

As to types 2 and 3, something corresponding to a psychic replica of the vocal organs would be required, including vocal cords, also resonating cavities with a movable tongue or its equivalent. The mechanism for providing the air stream apart from the medium's lungs need not be enlarged upon.

In conclusion the speaker suggested further experiments which might yield valuable results. These would include the use of a microphone to detect movements of the medium's laryngeal muscles; tests with resonators to locate positions of maximum intensities of the sounds; tests as to the effect of darkness; tests with gramophone records, and tests as to the presence of more than one medium during the production of simultaneous voices. He agreed that further research might negative the hypotheses put forward. This mattered little as long as fresh knowledge was gained. "Such a result is one of the fruits which stimulate the physical scientist. Should we desire to place our science on a less attractive plane?"

M. HENRI REGNAULT. (France.)

A NECESSARY MODIFICATION IN SCHOLASTIC TEACHING.
(In collaboration with M. Milliery and M. Mongel.)

THE SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF MEDIUMISTIC FACULTIES.

(In collaboration with M. André Richard.)

In the first paper a plea was made for an alteration in the present system of religious teaching in schools. While it was recognised that crime and immorality must be combated, and while sociologists agreed as to the evil, they are not in agreement as to the remedy. Official teaching neglected a knowledge of mankind. Léon Denis had pointed to the necessity of "giving the people a new education based on a large and rational Spiritualist doctrine". This would lead to a better understanding of humanity. It would perhaps be too much to expect public authorities to accept so radical a suggestion, but could they reasonably refuse to teach the children the history of religions? Psychic facts abounded in this branch of study; also by this means the youngsters would receive ideas of religious tolerance and of neutrality which would, however, not be a negation of all spiritual life.

The second paper was concerned principally with the payment of mediums. It might reasonably be considered that a distinction should be made between the psychic healer and the possessors of other kinds of psychic gifts. It was necessary to guard against trafficking in mediumistic gifts, and the writers of the paper called upon the Spiritualist organisations to combat all abuses in that direction. For several years the Fédération Spirite Belge had excluded from its association all persons known to be exploiting mediumship. Similar steps had been taken by psychic and Spiritualist groups in Lille, Roubaix, Cambrai, Douai, etc. This question, of course, was a delicate one. It was probable that many protestations would be made against the views put forward. Allen Kardec had written that "serious mediumship can never be a profession, not only because it would be discredited morally, but because of a material obstacle: it is an essentially mobile, fugitive and variable faculty on

the permanence of which no reliance can be placed."

There was an animated discussion on the two papers.

Regarding the first paper, Mr. Knott referred to the difference between the French and English systems of education, M. Ripert, the chairman, having pointed out that in France the influence of the State in education tended to give it a materialistic and sceptical bias.

MR. BLAKE held that, instead of directing attention to the history of religions, as a branch of school study, the child should be instructed in the knowledge of psychical faculties as throwing light on the miraculous and supernormal elements in the history of religions. That would leave the pupil free to form his own judgment and to choose his own religious faith. A knowledge of psychical facts would provide the clue to those miraculous elements which were regarded as the sanctions of different religions. In England the tendency as regards the religious part of education at a school was mainly determined by the principal of the school, his attitude tending to be reflected by the various teachers under him. The question having been discussed from various angles by the Chairman, Mr. Blake, Mr. Knott and others, the expression of collective opinion to be submitted to the Congress took this form:

That in the opinion of this Congress it is desirable that the history of religions and the evidences for psychic or psychological faculties of the human mind should form part of the curriculum of primary and secondary education in all State schools, according to the possibilities of each country.

The paper read by M. Regnault on the social uses of mediumship was closely debated, the Chairman, Mr. Keeling, Mr. Blake, Mr. R. Boddington, Mr. Grimshaw, and others, taking part.

Mr. Blake referred to the system pursued by the Bournemouth Society to which he belongs. A medium is attached to the Society and paid an annual stipend and thus relieved from the necessity of commercializing his gifts. Where a sitting is abortive, the matter is referred to the council of the Society and the fee paid is either returned or the sitter given the choice of taking another sitting. He disagreed with Mr. Keeling that questions concerning mediums should be decided by the sitters. He thought that the sitters should be under examination equally with the medium.

Mr. Knott thought it was eminently necessary that there should be some authoritative body to control the position between the medium and the sitters.

The various systems at present in force were compared and discussed, and their advantages and disadvantages reviewed.

Finally the sense of the meeting was embodied in the following conclusion to be submitted to the Grand Committee:

In the opinion of this Congress it is very desirable that all interviews with mediums should be controlled financially and in every other respect by recognised societies and organizations.

(To be continued.)

THE innate divinity works from within outwards; the mind moulds the body, though there is always a reflex action from the body to the mind. The vibration rate of the body is largely determined by the thoughts. High thoughts refine, coarse thoughts degrade. See the fibre of the drunkard who besots himself in the public-house and watch it coarsen with the degradation of his mind, while the beauty and refinement of the flesh keeps pace with the spiritualising of the mind. The body is often the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual disgrace. —"Self Training," by H. ERNEST HUNT.

"WE KNOW WHEREOF WE SPEAK."

RECEIVED THROUGH THE INSPIRATIONAL MEDIUMSHIP OF AGNES JUDSON.

We of the higher Realms are trying to impart to the children of Earth many of the so-called "hidden" truths, truths which you are intended to know, in order to enable you to live better lives upon earth and to visualize something in regard to the life ahead.

An open mind, like an open confession, is good for the soul; an open mind is the first requirement when one is seeking for truth, and the willingness to receive that truth from whatsoever source it may come, for truth is not limited to any one particular creed or doctrine, it comes in many ways through many channels.

The closed, prejudiced mind erects a barrier through which nothing can penetrate, and from which no growth of soul can come.

He whose mind and heart are both open to what the world terms "new" truths (but, as a matter of fact, there are no "new" truths), will indeed find himself travelling the road of Progression.

To such a soul will be given from those in higher spheres and from the Great Eternal Source of all Truth, information and guidance impossible of attainment through earthly channels.

We who have travelled ahead of you are able to bring back to you a larger degree of knowledge than you deem possible, but in order for you to receive perfectly that which we have to bring, there must of necessity be co-operation on your part.

We often hear it said, "Why must there be certain conditions and development in receiving messages from a Spirit?"

"Why cannot those we love come directly to all of us, why do so few receive communications?"

In answer to these questions we would ask:

"Why do you think that we can come from a spiritual plane of great harmony and peace into a material one of discord, unrest, and unbelief?"

The conditions we ask are spiritual ones, for spiritual truth must be spiritually discerned.

We must have quiet, peaceful vibrations, and minds attuned, so far as is possible, to our own.

"Except ye become as a little child ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

First of all there must be the desire to receive, and the faith in unknown possibilities.

Then, unless one happens to be from birth highly-developed psychically, there will have to be the regular, determined effort put forth, the effort necessary to develop any gift—psychic or otherwise, for the psychic or Sixth Sense is inherent in all, and requires only perseverance to bring it forth in full power.

The Open Sesame to the realm of Spirit and all things pertaining thereto, is faith.

Enter into the Silence of the soul, at a given hour always; let there be a period, not exceeding one hour and preferably less at first, of complete relaxation of both mind and body; cast aside all material thoughts and affairs of your everyday life, and reach out mentally to the spiritual.

You will gradually feel an influx of spiritual power, permeating your whole being, mind, body, and spirit, and with that force will come revelations you know not of. It requires patience, to be sure, for soul-growth and spiritual illumination take time.

When you have once entered the Pathway of the Spirit the way will be made easier and the understanding greater by loving hearts already there, those who have put off the mortal and clothed themselves in the immortal.

Pray always for only the highest and best, and allow no fear to enter in. Concentrate upon the spiritual, and lift your consciousness to the Heights, refuse to accept anything destructive or detrimental, and in due time the illumination will come.

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF THE SEANCE ROOM.

By R. H. SAUNDERS.

Attached to Mrs. Roberts Johnson's Circle on the spirit side is a lad who passed over during the War. On Earth, Joe Griffiths held a lowly position in a cotton mill; in the Spheres he takes rank as a humorist with a specific object. He combines much homely shrewdness with a fund of dry humour. I have known sitters who resented the laughter caused by Joe's sallies; they considered that spirit intercourse should be conducted with all solemnity. A reverent attitude is undoubtedly the proper one, but this is quite compatible with harmless fun. Every sitter does not know that a too serious attitude of mind begets a strain in the seance room which stands in the way of the best results being obtained. When this happens it is the duty of this spirit to lessen the tension, and it is invariably found that immediately after some hearty laughter caused by a shrewd hit of Joe's, the voice of some spirit which had been trying to manifest, attains strength and comes through with a burst. In addition to being the wit of the circle, Joe Griffiths claims to have acted as a matrimonial agent, and was instrumental in uniting two mortals in holy wedlock.

Joe has often some funny story to relate, and recently at a sitting with Mrs. Roberts Johnson he posed me with "Hast thee heard this? A man hadn't spoken wi' t' wife for 13 years". "How was that?" I asked. "'Cos he wouldn't interrupt her," replied Joe. We protested against the libel upon womankind, and the conversation led to Joe relating the following:

"A lass was sittin' wi' Mrs. Johnson, an' ah was sayin' ah foond t' difficult to wed t' widows, an' the lass said, 'Well, I'm not a widow', 'Eh, ah'll soon find thee a hoosband', ah said. 'I'm going to Brighton for a month's holiday,' said t' girl, 'find me one there'. 'No, no,' ah said, 'thee moost go to Margate'. She went to Margate, an' ah impressed her to go to hotel where ah knew her affinity was stayin', an' she was married to the lad afore her moonth was oop."

"That's true," observed Mrs. Johnson, "and I have a piece of the wedding cake addressed to Joe Griffiths, care of myself."

Mrs. Johnson then related that when the young lady became engaged she told her fiancé what Joe had said, and he wrote the girl's father that as the spirits had arranged it, he hoped there would be no opposition. The father replied that it appeared extraordinary to him that so short an intimacy should result in betrothal, but if enquiries proved satisfactory he would give his consent. The match was a most suitable one in all respects, and a very happy couple thank Joe Griffiths for his effective efforts as a spirit "go-between!"

It is a mistake to imagine, as some do, that no material benefit is obtained through spirit intercourse—I have been a witness on many occasions of the planning of "conditions" by our spirit friends, leading to some material advantage to sitters. As David Duguid once observed to me, "And why should we not help our friends, provided in so doing we do not injure others?"

There is another interesting point revealed in this story. Our auras, which indicate our natures, are clearly visible to spirit sight. They are ever reaching out, ready at any propitious moment to mingle with the auras of those in affinity with ours, and our spirit friends realize far better than we ever can where harmony is possible between two natures. The reason Joe Griffiths was able to "work it", as he phrases it, is due to the simple fact that he found the lady susceptible to impression, and influenced her to go to the place where he knew her "affinity" was staying, and propinquity gave the opportunity of the two auras blending, as Nature intended.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AND
MR. HARRY PRICE.

Sir,—You were good enough to publish a letter of mine in your issue of September 15th in which I showed that the statement of a man named Hartman who was a member of a circle in New York, in which he said that I had kissed the hand of an ectoplasmic image thinking it was my mother, was false, and that Mr. Harry Price had no right to repeat it. It is the sort of invention which is gross and palpable, for how could anyone kiss a flesh and blood hand and mistake it for an ectoplasmic one! The last thing which the fraudulent medium would do would be to allow me to touch her. Apart from this I had three independent witnesses who were present. I have now, in the face of my denial, received a letter from Mr. Price in which he says: "I am giving this same lecture again in Vienna and Copenhagen, and in future I shall read out Dr. Hartman's version of the Thompson story and let my hearers judge for themselves." After this I think that I can also let your readers judge for themselves. No comment is needed, when a man reiterates what he knows to be false.

Yours, etc.,

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

15, Buckingham Palace Mansions, S.W.1.

A VICAR'S EXPERIENCE IN PREVISION.

Sir,—It seems to me that the practice of telling fortunes should not be confused with the possibility of the future being foreseen or foretold. Although the prophet's primary duty was to "forthtell", there are a good many instances in the Bible of foretelling, such as Micaiah's foretelling the death of Ahab, while announcements of future events, such as the birth of St. John the Baptist, are fairly numerous in the New Testament.

An experience which I had some years ago makes me think that in certain conditions and in certain circumstances the future may still be foreseen and imparted.

I was in great trouble about my own future, having to resign a position I had long held, and hoping against hope for a suitable sphere of work. Daily I knelt with my wife in prayer, but the heavens seemed as brass, and no cloud appeared, when, suddenly, one day I met a lady who was possessed of clairvoyant powers in which I did not then believe. As she was speaking to me at 10 a.m. in the morning, she described a beautiful figure standing beside me, a figure from the normally unseen world, whom, by her description, I recognised. This figure, or angel, though it was a woman, spoke words of comfort to me, saying that I must not be so anxious as the way was being opened out before me, and I should soon be offered settled parochial work. I asked how I should know the right parish when it came, and she gave me a number of signs which would guide me. I then asked this angel whether it was possible to tell me how long I should have to wait, and she replied that I should be offered the parish when the snowdrops came, and would go to it with the daffodils. She then said, "Speak from the deeper reaches of your soul, and you will be used to bring blessing to many." Then this angel visitant vanished.

Six months went by and then, with the snowdrops, came to me the offer of no fewer than three parishes. Round one of these parishes all the signs gathered, and to that parish I went, and to my amazement, when I reached the Rectory, the garden was a perfect blaze of daffodils, so that the old gardener who had been there some forty years exclaimed, "I tell ye, sir, I never seen the like."

How is such an incident to be accounted for? I could not have imagined it, and the parish was one of which I had never even heard; the clairvoyant lady could hardly have imagined it, for she knew nothing whatever of my circumstances

or that I was seeking for a parish, and even had she seen this in my mind, how could she describe to me a parish not then offered to me, not then even vacant, and tell me the very time when I should go there?

I can personally see no explanation but the Scriptural idea of guardian angels, who, under certain circumstances, however rarely, are permitted sensibly to guide us.

Yours, etc.,

A VICAR.

FINGER-PRINTS—A SUGGESTION.

Sir,—Would it not be a good idea if a number of persons prominent in the Spiritualist movement had their finger-prints taken so that after they had passed over they would, if able to return, be in a position to give convincing evidence of identity by reproducing the finger-prints in dental wax?

Yours, etc.,

H. J. NORTON.

Eastchurch, Sheerness.

[A scheme of this nature is already in operation. An official of the London Spiritualist Alliance has for some considerable time been recording thumb-prints, with the object of establishing a basis for possible future identifications in the seance room.—ED.]

A HEALING EXPERIENCE.

Miss C. RUGG writes:

Some time ago, when I was lying in bed helplessly ill with my heart, the following occurrence took place in full daylight.

The room was suddenly filled with a deep, golden light. I looked about the room in surprise, at first, and then, thinking it must be reflected from something outside, I turned my head and looked out of the window, fearing that the house opposite must be burning, but there was no sign of any such thing. The light continued to fill the room and was quite steady; it soon, however, collected into a cloud high up at the foot of my bed, and descended on to me in a shaft of light. In this condition I fell asleep and awoke next day almost completely recovered. I got up and went to business.

I think this is a case of spiritual healing.

LITTLE IRONIES.

• BY E. W. DUXBURY.

Solomon is reputed to have said: "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." There are few signs of shame in many modern offenders, but it may be otherwise as to the folly.

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If you wish to know the truth about psychic phenomena, you can always obtain a definitive judgment from some one who has never seen a medium nor attended a seance.

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If you want to know the truth about a medium, ask a policeman!

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There is a Latin proverb which says: *In medio tutissimus ibis*. In view of the state of the law, this does not mean that you will be particularly safe with a medium, but that "Along the middle path you will find the safest way."

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In the eyes of the Law "the King can do no wrong", and in the same eyes, apparently, a medium can do no right.

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Two swallows do not make a summer, and three seances do not make a psychic expert.

LIGHT.

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THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

Whosoever would read a full, true and particular account of the papers and conferences dealing with Spiritualism in its religious, philosophic and scientific aspect must await the official record to be issued some few months hence by the International Spiritualists' Federation (Fédération Spirite Internationale) of which the General Secretary is M. André Ripert, of the Maison des Spirites, 8, Rue Copernic, Paris, 16e. No mere newspaper could adequately chronicle the multitudinous and many-coloured particulars of the event.

To many of us the main importance of the matter is the event in itself and its impact on the thought of the world, especially as reflected in the world's Press. The various foreign Press agencies, notably those representing the United States and South America, were kept busily engaged in reporting some of the features of the Congress to their various countries, most of which were represented by delegates at the meetings at Queen's Gate Hall and social gatherings in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Mr. Hannen Swaffer, whose personality might be held to represent the Press at large, and who spoke at the *Conversazione*, with its overflowing attendance, on Wednesday evening, 12th inst., referred to the great international gathering as "this League of Nations"—a not inapt description of it. Mr. Ernest Oaten, editor of *The Two Worlds*, spoke of the International Federation as being still in its infancy—which is true enough—but if the devotion and self-sacrifice on the part of the promoters and workers, and the ardour and enthusiasm of all concerned in the enterprise have any meaning we may expect the lusty infant to grow at last into sturdy manhood.

One of the notable features of the Congress regarded from the standpoint of its international character was the speech of Dr. Johnson, a coloured gentleman from West Africa, whose eloquence and attractive personality made a deep impression. That episode may be left to provide its own comment, especially amongst those to whom native Africans of Dr. Johnson's type are considered as savages.

It was a happy circumstance that while the Congress was sitting, Sir Oliver Lodge at Glasgow was delivering in a more exalted way from the pulpit of

the Wellington United Free Church, the same great message to the world—the tidings of human survival and immortality.

Looking over the whole range of activity—Spiritualism, Psychic Research, Theosophy and a vast multitude of organizations all over the world more or less associated with the question, we see a gradual convergence to the essential subject. We see that, by the process of time and much contentious and apparently destructive effort, the main theme will gradually "run itself clear". The formation of the International Federation with its ideals of construction and unity will undoubtedly do much to bring about this great end. Meantime as one of the leading representatives of Spiritualism remarked of the Congress "It is not so much what is said or done here that is important, it is the fact that there is a Congress and that the event has been recorded in every quarter of the globe". In short, the ball has been set rolling on a larger field than ever before, and like the proverbial snowball it will gather as it goes.

THE COMING BROTHERHOOD.

We have never been amongst the Jeremiahs, for, although the events of to-day abound in things disquieting and ominous, there are clear signs of a spiritual awakening in many directions. That finer and higher type of Spiritualism, which is in such sharp contrast to certain rather squalid and repellent manifestations which come under the same heading, is making itself felt in all quarters of the globe. Many men and women of goodwill are being attracted to our ranks, their only motive being to answer the call to service and to join the forces of those who are endeavouring to build up a bulwark against the acute materialism of the age. For some years past we have received letters and visits from people of many countries, some of them persons of high intelligence, who have become conscious of guidance and direction from the Unseen World. They have a deep, interior sense of the spiritual link connecting them together and breaking down the old barriers of race and caste. It is in our view a remarkable sign of coming changes, moving through trial and calamity, to great ends. Some of those people have given themselves wholly to the work, renouncing worldly prospects and sacrificing their wealth to the cause of humanity. They have found in Spiritualism a movement to which they are impelled to devote their best energies. It is all very significant to those who can understand.

BORING SPIRITS.

From the remarkable little book *Listening In* by Olive Pixley, we quote the following:

"When I first realised that I could write automatically I was pestered by a young woman who signed her name 'Hester'. She never tired of telling me how she had fallen into the river one day, when she was picking forget-me-nots, and had most lamentably been drowned. I was terribly sorry for Hester when she first told me her tale, but grew exceedingly tired of hearing it over and over again. She had no tact. She would suddenly interrupt a most interesting communication; I would become aware that the handwriting had changed, and on asking who it was, Hester would reluctantly declare herself.

"We can (sometimes) deal with bores in our world, but we cannot cope with bores (and frankly there are colossal ones) on the other side, too. Death alters nothing."

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SIDELIGHTS.

The *Daily Chronicle* of September 12th devotes a half column to the case of a young French book-maker, known locally as the "Lyons Fakir", for whom some sensational curative powers are claimed. He cured, it is said, a tumour in his own foot, by simply laying his hand on the affected part, and states that he possesses the power of mummifying dead birds, fruit, meat, etc., by placing his hands on them, through the action of a current or fluid that retards decomposition. Dr. Locard and Dr. Biot, a former chief of Lyons hospital, observed some of the experiments, and are stated to have been much interested. In an interview the young healer said, "I only take patients whose cases doctors have practically abandoned".

* * * * *

Father Thurston, in the course of an article in *The Month* on "Ghosts that Tease," recalls a sensational case of poltergeist activity which took place in Styria, Austria, about a century ago. The manifestations were recorded from statements by an eye-witness, H. J. A. Schauer, a teacher (afterwards professor) of mathematical physics. The affair caused an enormous sensation at the time, and was the subject of an official enquiry. Loud knockings and the flinging of stones by unseen hands took place, and it was noted with astonishment that a dog on the premises never barked during the manifestations. Close watch, and elaborate precautions against fraud were maintained, but no trickery could be discovered. During a search for the mysterious culprit by a number of persons, headed by one Koppbauer, stones began to strike the kitchen windows.

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Koppbauer, it is stated, put his head out of one of the windows and at once a large stone smashed the glass of the window through which he was craning his neck; this stone, and several more, appeared to come from inside the building. The stone-flinging went on until evening, and was resumed next morning, by which time a crowd had assembled outside. Later, it appears to have been established that the missiles came from a heap of substance, corresponding to washing-soda, which was kept under a settle on the same side of the wall as the windows themselves. Fragments of this material, some weighing several pounds, struck the windows, and must therefore, apparently, have followed a semi-circular path from the settle to the window.

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These phenomena, however, were only the beginnings of the disturbance. Windows were smashed, and a miniature storm raged in the kitchen, which seems to have been the focussing point for the manifestations; almost every breakable article was destroyed; spoons, dishes, saucepans, and other utensils were seen to fly through the air; while attempts were being made to rescue the plates by removing them to another room, those who carried these articles declared that they were snatched away from their hands. A stopper in an empty decanter was seen to jump out and fall on the table three times in succession. One curious piece of evidence was to this effect: that though the flying objects, which included a big iron spoon weighing about a pound, came travelling with great velocity against living persons, nobody seems to have been hurt, or even bruised. On coming into contact with a human body, the moving objects "fell dead as if a hand had arrested them in their flight".

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The British Association meetings recently ended at Glasgow caused the names of three scientists to be thrown into newspaper prominence; these three were Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor F. G. Donnan, and Professor A. V. Hill, and their subject which aroused so much public attention was—the production of life. Professor Donnan propounded the question: What is cellular death? It was upon this point, he said, that Professor A. V. Hill was on the verge of making a discovery of astounding importance. The *Glasgow Herald* of September 12th, which gives a very full report of Professor Donnan's lecture, paraphrases a portion of the lecturer's speech in these words: "If they could find a complete continuity of dimensions between the living and the non-living, was there really any point where they could say—Here is life, and there is no life? That would be a daring and perhaps a dangerous theme to dwell on at the present time."

* * * * *

Sir Oliver Lodge, who seconded the vote of thanks proposed by Dr. N. V. Sidgwick to Professor Donnan, is reported as saying that it was easier to say what life is not than what life is. He sometimes ventured to speculate on its being something that crystallized out of the ether of space. The *Daily Chronicle* of September 13th publishes an interview with Sir Oliver following this statement, and quotes him as follows: "We do not understand the mystery of life, but I think the solution may lie in that direction. Men of eminence are studying the mechanism of life, but it is not the whole truth that is involved in the mystery."

* * * * *

"Materialism has been scotched but not killed", was one of the striking remarks made by Sir Oliver Lodge in the course of an address at Wellington United Free Church, Glasgow, on Sunday, September 9th. The *Church of England Newspaper* of September 14th reports the address fully, and the following is a brief résumé: Sir Oliver pointed out that certain perturbation had been caused in the past by presidential addresses of the British Association, but it had been stated this year, by way of allaying such perturbations, that any pronouncement by a man of science is only a partial announcement. Modern discoveries did not throw away or discredit the accumulated witness of humanity.

* * * * *

There was a truth, Sir Oliver said, in the facts of materialism; but the facts had been wrongly interpreted. The universe was a going concern; the reign of law and order was complete. "The truth is that we are souls which have a body," he said; "the soul has made the body, which is a mere instrument. . . . Life and mind are by no means limited to our earthly manifestation."

* * * * *

The difficulty at present was to explain how life got into matter, went on Sir Oliver. The attempt to explain consciousness materialistically had been conspicuously futile. A scientific demonstration of the essential immortality of man was beginning; it was being conducted with difficulty and met with opposition. An answer was beginning to appear to the question: What is the object of life? It was to form a character that should continue, to train ourselves by meeting difficulties, and not to be defeated by pain and trouble. "We have reached a stage," he concluded, "at which we can realize that pain and trouble and effort are worth while. Our privilege is to explore with patience and diligence the vast extent of the universe to the thread of simplicity, amid its marvellous intricacy to apprehend glories beyond the utmost stretch of our imagination, and thereafter to revel in the enjoyment of its infinite beauty."

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

LEIGH HUNT AND HIS CIRCLE.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM A. REID, GLASGOW.

The very interesting article in the issue of *LIGHT*, dated September 1st, under the above heading, by Mr. H. G. Osborn, set me hunting among my old psychic records of 1912-5; particularly as the subtitle reads, "Do they come back?" Perhaps a few extracts from my records may help to answer the question. I may mention that I have no acquaintance with Mr. Osborn whatever.

From 1911-13 I lived in Philadelphia, and got to know, among other psychics, a Mr. McDowell, one of the finest men I ever met. He was of mixed Irish and Scots blood, a joiner in a small way, intelligent, well-read, a bit of a mystic, a non-professional medium, and one of the most unworldly men I have encountered. He died several years ago in Philadelphia, over 70, unmarried. No surviving relatives could be found. I corresponded regularly with him up to his death; and to him and other American Spiritualists I owe a debt of gratitude for opportunities to study Spiritualism at first-hand.

Now, McDowell believed that he got into communication with Leigh Hunt and Shelley; and I have in my possession some of these communications. Mr. McDowell told me that he generally got these communications direct, and wrote them down without a single slip or correction. Occasionally he got them through a ouija board in collaboration with a cultured day-school teacher. I shall give two examples of the first method, and one of the second. The first, you will observe, is individual and solitary; the second is in collaboration with another medium.

Wise and weighty words in prose, either from Leigh Hunt or from Shelley, even if expressing ideas characteristic of these writers, would not be evidential; but verse which bore evidence of the style and imagery of the poets, and up to the standard of their versification would carry weight, I think.

I propose to give my readers three examples in verse.

First Example.

This is marked as coming from Leigh Hunt on September 5th, 1913, and is a farewell to my wife and myself when we left Philadelphia for Scotland, and was written without a correction by Mr. McDowell.

A PARTING IN TIME.

Not like to arrows in their flight
That passing leave no trace behind,
Or days wrapt in oblivion's night
That memory's vision ne'er can find,
Are some we've met in days gone by,
Who left their impress as the seal
Upon the wax or clay ere dry
As bond of hearts that tell of weal.
No more their hands we grasp again,
No more the converse like a cup
Of nectar filled by richest brain
Is passed 'twixt hand and lip to sup.
No more, you say? What? Not no more.
I see the veil is drawn aside,
And hands are grasped, the cup runs o'er
Where separation can't abide.

The pointing is Mr. McDowell's.

Second Example.

Date, September 3rd, 1915, got by ouija board as described above. I quote the extract:

Then Percy Shelley was announced, followed by
When the lamp is shattered,
The light in the dust lies dead
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed
Read my writings.

The question was put, "Where can they be found?" (I presume this poem is referred to). And the reply was spelled out:—

English Literature of early nineteenth century.

None of the sitters knew the poem or the book, if book is intended. I have not verified the quotation. It may be known to some of your readers.

Third Example.

This is marked as coming from Leigh Hunt in January 22nd, 1912. It seems to me outstanding, as it does to others to whom I have read it. Indeed it is an almost perfect lullaby, good, whoever the author may be, and fully worthy even of Leigh Hunt.

NURSERY LYRIC.

Sleep now baby close your eyes
Never mind where pussy lies
Or your toes how pink they be
May I play bo-peep with thee
Cunning cunning though your look
Sleep will catch you with his hook
He is coming don't forget
Two bright stars are going to set
While the cradle rocks and swings
Baby is forgetting things
And is going where they say
Pleasant dreams are wont to stray
Leaving beauty like a flower
Pluckt unblown from Eden's bower
That unfolds its leaves in prime
When awakes my babe in time
Hear his breathing soft and low
Happiness has come below
Wrapping you around my dear
This is mother's highest cheer
Richest treasure from above
Gift of Everlasting Love
Bless all little lambs like thee
A shepherd cares for thee and me

In the poem as sent me by Mr. McDowell there were no punctuation marks; so I give none. The meaning, however, is quite clear.

I leave this brief record with your readers. Little links make a long chain. From what I have written I feel like saying that if there is a Leigh Hunt Circle, John McDowell must be in it. Now if our friends could get a description of Mr. McDowell, I shall with pleasure send a photograph for comparison.

THE CANDLE SYMBOL.

BY A. HORNGATE.

Has it not been rather too readily assumed that the simile of an extinguished candle tells against Survival? May it not, on the contrary, be a strong argument in our favour?

What do we know, as yet, about candle flames? Is it not likely that, when the Great Victory of Life is understood, the jet of flame that suddenly appears, seizes on fuel prepared for it, and when vanished into the Unseen leaves an evil-smelling wick behind, may represent our lowest form of visible life?

When we strike a match, or flint upon steel, it is possible that our friction scratches a hole down into the Ether of Space, setting up so violent a tension among the atoms of matter that a jet of etheric vitality bursts through from amongst them. This suggestion is in harmony with modern discoveries, and also with the instincts of primitive Man.

One of the primary arts discovered by savage man was the use of fire; and the earliest civilized communities guarded a "sacred flame" among their inner mysteries of religion, fed it with more care than any sacred ox, and put out all their other fires at certain times in order to re-kindle them from the steady central flame that they regarded as a Manifestation

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RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

of Deity. Is it not possible that this vital urge that consumed our fuel *does* come direct from the Centre of Creation, up through the first and second dimensions, into our third dimensional world?

But what happens when the candle is put out? Does the vital urge reverse the order of all creation and go back into the second dimension, the hole in the Ether of Space building itself up as though it had never been? That seems unlikely. The vital jet's experience of a three dimensional existence probably imparts to it a new oscillation, a new type of motion; so that when it vanishes from our sight, it proceeds through creation as a fourth dimensional motion.

Before you express scorn at this suggestion, pause to consider whether we do not already have another type of fire—incandescence. Whatever this may be, it does not run riot like common flame, but is made use of by certain animals and fish as if it were one of the ordinary modes by which life can be manifested. And has anyone noticed that in the Vale Owen Scripts ordinary flame and smoke are constantly referred to in the Underworld scenes, but never once in any description of the Heavenly Countries—though various forms of incandescence and radiance are there continually described?

You may say: "Even if a candle flame were to pass out into a higher existence on being extinguished here, it would be a mere vital motion like electricity; so the simile tells against the survival of any one recognizable man."

But what individuality has a candle flame here? If we regard a flame as a kind of inverted plant, its circular head (or ego-ring) slowly burrowing downward, while its root lashes the air in search of fresh nutriment, we have perhaps a manifestation of the most elementary kind of life, capable of originating other flames by snapping holes through into the ether, but all fires being as much alike as the letter "e", which can be used in any arrangement of words. All plants make use of the principle of combustion; a rose may be said to write a poem, with the letter "e" constantly occurring at definite points. A man's spirit may be like the spirit of a whole book, capable of translation into many languages yet essentially the same.

Of course, this theory regards plant-spirits as surviving death and taking lovelier forms in their next existence—as it is certain we do ourselves. There is surely plenty of room in the spheres centred upon this earth for all forms of existence manifested here, and some kind of magnetic connection with the central axis of our earth may be necessary for every kind of birth—even the birth of a candle-flame. These ideas are not likely to find ready acceptance, hence my hesitation in expressing them.

THE USES OF MORTALITY.

Amid the fret and fume, the hurry and the rush, the passion for speed in order to journey nowhere in particular, it is refreshing to contemplate the leisurely progress of Nature. She is never "rushed", having all Eternity to work in. But probably it was wisely designed that man should suppose that his whole future career must turn upon the little span of his mortal life—between two Eternities. It gave him the necessary sense of responsibility; and indeed it is true that his mortal life is an important period, for the opportunities for development it affords are of a special kind. Hard as it may be to form the character here, it is harder still in the world beyond. So, at least, we are told by those who maintain that matter affords a kind of grip or "purchase"—something that gives us foot-hold and leverage. But haste and strain are not the best methods of utilising those opportunities; they tend to waste energy, and Nature (lavish as she seems of power) never wastes a grain, but always conserves her gains.

A big volume might be written on the process of "speeding-up" through which the world is passing to-day—faster and faster travel by automobile and aeroplane, swifter and more efficient methods of doing the world's work in home and factory and office. Doubtless it is the outward and visible sign of a clearing of mind and a quickening of soul, with which the external side of life tries to keep pace. It is a crucial time in human evolution, the breaking away from old bounds and limits, with a goal not too clearly apparent, except to those who see in it the working of that Spirit which doeth all things well.

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Demand always produces supply. Some years ago a friend of mine occupied the house in which a century or so previously there lived one of our greatest poets. My friend preserved the house with religious care, but on one occasion he had to employ a builder to repair the front door. In the course of the work the builder begged that he might remove the knocker and substitute a new one at his own cost. He explained that a wealthy and titled collector of curios wished to buy from him a knocker which the great poet had handled. He begged and pleaded, but my friend was inflexible, and finally remarked with a twinkle, "Lord — wants a knocker, can't you supply him with one?" The builder grinned—he understood—and Lord — was supplied with a door-knocker, which he placed with great joy in his collection. But it was not *the* knocker!

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I think of this story—a perfectly true one—when I read of the fraudulent manifestations often reported, especially in poltergeist cases. The medium, or supposed medium, is surrounded by people eagerly and anxiously demanding marvels. And in the result what they get is not the real thing. As in the case of the poet's house it is a spurious knocker and not the genuine article.

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A certain amount of the adverse criticism directed against spirit communications arises from the honesty of those who record them. The messages are not "edited" to make them seem plausible. They are given exactly as they are received, and where the phrasing is such as to rouse suspicion as to the identity of the sender, a psychological puzzle is presented which is just as much a matter for solution by the critics as by those who receive and publish them. In a long and favourable criticism of Mr. Florizel von Reuter's *Psychical Experiences of a Musician*, it is observed that a communicator, supposed to be Charles Dickens, transmitted the sentence, "I have known you since many years". The reviewer remarks of this: "That *since* is a trap from which, apparently, no German can escape, but into which no Englishman ever falls." That is true enough; but the colouration of messages by the mind of the medium in the direction of words and turns of phrase is a fact with which all experienced investigators are familiar. I have seen a great deal of it in my own experience: but then, on the other hand, I have had messages from departed friends which reproduced all their own mannerisms and familiar phrases with no apparent tincture from the medium's own mind. It is very like wireless telephony. Sometimes you get "clear reception" and sometimes you don't. There are innumerable grades between hearing clearly and hearing nothing at all. If we look at it from that point of view the question is immensely simplified.

D.G.

CONGRESS ECHOES.

It is said that the recent Congress was rendered possible by the generosity of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. As not everyone knows, for years past he has devoted not only his time and energy but also all his profits from his lectures (and probably more) to the furtherance of the movement he has so much at heart.

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The many visitors from overseas—some of them seeing London for the first time—found a warm welcome, not only from the weather but from the host of friends whom they met, anxious to aid them in making the most and best of their visit. The house of the London Spiritualist Alliance in Queensberry Place—which had been thrown open to the Congress delegates and friends—was thronged daily.

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It was noticeable that the Pressmen most interested in the Congress were the representatives of the newspapers of the European Continent, the United States, South America, India and the British Dominions. So many reports were despatched, by the cable or the postal service, to these countries that the public in each will probably have learned more about the movement as it exists in their midst than ever they would have gathered from their local news.

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This close intercommunication between widely-separated countries has several times had curious results. For instance, some event in Spiritualism or some new book on the subject has passed with little comment in the country of its origin. But the news has been cabled abroad, and then copied by the Press of other countries, thus bringing under public notice in those countries things happening in their own land, of which otherwise they would have been unaware. This method of gathering home news from abroad has had some queer illustrations of late years, as Mr. Hannen Swaffer could testify. The present Congress has yielded some striking examples.

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The munificent gift of M. Jean Meyer was the subject of much admiration. He has allocated property to the value of 4,000,000 francs to the support of Spiritualism. The income (which arises in part from vineyards) is devoted to the support of the Société d'Etudes Métapsychiques, which includes the Institut and the Maison des Spirites, the trustees of the fund having also the power to endow any branch of Spiritualistic activity outside those institutions.

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Amongst the many visitors from distant lands, was Mr. Einar H. Kvaran of Iceland whom it was pleasant to meet again, for he visited London some years ago at about the time when the late Professor Neilsson, of Reykjavik University, an occasional visitor from Iceland, became personally known to many of us. Mr. Kvaran said that there was more Spiritualism in Iceland—relatively to the population—than in any other country in Europe.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Critics of the Christ Answered by Spiritualism."

Warner-Staples, F.R.A.S., with Foreword by Rev. G. Vale Owen. (Rider & Co. 4s. 6d. net.)

Few books could be more helpful to those wishing to know what light is thrown upon the New Testament by Psychical Research and Spiritualism. The author quotes freely from the works of those modern theologians who are unable to accept the truth of the Gospel story because it seems to them that it is contradicted by our observations of Natural Law. Their confused and mutually contradictory conclusions are contrasted with the perfectly natural account of the Gospel writers, as understood by those familiar with the repeatedly proven results of psychical investigation. It is made clear that New Testament scholarship can neither be deemed complete nor trustworthy while it fails to include a study of psychical phenomena. Some idea of the excellence of this little book can be formed by comparing its study of Our Lord's after-death appearances with the gropings and hesitations which mark an article upon the same subject in the *Modern Churchman* for August 1926. C.D.T.

SPIRITUALISTS AT THE POLLS.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's proposal that the united force of organized Spiritualism should be used as a political lever at the coming general election has caused widespread comment. His suggestion was to support whichever party would pledge itself to remove from the statute books the Acts which impede religious freedom. Interviewed by an *Evening Standard* representative, Sir Arthur said: "I estimate that there are at least 200,000 Spiritualists eligible to go to the polls; they would be capable of deciding the issue in a number of constituencies." The *Standard* of September 14th prints in italicized type Sir Arthur's remark: "We do not seek privileges for Bond Street fortune-tellers. We seek ordinary rights for our religion and its followers."

In a leading article on Sir Arthur's political proposals the *Referee* of the 16th September approves the idea of action at the polls as the most practical method of righting injustice. "The politician must be moved by the lever of votes if he is to go to work on any reform," says the leader-writer, who goes on: "Some of the laws which affect honest inquirers into matters occult are not only absurd and irritating obstructions to honest investigation, but are scandalously unjust in themselves. . . . We hold no brief for Spiritualism, but we do claim one for justice, and therefore we are exceedingly glad to see that their very practical leader, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, intends, with the help of his half-million or so of followers, to make 'psychic freedom' an issue at the forthcoming general election."

SHEFFIELD.—The Sheffield Society for Psychical Research has an unusually attractive programme of lectures for the coming Winter session, and the Spring session of 1928. Among the speakers will be Mr. G. R. S. Mead, editor of *The Quest*, Mr. J. Cuming Walters, editor of the *Manchester City News*, Mr. Staveley Bulford, Dr. F. Ballard, Mrs. Rose Champion de Crespigny and others.

SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—September 30th, 11, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. Podmore. October 3rd, 8, Mrs. Edey.

Gamberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—September 30th, 6.30, Mr. W. A. Coda. Wednesday, 7.30, public circle at 53, Station Road.

Peckham.—Lausanne Road.—September 30th, 7, Mr. Stephen Foster (Australia). Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. E. Clements, D.N.U.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—September 30th, 7.30, Mr. E. Hunt, address. October 3rd, 6.30.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—September 30th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mme. Esta Cassel, trance address and clairvoyance.

Fulham.—12, Lettice Street—(Nr. Parsons Green Station).—September 30th, 11.30, circle; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. John G. Pollard. Thursday, 8, Miss M. Mills.

SEPTEMBER 29, 1928

LIGHT

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Tuesday, Oct. 2nd, at 4 p.m. ... MRS. CANNOCK
Friday, Oct. 5th, at 8 p.m. ... MISS CLARKE

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