DISCOVERIES TO COME.

(Page 582.)

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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Readers are informed that the issue of LIGHT for next week, December 18th, will comprise a special enlarged Christmas Number. There will be no increase of Price.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

DOWSING EXTRAORDINARY.

Strange stories are told of the "dowsing" faculties possessed by the Curé of Hardelt, the Abbé Bouly, who, it is claimed, is able to detect with his divining-rod not only potash and other metals, but also bodies of the dead "even when they have been buried for 1,000 years." His divining-rod consists of two umbrella ribs joined together, and report has it that, with this instrument, the Abbé can also diagnose disease. Making allowances for probable exaggerations, it seems more than likely that here is one of those cases where the rare gift of water and metal divining is coupled with a still rarer extension of the faculty, enabling the adept to go beyond the usual range covered by the word "dowsing." There are numerous recorded cases of this extension of the divining gift, as for instance the celebrated Aymar, a native of Saint-Marcellin, near Lyons, who in 1692 successfully tracked down by his "rod" the murderers of a wine-merchant and his wife; he not only followed their trail along the bank of the Rhone, but also stated accurately that they had been three in number.

* * * *

MEDIUMSHIP AND THE DIVINING ROD.

No completely satisfactory explanation of dowsing has yet been put forward. In ordinary cases of water and metal divining it is permissible to suggest magnetic or other currents as a probable cause. This explanation scarcely covers all the facts, however. It does not cover Aymar's correct knowledge as to the number of the murderers, nor the statement as to the Abbé Bouly's ability to diagnose disease—assuming that these claims are reliable. This particular form of "dowsing" seems to partake of another order of things. It points to the probable possession of mediumistic gifts. If this is so, the question naturally arises as to the part played by the "rod." It may be that in such instances as these, the divining-rod merely acts as a kind of "concentration point" just as certain psychics require to focus their attention upon a crystal, or a glass of clear water, in order to call their supernormal gifts into activity. This is the probable explanation. In the meantime, it is to be hoped that further news of the Abbé Bouly and his strange powers will soon be forthcoming.

THOSE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEES.

The innumerable investigations of psychic phenomena which have been going on during the last sixty years or so must have provided rich mirth for the gods on Mount Olympus. There is the same flourish of trumpets every time and the committees go about their work with deadly seriousness, their solemnity increased by the feeling that it may mean a loss of popularity to pronounce a favourable verdict. A great many years ago the Dialectical Society's Committee found by a majority that the phenomena were real, but the favourable findings were discreetly suppressed. It is dangerous to vote on the wrong side. Consider Mr. Pickwick's diplomacy at the Eatanswill election, when he so cordially agreed with the political demonstrators outside his window. Said that dear old gentleman, "It's always best on these occasions to do what the mob do." "But suppose there are two mobs," suggested Mr. Snodgrass. "Shout with the loudest," replied Mr. Pickwick. It may be that the time is not far off when Spiritualism will have a majority—there are significant signs of it already—and then there will be many eager to shout with the largest crowd, not out of any real convictions, but simply from fear of being unpopular. But to-day there are those who have done more than shout disapproval. They have written their condemnation of us without having condescended to consider the matter; the "written letter" will stand as their own condemnation, and the gods—who do not take too serious a view of the frailties of mortals—will laugh more than ever.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS FUND.

At Christmas, 1923, we originated this little fund to relieve various cases of distress among Spiritualists which come under our notice from time to time. This Fund has been kept in existence ever since, under the title of "LIGHT Benevolent Fund," assisted by private donations, and several painful cases of need have been alleviated. The Fund is handled with the greatest care, a full account of receipts and disbursements being kept; it is used with discretion, and in many cases, with special tact and privacy out of regard for the feelings of those benefited. We know that at this season there will be many claims upon the purses of our readers, but we feel that many will wish to respond to the appeal of the Spirit of Christmas, and to assist at this Season of Goodwill those who, even at the best of times, are hard pressed. There are those to whom a small gift of money at such a time as this is a Godsend, especially when fighting the battle against poverty or sickness. All donations will be acknowledged in our columns; cheques and money orders should be made payable to the Editor of LIGHT, and sent to 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7.

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A CHILD'S VISIONS.

By DR. ROBERT H. NICHOLS (BOSTON, MASS).

He was a mere baby of two and a-half years, robust, but wabbly on his feet, with a dialect all of his own; but he bore amazing proof of his power to see and hear personalities of another world. His large blue eyes, as they squarely met yours, seemed to see straight through you. He gave the distinct impression that he looked direct from his heart into yours. His well-developed head, prominent forehead, well placed ears and intelligent eyes, manifestly indicated a thinking capacity. Two fat cheeks, lips ever ready to smile, and a chin which trembled when his feelings were hurt, reflected a picture of symmetrical brightness. At all events, Bobbie was then and is now a regular boy, and no different, so far as I can see, from any other normal child of his age. He prances around and shouts with glee over a new toy; he also shows a hot temper and yells as loudly as most youngsters when he does not have his own way.

It was the middle of June, 1920, when Bobbie announced out of a clear sky "Old Daddy." His announcement was as sudden as it was thrilling, but the naïve innocence at his age awakens belief as to the truthfulness of his assertions. On this eventful evening, Bobbie was seated beside me at the supper table. We ate in the kitchen because I was late for supper. The child insisted that he must sit right "long side of Daddy" on this particular night, so his mother waived the usual "early to bed" rule. Thus the boy waited to enact a scene long to be remembered.

Behind us was the door leading to the darkened dining room. Noticing that the child frequently turned to gaze into this room, I was attracted by his frequent inquisitive glances, wondering what he saw. No one was in this room that I could see, so I proceeded with supper. Presently the child turned a startled little face to me and said, "Daddy, Oh, Daddy, dat's old Daddy who stands dere! Look at he! Look at he, all drest in a white sheet!" Needless to say, I felt some very creepy sensations run up and down my spine. Then Bobbie said, patting my arm, "Like you, Daddy—old Daddy like you, Daddy."

By now all desire for supper had left me, and I felt as though some great event was about to take place. I said, "Bobbie, if that is old Daddy, ask him to sit beside you in the vacant chair, and have supper with us. The child's response was quick. "No, no. Old Daddy musn't touch Bobbie—Bobbie awfy 'fraid of old Daddy." The child remained thus for a few moments, then peeped over his shoulder and said. "See, old Daddy gone back again. Funny old man stands dere." At this I took Bobbie in my arms, as I could see that he was frightened. So I paced the kitchen with the child clinging to me. Presently he said, "Where's he gone? Old Daddy gone." Noticing that the child was calm now, I took him into the dining room and rocked him. He then requested that I play the "harmokida" (harmonica). This was his favourite music, so I sat rocking him gently, playing the harmonica.

In a few minutes, Bobbie, sitting upright in my lap, and pointing his finger, said, "Look, look, dere he is, Daddy—dere's old Daddy come back again! Look at he!" Oh look! he fly over dere just like little birdie!" The child indicated the direction from the door to the curtain on the opposite side of the room. Said Bobbie, "Look, Daddy—not on de side-board but on de curtain—dere he is, smiling at Bobbie!" The child was all attention to the apparition which he could see but we could not. Then apparently a conversation took place. The child would close his eyes and cant his head as if to listen to some voice in the distance. Bobbie would say, "Does he? Does old Daddy love Bobbie? Bobby awfy 'fraid of old Daddy! No, no, musn't touch Bobbie!"

This was most impressive. The child made me believe that my father who died twenty years ago stood in this room. Mustering up courage, I said, "If this is really my father here, come shake hands with me." Again the child swung around and his arms clinched my neck. He cried, "No, no, old Daddy must not come near Bobbie. Bobbie awfy 'fraid of old Daddy." The child trembled perceptibly and perspiration stood out on his forehead. While the child clung thus, I said, "Now if you are present, father, you must be here for some good purpose. However, you certainly frighten Bobbie. Now it would convince me more of your presence if you would take the child's fear away—rather, if you would make Bobbie love you."

It could not have been more than thirty seconds before Bobbie loosed his grip from around my neck, and slid into my lap. He said, "What's dat moosik? Oh, dat's booful moosik. Old Daddy does pay moosik for Bobbie!" The child turned his face to mine, closed his eyes, and with his hand uplifted, listened for fifteen minutes or more. The look of fright soon disappeared, and his expression was now distinctly one of enchantment. Presently the child opened his eyes and smilingly said, "Moosik gone. Old Daddy did pay moosik for Bobbie—most booful moosik Bobbie ever did hear." "Was the music like mother's singing?" I asked. "No," said Bobbie, "not like mudder sings." "Was it like the harmonica?" "No, not like harmokida." "Was it like Daddy's violin?" "No, not like Daddy's violin." "Well, what was the music like?" I asked. After some moments, trying to recall, Bobbie said, "Old Daddy pay moosik like Pearl's victrola." This young lady, a neighbour, used to play the victrola, using records as taken from the Symphony Orchestra, or of large choruses.

The child turned to me again, and the following dialogue took place between Bobbie and the unseen: "No, no, old Daddy won't hurt Bobbie." "Old Daddy loves Bobbie, does he?" "Yes, Bobbie loves old Daddy." "Old Daddy wants to kiss Bobbie?" "Yes, Bobbie will kiss old Daddy." The child then leaned far forward on my lap, and with outstretched arms he encircled and kissed something that he alone could see. He then sunk back against me, and turning his radiant little face to mine, said, "Old Daddy did kiss Bobbie! Bobbie does love old Daddy!"

Bobbie now announced old Daddy gone, and said, "Where's he gone, Daddy? Bobbie wants old Daddy to stay wiv him." It was late by now, and Bobbie went into the next room and was soon asleep. I was arranging my toilet for the night, pondering over this most remarkable experience. At the same time I sang lightly an old English song, "Woodman Spare the Tree," a favourite my father used to sing. Suddenly I heard Bobbie's shrill voice pipe up from the front room, "Oh, look at he! Look at he! Old Daddy is back again. Look, Daddy. Dere he goes down the hall." Then he cried, "Daddy, old Daddy go in the baff room wiv you." Soon after, the child was soundly sleeping in his "kiddy coop" beside my bed. As I was almost asleep myself, I heard the child rouse himself and say, "No, no, musn't touch Bobbie now—Bobbie must go to sleep!"

The next morning Bobbie peered over the rail of his "kiddy coop" and said, "Daddy, come and see old Daddy. He's asleep out in de udder room." The child grasped my finger, and led me out to show me old Daddy. He looked for old Daddy on the curtain, and expressed great disappointment that he was not there. He even ran in behind the curtain and looked behind all the chairs. After a while he sadly said, "Old Daddy not here. Where's he gone? Bobbie loves old Daddy. Will he come back to Bobbie"

From that time to this the child talks with, plays ball with, dances with, and finds great delight with old Daddy. Bobbie constantly describes old Daddy as standing on his head, which pleases the boy very much. Now, singularly enough, I am forced to recall how my father used actually to amuse us boys by standing on his head. This feat accomplished, we used to swell with pride. The child has since then described his grandmother, his other grandfather, a nurse I used to know, and sees others with whom he plays in a most normal innocent manner. I am impressed to believe that Bobbie presents convincing evidence that life goes on after death, that personalities are about us all the time, only we cannot perceive them. Just what function these personalities have with us here on earth, the child does not as yet show. However, from the incident of the fear expelled by music, as shown by the child, not to be from this world, I believe there must be very potential forces in another world which can drive out fear, can bring calm to a troubled soul, can suggest good as well as perhaps evil, can prompt decision in perplexity; in short, can, if we are in tune for it, direct us in proper ways through our intuition.

. . . .

Three objections to Bobbie's declared auditory and visionary communications might be advanced.

FIRST: Bobbie may have been actually reciting the content of my own mind, thus illustrating my visual contemplations of old Daddy (my father). Telepathically the child may have gathered Spiritualistic impressions.

SECOND: Bobbie probably constructed a fantastic naïve story from what he had heard us say about my father and others. His strange actions and vivid descriptions were

probably the machinations of imagination in the mind of a precocious child.

THIRD: For his own amusement Bobbie acted and talked falsely to please his own imagination.

Answering the first objection, I wish to state candidly that no ideas of my father possessed my mind. He died in 1896. The term "old Daddy" was absolutely original to Bobbie. Neither I nor my wife ever used the term "old Daddy." Since my father's death, the struggle for existence and the problems of progress have so engrossed my attention that memories of childhood, youth, parental influence, etc., have become as nearly obsolete as could possibly be. However, in my opinion, it would be extremely absurd to claim that Bobbie's visions were mere telepathic vibrations, concocted by him into accurate description, logical conversation, and convincing action. Toward the tenets of Spiritualism I had a sceptical and open mind. We are not now, nor were we then, members of the Spiritualistic Church. Indeed, at the time of Bobbie's declaration, I loved to argue with Spiritualistic friends, opposing their views; therefore, it cannot be contended that Bobbie gathered constructions from my Spiritualistic meditations.

Secondly, we had never discussed my father in or out of Bobbie's presence. Nor had Bobbie ever heard us say anything about dead relatives. No photographs of my father hang on our walls, and my wife had never seen my father. The child thus produces actual evidence of his power to see and talk with extraneous personalities. I cannot imagine mental machinations so accurate in all details.

Thirdly, at Bobbie's age, which was two years and six months, there could have been no deceit. He gave us a genuine exhibition of his surprise, fear, and love of a personality absolutely unseen by his mother or by me.

"R. L. S." AT A SEANCE.

The following account of a séance in Edinburgh reaches us from a prominent Edinburgh man who, with some other sitters of intellectual standing, considers the results very evidential.

A voice purporting to be that of Robert Louis Stevenson was heard at a recent direct voice séance in Edinburgh. The circumstances were interesting. To begin with, the séance was held on the afternoon of the day on which the Stevenson Club of Edinburgh held their annual *commemorative* dinner. The mediums were two Glasgow ladies, who so far as could be gathered were not in any sense Stevenson enthusiasts.

There were fifteen sitters at the séance, four of whom were strangers to the mediums. The arrangements for their attendance were made by an Edinburgh lady, no names or any indication of who they were being given to the mediums. One of them was spoken to by a voice giving the name of a personal friend, and mentioning, by way of proof, a circumstance that had occurred that afternoon, within the sitter's knowledge, and relating to the communicator's son.

At an early stage, one of the mediums described a figure, seen clairvoyantly. It was that of a rather tall man, with dark hair, growing thickly behind, strongly marked eyebrows, and a dark moustache, a high forehead and finely shaped nose. The medium said he had a quick, intelligent expression and a fine distinctive face. She thought he would be a very clever man. "He is wearing a velvet coat," she added, "whatever that may mean."

Nothing was said by any of the sitters at the time. One of the four referred to has lectured on Stevenson and recently went over some of the ground covered by Stevenson in his early days in France, and the description struck him as indicating "R. L. S." Many people were described in the course of the sitting, but these all appeared to be relatives or friends recognised by the sitters. The dark-haired man was the only outsider.

Later in the sitting the sitter referred to inquired if the man with the velvet coat was still there, and was told he was standing waiting "with his arms folded." Later still, when one of the controls was speaking, the question was put whether the man with the velvet coat would speak, and the answer was given that he was going to speak immediately.

A fine, expressive baritone voice was then heard, apparently directed to the sitter with Stevensonian associations. The latter asked the communicator's name, and a name which sounded something like "Sisitala" was given. It was repeated several times, and the sitter inquired if he was getting it right. It should be mentioned here that there seemed to be some difficulty in the transmission. Nearly all the communicators who had spoken seemed to say "Sess" for yes. Some consonants appeared to be turned into sibilants.

An explanation of the curious name dawned on the sitter, who asked if the communicator was giving his South Seas name ("Tasitala"), to which the voice assented so eagerly as to prompt the medium to intervene to request the communicator not to get excited. A request for the communicator's other name brought only an unintelligible sound, and then silence. Asked if the communicator still continued his "constructive work," the voice again eagerly replied in the affirmative.

"What is your real occupation now, in the place where you are?" was next asked.

The surprising reply was "Ambassador." This word was repeated by the sitter in a puzzled way, and the question was asked, "Ambassador to where?"

"To the Seventh Sphere," was the reply; and on the suggestion that the communicator was a messenger to a higher plane on behalf of those amongst whom he was, the characteristically eager assent was again forthcoming.

The sitter asked if the communicator was still interested in those on the earth plane, and again the voice with eagerness and vehemence agreed.

"What is meant by the velvet coat?" was asked, and the voice replied at once, "I used to wear it."

The question was then put whether the communicator could influence the sitter in similar work to that which he used to do himself—whether he could convey ideas to him, and the voice replied affirmatively in so urgent a way that the medium again asked him not to get excited.

"When could you begin to do this?" was asked, and the voice replied "At once—begin on Monday." The communication shortly after ceased, a new voice being heard.

Afterwards the sitter mentioned the name of Stevenson, but it did not seem to convey anything to either of the mediums.

"REVIRESCO."

EXPOSURES AND SOME OTHER THINGS.

BY DENIS GRINLING.

The recent "exposures," so-called, of various mediums by the "Sunday Chronicle" Committee of Investigation may have proved disquieting to some readers of LIGHT.

One bright ray emerges from the general darkness, confusion and misrepresentation. The reporters have made it clear that Spiritualists regard mediumship as a sacred office: that they, above all others, must have pure channels of communication; that they strive continually to sift the tares from the wheat; to expose the false and develop the true.

This, without doubt, is a step forward. It appears that believers in survival and communication with discarnate human spirits are not now classed as cranks and fanatics. They may even possess a shred of integrity.

Compare the present benevolence of the Press, with the cold contempt or vituperative wrath of the past, even two or three years ago; and again it becomes apparent that our cause prospers apace.

I think I state the considered opinion of many experienced Spiritualists, when I say that all development of objective supernormal phenomena should take place in a red light, or any other light which proves to be least destructive of ectoplasm. The old war-cry, "Why must it all occur in darkness?" is constantly reiterated. The answer that many natural phenomena require darkness for their development is not entirely satisfactory. We know that the finest mediums have conquered the disruptive power of light rays. Independent spirit voices, materialisations, dematerialisation, levitation, movement of objects distant from the medium, and a host of well-known psychic happenings are recorded in strong light, giving full powers of observation to all present.

Light makes it difficult for the medium, it is even more difficult for the communicating spirits, so they tell us, but it is not an insuperable obstacle. The sooner developing sensitives realise this fact, the sooner we shall have that standard of evidence which will break down the resistance of the carping and incredulous.

Another interesting fact is exemplified in the "Sunday Chronicle" test sittings, namely, the extreme suggestibility of psychics. Professor Low visualises and describes a strange dog with a yellow spot in the middle of its back; immediately the medium seizes hold of the idea and elaborates it. She sees the spotted dog clearly. But it only exists in the vivid imagination of Professor Low. She sees his exteriorised thought-form.

Although this kind of suggestion from the sitters has been "in evidence" throughout the whole series of sittings, the mediums investigated still fall an easy prey.

In short, it seems that many a medium is telepathic, a receiver of suggestion, and in turn a transmitter of that suggestion. Sometimes an accurate receiver and a faulty transmitter, sometimes an untuned receiver; frequently accurate in both functions.

With certain exceptions, a medium is telepathic to spirit people and earth people. Often, especially when the sitters are hard or uncongenial, it is very difficult to know whence the thought message comes. Mediums give what they receive, it may be from either side of the border.

The responsibility lies largely with the sitter. If he tries to keep his mind like a clean slate, good evidence of survival will be given him. If he projects inane mental pictures, he will be paid in his own coin.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

By Neil Gow.

The Young Spirit Has a Music Lesson.

The Young Spirit, junior member of the trio who, together, formed one of the Communication Groups of the celestial world, was as near boredom as is possible in that happy country. Allowance must, of course, be made for Youth. He crossed his legs; then uncrossed them; whistled a tuneless air; stopped; tried again, stopped again; then finally yawned in a distinctly earth-like manner. His immediate superior officer, the Assistant-Controller, smiled at his young lieutenant with sardonic benevolence. "Yes, I can sympathise with your point of view, youngster," he said, apparently apropos of nothing in particular.

The Young Spirit started. "How did you know?" He grinned a trifle sheepishly. "Reading my thoughts again, I suppose?" His remark was less a question than an affirmation.

Assistant laughed outright. "Couldn't help overhearing your thoughts, my boy! They fairly cascaded out of you like a fountain." His face took on an expression almost apologetic. "Not that I'm an eavesdropper," he added. "But if you only practised a little self-control ——."

The Young Spirit appeared mollified. It was difficult to be offended with the genial Assistant-Controller. "Well, isn't the singing *awful*! It fairly makes me writhe at times."

"Singing! Awful! To what, pray, are you referring, my amiable critic?" The Assistant's voice was full of bland innocence, but there was more than a hint of mockery in his twinkling eye which plainly showed that his apparent ignorance was more assumed than real.

"*You* know!" retorted the other. "You've been reading my mind, you wretched hypocrite. I'm referring to the séance music that we have to listen to. I get more of it than you do, in *my* job. Fairly sets my teeth on edge!" He broke off into a derisory bellow: "Shall we ge-*hather* at the Riv-Ah-h-h!"

The Assistant-Controller endeavoured to look shocked, but without success. "You impudent puppy!" he said, with mock sternness, but a mirthful shaking of the shoulders robbed the remark of its intended effect.

"Now, don't pretend to be the "stern disciplinarian," giggled the Young Spirit with the impudent freedom of youth. "I was talking about it with Mark Twain at dawn. He made a most priceless remark—you know dear old Twain's style? He looked at me with his humorous-melancholy smile and said: 'Many a rusty larynx covers a pure and shining heart!' Then he scuttled off to the Fourth, leaving me screaming with mirth." The Young Spirit sniggered. "I must tell that to the Controller," he said fatuously.

"*I* shouldn't!" remarked the Assistant dryly. "My dear young friend," he added, half-seriously. "You are still earthy, I notice. Your ear still catches the lower, the crude, the unrefined vibrations to which it was accustomed in your material incarnation. When you are able to attune your aural receiver to the finer, the rarified vibrations, you will perceive that the beauty of sound ——."

("I hope this isn't one of your pious moral lectures?" interrupted the Young Spirit rudely).

"You impertinent young cub!" grinned the Assistant. He thought for a moment. "Look here! I'll show you what I mean." He paused, in silence; over his face came the look of tense concentration which his junior immediately recognised. The Assistant was directing a stream of magnetism. But where, or why, was not apparent.

Suddenly along the road appeared a strangely garbed spirit, walking towards them. This being was dressed in a shapeless white robe, while from his shoulders drooped a limp pair of wings. In his hands he carried a harp which he plucked with unskilful fingers, while from his mouth issued a cracked and faded voice raised in the strains of a dreary hymn. "Is this your doing?" muttered the Young Spirit. "I sent for him," answered the Assistant-Controller. "One of the Undeveloped," he whispered. "He used to picture Heaven as a place of wings, harps and eternal songs of praise. Now he's got what he looked for." The Assistant chuckled gleefully. "Wonderful, what Concentration will do!" he added, dryly.

The melancholy figure drew closer. He warbled his dull strains with painful monotony and unbeautiful inaccuracy.

"Perfectly horrid noise!" said the Young Spirit.

"Now, take my hand," said the Assistant-Controller. "And *listen*! I'm going to give you a lesson in Transmutation of Sound-Vibrations." The Assistant's face again became tense. He was experimenting once more with the Magnetic Stream. And, with success—for the voice of the singer had changed. No sound of the dull turgid hymn was any longer recognisable. Instead could be heard, faintly but distinctly, a pure rich stream of music, which filled the eyes of the Young Spirit with a joyous light of appreciation.

"That's what it sounds like when it gets to the Higher Spheres," he whispered, "provided, of course, that the Intention is good."

. . . . .

"That's fine!" said the Young Spirit, when the experiment was over. "I wish you'd let me listen-in again sometimes. I love music!"

The Assistant-Controller shook his head. "No; once is enough!" he said gravely. "Besides, I daren't tinker with the Magnetic Force too often. Not while I'm on *this* plane, anyway."

SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

A Suggested Line of Progress.

By C. V. W. Tarr.

Sir Oliver Lodge's recent remarks on the possible scientific discovery of the spiritual world in the not distant future, naturally lead Spiritualists to speculate as to what may be the most fruitful line of development for the actual scientific demonstration of human survival. This may seem a curious expression when it is remembered that many of the most experienced of modern psychical researchers, and of course all convinced Spiritualists, are satisfied with the evidence for the persistence of human personality beyond death. What I mean is, of course, the compulsory recognition by orthodox science (as a result of actual progress in experimental research along the lines of psychic science) of Spiritualistic claims. How far orthodox scientific men are from admitting the Spiritualistic interpretation of psychic facts is evident from the various treatises on scientific subjects one may read in which no trace of the influence of psychical facts is to be found. Thus in an article on "Apparitions" in Chambers's New Encyclopaedia, which is actually in course of publication, we find the following remarks:—

> The apparitions seen at dark séances when forcibly grasped have always turned out to be the medium or a confederate in disguise. In Sir W. Crookes' famous experiments of 1874, his confidence in the medium appears to have led him to take insufficient precautions against fraud. The experiments have never been repeated under satisfactory conditions. In the cases occasionally reported, where the materialised spirit is recognised in a good light as resembling a deceased person, we have occasionally grounds for supposing, in the percipients' mind, a hallucinatory transformation of the medium's features, a process of which other instances can be found.

While extraordinary progress has been made in recent years towards a general acceptance of the reality of psychic facts, on the part of scientific and philosophical minds at large, there is far from being an equivalent advance in recognising the Spiritualistic explanation of them.

From what line of scientific investigation should we expect the greatest advance towards the recognition of Spiritualistic claims? I think it would be the discovery by orthodox science of man's actual psychic organisation. This is the crux of the whole situation. We, as Spiritualists, talk about "the etheric body," "the psychic body," "the fluidic body," "the perisprit," and so on. The Theosophists talk about a whole multiple set of invisible "bodies." To orthodox science, so far, all this is so much empty speculation. Spiritualists, generally, assume the existence of an invisible "spirit body" which becomes the normal vehicle of human consciousness after death, but there is no universally accepted theory of its origination and development nor of the precise nature of its relationship to the physical body. From the facts of clairvoyance on the mental or psychological side and of materialisation on the physical side of mediumship, we can draw certain reasonable inferences. For instance, the growth of children to maturity after death, in the spirit-world, has two clear and very important implications; one, that of a real biological continuity; and the other, that the fact of growth —the life-process—is not in itself dependent at all on physical organisation, as mechanistic biology asserts with quite a loud voice even to-day. Philosophically speaking, the acceptance of these implications simply removes a stage further back such ultimate questions as were asked by Sir Oliver Lodge in his recent address at Oxford. For orthodox science, however, to recognise our claims, something more than suggestive inferences will have to be forthcoming. It may take another fifty years for orthodox science to progress along the lines of this suggested research before the mere existence of the "spiritual body" is absolutely demonstrated. Until that is done we shall be held up in our relations to science like a flood of water behind a barrier—a barrier upon which is written "Hallucinatory Transformations," "Alternative Hypotheses," "Unexplored Biological Forces." But the barrier once removed, the flood-waters of the new knowledge will irrigate the fields of human thought and have profound reactions on our ideas of human and world evolution.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

A CHRISTMAS TREE FOR THE CHILDREN OF TWO WORLDS.

SIR,—For some years past the readers of LIGHT have taken a keen interest in this simple little function, indeed some have taken an active interest, for they have sent toys. We have never asked for these, yet it would be ungracious to refuse them. But a suggestion has been made by our spirit friends which would enable many to share in our Christmas service. It is that anyone who has "lost" (to use a misleading term) a child, should send a card with the child's name written on it, to be hung on the tree. A simple remembrance card would do, as ornateness would not enhance its value.

The power forged at the séance is limited both in force and duration, and it would not be possible for many of these little ones to speak, but it is certain they would be there. The very act of writing the child's name, born of a loving thought as it is, of necessity draws them. The law of attraction must operate where affection exists, and so the little ones would feel they were specially invited.

The card should have a piece of coloured thread to suspend it from the tree, and be sent to 199, Ewell-road, Surbiton, Surrey.—Yours, etc.,

R. H. SAUNDERS.

"PSYCHIC PHENOMENA AND INCOMPETENT INVESTIGATION."

SIR,—Mr. B. T. Hall's letter in LIGHT, of 27th ulto., should not pass entirely without reply. Surely it should not be necessary to explain that my article to which Mr. Hall takes exception refers to *physical* mediumship only. Physical phenomena have no value unless for the inferences to be drawn from them. If they are not unexceptionally genuine they are useless. *Teaching mediumship is* quite another matter; so is twaddle of which I have hear (and read) not a little. Mr. Hall does not seem to understand irony. His gibe is not worth notice.

Another letter also reaches me from a friend who objects to my statement that complete rapport is rarely established at first communication. I should have said "for detailed communication." I meant that though evidential matter is often given at once, it is rare that a complete rapport required for detailed or "test" communications should occur without extended practice. For instance, the Hyslop Hodgson communications cover 69 séances: *cf.* also "Spirit Teachings" (Stainton Moses), and many others.—Yours., etc.,

STANLEY DE BRATH.

A TELEPATHIC EXPERIMENT.

SIR,—One evening a friend of mine called at my studio and invited me to go with him to a séance. This man, whose name is Harwell, is a student of the occult.

I went with him, and that evening I received two messages purporting to come from the other side of life.

A week later he came and asked me if I were again going, and I said, no; that I had work to do that evening. Later on some friends came in, and it was 10 o'clock before I knew it. I went into my dark room to do some photographic work, and then the thought came to me to try and get in touch with Mr. Harwell.

I visualised the circle. In my mind I stood in the centre of the circle, and called Mr. Harwell by name audibly, then tried to see all the sitters in their respective places.

I repeated this. Then I said to myself: "I will tell no one of this and see if he gets me."

That was on Thursday night. The Sunday following, Mr. Harwell came in again and stood around for a few minutes, then started to leave, and as he got to the door I said: "How was the meeting the other night?" He answered me quickly: "Oh, you were there." I said, "Good. Now describe just what you saw." "Well," he said, "I saw your face, collar, coat, down to about the middle of your body, and then you disappeared. You had been standing in the centre of the circle." "Fine," I remarked, "now can you tell me about the time you saw me?" And he said it was at 10 o'clock. The actual time was 10.10.

I have gone into detail so that anyone interested may try for results.

I tried again on another occasion, and told Mr. H. to see if he could get me again, but without result.

I believe the receipient should be in an absolutely negative or passive state of mind, and should not know of any attempt being made to get in touch. Otherwise he would be in a more or less positive state of mind. The sender should be very positive.

To me mental telegraphy is an established fact. Many times I receive impressions, and think of the person, and shortly after they walk in.

This happens so many times that it could not be "just a coincidence."—Yours, etc.,

FRANKLYN Q. GATES.

San Francisco.

THE REALITY OF PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

BY GEORGE LINDSAY JOHNSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.

[Dr. Lindsay Johnson is a man of high scientific distinction, an authority on optics and on photography, and the inventor of various optical instruments.]

It seems to me that the discussion about the Combermere spirit-photograph is pure waste of time. The late Sir William Barrett, F.R.S., relates the story of this photograph in his little work on Spiritualism, "On the Threshold of the Unseen," and gives it as the only "spirit photograph" which had any pretence to rest on satisfactory evidence, for he certainly was not convinced at the time when he wrote that book. However, shortly before his lamented death, he wrote me stating that he had visited the Hope circle at Crewe and had taken some photographs himself under such rigid conditions that he was *perfectly convinced* as to their genuine character, and he enclosed a print of one of them signed by himself to that effect. Instead of discussing the authenticity of Lord Combermere's photograph, would it not be far more practical for the critic to take a trip to Crewe and make an experiment for himself? If instead of arguing whether supernormal photos can be taken or not, the critic would put it to the test, he should at once be able to convince himself of its genuineness. This is the only method that will ever convince anyone, and it is the one which I invariably carry out myself, if it be possible to do so. I have proved that such photographs are genuine, times without number. I began by taking photographs, with my own camera and plates, in full daylight. Then I tried the effect of taking stereo-photographs, and found to my surprise that the right and left images did not, when reversed and mounted, always combine, because one of the images often differed slightly in size from its fellow. I then discovered that the lens could be dispensed with, for I got admirable extras by merely holding an unopened packet of plates against the forehead of the medium. Then I made the further discovery that I could dispense with sensitive plates altogether, for I got several excellent positive prints right away on paper. All that was necessary was to purchase a small packet of P.O.P. (printing out paper) from any photographic store, and place it on an insulated copper plate, and then to get the medium and the others present to keep their hands on the packet in broad daylight, for about half an hour, when on opening the specially sealed and marked packet, we found half a dozen of the sheets to have an image of the deceased mother of one of the sitters printed on it. All that was afterwards necessary was to fix the prints in hypo, wash them under the tap for an hour, and then dry and trim them, when they were ready to be placed in an album. I have taken so many photographs during the last six years under every possible condition that nothing will ever shake my faith in their genuine character. If any readers of LIGHT have any doubt about it, let them put it to the test. To argue about it is both unscientific and useless, for as Alfred Russel Wallace says in his book, "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," page 17: "Whenever the scientific men of any age have denied the facts of investigators on *a priori* grounds, they have always been wrong."

Durban, Natal.

AT the L.S.A., 16, Queensberry Place, on Thursday, December 2nd, Miss E. B. Gibbes read an unusually interesting paper on the subject of automatic writing, giving some remarkable instances of evidential messages. There was a crowded audience, and Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny occupied the chair. As the substance of the paper will shortly appear in book form, we have been requested not to report it in LIGHT.

LIGHT,

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DISCOVERIES TO COME.

A SURVEY AND SOME COMMENTS.

There are no dead walls in life, as even that prince of pessimists, Schopenhauer, discovered. Man is a being of inexhaustible possibilities, and his achievements up to the present moment have but touched the outer fringes of all that he has still to discover.

There is mystery in Nature, but no muddle. Man, if he is the supreme discoverer of Nature's secrets, is also the supreme muddler. The psychic realm—that playground of irresponsible frivolity—which we never regard as the main or the central region of human life, holds nevertheless some important keys yet to be used by intelligent explorers of the treasure-house of Life. At the moment there is much of confusion and blundering. Many are fumbling at the doors. The voice of the mocker is heard, and the obstructionist is very active. It seems hard for even the clearest head and the firmest will to make much progress.

But it has always been so, and there is no occasion for lowness of spirits. We can behold it all with an assured mind.

Let us recall the beginnings of the great conquest of the air—aviation. A few resolute experimenters, a vast number of waverers and wobblers, and a great amount of derisive comment from certain organs of the Press, poking fun at the "impossible" idea day after day in jokes, caricatures, skits and other smart sayings—all of them suddenly hushed when the impossible thing was shown to be a practical reality.

Just now in the psychic region, in spite of the omnipresent muddlement and babblement, we are getting hints—more than hints sometimes—of great discoveries to come when the inquiry is better organised and better understood.

Great achievements in Telepathy lie ahead of us. Just now it is manifesting itself spontaneously in many quarters in surprising ways. The public at large knows little of these things at present, but it is beginning to gather vague hints and gleams, so many are the instances of strange happenings in the way of mind-to-mind communication. The idea of Telepathy very naturally proceeds telepathically. Presently it will get "beyond a joke." Some great and world-wide example will close the mouths of the scoffers, and they will no longer put the tongue of incredulity into the cheek of derision.

Then there is ectoplasm, or as some prefer to call it, teleplasm. It is a reality, with all the elusiveness of those "finer forces" which are yet to be put at the service of mankind when it is worthy of them. Putting aside that hotly contested point, the materialisation of spirit forms, ectoplasm, as some acute medical men are discovering, is a great factor in healing. But on that point it were wise not to be too explicit. Going to the world with inventions still in their raw and immature stages is a mistake, as many discoverers in the past have learned to their sorrow.

Meantime some of us know sufficient of our facts in the present to be very confident of the future. We do not think the sceptics will get the last of the laughing, especially as the laughter is not coming at the moment from the informed and intelligent classes, but rather from those who are given to judge a matter before they have heard it.

The path has been a winding one, but it is beginning to ascend now, and there are abundant signs that we are on the right road.

THE ELASTIC METHOD.

From time to time comes the complaint of the zealous but unhelpful critic, concerning the development of the Spiritualistic movement. Why cannot Spiritualists do this, that or the other? Such is the form these criticisms usually take. It is hardly necessary to say that these slightly petulant queries frequently emanate from the earnest well-wisher who is in the earlier stages of investigation. Caustic strictures from the sceptical scarcely merit consideration; in any case, in these days they are very rare. Generally the mature individual accepts criticism from friend and foe with equal unconcern. Very rarely is it of any value. Occasionally, however, a critical remark leads one to consider a fresh aspect of the question, and to evolve a useful train of thought. A complaint which reached LIGHT a short time ago touched upon the "vagueness" of Spiritualism; it was too indefinite, it lacked concreteness. One's first instinct was to put this statement aside as being one of those hasty generalisations which further investigation into Spiritualism would prove to be ill-founded. On second thoughts the complaint is perhaps worthy of examination. Is Spiritualism too indefinite? Let us consider this question for a few moments. It would almost seem that, so far from being indefinite, it has a tendency to err in the opposite direction. For instance, we all know that kind of Spiritualism which at times is presented to the public by uninstructed enthusiasts; dogmatic statements concerning the after-life; wild claims as to alleged transcendental experiences; the presentation of "proofs" which are no proofs. All these things are definite—much too definite. They are faults of over-zealousness and may be forgiven; at the same time the introduction of a note of tentativeness would perhaps make these claims acceptable to a wide public. "It is so!" occasionally jars on the sensitive ear; "May it not be so?" is more likely to be accepted by the judicial mind. And yet the second form of words is the vaguer, the less definite—and on the whole the more convincing.

Turning now to a wider view of the question, we see Spiritualism in its essential aspect, embodying three facts: life after death; communication between the two worlds; Spirit, and not Matter, the basis of the Universe. These vital integral facts are surely definite enough. They are like all great truths, of crystalline quality. Upon this fundamental basis various structures have been erected. The central core of the thing is enmeshed with complicated embroideries of thought. That is to be expected when we consider that, *for all practical purposes*, Spiritualism is a new thing. It is inevitable that it should become the centre of complex philosophic, theological and ethical considerations. Inevitable also that it should be interpreted in slightly different ways, and expounded by divergent methods. It is best that it should be so. It is this aspect probably which leads our critic to complain of "indefiniteness," which is only another way of saying that the Spiritualistic movement proceeds along the lines of freedom and spaciousness.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

"Nature" of November 20th has a very long editorial article on "Science and Spiritualism," wholly admirable from the present scientific point of view. The editor observes that the divergence between Science and Spiritualism "is as great as ever, and shows no sign of compromise or conciliation." Unwittingly exemplifying the first principle of the Harmonial Philosophy, namely, Use, he adds: "No useful scientific purpose would be served, therefore, by the publication of further letters on the subject." Until scientists and Spiritualists alike attain to some real knowledge of what is commonly called the subconscious mind, this divergence will continue. With characteristic fair-mindedness, the editor of "Nature" remarks that the conservatism of official science in these matters is not unnatural, and the distinction between Spiritualism and psychical research is a somewhat artificial one. Appended is an excerpt from the article under notice:—

> It is for science to stem the tide of superstition and sift the true from the false. We are quite justified in assuming, with Sir Oliver Lodge, that man's future outlook on the universe will be very different from the orthodoxy of 1926. Such an evolution is bound to take place even on purely physical grounds, as indeed is shown by the prodigious changes in physical conceptions since 1895. But the fundamental principles of the scientific method will not change, and no set of phenomena which depends for its occurrence, not upon ascertainable laws, but upon the whim of invisible operators not amenable to a court of law, can appropriately form part of the subject matter of natural science.

* * * *

The "Sunday Chronicle" prints a selection of letters from its readers on personal experiences of Strange Happenings. Here is one, contributed by L. M. Tranter, Nurses' House, Silkstone, Barnsley:—

> Whilst acting as private nurse to an old lady of 87 I was sitting up one night reading when I heard the patient mention the name "Ted," and commence talking.
>
> I made to go towards the bed when, to my amazement, I saw a shadowy object seated in a chair close by.
>
> All the power seemed to go from my legs; then, as I watched it, the figure grew dimmer and faded away. The patient subsequently died, and when I came to ask for particulars with a view to registering the death I found that the name of the husband who had died some time before was Edward.
>
> A daughter told me that she had often heard her mother speak of him as "Ted."

* * * *

The following fine paragraph is from the Notes of the Month in the December number of the "Occult Review":—

> A broadening sympathy and a growing peace are true signs of the unfolding of the spiritual life, as the abounding joy of religious conversion is a sign that the soul has set itself in line with the Divine Will which sent it forth upon its journey. The path of spiritual unfoldment is the path to the crown of human evolution. Along this path may come great sadness, and tears may seldom be far away from the eyes which have known the tender touch of Pity. Yet with it all the sense of peace grows stronger and more real, the power to give rather than to receive increases; and self becomes lost in the radiance of the Light for which we have no better name than "God."

* * * *

A contributor to the "Occult Review" who has been investigating dream phenomena says: "A staggering result I obtained was the discovery of what I call the Law of Determinants. . . At last I found to my astonishment, that my dreams are influenced much less by my own thoughts and feelings than by those of the persons I have met in the course of the day. Such persons exercise so marked an influence on the current of energy creating the dream that they can properly be spoken of as Determinants."

* * * *

The "Belfast Telegraph" reports a lively debate on the subject of Spiritualism, under the auspices of the Church of Ireland Young Men's Literary and Debating Society. The debate was opened by Mr. Frank R. Nolan, M.R.C.L., who, in opening his speech, said that undoubtedly at the present time Spiritualism was gaining an increasing number of adherents amongst people of culture:—

> Men of scientific eminence who, twenty or thirty years ago, would have looked with contempt upon Spiritualism, were now amongst its adherents. The reason for this may be found in the progress of scientific thought, which had brought about the discarding of what were once considered basic laws.

The "Yorkshire Post" gives a column account of a lecture entitled "Fifty Years in Science," by Professor A. Smithell, F.R.S., Emeritus Professor of Chemistry in the University of Leeds, under the auspices of the Cavendish Society, the President, Professor Comber, in the chair. The "Yorkshire Post" heads its report, "Attitude of Science to Spiritualism"; relative to which we take two excerpts:—

> Passing to the question whether science was doing its duty to the world, the lecturer said it was complained that scientific men would not concern themselves with "supernormal phenomena" of the psychic kind. The common word was "Spiritualism." It was argued that surely nothing should make a stronger appeal than that which gave promise of throwing light on the mystery of life and death. . .
>
> One reason for the abstention was that it was not the proper business of scientific men to investigate the reported phenomena of Spiritualism. The equipment which proved best for the ordinary man of science was quite inadequate for this other field of inquiry. But a great many more scientific men than was commonly supposed had seriously considered the matter.

* * * *

Concluding on a personal note, Professor Smithell proceeded to say that his own psychical investigations, undertaken seriously twenty years ago, led to the conclusion that "most of the reported phenomena of Spiritualism had not the character of what was commonly called 'reality'":—

> If they had reality they would, he believed, only be reached by men of science continuing in the path they had followed in the past, developing their powers and progressing in knowledge by the study of problems of increasing subtlety.

Now it is of infinite importance to have clarity of thought concerning "reality," which, of course, cannot be explained on this page. It may be repeated here, however, that reality as a human concept is always *a relation*, not something independent of the human mind, and "absolute." The reality commonly denoted by the term is only sense-reality—the natural correlation of things to the human senses in the ordinary state of consciousness. When this changes into the state vaguely called psychic, the reality changes correspondingly. Earth and iron, ad hoc, are positively real to the embodied spirit, but to the spirit discarnate they no longer exist, as we in the ordinary state of consciousness know them. This is the crux problem of "reality," as regards the scientist and the Spiritualist alike. Let it not be forgotten that those states of consciousness which seem utterly different are nevertheless *not* unrelated. Hence confusing experiences of psychical researchers.

* * * *

Bearing on the above problems, we quote from the "Newcastle Sunday Sun" some remarks by Mr. R. Hunter, President of the new church at Heaton, touching evidential phenomena:—

> The question as to whether such phenomena are produced by a sub-consciousness of persons present, known as "sensitives," or are the work of exterior supernormal beings from another plane of existence, is difficult to determine.
>
> Much of it can be classed as coming from the inside, but those who have patiently studied the subject over a period of years cannot fail to recognise that there is a residue which points to the ability of investigators to get into contact with exterior entities.
>
> Religious sects have nothing to fear from the acceptance of this belief, reached after careful scientific research.

* * * *

The "Wembley News" has a long article on Spiritualism, by Arthur C. Norris, who, in the course of it, puts a naïve question that can hardly be called impertinent:—

> It will not be disputed that people on earth are prone to speak falsely deliberately, as suits their case. Why should it be thought a strange thing if discarnate beings speak untruthfully? Does immediate transition from earthly life into the enjoyment of life in the spirit world *ipso facto* miraculously convert a liar into a saint, or at least a truthful being?

POOR CHILDREN'S TREAT.—Mrs. Alice Jamrach would be grateful to receive donations and gifts to assist in the promotion of a Christmas treat to be given to some 200 or 300 children, according as funds permit. This entertainment, which has been held in past years and to which readers of LIGHT have generously contributed, is held under the auspices of the Little Ilford Christian Spiritualist Church. All contributions forwarded to Mrs. Jamrach, 8, South Park-crescent, Ilford, will be gratefully acknowledged.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH THE SCHNEIDERS.

MR. HARRY PRICE DESCRIBES SOME TEST SEANCES.

Much has been said and written concerning the extraordinary powers of the two physical mediums, Willi and Rudi Schneider, the two Austrian lads whose psychic gifts have been the subject of some extensive investigations on the part of Baron von Schrenck-Notzing and other well-known researchers. Mr. Harry Price, in detailing his own experiments with the two boys, in a lecture at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research on Tuesday, November 30th, gave so intimate and vivid an aspect of the Schneider case, that the audience might well have left the lecture hall with the impression of having themselves investigated the phenomena. Mr. Price not only gave a wealth of detail, but also showed a large number of unusually interesting lantern slides, depicting scenes in the life of the Schneider family, as well as photographs of some of the séances in progress.

Herr and Frau Schneider, said the lecturer, are a very amiable, hardworking, highly-respected couple, living in the Austrian town of Braünaü-am-Inn. They live over a printer's shop, of which Herr Schneider is the foreman typesetter. Of their twelve children, four possess powers of physical mediumship; Willi and Rudi showed unusually strong powers, and these two boys fortunately came under the notice of a wise counsellor in the person of Commander Kogelnik, a former Austrian naval officer. Willi, the elder, who is a dental student, is unhappily now suffering from a lung affection, and has been ordered into a sanatorium; this illness has had the effect of decreasing his psychic powers of late. Rudi was, at the time of Mr. Price's arrival in Braünaü, also on the sick list, owing to a poisoned leg.

"I started my investigations," said the lecturer, "feeling quite convinced that the Schneider phenomena were the result of clever trickery." That impression was afterwards completely dispelled. The most rigorous precautions were taken to eliminate all possibility of fraud. The séance room was stripped, measured, scrutinised inch by inch, walls and ceiling carefully tapped, floor and furniture examined, etc. The medium was stripped, examined and clothed in a skin-tight suit. (A photo was projected here, showing Willi, clad in the test suit, which was decorated with luminous paint, and with hands and feet under rigid control—the conditions in which the manifestations were observed.)

Some remarkable phenomena took place, in good light. A table was levitated; a musical-box repeatedly played and stopped when requested. The stopping and starting followed instantaneously upon the word. "I requested that the musical box should be wound up—an operation that normally required two hands," said Mr. Price. This request repeated in various languages was at once obeyed, on several occasions. A bell was raised in the air and rung by an invisible force, upon request.

At Braünaü a pseudopod—a tiny materialised hand, without a thumb—picked up and waved various handkerchiefs. Mr. Price's handkerchief, which he dropped on the floor, danced and took various shapes as though manipulated by invisible hands. At Munich, a "tug-of-war" took place, Baron von Schrenck-Notzing together with another sitter, vainly endeavouring to hold down a stool which was raised from the floor by some unseen power. The result of the contest was the breaking of the stool.

At the next séance, a similar exhaustive examination of the room and the medium took place, and at the request of the investigators, precisely similar phenomena occurred. As an expert amateur conjurer this fact had particularly struck Mr. Price, because no conjurer willingly gives the same trick more than once before the same audience, as repetition naturally increases the chances of detection. In the Schneider case some of the phenomena were identically repeated nine times. Space does not permit including details of all the manifestations, nor of the elaborate tests made to ensure a water-tight investigation. Mr. Price described his method of controlling Willi Schneider, a method of control which is possibly as effective as any that could be easily devised. He places his chair at right angles to the medium; within the angle so formed the medium's feet and legs are placed. The controller presses his own feet against those of the medium. He also holds the wrists of the medium, while the medium's hands are placed on the controller's knees. This form of control is probably as near scientific perfection as one can get in the circumstances, and is infinitely preferable to tying with ropes—a method which is no safeguard whatever if the medium is an experienced trickster, while it is sometimes unnecessarily painful to the genuine medium, whose powers may be inhibited by the constriction and discomfort of ropes or cords.

In conclusion, Mr. Price said, "We left Munich fully convinced that there was such a thing as genuine physical phenomena."

FAREWELL LUNCHEON TO DR. R. J. TILLYARD.

In connection with the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, a farewell luncheon was given to Dr. and Mrs. R. J. Tillyard on the eve of their return to New Zealand where, as previously mentioned, Dr. Tillyard is taking up important Government work.

The event took place at the Piccadilly Hotel on Tuesday, 30th ulto., and the guests included (in addition to Dr. and Mrs. Tillyard), Sir Richard Gregory (the Editor of "Nature"), Susan Countess of Malmesbury, Lord Charles Hope, Mr. Harry Price, Professor Julian Huxley, Mr. Edward Heron Allen, F.R.S., Mr. E. W. Janson, Mrs. F. E. Leaning (Editor of the "British Journal of Psychical Research"), Miss Mercy Phillimore (Secretary of the L.S.A.), Miss Lucy Kay (Secretary of the National Laboratory), Mr. J. Arthur Findlay, Mr. Roy Holmyard, and Mr. David Gow (Editor of LIGHT).

SIR RICHARD GREGORY, as one of the hosts, in the course of some highly appreciative references to Dr. Tillyard, spoke of him as having lighted a candle which had not yet been put out. That candle might seem to flicker, but he thought that was all to the good. Science had for centuries fought for freedom of thought, and in this subject he considered there should be the same freedom of thought and expression of the results of observation and experience. He felt sure that whatever the results of the correspondence in "Nature" might be that Dr. Tillyard's observations had made a permanent impression on the minds of the scientific world. He had known Dr. Tillyard many years ago, and was glad to renew his acquaintance during his recent visit. He regretted the fact that the Doctor was returning to the other side of the globe, but he knew that although he would not be here, they would not be separated—there were all the modern methods of communication between them, and he thought that it was this idea of the abolition of the limits of time and space that was at the bottom of Psychic Science. It was an idea to be cultivated. He had the highest regard for Dr. Tillyard's work. He felt it a privilege to be associated with him in regard to raising the important question of the attitude of Science to Psychical Research. Personally, he felt the greatest gratification at the presence of Dr. Tillyard amongst them.

MR. HARRY PRICE, supporting the toast, warmly endorsed Sir Richard's appreciation of Dr. Tillyard. He was glad to think that there was a possibility that Dr. Tillyard would only be away for a year or two, and they would all look forward to his return.

DR. TILLYARD, in some felicitous remarks, responded to the toast. He thanked all present for their very kind remarks about himself and the good wishes they had expressed for the future happiness and prosperity of himself and Mrs. Tillyard. Alluding to Sir Richard's remark, he said that he understood that he represented a light of one candle power—one of Price's candles. (Laughter.) In this matter of psychical research, he had been taxed with his want of experience. But he had found that in three or four months one could gain a great deal of experience if one ventured on the inquiry without prejudices and preconceived ideas. Alluding to certain ruptures in connection with the subject, he thought the seriousness of such things might be exaggerated. It was a desirable thing sometimes that children should go away from their old homes. He pleaded for the cultivation of good will and breadth of view, and closed with an optimistic forecast of the future career of Psychical Science.

"THE RETURN OF PETER GRIMM."

A special private view of this remarkable film-play was given by the Fox Film Company at the Capitol Picture Theatre, Haymarket, on Friday morning, 3rd inst. The house was crowded, a large proportion of the audience consisting of the followers of Spiritualism and Psychical Research, amongst whom were many well-known people.

Before the play commenced, Mr. P. J. Hitchcock introduced the Rev. G. Maurice Elliott, the author (with Mrs. Maurice Elliott), of "Angels Seen To-day," "A Modern Miracle," and "In Converse with Angels"—who delivered a brief address. Mr. Elliott said that one of the reasons for his presence there was that he was a clergyman of a Spiritualistic Church—the Church of England. That Church was based on the Bible, which was full of instances of communication between this world and the world of spirits. This communication between the two worlds had not ceased, as he could testify from his own personal experience. His own little daughter had been saved by direct intervention from the Unseen. The film they were about to see dealt with spiritual phenomena, which it treated with taste and beauty. It would appeal to their minds because the subject was handled sensibly. There was nothing in it which in any way violated what they knew of psychic possibilities, and the naturalness of the life after death. The appearance of such a film was an event in the history of the Spiritualist movement.

The film-play, which has already been described in LIGHT, was then given and followed with the keenest interest and enjoyment by a large audience.

INVINCIBLE SCEPTICISM.

A NOTE ON THE "MARGERY" CASE.

BY F. E. LEANING.

The article of greatest interest to readers of LIGHT in "Psyche" for October, is undoubtedly that by Prof. William McDougall on "The Margery Mediumship." He begins by giving in broad outline the history of this absorbing case, since he considers that his position in the investigation qualifies him to review the evidence, and to utter as it were a counterblast to the pamphlet entitled, "Harvard, Margery, Veritas," recently put forth by "an influential group of the Margery partisans." He has of course as much right as anyone else to publish his opinions, and he is as thoroughly convinced "that deliberate trickery had been used in the production of a considerable proportion of the phenomena"—these are his exact words—as the Pro group are convinced that Margery's phenomena are genuinely supernormal. He uses the expression "trickery" and "extensive trickery" over and over again; but he strongly objects to the least imputation of unworthy motives, such as fear of ridicule, or loss of academic status, as weighing with his own group. And then he tells us, "It is for the public to judge between the claims of the two groups, the Pros and the Cons."

If those who were there, the immediate eye-witnesses, are found to differ diametrically as to what they saw or did not see, how in the world can the public who were not there, and have only hearsay to go upon, "judge between the two groups"? If "the observations have to be made under peculiarly difficult circumstances," the opinions of those who have never made any at all are surely rather irrelevant. As a matter of fact, what does divide the public into two groups upon any such question, is the use of an individual criterion; and that is, how far the particular marvel accords with anyone's knowledge of human experience. It may not be his personal experience, but according to the width of his knowledge will be the soundness of his judgment. There is such a thing as invincible ignorance, even in the scientific world, and it is not new. Sixty years ago a vigorous and convinced writer, William Howitt, said his say on this point with a certain racy directness of phrase which we hope will not offend our politer age if we quote.

"Learned pigs," said he, "don't believe in pneumatology. They believe in troughs, pig-nuts and substantial potatoes. Moles and learned pigs were contemporaries of Adam, and have existed in all ages. When the mole was called up by Adam to be named with the other beasts, doubtless our great ancestor had scarcely time to say 'Mole!' ere the creature had disappeared out of this our phantasmal world into his lower and *real* one. The learned pig, wrapped in his comfortable carboniferous grease and eschewing what is "too big to swallow and too hard to bite" passes his days in rest and quiet. Once and once only did the devil get permission to torment the learned pig and he did it by forcing upon his consciousness the presence of *spirit;* and we all know the tragic result—he and all his learned brethren ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choked. Why, then, I would tenderly ask Spiritualists, should they so continually be desiring to lead the learned pig into the same catastrophe? Good Spiritualist, let the learned pig follow his safe and unerring instinct; let him wallow voluptuously in the slough of theory, and don't drive any spirit into him, which must by nature and all her laws—choke him. Pleasant fellows of the true mole and learned pig school, the more evidence you give them, the more they are blinded and choked. Pleasant fellows and right philosophical, who set out in the search for truth with a patch over one eye, and a magnifying lens stuck in the other, who therefore honestly assure you that they can't see what you try to show them, but see all on the other side five times the size of life. . . ."

So we find the professor's lens showing him that ectoplasm "bears a very striking resemblance to a piece of animal lung cut to present some crude resemblance to a hand," and even has the appearance (in a photograph) of "cut alveolar surfaces with sections across bronchial tubes" and so on. And what about it when it has the appearance of a face, with a bright intelligent eye looking at his own? Can lung do that? But we will turn the patch-side to this disturbing phenomenon; particularly if it does not occur in our own psychological laboratory. And of course, "the Ec.," as Dr. MacDougall conveniently nicknames it, may really turn out to be lung-tissue, manipulated by "trickery extensively employed"; so extensively, indeed, as to be rendered quite invisible and yet capable of ringing the bell-box in a sitter's hands as he walks about the room, or countering the weighted scale-pan in an untouched balance. It seems as though whether it is real "Ec." or real lung-tissue, it does very wonderful things. But one more wonderful than any it cannot do, and that is to persuade a learned psychologist to "reverse the principles of a life-time," or refuse "when in doubt" to play *trickery* every time.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

A sarcastic correspondent informs me that in spite of the proofs which Spiritualists have laid before him lately he continues to believe in Spiritualism! Which is very nice of him indeed. It reminds me of the advice once given to his flock by a clergyman of the advanced type (I think it was our friend "Woodbine Willie") who said, "Go on believing in God—never mind what the parsons say!" That was the sentiment, although, quoting from memory, I may not have got the words quite precisely. There is a tendency to forget that scientific proof is not the only kind of proof. Scientific proof is necessary in the case, for instance, of physical phenomena. But there are other and deeper aspects of Spiritualism which stand in need of no such confirmation.

* * * *

In its strict sense, proof is a matter which concerns the lawyer, the mathematician, and the scientist. The very rigidity of its meaning makes it of limited application in the practical affairs of life. There is so much in life which we accept without proof, so much that we know beyond the slightest scintilla of doubt, to be true, that for ordinary purposes we can well dispense with water-tight demonstrations.

* * * *

Many of us accept the idea of a Guiding Intelligence as a matter of reason and intuition. Nobody has "proved" the Deity's existence. To be strictly and pedantically logical, a scientist ought not to pray, although a well-known Fellow of the Royal Society to whom I made this suggestion, retorted that scientists have great need to pray hard. I think he is right!

* * * *

I think it was George Jacob Holyoake who rather cruelly said of Carlyle that he was always demanding silence, in order that his own voice might be heard. We have long been familiar with certain hostile critics of Spiritualism who are accustomed to denounce its "emotionalism" in passionate terms. Might we not say of such people that they are demanding the abolition of emotion in others in order that their own emotions may have free play?

* * * *

Here is a fable which has just come into my head:—

THE EXPLORERS AND THE ALARMIST.

A party of explorers in a very cold climate, while sheltering in some huts roughly constructed for the occasion, were surprised by the appearance amongst them of a wild fellow who went through their camp yelling, "Fire! Fire!" at the top of his voice. Issuing forth, the travellers desired him to direct them to the scene of the disaster, and he accordingly took them, running and shouting excitedly, to a large building of the existence of which they had until then been unaware. Rushing into the place after him they discovered that the only sign of any conflagration was a fire burning cosily in the grate. It was the very thing of which they were most in need, and they benefited accordingly.

MORAL.

We should be patient with the retailers of inaccurate statements and exaggerated reports. They have their uses.

* * * *

I number amongst my animal friends a Persian cat of graceful manners and distinguished presence. He is refined, sensitive and fastidious. By the inmates of the house in which he resides he is known as "Bill"—an indignity which he resents by never answering to the name. In point of fact he seldom answers to any name, moving only at his own will and pleasure. But with all his aristocracy of manner "Bill" is subject to strange caprices. Now and again he will rush about the house as though at play with an invisible playmate. His behaviour on these occasions is so striking that his adoring mistress asserts that "Bill" sees and disports himself with the spirit of a favourite cat of hers who died some months before "Bill" came on the scene. It may be so. I am willing to believe almost anything about cats. They are so mysterious.

* * * *

As to the secret of "Bill's" curious antics, so unlike his normal self, I can say little. It is perhaps a matter for the clairvoyants. But I have noted that he is super-sensitive, which may have some bearing on the case. He certainly appears at times to perceive things which (humanly speaking) are not there. I pass over (with contempt) the flippant suggestion of one of the younger members of the family that "Bill" has joined a cats' "developing circle" and either developed clairvoyance or obtained a "control"—that, in short, he is a psychic cat.

D. G.

AN Address, "Observations on the Divining-rod and Other Phenomena—Chiefly South African," will be given at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, at 16, Queensberry-place, South Kensington, S.W.7, by Professor E. Garnett, B.A. London, on Tuesday, December 21st, at 8 p.m. A number of Kaffir drawings, etc., will be exhibited during the evening.

THE PSYCHIC SIDE OF STAGE LIFE.

BY A THEATRICAL MANAGER.

The Rev. George Vale Owen's recent article in the "Referee" under the title "Are Actors Inspired?" prompted a cynical friend, a dramatic critic to whom I showed the article, to reply to the question in somewhat acid terms. "Most of the actors I see," he said pessimistically, "are, quite definitely, *un*inspired." Mr. Vale Owen, however, was dealing with the matter, not in the poetic, but more in the literal sense; he suggested the possibility of departed actors and actresses being able to influence the work of living artistes while actually performing behind the footlights, and instanced a list of theatrical folk, quoted in "La Revue Spirite" who have openly acknowledged their indebtedness to the world of spirits. Sarah Bernhardt was one of these, and it was claimed that her great predecessor Rachel was her inspirer. Dame Nellie Melba also has related that while singing in grand opera she found herself in a partially entranced state, when the beautiful quality of her voice appeared to become intensified. Miss Lilian Baylis, of "Old Vic" fame, is another who has similar views as to possible spirit intervention in stage activities, and attributes some of her successes to the help of William Wycherley, the eighteenth-century dramatist, and to George Frederick Cooke, a brilliant Shakespearean interpreter.

These things are interesting, without, however, being conclusive. Certain it is, that the actor is by nature and training peculiarly sensitive and impressionable, at least upon occasions. It is reasonable to suppose that he might be a fitting subject for other-world guidance in certain circumstances.

I recall a curious incident which came under my personal notice. I was performing in some amateur theatricals, when a fellow-performer who was regarded as a very reliable amateur, was seen to become agitated, apparently finding the utmost difficulty in completing his part. This was naturally diagnosed as a simple case of stage-fright. At the conclusion of the performance some of us proceeded to "chaff" the actor upon his unexpected failure to conclude his part as brilliantly as he had begun it. He explained. "I had no sense of stage-fright at all," he said, "until I caught sight of X." (naming a well-known producer), "sitting in the stalls. I naturally went to bits after that!"

"But why do you object to X. sitting in the stalls?" I retorted facetiously, forgetting for a moment the full significance of my friend's explanation.

My fellow performer looked at me in silence. Then I suddenly remembered; X. had died three week's previously!

. . . . .

The following true incidents seem to suggest that actors may at times be peculiarly susceptible to telepathy. I was in the prompt-corner, "holding the book" during a certain "first night." My duties were numerous, but my chief function was to follow the play word by word, and be ready to prompt any artist who might forget his or her part. It was my custom at these times to keep my eye on the "script," but always keeping a few words ahead of the actor. In an unguarded moment I read into one of the sentences a word which did not actually occur in the play. (I was, of course, reading silently). I noticed the intrusion of this extraneous word, and re-read the line to make sure that it did not exist in the "script." At that moment I was startled to hear the actor who was speaking misquote the line exactly as I had mistakenly read it.

This seemed like thought-reading. I determined to try again. I glanced down the page, and mentally noted another point where I could, without affecting the play, introduce a slight change in the author's words. When the actor reached this point, I deliberately "willed" him to misquote the line in a certain manner—which he did, word for word, as I had imagined it.

I tried the experiment at subsequent performances, but without success. Probably the peculiar nervous tension of a "first night" (which, however, usually disappears after the *première*), may have had something to do with it.

At other times, when a nervous understudy has "gone on" at short notice to play an unaccustomed part, and has exhibited signs of nervous collapse, I have tried to assist her—and, I think, with success—by reading her part silently, from the prompt corner, and mentally "chucking" the lines at her (I can express it in no other way). This has, on the two or three occasions I have tried it, always appeared to reinforce the tottering memory of the nervous artiste, and restored something of her normal confidence. When I have noticed a nervous actor hesitating for the next word, I have frequently "chucked" it at him mentally, and he has never failed to bring out the correct word immediately.

WE learn with regret of the recent passing of Major John De Witt Jebb, a former officer of the Cameronian Highlanders (Scottish Rifles), a keen student of our subject for many years and an old subscriber to LIGHT. Major Jebb's transition occurred in his 79th year, after a protracted illness.

SIDELIGHTS.

Dr. Annie Besant and Mr. Krishnamurti who were due in England last month, have cancelled their passages and decided to remain in California for the winter.

* * * *

Dr. R. J. Tillyard, F.R.S., Vice-President of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, has sailed for New Zealand.

* * * *

Messrs. Will Goldston, Ltd., announce that in a forthcoming publication, "Further Exclusive Magical Secrets," will be included a number of secrets connected with the "escapes" of the late Harry Houdini. Mr. Goldston states that Houdini entrusted him with these secrets on condition that they were not divulged during Houdini's lifetime, but permission was given that Mr. Goldston could publish any of them should he survive the master magician. This statement contradicts a recent newspaper report that the records of Houdini's secrets are to be destroyed.

GLASTONBURY.

Capt. Bartlett, "John Alleyne," of the "Gate of Remembrance" and the "Hill of Vision," accompanied by his wife, "Carlyon de Lyle," gave a delightful talk on his Personal Experiences in psychic matters to a large audience at the British College of Psychic Science on November 24th.

Mrs. St. Clair Stobart ably presided.

The inspirational sketches of Glastonbury in its prime, and the inspirational music inspired by visits to Glastonbury, added to the pleasure of the audience.

It was valuable to realise more clearly from Captain Bartlett's address, that mediumistic powers had accompanied him sporadically from boyhood, and at intervals culminated in consecutive work. The Glastonbury Script, in association with Mr. Bligh Bond, was apparently the high-water mark, the result of a steady growth in mediumistic power.

It is to be hoped that the unpublished scripts of this same series, grouped under the name of "The Middle Kingdom," will be given to the public in book form. It can only be of benefit to all concerned to pass on these valuable messages.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Captain and Mrs. Bartlett, and to Miss Walton, who accompanied them for the pleasure the evening had given.

SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY SERVICES.

ADDRESS BY MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART.

In the course of a deeply interesting address at the Grotrian Hall, on Sunday morning last, Mrs. St. Clair Stobart said that the most convincing book in the world about Spiritualism was the Bible, although a Spiritualist's view of the Bible is something very different from that held by those ignorant of psychic phenomena; indeed it is only intelligible to the thinker through that light. One might just as well try to understand the heavens without the aid of astronomy as try to understand the Bible without the aid of Spiritualism. What had been stumbling-blocks before, in the light of the new revelation became turnstiles to a glorious understanding of the mystery of revelation and inspiration. Our knowledge of the laws governing inspirational writing helps us to understand the apparent discrepancies which we encounter in the Bible, for we know that communicating spirits make use of the unconscious mind of the medium, and that therefore the communications are sometimes unconsciously coloured by the thoughts and beliefs of the medium, but we can see the direct spirit inspiration in the outpourings of the prophets, but reason calls us to deny special inspiration where a mere record of events is concerned. It seems, therefore, that the inspiration came not so much to those who wrote the Biblical events as to those about whom the Bible is written. The greatest work to which we can devote our time and energies is to help the Churches to recognise that the Spiritualism of to-day and the Spiritualism of the Bible are one and the same thing; this is a work in which we can feel proud to have a part, and in taking a larger or smaller share in the Community Services, we are taking a larger or smaller share in a movement which seeks to re-establish within the Churches the Spiritualist religion which Jesus taught.

M. J. C.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS."—It is difficult to answer your letter as you do not give your name or address. If you will forward your address it is possible we might be able to put you in touch with a local society.

M. E. ASKINS (Bristol.)—Thanks for your letter. It is too late, however, to use a poem on the Spirit of Armistice, and in any case it would be necessary to obtain permission from the owner of the copyright.—ED.

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Public Clairvoyance.

Fri., Dec. 10th, at 8 p.m. ... ... **MRS. MARRIOTT.**
Fri., Dec. 17th, at 8 p.m. ... ... **MRS. PODMORE.**

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

Vol. V. **"PSYCHIC SCIENCE."** No. 3.

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Sunday, December 12th, 11 a.m. ... ... MR. E. SPENCER.
"The Great Light."
Followed by Spirit-descriptions and Messages.
" " " 6.30 p.m. ... ... MR. E. SPENCER.
"Life Here and Its Bearing on the Life Hereafter."
Followed by Spirit-descriptions and Messages.
Wednesday, December 15th, 7.30 p.m. ... ... MRS. F. STEVENS.
Address, Spirit-descriptions and Messages.
Healing, Tuesdays, 7.0 p.m. Wednesdays, 3.0 p.m.

The London Spiritual Mission,

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At 11 a.m. ... ... MR. ERNEST MEADS.
At 6.30 p.m. ... ... MRS. ALICE JAMRACH.
Monday, December 13th, 7.30 ... ... MR. STAVELEY BULFORD.
Lecture on "The Human Aura," with Demonstrations.
Wednesday, December 15th, 7.30 p.m. ... ... MR. HORACE LEAF.
Clairvoyance.
Wednesday Services at 7.30 p.m.

Worthing Spiritualist Mission Church, Grafton Road.
Sunday, Dec. 12, 6.30, Mr. Ernest Hunt; Dec. 16, Mrs. Fillmore.

SUNDAY'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—December 12th, 11.15, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. E. M. Neville. December 15th, 7, Miss Jessie McKay.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High-street.—December 12th, 11, service; 6.30, Mrs. de Beaurepaire. Wednesday, 7.30, at 55, Station-road, public circle.

Croydon.—Harewood Hall, High-street.—December 12th, 11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Mr. C. L. Brown.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—December 12th, 11, public circle; 6.30, Mrs. Holloway. December 16th, 8, Mr. F. Crook.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—December 12th, 7, Mrs. M. Crowder. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. A. Jamrach, D.N.U.

Bowes Park.—Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (down side).—December 12th, 11, Mr. G. W. Coleman; 7, Mme. Clare O. Hadley. December 15th, 8, Miss R. Goldsmith.

Richmond Free Church, Ormond-road.—December 12th, 7.30, Mr. Horace Leaf, address and clairvoyance. (Doors close 7.40.) December 15th, 7.30, Mr. Newman, address and clairvoyance.

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