

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

Edited by DAVID GOW

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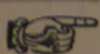
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AMONGST the contents of the present issue are:—

THE VALIANTINE SITTINGS IN
ITALY (concluded).

SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES
WITH "MARGERY."

THE HUMOURS OF CONTROVERSY.

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"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

THE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION.

Mr. Hannen Swaffer's new book *Adventures with Inspiration* (Morley & Mitchell Kennerley Jr., 2s. 6d. net) with its striking stories of famous modern writers and artists who seem to work under what, to them, is a strange influence, will do much to stir up discussion of the subject. One of the questions will doubtless centre around the problem whether inspiration comes from personal or impersonal sources. Is the inspired person actually prompted by a spirit-friend, or by some unknown spiritual power, atmosphere or influence? Our own view is that either or both of the two causes may be at work, and we can speak from practical experience and observation. We recall a case where a musical genius came into a room which before his arrival had (unknown to him) been given over to a recital of Scottish songs and music. When he sat down to the piano to improvise it was observed as curious that all his compositions were tinged with a Scottish flavour. He himself was puzzled by the musical influence, and remarked on it. Evidently a "thought atmosphere" of the place was responsible. On the other hand, we have known instances where the work of some artist of only average merit has been raised far above its usual level by the presence (clairvoyantly seen) of some departed genius interested in the particular form of art presented—it was usually music.

ALCHEMY AND MODERN SCIENCE.

In the current *Quest* Mr. H. Stanley Redgrove discusses "Alchemy and Economics" in a highly interesting way. He suggests that the old alchemists may have been wiser men than nineteenth-century scientists believed them to be—which is highly probable—and he remarks that it is fruitful to study bygone superstitions because they show us how prone is the human mind to error, and create in us a healthy scepticism concerning some of the beliefs of the present day. Dealing with the discoveries of modern chemists in connection with radium, he considers that—

There can be little, if any, doubt that men of science will ere long discover a method of effecting inter-atomic change; and one of the consequences of this will be the realisation of

the old dream of the alchemist, namely, the transmutation of base metals into gold.

We can easily accept Mr. Redgrove's assurance that it is no "fairy tale" he is relating in his article. "Predictions of scientific inventions seem always fated to be met with incredulity," he says. Surely; we have more than once given in these pages some striking examples of now generally-accepted discoveries that even in recent years were greeted with doubt and derision. We may not live to see the common utensils of daily life made of gold; but it may well come. Gold will then no longer be worshipped as the highest form of wealth, and there will be a considerable re-conditioning of our social and economic structure. Whether it will be for the better or the worse will depend on the moral sense of mankind. If that does not advance, then we may have the world destroying itself by some evil direction of discoveries involving the secret of liberating the energy locked up in the atom: so prone are we to turn our blessings into curses.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

In the course of an article in the current *Occult Review* on "Philosophical Science Modern and Ancient", Mr. W. Wilson Leisenring has the following arresting remark:—

Behind the official scientific bodies there are workers who are working quietly, and thinkers who are thinking silently; and some profoundly significant discoveries are being made that are verifying the statements of the ancient scientists, in biology as well as physics.

We have more than once in these pages said something of the same kind, being aware of investigations and results not yet considered ripe for public disclosure. The persons concerned are too wise to make premature revelations and to bring into the light discoveries that are still in an unfinished state. But we observed how some of them confirmed old teachings not only of the ancient scientists but of advanced spirit communicators who disclosed some of their knowledge to little groups of students. These received it gladly though well aware that the statements made would only be verified by time and a more receptive attitude amongst scientists. Great things are going on behind the scenes, biding their time for revelation. And each fresh discovery makes the road easier for those which are to follow.

QUEEN'S HALL MEETING.—Attention is drawn to the public meeting and discussion to be held on Sunday, October 13th, at 7 p.m., under the chairmanship of Mr. Dennis Bradley, for the purpose of laying before the public, evidence of survival after death. Among the speakers will be Hannen Swaffer, Oliver Baldwin, M.P., Shaw Desmond, H. De Vere Stacpoole, Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, Rev. G. Vale Owen, Maurice Barbanell, Mrs. C. A. Dawson-Scott, Miss Lindaf-Hageby and Mrs. St. Clair Stobart.

THE VALIANTINE SITTINGS IN ITALY.

By H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

(continued from page 471.)

V

MR. CASTELLINI has not written to Mrs. Bradley. He is evidently timorous of doing so. Mr. Castellini has received very sharp letters from Count Bon (a Viennese gentleman with considerable reputation for his knowledge on psychical research) and also others in Italy, demanding that the charges he has made should be proven, but Mr. Castellini has declined to reply to these letters. All that he could be induced to do was to suggest a telephone conversation with Count Bon, which he (Count Bon) declined, saying that Mr. Castellini must state in writing the allegations which he had verbally made.

I understand now that Mr. Castellini has withdrawn his allegations against Mrs. Bradley and this was confirmed to me by Mr. Rossi on June 18th.

Mr. Rossi, in a letter dated May 23rd, said that he would be in London some time in June, and that he would see me (to quote) "in order to supply you with all the information which you will require in connection with the said occurrence and on behalf of the Marquis Centurione who requests me to tell you that the money offered to Valiantine covering his travelling expenses is with me at his disposal".

I received no further communication from Mr. Rossi and it was only because of a letter which I received from Mrs. Kelly Hack in Italy that I heard he was in London. I immediately telephoned Mr. Rossi and he informed me he was leaving England on the following day. I told him that it was imperative I should see him that night, which I did. Although Mr. Rossi had been in London for over a fortnight he had made no attempt whatever to see me, although he had written that he would do so.

I received Mr. Rossi quietly and politely because I wished to hear from his own lips his description of the incident upon which he based his allegation. All that he had to retail was that at the very end of the last sitting he heard Valiantine's chair creaking on three occasions when a "voice" was speaking. (Mrs. Bradley and Mrs. Kelly Hack affirm the "voice" to have been that of "Dr. Barnett".) On the second occasion Mr. Rossi stated that he *heard* Valiantine's body bend forward, and on the third occasion he (Rossi) placed his hand on the back of Valiantine's right arm and shoulder, *found that Valiantine was leaning forward*.

I made Mr. Rossi illustrate to me by sitting in a chair exactly the action which he alleges to have taken place. Naturally, at the slightest movement the chair on which we experimented creaked, and I at once pointed out to Mr. Rossi that it is absurd to imagine that anyone could sit throughout a seance without innumerable slight movements caused by the natural changes in position.

I then made Mr. Rossi illustrate to me how he placed his hand on the back of the chair and how far forward it was before he touched Valiantine's shoulder. According to Mr. Rossi's demonstration of this, in a carefully-conducted rehearsal, it would appear that *Valiantine's shoulder was some eighteen inches from the back of the chair*.

It must here be emphasised that at a "direct voice" seance when a "voice" is manifesting, the first essential of the medium and of the sitters is that they shall *not* loll against the back of a chair, and, as I personally proved by act of demonstration to Mr. Rossi, the natural attitude of the shoulders, under such conditions, would be at least eighteen or even more inches

away from the chair back. Mr. Rossi, however, in his accusations against Mr. Valiantine, distinctly alleges that *Valiantine himself spoke through the trumpet*. Here is a point of paramount importance, which alone utterly refutes Mr. Rossi's allegations. Mr. Rossi omitted to consider measurements. The trumpet through which he alleges Valiantine had spoken is luminous and can be seen by all present. It was stationary in the centre of the circle.

The position of the trumpet is agreed by Mr. Rossi and by Mrs. Kelly Hack and Mrs. Bradley. The height of Valiantine's trumpet when placed on the floor is *just under thirty inches*. In a close circle of six people, the trumpet in the centre would be, at the barest minimum, at least thirty inches away from the front legs of Valiantine's chair. Even at this short distance, for Valiantine to speak into the *top of the trumpet* would necessitate, not merely bending forward from his chair, but rising from it and leaning his head right down to within thirty inches of the floor, *and the distance of his shoulders would then be at least from forty-eight to fifty inches from the back of his chair*. This is an absolute—and on Mr. Rossi's part, an entirely unthought of—refutation of his own statement. *The fraud alleged against Valiantine is a physical impossibility.*

When interviewing him I asked Mr. Rossi whether he made any mention of his alleged discovery to Valiantine at the time. He replied distinctly that he did *not* do so, but that he informed the Marquis Centurione afterwards. This entirely refutes the Marquis Centurione's letter, in which he says that Mr. Rossi warned the sitters in Italian in a loud voice that it was his intention to catch Valiantine in the act.

I asked Mr. Rossi what the "voice" (which he alleges to have been Valiantine speaking through the trumpet) said, and he replied: "I don't know, I wasn't listening." A strange and illogical answer!

I asked him whether the "voice" bore any resemblance to the tones of Mr. Valiantine. Again he replied: "I don't know." I reminded him that he had heard the "voice" of "Dr. Barnett" speaking upon very many occasions and asked him whether this "voice" speaking through the trumpet sounded like that of "Dr. Barnett" or not. Again he replied: "I don't know, I was not listening to the tones of the 'voice'." Such vague and inexplicable replies to questions of the gravest importance when an allegation of fraud has been made are inconceivable. It will be seen from this that the only basis for Mr. Rossi's allegations rests, according even to his own evidence, upon his one statement that he touched Valiantine's shoulder some eighteen inches away from the back of the chair.

Mr. Rossi owned to me that the statements he had made sounded "somewhat weak" and he also said that it was only his word against Valiantine's, and that probably the majority of people would accept Valiantine's word. It is, however, not merely a question of Valiantine's word against Mr. Rossi's, although that would probably be accepted by the world, but there is, in addition, Mrs. Kelly Hack's records, added to the affirmation of Mrs. Bradley.

Before he left me he told me that they did not desire to have anything published in Italy in regard to this affair, and hoped that nothing would be published in England. I informed him at once that I should publish the whole of the facts of the case; I believe in absolute truth in Psychical Research, and in the clear and open statement of facts.

I understand that Professor Bozzano was also requested by the Marquis Centurione not to publish his accounts of the successful seances held under control. I sincerely trust, however, that in the interests of Psychical Research he will ignore this request and will publish in full details all that transpired in Italy.

It may charitably be conceived that Mr. Rossi, excited, temperamental, and disturbed at what had taken place both with the Marquis Centurione and Mrs. Rossi, when they were controlled in dramatic and somewhat alarming conditions of trance, may have been in such an abnormal condition himself that he was not responsible for the tricks of his own mentality, and imagined something to have occurred which had no reality and which most certainly has no corroboration from any of the other sitters who were present at the time.

There is one aspect of the situation, which, when considered, is truly Gilbertian. The Marquis Centurione, Mr. Rossi and Madame Rossi, unknown before to me or to Valiantine, visit me in England in 1927. The Marquis, to his astonishment, speaks to his son in Italian. The Marquis and Mrs. Rossi then develop "voice" mediumship entirely from, and because of, their meeting and initiation with Valiantine. Valiantine then in 1929 visits them in Italy, and is accused of being a fraud. The poet is right when he declares "It's a mad world."

It is refreshing to be able to realise that after leaving Genoa Mr. and Mrs. Valiantine and Mrs. Bradley travelled from there to Venice, to meet a friend of Valiantine's—Count Bon, who resides there and who had sat several times with Valiantine in America. They stayed in Venice a week and the series of sittings held was eminently successful, and many remarkable evidences of survival were obtained from the communicating Italian spirits. Count Bon was scrupulously careful as to the character of the sitters in each circle. Two experiments were made at a given time to endeavour to establish cross-communication with "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon of Boston) simultaneously. I am informed that one of the experiments was distinctly successful and the other one partially so. The details of these experiments were carefully recorded by Count Bon and will be published shortly in the *Luce e Ombra*. It will then be possible to have the records translated and published in England. These records give a brilliant exposition of the exceptional value of Valiantine's mediumship and will serve to add further testimony to his remarkable powers.

(concluded)

DO GHOSTS "BUILD UP"?

BY AUBREY CLAIR.

A point which has often seemed to me to be of great interest to Spiritualists is the question whether ghosts "build up" as is done at seances, or whether they possess the power of making themselves visible by other means?

As the reality of ectoplasm has been testified to by that very careful observer Professor Charles Richet there can be little doubt as to its existence, but the forms produced in this manner appear to be of a much more substantial character than do the apparitions (or wraiths as they are sometimes called) which usually manifest soon after death or haunt our deserted dwellings.

No one has ever claimed to have shaken hands with a ghost, but many have enjoyed the privilege of doing so with the materialised spirit when it emerges from the "cabinet".

It does not seem likely that a spirit immediately after passing over (even if he had been a Spiritualist in this life) would possess the necessary knowledge to make use of ectoplasm in order to manifest himself. I have always understood that the process of forming a materialised body is in the nature of a chemical experiment and requires the co-operation of several spirits specially trained to the work. Much less then would an earthbound spirit (as ghosts are supposed to be) be able to perform the task.

What I suggest as most probable is that for some time after leaving here we retain sufficient of our earthly nature to enable us to project a "thought-body" capable of impinging upon the human vision.

It is a curious fact that ghosts never show themselves at a seance, but are usually "on their own", as it were. They seldom run in couples.

It will be asked when the materialised form steps from the seance "cabinet" what do we see? It cannot be the old physical body we knew in this life, as that has long since crumbled to dust or been consumed by fire. We are told it is one composed of ectoplasm. What is ectoplasm? No one really knows, though it has been analysed and is stated to contain most of the constituents of the human body (those which go to make flesh and blood, nerves, tissues, etc.) and it is alleged that this substance can be worked up by spirit agency (as a potter does clay) into a semblance of some departed friend or relative, and the completed body is then taken possession of by the discarnate mind of the spirit for whom it is intended, who controls it and enables it to move and speak. In short, an entirely new body has been created.

From whence does this ectoplasm proceed? Again we are told that it is drawn from the Medium and sitters and returned to them when the spirit dematerialises, though the *modus operandi* of this two-fold operation has never been satisfactorily explained. If that is the method, however, the body is one built up with material derived from our own bodies, and is neither the resurrected body of our friend nor one evolved from outside matter. This seems a strange proposition and one which so far has defied all attempts at explanation by modern science.

I believe it was the mystery surrounding the precise nature of ectoplasm which made the late Sir Wm. Crookes and Professor Richet so guarded in their statements concerning survival.

I think enough has been said to indicate that the task of producing a materialisation is one which demands considerable skill and knowledge of the laws which govern such phenomena. This is further evidenced by the fact that materialisations are often only partial and rapidly fade away, doubtless due in great measure to lack of experience on the part of the operators, leading in many cases to the total failure of the sitting.

Although these phenomena have been testified to by men of the greatest ability and learning and by the most unimpeachable witnesses in every walk of life we know very little as to their real nature, and I am of the opinion that owing to their non-material origin we can never on this side hope fully to understand them.

A HELPFUL programme for the winter session has been drawn up by the Discussion Group of the London District Council of the S.N.U. Meetings are being held at Minerva Rooms, 144, High Holborn, London, W.C., on Monday evenings at 8 p.m., among the speakers being Mr. Fred Whitmarsh, Mr. G. F. Berry, Rev. G. Ward, Mr. M. Barbanell, Mr. H. Boddington, Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker and others. At the next meeting on October 14th the Rev. G. Ward will open the discussion on the question "Where does Personal Responsibility Commence and Finish?" Full particulars of these gatherings are obtainable from Mr. R. B. Eyles, 28, Romberg Road, London, S.W.17.

SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH "MARGERY".

L.S.A. OPENING SESSION.

The assembly room at the London Spiritualist Alliance headquarters was crowded for the first meeting of the autumn session on the evening of the 3rd inst. Refreshments were served, and a short musical programme carried out; an atmosphere of gaiety marked the proceedings. An informal talk by Mrs. H. L. Baggallay was listened to with deep interest.

DR. R. FIELDING-OULD, M.A., M.R.C.P., vice-president of the Alliance, welcomed the members, and their friends, and touched briefly on the position of the Spiritualist movement. Attacks were still being made against it by certain sections of the Press and the Churches. "They leave us cold!" remarked the speaker. The Alliance had great work to do; experimental research in the psychic area was not the simple matter that the man-in-the-street seemed to believe. It required to be undertaken with knowledge, care, and a sense of responsibility.

MRS. BAGGALLAY then described her recent experiences in the Boston home of Dr. and Mrs. L. R. G. Crandon. She had never before seen Mrs. Crandon ("Margery") and the first meeting proved a delightful incident; "Margery", she found, was a young, vivacious, attractive lady, perfectly natural in speech and manner, and robustly healthy—the very antithesis of the sickly neurotic type to which Mediums belong, according to ignorant critics. (Laughter.) Three seances were arranged, and to each one the spirit, "Walter" came. He had a strong personality, entirely different from that of his sister "Margery". A very lively person was "Walter", said Mrs. Baggallay, "and an adept swearer," she added, amid laughter.

Before the first seance, Mrs. Baggallay had been handed a piece of plain dental wax ("kerr") and her brother-in-law, Mr. Tom Pierson, of the American S.P.R., marked this with an identifying initial, and three grooves, cut with a knife. She wrapped this wax in a handkerchief and placed it in her dress; it never left her possession until the sitting, when it was placed in hot water. In the darkness, she heard faint sounds as if it were being manipulated; then came "Walter's" voice saying, "That's a pippin!" On examining the "kerr" in full light later, a well-defined thumb-print was found, which tallied with the many others obtained from "Walter" in a similar way on past occasions. (This piece of wax was shown to the assembly by Mrs. Baggallay after her talk.)

Next morning Mr. Tom Pierson produced some small loose calendar leaves each containing a number. She selected two at random, unseen, marked them and placed them in an envelope, this also being placed in a second envelope. The packet did not leave her possession until it was opened at the seance that night.

She and her brother-in-law next went to a stationer's shop, where Mr. Pierson asked for "any magazine" to be wrapped up and handed to him. This packet (containing the current number of the New York *Cosmopolitan*) was also retained until the seance. At the sitting that night the packets were opened in the dark. Mr. Pierson tore off at random some corners of the magazine pages; these were placed for a few moments on the seance room table, then handed to Mrs. Baggallay who concealed them in her dress. The marked calendar sheets were dealt with similarly; there were five sheets in all and one of them was handed for retention to each of the following sitters: Judge Gray, Mr. Frederick Smith, Mrs. T. H. Pierson, Mrs. Richardson and Mr. Pierson. The speaker said she saw no possibility of any persons becoming aware, by normal means, of what was printed on these pieces of paper. The object of the experiment was to enable "Walter" to

demonstrate that he could read in the dark and afterwards give what he had read through the hand of "Margery".

After the seance the group of sitters and the Medium went downstairs. "Margery" then began to scrawl, apparently aimlessly, on a piece of note-paper. The calendar sheets and the fragments torn from the *Cosmopolitan* were then produced for comparison. It was found that "Margery" had accurately reproduced the calendar numbers and the printed matter from the torn magazine fragments. One torn fragment contained part of an advertisement in which the word "cake" had appeared in large type; the letter "c" had been torn off. The "Margery" script had the letters "ake" and other faithful reproductions of the matter printed on the sheets and fragments.

The attestation to this seance is signed by the following persons: Virginia Pierson, T. H. Pierson, Juliet Baggallay, Alfred H. Gray, Theron T. Pierce, J. Fred Adler, Mark W. Richardson, L. R. G. Crandon, Frederick Bligh Bond, and Orrea Gray Parmelee.

The whole of her experiences in Boston, said Mrs. Baggallay, were pleasant and impressive. She could not imagine any possibility of fraud in connection with Dr. and Mrs. Crandon. "My impression of the Crandons is that their integrity is beyond doubt," she concluded.

The original calendar sheets, torn magazine pages and "Margery's" automatic script, were handed round for inspection and comparison, at the conclusion of the address.

THE SENSE OF WONDER.

BY DR. E. H. WORTH.

D. G. in his "Rays and Reflections" recently wrote, "It is a pity to lose the sense of wonder. It means the loss of faith in the Creator, or at least in His Creation." He is correct.

There are 30,000 million stars in our family group, but there are also two million other family groups, each with at least a thousand million stars (made or in the making) in each group.

The distant ones are so far away that the light from them travelling at the rate of just over 186,000 miles a second, has taken 140 million years to reach us, and astronomers tell us that the universe extends a thousand times farther than the farthest star. Professor J. Arthur Thomson tries to make these distances more easy of understanding by reminding us that, "a message travels along a nerve at the rate, for man, of about 400 feet in a second: Imagine a man able to stretch out his hand to touch the sun, [which is about 93 million miles distant]. It would take about 40 years before he became aware that his finger was burning."

What were these stars made for? And why do they travel in their orbits for millions and millions of years?

The following message received in our weekly seance a fortnight ago says that the angels also wonder, so we are in good company.

THE MESSAGE.

That was a good word—"Citizens of Heaven"; dear workers therein, may I remind you that Heaven is your own garden, be it that there is but one rose on its tree, one snowdrop with its exquisite border of green, and the cool greens of grass and tree; all is the handiwork of the greatest and divinest Artist.

Oh, yes, Heaven lies all round you and is fit setting for the even yet more precious flowers of the spirit, Love, Joy, Peace and that rarest of gifts, the child-like gift of Wonder. You are most wonderful when you are lost in wonder.

The very angels have this divine wonderment. Be of good heart, each of you, for you are as the dew to the flower and the bloom to the rose in an earth of dust and toil.

OCTOBER
LETT
(The Editor)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

MYSTICISM.

Sir,—In your leading article "What is a Mystic?" you refer to the fact that the word mystic "comes from a Greek work(?) signifying the closing of the eyes". I take it the allusion is to the Greek word *muo* which carries that meaning. But is it not possible that it refers to the custom of blindfolding the person to be initiated into the ancient mysteries?—Yours, etc.,

O. M.

[The word "work" in the sentence alluded to was an unfortunate but obvious misprint for "word". Our correspondent makes a suggestion which may be accurate, we cannot say positively.—Ed.]

"REINCARNATION AND MODERN THOUGHT."

Sir,—My disbelief in Reincarnation is, I think, due to a sense of its inadequacy as a means to an end. I can imagine nothing much more futile than this ever-recurring return of man into a physical garment for the purpose of his moral improvement, when not a hint or whisper is allowed him of what his besetting sins or failings were in his previous earthly life. He is without chart or compass.

Neither does it seem a lofty conception, that of an Omnipotent Being who knows each man's heredity and environment, past, present and to come, watching these changes, the while he sees clearly a thousand incarnations ahead every step of the way. "A Student" rightly reminds me of the great men of antiquity who believed this doctrine but, with the utmost respect, they could not very well know everything. As Sir James Jeans has just said, telescopic astronomy is only 300 years old—no doubt two or three millenniums ago the whole world thought geocentrically and that the function of the heavenly bodies was just to give us light at night-time. Everything had reference to man. Voltaire, writing in his day of the English Constitution and the mutual check of King, Lords and Commons, said it was the most perfect thing the wisdom of man had devised and that Plato's *Republic* was, in comparison, a ridiculous dream—*un rêve ridicule*! Reincarnation never caught on with the brainy Jews and the Nordic stock, but it has a good vogue in parts of the East and with the Celts of a former day. The Druids firmly believed in it and as they had the pleasant habit of shutting their enemies up in wicker cages and then setting these alight they did their bit towards hastening the return of the cycle!

Whether we believe the New Testament or not, we allow that as mere documents they are very old; so, independently of their genuineness or not, they are, at least, interesting as showing what people of some nineteen centuries ago thought. I cannot see any reference to Reincarnation. In the last book of the canon—the *Apocalypse*—we get a parting glimpse. A question is asked as to the identity of some persons described as dressed in white, and the reply is that they had come out of great tribulation, and finally that "therefore they shall hunger no more". Nothing about crawling back after a suitable time to their prisons and the monotony of the bench, desk, or field—but that they shall hunger *no more*.

I wonder what becomes of the accumulated knowledge and experience which even the poorest savage collects in his life time—he clearly does not bring it back with him when he starts afresh—perhaps it is pooled!—Yours, etc.,

E. HARVEY.

Bromborough, Cheshire.

THE INVISIBLE HALO.

Sir,—I was interested in a letter dealing with "ectoplasm" or "teleplasm", defined by Dr. Arnold as a "peculiar, white material emanating from the body of an entranced person".

I am not certain whether I am dealing with the same emanation, when I assure your readers that this emanation may distinctly be seen round the heads of certain very holy "yogis" during ecstasy—seen not only by the occultist, but the ordinary man in the street. I have personal experience as to what I write.

Most religions definitely accept this emanation when it is white or golden, or of a clear transparent blue (this last colour, however, is not visible in the dark to the ordinary man in the street, as the other two colours are), and have recorded them as the aureoles around their "God-Heads", prophets or saints.

Reading Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's touching message as regards the solution of the great secret of life and death, I feel impelled in this connection to give a clue, by no means slight, but useful only to those whose halo is of purest white, i.e., they who have reached the union when the God within mingles with the God without; in this white halo can be reflected, by the mere thought of the reflector, all the universes and their people, the living and the dead, the past and the present, and nothing of this world of the Senses is so real as *that*.

Here, also, I speak not as dreamer or an idealist, though I am both, neither as a philosopher, but as one (without egoism) with authority.—Yours, etc.,

ELIZABETH SHARPE.

Shri Krishna Nivas, Limbdi, India.

"REASON AND THE SPIRIT."

Sir,—I wonder if the following will give your correspondent that "clear insight into what 'Spirit' really is" for which he is searching.

Sitting with "Chang" at the British College of Psychic Science this week, I asked him if it is possible to make spiritual progress, yet be unconscious of the improvement.

"Chang" said emphatically yes, for the moment we touch Spirit, there can be no comparison. Spirit is Perfection. It is a Whole. There is nothing higher.

We are, each one of us, pure spirit, yet we build such a wall of false, conventional ideas round us, that most of us go through life without even looking over the top of the wall, far less seeing through it.

"Chang" went on to explain that the mind was divided into seven parts, but for the present moment three only need be considered:—

(1.) The lower part—instinct, etc.

(2.) The intellectual part, which makes much use of the lower part, relegating to it everything memorised or mentally acquired, to be drawn upon at will.

(3.) The Spirit-*ual* (the division and emphasis are "Chang's") which is the link with the Spirit, by means of which inspirational thoughts, intuition, etc. are given, for us to accept or reject.

Thus, in "Chang's" opinion, Reason is not only definitely *not* Spirit, as your correspondent strives to prove, but it is placed in the lower part of the mind with Instinct, Intelligence, etc.—Yours, etc.,

FLORENCE HODGKIN.

Old Southcote Lodge, Reading.

LIGHT.

Editorial Offices, 16, QUEENSBERRY PLACE,
SOUTH KENSINGTON, S.W.7.

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ADVERTISEMENTS.—For rates, apply The Advertisement Manager, LIGHT, 34, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4. (Phone: Central 1462.)

THE HUMOURS OF CONTROVERSY.

In an article in LIGHT of January 19th, 1924, we imagined the existence of a monstrous creature, visible only to the mind's eye, which dogged the footsteps of the human race through all the ages. As a concrete expression of the asinine element in humanity, it might, we suggested, be termed "the Ass of the Ages".

We observed that the influence and operations of the Ass were extensive, and gave various examples of them, both as regards the ridiculous forms in which Spiritualism was sometimes presented to the public and the imbecilities which were gravely put forward by its enemies as arguments against the subject.

Some recent conflicts between Spiritualism and Roman Catholicism reminded us of the article under reference. Although we deplore these controversies, we see they are sometimes unavoidable. Such quarrels usually start as a result of the members of one group or community making gratuitous attacks on another. That is the mark of a low-grade mentality, and usually provokes a retort from the people attacked. This is only natural and human. It is not Christian, of course, but as Mr. G. Bernard Shaw once remarked, it is useless to talk of the failure of Christianity because it has never yet been tried. Which strikes us as a melancholy truth.

So far as LIGHT is concerned we have long taken the line that we are all fallible, that the interests of the human family are identical and that all the exhibitions of bigotry, spite and intolerance directed by one sect or community against another are just the marks of infancy—rather like the silly quarrels of children in a nursery. We cannot fail to trace in this squabbling the influence of the "Ass of the Ages".

Lately we were reading in a Roman Catholic journal the review of a book written by a Cardinal of the Church. It is very significant that the reviewer was clearly annoyed by the ignorance shown by the eminent author when he dealt with the subject of Spiritualism.

The reviewer even went so far as to "gibbet" a reference in the book to "that medley of petty happenings which are narrated in connection with the notorious Eusabia Palladino, Madam Piper, Madam Verral, Madam Sidwick and similar characters". The reviewer kindly puts the spelling of the names right, and delicately alludes to the fact of Mrs. Verrall and Mrs. Sidwick being the widows of two very distinguished Cambridge scholars, and adds that Mrs. Sidwick is the sister of Earl Balfour, one of the most respected of living statesmen. This kind of ignorant

comment, as the reviewer remarks, is "really deplorable". But it is also comic, although naturally the side which suffers from these eccentricities on the part of its followers will not readily see the humour of it.

For many years we have read attacks by Christian communities upon each other, or upon the non-Christian or anti-Christian sections, together with the replies and counter attacks. There were signs of silly and ignorant prejudice—to say nothing of comical blunders—in nearly all of them. It was so clear that they did not understand or take the trouble to understand each other. Instead, each lied stoutly about each—the lies being sometimes unconscious, but occasionally knowing and deliberate. Even when the criticisms were true they were disfigured by the evident malice displayed. The warring sects and societies stung each other like battling emmets—it was all as Tennyson put it, "a trouble of ants". They had not learned one of the elementary lessons of practical life: "Mind your own business and let other people mind theirs!" They had not begun to realise the essential qualities of the human soul—charity and dignity are two of them—but had joined the great community of meddlers and busybodies, animated in some cases by what is known (strangely enough) as "religious" zeal. Alas for that "religious" zeal with its burnings, slaughtering and torturings, diminishing with the advance of civilisation to the present-day warfare of words and petty boycottings and "pinpricks". Tragic, painful and mischievous, yet it still carried always strong traces of our imaginary figure, the Ass.

However it is "all in the day's work", all part of the process by which at long last we shall hear no more the strident bray of the Ass; and the voice of the Angel—so slowly unfolding in Man—will melodiously replace it. That is a consoling reflection, and so also is the fact that the dissensions, however unedifying, have their humorous side.

TO A DEAD FRIEND.

Now you have passed beyond
The ultimate horizon men call death,
Whereunto, even in their days of breath
They turn their eager gaze, and strain and stare,
Striving to see the unknown world that lies
Beyond the little circle of their ken,
And, baffled, turn and question fellow-men,
And find no satisfaction anywhere,
But only vague conjecture and surmise.
Even so, when you were here with me, my friend,
We gazed, and questioned, and were almost fain
In life's full prime to cut it short, that so
We might have done with these uncertainties,
And stand upon the edge of things, and know
The great unknown whither all men must go.

Lo, you have chosen the swifter road, my friend,
You have arrived, and left me far behind
Upon the dusty road; where I am blind,
You see; where I am ignorant, you know—
Have you no message for your eager friend?

You who loved knowledge best of all to share
And scatter among men, shall you not spare
This knowledge to our wistfulness and woe?
You who have solved what all men cry to know,
And cry in vain, you who have now laid bare
The riddle of existence, O, my friend,
Have you no word—have you no word to send?

ALICE V. STUART.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SPIRITUALISTS announces a "Dutch Towns" sale of work to be held on the 17th inst., at Leigh Hunt House, 13, Mortimer Terrace, Highgate Road (near Kentish Town tube). Full particulars, including a booklet with some interesting details, may be obtained on application to Mrs. Smedley, the secretary, at the address mentioned.

OCTOBER 12, 1929
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SIDELIGHTS.

Roy Reeves, a popular dirt-track racer, was killed at Melton Road Speedway, Leicester, on Saturday, September 21st. His widow and three mechanics (Cyril Hefford, Sid Rumbsey and Sid Heather are their names) were walking round the track on the night of Tuesday, September 24th, at the same hour of the tragedy, when the dead man suddenly appeared before them—according to a long report in the *Leicester Mail* (of September 25th). The evidence of two of the witnesses is given with much circumstantial detail. Sid Rumbsey, however, seems to have been too shaken by the experience to say much; he is stated to have kept to his bed since the affair.

* * * * *

Here is what the widow said:

"Last night a mysterious something compelled me to go to the track. It was dark, so I went with Cyril Hefford and the mechanics. We walked round the track. Then we came to the fatal spot. It was the hour at which poor Roy was killed on Saturday night. . . . Then . . . then Roy appeared. He smiled at me—I couldn't move, I was so startled. I heard a cry from one of the mechanics who was just behind me. My husband spoke. . . . I feel sure, indeed I know, that Roy's greatest wish is that his death should not deter people from going to the track. He loved the sport and the crowd. I shall never forget that moment as long as life lasts. None of us will."

* * * * *

Mrs. Reeves added that the spirit of her husband spoke to her of private matters, and gave directions as to the disposal of his medals—his mother was to wear one, his wife another, and the third was to be buried with the body.

* * * * *

Mr. Heather (who declared that after his psychic experience he would "not go round that track again for a thousand pounds") described the incident to a *Leicester Mail* representative in these words:

"Suddenly we all stiffened. We had an eerie feeling. Roy was in his track attire, wearing his crash helmet. A mechanic leaned against the railing and sobbed 'I have seen him.'"

* * * * *

It appears from the account that Mrs. Reeves, the widow, possesses mediumistic powers; Mrs. Hefford, wife of one of the mechanics, said Mrs. Reeves "had an uncanny way of sensing things", and that, although she had not seen her husband's body after the fatal accident, was nevertheless able to give a complete description of his injuries, and appearance. Mr. Hefford, who saw the dead man in his track-riding attire, seems to have been aware that the spirit was speaking, but did not hear what was said.

* * * * *

A correspondent in the *Morning Post* of the 30th ulto., Mrs. A. Gurdon, describes a curious dream in the following words:

"It was a clear, beautiful night in January, 1916 (the 2nd to be exact). We were lying in Marseilles harbour after a perilous journey through the Mediterranean. I had switched off the electric light and had fallen into a deep sleep. The vision was a perfectly clear one of an Australian summer cottage.

* * * * *

"It was nightfall, and the light of the punkah lamp revealed at the end of the verandah a narrow camp bed. My mother was lying there with wide open eyes. She called me breathlessly twice, and I awoke. So vivid was the dream that I got up and made a rough note of it. Upon arriving at Tilbury a cable was handed to me. It contained three words: 'Mother died second.'"

In the *Empire News* of the 29th ulto., Mr. Elliott O'Donnell describes a seance at which a thief was made to confess. The writer was lodging in a house in Lower Mevison Street, Dublin, and he, and several fellow lodgers, "missed things". It was suggested by one of them that a circle should be formed with a view to trying to track the culprit.

* * * * *

Says Mr. O'Donnell: "The night we chose for our experiment proved extremely wild and stormy, and whether this had anything to do with it I cannot say, but one of our number suddenly went under control and in a voice totally unlike her usual voice denounced one of those present as the thief and, moreover, said where the missing articles were to be found. The person thus convicted fell on his knees and admitted his guilt, and conducting us to his room took the purloined articles from their hiding-places, which the amateur medium had most accurately described, and returned them to us."

RESTRICTIONS ON MEDIUMSHIP.

A LETTER TO THE HOME SECRETARY.

The agitation at the time of the *General Election* for the repeal or amendment of the Witchcraft and Vagrancy Acts has received further stimulus from the Spiritualists' National Union. Mr. George F. Berry, General Secretary of the S.N.U., and his associates, are following up the matter with energy. A letter to Mr. J. R. Clynes, the Home Secretary, has been drafted. In this the Spiritualists' grievance has been briefly set out. It is claimed in this letter that psychic phenomena and mediumship are natural, if unusual, manifestations, and that their reality has been testified to by some of the greatest minds in Science and Philosophy. Mediums essential to such phenomena are, however (to quote from the draft), "rogues and vagabonds before the Law"!

One serious complaint which arises from the present state of the law is that Spiritualist associations may be debarred from beneficial bequests in certain cases. It will be pointed out to the Home Secretary that:

Spiritualist associations have had recourse to the Law Courts and have lost the day in endeavours to secure the payment to them of funds bequeathed for the express purpose of developing and training Mediums, or for the establishment and maintenance of institutions devoted to this object.

It is urged that there is growing in other countries a more enlightened attitude towards the claims and practices of Spiritualist bodies, and that in New Zealand, Canada and the State of New York the law has recently been amended to remove the unjust restrictions under which Spiritualists and psychics have hitherto laboured.

In a covering letter Mr. George Berry tells us that the S.N.U. are resolved to continue their efforts towards securing practical relief through the present Parliament. He desires that the secretaries of Spiritualist churches and associations should make a point of writing to the Home Secretary on or about October 25th, setting out particulars of the present grievance.

MR. HAROLD SPEER again draws attention to the Spiritualist Rest Home, Nightingale House, 1, Clarendon Terrace, Brighton. The building is on the Marine Parade, facing the sea. Permanent guests will be taken. The terms are moderate, and as this is the slack season Mr. and Mrs. Speer are especially desirous of making the Home known to readers of LIGHT.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

A VISIT TO DR. GLEN HAMILTON.

IMPORTANT EXPERIMENTS IN WINNIPEG.

By E. A. S. HAYWARD.

During our trip across Canada before turning South into the States my wife and I stopped for a couple of days at Winnipeg, in order to pay a visit to Dr. Glen Hamilton and his Circle.

The Doctor has devoted himself for the last ten years to scientific research into the phenomena of Spiritualism, and for the greater part of each year sits regularly, twice a week, with his Circle, in a laboratory, which he has equipped most carefully for the purpose. For the greater part of the time he has had the services of two lady Mediums, who have developed greatly under his careful and experienced guidance. One of them has become a powerful agent for ectoplasmic production and Dr. Glen Hamilton has been able to obtain a series of most remarkable flashlight photos of faces built up in the ectoplasmic material. In the seance room he has fitted up a series of ten cameras of various grades and powers, and three series of flashlights, by which he is able to obtain photographs at various stages in the production of the complete "extra". All the cameras are focussed beforehand on the Medium so that at any moment the experimenter can, by electric impulse, make use of any camera unit, or the whole battery at once. He is thus enabled to obtain photographic records of the phenomena from practically any angle, thus affording most valuable results for the purposes of comparison.

The controlling spirit for the work in connection with the production of these photographs is understood to be "Walter", the brother of "Margery"—Mrs. Crandon of Boston. This spirit gives most precise instructions in regard to the *modus operandi* of the work in progress. Sometimes several preliminary sittings are undertaken, apparently for storing up the power necessary for the completion of the picture.

At intervals flashlight photos are taken of the ectoplasm proceeding from the Medium, who before each sitting is thoroughly searched, and, after being divested of her clothing is garbed in a kind of bathing suit, covered with an outer garment. Throughout the whole of the proceedings she remains under the strictest physical control, and every movement is described and detailed in the report of the sitting by a note-taker, seated outside the circle. The members are linked up by holding hands throughout the sitting.

One peculiar feature of this form of ectoplasmic picturisation is that when it is complete, a kind of defoliation of the ectoplasm takes place; the piece forming the picture falls down and the final photograph shows this lying separate.

Portraits have been obtained of Spurgeon, Livingstone, Robert Louis Stevenson, Myers, and of a little son of the Doctor's who has passed over.

Dr. Hamilton is doing a great work in reaching a class of persons which would not ordinarily be interested. He has lectured to thirty-four different societies, and included in his audiences have been medical men, scientists, university professors and students, as well as representative bodies of men and women in the city and province of Manitoba. These lectures are fully illustrated with slides prepared from the most typical photographs taken during the sittings.

We had the privilege of being present at one of the sittings, the first after the summer vacation. It happened to be held on the anniversary of the passing of our daughter, and was specially noteworthy as being the first occasion on which the Circle received an apport. None of those present was aware of the fact that the day had any special significance to us. The apport consisted of a sweet-pea, which was given

to my wife by desire of our daughter. Although careful search was made, none other like it in colour was discovered in the house.

Dr. Hamilton's second Medium has the gift of Automatic Writing, and also receives mental pictures of incidents in the lives of Livingstone and Robert Louis Stevenson, who appear to be greatly interested in this Circle. Mrs. Hamilton has devoted much time and research to the verification of the details so given, and often has spent many weeks in delving into books dealing with the lives of these men, before being able to verify the descriptions given in the seance room. Dr. Glen Hamilton has full records of over 850 seances on this phase of Mediumship.

He has also a series of most striking and instructive flashlight photographs showing the stages of development of trance with this particular Medium.

The doctor's probity and critical acumen are so well known by the people of Winnipeg that his influence in spreading the knowledge of the scientific side of Spiritualistic phenomena is inestimable. It is sincerely to be hoped that before long he may see his way to make a visit to England to give lectures on the result of his investigations, and that he may also find time, amongst his many activities, to present some of his most important work in book form.

ON CRYSTAL-GAZING.

By THOMAS T. SMITH, B.A.

Not long ago, someone to whom I was speaking about this occult practice—seeing visions in a crystal—tried to throw contempt upon it, saying: "Actually, all that you see in the crystal globe is your own face!"

Now let us get down to the practical experience, looking intently, but not fatiguingly, into a glass sphere, preferably about two or three inches diameter; any shape of hard glass crystal will do, but the crystal should be carefully handled, and the place and time for clairvoyant vision strictly kept to, from day to day. An illumined circular bowl is sometimes used in Lecanoscopia, partly filled with water. Evening is the best time of day, and to use natural light is better than artificial.

Now the phenomena seen by adepts at crystal vision are often so wonderful that persons who have not seen them first-hand can hardly be convinced of their reality, or genuine character. The first appearance after one has tried the experiment carefully, steadily looking into the Sphere for say ten minutes (in solitude at first, and in a state of mental passivity, as Myers says) is that the crystal begins to cloud, and then seems to become azure before definite images and scenes appear: the sayer hardly is aware of anything but the crystal in front of him, and a tight feeling at the cortex of his own brain. He is not in a true hypnotic trance, but the "hypnoid" state seems to be induced like the state when we close our eyes to prepare for sleep. Hallucinatory images or "visions" are seen, in the crystal ball, as it were, yet true, living pictures, like those seen casually out of doors, at sea, etc.

Professor A. G. Tansley (*The New Psychology*, Ch. XIII) says that these visual images are symbolizations from the unconscious mind, somewhat like dream pictures, and that "though obtained in a hypnoid condition, they are much closer to the symbolic dream images than to those of day-dreams, as the latter are closer to ordinary memory pictures."

Sir Oliver Lodge, writing of crystal-visions at the height of their intensity, says that "The Mind becomes temporarily complexed as it were, and different parts of the brain are automatically telegraphing to each other." (*The Survival of Man*.)

The above is written in part theoretically from reading on this subject, and confirmed in my own practical experience.

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THE BRITISH COLLEGE.

FORMAL OPENING OF 15, QUEEN'S GATE.

It is a handsome building, this new headquarters of the British College of Psychic Science; a fitting home for one of the most important of the European Spiritualist societies. The premises were acquired by College officials a few months ago, and the story of "how it was done" is strange and romantic; the early negotiations for the property were unpromising; one after another, obstacles reared themselves in the path and it seemed as though the completion must fall through. Then, as if by magic, one after another, the obstructions vanished, and the members of the British College were able to enter into possession of their new home. (Curiously enough a similar story is told by the directors of another Spiritualist organisation—"The Seekers"—whose headquarters are a few doors away in the same street; they, too, came into possession of their home in a providential manner that suggested the presence of a "Good Fairy", pulling wires behind the scenes on their behalf.)

The "house-warming" given by the British College on the evening of October 2nd was a happy affair; no formal speeches were made; the atmosphere was friendly, gracious and unrestrained.

Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny, the president, welcomed the assembly in a charming little speech, brief and sincere.

The Rev. Dr. Lamond, who followed, gave some personal reminiscences of his early association with Mr. and Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, paying a high tribute to their unselfish work for spiritual truth. He referred, in moving tones, to the late Mr. J. Hewat McKenzie: "We would do well to remember him to-night," said the speaker, "for he was really the father of this enterprise."

Mr. H. Ernest Hunt, representing the London Spiritualist Alliance, wished God-speed to the College in its new sphere of activity. It would be, he felt assured, a centre from which light and leading would radiate. Such centres were doing work of incalculable value; by spreading a real knowledge of life, they would rescue the world from its present precarious state, which was the result of too materialistic ideas.

Mrs. Hewat McKenzie spoke with gratitude of Mrs. de Crespigny's work on behalf of the College. The success of the enterprise, in fact of all Spiritualistic progress, depended upon many things, not easy to come by—Mediums, finance, workers, social prestige. More and more enthusiastic workers were becoming necessary. Every person who came into the movement became a centre of influence, even though he or she might be unable to carry out active work on its behalf. There were those who regarded Spiritualism as a religion; others took a different view; all could unite, however, for the foundation of Spiritualism was a recognition of the reality of that life-giving thing—spirit.

During the evening Mrs. Humphrey-Martin (Miss Mary Monteith) entertained the company with piano-forte selections.

N.

MISS M. L. STAIR, Hon. Sec. of the S.N.U. Fund of Benevolence, again appeals for contributions for the relief of sick and aged workers in the Spiritualist movement. 637 grants were made during 1928 and these necessitated drawing heavily upon the reserve fund. It is hoped that this (the 22nd) annual appeal will result in sufficient money being raised to enable this benevolent work to be actively continued. Many of those in receipt of contributions from the Fund are old people whose ages range from 70 to 85 years of age. Contributions should be sent to Miss Stair, 32B, North Street, Keighley, Yorks, who will acknowledge on behalf of the Committee.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

I was reading lately of a scheme to bring in money to a charitable enterprise many years ago. In order to induce the wealthy to contribute it was arranged that donors of £1,000 should be invited to dinner at a ducal residence and it was found that several social climbers were willing to pay thus heavily for the honour of dining with a duke. I doubt not that they belonged to that class of people who would complain bitterly of paying a guinea or so to sit with a medium.

* * * * *

"To-day," writes a moralist, "trifles are treasured, and people fret and sweat in pursuit of fugitive and futile things, neglecting altogether the eternal values." There is a good deal of truth in the sentiment, but it is not a new thing. Worldlings have trifled with life and moralists have mourned over the fact for thousands of years. And it really seems as if there were less and not more cause for lamentation to-day. A change of mind and a change of heart is coming over the world, and when the matter is closely examined it is seen that the vain and foolish make up only a relatively small proportion of the population. The great spiritual impulse which is upon us—the growth of Spiritualism is one of its signs—is causing a general ferment, but the proportion of bubbles to the clear liquor is very small.

* * * * *

Mr. Sylvan Muldoon, author of *The Projection of the Astral Body*, notes a singular discovery in an article in the *Occult Review* for October. It is that contact with metal acts as a stimulus to the projection of the astral form. This is rather curious in view of the fact that some sensitives are disagreeably affected by metallic contacts. It would be interesting to know why this is so. I have even heard it said that humanity suffers psychically because of the immense amount of metal-work now in use everywhere. It may be so. Some of the old folklore stories indicate that the elfin world does not like "cold iron" although it loves wood. And if there is anything in the idea it might explain why the presence of metal in Mr. Muldoon's case assists in the expulsion of the astral or psychic body.

* * * * *

A correspondent, who is not alone in his comment, remarks on the fact that some Spiritualists are inclined to give way to excessive grief when under the stress of bereavement. It is so. Here and there you find a man or a woman speaking or singing with joy and confidence on the theme, that "There is no death", doing their best to communicate this assurance to others, and generally making of death "a little thing". But one day some near relative passes—husband, wife, father, mother, or child—and the bereaved person "goes all to pieces". Yet I really cannot see anything surprising in the fact, remembering that human nature is very rarely logical (for which perhaps we may thank Heaven!). While we are in a material world, material things must needs count even with the best of us. "There was never yet philosopher who could endure the toothache patiently." The pain of separation—the loss of the bodily presence of one near and dear to us—is worse than any toothache. But as time goes on and life unfolds, we shall find, even on earth, that deeper sense of spiritual presence and companionship which will make death actually as trivial a thing as it is so often and so truly proclaimed to be.

D. G.

RETURNING SPIRITS AND THEIR METHODS.

A SIMPLE STATEMENT BY A CLAIRVOYANT.

So much has been said about the way in which spirits shew themselves to a clairvoyant that perhaps a simple statement from a clairvoyant's own observations may be of interest.

I have seen spirits who, being familiar with the conditions necessary to manifestation, seem to "glide" into the physical surroundings in which they seek to shew themselves; others appear to be dependent upon some outside assistance—which is often given by a guide of the Medium—and others, again, seem hardly aware that they have invaded the physical atmosphere. Some will suddenly appear close to the Medium, and then press forward towards the person they are seeking. It will thus be readily understood that a Medium has to be well developed before he can discern these different phases of manifestation. Indeed, a true clairvoyant must be actually a "discerner of spirits", and not merely one who simply "sees" a discarnate person.

It is no easy matter for one who has been in spirit life for a considerable time, to shew himself in such a way that he can be readily recognised by a Medium's description. Memory, of course, plays an important part in the matter. Spirits can, and do, clothe themselves with, what I can best describe as, a "body garment", and if they can *vividly* recall their earthly appearance much trouble regarding recognition is saved. It is just here where difficulties arise. Spirits forget little characteristics of face and form and manner which, in the physical body, rendered them familiar to their relations and friends. A little lapse of memory, and confusion results. Now, if the Medium is one who is also a good *impressionable sensitive*, spirits can convey to his mind what they cannot always memorise sufficiently to make objective. They find themselves in their old "conditions" and, in some subtle way, these conditions assist both them and the Medium—a kind of psychometric impression is given, in addition to the objective portrayal by the spirit of his appearance. How often a Medium will say:—"The spirit now seems to impress me that he had"—this or that characteristic, physical or mental. "But," the conscientious Medium will add, "I do not actually *see* this—I get it by impression." The detail so given is, nevertheless, at times, most evidential.

This "impressionable condition" coupled with the power to psychometrise surroundings, often enables a Medium to convey a message from a spirit who is unable to express what he wishes in any other way. (The fact that a Medium is clairaudient does not necessarily help a spirit, who may be unable to utilise physical conditions, so as to *voice* his message.)

There are, of course, other considerations connected with the way in which spirits endeavour to make themselves and their characteristics apparent to the Medium, but those I have referred to are, I think, enough to remind the reader that the difficulties of communication are not slight, and that the wonder is that communication between the two worlds is as successful as it usually is.

L. H.

THE SHEFFIELD SOCIETY OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH has just issued its Syllabus for the winter session. Its activities include lectures by Mrs. Champion de Crespigny, Miss Geraldine Cummins, Captain Jack Frost, the Rev. Alfred Hall, Mr. J. B. McIndoe, Dr. Hector Munro, the Rev. G. Vale Owen and Mr. J. Cuming Walters. Demonstrations of spirit-photography, physical phenomena, and clairvoyance will be given by Mr. W. Hope of Crewe, Mr. James Lewis, and Mr. Aaron Wilkinson respectively.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"? Spiritualism." By P. B. Beddow. (*Spiritual Truth* Offices, 46, Anerley Station Road, London, S.E.20. 1s. 2d., post free.)

This is a useful little primer on the main facts of Spiritualism, serving as a helpful introduction for the novice; it is written with obvious sincerity and without any straining after literary style. The severe critic may find faults here and there, but the booklet will, no doubt, have a good popular market.

H. G.

"The Game of Life and How to Play It." By Florence Scovel Shinn. (L. N. Fowler; 2s. net.)

"Ask and ye shall receive," is the keynote of these little essays. Mrs. Shinn shows us how to do it; and if the fault-finding critic sniffs at the materialistic note of some passages (wherein we are told how certain much-needed sums of money—in dollars—were miraculously obtained at the eleventh hour by the power of faith) nevertheless, there is much of value in these pages, and the optimistic tone is welcome.

H. G. A.

"The Kingdom of the Wise—Life's Problems." By J. S. M. Ward, M.A. (Baskerville Press, 161, New Bond Street, W.1. 6s.)

This is a book of collected addresses, delivered early in 1929 under the auspices of "The Confraternity of the Kingdom of the Wise", a society which believes (to quote from the Introduction) "that this Age is drawing to its conclusion" and that the Second Coming of Christ will take place in the near future. The author discusses a number of subjects of metaphysical interest—reincarnation, sin, death, survival, the astral body, to mention but a few. Some of his views are, broadly speaking, in line with a considerable body of spiritual teaching accepted by Spiritualists, but other of the author's ideas appear to be debateable. His general conclusions are optimistic; he sees that the greatest lesson which we shall learn from our after-death experiences will be the continuity of life and the recognition of love as the central force of the universe.

J. A. N. C.

"Altar Lilies: The Message of Brother Joseph." Recorded by W. H. Evans. (The Greater World, 4s. 6d.)

This is a neatly-bound reprint of a series of inspirational messages received by Mr. Evans, who tells us he does not know who Brother Joseph is; but as the object of the communicator was not to prove his identity, the absence of evidential matter is not important. Many will agree that the communication of valuable teaching is a higher matter than evidence of personal identity, which in other directions is given abundantly to supply that particular need. The messages are on a high level of thought—they form that "manual for meditation" which the communicator designed to give. I read them with interest and profit, struck by the quality of the thought, the imagery and the insight. A more careful editing would have corrected certain little errors of grammar and the like. But these things are of small account except to the ultra-critical who are apt to overlook the beauties of a work in a too curious examination of its defects. The book will find a welcome amongst readers who look beneath the surface of things for interior truth.

E. P. G.

MRS. CANNOCK, the well-known psychic, has left for Sweden where she has arranged to give a series of addresses and demonstrations. She will return home on or about November 10th.

OCTOBER 12, 1929
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Friday, October 18th, at 5 p.m. MISS COLLYNS

VOL. VIII. No. 3.

October, 1929

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Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—October 13th, 7,
Mme. de Beaurepaire, trance address. October 16th, 7.30, Mrs. S. D. Kent,
address and clairvoyance.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—October 13th,
3.15, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. T. W. Ella. October 16th, 7.45, Mr. Edmund Spencer.

Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41, Ashford Road.—October 13th,
6.30, Mr. Ernest Meads. October 16th, 3 and 8, Miss L. White.

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Wednesday, October 16th, 7.30 p.m. Clairvoyance. MISS FLORENCE MORSE

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a simple fact in Nature, and probably operates naturally and frequently without conscious awareness on our part. Those communications of which we are intellectually and emotionally aware, depend upon the exercise of the psychic faculties, which are by no means simple. We know comparatively little about them. They are associated with certain mental and physical peculiarities requiring much study.

RELATIONSHIP OF SITTER AND MEDIUM:

It will readily be seen that the enquirer who becomes familiar to some extent with the nature and scope of mediumship is better able to appraise the results of a sitting than one who comes with preconceived notions, all of which may be influenced by mistaken ideas. The experimenter needs to be capable of sympathetic and intelligent response to what may be given him. He must use common-sense in this, as in all things; he must be content to accept and examine carefully in the light of his reason whatever is given to him. He will court failure if he demands particular results. It should be remembered that in every psychic experiment the initiative and constructive work is from the spirit world. The medium is in effect a passive recording instrument and the sitter an observer. The sitter should also endeavour to be passive and sympathetic, merely recording all impressions and statements. The critical analysis should be made after, not during a seance.

The extreme delicacy of the psychic states should never be overlooked. The mediumistic gift is subject to constant variations in power and sensitivity. A variety of factors go to make either good or bad conditions. The gift itself varies in power. The psychic state of a medium may harmonise with the psychic state of a sitter, or it may not. The experiment is influenced not only by the state of mind of the sitter at the time of the experiment, but by his general mental condition and character. As in ordinary human Society, some people mix with their fellows more easily than others, so in psychic experiments some combinations are favourable and others unfavourable. Every sitting is thus in the nature of an experiment. The sincere enquirer with an open mind, will receive experiences of a supernormal nature, and usually, when he has the co-operation of an interested spirit friend, he will sooner or later obtain evidence of the identity of his friend.

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