

# Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

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Editor: GEORGE H. LETHEM.

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The Greater Humanity Foundation

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by

Miss LIND-AF-HAGEBY

on

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## NOTES BY THE WAY

### LOVE AND LABOUR

IN our "Notes by the Way" recently we wrote, under the heading of "Sentimentality and Summerland," of the recoil from the old idea of a heaven of ease and beauty, in favour of a life of labour and effort, in the world beyond. This has provoked a gentle protest from E.B., (Sunninghill) who asks "When has the labour and effort of love ever been anything but ease and beauty?" True enough. "Love lightens labour" as the proverb puts it; and we were far from desiring to affirm anything to the contrary. We merely intended to note what we regarded as a healthy reaction against the idea which formerly obtained amongst the less thoughtful Spiritualists, that the "Summerland" means a kind of invertebrate existence suitable to the inhabitants of that languorous country "where it seemed always afternoon," (as described in Tennyson's "Lotus Eaters"). There is a good deal of difference between Love and Laziness. We did not at all propose to argue for that life of incessant strain and struggle which some people accept as a normal type of active industry, and would fain carry on into the next region of existence. It is, of course, a very large question. So far as we know, if anyone in the spiritual world wants to live "the strenuous life" there is nothing to hinder him, and the same law applies if he wishes to remain in a dormant state and enjoy the pleasure of doing nothing at all. But between these two states of mind is one of harmonious activity and that we imagine to be the true ideal.

• • •

### THE MISSION OF "POWER"

ONLY those who know the history and the true inwardness of the meetings at the Fortune Theatre and in many other places throughout Great Britain, given by Mrs. Meurig Morris under the inspiration of "Power," can understand and appreciate the importance of the work done. The great anniversary meeting at the Fortune Theatre on Sunday evening last, when the stage was nearly filled with people of note in the movement, many of whom had been chairmen of the meetings during the previous twelve months, will long be remembered. The reception which followed, held on the stage and in the auditorium, and which drew together many well-known people, —some of whom, although sympathetic to "Power's" mission, were not Spiritualists—had a significance of its own. It may not be inappropriate here to refer to what happened to Peter and the other Apostles when they

## THE INDWELLING SPIRIT

(Suggested by a prayer offered by "Power")

O Love Divine, whose hand my form hath fashioned  
Most wondrously, in sinew, brain and blood,  
Yet as a vacant tenement till passioned  
By Thine Indwelling Spirit, which should flood  
Its avenues of sinuous nerve and vessel  
With life and feeling, wondrous more than all  
Material structure, conscious power to wrestle,  
And win, perchance, a fadeless coronal.

Profane it were, Thy handiwork despising,  
Contemptuously the body to regard;  
Yet is it but the scaffolding arising  
Around the fane, which I in death discard.  
But that within, forever t'ward Thee yearning,  
Despite the carnal vesture of the soul,  
What is it but Thy Spirit faintly burning?  
In me a part; in Thee the boundless Whole.

Thou centre, source and sun of all creation,  
Who by Thy rays hath touched us one by one,  
By Thy celestial fire the soul's oblation  
Is kindled into flame in unison  
With Thine own Spirit. Thus through Thee is given  
New birth to every soul to serve Thee here;  
Nor shall the bond created thus be riven,  
Though worlds and constellations disappear.

G. E. WRIGHT.

were threatened by the High Priest and his followers. Gamaliel intervened on their behalf with the memorable words: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone, for if this counsel or this work be of men it will come to naught; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it. . . ." There is, as we have sometimes noted here, a close resemblance to the early days of the Christian Church in some of the happenings to-day where spiritual revivals are attempted, as in the case of Mrs. Meurig Morris and "Power." "Power's" mission is a call to righteousness and it is but one of many similar messages to the world bearing the stamp of direction from the Unseen World.

• • •

### "THE FIRE TEST"

IT is long since we heard of that form of psychic manifestation in which Mediums, and others, are able to handle fire without harm. The last case of which we have any knowledge was that narrated some years ago by Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny, an experience in which she took part, and which, as she mentioned, called for the exercise of much faith on her part. Many readers will recall the story. This was a case of a transferred power from the Medium concerned. Andrew Lang was greatly interested in this phase of phenomena, and the last letter we received from him before his death was concerned with it. There are a sufficient number of witnesses to the marvel to make it credible to those who have any experience of psychic manifestations. Its especial interest for us is not merely because it reveals the existence of a spiritual element in Nature, but also because it suggests the tremendous possibilities of the future when this power becomes more widely distributed and man becomes lord of all the forces below him in the natural order.



# FROM SLUM TO COUNTRY COTTAGE

## STORY OF HELP AND DIRECTION FROM THE "OTHER SIDE"

IN his Foreword to a symposium on "Life After Death," the Bishop of London declares that spirit communication is a delusion, asserts that "even if the information given were real information—which he denies—it amounts to nothing worth knowing" and deprecates the time wasted in such intercourse, "which time," he says, "should be used for improving this world while we are in it."

As one who in the privacy of home has spent many happy and helpful hours in this "delusory" practice, and through it reached a spiritual knowledge beyond that attained throughout a lifetime's association with conventional religion, I may be justified in offering the following as a pendant to Dr. Ingram's opinion.

For some years my wife and I interested ourselves in a slum family in Islington. It consisted of a father (bed-ridden with spinal trouble), his wife, two girls aged seven and eight, and, latterly, a baby. They occupied a small, dark room adjoining a noisy pavement and deafening tram route. They all slept in the same bed. The little mother kept and ran the household on her meagre wages as a rag sorter.

In the course of communication with our spirit friends, reference was frequently made to the needs of this deserving family. Indeed, we were told that before our "discovery" of spirit communication we had been "led" to the assistance of these needy people. At various times in communications our unseen friends stimulated and helped us to further efforts on the family's behalf. The suggestion was made that we might find them a country cottage. The many difficulties seemed insuperable, but we were encouraged by assurances of ultimate success. But for that guidance and encouragement, and our determination not to "let down" those to whom we owed so much, our search would many times have been inevitably abandoned. But over many months we pursued enquiries to no purpose. In order that we might be at hand to keep an eye on the family, we approached the L.C.C. to grant accommodation on their new estate close by, but were refused, as all applications had been definitely closed. A final effort, with all the circumstances made known, including a guarantee of rent for three years, made possible by the generosity of friends, ended in a final refusal.

### "THE HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY."

Naturally we said nothing to the family of our endeavours so that they should suffer no disappointment if our efforts proved unavailing. But while the two children were spending a summer holiday with us, the elder made frequent, and perfectly natural, reference to "the house in the country" to which "Daddy said we were going." We thought this rather astonishing.

During a subsequent visit to Islington ("What about a visit to the T...s!" said our spirit guide to me one evening), the bedridden invalid—shy, but obviously anxious to unburden himself—spoke with surprising candour and conviction of the "help they received from the other world." I could not help pondering his strange admissions, and mentioned the confession to my mother, who was one of our spirit visitants, at a subsequent meeting. She confirmed the truth of what Mr. T... had said, and thereupon wrote to him, through the hand of my wife, a very beautiful letter. I quote part of the invalid man's reply.

"You will perhaps be surprised to know that I have had that message in just the same words as written in the letter. I wonder if it is the Vision we have seen that has been coming at our bedside for about three and a half years. Now it comes about twice a week. Mrs. T... sees it more plainly than I do—a grey-haired lady with a smiling face. Yesterday, I saw it when everything seemed wrong but it said to me, 'go on.' If it is the one it has given us

great help to pull through. I think it is. Patience is the great thing."

On my next visit I questioned the man critically on this matter, but nothing would shake his conviction of the reality of what he saw. He had not spoken of it elsewhere for fear of ridicule. And his description of the vision corresponded exactly with that of my mother, who, unknown to him, had died some four years previously.

I have said that our efforts to secure accommodation ended in a final refusal. But it was our spirit friends who then pointed a way in which our difficulty might be overcome. Their advice was followed and proved successful. We obtained the house. Friends paid the rent. Friends came forward with gifts of furniture, linen, lino and household articles, until the three rooms were completely and comfortably furnished. Our itinerant greengrocer was to "do" the removal at an agreed charge, but when he turned up at Islington early one Sunday morning, before the curious neighbours were astir, and beheld the dismal room, something happened, and he worked like a nigger and would not accept a penny.

The family was duly transported. Father, lying back in a clean bed and white sheets, was dumb with ecstasy. "L-O-V-E-L-Y!" he exclaimed, staring round the room with eager and bewildered eyes. "L-O-V-E-L-Y! Clean walls! — 'HEAVEN.'" But it was too late. In a few days he passed hence, almost as he repeated the words.

Through past misfortune and carelessness in the matter of contributions, no pension was technically payable. Application was made, but refused. Our spirit friends continually asserted—it is a matter of written record—that the pension would be paid. An appeal was entered, but without success. The facts were reviewed, and the claim finally rejected. We accepted the position and regarded indulgently the continued assertions of our spirit friends that the pension would finally be forthcoming. Suddenly, after nearly a year, the surprised widow received a notification that her pension had been granted. She is now almost self-supporting and bringing up her family in decency and wholesomeness.

This is one of the many experiences, "delusory" though they may be, which one naturally hesitates to speak of openly, and yet its purpose will be achieved if some day it catches the eye of Dr. Ingram who so deplors an unreal and deceptive practice to which is directly attributable a happy achievement wrought through the co-operation of the United Kingdoms of Heaven and Earth.

A.N.

## PROFESSOR FRASER-HARRIS ON THE "HUMAN AURA"

At the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, South Kensington, on Wednesday evening last week, Professor Fraser-Harris, the distinguished physiologist, lectured on the "human aura."

As reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, the lecturer said that taking the occultists' most popular definition of an aura as some mysterious emanation from the human body only to be seen under special conditions, he suggested that the pale light or fringe which the favoured occultist claimed to see in these conditions was actually caused by the ability of the human retina to see subjectively an after-image of something gazed at and to see that image as a reverse of the reality. He showed how, for instance, anyone gazing at a yellow disc against a white background would for a second or two after that disc had been removed see in its place a blue disc, though shape and colour only existed in his mind. By the aid of lantern-slides he showed how a white object produced a black after-image and a black one a white or grey after-image.

The lecturer added that using the Kilner method he had secured a fine yellow aura of a stuffed cat.



## THE EXPERIMENTS WITH PASQUALE ERTO

By HARRY PRICE

PASQUALE ERTO is a Neapolitan Medium, aged 35 years, who came into prominence during the examination of his alleged powers by the late Dr. Gustave Geley in 1923 and 1924. After thirty-eight *seances* Dr. Geley published an adverse report (see the *Revue Metapsychique* for May-June and July-August, 1924 and *Le Matin*, April 7th, 1924), but admitted that several of the manifestations puzzled him. Erto demanded another test and this was independently conducted by the Paris journal *L'Opinion* which formed a panel of eminent French scientists and chemists. The *seances* were held in the laboratory of the Faculty of Pharmacy at the Sorbonne. Again a completely adverse report was issued, the full *proces-verbaux* being published (see *L'Opinion*, Paris, for May 23 and May 30, 1924) by the investigators.

Erto returned to Naples and I heard little concerning this man until Dr. Servadio published an article in *Luce e Ombra* (for September, 1931) recalling the earlier experiments and suggesting that the Medium be again examined at the National Laboratory in London or at the Institut Metapsychique in Paris. It appears that Professor Dr. Emanuele Sorce, a distinguished surgeon at Naples University had been conducting some experiments with Erto, and was rather impressed. Professor Sorce wrote to me and stated that Signor Erto was willing to be tested at the National Laboratory, if our Council would pay the expenses of the visit. The Council agreed and Erto arrived in London on Friday, December 4th, 1931.

Erto's phenomena consists of flashes of light of various colours, luminous streaks, points of light and similar manifestations. Another faculty claimed for him is the power of affecting the sensitised emulsion of sealed photographic plates.

### THE LIGHTS.

It must be emphasised that many of these lights can be exactly duplicated by means of a small particle of ferrocium (the "flints" we put in our pocket lighters) and a fragment of steel. It would not be fair to previous investigators unless I stated that such particles of ferrocium and points of pen-nibs were found in abundance during the Paris tests under conditions which made it impossible for the French scientists to come to any other conclusion than that the objects so found had been used for the normal production of "phenomena."

In addition to the luminous phenomena, Erto is controlled by at least three entities—*viz.*, an Italian poet named "Nier," whose voice makes the windows rattle; a "Dr. Fagel," a sedate personage who gives remarkable consultations, and a "Donna Anna," whose plaintive, twittering voice sometimes breaks into song. We have heard all these voices at different times.

Erto's trance is the most amazing and distressing (if genuine) exhibition I have ever experienced. It commences in white light, which is afterwards changed for red. The trance is self-induced and does not reach its climax until there is total darkness. Then the Medium commences to groan, moan, gasp, growl, hits the chair with great violence, hits himself, barks like a dog, chokes as if being suffocated, mutters "ma-ma-ma-ma-ma-," etc., shouts, shrieks, screams, writhes in his chair—gives cries of distress, beats his breast, staggers round the room like a drunken man, clutches the heads, hands and bodies of the sitters, drags them round the room and behaves generally like one possessed.

It was arranged that, for the first two *seances*, Erto should wear his own clothes, the control being afterwards considerably tightened. At the first *seance* one flash was witnessed. At the second experiment we had a brilliant display of flashes and lights which lasted about an hour. At both these *seances* his clothes were searched but as the

(Continued at foot of next column.)

## REINCARNATION

BY W. H. EVANS

IS Spiritualism able to confirm or refute the doctrine of reincarnation? If not, why not?

The answer to this is implicit in the term "doctrine of reincarnation." Reincarnation is a theory of human progress. We do not know whether it is a fact or not; if we did, there would be no further argument.

Spiritualism is not an authority to which one appeals for confirmation of his prejudices; it is a science and a philosophy of life. As such, there is plenty of room for many theories. Each person reacts to it according to his development; consequently, we find Spiritualists who accept reincarnation and others who reject it.

When we question the people of spirit-life we find there is the same difference of opinion—some saying reincarnation is true, others saying that it is a folly of man's imagining.

Now it must be borne in mind that the spirit people do not desire us to accept their statements as final; they can only be accepted in the same way as we do those of our fellowmen, that is, provisionally.

The fact that spirits who have been in the spirit world for a very long period communicate with us, seems to prove that reincarnation is not a fact; otherwise these spirits would not be able to communicate with us, as the personalities representing them would have been dissolved.

It would be very interesting if we could get an esoteric view of conception from some advanced spirits who have observed it—I mean a purely scientific view, shorn of all theorising. When the circuit is completed, does it send out a filament to the inner realms which draws in a germ of spirit? or is that germ already within the cells?

Is the physical form a *means* for *fixing* the individuality of the ego? If so, will not the purpose of the physical form cease at death and render a return to another physical form unnecessary?

The reason Spiritualism does not speak definitely upon this question is because there is no means of demonstrating it.

(Continued from previous column.)

normal production of these lights could have been accomplished by two tiny objects about 2mm. square, it is obvious that a strict medical examination would be necessary to reveal them, were they hidden in any of the body cavities.

At the third and subsequent *seances*, we commenced to control him adequately. A medical examination by Dr. Millauro, a compatriot; the wearing of our special garment, and—especially—the proper control of his hands formed part of the control routine. A powerful magnet was passed over his body.

The phenomena came to a sudden stop. During *seances* 3—8, only two pale luminous patches (not seen by all sitters) were witnessed at one sitting and as his special garment was flung off and deposited in the middle of the *seance*-room during the experiment, our control was broken and the "lights" counted for nothing.

His hands have been immobilised by means of boxing-gloves which were entirely comfortable. But as he complained that he could not move his fingers about, a pair of sealed light oak boxes were substituted for the gloves. No phenomena were produced when wearing the boxes or the gloves (which he managed to destroy and fling off during the sitting) and, in fact, no phenomena whatsoever have been produced when his hands have been properly controlled. Also, although a photographic plate, in a sealed opaque x-ray envelope, has been placed near him at each *seance*, it was never affected. But we *did* get an excellent photographic record of some of the highly-actinic "flashes" witnessed at the second *seance*.

Erto returns to Naples without having produced a single phenomenon under a good control.



# SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE SOME DIFFICULTIES OF A VICAR OF WESTON ON HIS COMMUNICATIONS AND MANIFESTATIONS "CONTROL"

BY C. A. DAWSON SCOTT

To the Editor of LIGHT.

SIR,—The statement is made that when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle finds a suitable instrument (psychic) he will give evidential communications, and that "when he attains the power of manifesting his characteristic force through clear channels" he will lose no time in continuing his work.

May I point out that Sir Arthur *has* long ago found "suitable instruments" and "clear channels" in my family circle, and that within two days of his passing he gave me a wonderful triple photograph of himself. This was followed by a remarkable series of important and connected messages, some of which, together with the photograph and the marvellously accurate signature which accompanied his messages were published in the *Two Worlds* for Sept. 19th, 1930. Since then he has manifested here many times, his manifestations being frequently most evidential, and at times accompanied by striking phenomena. Thrice he has foretold the obtaining of his photograph—on the second occasion (Sept 10th, 1930) saying that Lady Doyle would get his photograph and a message on the plate. This forecast was sent to Lady Doyle beforehand and the photograph and photographic message were duly obtained by her. The affair of the mauve flower was another strikingly evidential thing, and there have been many others. Scarcely a week goes by but that we have evidence of his presence. That evidence is already sufficient to provide material for a book.

His activity continues to date. On Wednesday, Dec. 30th, I was alone in my study about noon, and thinking of Sir Arthur and of a dream I had years ago to the effect that he came here to see me. Speaking to myself in an undertone (door shut) I said: "Well, he has passed, and he never came here to see me." Then I thought perhaps it was fulfilled when he manifested here in spirit. I had scarcely got out the words and the thought before the door was opened, and my wife rushed in saying that a few seconds before she was entirely alone in our seance room when a small table on the other side of the room from where she stood resounded with three blows as though struck with the clenched fist and the table was lifted up at one end. She immediately ran to my study, as narrated. Calling my daughter Dorothy we at once sat and got the following: "Doyle sends congratulations on the publication of your book in —. Its effect will be profound and far-reaching."

The same day I got a letter from the eminent scientist who has written the Preface to this edition, saying that he "expected great results from it, both in spiritualistic and theological fields"; thus wonderfully confirming Sir Arthur's message and manifestation.

In connection with the article in your issue of January 1st., in which it is stated that in the November and December issues of the *Liverpool Review*, edited by the Bishop of Liverpool, articles appeared on "Psychical Research," it may be of interest to readers to know that Sir Arthur, manifesting here at Weston on July 25th, 1930, said: "My last message to-day is that Christian Spiritualism will win on its own merits, and next year you will hear of two Bishops turning to it in your own Church." This was published by me in the *Two Worlds* for September 19th, 1930.

It would seem that this forecast, given to us from the spirit world, is in process of being fulfilled, like so many others which we have had the privilege of receiving in the past.

Weston Vicarage,  
Yorkshire.

CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

SOME time ago, a group of people asked the Control of a well-known Medium if he would permit a friend of theirs to come through in order to answer questions and give information. The Control, whose name was Yusuf ben Ali, agreed and the friend was allowed to give us a weekly talk.

All went well until an ill-advised visitor suddenly began to question the speaker about events in his own private life known to both. "A simple test," said he.

No answer was vouchsafed and that evening the sitting was a failure. We asked Yusuf ben Ali why?

"You did not ask for a test sitting and only the philosophical thought-ray of your friend was being used. We could not allow him suddenly to change from the one to the other, it would have been bad for our Medium. If you want a test sitting he will give it, but it must be either the one or the other."

This seemed a reasonable explanation, but there were people who were not content with it. "He must have known—that is, if he were really the person whose name he gives, and if he knew why didn't he answer?"

He didn't, because the real Control of the Medium would not permit it.

I am a little uncertain as to whether he himself knew why he could not get through the knowledge he had, and this is the reason of my uncertainty.

## DIFFICULTY WITH NAMES.

A well-known novelist wished to discuss with this same dead friend of ours a matter of health. She asked to see his photograph, then said to him: "I've met you somewhere, but I can't remember where."

He at once described a room—"lofty with red and gold decorations and mirrors—dinner—speeches—three not four speeches." He also told her she had been with three friends and had sat opposite to him, but further down the table. What he could not utter were the names of the place (Prince's Restaurant) and the occasion (a P.E.N. dinner), but his descriptions were correct and she recognized them.

Afterwards he said: "I don't know why it should be, but whenever I try to pass through a name—a name I know perfectly well—the Medium seems to have an attack of lockjaw."

We think the reason must be that the Medium's usual Control does not permit these names to be uttered. We don't know why, only that this appears to be a fact.

This same friend when speaking to me alone, is able to give me news of events happening beyond my ken, to make suggestions and advise—in fact he is able to talk as freely as if he had come to tea and we two were sitting by ourselves and able to say whatever we pleased. On such occasions the real Control may take pity on us or perhaps he has a fellow-feeling—at any rate, he lifts that somewhat heavy hand.

## SPIRITUAL FORCES IN THE WORLD CRISIS

A desire has been expressed that those who know the value and power of concentration and meditation should meet regularly in order to form a nucleus for the development and definite use of this constructive force.

Miss Margaret V. Underhill, the well-known writer on psychic subjects, has undertaken to initiate the scheme and a preliminary meeting is to be held at the London Spiritualist Alliance, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7., on Wednesday next at 3.30 p.m., when a statement of aims and procedure will be discussed. Members of the L.S.A. and their friends are cordially invited to be present. Tea will be served at 4 p.m.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*(The views and statements of correspondents are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, who occasionally prints, in the interests of free discussion, letters with which he does not agree.)*

## THE HUMAN AURA

Sir,—Professor Fraser-Harris, in his lecture delivered at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research on the 6th inst., was manifestly speaking from a purely scientific standpoint when he suggested that the whole matter was an illusion caused by the ability of the human retina to see, subjectively, something gazed at previously.

I know little or nothing of the various theories of scientists and others regarding this matter, but I feel it incumbent upon me to state that I have, on very many occasions, seen (clairvoyantly) auras of various colours surrounding the whole or portions of a human body.

I have also seen what I can easiest describe as a refined aura surrounding the psychic body of some of my friends when they have been in a quiescent condition.

To mention only one instance: my wife was in the throes of a trying bilious attack and, after she had taken a suitable antidote, I saw the dark blue aura which had hitherto surrounded that portion of the body where the liver is situated, change to a vivid light blue and immediately she spoke of feeling great relief. On this occasion, after she had fallen asleep, I distinctly saw an aura of a golden colour around her entire form. Much relieved, I retired for the night not vexing my soul about scientist's theories, but just knowing that I had indeed seen the physical and also the spiritual aura around a human being.

LEIGH HUNT.

\* \* \*

## A CORRECTION

Sir,—I regret to have to call attention to a mistake in the current issue of *Psychic Science*.

The article on "The Voice of Confucius" is not by Dr. Neville Whyment, but by myself. It was correctly announced on the front page of *LIGHT* last week.

STANLEY DE BRATH,  
(Editor of *Psychic Science*)

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## SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Sir,—As "Recorder" has discovered, Spiritualists and Christians do not really mix well. I have not, up to now, seen any reason advanced for this, but should say, myself, that it is due to the conviction of both that their own point of view is the superior one. It is impossible for either to write about the other without this appearing. I shall not attempt to do so.

The Christian-Spiritualist, a hybrid of the same kind as the earlier Christian Neoplatonist, believes that as in ancient times Christianity successfully absorbed all that was useful to it in Neoplatonism, and suppressed the remainder—so, in these later times, it will, by virtue of its superior organisation, be able to steal the thunder of its latest rival and emerge rejuvenated from the conflict.

This attitude does not endear the Christian to the hundred per cent. Spiritualist, who holds that it is his duty to preserve the spiritualistic idea from contact with Christianity, so far as that word is bound up with a tangle of speculation based on ancient manuscripts known to have been edited to suit the theological requirements of powerful ecclesiastical organisations.

Spiritualism, it is often declared, will die out if it is not prepared to assimilate the theological ideas set forth in the Christian creed, or the Christian notion of what constitutes worship. To this, the Spiritualist (hundred per cent. order) is inclined to reply: "In that case, let it die, it would be better so"; but he is not in the least disturbed.

We know very well that the Churches are paying more attention than usual to the beliefs present in their doctrine

which are of a spiritualistic complexion, and that the more fearsome theological notions are being kept in the background; but this strikes me as more in the nature of a diplomatic concession to popular clamour than a real change of heart.

The Churches are neither absorbing Spiritualism nor relinquishing Theology; nor could they do so. Contrary to the opinion usually expressed, it is my opinion that the real acceptance of Spiritualism by the Churches would be the signal for their dissolution. P. L. HOLDSWORTH.  
Tunbridge Wells.

\* \* \*

## "HOME CIRCLES"

Sir,—It is astounding to see, in last week's issue of *LIGHT*, that Mr. Hannen Swaffer reckoned there were 100,000 circles sitting on a recent Sunday.

It must puzzle everyone interested in Spiritualism that the official Spiritualistic movement, as represented by the recognised Churches, avoids responsibility and guidance in regard to home circles.

In London I have even known leaders of some Societies refuse to encourage home circles, on the grounds of the detrimental effect such circles are alleged to have.

It seems to me that if the home circles are as important as indicated by the numbers mentioned by Mr. Swaffer, the time has surely come when the home circle side of the movement should be recognised. Particularly for "physical phenomena," home circles seem to me to be indispensable; and certainly the present official movement cannot be said to have contributed one iota of helpfulness in the demonstration of these—which type of manifestation can alone convince sceptics. J. A. HALLIDAY.  
83 Truro Rd., Wood Green.

\* \* \*

## COST OF VEGETARIAN DIET

Sir,—In reference to D.G.'s queries as to the relative expense of a vegetarian or ordinary meat diet, I should like to give my decided opinion in favour of Vegetarianism. I left off meat twenty-five years ago—D.G. would say for "sentiment," I say for conscience's sake. Personally I do not use the prepared foods, though I think these would be used more for convenience than economy, preferring to buy the nuts, which are the chief proteid substitute for meat, and make them at home into nut roast, nut rissoles, or mince with milk.

Blanched and washed cashews cost 1/7 the lb. Pine kernels and Brazil kernels 2/-, other varieties a few pence more or less.

I live in the house of a non-vegetarian, who is kind enough to use only Nutter instead of suet, lard or dripping, and I take the ordinary vegetables, puddings, cheese and fruit, only leaving out the meat. I use more olive oil no doubt, for a daily salad, otherwise one need only compare the nuts, 2 oz. used at a time with equal quantity of brown bread making a dish for two or three people. Set against this bacon and fish for breakfast, butcher's meat and poultry and is it not clear which is cheaper? Minehead.

C. JESSIE VESEL.

## MR. J. J. VANGO'S BEREAVEMENT

We learn with regret of the decease of Dr. Harold M. Vango, the famous criminologist, who died in Alberta, Canada, last month, as the result of blood poisoning set up by a cut thumb while performing an autopsy.

Dr. Vango, who was 36, had studied at Vienna, Montreal and Edinburgh, had a considerable reputation by reason of the assistance he had been able to render in criminal cases in Alberta. He was the son of Mr. J. J. Vango, of St. Leonard's Lodge, Clewer Green, Windsor, who is well known throughout Spiritualism as a veteran medium.



## Light

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## MATERIALISATION AND ITS MYSTERIES

H. S., an intelligent student of psycho-physical mediumship, who has gained practical as well as theoretical knowledge, offers some interesting suggestions.

As regards the fraud question, he maintains that if a man were charged with fraud in the police-court and his lawyer could prove that he committed his crime under the influence of a hypnotist, that would be a good defence in law. Possibly it would, if the magistrate could be induced to believe in hypnotism as anything more than a wrong-doer's flimsy excuse. But in the region of psychical science, where hypnotism is understood and admitted, it has a certain validity in explaining mediumistic eccentricities. Arguing from that standpoint, our correspondent affirms that there are two classes of objective phenomena, which he designates "A" and "B." The "A" phenomena is the genuine article, with which we are familiar. It is generally spontaneous in character, but, under any kind of pressure, or coercion, its quality is likely to be broken down. To use our friend's words: "The 'A' phenomena (the true) crumble into the 'B' variety (the induced) which is usually and incorrectly described as fraud."

That is a point with which we are quite in agreement, more especially as it confirms our own experiences and observations of psycho-physical phenomena. It is certainly probable that recent occurrences which have been ascribed to fraud will serve to throw new light on the real causes at work.

H. S. has some remarks on unconscious or automatic mimicry, which recall to mind some observations we offered in *LIGHT* a few years ago on this subject, with special reference to the mimicry (or "fraud") perpetrated by Nature herself in some of her manifestations. We alluded to pseudo-morphism—to the genuine crystals and the spurious crystals both produced by Nature

the sham imitating the real so closely that the difference is not readily detectable. We referred to those diseases, the real forms of which are mimicked in the human body with such fidelity that even the physician may be deceived. We felt that such things were rather suggestive in connection with psychic phenomena—the sham forms of which, in certain mediumistic conditions, are so puzzling to those who, not being raw investigators, realise that the phenomena while not genuine in the strict sense are at the same time not to be ascribed to conscious imposture on the part of the Medium, but are probably a kind of pseudo-morphism.

That, of course, remains to be proved, but all that we have seen so far of the intricacies of mediumship point in that direction. In mediumship we are dealing with the ordinary natural and psychical forces in an intensified form. There is a problem to be solved, and patience and persistence will infallibly settle the question in the end.

Even some of our present difficulties are involved in the psychological order of things. We have, for instance, to deal with the "fraud complex" which possesses some minds who are firmly convinced that everything which is not psychically genuine is criminally fraudulent. Such people represent that rudimentary type of intelligence to which (as it has been said) "everything which is not white is black." Further, there is the "conjurer complex," and here we may quote H.S. who writes: "The usual methods in some forms of psychical research are merely traps to catch a conjurer, and are quite impotent from a psychic point of view. The conjurer (who is no fool) would never put his head into any of these traps." That is true enough. We have never known Mediums who had any skill as conjurers. Usually they were rather clumsy and fumble-fisted persons, but when they got caught in some "scientific" trap, we used to hear such stories of their amazing powers of sleight-of-hand and stage magic that we could only wonder that they had not made a fortune out of their gifts in that direction. It was a mystery why they should have chosen to face the bitter ordeals of mediumship, ill-paid, ill-treated, and always liable to be hunted down by the modern representatives of Matthew Hopkins the "witch-finder." The mentality at work seems to be very much the same in both cases.

### "THE GATE OF HEAVEN"

To the Editor of "*LIGHT*"

Sir,—Our attention has just been drawn to a paragraph which states:—

"... Miss E. Lees, his daughter, announces that the Publisher wished to make the price 7/6 so as to give her a royalty but that she is willing to forego the royalty so that the price may be kept at 5/-, the figure at which the other two books are sold."

We would like to point out that Miss Lees is merely foregoing royalty on the *first* one thousand copies.

RIDER & Co.



## SIDELIGHTS

## MINISTER'S PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPH.

"How I sat for a Spirit Photograph" is the title of a long article written by the Rev. Harold Ewbank and published in the *Yorkshire Telegraph and Star* (Sheffield). Mr. Ewbank tells how he met Mr. W. Hope, of Crewe, the psychic photographer. "I, who consider myself an open-minded observer," he writes, "with an extensive knowledge of conjuring tricks, went to the house of my friend at noon, and was there introduced to the photographer, an elderly, quiet, nice-mannered man—a carpenter by trade—who explained that he had discovered his 'gift' by chance many years ago when photographing a friend. He told me that Spiritualism was his religion, and he appeared to be a very decent, sincere, working-man."

\* \* \*

## UNABLE TO EXPLAIN THE "EXTRAS."

Then follows a detailed description of the "sitting," in the course of which a number of "extras" were obtained on plates brought in, exposed, and developed by sitters. Of these "extras" Mr. Ewbank says: "I am totally unable to explain how the faces (and a different face appeared on each of the 25 plates) came on to the plate. It is difficult to understand how a material object such as a sensitised plate can be affected by 'power.' I know that a camera can pick out points of light (such as stars) more clearly than the human eye, yet in these cases the faces were no brighter than the human face. One would expect also to be able to see something of the 'ectoplasm' if it was so clear to the camera, and yet we could see nothing. Or again, why does not one's own camera see them—because, after all, the photographer apparently never touched the camera or plates, both of which were perfectly ordinary? Personally I shall be very interested if anyone can explain the matter in any other way than that accepted by the Spiritualists."

\* \* \*

## "MORE THINGS IN THE UNIVERSE."

In the *Christian World*, the Rev. Leslie D. Weatherhead, of Leeds—one of the most impressive of the younger Wesleyan preachers and an authority on psychotherapy—deals very faithfully with a correspondent who had described his reference to "the psychic universe" as "an amusing fantasy," and "nonsense." "I like this contributor," he writes: "I should nickname him Honest John. He has the sublime ingenuousness of the ignorant which is so endearing. Does he dismiss all the findings of the Society for Psychical Research as 'nonsense'? Does he suppose that all the findings of the scientific Spiritualists are 'nonsense'? Does he think Sir Oliver Lodge is a fool? When Jesus talked of twelve legions of angels was He also talking 'nonsense'? Now come, Honest John, admit there are more things in the universe than ploughs and sheep and barns and hens."

\* \* \*

## THE UNSEEN ACTORS.

Novelists familiar with the teachings of Spiritualism are probably more numerous now than at any previous time, and the result is that more and more the implications of conscious survival are finding their way into imaginative literature. A case in point is *The Second Adventure* (Jenkins, 7/6), in which Lilian Clifford tells a story of modern life, the central incident being the deliberate rejection of motherhood by a young Society matron, with results little short of disastrous to herself and her husband. The psychic element is introduced skilfully and to good purpose. The young wife's mother had been concerned only with material values, and, when disease came upon her and financial disaster threatened her husband, she induced him to end his life by jumping into the sea after her. Beyond death, the parents find themselves still alive and fully conscious of what their

children are doing. They try to turn their daughter from her purpose and fail, and the mother is stricken with remorse, because she recognises her responsibility for what is happening. "If only I could speak to her so that she could hear," she wails. "If only we had taught them differently." Failing to prevent the action, they set themselves, by telepathic impressions and dream visions, to soften the consequences and to some extent succeed. The unseen actors might be "cut out" of the story without its main incidents being altered. By introducing them, the author indicates the source of the influences—unsuspected by the daughter and her husband—which explain the incidents that guide the pair through the tangled troubles of their own making. The *Second Adventure* is clearly a story with a moral—the moral being that the consequences of human actions, good or bad, do not end with the physical death of the actors. Spiritualism is never mentioned; but Spiritualists will read it with understanding and appreciation.

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## THE EIGHTH IMPRESSION.

Mr. J. Arthur Findlay's book, *On the Edge of the Etheric* continues to receive very favourable reviews. The *Evening Standard* describes the book as "remarkable for itself and for its writer," and adds: "There have been many books on psychic phenomena; few of them have presented their case with the lucidity of this one. The interesting thing about the author is that he is a practical business man—what we should call a 'hard-headed Scot'—secretary for many years of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers. To his work, it has been said, the Institute owes its present position in the life of the shipping community. Interesting evidence, and an interesting witness." We understand that the eighth impression has been printed and that the book is being displayed by Messrs. Smith & Son at all their bookstalls.

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## SIR W. GOODENOUGH'S GHOST STORY.

Describing it as one of the "best ghost stories" he has heard, Sir William Goodenough, president of the Royal Geographical Society (as reported in the *Daily Telegraph*) related a strange incident when delivering a lecture to young people at the Society's Hall in Kensington. Showing a lantern slide of a group of houses in Malta, he said it concerned one of those. A young man was walking along the street in Malta, when he saw a man attack two ladies. The youth went to their assistance, knocked the man down and escorted the two ladies home to the house shown on the slide. He accepted an invitation to stay to supper and he lit a cigarette. Next day he missed his cigarette case, thought he had left it behind the previous night, and returned to the house. He found the house shut up and was told it had not been occupied for years. He entered and found the rooms heavy with dust—but on the table was his cigarette case.

## SHEFFIELD S.P.R.'s NEW PRESIDENT

The Rev. Alfred Hall, (Unitarian), has accepted the position of President of Sheffield Psychical Research Society in succession to the late Rev. Dr. Ballard, (Wesleyan). Mr. Hall states that he is not a convinced Spiritualist, but if there is a life beyond death he can see no reason why communication should not be possible. He had attended many seances but, although he could not explain many psychic phenomena, he had never had a convincing experience.

Mr. O. J. Wendlandt, Secretary of the Society, states that at a seance he attended, Dr. Ballard "came through" and without any prompting said: "Hall is possible," referring, as it was understood, to the Presidency. Regarding "the other side," he said "it is glorious, better than I expected."



## FORTUNE THEATRE SERVICES

TRIBUTES TO "POWER'S" WORK AT  
GREAT ANNIVERSARY GATHERING

THE Fortune Theatre, London, was filled on Sunday evening on the occasion of the special service to mark the anniversary of the meetings, which began in January, 1931.

Mr. Laurence Cowen presided and was supported on the stage by the majority of those who had taken the chair at the previous meetings. In his remarks, Mr. Cowen recounted the circumstances in which the work had been undertaken and the success that had attended it.

"Power," through Mrs. Meurig Morris, gave an address well worthy of the occasion and his message was especially impressive when he spoke of the great spiritual awakening which was taking place, aided and guided by those of the Unseen World. He predicted that the work of spiritual enlightenment would grow and continue and that there would be important developments this year.

Mr. Denis Conan Doyle said that after the powerful address to which they had listened, they were in a position to repel the foolish accusation that nothing but banalities and trivialities emanated from the spiritual world.

The Rev. John Lamond, D.D., said it had been his privilege to listen to some of the greatest orators of his time, but never had he been so deeply impressed as by the messages given by "Power" through the lips of Mrs. Meurig Morris. He felt that "Power" had a message for everybody, including the religious man, the scientist and the philosopher.

Mrs. Philip de Crespigny, hon. Principal of the British College of Psychic Science, said that, after listening to "Power's" address, they would realise the importance and significance of his message. "Power" had spoken of the need for a change of heart and this was the call coming through many channels from the Unseen World.

## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Prof. William Stede, Ph. D., said fear and pride were the blinkers that men wore, and if we took off the blinkers and became humble we should get much further in the struggle for world betterment. Spiritual guidance was a great fact.

Admiral Armstrong—referring to the statement by the Chairman that Prof. Stede was not a Spiritualist—said that he himself was not only a Spiritualist but an Irishman. He referred to the effects of the great meetings addressed by Mrs. Morris in many parts of Great Britain, and said they could influence the world to a large extent individually by radiating thoughts of love and peace.

Prof. Shastri, D.Litt., read a letter from Prof. H. H. Price, of Trinity College, Oxford, paying tribute to the quality of the addresses given through Mrs. Morris. We had to recognise, said Prof. Shastri, that we were all spirits. To know God was to look within, for He was mirrored in the human soul, but it was necessary to purify the mirror. Nothing was more self-evident than the existence of God.

Mr. Graham Moffat said there was never a time when the world more needed such teachings as that given by "Power." It seemed to him that they needed a hundred Mrs. Morris and a hundred "Powers." He complimented Mr. Cowen, as a fellow-playwright, on the great and self-sacrificing work he had done.

Mr. Frank Whitmarsh, President of the London District Council of the Spiritualists' National Union, on behalf of the S.N.U., said they had watched the work and recognised the unselfish devotion that Mr. Cowen had shown. Every penny of the expense of running the meetings had been borne by Mr. Cowen. As to Mrs.

(continued at foot of next column)

## MRS. E. R. RICHARDS

WE record with deep regret the transition of Mrs. E. R. Richards, the widow of Rear-Admiral George Richards, which took place on Sunday night last, after an illness of nine days.

The name of Mrs. Richards has been for many years well-known in the movement by reason of much self-sacrificing work. She had a remarkable gift of clairvoyance which she placed at the service of many enquirers. She was an occasional contributor to LIGHT and was well-known as a frequent visitor to the meetings of the London Spiritualist Alliance and other societies.

She was introduced to the subject many years ago by the late Admiral Osborne Moore; and, as a member of a distinguished naval family, she numbered many friends in naval circles. We recall her unvarying kindness and cheerfulness. She continued active almost to the end in spite of frail health. We offer her bereaved family the expression of our deep sympathy, in which our many readers who knew her, or knew of her, will, we are sure, unite with us. The funeral will take place to-day (Friday), and a service will be held at 2.30 p.m. at the Crematorium, Golders Green.

Readers will recall that we recorded the decease of Mrs. Richards' husband, Admiral Richards, in LIGHT of December 17th, 1927.

## THE RETURN OF GEORGE VALE OWEN

"The Return of the Rev. George Vale Owen" is the subject of a book about to be issued by Mr. Frederick H. Haines with the title of "A Voice from Heaven." It will contain a series of messages received by Mr. Haines together with a "spirit" photograph, and is to be issued by the Pure Thought Press at 4/-.

Writing in LIGHT (Oct. 23rd, 1931) of the impression made upon him by the messages from Vale Owen, Mr. Haines said:

"One thing I can say and that is this—his experience of death and the hereafter has enriched Vale Owen's vision of life and he comes to me bolder, more convinced, and quite assured that we pursue the right course in trying to lift the movement of Spiritualism above its common-places of phenomena, bolder than ever I expected from my one sight of him on a public platform. He then seemed oppressed, over-burdened, unable to deliver his message effectively, worn out by suffering. Life in the spirit world has 'made a man' of him. I wanted to write 'made a saint' of him but he is here with me now and will have his way."

Great interest will be taken in the new book by those who knew the Rev. George Vale Owen and by the still greater number who read his scripts.

(continued from previous column)

Meurig Morris, they realised that there was a real "Power" speaking through her lips.

Among the large and distinguished company present and attending the subsequent reception on the stage were the Lady Carmichael, Lady Honor Bridgeman, Lady Culme Seymour, Lady Gait, Lady Conan Doyle, Admiral Armstrong, Rev. John Lamond, D.D., Graham Moffat, Mrs. Champion de Crespigny, Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, Madame Clara Novello Davies, Madame Freebairn Smith, Miss Mary Conan Doyle, Denis Conan Doyle, David Gow, Geo. H. Lethem, John Lewis, W. H. Evans, Dr. Nandor Fodor, Mrs. Cadwaladr, Mrs. Caledfryn, Miss Mercy Phillimore, Mrs. Hinchliffe, Professor W. Stede, Ph.D., Professor Shastri, D.Litt., Garland Anderson, H. S. L. Polak, Frank Whitmarsh, J. M. Stewart.

The solo "A Voice from the Spirit Land" (by Madame Clara Novello Davies) was sung with fine feeling and effect by Madame Freebairn Smith, to the organ accompaniment of Madame Novello Davies.



## DIRECT SPIRIT HEALING

MR. R. H. SAUNDERS ON AN  
"UNIQUE EXPERIENCE"

ON the Bakerloo line at Waterloo Station, there is a platform of crescent shape, with the result that a space is left between the platform and the carriages, and some two months ago, by pressure of waiting passengers, I was forced forward and my leg dropped through an opening. I received considerable injury, especially in the knee, and the shock set up a severe attack of neuritis, and I realised what it is to suffer from this little understood trouble. The pain of the spasms that shot through the body like electric shocks was great, and no embrocation or balsam (which my local doctor advised), application of electric treatment, warmth, or recourse to "Healers," had the slightest beneficial effect, and I passed some sleepless nights.

I mentally appealed to our good and wonderful friend Abduhl Latif for help, and was privileged to obtain a few minutes' sitting with Mrs. Blanche Cooper, who was not acquainted with what I had gone through.

Abduhl Latif at once manifested, and said: "I received your call and I, Abduhl Latif, come to treat the knee, here and now." He then materialised his hands (the Medium was then strictly under control, and could make no movement without being detected); one he placed on my head, the other covered the knee, and I felt the pressure of the fingers, and a gentle pricking sensation as they manipulated the knee, and this was felt long after Abduhl had returned to the Spheres. The hands were of unusual size, quite twice the size of Mrs. Cooper's, temperature about same as normal human beings, and texture of the skin much the same. The pain had been present at the moment I was sitting, but in a few seconds it left me, and Abduhl's voice came: "I have taken the pain away—you will have sound sleep to-night." And I did, and have felt no pain since.

I had booked a sitting at the British College with Miss Francis, a Trance Medium, for the next morning, and Miss Francis knew nothing whatever of my accident, pain, or my seance with Mrs. Cooper, yet confirmation of the manifestation of the previous night was instantly forthcoming. As soon as the Medium entered the trance state Abduhl Latif took control, and greeted me. I said: "I am thankful to say I've had no pain since you treated my knee." "Nor will you," said Abduhl, "for I have dealt with the cause." "What was the trouble?" I asked. "The shock of the accident caused a blockage of the blood beneath the knee cap. I have now set the blood-stream flowing freely. Some of the pangs you had were of unusual severity, but these were due to my efforts in clearing the obstruction and could not be helped."

This incident illustrates what I have frequently experienced in my intercourse with our spirit friends, viz., confirmation through one Medium of what transpired with another. Here we get corroboration from a Trance Medium of what happened with a Direct Voice Medium. Proof of survival together with a demonstration of the ability of Spirits to help those on earth could hardly be stronger.

Spirit Healing is accomplished in many ways, but it must be extremely rare for direct action and actual physical contact (for a materialised hand is flesh and blood for the time being) to be used as in this instance. I have never heard of a similar case. When spirit doctors find an earth *confre* plastic enough to receive impressions, a diagnosis of the case under treatment is conveyed—that is one way of working, or through those possessing a measure of Healing Power—or again (and this plan is more freely adopted) by taking the spirit body over during sleep, when spirit specialists experiment upon the psychic body, and after the best method has been decided upon, the improvement is transmitted to the physical body. Operations beyond the skill of earth's finest surgeons have been managed in this way.

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS

"Why don't you call up St. Augustine?" was the jibing question asked of a speaker at a recent Spiritualist propaganda meeting. The question strikes me as too silly to call for any serious reply, for it implied the kind of mentality which has some vague idea of "ghost-raising." One answer to the foolish remark might have taken the form of another question—*Why?*

\* \* \*

It is a pleasant thing to observe how many of the byways of life are now being explored—dreams, astrology, numerology and divination, for example. The human spirit is adventurous, and will not rest until it has found out the truth about everything. Some of these matters were known to the ancients—we have their "Bible word" for it. Remember Joseph and his dreams and his divining cup; and Saul who visited Samuel the "man of God," who told him where the lost asses were to be found and some things that would befall him. As the child in R. L. Stevenson's lines remarked, "The world is so full of a number of things," and although we may not all be "as happy as kings" about it, we can at least be as busy as bees!

\* \* \*

As a part of the usual stock-taking recently, I was lately looking back to the first appearance of this column. It was in February, 1921, and I see that in the first paragraph I remarked, *apropos* of a suggestion that LIGHT should pay more attention to its historic past, that we did not want to be a paper with a great future *behind* us; and recalled the story of the small boy who on going to school for the first time was given a seat and told to "sit there for the present." He complained afterwards that he did not get any present. We are not waiting for the present—but rather working for the future. As we look forward we find our spirits rising; even when we don't "call them up" in accordance with that silly superstition that used to talk of "raising the ghosts."

\* \* \*

In *The Harmony of the Spheres*, Mrs. Marjorie Livingston's latest book, is a statement regarding the aura which I found rather suggestive. Her guide, or inspirer, says that "atomic particles may incorporate any rate of electrical frequency," and that "the slower the vibration of the atom the more material is the substance produced." Further, he says that "Spirit descending into matter must acquire auras or strata of increasing density in order that its own integral energy may be insulated." In all that I have read about the aura I have never before seen any reference to its function as an insulator. One remembers, however, that the atmosphere of the earth—which, I suppose, could be regarded as a material aura—serves a similar purpose.

D.G.

## "THE LAND IN WHICH WE DWELL"

"We come from the world of spirit to help to make life fuller for the people of the earth," said the Guide of Mrs. Barkel last Sunday at the Queen's Hall Meeting of the Marylebone Association; and during the course of the address which followed, useful advice was given to inquirers into Spiritualism.

Spirit's eagerness and mortal's receptivity, it was stated, are important aids to communication between the two worlds. "Look upon things in their spiritual aspect and seek to perform your earth duties to the best of your ability; then will you be able to attune yourselves to the world of spirit and thereby gain help, strength, and comfort." In conclusion the speaker urged all who possessed spiritual gifts to cultivate them carefully and *then* to use them for the benefit of others.

The clairvoyant descriptions and messages given by Mrs. Hirst were markedly successful.



## EXPERIMENTAL SPIRITUALISM

SECOND VOLUME OF CAESAR DE VESME'S  
GREAT HISTORICAL WORK

THERE is much interesting and instructive reading in the second volume of Caesar de Vesme's History of Experimental Spiritualism, an excellent translation of which, by Mr. Fred Rothwell, is published under the title, *Peoples of Antiquity* (Riders 10/6).

This work, laureated by the French Academy of Sciences, is of great value to serious students of the subject. The first volume, translated by Mr. Stanley de Brath, and entitled *Primitive Man*, discussed the nature and origin of religious beliefs; the second volume deals with the practices and beliefs of the Egyptian, Hebrew and Graeco-Roman peoples.

Dealing with the Mosaic prohibitions against consulting soothsayers and necromancers, the author points out that if Jews and Christians of the present day thought it their duty to adhere to them, "they would have to do their best to introduce the death penalty against soothsayers and Mediums as well as against all who consult them"; also they would have to apply verses 13 and 14 of the 20th chapter of Deuteronomy "whereby the Lord ordered that all the males of the besieged and captured towns should be smitten with the edge of the sword"; and they would also have to cease from eating "impure animals" such as hares and swine.

"It is important to note," says the author, "that Moses never dreamt of altogether forbidding divination; all he wanted was to regulate it."

Pointing out that "ecclesiastical laws, like all others, bend to circumstances," the author recalls how the various branches of Christianity have dealt with the second Commandment, by which it is forbidden to make "any graven image or any likeness of any thing" in heaven, earth or sea. Images offered the greatest danger of idolatry to the primitive Arabs and Hebrews, "but the Roman Catholic Church paid no attention whatsoever to this commandment of God, since a recrudescence of idolatry was no longer to be dreaded."

The argument is that, whilst there were doubtless good grounds for many prohibitions in the Mosaic times and amongst the Hebrew people, these prohibitions may be—and mostly are—entirely inapplicable to civilised peoples in the present day.

Very patiently and very thoroughly the author shows that many ancient beliefs and practices correspond with modern spiritualistic beliefs and practices; and very gently he heaps ridicule upon those who "find no difficulty in believing that Elijah was carried into heaven in a 'chariot of fire,'" but who refuse to accept modern evidence of "the simplest phenomenon of telepathy or clairvoyance or displacement of an object without contact."

In the section dealing with the Greeks and Romans, the nature and operation of the Oracles are explained with much detail, and many examples of prediction, "apports," healing, trance and telepathy are given.

Regarding evidences of fraud in connection with Spiritualistic practices in ancient days or modern, the author says: "Deception and fraud are continually interblended in all human affairs . . . It is therefore absurd and ridiculous always to advance some case of fraud when discussing supernormal facts to show they are all unauthentic, whereas the same method applied to any other branch of human activity would make one to deny everything that exists."

Throughout the work, M. de Vesme uses the word "Spiritualism" in its philosophical sense, as the antithesis of "Materialism"; and so far he has not stated clearly whether he accepts spiritualistic phenomena as proof of human survival. His method of historical examination, however, is of great value and should help to place psychical study on a secure scientific basis. G.H.L.

## AURIC CINEMATOGRAPH FILM

MR. H. BODDINGTON ON AN INTERESTING  
PROPOSAL

To the Editor of LIGHT:

Sir,—I have received a request for a cinematograph film showing the transformation of the aura into psychoplasm and thence into materialisation. Such a film would have an enormous scientific value and I am wondering if I can possibly find any of your readers who could assist in its production. I have never heard of such a film being made but that is no reason why it could not be produced.

I have replied to my correspondent that I should probably have to start with photographic Mediums like Mr. Hope, who produce types of "auric blanket" which invariably surrounds psychic extras. This also has the advantage of being photographable under normal conditions. The first essential is Mr. Hope's willingness to sit and his Guide's co-operation to show us in detail how they weave the auric blanket. This type of aura would be entirely distinct from the type produced by materialisation Mediums which becomes solid as psychoplasm; and although this has often been photographed there are many gaps in the illustrations provided. For instance—are dress material, hair and the appearance of flesh all evolved from the same elements and by the same processes? Here is a field of enquiry that would well repay investigation.

If any Mediums are willing to co-operate or others able to assist in any way I shall be glad to receive a line from them.

H. BODDINGTON.

London Psychic Educational Centre,  
17 Ashmere Grove, Brixton, S.W.2.

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