

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!"—Paul.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Looking back over the files of *LIGHT* of thirty years ago we note many sayings curiously illuminating, and some of them so applicable to present-day problems that they might have been uttered yesterday. Here are some passages from an article by "M.A. (Oxon)," written at the end of 1887:—

It is natural that a subject which has attracted so much attention from the public of late years should be attacked. . . . It does no harm but good that it should be attacked. It is unfortunately unavoidable that private annoyance should be caused by these spiteful attacks. It is not pleasant for any of us to have to go over and over the old ground in controversy with a friend who thinks he has found a serviceable stick to beat us with. Life is too short for such logomachy: and it is as fruitless as it is unpleasant. Nevertheless, we cannot expect to be free from it so long as an obscure and perplexing subject irritates the public mind. Spiritualism has the faculty of inspiring some minds that are prepared and ready for its teachings; and it has the gift of reducing others to a state of unreasoning fury on which argument is wholly wasted and thrown away. . . . We could wish that our friends had a clearer view of the impossibility of forcing unwelcome truth on an unprepared and unwilling mind, and that our enemies would pursue their own course in their own way, and cultivate charity.

\* \* \* \*

Many times in the past has reference been made to the extraordinary psychic phenomena at Epworth Parsonage, Lincolnshire, during the time it was occupied by the Rev. Samuel Wesley and his family, which included, of course, John Wesley, his son. The need for a concise account of events which amongst orthodox Wesleyans there was a general tendency to ignore or gloze over has now been met by the little volume, "The Epworth Phenomena" (Rider & Sons, 2s. 6d. net). It is collated by Mr. Dudley Wright and prefaced with an ably-written Introduction by Mr. J. Arthur Hill, although we are struck by the fact that, while Mr. Hill finds that John Wesley, by reason of his critical instinct "would have made an excellent member of the S.P.R.," Mr. Dudley Wright in his Foreword thinks that John Wesley "cannot be claimed as a scientific investigator or observer." "His attitude frequently borders on the credulous," says Mr. Wright, "and his method of examination would certainly not have come up to the modern standard of a psychical researcher." The two criticisms disagree, but we find it not impossible to reconcile them to some extent by remembering that the criterion of what constitutes a true psychical researcher is a variable quantity. The book gives us not only a full and particular account of the Epworth happenings from Southey's "Life of Wesley" and the published letters of

the Wesley family, but also excerpts from John Wesley's own journals relating various cases of supernatural happenings which he came across in his travels.

\* \* \* \*

In the course of a letter too long to reproduce, Mme. de Steiger replies to the remarks of N. G. S. on "Natural Law and the Spirit World" (p. 399). She suggests that much of the difficulty in these matters would be solved if the word permanent were substituted for real and the word impermanent for unreal, or illusory. The older Mystics, she points out, taught that all things which belong to this world relate only to a temporary condition, in which they are continually changing. They are not merely altering but alterative—they change in appearance in accordance with the varied grades of human perception. This was why they urged the laying up of treasures in the spiritual region where everything was permanent and independent of the mutations of time and sense. It is not that the objects of the world of time and space are deceptive in any sinister sense. It is rather the deception under which a child might mistake a bright medal for a sovereign, or a glass bead for a diamond. All that the senses perceive is true enough, but only relatively to those senses.

\* \* \* \*

Having summarised so far we may give remaining portions of Mme. de Steiger's letter in her own words:—

Whether there are houses, trees, &c., in another world we have no certain knowledge. But we cannot deny the statements of those who assert that there are. We have no right to argue resentfully if such conceptions do not coincide with our own ideas.

I remember being told by a thinker, for whom I had great respect, that everything in the next plane of existence was far more real than anything in this. It was not that they were so different, but so much more vital. The alchemists always spoke of this astral (our present) plane as being of a very spongy, porous nature, and much less vital and firm than the plane to which our nerve bodies belong. It seems to me a certainty that we leave our sense-bodies behind us, and pass on in our nerve-bodies with our nerve sensorium, and therefore also a certainty that there can be, and is, communication between these two planes, just as certainly as we can have painful nerve sensations in these sense-bodies, though the flesh surrounding these nerves may appear to be perfectly healthy to all our senses.

INDEX TO "LIGHT."—In view of the diminished size of *LIGHT* and the fact that hardly one reader in a hundred has any need for the index, we follow the plan we originated last year of printing the index separately for the use of those who bind their volumes. It will be ready about the third week in January, and can be had on application, price 3½d. post free.

THE GEOLOGY OF CHARACTER.—As minute particles of matter immersed in sea-water descend lower and lower, ultimately creating in the bed of the ocean a deposit which in course of time may again be elevated by natural convulsions; so the most insignificant thoughts and ideas floating in the mind gravitate to the subconsciousness of man, there to solidify and form a bed-rock of character which shall again be brought to the surface by that upheaval of Nature which men call death. —RICHARD REES,

## ANGELS AND EVIL SPIRITS.

By "Joy."

Nobody goes through this life uninfluenced by those who have passed to the other life—good, bad, or indifferent. People are oftentimes judged by the company they keep. Far more accurately, by those who have the psychic vision which enables them to penetrate the veil of sense, can they be gauged by the spirits whom they attract. That vision has been mine for many years—long before I knew anything of Spiritualism, save what was occasionally told me by sundry pious folk who regarded it as something to be shunned as one would Beelzebub. For I was reared in the orthodox faith, and for the greater part of my life was a member of the Established Church, for which I shall always entertain a deep affection and reverence.

There is a ministry of angels concerning which I am glad to have been allowed to testify in *LIGHT*. There is also a ministry of evil spirits. Between these extremes there is a great host of discarnate beings of varying grades of spirituality and intelligence who mingle with those who still abide on earth. It is not these spirits, be they high or low, but we ourselves who determine to what extent we are influenced by them for good or ill.

Ignorance of the law of spiritual affinity and attraction exempts no one from its operation. Least of all those who find their chief satisfaction in life in the gratification of their sensual appetites or selfish desires. Generally they pride themselves on possessing far too much common-sense to believe in what they call "spooks." Not a few such have I met who, unfortunately for them, were possessed of sufficient means to indulge to the full in what they liked best. And I have seen with them those from whom they would have fled in terror and disgust could they also have seen them.

Though the evidence of evil deeds may be hidden from the gaze of men it cannot be hidden from spirits. In the course of my career as a professional nurse, I was at one time engaged to attend the wife of a lawyer who was, apparently, in affluent circumstances. He was a man of marked ability and strong character. In the town in which he lived he was much respected and implicitly trusted. But when I first met him I knew that he had done things, or thought things, which rendered him a prey to evil spirits, for I could see them with him. He was a very reserved man. By the members of his household his usually abstracted, and occasionally distracted, air was attributed to overwork and pressure of business, for he had a very large practice.

He kept a little terrier. One night the dog started howling dismally. Everybody knows the superstition, as it is commonly called, which, especially when there is sickness in the household, interprets the howling of a dog as a sign of impending death. My patient was much upset by it. Intent on quieting the dog, I hastened from the bedroom to the library from whence the disturbance came.

The dog stood backed against a wall, its legs stiffly braced, the hair about its neck bristling, its eyes wildly staring. I had made no noise on entering the thickly carpeted room, and the lawyer seemed unaware of my presence. He was pacing the floor, muttering to himself, "I cannot stand this any longer; there is only one way out of it." There were others in the room. I don't think he saw them, but I am sure his dog did, just as I did, and it was the sight of them which caused him to emit howls of terror. They were spirits, dark-hued and evil of mien. Me they ignored, keeping their gaze fixed on the lawyer, giving vent to mocking laughter and gesticulating derisively at him. I snatched up the terrier, which immediately ceased its cries, and slipped out of the room.

I was the first to enter it next morning. The lawyer was dead. On the desk, littered with papers, on which his head had fallen, was an empty phial. Its contents had provided him with what he, poor misguided, erring man, regarded as "the only way out of it." Investigation of his affairs disclosed that he had misappropriated large sums of money entrusted to him by clients and had lost them in speculation. His poor wife

survived him only three months. As she expressed it, she had "nothing left to live for."

Those spirits whom I had seen gloating over her husband had, very likely, by impressing their evil thoughts upon him, lured him to destruction. But his was the responsibility for making himself receptive to their influence by disregarding the voice of conscience and stepping aside from the path of rectitude. He chose the wrong when he had the power to choose the right.

The influence which evil, or demoniacal, spirits may exercise over human beings is not a pleasant one to dwell upon. But it exists. It is a stupendous fact. It should be recognised and guarded against.

As regards friends and associates in this world, our range of choice is often exceedingly limited by circumstances, environment, caste distinctions and social conventions. No such restrictions are imposed upon our choice of companions from the other world. We can have the friendship and help of Angels. Or we can accept the guidance of those who will strive to make us evil like unto themselves. Few people wittingly choose the latter, but certainly many unwittingly do so.

Rank, wealth, worldly position, lowly toil, poverty or obscurity count for nothing in determining whether good spirits or evil spirits shall exercise the greater influence over us. Often have I seen an Angel prompting, guiding some poor woman who, while struggling heroically against dire poverty was striving still harder to "hearken unto God." And often, too, have I seen debased spirits with a richly-clad, purse-proud, worldly-minded, vain and selfish "lady" who would have deemed herself contaminated by contact with the woman who, unawares, had an Angel for her guest.

"As a man thinketh so he is." As a man thinketh so, too, are his attendant spirits. By his thoughts he determines whether they be good or bad; whether they be those who will help make him better, or those who will do their best to make him worse.

Scientists tell us that one who gives way to violent passion distils actual poison which can be detected by chemical analysis of his perspiratory excretions. By yielding to furious anger he attracts to himself evil spirits and subjects himself to their malign influence. That may have far graver consequences for his soul than his self-produced poison may have on his physical being. The presence of these malevolent spirits cannot be detected by chemical analysis, or any instrument which science has yet devised, but by the psychic sight, if sufficiently acute, they are clearly discerned. So, also, is the change in the aura which results from abandonment to gusts of temper. That must be visible to spirits. Perhaps it is that which reveals to those discarnate beings whose delight it is to work evil that another victim has, temporarily at least, laid himself open to their attacks. And they are quick as thought to take advantage of it.

When one yields himself to the promptings of his better nature—that within him which is divine and hungers and thirsts after righteousness—his aura correspondingly changes, reflecting his aspirations. He attracts those bright spirits whom I call Angels, who are ever watching for opportunities to help us get nearer to God.

Several persons who have read what I have written in *LIGHT* about Angel Ministry have told me they ardently wished they could see Angels as I do, and have asked me how they could develop the power. Alas, I am unable to tell them. I do not know. It simply "came" to me long before I had heard or read anything about psychic development.

It is a precious privilege to be able to see Angels. But still more—much more—to be desired is the power to become conscious recipients of Angel Ministry. That, I believe, can be acquired by all who devoutly seek it. It is not dependent on the possession of clairvoyance or clairaudience. No attendance at circles or séances is necessary to obtain it. What is necessary is the attainment of that state of mind in which one feels impelled to "sing a glad song unto the Lord." It is usually termed "going into the silence." I should prefer to call it "going into the House of the Lord." It is, I think, what is meant by the phrase as used in that wonderful twenty-third

psalm. For verily it is the soul's holy of holies. Before it can be entered, every vestige of selfish and discordant thoughts must be got rid of. How? By entertaining good thoughts—by bringing to mind things for which one needs must feel grateful to God. That should not be difficult for any true Spiritualist. The absolute assurance of survival after death that has been obtained through Spiritualism, and the certain knowledge that the loved ones "over there" are mindful of him and love him still, should fill his heart with a deep sense of gratitude. So much has God bestowed on us here that he must be spiritually benighted indeed who, even in these days that try men's souls, cannot find something—many things—for which to thank God.

Angels will help him. By believing that—by realising it—entrance to the "House of the Lord" will be made easy for him. Angels will enter with him. To the extent of his capacity to receive them they will impart to him those spiritual truths which can be apprehended by the spiritual understanding alone, and which will give him a deeper, firmer trust in the All Father and His infinite love, and will bring to his soul something of that "peace of God which passeth all understanding." To experience that, even in a small measure, is worth far more than the acquirement of any psychic power known to psychic science.

I believe that many Spiritualists who are seeking to develop psychic faculties would find much less difficulty in acquiring what they desire if they would, in this way, seek first "the kingdom of God and His righteousness." Then might they realise that "all these things shall be added unto you."

For this reason I am glad to be able to testify to the value of the meetings for devotional contemplation that precede Mr. W. J. Vanstone's Thursday afternoon lectures in the rooms of the Spiritualist Alliance. There, at such times, do Angels gather, too. Their great work on earth is to help us progress spiritually, whatever form of religion we may profess.

Alas, it is little we hear of Angels from pulpits in these sad times. For the most part they seem to have been "explained away" by modern theology. They will have to be reinstated before the churches will be able to give the people what their hearts hunger for. Not from preachers but from poets do we learn of them meanwhile. Listen to this:—

Our Angels go with us the whole of the way  
That we travel to God in our garments of clay,  
And their hands are in ours, and our hearts are aglow  
With the vision of Him they prefigure below;  
Till we pass through the portals of death, and we find  
They have compassed our feet from before and behind.

It is by Miss E. M. Holden, who has written much that is beautiful and inspiring about Angels. I extract it from a little book of poems by her entitled "By Shakespeare's Shrine," now being sold on behalf of war-victims.

### CHILDHOOD AND REINCARNATION.

In the new composite work entitled "Immortality," one of the writers, Miss Lily Dougall (author of "Pro Christo et Ecclesia"), deals thus with the above subject:—

A final difficulty concerning reincarnation is little touched upon by its advocates, that is, that it makes childhood, which appears so beautiful and so holy as the beginning of a virgin soul, a gigantic lie, merely a part of nature's protective mimicry intended to deceive parental love and human reverence, the greatest of the illusions of sense. It is hard to conceive how any mother can look into the dawning intelligence of her child's eyes and be satisfied to believe that in innumerable past lives that same soul has gone through experience savage and civilised, has probably been in turn harlot or rake, victim or tyrant, wife or warrior, layman or priest, and perhaps all these a hundred times. If we take the beauty of that story of Jesus Christ setting a little child in the midst of His disciples and telling them that to become "like this little child" is to find the door of the heavenly kingdom, we shall realise how for us the whole beauty and point of the scene vanish if we think of the soul of that child as already an aged pilgrim, scarred and seamed by evil experience, only innocent in the sense in which the senile are innocent when memory entirely fails.

### A VOICE FROM THE CHURCH.

THE REV. R. J. CAMPBELL'S POINT OF VIEW.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell has an article in the Christmas number of "The Church Family Newspaper" on "Communication with the Dead." The claim of many to have won through Spiritualism an indefeasible assurance that those whom they mourned as dead still live and still care for them, and to have found in that assurance a spiritual stimulus as well as a remedy for hopeless grief, may, he freely admits, be accepted at its face value without cavil or scorn.

Nor is it of any use for outsiders to deny the reality of the experiences thus indicated. The time for that sort of thing has gone past. Clairvoyance, clairaudience, levitation, the materialisation of spirit forms—all these, and many more that might be named, are facts attested by trained expert scientific observers. . . . Men like Sir William Crookes, President of the Royal Society, the late Alfred Russel Wallace, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Sir William Barrett are not men whose testimony on this or any other subject is to be lightly discounted. The two last-named have been intimate personal friends of the writer for many years; both are scientists of repute, both Fellows of the Royal Society; both have devoted half a lifetime to Psychical Research; and both are fully convinced, as all the world knows, that the survival of personality after the shock of physical dissolution has been fully demonstrated. In fact, it may be safely asserted that no person who has ever taken the trouble to familiarise himself with the facts collected by the Society for Psychical Research during the last thirty years or more would be prepared to deny the genuineness of the phenomena upon which Spiritualism is based, whatever interpretation they may choose to give of those phenomena.

The Church, as such, has never denied the phenomena; its attitude is not that of denial but of warning. Mr. Campbell quotes with approval the late Monsignor Benson's exposition of the reasons governing authoritative Roman Catholic practice regarding communication with the dead. Greater experience and independence of judgment might have modified the following sweeping conclusions:—

Nine people in ten who go to professional mediums in search of solace for love bereaved are unaware of the disappointments and deceptions that may await them, not always the medium's fault by any means. They are entering a region of uncertainties, bewildering mystifications, baffling and mysterious hindrances. It would seem probable that the plane nearest to our own in the world of extra-physical relations is peopled by spirits of a comparatively low order—earth-bound, as they are often described—and these delight in impersonating others, in lying and tricking, and sometimes in placing sinister temptations in the way of those who have dealings with them. A fact that needs to be impressed upon the modern mind is that demon possession is not a phenomenon of New Testament times alone, but takes place now with dire effects; it is madness to throw one's being open to the influx of occult forces on the bare assumption that they may be good.

A CENTRE is infinitely small, practically nothing apart from a circle. A finite self would be equally nothing apart from the Infinite.

THE REGULATION OF LIFE.—As Archdeacon Wilberforce has said, "All actions have their origin in mind." All inventions are simply the result of mental vision. All experiences are within the choice and the determination of the spiritual man—of his higher self, which is dwelling in the ethereal realm even while by his denser body he is still tethered to the physical world. One may, indeed, almost absolutely determine a day before it begins. All its wants and its groupings of people and incidents will be coloured and controlled by the quality of thought brought to bear upon the panorama, and the degree of refinement and elevation of thought depends, first of all, upon prayer, and largely upon the quality of reading and general interests. "Every man," says Dr. Wilberforce, "capable of recognising the paralysing power of flesh over spirit the, numbing influence of habits formed in the normal tenour of human life, will acknowledge the value of a recurring authoritative appeal to the heart and conscience, which invigorates the will, purifies the aspirations, and elevates the aim and scope of life."  
—LILIAN WHITING.



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### 1917: A RETROSPECT.

Our glance behind must needs be brief and general. We are, indeed, not fond of looking backwards, except in reposeful moments, for the contemplation of some pleasant picture painted by memory, or, perhaps, to gain some hint that may illuminate the present.

The year has still some few days to run, so that our survey cannot be quite complete. If it were a matter of details we should perforce have to wait. But looking at things "in the large," we can safely take account of developments and tendencies, without fear that a few days will radically alter the general aspect.

During 1917 the progress of our movement marked fresh and definite stages, under the influence of that great testing of the nations which grows all the time in severity. The problem of death and its meaning emerged more starkly and insistently than ever. It brought in as inquirers and students many of the most intelligent observers of our subject, as well as thousands who had never thought about the matter at all until it was brought home to them by personal bereavement. They found it a vastly more important movement than they had ever thought possible. They discovered that instead of a small horde of superstitious people whose sole concern was with table-rappings and "weird manifestations," Spiritualism represented the beginnings of a great science and philosophy, numbering many persons whose names command respect in other departments of activity. That was the first lesson; they learned that they had been woefully misled by those they had looked up to as authorities, whether in the Pulpit or Press or on the Platform. That lesson had a personal as well as a general application. It pointed the moral of Self-Reliance and the necessity of seeing things for oneself instead of relying on the judgments of others. And it applied fully as much to those within the movement as to those without. The Great Revelation is the opening of a mighty Doorway, but it is not a final Goal. It is a fresh light on life, but it is not the Great Illumination. That belongs to the Spiritual and not to the Psychic order of things. This is a view which has of late been forced upon many of us more strongly than ever during the year about to close, and thus marks one of the developments on the inside of our subject. It will last us as a text for a long time to come. Until it is thoroughly realised there will still be room for much criticism, not wholly uninformed, concerning those who mistake supernormal powers for moral and spiritual qualities.

Nevertheless, a great advance has been made. Many things that were before cloudy and indistinct have become definite, showing themselves in clearer outline. The dividing lines between those who pursue Spiritualism religiously, scientifically, or philosophically have become clearer, and there is less confusion of thought regarding central issues.

A great deal of good work has been done in all three departments of the subject. Much of it has not yet come to the light, but it has all reacted beneficially on the thought of the time. To-day the old Materialism is very clearly on its last legs. Its incursions into the daylight have revealed its defects of intelligence in a way that has covered some of its protagonists with ridicule. 1917 gave us some examples of this that no preceding year has equalled. And in no previous year, we think, have so many persons investigated our subject, moved not so much by propagandist efforts as by vacuous and ignorant criticisms implying the intellectual bankruptcy of the old order. For the signs of a bad case are quickly discernible, especially when it is fought in such a fierce light as that which now beats on the opposing sides.

We could easily have filled this space with a record of the notable events and distinguished names which have signalised the activities of Spiritualism during the year under review. But these will be still fresh in the minds of readers. These things have made the year a memorable one, and although on the material side of things it has been a day of clouds and thick darkness, we have every reason for satisfaction with the progress made all along the line. In the great night which has fallen upon the earth we have been able to show lights in the gloom. Few of us may survive to see (from this side at least) the port to which our movement ploughs on through the wave-racked Hebrides of these bitter days. Meantime we hold on our way; our sailing directions are clear. With Rudyard Kipling we can say:—

Be well assured, though in our power  
Is nothing left to give  
But time and place to meet the hour,  
And leave to strive to live,  
Till these dissolve our Order holds,  
Our Service binds us here.  
Then, welcome Fate's discourtesy  
Whereby it is made clear  
How in all times of our distress,  
And our deliverance too,  
The Game is more than the player of the game,  
And the Ship is more than the crew!

### A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF DECEMBER 31st, 1887.)

The year now closing has seen perhaps as near an approach to a bloody revolution in the metropolis of this country as this generation has witnessed. Long continued distress among a large section of the community patiently borne and with little outward show of complaint—for our peasant and our artisan are, as a rule, patient and self-respecting—has been utilised by designing men for purposes of their own.

—From the leader, by "M.A. (OXON)."

The "New Age" has for its Christmas novelty a ghost story by Mr. Eglington [the then famous medium]. It is not often that a man writes on a subject about which he knows so much.

—From "Jottings."

HOLD on, hope hard in the subtle thing  
That's spirit.

—BROWNING.

## SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION OF THE BORDERLAND.

BY "EWING" (SAN FRANCISCO).

In *LIGHT* of August 4th (page 243), under the heading "Scientists Arrive at the Borders of the Infinite," I quoted at some length the conclusions of modern physicists that matter (even electricity) has been proved to be discontinuous, thus calling for (a) a non-atomic or etheric body to connect and relate the atomic dots that supply the illusion of solidity to the human organism through which it is functioning, and (b) a similar substructure of the Universe under all the diverse phenomena as a suitable habitat or environment for the continuous growth and development of these non-atomic etheric (religion would catalogue them as spiritual) bodies after they have been liberated by the processes of evolution from the atomic vehicles kindly supplied by Nature for specialisation and development in this lower order of vibration.

The physicists are becoming dualists. But the popular mind, unacquainted with the rapid advances of Science, is almost offended at the suggestion of the discontinuity of matter, little realising that it has advanced from the realm of speculation to a solid basis proven and accepted by the greatest physicists now living.

The man in the street was not ready to admit that different aspects of matter could occupy the same space at the same time, much less admit that the atoms could be so far apart that a lower order of vibration could exist within a ratio so much higher that they not only do not conflict but can be apparently independent and unconscious of each other's existence.

The atomic theory was the only one that covered all the facts, but there was always one open factor—the absolute proof was wanting. Yet the physicists were so well satisfied with the atomic hypothesis that they have for years accepted it as fully established.

Hence we read in Jevons's "Principles of Science":—

There might be here and now passing through us and this world some planet invisible to us, with mountains and oceans, rivers, lakes, cities and inhabitants, and we not know anything of it at all.

And to quote the eminent Dr. Carl du Prel:—

The beyond is only the Beyond of our senses; it is the unknown *Here*. The line of division is not drawn spatially, but by the threshold of sensibility. The two worlds are not adjacent, but within one another, and existence in the Beyond does not follow existence here, but is contemporaneous with it.

Professor Dolbear, Professor of Physics of Tuft's College (Massachusetts), author of the text-book, "Matter, Ether and Motion," goes into further details, thus:—

If the earth moves through the ether, not disturbing it in any appreciable degree, is it not conclusive that all the phenomena of our physical life are moving among the phenomena of ethereal life, not displacing or interfering with it, and that thus all about us is this finer Universe, unperceived except where some development of the spiritual powers perceives it by means of that finer sight and hearing of the psychic senses?

The discovery by Röntgen of the X-rays, Marconi's discovery of the possibilities of wireless telegraphy, Tesla's discovery of atmospheric currents—all these constitute a group of new insights into Nature which are of the utmost importance—not only in revealing potent resources hitherto undiscerned, but as indicative of the progress of humanity in conquering new territory in the unseen.

Dolbear continues:—

What is the nature of the spiritual world? The answer seems to be that it is a world corresponding to this, only of higher potencies. All the present life of humanity is twofold, and is lived partly in both worlds—the seen and the unseen. Telepathy—now scientifically recognised as a mode of communication as real as telegraphy—is a method of the unseen universe. Wireless telegraphy belongs to that realm. Just as rapidly as the power of the spiritual man develops and demands methods of life pertaining to the spiritual world these methods are evolved.

Other scientists could be similarly quoted, but the above will be sufficient to show how the physicists have abandoned

monism and have become dualists. True, pure reason formed the atomic theory as the only one explaining all the phenomena of life, but there has always been lacking the keystone of the arch—viz., the physical proof—and the masses held back.

But note the dawn of the twentieth century. Professor Dolbear's affirmation that "as rapidly as the power of the spiritual man develops and demands the methods of life pertaining to the spiritual world, these methods are evolved," has been verified. The University of Chicago gives the world the proofs. Professor Milliken, its Professor of Physics, announces to the world the greatest achievement physics has ever known—the isolation and measurement of an electron—thus proving the discontinuity of matter and the determination of many of its properties. Even electricity is found atomic in structure, "the atoms in front being pushed by those behind."

With absorbing interest I heard Professor Milliken tell a large audience at the University of California of his researches, and I now have his book on "The Electron," fresh from the University of Chicago Press. I am profoundly moved by the prophetic vision of men like Jevons, Dolbear and others, who could anticipate Milliken's work by arriving through processes of pure reason at the stupendous facts that his researches have now demonstrated.

To the questioner, the man in the street and the passing multitude, let it be now said the proofs are in hand, that they are not merely demonstrated by a single fact or a few facts, but are established by hundreds of carefully recorded experiments.

In my previous article I hesitated to give some of the most interesting and conclusive of Professor Milliken's observations, fearing to trust to my memory of the same, but with his book before me, I can now quote him accurately. For instance, to give us an idea of the wonders of Nature and how infinitely small an electron is, he says:—

It is by such direct experiments as these that the electronic constituents of atoms are found to be as small in comparison with the dimensions of the atomic systems as are the sun and planets in comparison with the dimensions of the solar system.

Again, in the same vein, he says:—

The number of electrons contained in the quantity of electricity which courses every second through a common sixteen-candle power electric lamp filament is so large that if all the two-and-a-half million inhabitants of Chicago were to begin to count out these electrons and were to keep on counting them at the rate of two a second, and if no one of them were ever to stop to eat, sleep, or die, it would take them just twenty thousand years to finish the task.

At this point the doubter is liable to ask if the electrons can be accurately counted. To this he replies (p. 71): "There is not a whit more uncertainty about this count than there is in counting one's own fingers and toes."

And this brings another interesting consideration—viz., one of the methods by which these astonishing and epoch-making results were achieved. In dealing with "the smallest thing in the world," it became necessary to evolve instruments of refinement heretofore unknown, for the electron had to be weighed and measured. On p. 101 our author tells of the electrical balance evolved for this work that "will weigh accurately and easily to one-ten-billionth of a milligram," a fact which will be more fully appreciated when it is remembered that a milligram is about one-thirty-thousandth of an ounce. In a word, the Chicago physicists are measuring accurately "bodies so small as not to be visible at all to the naked eye" (p. 102), the "method being quite independent of the nature of the body or of the medium in which it is immersed."

But the materialist finds his Waterloo on p. 191. There is ever coming back to the materialistic mind the troublesome question, "Must not the existence of two worlds in the same space at the same time be opposed by the sane and sound physicist?" Let us hear the answer to this question by Professor Milliken, the last word in physics demonstrated beyond peradventure of a doubt by the crowning achievement of science, the isolation and measurement of the electron. He says:—

The notion that an atom can appropriate to itself all the space within its boundaries to the exclusion of all others is then altogether exploded by these experiments. A particular atom

can certainly occupy the same space at the same time as any other atom if it is only endowed with sufficient kinetic energy.

This gives us a better grasp of Dolbear's declaration above in which he refers to the phenomena of our physical life as "moving among the phenomena of ethereal life, not displacing or interfering with it . . ."

The above throws illuminating rays on the address of Sir William Crookes of some fifteen years ago in which he graded matter according to the vibrations from one (represented by a pendulum beating seconds in the air) to 9,000,000,000,000,000,000 per second (the radium rays), the latter being so subtle as to transcend physical limitations, passing through all solids. Sir William naïvely says that the higher vibrations may be at "the threshold of the wonders of the unseen universe," and continues: "It seems to me that in these rays we may have a possible mode of transmitting intelligence which, with a few reasonable postulates, may supply a key to much that is obscure in psychical research."

As illustrating the accuracy of the work of the physicists of the Chicago University, Professor Milliken gives a table (page 74) to show how infallibly the atomic structure of electricity follows from their experiments, adding—

No more exact or more consistent multiple relationship is found in the data which chemists have amassed on the combining powers of the elements and on which the atomic theory of matter rests than is found in the foregoing numbers.

In a word, ~~modern science is not only invading the infinite by disclosing the etheric (spiritual) body and the etheric (spiritual) universe in which it functions but is locating it, and not in remote space but all about us—here and now~~ "in the same space at the same time." We are in both worlds at the same time, commonly sensing but one—the lower order that corresponds to our vibrations and our vibratory senses. We are in heaven all the time, but unconscious of our regal heritage except in rare moments when the veil is lifted and the soul gets a fleeting vision of the eternal verities that lie all about us. Tennyson has referred to God as nearer than hands and feet, and the physicists are now completing the picture.

### THE LATER ÆSOP.

#### JUPITER AND THE SCEPTIC.

A Sceptic who doubted the existence of the Gods once supplicated Jupiter to give him some Sign whereby he might be assured of their existence. So great was his unbelief that even when the God answered him out of a cloud he persuaded himself it might be only the working of his own Fancy. Nevertheless, in reply to Jove's question as to what he desired, he begged that a tree might be uprooted by some unseen agency. And later there came a great gale, which tore from the ground a mighty Oak. But the Sceptic was still unsatisfied, for (said he) "after all, it was only the Wind." So he begged to be shown another Phenomenon—namely, that fire should come out of the ground. Soon afterwards a mighty eruption took place from a Volcanic Mountain, which the Sceptic was near enough to behold. Yet he was still discontented. There was nothing wonderful, he said, in a Volcano. But being persistent, he prayed again, this time asking to be shown some great body suspended in space and upheld by nothing. Even as his petition finished, the moon rose over the hills, as for a sign. "True, it rests on nothing," he grumbled, as he watched it poised in the heavens, "but it is only the moon."

And thereupon there came a great clap of thunder from Olympus, following a flash of lightning which blinded the eyes of the Sceptic. And the Father of the Gods spoke from a cloud once more, saying, "Presumptuous wretch, if thou canst see nothing wonderful in the works of Nature thine eyes are useless to thee." And the Sceptic, now become a Believer, wandered sightless all his days.

D. G.

READING SOCIETY BAZAAR.—Mrs. Street reports that the society benefited to the extent of £40 by the recent sale of work.

## 1918: THE REVELATION OF SPIRITUALISM.

By HENRY FOX.

The new year 1918 will inherit a great revelation—the revelation of Spiritualism up to date. Amidst the horrors and the gloom of the great world war there is to be seen a new sun arising above all the darkness and fog and chill of the new year.

It is the dawn of the new revelation of the oldest truth about all the inhabitants of this little globular dot in the universe which we call the earth.

This ancient truth now arising afresh in men's hearts is this—that man is a "spiritual being" here and now: and that he never was and never will be anything else. As such he is gradually re-acquiring a new consciousness. It is a consciousness that lifts him above all the present limits of his five very limited senses; for it is a consciousness of the growth within him of the universal spirit of life—the source of no evil thing in heaven or earth, but the source of all that is good and true and happy.

Man is learning old truths in modern times. It is his Renaissance in every department of human life: in science, in politics and in all the arts of war and peace. And it all comes from the growing conviction which Spiritualism in its more cultured forms has forced on the attention of our modern intelligence—that man, as a "spiritual being," is capable of infinite development, and lives on this earth in his physical form only as one stage in his progress upwards and onwards towards the infinite. Why this stage was necessary for his higher evolution is the great secret mystery of his existence.

Why evil is so rampant and whence comes it all is only part of the same problem. But to those who know something of the new revelation, this secret ceases to have much interest. The world of evil for them is gradually disappearing and losing its hold on their thoughts and conduct: even amidst the horrors and abominations of this present ghastly outbreak of human ferocity they know that nothing outside themselves can injure their real selves.

"Shall we win this war?" is a question which loses much of its interest for those who see in this war the inevitable results of a materialistic civilisation in both victors and vanquished. The question of real interest is whether England and her Allies will enlist on their side and in a good cause the all-powerful spiritual forces which "move the visible world." If they do—then no amount of German hosts can defeat them. If they do not—then it leaves the issue to the forces of evil on both sides, and on these lines the chances are in Germany's favour.

Thus the teaching of Spiritualism and of all other forms of spiritual religion have a most practical bearing on the issue of this war.

If the new year sees a "conscription" of human souls to "the true front," as General Smuts calls it—"the soul of the nation"—then it stands to reason and to common sense that the peoples which believe in the higher forces of their nature as spiritual beings must inevitably conquer those who believe in nothing but brute force: for Spiritualism has proved the control of physical laws by the laws of the spiritual world. The materialistic amongst the Allies will perhaps scoff at this, saying "We will keep our powder dry," but Spiritualists will both keep their powder dry and also keep their hearts and souls "in tune with the Infinite."

The faith of all Spiritualists is built on the ultimate spiritual foundation of all human nature. Death will be no disaster to them. As the author of the ancient Sanskrit poem known as the Bhagavad Gita says:—

Slain—thou wilt obtain heaven;  
Victorious—thou wilt enjoy the earth:  
Therefore—stand up, O Son of Kunti,  
Resolute to fight.

With such a spirit as this within them the Allies will be unconquerable in a good cause—and the German hosts will melt away like the mists of evil before the rising sun: dissolved by a new light within them too.



This is not a blind faith, but a wide-eyed view of the reality of spiritual powers, available for every man who believes in them and in himself as a human dynamo, capable of generating the spiritual force which rules the world of matter, as surely and as effectually as any dynamo can and does generate the force and power of the electric current. The force of evil has before now proved to be powerless against the force of good—for the one "is of the earth earthy," and the other is the power of the Infinite Spirit of Life in whom we live and move and have our being.

If the new year, 1918, brings home to us the real meaning of this war and the real means of winning through to victory, it will be worth to us millions of "man power" and thousands of millions of gold: for gold cannot buy the happiness and contentment of the human race.

Spiritualists should be prepared, at any moment, to send strong reinforcements to the true front—"The Soul of the Nation."

## AUTOMATIC WRITING: A NOTEWORTHY EXPERIMENT.

BY THE REV. CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

As many of the readers of this paper are aware, it has been my good fortune to have had experience of almost the whole range of psychic phenomena in my own house during the last few years. I say "almost," for automatic writing has, up to a few days ago, been the exception. On December 5th my wife informed me on awakening that she had dreamed during the night that someone came to her and told her that we must sit with the planchette and we would get messages. I have a great respect for my wife's dreams, many of them having in the past been marvellous prophetic forecasts of coming events. As, for instance, her dream forecasting minutely all the details of the aeroplane race around the British Isles and placed on record by me at the office of *LIGHT* and elsewhere ten days before the event, all of which was accurately fulfilled to the letter, a vision of the wreck of the aeroplane being seen here at the moment of its fall into the sea off the coast of Ireland; for a full account of which I refer readers to *LIGHT* of that period. As we had tried the planchette before periodically during the last eight years and got practically nothing, I did not take any immediate action, but towards evening the matter coming to mind I resolved to try again. We got out the planchette and sat down to it. Almost immediately it began to move in such a manner as I had never seen it do before. Soon it swung round and round in long, sweeping curves, then began to write short words as "good," "yes," "no," &c. By this time my daughters had gathered round the table, all excited, and were watching the proceedings. I now sat alone at the planchette; not a movement occurred. My wife now held her hand above my hands, but *not touching them*, a space of about two inches intervening. I immediately felt the planchette endowed with power, and it began to drag my hands with it, until it was sweeping round in long ovals, making a thick track upon the paper. Several times was the experiment repeated. Alone, no movement, but as soon as my wife's hand was held over mine it was just like switching on the current to an electro-motor, and the planchette started off, dragging my hands with it. It now began to write words for me, and finally wrote the name of my dear mother, who passed over some years ago. This was done with my wife's hand held over, but *not touching*, my hand or the planchette, and with no voluntary movement on my part. Exactly the same experience befell my two daughters. Alone they could get nothing. The instant my wife's hand was held above their hands and the planchette, without touching them, it started as though endowed with life. Later in the evening the pencil wrote several sentences and intelligent messages when held passively in my wife's fingers. The notable points in this experience are (1) the dream communication and (2) the fact that three witnesses in turn felt the imparting of the power from the overshadowing hand of my wife. She noted a cold sensation on the palm of her hand as though a cold wind was blowing upon it, but none of those whose hands successively held the planchette could feel anything like this.

THE great work of genius is to eliminate the unnecessary.

DR. ELSIE INGLIS.

### THE STORY OF A TRIUMPHANT "GOING FORTH."

High in the magnificent roll of the heroines of the Great War will stand in future ages the name of Elsie Maud Inglis, M.B., C.M., whose work in France and Serbia in connection with the Scottish Women's Hospitals will ever be gratefully remembered in both countries. A character of singular nobility, courage, self-devotion and sympathy, she impressed herself in ineffaceable records on the minds of all who knew her or read of her labours, as that wonderful funeral procession in Edinburgh on November 29th last is sufficient evidence. All the way from the door of the Cathedral to the Dean Cemetery (nearly three miles) the streets were packed with people. Edinburgh, it was said, had never seen such a sight before.

We are indebted to Miss E. L. Chetham Strode for a copy of "The Common Cause" in which the splendid life and work of Dr. Elsie Inglis is described in graphic fashion. Our correspondent marks some passages which we give below. They are sufficiently significant.

We take first a passage from an article by Mrs. A. Flinders Petrie, hon. secretary of the London Units of the Scottish Women's Hospitals:—

That last day, it was only as the hours drew on, it is said, that she realised her discharge was being given, and that her present labours were finished. It does not seem given to many before death to perceive the new tasks awaiting them, but the doctor was able to talk confidently of the next work she was about to undertake. With her the vision was clear, and she several times pronounced it wonderful. We are not told more than this, but the hopes and beliefs of those who can hope and believe seem substantiated in these lively utterances of one who was severely truthful in her nature.

And this from a tribute by "One Who Was With Her":—

"What a triumphal Home-coming she had!" wrote one friend, and another writes: "How glorious the service was yesterday. I don't know if you intended it, but one impression was uppermost in my mind, which became more distinct after I left, until by evening it stood out clear and strong—the note of Victory. I had a curious impression that her spirit was there just before it passed on to larger spheres and that it was glad.

The same writer tells how as soon as Dr. Inglis knew that her end was near, she, with her wonted decision of character, instantly readjusted her whole outlook. "For a long time, I *meant* to live," she said, "but now I know I am going. It is so nice to think of beginning a new job over there! But I would like to have finished one or two jobs here first."

"I asked," she said, "what had happened? Someone said, 'Our moorings broke.' I said, 'No, a Hand cut them!'" Then, after a moment's silence, with an expression in face and voice which it is utterly impossible to convey, she added: "That same Hand is cutting *my* moorings now, and I am *going forth!*" The picture rose before you of an unfettered ship going out to the wide sea, and of the great untrammelled, unhindered soul moving majestically onwards.

There was no fear, no death! How could there be?

FOR EXAMINEES.—"Your Examination and How to Pass It," by Ellis T. Powell, LL.B., D.Sc., justifies its description as a manual of "plain and practical guidance based upon a wide experience." The price is 2s. net and it is published by the "Financial News" (for the National Efficiency Press, Ltd., 111 Queen Victoria-street, E.C.). We are not surprised to find that Dr. Powell devotes some paragraphs to the question of psychic auxiliaries. He faces the subject in so practical a fashion that we cannot forbear a quotation: "No man or woman ever begins the intellectual struggle without attracting the instant sympathy of the discarnate intelligences who fill all the planes of life that interpenetrate our own. Some of these will forthwith attach themselves to the struggler. By influencing his or her mind they will endeavour to bestow the priceless benison of their aid. This is a scientific fact, not a mere visionary conjecture. . . . Whatever the temperamental characteristics, certain it is that our best flashes of insight, our finest intellectual conquests, are seldom our own, but come from the planes of discarnate activity around."

## STUDIES ON IMMORTALITY.

## A TRIUMPH OF COLLABORATION.

"Immortality: An Essay in Discovery, Co-ordinating Scientific, Psychical, and Biblical Research" (Macmillan, 7s. 6d. net) is a distinctly noteworthy achievement in literary collaboration. The secret of its success is hinted at by one of its five authors, Canon Burnet H. Streeter, in the introduction, where he expresses his conviction that "intellectual co-operation only achieves its greatest possibilities where its basis is enthusiasm for a common cause and personal friendship." Canon Streeter's own contributions deal with "The Resurrection of the Dead" and "The Life of the World to Come." Progress is, to him, an essential element in our conception of that life. He regards as immoral the idea that the future state of the soul depends entirely on the state of mind at the actual moment of death, and holds that the notion of a material identity between the present and the future bodies is one which ought to be far more emphatically repudiated by the Church than has hitherto been done. Discussing "Presuppositions and Prejudgments," Mr. A. Clutton Brock includes among the causes of disbelief in a future life "the strange assertion, commonly associated with the Christian faith, that animals have no souls." Now that a thousand facts prove the likeness between men and animals, "the contention is obvious that, since animals have no souls, men can have none either."

I cannot believe in any real and universal fellowship unless I am ready to strip myself of all status. I cannot believe in a real future life so long as I think of it as the privilege of my own species. In the long run exclusiveness always shuts out those who exclude; for there is a terrible unconscious sincerity in the human mind by which all lies told for comfort or pride revenge themselves on the liar.

It is part of Mr. Brock's "Dream of Heaven" (he dismisses the conventional idea of Heaven with its characterless angels and saints, as due to a literal interpretation and misunderstanding of the myths of the artists) that progress in the hereafter will partly consist in greater freedom from the tyranny of the past—in the sweeping away of all status. "We shall love Shakespeare for himself, not for his reputation, and we shall come nearer to loving God also for Himself and not for His reputation."

One of the most interesting and at the same time informative articles in the volume is that in which Dr. J. A. Hadfield, approaching the subject purely from the standpoint of science, points to the tendency of the mind towards independence and autonomy as suggesting the possibility of its becoming entirely liberated from the body and continuing to exist after its liberation. Treating of "The Bible and Hell," the Rev. Cyril Wm. Emmet makes it clear that the doctrine of hell in the strict sense is not to be found in the Bible. Fear of hell, he shows, has never been a deterrent against sin, and our belief in the Fatherhood and love of God as revealed by Christ makes the idea of unending torment intolerable. Students of psychical science, however, will be chiefly attracted by the three striking essays by the author of "Pro Christo et Ecclesia" (Lily Dougall) with which the book closes. They are entitled respectively, "The Good and Evil in Spiritualism," "Reincarnation and Karma," and "The Undiscovered Country." In so far as it is a reaction against the superstition that it is wrong to pray for the dead or to believe in their fellowship with the living, Spiritualism, in this lady's opinion, shows a healthy instinct. But the methods employed by Spiritualists to bridge the gulf appear to her to be mistaken and therefore dangerous. Her concluding essay is an endeavour to show that assurance concerning the after-life can be attained in other and better ways. Like a recent critic in our columns she regards telepathy from the living as usually an adequate explanation of veridical messages. It doubtless explains some, but, to our mind, such messages as those in "Raymond" about the group photograph and the "Honolulu" song seem to have been expressly designed to rule out the possibility of this explanation. It is difficult to see what stronger evidence a communicator could afford that it was

really he who was speaking. However, the criticism is sober and thoughtful and hardly so severe as that to which the author subjects the Theosophical doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma—the latter she especially condemns as based on an entirely false theory of justice. The book is the work of cultured and deeply spiritual minds, and is well worthy of the great subject with which it deals.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## Theological Objections.

SIR,—In "Raymond" and Survival" (LIGHT of December 1st, page 378) Sir Oliver Lodge deals very briefly with the objections raised by Church opponents of Spiritualism on the score of its being diabolic. Sir Oliver is, of course, as a scientific man, more concerned with the scientific objections that are raised, although I think he is fully justified in claiming that the "fruits" of the cult are good.

However, that is not really the touchstone that is applied willingly by the various churches, who appear to be more concerned with conserving the purity of their special dogmas. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church certainly considers a bad Catholic to be better than a good "heretic."

Otherwise it might with some force be represented that if Spiritualism is the work of devils, then the devils simply do not know their job!

Rank materialism has been spreading all over the civilised world, with Germany as the centre, or hotbed; the churches hold most diverse views of the condition of man after death, and their teachings at the best have whittled away all functions and qualities, until what is left is shadowy and unreal. The "devils" have then only to abstain carefully from giving any evidence that man really does survive the catastrophe of death, and the world will go fast enough the way devils presumably would wish it to go. For if there is no convinced belief in survival, religion must become a mockery, codes of ethics a delusion, and German "kultur," with its frank repudiation of all responsibility towards one's fellow creatures, and its claim of the right of the strongest, will become the only logical and useful "civilisation."—Yours, &c.,

C. E. BADDELEY (Col.).

France.

## Dark Seances.

SIR,—Miss Irene Toye Warner's letter in LIGHT of the 15th inst. is a timely warning against the above as regards injury to eyesight. May I add my testimony to their danger to the entire physical well-being of both medium and sitters. I have only attended two of the "trumpet" species, and felt a physical wreck after one of them, and light-headed and depressed after the second.

In complete darkness, with little or no fresh air, often in a small room—are these the conditions for a séance at which we can reasonably expect higher intelligences than those on the "borderline" to appear or to speak to us? That some from a higher plane can so return to give proof of identity, I am convinced, but, as a rule, most sitters will agree, the conversation—jokes—and general tone of the intelligences are of a most banal description. Surely a red lamp would not frustrate phenomena, nor open windows dissipate force.

If clairvoyance, clairaudience, impressional speaking—I mean by this the use of the medium's voice by the communicating intelligence during semi-trance—and levitation can be produced in broad daylight, or by electric light, why must we continue to make the "enemy to blasphemy" and to denounce us as "frauds," by shrouding trumpet and materialisation séances in outer darkness?

Let us be normal, and then the veil between the spheres will be withdrawn, as it was in the beautiful legend of the Garden of Eden.—Yours, &c.,

"Pax."

EXCESS in the use of all or any faculty is a danger to the moral being as well as to the physical. . . . Only by a temperate, moderate use of our forces can we become their master and make them serve a high and useful purpose.—"Objections to Spiritualism Answered," by H. A. DALLAS.

To cure a disease is valuable, to rectify temperamental faults after they have brought us into difficulties is of great importance, but infinitely more valuable and important is a constructive policy that shall render us immune to disease and discount in advance any tendencies that are likely to lead us into difficulty in the future. Wisdom before the event is the price of freedom.—"Manual of Hypnotism," by H. ERNEST HUNT.

## SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, DEC. 23rd, &c.

*Reports and prospective announcements are charged at the rate of twenty-four words for 1s.; and 3d. for every additional ten words.*

**LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.**—Morning, Mr. E. W. Beard, "Help from the Spirit Friends"; evening, Mr. P. E. Beard, "The Changing World." For Sunday next see front page.

**CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM: 22, Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.**—Morning, some friends across the Border gave their experiences; evening, inspired address, "The Birth of Christ," by Mrs. Fairclough Smith. Carol music by our organist. For Sunday next, see front page.

**FOREST GATE, E.—EARLHAM HALL, EARLHAM GROVE.**—Sunday next, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn will address the meeting in No. 13 Room at 6.30 p.m.—E. S.

**CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.**—Morning, Mr. Nickels, of Luton, gave a splendid inspirational Christmas message. Sunday next, 11 a.m., Mr. H. Ernest Hunt; 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Annie Boddington.

**READING.—SPIRITUAL MISSION, 16, BLAGRAVE-STREET.**—11.30 a.m., message read from Mr. P. R. Street; address by Mr. Deadman on "Jerusalem"; 6.45 p.m., address by Mr. J. Jackson, "The Proofs of Spiritualism."—T. W. L.

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## THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (Oxon.)'

### ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance. If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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