

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

Edited by DAVID GOW

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of disposition. These graces of soul help us very much in this world—they invite where the opposite disposition repels. And the spiritual world is in some respects very much like this world intensified, so that the qualities which either attract or repel us here operate in the same way, but to a far stronger degree, in our intercourse with the unseen realm and its people. And when there is imposition and falsity, who is it that is most readily imposed upon by specious appeals to their vanity? Not the simple-minded, so much as the pompous and self-conceited folk. It is very much the same in both worlds.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

PREDICTION, DIRECTION AND DESTINY.

Andrew Jackson Davis, in the fifth volume of his *Great Harmonia*, said that no person, however much he might enjoy communion with the Spirit World, could gain very accurate information regarding the details of the future. That is the experience of many of us, for although we know that future events are sometimes very precisely outlined, all predictions are liable to go astray in small particulars. We can never completely eliminate the human tendency to error. But Davis was equally emphatic on the question of influence and direction from the spirit side. He said that the affairs of men were more or less modified or "diverted into different channels by Power and Wisdom emanating from co-operative groups in the spirit-world". That becomes increasingly clear as we go on, and many people can testify to the fact from observation of their own lives. Fate and Freewill are words very loosely used. They are so closely blended in our lives that it is really impossible to separate them. Man has not freewill in an absolute sense, but then neither is his career entirely under the dispensation of Fate.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.

In a message from Dr. Richard Hodgson, given some time after his passing on, he made some allusions to the difficulty of getting messages through. He said: "Remember, every communication must have the human element." That explains why very "human" people get so much more satisfactory matter than the supercilious and the "superior" types of mind. Swollen with self-consequence, these persons are apt to despise those simple, kind and self-effacing people who so rapidly gain proof positive, and whose very presence provides the atmosphere in which the best evidences may be gained. An inflated egotism seems to block the channel of approach from the spirit side. And, although arrogance and self-assertion are in themselves very human frailties, they are not so ideally human as geniality and friendliness

TRANSITION OF DR. ABRAHAM WALLACE.

The news of the passing of Dr. Abraham Wallace on the 23rd ulto. in his eighty-first year will come as a matter of widespread regret although hardly as a surprise, for he passed out in the fullness of years after a long and honourable career both as a physician and a Spiritualist.

Dr. Wallace commenced his career at the old Glasgow College, where he studied anatomy under Professor Allen Thomson. Afterwards he went to Edinburgh where he became a student at the University there and a member of Lister's Clinical Surgical Class. He graduated in 1873 and became Junior Assistant to the Professor of Midwifery, and Physician-Accoucheur to the Fountainbridge Dispensary, Edinburgh. Before taking up his duties as tutor in the Winter Sessions he visited most of the centres of medical education and the celebrated hospitals on the Continent, including Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Leipsic, Munich, and Paris. He was made welcome at these centres, for he carried the prestige that came of having been a student with the great Lister. In Edinburgh he came into touch with W. E. Henley, the poet, who was a patient of Lister. That was during the days when Robert Louis Stevenson studied in Edinburgh, but although Dr. Wallace occasionally saw Stevenson he did not become personally acquainted with him.

In 1889 Dr. Wallace came to London and settled in Harley Street as a specialist for Midwifery and Diseases of Women. He was for some years on the staff of the *Lancet* and was also a member of the Council of the Society for Psychical Research.

Last year Dr. Wallace retired from active work and settled at Paignton, at which place he passed away. We had rather hoped that he would be induced to write some of his psychic reminiscences in *LIGHT*, but doubtless we shall hear something of these from those of his intimate friends who had knowledge of these matters. A good many of his reminiscences were, however, given by him in his public addresses, and some of these have appeared in *LIGHT* in past years.

Meantime the thoughts of his many friends and admirers will go with him into that new life on which he has entered and for which he had so well and worthily prepared himself during a long career of valiant achievement—a worker for human good and a witness of the truths of Spiritualism.

PSYCHIC RESEARCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

BY THE LATE DR. ELLIS T. POWELL.

(Continued from page 39.)

The third appearance was to St. Peter, but beyond the bare mention of the fact by St. Luke and St. Paul (Luke xxiv. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 5), we have no details. The impetuous Apostle, however, was one of the most powerful psychics of the Apostolic band, as we know from his selection to be the medium—or one of the mediums—where exceptional results were aimed at, as in the case of the Transfiguration. The fourth appearance was to the two of His disciples (one Cleophas, the other unknown to us) on the way to Emmaus. I need not add the details of the story. The incident is only fully recorded by St. Luke (Luke xxiv. 13 *et seq.*), though there is the briefest allusion to it among those last few verses of St. Mark (Mark xvi. 12, 13), which, according to the best modern opinion, formed no part of the original gospel, but were added by another hand. The time was the close of the Resurrection day, the eventide of the world's first Easter Sunday. The two disciples talked as they went to Emmaus. Jesus came and joined them, though they were prevented from recognising Him. The word for "prevented" is the same Greek verb (*κρατέω*) as we have already encountered when we read of the two women clasping or *seizing* His feet. The antique English of our Authorised Version (which is preserved in the Revised Version) is the best of all—"their eyes were *holden* that they should not know Him." In psychic terminology, there had been, during the course of the Easter Day, an accession of "power", of materialising skill. The materialisation was now so good that, instead of supposing Him to be "the gardener", his companions must infallibly have recognised Him, if psychic means had not been adopted by the spirit band around Him to prevent it. The two disciples told their new friend of all that had occurred during the past few days, and then—

They drew nigh unto the village whither they went; and he made as though he would have gone further.

But they constrained him, saying, "Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And he went in to tarry with them.

And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

There are two points here which are well worthy of our attention. The first essential of a successful materialising circle is complete harmony on the part of sitters. They must blend—and the simile is very apt indeed—like the notes of a chord in music. The more intimately they blend, the more successful the conditions. In this instance the conditions were good throughout—so good that it was necessary to *prevent* recognition of the materialised spirit form. They would improve as the fellow-travellers, in earnest discussion, came into closer and more cordial sympathy with each other. So much we know from the reluctance of the two disciples to part from their new Friend, and the pressure which they employed to induce Him to stay with them for the night. So that there were in operation two separate

lines of psychic action, two different psychic forces. One was represented by the efforts of the controlling spirits to *prevent* recognition; the other was the strong tendency towards the increasing perfection of the materialisation as the three participants of this marvellous episode drew more and more into harmony and sympathy. One of these forces was bound, in the long run, to triumph. At last the crisis came. He took bread and blessed it and brake it and gave to them; and in that supreme act of sacrifice and remembrance, the loving harmony of the little circle reached its climax, and the materialisation became simultaneously perfect. Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and then the "power" faded, and He vanished out of their sight. How natural it all is—how exquisitely life-like to those who have witnessed the process of materialisation and can picture the whole scene almost as vividly as if they had been privileged to be spectators!

In the course of the next verse we get a very instructive insight (palpable in the Greek, and very happily and naturally preserved in the Authorised Version) into St. Luke's meaning when he says that "their eyes were holden" that they should not know Him. After telling us that their eyes were *opened*, and they knew Him, St. Luke goes on to record the mutual reminiscences of the two disciples. "Did not our heart burn within us," they said, "while He talked with us by the way, and while He *opened* unto us the Scriptures?" The opening of the eyes and the opening of the Scriptures are the same word (*διανοίγω*) in Greek and English. The Greek word means to open by drawing aside or asunder some obstacle which has previously been in the way. Hence it signifies clearing of the vision and the mind by drawing aside something which has been an interruption to the activity of the perfected operation of both. The Scriptures had been as dim and obscure to the minds of these disciples as the figure of the Risen Lord to their eyes; and both were *opened*.

Finally, we have the curious and indeed unique expression in which St. Luke records the fact of disappearance—or dematerialisation, for that was really what took place. His words are rendered both in the Authorised Version and the Revised Version by the phrase "he vanished out of their sight". There is nothing about *sight*, save inferentially, in the Greek text. Dr. Weymouth's version is therefore nearer the original—"he vanished from them". But the precise sense of the words is not conveyed even by this translation. I am the more anxious to make it quite clear because I believe that here, as in the earlier instance of his account of the Transfiguration, St. Luke deliberately cast about for an expression which would exclude possible misapprehension and indicate, with complete technical precision, the real character of the incident to those of his Greek readers who had any acquaintance with psychic phenomena. What St. Luke really says is, that "he became invisible from them."

Now the ordinary Greek construction here would have been the same as the English—He became invisible *to* them. The anomalous use of *from* is noticed by Alford. He finds in it an indication that this was not only a disappearance of the apparent physical frame, but an actual removal of the personality away from that spot to another. Is it not at least as likely that St. Luke was endeavouring to convey the idea of dematerialisation? He became invisible from them—that is, He gradually dematerialised until nothing was left where a few moments before there had been a palpable presence? I have seen the phenomena of dematerialisation myself, and

so have many fellow-investigators. The expression "he became invisible *from* them" is, to my mind, extremely apt to the circumstances which on this hypothesis the Evangelist was describing.

When we go on to the séance which Thomas was invited to attend, the Greek becomes very suggestive. "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands," says the Authorised Version. "Reach hither thy finger and *see* my hands," says the Revised. Neither is quite a satisfactory rendering. The verb *ὁράω*, used here for "behold" and "see", is the one employed of vision in the intellectual sense. It signifies to discern, or examine, to observe, to become acquainted with a thing by experience. Where the significance is merely that of looking at a thing just to note its existence or presence and without any idea of critical inspection, the sacred writers use another verb. They employ *βλέπειν*—as, for instance, in the record of the Ascension—"When He had said these things, as they were *looking*, He was taken up." These considerations led the late Dr. Weymouth to render the passage: "Reach hither thy finger and *feel* my hands." That is to say, "assure yourself by actual touch that I am what I seem to be, a material form, reproducing the conditions as you knew them on Calvary." In the presence of eleven powerful mediums—for such, undoubtedly, the Apostles were—the spirit becomes overwhelmingly confident, and so far from forbidding the act of touch, as had been done only twelve or fourteen hours earlier, now invites it and commands it. Thus was the prompt fulfilment added to the implied promise of the morning that there would be abundant opportunities of touch before He ascended to the Father. This incident of Thomas, as it stands, is utterly inconsistent with the traditional interpretation of the words: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father."

So, once more, at the final scene of the Ascension—"as they were looking up, a cloud received Him out of their sight." The Greek word *νεφέλη*, whence comes the Latin word *nebula*, familiar enough to us all, might just as well mean a mist or vapour. The word is the same as that which we encountered in our study of the Transfiguration. It was, I take it, simply a screen for the process of dematerialising the materialised body, thus levitated in accordance with the operation of a psychic force familiar enough to the saints of the Middle Ages, and well within the experience of modern investigators—for instance, in the case of the late D. D. Home. There is no need to invoke the miraculous by imagining the departure of a physical body to a physical heaven. Levitation and dematerialisation cover all the facts and meet all the necessities of the case. Modern astronomical science knows the *nebula* as the gigantic fire-mist out of which the planetary systems slowly materialise. The New Testament writer uses the same word to describe the psychic mist in which the materialised form dematerialises; and one Supreme Power employs both—the fire-mist that spreads over immeasurable distances of space, and that which simply floats along the mountain-side—for its inscrutable purposes.

One point further. The enquirer (particularly if he is attached to the traditional creed of Christianity), may well ask a pointed question. He may say: "If these arguments are sound, what becomes of the historic article of the Apostles' Creed, in which the faithful are required to enunciate their belief in the Resurrection of the Body?" If [physical, fleshly] death means the ultimate dispersal of the physical components of the human frame, and if, as has been argued above, the appearances of the Risen Lord were materialisations, this article of the Creed must apparently be abandoned. But that is really not the case. In all probability, the materialisation theory solves the problem which has perplexed Christian theologians ever since modern biology began to challenge the possibility of a re-gathering and re-aggregation of all the particles which had formed

part of a physical body. The difficulty has been all the greater because of the impossibility of denying that a given particle of matter has in the course of ages been a part of more bodies than one, or even of two. But if the materialisation theory be sound, the whole question is lighted up with new suggestion.

We may then argue that the words in the Creed represent no more than a misapprehension with regard to the real character of the Resurrection. The theologians who formulated the Creed were accustomed to materialisation. They knew that the appearances of the Risen Lord were instances of this phenomenon. They had themselves frequently witnessed it. But they were aware of one infirmity from which the process could not escape, namely, the necessity of the presence of one or more psychic sensitives. They knew also that even when this instrumentality was available, the materialised forms could only be made to last for a few moments. They supposed, however (on the hypothesis now offered), that the Resurrection was a *permanent* materialisation, in which the materialised physical form would not be dependent for its existence and permanence on the intervention of a psychic. They had seen with their own eyes a demonstration of the fact of a *temporary* Resurrection of the Body. They could hardly be blamed if they assumed that in its ultimate manifestation, the *permanent* resurrection would take the same form. This is probably the key to their enunciation of the Resurrection of the Body as one of the essential articles of Christian belief.

(To be continued.)

"OBSESSION."

Under this title in *LIGHT* of the 18th ult. (p. 33) "Doc. San." told the story of the weird behaviour of a small coal-black kitten that he suggested might be due to obsession. Two correspondents, M. Hull (who omits to add his or her address) and E. Champion (of Guernsey) strongly combat the idea.

M. Hull says that what ailed the kitten was probably the result of some fright sustained by the mother cat before the kitten was born. Our correspondent continues: "I have kept cats all my life and can confidently assert that their characters and dispositions are as various as those of human beings. You could easily find the kitten's counterpart among slum children of the so-called irreclaimable kind." Our correspondent regrets that the case should be described by such an absurd title as "obsession," and continues: "The idea of obsession in this connection is merely silly; no one who had studied animals and understood them would credit it for a moment."

E. Champion says that if there was any obsession at all it was the obsession of the evil spirit known as *Fear*. That fear was probably engendered in the kitten pre-natally by fright and mistrust, and impressed itself so strongly on the animal's temperament as to become a permanent factor in its disposition. E. Champion continues: "The fact that it adopted a prolonged and fixed stare and a ferocious expression, supports my suggestion. Clearly the frightened creature—even when eating—tried to appear as terrible as it was able in order to intimidate its supposed enemies."

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SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

The *Progressive Thinker* prints the report of a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Gordon, of Los Angeles, California, from which we take the following:—

“What is the vital difference between this world and the spirit world?”

The answer is, there is more love in the spirit world. Love shines like a burning sun. Tenderness floats like perfume. Sympathy thrills like a life current. Appreciation springs like opening flowers. Helpfulness abounds like the ozone of the sea. Everything in the spirit realm is dominated by love.

“Is there such a thing as class distinction in the spirit world?”

The answer reads: “There is; but people are not classified there according to property.” There are three preferred classes in the spirit world. First, those who feel deeply. Second, those who think unselfishly. Third, those who think clearly. The highest class in the spirit world is composed of those who are honest, sincere, unselfish, good-natured and sympathetic. There is a world of meaning in the words of the Master: “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” The moral qualities stand the highest in the spirit realm. Over yonder men of heart are preferred to men of brain. Over yonder the crown of glory is not for the master-mind, but for the super-spirit. Heart qualities and soul virtues are enthroned up in Heaven.

“Are good spirits in the spirit realm holy, sinless, perfect and infallible?”

In the spirit realm the eternal law is eternal progress. There are imperfect spirits over yonder just as there are imperfect men and women in this present life. The words of Emerson, as applied to earth and heaven, to time and eternity, are appropriate, “On and for ever on.” The oldest saint in glory, who has resided in the spiritual universe for millenniums, is still a child in the realm of knowledge, with worlds of information yet to attain and points of perfection in character yet to be achieved.

“Aside from love, as the master motive, what is the greatest element of power in the spirit world?”

The answer we have received to this interrogation is expressed in these words: “Thought is the only creative power on earth or in the spirit world.” Every part of your body answers to thought. You think and speak. You think and walk. You think and run. You think and strike. Nothing is done or accomplished except by and through thought. In the spirit realm every part of the universe responds to thought. There, thought is creative energy. In this world thought and labour must be conjoined, but in the spirit realm thought produces the corresponding ether-form instantaneously. There we annihilate distance by thought. There we clothe ourselves by thought. There we provide the furniture of our surrounding environment by thought. One of the chief differences between the earth's sphere and the spirit's sphere is that the limitations placed upon thought are less, and, within certain bounds, we become God-like in that we can create the things desired by the soul and the garments and the furniture necessitated by the ether-body.

“Why do you not tell us more definitely just what the spirit world is like?”

The question is very often addressed by inquiring people through Mediums to the friends who are on the other side, and the answer is given to us as follows: “Words fail us, the scene is absolutely indescribable.” “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath laid up for them that love Him.”

SPEAKERS' GROUP RE-UNION DINNER.

The first annual Reunion Dinner of the Speakers' Group took place in the Lodge Room at Slater's Restaurant, Strand, London, on Friday, the 10th January. The chair was occupied by Mr. H. H. Hitchcock. The Rev. G. Vale Owen and his daughter, Miss Irene Owen, were the guests of the evening. The Speakers' Group was formed some five years ago by the Rev. G. Vale Owen with the object of training speakers for Spiritualist platforms. The first meetings of the Group were held in a small room, placed at their disposal, at the headquarters of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and when the Alliance moved to its present premises, the Group found accommodation under the auspices of the Spiritualist Community, but eventually became independent and removed to Lancaster Gate.

The Chairman, in his speech of welcome, referred to the interesting work which individual members of the Group had taken up as a result of the training received, and, in the course of his remarks, gave a brief survey of the progress of the Spiritualist Movement in recent years. Referring to the lack of co-ordination and homogeneity in the various branches of the Movement, he asked “Where are our Leaders?” There were, he said, outstanding figures in the Movement like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, to whose pioneering work on behalf of the Cause he paid a high tribute, and others like the Rev. G. Vale Owen; but there was no powerful body analogous to a political organization with a war chest behind it capable of directing the Movement as a whole and of bringing pressure to bear upon the Press. Nevertheless, despite this disadvantage, the tone of the Press, during recent years, had changed so remarkably that one was compelled to try and seek for the cause. No one would suppose that it was entirely due to the influence of Mr. Hannen Swaffer or other Spiritualists in Fleet Street, but he thought a clue could be obtained from a remark made by the late Lord Northcliffe after his passing, to the effect that his job was to get hold of the Press. The speaker said that when spirit people get to work there is no noise and nothing to be seen, yet the result remains, and he claimed that Lord Northcliffe was succeeding. He stated his opinion that our Unseen friends had been busy with the Cinema and especially with wireless plays, so many of which dealt with after-life incidents with remarkable fidelity—it was true without the word “Spiritualism” being mentioned, but the essential facts were there.

He indicated that, in his view, the Movement as a whole was not being led, it was being thrust forward from the Unseen, and he asked what was the reason for this insistent urge? Had it a portent? Were we on the eve of great events? or did it imply the coming of the Christ? He was unable to supply the answer, but he felt that we were living in momentous times and it behoved those present to prepare themselves to take their part in the great work.

Other speakers followed, among whom Miss Cecil Preston gave a brief account of her recent psychic experiences in California and in Canada.

The Rev. G. Vale Owen spoke with inspiring power. Referring to the remarks of the Chairman he said that when one is climbing a mountain it is impossible to see its contour, to do this one had to stand at a distance and see the mountain as a whole. We lived too near to recent events to see them all clearly; but he agreed that the times were momentous, and instanced spirit-messages he had received from various parts of the world which dealt with world events.

The company present were unanimous in expressing their thanks for the opportunity of a happy reunion, and so concluded a most successful evening.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

"SPECTACULAR SPIRITUALISM."

Sir,—May I join with others in thanking Mr. Ernest Hunt for his timely protest against "Spectacular Spiritualism." Unfortunately for us all if a Medium makes a claim to be controlled by the Christ, there is no method of checking that claim. The onus of proof lies, of course, with those making the claim. What we are offered is (1) the high standard of the teachings given under trance and (2) the fact that Miss Moyes does not benefit financially by her mission.

The value of the first "proof" is difficult to determine. Who is to decide whether the teachings transcend, or are merely a reflex of the teachings of Christ whilst on earth? Are they finer than those given through Stainton Moses, in *Spirit Teachings*? Better than those given, by speech or by writing, of many men who make no claim to such exalted direction? Who is to determine? Or are we to accept any and every such claim as settled by its mere assertion? And what are we to do in the case of rival claims?

The second "proof" gives no greater certainty. The world is full of instances of men and women who, at great personal self-sacrifice, maintain propaganda of contradictory theories and teachings. Such self-sacrifice, whilst compelling our admiration, can hardly be accepted as proof of the truth of each and all of the many and widely-divergent teachings.

The sincerity of Miss Moyes and her supporters may be accepted. But others, equally sincere, must be forgiven if they decline to accept, without better proof than has yet been given, a claim of such profound importance.—Yours, etc.,

TOM GROOM.

London, W.C.1.

Lady Gait, of The Croft, Park Hill, Ealing, writes:—

One would have thought that anyone so well versed in psychic knowledge as Mr. Ernest Hunt would have known how little (or not at all) titles, names, earthly honours, count in the Great Beyond. As illustration one might mention our Lord's parable on Dives and Lazarus. What would not the rich man have given to be as Lazarus when he passed over? I personally have heard several of the "notabilities" Mr. Hunt refers to in *LIGHT*, speak through the Medium whom he with "some reluctance" criticizes, and I can only say that their humility and utter lack of self-pride have always been the chief characteristics of their messages and often their deep regret that they had used to such little effect their opportunities. Their one and only desire seems to be always to help in any way they can those still on earth.

I am proud to sign myself as a follower of "Zodiac," whose only boast is that he is honoured in being allowed (after 2,000 years) still to work for the Master he loved and served on earth.

Mrs. M. I. Gray, of 33, Anerley Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, writes:—

Does Mr. E. Hunt realise the damage done by his letter in *LIGHT*, of January 4th, re "Spectacular Spiritualism", to the outside public? Surely the work of Christ can be carried on in many ways. Why attack someone who has done a glorious work for years?

Sir,—Mr. Ernest Hunt is right. The message must stand or fall on its own merits and the protest is not against the message but against its ascription to a source obviously incapable of proof. Identity is difficult enough of demonstration in the ordinary course of Spiritualistic experience and, after the lapse of many centuries, wellnigh impossible.

Spiritualism professes to offer *facts* to the world, stating that to *belief* it adds *knowledge*. Clearly, the use of great names in the manner indicated is a question neither of fact nor knowledge and it is not surprising that the "unskilful laugh" while the "judicious grieve."

All who are seriously-minded in the search for truth, are prepared to accept spiritual teaching from whatever source presented, but when exaggerated claims are made regarding the origin of the teaching, we tend to be sceptical and this discounts to some extent the value of what is received. More's the pity.

If the message is really worthy, it will have its due effect: if it is only second rate, the addition of a great name will not mend matters.—Yours, etc.,

J. D. TURNER.

72, Windermere Avenue,
Merton Park, Surrey.

Sir,—From a perusal of Mr. H. E. Hunt's letter in *LIGHT*, dated the 4th January, it would seem that he has unfortunately missed the theme of the type of Spiritualism he deplores.

Those of us manifesting on earth now who seek unto the Highest, shall surely contact and attain unto the Highest.

Does Mr. Hunt not believe that He who promised to be in the midst of two or three gathered together in His name would not fulfil His promise? If so, then he has not perceived in Spiritualism what is its greatest service to mankind.

If Christ manifested 2,000 years ago in the flesh because of man's need then, why should He withhold Himself from us to-day? And what applies to the Master must surely apply to His servants, no matter of what high sphere they may be.

Knowing the world and men as Mr. Hunt must do, does he not see the great wisdom of communicating-spirits giving their names, particularly if they are of high degree? Mankind is always attracted by a name and if the message is such that it provides the spiritual food that mankind needs, then the name will have fulfilled its mission even if it is afterwards forgotten.

I would say that there is nothing spectacular in the giving of these names any more than there was anything spectacular in Christ telling His hearers that He was specially sent from God to lead the way to Truth and Life.

The teachings contained in the journal, mentioned in Mr. Hunt's letter (the teachings of "Zodiac" that is), to myself and to many I know are an inspiration and a blessing, and to those who desire above all things to be true and faithful servants of God and His dear Son, they come truly as from the Master Himself. "He who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

I would ask Mr. Hunt to try for himself—to kneel with an earnest and humble heart at the feet of these bright ones sent from the Master, and learn from them of the things that are of Him; he would then realise that in spite of a name being given to which, perhaps, he might object, the teaching would fill his every need.

But perhaps Mr. Hunt's need is not so great as that of those of us who so eagerly receive these words.—Yours, etc.,

WILLIAM G. C. SLY.

20, Palace View, Bromley, Kent.

A number of letters are unavoidably held over.

LIGHT.

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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

HIS PSYCHICAL AND MYSTICAL SIDE.

Several times in the past we have alluded to R. L. Stevenson's interest in supernormal faculty and to the fact that in the early 'seventies, of last century, he was secretary of the Psychological Society of Edinburgh, of which our friend, Dr. Gavin Clark, was President. From Dr. Clark we learned that the Society was more than a mere academic institution. It held seances with some notable Mediums of the time, and in a prospectus, which we have by us, dated 1st August, 1873, there is mention of some new books added to its library. These included two volumes of the *Great Harmonia* of Andrew Jackson Davis; *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, by Robert Dale Owen; Hudson Tuttle's *Arcana of Spiritualism*; and other Spiritualistic works. That fact alone is sufficient indication of the outlook of the Psychological Society.

The foregoing remarks are prompted by a lecture on R. L. Stevenson and his psychic interests, recently delivered by Mr. J. W. Herries, a Scots journalist, at a meeting of the Stevenson Fellowship held at the North British Hotel, Edinburgh.

Mr. Herries, in his remark that all creative artists were, in a sense, interested in psychic matters, as being themselves interpreters and exponents of the soul of man, expressed an idea which nowadays is very much in the air. In his lecture on the Novel, delivered to the Society of Arts the other day, Shaw Desmond touched closely on the point, and Hannen Swaffer, in his lectures and writings on Inspiration, has given utterance to much the same idea. There can be no doubt of the truth of Mr. Herries's dictum that creative artists are "the passive instruments of some mysterious force". Certainly many artists, working with brush and pen, admit that they have very little to do consciously with some of their creations.

It is clear enough that R. L. Stevenson was aware of the fact in his own case. His references to the "brownies", who inspired him at night, are sufficiently significant. But although he came into some casual association with scientific psychical research, he was too entirely devoted to his literary work to make

any close study of the question. We can only gather his impressions, concerning the direct influence of the Unseen World, by certain of his sayings. He was content to make a nodding acquaintance with the question, and to treat it in a detached kind of way. He regarded it much as Charles Lamb regarded it—through the medium of his literary sense. There was in his nature a certain elfishness; he was elusive, and full of whimsical humour, as some of his friends have testified. The scientific side of things did not seriously concern him.

In the course of his address Mr. Herries told an interesting story of Stevenson and the Edinburgh poet, Robert Fergusson, to whose memory Robert Burns was so greatly devoted, for Fergusson's poetry had a considerable influence on the work of Burns. It seems that Stevenson traced in himself a remarkable similarity in temperament and circumstances with Fergusson. Indeed, this similarity between the two lives led to a theory that Stevenson was a kind of reincarnation of Fergusson—it was Stevenson's own idea. But we are disposed to agree with Mr. Herries that it would be unreasonable to deduce from this any more than the play of Stevenson's fertile imagination. Still, it is not to be denied that these parallels and coincidences between the lives of poets and artists, living in different ages, are very curious. We had an example lately in the case of Keats and Rupert Brooke, as narrated by Mr. Mansford; and that was but one instance out of several. They seem to point to some deep spiritual relationship between creative artists generally—some kind of "correspondence", suggesting action and reaction between those in the unseen and their brethren on earth who are united with them in some bond of mystical sympathy which may outwork itself even in the world of everyday experience.

CHARLES ASHTON JONSON.

A TRIBUTE FROM SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

The cause has sustained a severe loss in the death, in his 69th year, of C. Ashton Jonson. He was a man of the highest culture, deeply-read, and with a practical knowledge of books which enabled him, as Honorary Librarian, to make the collection at the Royal Automobile Club a noteworthy one. He was also a fine musical critic, and his *Life of Chopin* is among the standard works upon the subject. As a Spiritualist he brought certain gifts to the movement which were invaluable. His gentle and yet forceful personality, together with his absolute grasp of the subject, and his power of clear exposition made him a wonderful propagandist. Both in South Africa and in the far Continental countries (Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway), where he and Mrs. Jonson were our companions, the success which we achieved was greatly aided and increased by their fine team-work, Ashton Jonson, with his charming personality, interviewing all comers, while his wife did splendid unselfish anonymous work, preparing the answers for the whole pages of catechism which used to appear in the papers each day. He had a way of disarming and converting opponents by his courteous and convincing answers to their difficulties, which put him in a class by himself among our propagandists. Instead of losing his temper in the face of rudeness and stupidity he would write so polite and reasonable a letter that the culprit would be compelled to alter his tone. He has left a gap behind him which it will indeed be hard to fill, though we may try to console ourselves with his wife's beautiful words, in the first flush of her grief, "We have lost nothing and we have gained an angel."

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

SIDELIGHTS.

In the course of an address in the Small Town Hall at Reading, reported in the *Reading Mercury*, of January 11th, Sir Frank Benson said: "I knew that my father was ill and dying. When I was 600 miles away he came into my room, kissed me and said: 'Good-bye; God bless you!' I turned up the light and made a special note of the time. It was the exact time at which my father had died."

* * * *

In his popular *causerie*, "The Londoner's Log", Viscount Castlerosse mentions in the *Sunday Express*, of January 12th, that a member of the present Government was asked to attend a Spiritualist seance in order to obtain a message from the late Lord Curzon, who had recently died. Says Viscount Castlerosse, "The Medium insisted that Lord Curzon was anxious to communicate with him. What he said I do not know, but this is certain, that the living politician was very much impressed."

* * * *

Writing in the *Sunday Express*, of January 12th, Mr. Donald Brook tells of a personal experience, while staying in Galway, about two years before the War. He was alone in his uncle's rambling old house (save for the servants), and while reading in the library at night, it occurred to him to write a letter to his mother. He debated with himself whether to write then or wait until next morning. Suddenly the library door flew open, and standing in the doorway was Mr. Brook's mother. She was clad in evening dress, with a dark blue velvet cloak embroidered with gold.

* * * *

"I sprang up with a cry of 'Mother!' and the vision vanished," says the writer, adding that he immediately looked at his watch and noted that the time was a quarter to eleven. At once he wrote to his mother with an account of the apparition. Three days later came her reply: she had been leaving the Queen's Hall at 10.45 p.m., on the night of the vision, and had been thinking of her son whose favourite music had just been played in the concert hall. The blue cloak was a new purchase made during her visit to London, and Mr. Brook had never before seen it.

* * * *

The *Eastern Daily Press* recalls in its issue of January 13th, the strange psychic experience of the Rev. Dr. Jessop, a former head-master of Norwich Grammar School, which occurred during a visit to the Norfolk home of Lord Orford, Mannington Hall, in October, 1879. After dinner, at which six persons were present, cards were played and the party broke up at half-past ten. The principal motive for Dr. Jessop's visit to Mannington was to examine some very rare books in Lord Orford's library, and, by permission of his host, he remained seated in the library examining the precious volumes until after midnight. Says Dr. Jessop's account, "I was just beginning to think that my work was drawing to a close when, as I was actually reading, I saw a large white hand within a foot of my elbow."

* * * *

"Turning my head, there sat the figure of a somewhat large man with his back to the fire, bending slightly over the table and apparently examining the pile of books that I had been at work upon. The man's face was turned away from me, but I saw

his closely-cut reddish-brown hair, his ears and shaven cheek, the eyebrow, the corner of the eye, the side of the forehead and the large high cheek-bone. He was dressed in what I can only describe as a kind of ecclesiastical habit. . . . The right hand, which had first attracted my attention, was clasping, without any great pressure, the left hand; both hands were in perfect repose." This figure, continues the doctor, vanished for a few minutes but returned again. It remained while Dr. Jessop completed some notes he was engaged upon, after which he shut his book, threw it upon the table, and the apparition then disappeared.

* * * *

The following experience taken from the Boston *Sunday Herald* (via the Boston *Banner of Life*) concerns a former pastor of the Baptist Temple in Philadelphia, the Rev. Russell H. Conwell, who died in 1925 at the age of eighty-three. Mr. Conwell frequently dreamed that his wife, who had been dead some time, would sit at the foot of his bed and converse with him. Once, in his dream, he asked whether he might apply a test to ascertain whether the dream-figure was real. Permission was granted. He then said: "Tell me, then, where is my army discharge paper"—a document he had lost sight of for many years. In the dream, Mr. Conwell's wife replied: "It is in the black japanned box behind the books in your library."

* * * *

Rising from his bed, Mr. Conwell sought in the black japanned box, and found the missing document. But not entirely satisfied with this test, he waited until the dream recurred, on the next night, and obtained permission to apply a further test. This was agreed to by the dream-woman, and at breakfast, next morning, Mr. Conwell instructed Mary, a maid, who had been in the family for fourteen years, to take the gold fountain-pen which his wife had given him before her death, and hide it, without saying where she put it. Next night, Mrs. Conwell again appeared in dream form, and, on being asked if she knew the hiding-place of the hidden pen, replied: "Get out of bed and come with me."

* * * *

The account continues: "He obeyed and, as if holding her hand, went with her. She led him to one of the closets in his room. She motioned him to look on the top shelf. He stood on a chair and ran his hand over the shelf, but without finding the pen. Again he felt, sadly, that all this pleasant contact had been a delusion. But as he started to get down from the chair, Mrs. Conwell beckoned emphatically for him to look once more. He obeyed. Far back on the shelf his hand encountered the pen."

DISSOLVING VIEWS.

Somehow the room grew gradually dim,
But there was no decided interim.
Like a dissolving picture on a screen,
The colours faded from the former scene.

And then the light renewed and slowly grew,
Bringing another picture into view,
Soft with the tints that breathe into the morn;
Was it then death, or was it being born?

FREDERICK EDWARDS.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

A PSYCHIC RESEARCH DINNER.

INTERESTING SPEECHES AT LYCEUM CLUB BANQUET

The Psychic Research Circle of the Lyceum Club held its annual dinner on the evening of the 20th ulto., when a large gathering of members and guests were present, including several people well known in Art and Literature as well as in Psychic Research.

At the conclusion of the Banquet, which was admirably served, MRS. PHILIP CHAMPION DE CRESPIGNY, who presided, expressed in a few graceful words the satisfaction she felt in being able to report an improvement in the health of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose son, Mr. Dennis Doyle, was present with them that evening.

The toast of His Majesty the King was drunk with enthusiasm. After which the President called on various speakers to address the gathering on the subject: "What it was that convinced *me*." Mr. Hannen Swaffer, who was to have spoken, was unavoidably absent owing to his engagements as dramatic critic.

THE REV. G. VALE OWEN, who was the first speaker, told of his introduction to Spiritualism. It began with a question put to him by one of the members of his Bible class at the time when he was Vicar of Orford, Lancs. This youth asked him "Is Spiritualism true?" and Mr. Owen answered, "Yes, it is, but keep away from it; it is evil." Afterwards Mr. Owen had a period of self-questioning; he took himself to task. He felt no doubt about the accuracy of his answer to the lad, yet he could not avoid a feeling that he had not himself investigated the subject, and so could not speak from knowledge. Reading two books by Mr. Robert James Lees, *Through the Mists* and *The Life Elysian*, he observed that there was mention of the return of angels, and he had asked himself why it was that if angels could visit the earth 2,000 years ago they did not seem to be able to do so to-day. Later came some planchette writing experiments which, although they were mainly nonsensical in their results, gave him a feeling that some of the statements could not have emanated from the minds of the experimenters. Eventually he came upon Admiral Osborne Moore's *Glimpses of a Future Life* and wrote to the Admiral, who invited him to a seance with Mrs. Etta Wriedt, the famous direct-voice Medium. At that seance many strange things happened. Mr. Vale Owen's mother spoke to him in a voice more clear and beautiful than ever he had heard her use during her life on earth. As a result he made up his mind that "as a sky pilot" he ought to know which way he was going. Later Mrs. Vale Owen developed the faculty of inspirational writing, evidential messages were received, and when he sat alone in the vestry of his church he found himself inspired to produce those scripts which were now so well-known. This little church became to him as a Jacob's ladder.

MR. ERNEST OATEN, Editor of the *Two Worlds* and President of the International Federation of Spiritualists, who had come from Manchester to attend the dinner, then addressed the company. Referring to the spread of Spiritualism through the world, and the fact that twenty-eight countries were represented at the last Congress held in London, he mentioned how amazingly strong was the movement in South America. In the Argentine the Spiritualists were building their own broadcasting station at a cost of £100,000, so that the message of Spiritualism could be put on the ether.

Very fascinating was Mr. Oaten's account of his own introduction to Spiritualism. As a youth in the year 1892 he was engaged on a journal, some of the compositors of which were Spiritualists, and boy-like he used to poke fun at them. The compositors mildly suggested that he might learn something of the subject before he commenced to ridicule it. Subsequently he was invited to attend a seance in Cardiff at which the

circle were accustomed to get the most remarkable physical manifestations in full light. To this circle he went with his father, who was a devout Baptist, and his uncle, who was of a strongly atheistical turn. They satisfied themselves of the reality of the levitation of the huge mahogany table at which they sat, making the test of passing a walking-stick over and under the table while it was poised high in the air. After that they got, through the tilting of the table, a message, giving the full name of Mr. Oaten's grandfather, his age, his address and the date of his death. Mr. Oaten's father challenged the date as not being correct but after their arrival home it was found that the table was right and Mr. Oaten, senior, was wrong. He had confused the date of his father's death with the date of the funeral. This so annoyed him that he declined to have anything more to do with the matter!

Eventually, at the instance of Mr. Ernest Oaten and his uncle, a family circle was started; after many long and regular sittings they elicited almost every kind of manifestation, including full-form materializations, and subsequently developed an intercourse with the spirit world, definite, regular and evidential to the last degree.

Mr. Oaten was listened to with profound attention, for seldom has a more impressive account of psychic investigations been presented in public. It showed that psychic phenomena, which in some quarters, it is complained, are vague and fragmentary, could be obtained in conditions so perfect and in volume so full and complete that doubt was impossible. As Mr. Oaten observed, all the most important manifestations he had ever witnessed had been observed by him in the home circle.

MR. E. A. RADFORD (formerly M.P. for Salford) said that probably there were very few people present who had less experience of Spiritualism than himself. He had gained his conviction by the strong evidences of spirit return which he had received in a direct-voice circle at which Mr. Phoenix of Glasgow was the Medium. He gave a very graphic account of the sitting, to which he had been introduced by two business friends, and the astonishing proofs of personality shown by the voice and messages which came to the sitters. In his own case he had received messages from his father and mother, the former addressing him as "Ted" and the latter as "Eddie." One of the sitters present had commented on this difference but it was a striking proof of identity for as Mr. Radford then remembered, although he had previously forgotten it, his father had always called him "Ted" and his mother "Eddie," each having their own diminutive for his own name, Edmund.

MISS ESTELLE STEAD gave some interesting reminiscences of her father and his untimely death in the sinking of the "Titanic." After his passing she had many troublesome little doubts regarding the actuality of his return but in course of time finding that when she acted on his advice she was successful and when she disregarded it her plans failed, there was gradually built up in her mind the most complete assurance of his continued life and help, as particularly manifested in the conduct of the Bureau, in the direction of which he showed himself at least as active and able as when he was on earth.

MR. SHAW DESMOND spoke at considerable length, his eloquence and humour being strongly marked. As to the question, "What first convinced me" he answered, "Nothing at all." He was born convinced; he was entirely sure from the moment of his birth. [Laughter.] He had the spiritual heritage of the Gael, the consciousness of another world of unseen life interpenetrated with the life of this. He told of hearing the cry of the banshee when he was a lad in Ireland playing with other children; they all heard the cry. He related another story of a banshee which had been seen by his grandmother and a companion. Both had seen the figure clearly and heard the cry which betokened the death of a member of the family on the same night.

Referring to the question of fairies, Mr. Shaw Desmond remarked that it was not the ignorant peasantry who nowadays had much faith in fairies; the people who believed in fairies were the highly educated and cultured people like W. B. Yeats and "A. E." (George Russell).

In the course of his address Mr. Shaw Desmond referred to the significance of the fact that he was sitting by Miss Estelle Stead because he had such vivid recollections of her father. He told of a visit to Mr. Stead and a walk with him when Stead was discussing all the time the subject of his approaching visit to America. Mr. Desmond, having the premonitory sense, felt convinced that Stead had not very long to live. So strong was his premonition that he recorded the fact and drew up a document mentioning all the circumstances. He also related another premonition of the approaching death of a well-known man whom he had met, and alluded, in conclusion, to the fact that prevision of the future was now being scientifically established. That now well-known book *An Experiment With Time* by J. W. Dunne had proved the case and those who experimented on the same lines might also gain that proof.

The meeting then broke up into conversational groups but did not disperse until a late hour after what was, by general consent, regarded as a most enjoyable evening.

PADRE PIO, THE ITALIAN HEALER.

Some years ago Miss Lilian Whiting, the well-known American authoress, sent us from Florence, where she was staying, accounts of the astonishing powers of Padre Pio. We take the following from a cutting from the *Chicago Tribune*, whose correspondent, Mr. David Darroh, gives some particulars of the gifted monk.

Padre Pio is forty-odd years old. Before taking orders he was Francesco Furgione. For some years he has lived in the monastery at San Giovanni, where his piety, benevolence and good work had quickly made him the beloved of all the inhabitants and peasants for miles around. This was increased when Padre Pio was discovered to have powers of intervention.

As in the case of St. Francis of Assisi, it was said that stigmata developed in his hands. His reputation for healing spread even among foreign visitors. A case is reported of a New Yorker, named Gordon MacAlpine Pyle, who had his wife consult Padre Pio. To the padre's diagnosis is attributed the success of an operation later performed by a Roman surgeon. In the minds of the inhabitants of San Giovanni Padre Pio became a most illustrious and valued personality in the community.

When his activities came to the attention of the congregation of the Holy Office, which is always careful to control the activities of those in the Church accredited with miraculous powers, difficulties arose. Padre Pio was ordered to come to Rome. He obediently prepared to go. But the people of the district raised a violent protest, refusing to allow him to depart, fearing he would not be allowed to return to them.

Then the Holy Office prohibited Padre Pio from writing, preaching, lecturing, or any other activities of that nature. But in view of the commotion that was feared among the peasants and their possible violent reaction Padre Pio was allowed to remain in the monastery, where he is the point of conflict between the Holy Office's rigorous control and the devotion of the peasants. Hundreds still visit him.

THE SUFI MOVEMENT.—We are asked to state that the Sufi Movement has opened a branch at the International New Thought Centre, facing Selfridges, 419, Oxford Street, London, W., and services of universal worship are held there at 6 p.m. on Sundays.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

Of a man who was buoyed up by hopes and wishes rather than intellectual vigour it was said that he had a wish-bone instead of a back-bone!

A useful leaflet, *How to Investigate Spiritualism*, written by Mr. F. H. Haines, has already been noticed in LIGHT. Scanning its contents I was struck by its evident sincerity and its directness of statement. One piece of advice in it is delicious in its (possibly unconscious) satire:

"If you want your fortune told, don't go to a reputable Medium; seek a booth at a fair or a Church bazaar."

I learn that there has been a great demand for Sir Oliver Lodge's last book, *Phantom Walls*. Such books are invaluable in the work of propaganda, which is now proceeding in such volume and in so many directions that the effects during the next few years are likely to be revolutionary in their influence on religious and scientific thought. A contributory cause, rather easily overlooked, is the effect on individual minds of direct but unsought contact with the Unseen World and its influences. This is shown in the number of instances of spontaneously-developed telepathy and premonition. They seem to spring up everywhere, often amongst people who have little or no acquaintance with the subject, and who being puzzled by their experiences are drawn to inquire into it, thus bringing in new recruits to the various societies.

Spirit-communication is a far subtler thing than most of us realise. I have sometimes suggested that the life hereafter is primarily a *mental* life; that is probably as near as we can get to forming an idea of it. Some time ago Felicia Scatcherd, who has given many arresting and highly evidential messages to her friends, told one of them that she could approach more easily if the person concerned formed a mind-picture of her. That, as it were, provided a means of entrance into physical conditions. And lately a communicator, speaking through Mrs. Osborne Leonard, *via* Feda, the guide, said: "In every circle the Medium and the sitters have their own mental picture of the spirit-control, and the power of their thought literally forms a *mould* through which alone can the spirit give his ideas." It is not easy to follow this, but it is highly suggestive, and certainly throws light on some of our problems both as regards the real and the illusory types of phenomena.

Mention of the Rev. John Page Hopps recalls the memory of a clergyman who, thirty years ago, was a notable figure in London, both as evangelist and politician. He was an ardent Spiritualist (although he disclaimed the title) and was well-known both as a speaker and writer on Spiritualistic subjects. In a report of one of his political meetings, in a daily paper, he was referred to as "P. Hopps", which led a comic weekly to refer to the saying about the behaviour of "a parched pea on a drum-head"! But Mr. Hopps was not in the least like his name in that respect. He was of the stolid and solemn type; a great contrast, by the way, to his contemporary, Sir William Barrett, who was highly restless and volatile. "A little gentleman who jumps about the room," was the description of Sir William given to me, a short time ago, by a Medium who described him as being present. Whether he was there or not, the description was very apt, and enabled me at once to "place" the famous scientist, in the absence of his name.

D. G.

SIDELIGHTS ON PROFESSIONAL CONJURERS.

MR. GOLDSTON'S PSYCHIC AND MAGIC RECOLLECTIONS.

This highly original book* gives us intimate sidelights on the private lives of the famous conjurers and illusionists. We are told how the Great Lafayette met his tragic death by fire at the Empire Theatre, Edinburgh; dealing with the even more dramatic passing of Chung Ling Soo, Will Goldston debates the alternative theories of suicide and murder.

Spiritualism comes into the book, the author being a Spiritualist as well as a leading authority on professional "magic". He humorously complains of the invidious position of being at once a Spiritualist and a professional conjurer, and remarks that "were I a grocer or a butcher instead of a magician should I be thought 'queer' because I believe in Spiritualism?"

Concerning the famous John Nevil Maskleyne (whose name, the author says, will be known and honoured as long as magic exists) we are told that "although he secretly had a great respect for Spiritualism, Maskleyne publicly derided it, thereby gaining a wonderful free advertisement." We are told, too, that although John Nevil Maskleyne lost his case against Archdeacon Colley the result gained him enormous and valuable publicity.

Conjurers, as we know, have (or used to have) everything to gain by attacking psychic matters, but it is strangely refreshing to find this fact admitted by one of the principal illusionists in the magical profession.

The late Harry Houdini seized eagerly upon this method of re-establishing himself in the public eye. Badly hit by a failure in connection with a film venture, Houdini wanted to "get back". Some big publicity scheme was necessary. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had been giving a series of lectures in the United States and this gave the Handcuff King his opportunity. He would "expose" the Spiritualists! After attending various seances Houdini came out with the announcement that he had discovered Spiritualism to be a gigantic fraud. The enormous free publicity that followed was sufficient to refloat Houdini's temporarily grounded barque on the sea of popularity.

As a Spiritualist myself [says Will Goldston] I know Houdini was not sincere in his statements. Every Jew believes through his religion that the spirit which passes out from the body at death lives on, and Houdini was really a good Jew. On the death of his mother he prayed that her spirit would be guarded and protected, and that she would be eternally happy. No real disbeliever would do that.

"Is Houdini earthbound?" asks Will Goldston, and devotes a brief chapter to answering the question. He states, too, that Houdini never had any mediumistic power, and that all his amazing escapes and illusions were produced by extremely clever conjuring, coupled with superb showmanship.

But in spite of the fact that he was always endeavouring to expose every Spiritualistic Medium with whom he came in contact, Houdini was never entirely convinced that Spiritualism was a fraud. . . . He knew that he was no more qualified to speak on the matter than millions of other people.

In a chapter entitled "What Hannen Swaffer told the Magic Circle" there is given the cream of the debate held at Caxton Hall in May, 1928, under the chairmanship of Professor A. M. Low. Hannen Swaffer's speech, says the author, "will go down as

one of the finest ever made in the great cause of Spiritualism."

With regard to the Zancigs, Mr. Goldston disposes of any notion that either of them was possessed of supernormal powers. The thought reading code employed by the pair was ingenious and complicated, and long practice had brought it as near perfection as is humanly possible. Confederates were placed in the audience and these appeared to submit the performers to the most rigorous tests, which, needless to say, the latter easily surmounted. "'Psychic'—that is the word which has made my fortune," remarked Julius Zancig on one occasion, adding that he had never heard it until a famous newspaper owner had used the term in connection with the Zancigs' act.

Hannen Swaffer contributes an appreciation, by way of Introduction, written in his usual witty vein. N.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Jungle Gods." By Carl von Hoffman. (Constable. 10s. net.)

Captain von Hoffman, formerly a Russian officer, who has had an adventurous career as soldier and explorer, tells here a series of stories dealing with life in the African jungle. There is artistry in these sketches, and the author shows marked sympathy with, and insight into the minds of the jungle folk. Their strange mental processes are characteristically shown in the account given by Captain von Hoffman of the losing of his native "boy's" soul! Wambue, the head-boy, announced, with every sign of terror, that he was going to die—because his goat had been devoured by a leopard. Wambue had paid a witch-doctor to take his soul and—as a protective measure—mix it in some porridge. The goat ate the porridge surreptitiously. This was not an irreparable misfortune, however, for Wambue knew that if he guarded the goat carefully, he would also be guarding his soul. When the leopard devoured the goat, Wambue knew then that his soul was extinguished and he must die. For, according to native notions—

—the soul is a delicate thing and open to all sorts of dangers. It wanders away from the body at night engaging in various independent exploits in the form of dreams. If, for any reason, the soul is detained during its wanderings—as for example, when it meets with another soul and fights with it, or with a stronger soul that abducts it—the sleeper never awakens. A soul may quit the body during waking hours, especially during periods of sickness. . . . If on the other hand a person wants to protect his soul, he may go to a witch-doctor and have it placed in some more durable container than his body.

Wambue, we are told, died a few days later. This, and other anecdotes, give some strange sidelights upon the African black man's theories concerning the unseen world. The book is attractive and instructive. There are several illustrations. N.

THAT light-hearted philosopher-humorist who calls himself Freedom Hill Henry (formerly Dr. Leroy Henry, M.D.), sends us an amusing printed letter conveying New Year wishes, and containing much practical wisdom presented in semi-comic vein. Freedom Hill Henry (of Roscoe, California), as many of our readers know, is the publisher of books of a Spiritualistic type (including the works of Jacob Beilhart), and his philosophy, based on spirit teachings, is one of radiant (one might almost say rollicking) optimism. He announces the publication of a new magazine to be called *The Impulse*.

"SPIRITUAL ILLUMINATION."—A booklet under the title, *Spiritual Illumination—Is Religion Worth While?*, being the first of a series to be published, has just made its appearance. It is obtainable (4d., post free) from the author, Mr. J. Hyde Taylor, 1, Whitehall Lane, Walsall. Two other booklets of this series will be entitled respectively: *Spiritualism a Misnomer* and *Mediumship or Inspiration—Which?*

THE CHRISTIAN PROTEST MOVEMENT, of 24-25, St. Stephen's House, Embankment, Westminster, S.W., have published as a Pamphlet entitled *Religious Persecution In Russia*, extracts from the speeches delivered at the Protest Meeting in the Royal Albert Hall on December 19th, 1929.

*"SENSATIONAL TALES OF MYSTERY MEN." By Will Goldston. (Will Goldston, Ltd. 7s. 6d. net.)

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 circle; 6.30, Mrs. M. Morris. February 5th, 8, Mrs. F. Tyler.

Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41, Ashford Road.—February 2nd,
 6.30, Mrs. Podmore. February 5th, 3 and 8, Miss Eva Clark.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—February 2nd,
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