

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" are omitted this week to relieve the pressure on space.

COMMON-SENSE SPIRITUALISM: TWO SYMPOSIA.

By STANLEY DE BRATH, M.Inst.C.E. ("V.C. Desertis").

PREFACE.

No more practical question than our attitude to these phenomena is before the world at the present time, for the form which social reconstruction will take must inevitably be determined by our decision to give weight to what is called the super-natural in our conduct of life or to ignore it.

The greatest need of the day is a Religion that will be not merely assented to but believed in as men believe in Hygiene. That Religion will be less a creed than a recognised principle and guide to practice. There can be no question but that the experimental method of physical science has completely displaced the old dialectical method in all departments of knowledge. The intellectual basis for Religion—apart from its purely moral or mystical concepts—must be similar in kind. Christianity at its inception brought forward such data; the Churches have lost their hold on the masses because they produce none. Therefore some definite proof of the existence of Spirit is required as a point of departure for the many minds which are not naturally religious.

There are two, and only two, logical bases of thought—Materialism and Spiritualism—using both words in their widest senses. The one assumes that Matter is self-existent; or, which comes to the same thing, that the non-material is negligible. The other infers, chiefly from the obviously pre-potent force of moral perceptions, that Matter is the vehicle of Spirit. The logical result of the former is the Will-to-Power and all the quagmire of inconsistency into which this *ignis fatuus* has led Germany. The other involves the conclusion that "Except the Lord build the city, the watchman waketh but in vain," which has a close bearing on our schemes for social reconstruction.

The conversations which follow are "composites" of actual occurrences, and represent five distinct currents of thought. The opinions of the Artist's Wife are nearly *verbatim*. For the statements of the Engineer and the Hostess I take full responsibility.

STANLEY DE BRATH.

Weybridge,
November, 1918.

SYMPOSIUM I.

An Artist and his wife, a Physician, a Soldier, and an Engineer met in the Hostess's drawing-room to discuss these matters.

ARTIST. Common-sense and Spiritualism are contradictions in terms. The futile nonsense which is gravely testified to by Spiritualists is the greatest outrage on common-sense that the world has seen. It is one symptom of a disturbance of mind which is nothing less than insane. Religion rests on man's sense of something greater than himself in the Universe, something which has inspired Art, Literature and Religion, and led him towards ideals. Even granting, for the sake of argument, that the "phenomena" are real,

Spiritualism debases these ideals and substitutes the gibberings of "mediums" and the frauds of the séance-room for the ideals which made an Augustine, a St. Francis, a St. Bernard, and a Raffaellino. Could it rebuild Rheims Cathedral or paint the Madonna di San Sisto? It leads downwards, not upwards.

ENGINEER. Pardon me, my friend, you are missing my point. I don't deny that much so-called Spiritualism is very poor stuff. I am concerned with the principle in it—that there really is an immediate after-life, not a future hard-and-fast separation between the sheep and the goats, but a life strictly conditioned by the character which every man has developed here: that this is not a matter of rewards and punishments, but is under inviolable laws like the laws of physical nature; and that communication between the seen and unseen has been demonstrated. This seems to me to supply common-sense data on which those who speak of thought being "secreted by the brain as the liver secretes bile" may revise their opinions, and realise that the soul of man is a real thing, independently of the body.

A. But this is no novelty. All religions have maintained most of that; and if people have come to disbelieve it, why not keep the proofs to the calm and reasonable atmosphere of scientific research?

E. Have the scientific researches of Sir Wm. Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Wm. Barrett, Professor Richet, and a round dozen of other men of science received respectful attention? Were they not first unnoticed and are they not violently decried? It seems an unfortunate fact in history that no cause makes much advance till it has the driving power of the masses behind it. It was so with early Christianity. It was so with the Reformation; while reform was in the hands of sober statesmen like Sir Thomas More, of refined scholars like Erasmus, and temperate theologians like Dean Colet, it made no tangible progress. Not till Luther called in the passions of the democracy, did it become a power. I don't deny that democratic Spiritualism sometimes takes on forms as coarse and vulgar as democratic politics.

A. But it is, all of it, so ugly. If there is to be religious revival, where is the need to drag the most difficult problems of human existence through the gutter?

E. Because they concern the gutter-snipes as much as the philosophers, perhaps more so; and we have no choice: it has become democratic. Religious faith and religious art have been before the world for centuries, and the *average* result seems to me to be symbolised with painful accuracy by the painted windows in our churches: we represent those who have striven and suffered and prayed as arrayed in impossible robes and with golden dinner-plates round their heads—which must astonish them mightily—but we don't try to understand them nor the purpose of their lives. We erect monuments to our great men, but we don't read their words, nor strive to carry on their work. And as to religious faith is it not a fact that the "faith" of which St. Paul wrote (before any of the creeds were in existence), which meant to him confident trust in God, has now come to mean assent to certain complex theological statements? Is not the common-sense of average men and women much more impressed by trivial facts *falling within their own experience* than by the most splendid achievements which lie outside it?

A. But I maintain that this spookery is not only ugly but dangerous. I will give you an example of my own knowledge. I know a man and a woman who, writing with planchette, were urged to entirely immoral relations by messages purporting to come from a deceased friend. The incitements were urged with much insistence and plausible "free-love" arguments based on the need for "self-development."

E. Yes: and how did it end?

A. Both persons felt that the communications *could not* emanate from the alleged source, and that to follow them must cause a quite honest friendship to end in disgrace. They put questions as if they were considering the advice; and the answers revealed a hopelessly low moral tone in the communicating spook, which finally gave the name of Lola Montez—a name quite unknown to either. The man came to me to ask if I had ever heard the name.

E. What did you reply?

A. That Lola Montez was a well-known courtesan of the Second French Empire.

E. Did that carry conviction, or did they accept your theory of the astral memory?

A. They thought it real, because the words fitted the character.

E. Precisely! That is the point. You in no way surprise me. I have known a few cases which lead me to agree unreservedly that the practice is very dangerous for those who do not approach these matters with purity, honesty, and a right motive. These are the safeguards. But I have known many other cases in which these experiences have led to Religion in the best sense of the word, by giving proof of the reality of an unseen world, and of the survival of human souls. For any of us who are tempted by illicit pleasure or illicit gain, traffic with the unseen is very dangerous: I can quite understand that some think it to be diabolical: for them it is diabolical. But to me it proves the existence of ugly souls as well as beautiful ones; a heaven and a hell which are all the more real by being created by states of mind, not fixed localities. Think what must have been the life of Lola Montez since she passed over, if such can be her aims now! The thing is just what we make it; those who are akin to the noble and the pure attract the noble and the pure, and do not suffer any harm from occasional base incursions, while base desires willingly lie open to base suggestions. Give me facts, I say—the more the better; I do not fear the conclusions.

THE ARTIST'S WIFE. Oh how I detest it all! I was once at a meeting of some really scientific men—Sir William Crookes and others—and they were telling how the medium, D. D. Home, had taken a glowing coal from the fire with his bare hands; and how a table first rose into the air, and afterwards became too heavy to lift. Crookes spoke of "materialised forms that he could touch." Such trivial nonsense! I was amazed that such men could pay attention to such *objectless* stuff! Even if it were true it was all so senseless.

E. Do you want me to reply?

A. W. I suppose I do.

E. Well, without the physical facts the whole question would resolve itself into mere argument and dialectic. Dialectic only convinces those who are already temperamentally inclined to the view presented: even Socrates found that. Dialectic presupposes that starting from admitted premisses we can argue out the truth about all things. We have done with all that nowadays. All Science, from bacterial sewage to psychology, rests on experiment. These men were interested because the experiments showed the existence of an unknown force.

A. W. But they were not experimenting. They were just gazing at things which upset all one's notions of an orderly world.

E. Give them a little time! Astonishment is the first stage of experiment. Since then a great deal has been established.

A. W. What has been established?

E. It has been shown by careful experiment that not only are there forces which can balance the physical forces of heat, gravity and the like, but that there is also a state of matter at present unknown in which it can transmit power, but is invisible,* and that these powers can be directed by unseen operators.

A. W. Oh! Spirits! That is worse still! To think that the dead have nothing better to do than to move tables and to hang about round us! I hate the whole idea!

E. Well, there is no need to think that; the evidence does not show it. What seems to be the case is that those who are united by common interests or affection have a kind of "wireless" sensitiveness by which they feel a telepathic call. But, of course, as large numbers of those who pass out of this life have had their only real interests—dress, food, drink, sex, sport, and gossip—knocked out of their lives, their only desire is to get back to it; they are desperately dull, and they do "hang around": and if anyone should try to "call up" Samuel, or Socrates, or King Edward VII., one of these vagrom spirits would say—"Here's a fool; let's have a joke on him," and will personate with more or less success.

A. W. But they all talk such rubbish; nothing worth a farthing has ever come through. I have read pages of the most utter nonsense automatically written. They are nothing like as good as people can write normally.

E. I agree with the last remark in the main. It is the natural consequence of human conceit. Average people are very easily put off their balance; as soon as they find that automatic writing is genuine, they think they are going to get revelations; and because their minds are poor in information and ideas, they get poor stuff, which might yet be of use to themselves if they would not rush into print. And I admit that the communications are mostly curiously limited, as if we were conversing with only a part of the mind we once knew. But when you say that nothing of value has come through, I think you are hardly fair. Have you read Stainton Moses' "Spirit Teachings," or Wallace's "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism," or Miss Dallas's "Across the Border"?

A. W. No, and I don't want to.

E. Just so. I think you are in the frame of mind referred to by Dr. Carpenter, who wrote that "New and startling facts, however well attested, are often rejected because

they are held to be opposed to the indisputable conclusions of science; hence people find that there is no place in the fabric of their thought into which such facts can be fitted, and until such place is made for them further evidence of the same nature is useless."

A. W. I suppose that is so. I believe the things I have known and tested by experience of life.

E. I have nothing to say to that except that it removes the question from the ground of truth to that of taste. There is no obligation to be interested in the subject any more than in the study of electricity. *Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra*, will bring anyone out all right. You are interested in plenty of things here and now: when you get over there you will probably think differently. But I would submit that we cannot justly pronounce things "nonsense" because one happens to dislike them. After all, the array of scientific men who have testified to the facts is rather formidable evidence of their truth.

PHYSICIAN. I confess that the growing number of these names somewhat puzzles me. It seems scarcely possible that they can all be deluded. But I have seen curious and very fixed delusions among the sick.

SOLDIER. But these men are not sick, and they begin in complete scepticism, as I did; only, as men of science, they are open to evidence and are specially qualified to study the causes of what they see; that is the first business of an experimentalist. And are we to suppose that their cameras, phonographs, and dynamometers are deluded too?

P. You don't mean to say that there are mechanically automatic records?

S. I certainly do. Prof. Crookes, F.R.S., Dr. Crawford, D.Sc. (the lecturer in engineering at Queen's University, Belfast), Lombroso, and others have published their measurements and photographs. There is plenty of evidence for those who are interested in it. I have nothing to say against those who are frankly uninterested in the subject; the people I cannot stand are "investigators" who do not investigate, but read small parts of what abler men have recorded, explain away the easy parts, ignore or deny the hard parts, and then launch out into abusive rhetoric, leaving the facts untouched. They are thoroughly unscientific, for they do not seek a solution, but only to prove a preconceived negative.

P. I confess I have heard of nothing except on the physiological side, which is that which mainly concerns me. There, I have seen some curious things; also, in a sense, delusions. When I was studying hypnotism I was shown what the consultant called "an experiment in free will." The patient was obviously sound asleep, snoring heavily, in fact. The doctor said to him in a low voice, "You will wake up on the last stroke of four, and before you leave you will light the candles on my mantelpiece." The patient continued to snore. It was then six minutes to 4 p.m. There was a small clock in the room. We sat down and waited. On the last stroke of the hour he stretched and sat up, and, seeing me, gave me a brief account of his case (insomnia). Nothing more was said. Arrived in the consulting room, he took his hat and turned to go. When he reached the door he came back, took off his hat, and stood with his back to the mantelpiece, talking. He then turned, sought a match, lit both candles, and blew them out, with a laugh. I said, "What in the world did you do that for?" He replied, "The idea came to me to see how they looked." "Do you mean you felt you must light them?" "Oh, no," he said; "of course I need not have done so unless I liked. I thought it rather funny afterwards." He turned and went out. My friend turned to me and said, "So much for free will!"

A. W. How horrible!

P. We had an argument afterwards, I remember, in which we agreed that "suggestion" disproved free will (if that needed disproof), but did not altogether inhibit the power of choice.

A. W. That is nearly as bad.

S. Why?

A. W. Not even our thoughts are our own.

P. But why should not unconscious suggestion be sometimes the starting point for our choices? The suggestion from higher minds might be useful: Socrates found it so.

A. W. I should not like to believe that.

P. Well, you need not, but it will not alter the fact if it is a fact. I used to think that a man's belief must turn on evidence; but I have found that the average man can usually believe whatever he likes, and the average woman always can.

A. W. Thank you!

HOSTESS. There isn't any average woman; every woman is herself.

S. Hear, hear! But what if the "spirits" are right, and interpenetration of thought is "the light of heaven," so that all our thoughts and memories are known to others, and that is how "there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed, nor anything covered but it shall come to light"? That information, if true, seems worth a good many farthings.

A. Not much joy about that!

S. I don't know that; one would soon get used to it. And it explains why everyone would go to his own place and his own kind. Napoleon at St. Helena. I have read, spoke of possible discussions with Alexander, Caesar and Hannibal about their campaigns. I do not read that he wanted to meet Wellington!

(To be continued.)

* See "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena," by W. J. CRAWFORD, D.Sc.

"RECONSTRUCTION AND THE CHURCHES."

Mr. E. Wake Cook (27, Hartington Road, Chiswick, W.4) writes:—

I wish to thank my courteous critics for their able and interesting letters (*LIGHT*, page 69), the last three confirming what the first says, that the Church's doctrine is in a state of absolute chaos. Their general effort to show that Christ did not preach the terrible doctrine of hell-fire is but another manifestation of that Spirit of Christianity which I have said is the most beautiful flower of religious thought and feeling. The plea that anything we do not like is but Eastern hyperbole is matched by a plea in the other direction. I heard a distinguished clergyman say, "It is now objected that the doctrine of fire and brimstone is but a metaphor; still we must remember that a metaphor always falls short of the reality!" So if it was not fire and brimstone it was something much worse!

None of my critics tell me anything I did not know, except the Rev. Vale Owen. His statement that a modified form of eternal punishment is in agreement with the best Spiritualist literature is indeed new to me after fifty years' study of it, at its best. I repudiate it as founded on an old-world misconception of the nature of "sin," and who and what is ultimately responsible for it. I agree with the Rev. Ellis G. Roberts that no one now preaches the old doctrines of hell-fire and the total depravity of man. These doctrines are dead and should be buried, as they infect the air. As I have said, the Churches should follow Christ's own example and sweep away all the barbarities of the Old and New Testaments, as He swept away the barbarities of the teaching of Moses. This should all be done as formally and as openly as Christ did. Then they should enthrone the lovely "Spirit of Christianity," with its eclectic cream of the whole. This would come as a great shock to slumberous folk; and the Churches would then need new sanctions to give the authority formerly given by the Bible. These are to hand in Spiritualism and Psychical Research, they offer boundless wealth in place of the worn-out rags of doctrine they would cast aside. These are the only foundations of the Religion of the Future. This should be further enriched by all that is good in Christian Science. The Divine, the Spiritual, and the Mental Healing should be freed from the fetters on thought and progress imposed by Mrs. Eddy; then we should have a soul-satisfying religion that would meet all the multitudinous demands of the coming time.

Turning to Mr. Charles W. J. Tennant and Christian Science, I must refute his "refutation." I know Christian Science inside and out, and I repeat my affirmation that it is powerless in some cases, in all those cases in which the teaching has become stale and flat, and cannot arouse that spiritual uplifting which it does at first with congenial minds. Mr. Tennant says that "its divine principle and rule never vary, and are able to meet and destroy every disease in every circumstance when properly applied." I would to heaven this were so; it would have saved me bitter suffering. Unfortunately, I have much first hand evidence to refute Mr. Tennant's assertion. My wife was an ardent Christian Scientist, had been "through class," was a member of the Mother Church, attended every meeting she could, and "did the lessons" regularly. She suffered much and long, and she died in early middle age, despite the best Christian Science could do for her. Another case of a young girl who suffered dreadfully, although a more devout Christian Scientist could not be. All the very best Christian Science healers were tried in vain; they could not lessen the trouble in the slightest degree. My wife was helped a little at first while it was fresh and could bring the needed spiritual uplifting; after that it lost its power. In the other case the girl had no old fossilised beliefs to be relieved from; she grew into Christian Science and it is her only religion; she, too, has been "through class" (a £20 course of instruction), and does the lessons regularly night and morning. A friend died in great agony despite Christian Science; but he was a hard-headed Agnostic on whom the teaching could produce no spiritual emotion. I could multiply evidence of Christian Science failure. Mr. Tennant says I object to them reducing God to a Principle. On the contrary, the Father of Modern Spiritualism did that long before Mrs. Eddy. My contention was that this is a form of Spiritual Pantheism, so Mrs. Eddy's denunciation of Pantheism, while she was a sort of Pantheist herself, is another of her innumerable misunderstandings. Mr. Tennant is as blank on the question of questions, an after-life, as Mrs. Eddy; they can throw no light on the all-important subject. The perpetual abuse of "Mortal Mind" and the senses is another of Mrs. Eddy's misunderstandings of the Eastern doctrine of Maya. These God-given senses have important work to do in our education in Time for Eternity; without them we could have no proper grounding, nor could we properly understand the wondrous works of the Creator. Their report is true as far as it goes from the five-sense standpoint, and this is not invalidated by the fact that there are higher standpoints, and vaster faculties yet to be unfolded within us. Despite all her confusion of thought, Mrs. Eddy showed a flash of real genius in searching for a natural Principle at the back of Christ's healing, instead of regarding it as supernatural. She discovered, long after the hypnotists, the power of suggestion, and the

value of holding the right thought; that is, the full realisation of the Divine image in man, and its freedom from sin, sickness, and death; and this thought tends to realise itself in the suffering mortal body.

THE LATE J. J. MORSE.

By THE REV. STANLEY GORDON.

I was deeply impressed in learning from the columns of *LIGHT* that Mr. J. J. Morse had passed within the veil to his real work. He was the first who taught me that Spiritualism is a fact and has to be reckoned with. It was in Glasgow in the year 1878—more than forty years ago. At that time, being deeply interested in platform oratory, I saw a bill announcing that a "trance oration" was to be delivered in the Trongate Hall. I accordingly sought the hall, situated up many stairs and somewhat dismal and unattractive. There was a fair audience of what appeared to be mostly working people. Mr. Morse came on the platform and underwent a kind of transformation which was visible in his countenance. To me at that time it was unaccountable, and then I listened to one of the most beautiful orations I have ever heard. I have heard Mr. Gladstone and many of our most distinguished political orators: I have listened to Beecher and Parker, and Liddon and Spurgeon, and many other eminent preachers, but for beauty of diction and sublimity of thought I do not think that I have ever listened to any address that made so deep an impression on my mind. I naturally went up to him afterwards to learn his secret, and was more than surprised to learn that he did not know a single word that he had uttered! Here was a phenomenon that completely staggered me. We adjourned to the house of Mr. S. Bowman, who was then a leader in the Spiritualistic movement in Glasgow. Dr. Coates, who has done so much for the cause of Spiritualism, was also present. In the house of Mr. Bowman it was "The Strolling Player" who controlled Mr. Morse, and I began to realise what mediumship meant. The wit and readiness of repartee on the part of "The Strolling Player" was remarkable. It was at that time I met David Duguid, who is still very much alive. My duties took me from Glasgow, and I only saw Mr. Morse once again, when he was resident in London.

Nearly fifty years he has given to the cause of Spiritualism in this world. He has sown the seed in all lands, often amidst hardships and difficulties that few can realise. He has borne the torch of truth aloft, and not without result. There are thousands who owe to his teaching their first impressions of what Spiritualism really means, and in his later years through the Press and otherwise he has been a consistent advocate of what he regarded as the greatest of all truths. What would this world be without such pioneers? They are ever the heralds of the morning, the precursors of some new era for humanity. Too often ignored in their generation, they are recognised in after years as the prophets of a new dispensation. But the work of Mr. Morse has only begun. Such work as his bears the stamp of immortality. Time alone can determine its value. The pioneers of Spiritualism will not be forgotten. Mr. Morse will have his own place in that noble band who, amidst persecution and obloquy, witnessed for those truths which not only confirm much of the teaching of the past as regards the Unseen World but which likewise shed such a flood of light upon the problems of the human soul alike in this world of sense in which we live, and in that more real world to which we are all so steadily journeying.

I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will if He had undertaken the work of a modern practical statesman.—BERNARD SHAW.

"THE WAY OF THE WORLD WORTH LIVING IN" consists of communications received through automatic writing by two sisters, and purporting to come from their departed brother, late chief magistrate in Calcutta. Dr. Ellis Powell, in an excellent Introduction, bespeaks the reader's especial sympathy for the communicator in view of the greatness of the difficulties he would have to overcome in bringing himself again within the reach of things terrestrial. We are asked, too, in a foreword by the sister who was the main channel of communication, to bear in mind, with regard to coined words and difficult sentences, that she was an amanuensis only and not an editor. We recall these appeals when we note the difference in style between the English of the foreword itself and that of the messages which follow. We find no oddities of language in the former, but the latter, while containing much that strikes us as helpful and thought-provoking, are marked by an air of wondering simplicity, and now and then a strangeness of expression, which are much more suggestive to us of the talk of a child than of a man of sixty. But we remember that the lessons the communicator had been learning—especially those of absolute sincerity in word and deed—are such as belong to the renewal of the child nature, long forgotten amid "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches," but without which, as the greatest of all teachers has taught us, we shall ever find the Kingdom of Heaven out of our reach. The book, which is published at 4/- net, can be obtained from Miss Leith, 10, Clorane Gardens, Hampstead, N.W.3.

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HOLDING ON: OBSERVATIONS BY THE WAY.

In these unsettling days we may preserve many things of less importance than a sense of proportion. We may go through our crises with an air of lofty and god-like detachment, and yet not possess that sense, for this particular kind of detachment belongs more properly to gods than to men, and we, being human, are under debt to our fellows, owing to "each man human brotherhood." Yet do we need to keep our heads; our sympathies must not be laid waste or our judgment overpowered by the clamour about us.

We find ourselves beset with appeals more strident than sensible; there is a suggestion of hysteria about some of them. Many voices call our attention to the vital urgency of things which a single glance is sufficient to show us are of quite inferior importance. The world will not fail for lack of them. Elsewhere we see would-be reformers each struggling and sweating like Atlas to support the burden of a world that is being quite well taken care of by the law of gravity.

The crisis, of course, is grave enough. The stress and terror of the time lay a heavy tax on human nerve and fibre. But they must not take hold of us too insistently. If our philosophy of life means anything at all, it means that we are, and should know ourselves to be, greater than any circumstances we can ever encounter.

But—there is a pestilence abroad. We may go down in it. True, we *may* go down—we don't know. But if we "go down," well, we shall "go up" again! That we *do* know. A philosophy which has found out the meaning of death is proof against charnel-houses.

But, again, we are beset with a host of policies and doctrines, gospels, revelations and deliverances of all kinds. True enough, there is something of a maze through which to steer. We lay hold of a principle, fixed as the Polar Star, the principle of Reason in the soul and find it no difficult task to blaze a trail through all the little systems that call some man master and have no higher warrant.

We take Reason, or so much of it as our minds may compass, and use it as our test and touchstone. It has a like quality with faith in its power of vision and direction. It is proved by experience, past, present, and to come. So long as it abides that proof, we may trust ourselves to it and remain tranquil. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," said Keats. And we might almost say, "Reason is faith, faith reason."

We are confronted with problems of "mystical" and "occult" knowledge—of a certain sort. Required to know how to test the value of statements which, on the hypothesis, are not capable of demonstration, we take up some particular volume in which the "occult" matter is portentously set out, and we begin to observe the quality of the thought. We find, it may be, that it is marred by errors of judgment; that the writer blunders over matters of fact within our own practical knowledge; that his sense of congruity is defective; that he explains simple problems by remote and cumbersome theories; that he is incapable of clear and consecutive thinking; that he is captivated by glittering generalities and snatches eagerly at any small matter that appears to support his thesis. After that we are not troubled greatly about his "mystical" and "occult" elements. We cannot disprove them, we are told. No, it is not necessary. We have made our practical test along other lines. The cardinal in an old story was invited to visit a wonderful nun who was acclaimed by the abbess and the sisterhood as a saint, so many visions and mystical

experiences were vouchsafed to her. The cardinal appeared in his riding boots and bade the sister pull them off, a menial task which the lady haughtily refused. "You need not be under any concern about your nun," was the cardinal's report afterwards. "She is no saint—she has no humility!" That was *his* practical test. Yet there are true saints and true mysticisms.

Elsewhere we find our attention invited to wild and weird discussions on psychic phenomena in the newspapers. We observe that the issues are whether there are a spiritual world and spiritual beings, and we note that for many of the disputants the matter resolves into a question whether a conjurer can perform certain tricks. We smile, a little crookedly perhaps, and pass on, viewing it as part of the Human Comedy.

Later, it may be, we encounter the Transcendentalist who is strong on the existence of a Spiritual World of which no one can possibly be allowed to know anything. (It reminds us of a celebrated commercial proposition put forth at the time of the "South Sea Bubble.") Our Transcendentalist is shocked and indignant at the idea of any association between the spiritual world of his dreams and this dull earth. Logical and scientific proof—*faugh!* Nothing so degrading! It was a philosopher of this type who was cuttingly sarcastic some time ago on the subject of signs and wonders as the sanctions of faith. And in an exalted vein he wrote that when the wise man heard of miracles being performed in a certain street he at once turned into another street! This, as we thought at the time, reflected very severely upon the miracles of Jesus Christ and His apostles. Of course the Transcendentalist had not stopped to consider this implication of his remarks. He was quite oblivious of the possible reactions of his doctrine. It was not surprising, because his conclusions were clearly the outcome not of illumination but of prejudice and would-be superiority. The vision of the clear thinker was not there.

Meanwhile we go on, applying our touchstone of Reason, finding that it never fails us so long as we retain our sense of the mystery of life and acknowledge that there are many things yet to be unfolded. And so, assured that although things go hardly with the world at present, they will yet go exceedingly well, we—hold on!

"THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS.

(REPRINTED FROM "LIGHT" OF MARCH 16TH, 1889.)

We have received No. 3 of the "Töcsin" (price 6d. monthly), a journal of general and of medical philosophy, edited by Fred. A. Floyer, B.A., Nat. Sci., M.B. Cantab, M.R.C.S.E., and L.S.A., Lond. In it we find an article on phenomena roughly classed as Spiritualistic. The treatment is fair from the point of view of the writer. "We are convinced that there is room for much useful work in the attempt to elucidate (these) matters." There is: and it is going on apace, by competent "men of well-known ability and scientific attainments," as the writer admits. "With regard to table-rapping and table-turning there appears to us to be abundant evidence that some visible and tangible expression of kinetic energy is, under certain circumstances, manifested which is not explained or warranted by any potential, if we conform ourselves to the study of what are ordinarily known as the laws of nature."—From "Jottings."

PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

Under the title "Spirit 'Snapped' at a Séance," the "Daily Sketch" of the 4th inst. gives an account of the experiences in Spiritualism of Mr. John Thomas, a sculptor, of Canellyn, Cefn Coid. He describes himself as the son of a Calvinistic Methodist deacon, and says he became an atheist, but afterwards took up Spiritualism, with the result that he obtained communications from a departed daughter, Ivy, aged seven. Subsequently he visited Crewe and obtained pictures of his little daughter. The journal reproduces a picture of Ivy as in life, dressed in the quaint Welsh costume, and two psychic portraits of her, one appearing between Mr. and Mrs. Thomas as sitters, and the other superposed on the face and breast of Mrs. Thomas.

To fill the passing day, with its duty or drudgery, with the spirit of warm and gracious Fellowship—what more can be asked of us?—J. FORT NEWTON.

MATERIALISATION PHENOMENA: FROM THE FRENCH SIDE.

Mr. C. J. Hans Hamilton, of the Société Universelle d'Études Psychiques, sends us the following letter:—

The article in *LIGHT* of the 22nd inst. concerning Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's "Materialisation Phenomena," in which you refer to Mr. Rolleston's article in the "Hibbert Journal" for January, induces me to offer some observations more familiar to students of psychical research on the Continent than to those in England.

In the first place, then, I would draw attention to the lecture delivered by Dr. Gustave Geley, on January 28th, 1918, in the Amphitheatre of the Medical Faculty of the Collège de France in Paris, on the invitation of the Institut Général Psychologique, and dealing with this new phenomenon and the medium, Eva C—. Dr. Geley is a Laureate of the Faculty of Medicine of Lyons; he is one of the best-known French psychists and author of two valuable books dealing with the philosophy of psychical phenomena.

This lecture has been published by the Librairie Felix Alcan, 118, Boulevard St. Germain, Paris, in the January-June number of the Bulletin of the Institut Général Psychologique, and a résumé of it has just appeared in the "Annales des Sciences Psychiques" (No. 1 of 1919). It contains a full account of a series of séances held between the 10th December, 1917, and the 11th March, 1918, in Dr. Geley's own laboratory, with the collaboration of Madame Alexandre-Bisson and her medium, Eva C— (Marthe Béraud).

In a note at the end of his lecture, as published in the Bulletin above-mentioned, Dr. Geley makes the following statements (which I translate as hereunder):—

"Needless to say the usual precautions were rigorously carried out during the séances in my laboratory. On entering the séance-room (into which no one penetrated during the intervals between the séances) the medium was completely undressed before me and sewn up in a complete suit of tights which Madame Bisson sewed at the back and wrists. The hair and mouth were examined by me and my assistants before and after the séances. . . . Eva was seated in a wicker armchair in the dark cabinet; her hands remained continuously visible and held outside the curtains; a sufficient amount of light was used in the séance-room. I do not only say, 'there was no fraud'; moreover I could not repeat this too often; almost always the materialisations were formed under my eyes, and I observed their commencement and the whole of their development."

This last point is most important, and is fully dealt with both in Dr. Geley's lecture and in Madame Bisson's book, "Les Phénomènes de Matérialisation" (which latter does not appear to be known in England, where, however, nearly all educated people read French). The photographs reproduced in Madame Alexandre-Bisson's book confirm the statements published at various times in the "Annales des Sciences Psychiques" of Paris by competent observers such as Dr. Maxwell, Dr. Bourbon, M. Cesar de Vesme, M. Boirac, Dr. Geley, and others, with reference to these phenomena observed at Madame Bisson's house, to the effect that the materialised formations were constantly in movement of transformation and development before the eyes of the observers at short distance. (Had it been possible to take cinematographs this would have been much better shown than in ordinary photographs.)

Dr. Geley states in his lecture that on one occasion he had the opportunity of carefully feeling over the temporary formation of a human head with perfectly formed bones, and covered with a heavy growth of hair; on other occasions a complete hand with bones and articulations. He also states that the phenomena have been observed closely by a very large number of other medical men and physiologists.

Miss Verrall's theory of "regurgitation" is rendered absolutely nugatory by such phenomena as the above-mentioned, and also by another important fact, viz., that the mysterious "substance" which ultimately transforms itself into heads, faces, hands, etc., does not always come from the medium's mouth, but often exudes in the form of luminous globules through the tissues of her tight-fitting blouse, or else appears from different parts of her body in turn, and sometimes forms itself at a considerable distance from the medium. Sometimes the plastic forms are partially in relief and partly flat, and sometimes completely flat.

Madame Alexandre-Bisson, who has trained this medium in view of the production of phenomena controllable by scientific methods, is a scientist herself, as is obvious to anyone who has taken the trouble to read carefully through her book. She has spent a great deal of time and money in this form of scientific research, and organised her séance-room on scientific lines, including a special installation of shaded electric lamps.

Her book is expensive, costing twelve francs, but those who can read French and are interested in the subject should obtain and read it, as well as Dr. Geley's lecture.

With regard to Eva C—, and her identity with Mdlle. Marthe Béraud, the principal medium for the Algiers phenomena at the Villa Carmen, belonging to General Noël, it is well known that the same personages materialised at

Algiers through other mediums (notably Madame Vincente) in the absence of Mdlle. Marthe Béraud, and even before she was heard of at all in this connection. The whole of this matter was threshed out in numerous articles which appeared in the "Annales des Sciences Psychiques" of Paris in 1906. I may mention in passing that this periodical is the organ of Dr. Charles Richet, and is the principal psychical research journal appearing in France.

To conclude, I should remark that it is essential that persons who wish to understand the modes of appearance of these remarkable phenomena should read the two documents mentioned above.

It may be useful to know that the principal personage who materialised in Madame Bisson's séances (and almost if not quite the only complete materialisation) was Madame Bisson's deceased husband. At the end of her book, Madame Bisson states that in later séances than those recorded therein the apparitions left the cabinet and addressed speech to her. She makes no mention in her book of the messages which she received by automatic writing concerning the personalities involved, maintaining this reserve in order to preserve the objective character of the book.

With regard to the "substance" forming the materialisations, Dr. Geley states in his lecture (what other observers have also mentioned) that sometimes this condensed fluidic matter is exuded in such abundance from the medium's body as to cover her from head to foot in a white mantle. One or two of the photographs in Madame Bisson's book show this very well.

C. J. HANS HAMILTON.

Le Pavillon, Mauze,
Deux Sèvres, France.
February 25th, 1919.

SIR WILLIAM BARRETT ON SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION.

In the "Daily Express" of the 7th inst. Sir William Barrett has a temperate and cogent reply to an attack on Spiritualism by Sir James Crichton-Browne.

Sir William remarks that he is sure Sir James Crichton-Browne will readily admit that "it is not only desirable but essential that scientific discussion shall be conducted with accuracy of statement as well as knowledge of the subject discussed." As to Sir James's observation that "Biologists, so far as I know without exception, ridicule the whole thing as preposterous," he is reminded that Professor Charles Richet, M.D., of the University of Paris, has "not only been president of the Society for Psychical Research, but after years spent in the investigation of Spiritualism, is convinced of the supernormal character of the manifestations he has witnessed." Other names of scientific investigators who have arrived at the same conclusion are given by Sir William, including Professor Morselli, M.D., Professor Bottazzi, Dr. Venzano, and the late Professor Lombroso. Sir James is also made acquainted with the fact that on the Council of the S.P.R. are five highly qualified physicians, one of whom, Dr. W. McDougall, F.R.S., is a distinguished biologist and psychologist, while of the physicists on the Council three have received the Order of Merit and been presidents of the Royal Society. "One of these three eminent men, Lord Rayleigh, is the president of the Society for Psychical Research for the current year."

AUTOMATIC WRITING AND DRAWING.

Dealing with the subject of automatic writing and drawing, Sir William Barrett alludes to the great number of persons in all ranks of life who "have been surprised to find that a pencil lightly held on a sheet of paper will often write long messages without any conscious effort or volition on their part. Often famous personages purport to be controlling the writer, and the whole experience is so bizarre and foreign to the ideas and even wishes of the scribe, or automatist, that an unseen power or spirit is inferred as actuating the pencil." It is pointed out that "the face value of these 'automatic scripts' is not to be trusted any more than the names of the famous controls who purport to write." All that can as a rule be safely affirmed as to the origin of these things is "the emergence, often with dramatic intensity, of that hidden mysterious side of our lives which lies below the limen or threshold of our consciousness, our subliminal life." But "critical and painstaking inquiry has also shown that this explanation does not cover all the ground." And Sir William refers to the numerous instances in his book; "On the Threshold of the Unseen," where "every known cause for this automatic writing has been found to be inadequate, and some unseen discarnate intelligence really appears to be controlling the mind and muscles of the automatist."

The whole article is one of the most valuable contributions which have yet been made to the newspaper discussion of psychic phenomena. If it only results in teaching distinguished scientific critics to avoid damaging their reputations and discrediting their authority with the public by making wild statements on subjects of which they are quite obviously ignorant, the article will do great good. But its influence will be even farther reaching. It will teach the public at first hand.

* Published by Félix Alcan, 108, Boulevard St. Germain, P is.

"A KING'S COUNSEL" ON "COMMUNICATION WITH THE SO-CALLED DEAD."

On Saturday, the 8th inst., in the picture gallery at the London residence of Lord and Lady Glencorner, Queen Anne's Gate, the author of "I Heard a Voice" addressed a large audience on the subject stated above. He commenced by observing that when he was invited to deliver his address he felt a good deal of hesitation and diffidence, since he realised that he would be addressing a body of experts who would be familiar with such experiences as those he himself had passed through. Nevertheless he would say that his experiences during the last few years had been very extensive, and he thought indeed in some respects unique. As many of those present knew, his investigations had been carried on in his own family circle, through the mediumship of his two daughters.

In any discussion on the subject of psychic communications as an abstract matter, two questions arose: (a) were they possible? (b) were they desirable? The speaker devoted considerable attention to a logical analysis of these questions. From the standpoint of the sceptic or anti-Spiritualist who denied mediumship and psychic phenomena altogether, such results as were obtained had to be dismissed as either fraud or delusion. If in but a single instance it could be proved that the results were genuine, then the whole case of the opposition collapsed altogether. And as there were multitudes of absolutely proven cases where the explanation of fraud or delusion was impossible the anti-Spiritualist was put completely out of court and his arguments were seen to be unworthy of any serious attention. As to the second point, the desirability of such communications, the lecturer appealed to the immense amount of consolation which had resulted. That in itself alone justified the practice of spirit communication, quite apart from the immense support given to the doctrines of religion (which these phenomena proved and vindicated against the materialist and the atheist), and the advance of human knowledge concerning the true nature of life here and hereafter.

In the course of his address the speaker gave some deeply interesting particulars concerning the messages received in his family circle, and the proofs afforded that the mediums were really in communication with departed friends. These and other communicators who had once lived on earth and who were drawn to the mediums by sympathy, the true spiritual link, had shown their desire and ability to give information concerning themselves and to assist the education and spiritual advancement of their charges by every means in their power.

"A King's Counsel" concluded his address by some vigorous remarks on the Witchcraft and Vagrancy Acts, pieces of barbarous legislation which disfigured the Statute Book, and which were quite out of harmony with modern thought and the advancing education of the public in psychic science. These relics of the dark ages of ignorance should be expunged from the statute book. (Applause.) It was nonsense to maintain that it was necessary to retain any of their provisions as a defence against fraudulent mediumship. When fraud was practised it could be reached and punished by the Common Law of England, and there was no need of special statutory provisions for the purpose.

In the course of the discussion which followed the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould complimented the lecturer on the ability which he had shown in establishing his two propositions, the reality of mediumship and its desirability as an agent of consolation. He alluded to spirit teachings as to the immense importance of *thought* as a factor in ameliorating human conditions. It was amongst the subtlest and most powerful of forces in human life. When strong, constructive, humane and benevolent, it built up and harmonised the outward conditions. When selfish, disorderly and maleficent, it resulted in the destruction and disintegration of life.

Dr. Abraham Wallace referred to his experiments in establishing proof of identity, an important part of the scientific side of spirit communication, and inquired if "A King's Counsel" had pursued investigations along this line.

The lecturer, replying, said that the spirit teachings given to him and his family emphasised the importance of right thinking to which Mr. Fielding-Ould had referred. As to the question of the identity of communicators, he had received ample evidence that they were the people whom they professed to be. The evidence was both direct and collateral. Some of those who had fully proved their identity had testified to the genuineness of the claims of others whose identity as strangers could not be so directly attested.

The Rev. A. H. Lee, in allusion to the attitude of the Church towards psychic phenomena, referred to the fact that some of the communications were of an anti-theological character. There were also suggestions of impersonation on the part of some of the controls. Thus there was reason to suppose that Dr. Phinuit, associated with the mediumship of Mrs. Piper (who was undoubtedly a genuine medium), was a dramatisation of the sub-consciousness of the medium.

The proceedings closed with a cordial vote of thanks to the lecturer.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ATOM.

By ERNEST C. CHAVEN.

I have read Col. Johnson's letter of the 1st inst. with much interest. It seems to me, however, that we are running wide of the original point raised, viz., that the works on occult chemistry afford a proof of clairvoyance. If Col. Johnson will agree with me that they do not, or at all events that the matter is "not proven," then the question is settled.

As a purely side interest I should like to make the following observations on the other points raised before the editorial fiat quashes further discussion.

"Our observations cannot be regarded as established, etc., etc." The general trend of this phrase reminds me very much of the smug complacency of a "hell-fire" fanatic who, failing to impress his views on me, finished by saying, "Ah, my friend, you will not accept the truth now, but when you are roasting eternally then you will be forced to admit I was right." Whereat I thanked him very much.

As regards the capacity of the subconscious mind for inductive reasoning, we must first settle what is meant by "original work." The great *forte* of the subconscious mind is the building of extended analogies from very small beginnings. As I have endeavoured to show, both "Occult Chemistry" and the other case mentioned may have been built up in this way. The subconscious mind forgets nothing once seen or heard, and under hypnosis or in dreams delivers up most surprising *réchauffés* of matters normally forgotten. It is a somewhat suggestive fact that the atomic weights said to have been obtained clairvoyantly agree better with the older values which the clairvoyants would have learnt at school (probably afterwards forgotten), rather than with the modern values.

I cannot at the moment grasp how an assemblage of atoms composed of (a) "ultimate atoms" four times removed from physical plane; (b) a nucleus still more remote, can form "common or garden" matter. The nucleus of an atom may quite possibly be formed of electrons itself. Sir Oliver Lodge's statement merely refers to the mass of the electrons which impress a charge on a "neutral" atom, which then becomes ionised. For hydrogen this ratio is 1/1700 as stated. It is most extremely unlikely that 18 electrons can complete the mass of a hydrogen atom.

If the authors of "Occult Chemistry" desire to assist science by the "old, old instrument of enlarged human vision," may I suggest that they have a wonderful opportunity at the present moment in attempting to trace the bacillus of the present fearful influenza scourge. If they can isolate and prepare cultures of this deadly organism they will earn the thanks of the whole world.

I will supplement the suggestion made at the close of my last article by offering as test objects for "micro-clairvoyance," slides of microscopical objects to be described or drawn by the clairvoyant. These should be much easier to deal with than sub-ultra microscopic particles like atoms.

In conclusion, may I take this opportunity of thanking Col. Johnson for his kindness in permitting the examination of the works in question and his remarkable collection of psychic photographs, also for the unfailing courtesy he has shown in the discussion.

"HOW DOES PSYCHOMETRY WORK?"

Mr. H. Langelaan (of King Street, Honiton, Devon), writes:—

The article on "How Does Psychometry Work?" in *LIGHT* of March 1st is extremely interesting, and with a view to rendering some assistance in arriving at a satisfactory answer to the question I give you here my own thoughts on the subject.

Objects appear to receive and retain impressions by means of the waves of sound, heat, light and others impinging on them, as, for instance, the bark of a tree, a piece of rock; the sensitive plate in a pinhole or other camera helps to prove this.

Objects also appear to be able to receive and retain impressions of the human emotions of joy, grief, love, states of health; as, for instance, gloves, trinkets, and wearing apparel.

Objects appear to receive and retain the impress of the thoughts and emotions of persons in their vicinity; for instance, pictures and articles of furniture.

Objects appear to receive and retain impressions of spiritual presences; for instance, altar fabrics and utensils.

The human soul-body also appears to receive and retain all the above-mentioned impressions, and to be capable of receiving from objects the impressions, or reflections of the impressions, which the objects have themselves received from others.

The psychometrist appears to interpret the impressions by converting sense impressions into mind impressions.

These tentative conclusions cover all the facts known to me.

THE REINCARNATION PROBLEM.

In reply to Mr. Vale Owen, may I say that I am not a Theosophist, and though the doctrine of Reincarnation appeals to me as true, I have no claim to be able to solve difficult problems connected with it? As a possible solution of Mr. Vale Owen's dilemma, however, I would suggest that on the rare occasions when an exalted spirit returns for some special reason to earth, he would be likely to assume the character of his most important incarnation. In the present case there were obviously good reasons why the spirit in question should appear as Elijah, not as John.

In your issue of February 22nd, Mr. Owen mentioned another stumbling-block in the way of his belief. When a child dies, we know that it goes on growing in its new home; but if it had been incarnate before, it would, Mr. Owen thinks, already be a grown-up spirit when it returned to "the spirit-sphere whence it came." But when a human being, man or child, dies, he does not return straightway to the "spirit-sphere" whence he descended into incarnation. He has first to perfect his *personality* in the astral world, and only when that has been accomplished will he be able to rise into the higher realms whence, in due course, he may again return to take on a body of flesh. This accounts for the fact that spirit-communicators, who are in the astral world, so often have no knowledge of reincarnation. There is no reason why they should know more of it than we do.

Belief in the twin doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma was taken away from the Western world during the era that is now passing away. These truths, together with others long forgotten, are now being given back to help mankind in the new ordering of the world. Spiritualists should, therefore, study them with sympathy and try to understand what they really imply. We have to remember, however, that they are pre-Christian doctrines, and we know of them from non-Christian sources. Though they may be fundamentally true, we may believe that they have been modified by Christ's life on earth. For instance, may we not be able to escape through Him from the weary round of births and deaths, in a way that was unknown in the East? I only throw this out as a suggestion. We have, I am sure, much to learn from the East, but Eastern teaching is not always food for the Western mind. It needs to be reinterpreted on a Christian basis.

G. R. DENNIS.

Is it valid to raise as an objection to Reincarnation the fact that we do not remember our past lives? Modern psychic science seems to show that only a small part of the Ego operates through the body and that the real Ego is very complex. Under such circumstances may it not be that, while the physical brain does not remember past lives, the larger part of the Ego, which would include the very complex subconscious self, does remember and has periodic glimpses, from which the experience gained and lessons to be learnt from past lives may be reviewed.

That our physical brains do not remember past lives is easy to understand, as they do not remember masses of details of our present lives unless under some special stimulus.

I see no injustice in that we do not know from what specific acts of the past specific Karma in this life comes to us. Karma is cause and effect and *not* punishment only, and we get thus good and unpleasant things, but were we to know what was due to us and when, we would be madened by the anticipation, for we all know how much pain we can get by anticipation, say, of a visit to a dentist. What we have to do is to recognise that what comes to us is our just due, and that we have to learn lessons from it, and also that we are setting up causes of which in the future we shall have to reap the results.

H. G. T.

THE IMAGE OF THE GOD.

Mr. J. Chillingham Dunn, writing from Japan, says:—

The following incident may interest readers of LIGHT. A representative of a foreign paper in Tokyo interviewed Miss Ritsuko Mori, and in this interview, which was printed under a heading describing the subject of it as "The Most Popular Actress in Japan," occurred the following:—

"Many years ago [she told the reporter] we moved into a house which had been the residence of a very generous man. One night my mother had a vivid dream, in which the god Fudo appeared and besought her to deliver him from his grave beneath the house. My mother, on awakening, immediately ordered the servant to dig under the house, and sure enough a small image of the god Fudo was discovered. So Fudo became the household god, worshipped by every member of my family. It is an image of this god that I carry in my belt."

I know Miss Mori personally, and this is the same lady who visited England some years ago and met various representatives of the English stage, including the late Sir Herbert Tree and Miss Ellen Terry. Her father is an M.P. I had the interesting experience of appearing with her for seventeen consecutive performances at the Imperial Theatre, Tokyo, in a dramatic version of "Madame Butterfly," but not then knowing about the Fudo incident, did not discuss any phases of psychology with her. On some future occasion I may broach something of the kind, and see what she says.

THE CLAIRVOYANT AND THE SOLDIER.

There is something beautiful and impressive in the way in which the newspapers, while publishing skits and satires on, and denials of psychical phenomena, are at the same time giving first-hand accounts of them. We take the following from the "Express" of the 1st inst. It follows an interview with the London Spiritualist Alliance, and is one instance out of several of the chaos of opinion which now prevails in the Press:—

"An extraordinary instance of the psychic power of a Belgian peasant girl came to my notice nearly four years ago," said Private J. C. Campbell, late of the 15th Regiment Canadians, to a "Daily Express" representative yesterday.

"The 15th, or the Canadian Seaforth's, as they are popularly known, took a prominent part in the heavy fighting in Flanders in April, 1915. On the afternoon of the 25th of that month a section of this regiment became detached from the main body. It was impossible to aid these men, although from the second line trenches to which we had been obliged to retire we heard our comrades firing desperately throughout the night.

"A few days later we were relieved of trench duty by another battalion, and went back to rest billets. We were speculating as to the probable fate of the missing men, and in particular the case of a fellow named Lees, who was a general favourite. A peasant who resided in the place said that there was a girl living near by who could while in a state of trance get into communication with the dead. This girl, whose name is Julia Raymonde, gave a séance a day or two later, and was asked to say what had happened to Lees. She described his position at that time as being in a damaged building, where he had died while trying to send messages to his comrades.

"Three weeks later we captured the lost ground, and in a basement we found the body of Lees near a telephone, which was connected with the second line trenches, with a telephone receiver clipped over his ears. He had not been shot, but had died from the effects of poison gas, which the Germans first employed in that engagement. He had evidently been trying to send messages to the rear when he died."

THE COLLIER MEDIUM: THE DIRECT VOICE.

We take the following from the "Evening News" of the 5th inst.:—

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has received an account of a séance sent by Mr. D. C. Powell, of Tylorstown (Glam.). The medium was the same Welsh collier that Sir Arthur himself met.

Mr. Powell, after describing the detachment of rings from a lady's fingers, a watch taken from the wrist of another and wound up near the ceiling, his own collar and tie removed by a pair of hands "that ended just above the wrists," says:—

"Another very interesting phase of the phenomena which can be produced through the mediumship of Mr. Thomas is the 'direct voice.' We have been fortunate enough to get this, and we were astounded with the direct evidence afforded us of continued existence.

"The trumpets, three in number, on one occasion swung round the circle, and voices were heard addressing different sitters simultaneously.

"One of the spirits communicating stated that she was the mother of the sitter addressed. She was well known to many of the other sitters in earth life, and her voice was immediately recognised, but to prove the identity of the spirit she was asked to give her maiden name, known to no one but the sitter concerned. This she immediately did.

"But the climax came whilst the sitters were singing 'O Fryniau Caersalem,' very softly. Three voices, a bass, a tenor, and a contralto, were heard singing this beautiful old hymn through the trumpets.

"The voices proved conclusively to all the continuity of existence and the power of spirits over matter."

LIVE, Christ said, all of you together, not each of you by himself; live as members of the righteous society which I have come to found upon earth, and then you will be clothed as beautifully as the Eastern lily and fed as surely as the birds.—STEWART D. HEADLAM.

SPIRITUAL HEALING: AN INVITATION.—Mrs. Gibson asks us to announce that she will be glad to receive further applications for healing treatment of the kind already indicated by previous announcements; that is to say that the intending patients are to be treated at night by spirit operators under the direction of Dr. Beale, the spirit doctor to whose attentions E. M. S., the author of "One Thing I Know," attributes her wonderful recovery from a disease which defied all the ordinary methods of cure. Mrs. Gibson should be addressed (with stamped envelope for reply) at 26, Haven Green, Ealing, W., and applications may be made on behalf of either adults or children. There is no fee. As we said at the time of making the first announcement, there is but one way of testing the reality of offers of this kind—by putting them to the proof of experiment. So many cures have been reported that there is now good ground for treating the matter as a practical proposition, justified by results.

HOUDINI: MEDIUM OR CONJURER ?

H. W. E. writes:—

As one who has for many years been closely connected with the professional side of public entertainments, I can see very little ground for Mr. Hewat McKenzie's claim that Houdini performs his feats by supernormal means. In any case, seeing that the conjurer and his friend, Mr. Hereward Carrington, disclaim the employment of psychic methods, I do not see that we have any right to go behind their statement and question their truthfulness in the matter. No doubt some of Houdini's tricks are difficult to explain on ordinary lines, but then so are many other feats performed by the best conjurers. Although I believe in spirit agency I do not feel that it is either wise or dignified to call in such an explanation without the strongest justification. Mr. McKenzie tells us he has tested Houdini's powers "under strict test conditions." It would be interesting to learn when Houdini submitted himself to such an investigation, for Mr. McKenzie's statement implies the kind of experiment which would be made by the Society for Psychical Research in a case of reputed mediumship. Mr. McKenzie's observations concerning Mr. Carrington's ability to judge psychic phenomena are quite beside the point. If a conjuring entertainment is performed by ordinary methods of sleight of hand it is not necessary that those who so describe it should be authorities on psychic science. In any case, Mr. McKenzie offers us no evidence for his theory.

Mr. McKenzie talks of faked films. Is he aware of the fact (and I speak as one familiar with film work) that whatever "faking" is used to obtain an effect on the screen, it is none the less a fact that everything you see on the kinema actually happens. The scenes depicting Houdini's tricks demonstrate absolutely the entire absence of psychic methods. I have met many of the performers of supposed "occult" tricks on the music hall stage, and in every case the performer has admitted the possibility of using psychic powers, but he would never attempt such a device at a "twice-nightly" show. It would be too precarious altogether.

FROM BLUE TO GOLD: A STARRY PORTENT.

We have heard of strange chemical metamorphoses taking place in the course of psychical experiments conducted by French savants, and suggestive of alchemy, but we know not what to make of the following case, contained in "The Plaindealer," of Cleveland, Ohio, one of the best-known journals of the United States. The cutting from which it is taken is sent us by "G. A.," a reader of *LIGHT* in Ravenna (Ohio), who says:—"The story is authentic, as Joyce Kilmer was one of our most notable as well as our most upright young poets. His mother's word could not be doubted":—

NEW YORK, December 26th.—On Christmas morning the "New York Tribune" published the story told by Mrs. Ellen Flynn, of Jersey City, who related how a blue star in the service flag displayed in her home turned to gold about the time Peter J. Mahon, her nephew, was killed in France.

To-day the "Tribune" received the following letter from Mrs. Kilburn Kilmer, mother of Sergt. Joyce Kilmer, of the 165th infantry, the poet, who was killed in action:—

"Dear Editor,—I have just read in this morning's paper an account of the blue star changing to gold, and it has emboldened me to tell you a true incident, quite as strange perhaps as that narrated in your paper.

"Before my son, the late Sergt. Joyce Kilmer, sailed for France he gave me a little gold service flag—red border, white enamel and blue star—and I always wore it, and shall always wear it.

"He was killed in action on July 30th. I was in Litchfield, Conn., when the news reached me, in August, and I said to my husband, 'I shall always wear the little service flag he gave me, but I'll pin it on a bow of black ribbon.' While I was doing so, to my great astonishment, I saw the blue star had changed to gold!

"There is no chipping of the enamel. It simply turned to gold just as it is to-day. I have shown it to many, and none can explain it. Many jewellers have seen it, and they offer no solution.

"I have not made it public before, but I thought I must when I read the account in this morning's 'Tribune.' I have no doubt it changed when he died—it certainly had done so when I looked at it closely two days after I received the notice of his death."

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND, 1919.

In addition to the donations already reported, we have to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following sums:—

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. A. Gibson	1	0	0
Mrs. Lionel Robertson	1	0	0
J. M. T.	0	10	0

"NEVIL MASKELYNE PRESENTS GOFF GODFREY."

An old Pressman, I sat with the "Press crowd" on Monday afternoon at Maskelyne's Theatre of Mystery, feeling a little bored, having gone so many times in the past over this same ground—a séance or two reported in the newspapers, a newspaper sensation, discussions almost as futile as they are fiery, and then some conjuring entertainments to show how the phenomena are really produced and what egregious asses are the people who believe the original manifestations were the outcome of supernormal agencies. We commenced with a display of clever legerdemain, "The Magical Milliner," by Mr. Cecil Lyle; there were musical turns, some brilliant illusions by Mr. Oswald Williams; Mr. Bert Elliott showed with a fascinating smile what he could do with silk hats and crockery; the Kamakura family gave us feats of Japanese magic, including some mysterious fountain-playing; Mr. Doraswami, an Indian violinist, fiddled divinely; and then came the most loudly-trumpeted and in some ways the dullest item of the show. It was the parody of the "Cardiff séance" made famous by the author of "Sherlock Holmes." A parody, to be justified, we are told, must be a good parody. Whether this was a good parody or not, I have my doubts. I was not at the Cardiff séance, neither I suppose was Mr. Goff Godfrey. Not that it matters very much. Two members of the Press went on the stage and tied up Mr. Goff Godfrey. He was "made up" as the typical male medium, who, as everybody knows (except those who have actually met mediums), wears an expression of seraphic imbecility and very long hair. There was some trouble about the tying up—Mr. Goff Godfrey appeared to be objecting to the way in which it was attempted to tie him. As one of the newspaper men concerned told me afterwards, this was actually the case. But that also is not of much importance. Mr. Goff Godfrey sat inside a cabinet, which was closed up and then tambourines played, bells rang, and things were thrown out on to the stage. Then he was tastefully clothed in a sack, and the same things took place. Afterwards he was put in a strait-waistcoat and the proceedings were repeated *da capo*. After that Mr. Godfrey showed us how he could escape from the strait-waistcoat in full view of the audience by a series of convulsive wriggings and twistings on the ground—a clever and amusing trick. And that, in common speech, was all there was to it.

Many years ago I saw all or nearly all the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, with professional mediums, with mediums in private life, in Spiritualistic circles and non-Spiritualistic circles, in public meeting places and in private houses, and it was quite early in my investigations, as a very young man, that any lingering doubts I had on the subject of fraud were removed by witnessing the movement of objects in a lighted room where I had remained after all the other members of the circle had left the apartment. There was no illusion about it. I was at the house of a friend and all the members of the circle were friends and guests of the house. Similar manifestations had taken place when they were all in the room. I realised then, as many times since, the reality of a mysterious force only now beginning to be known to science generally, through the investigations of Dr. Crawford, of Belfast, Dr. Geley, of the Collège de France, in Paris, and other scientists. But Mr. Maskelyne's performance proved something. It proved that objective psychical phenomena can be imitated by those with sufficient skill as conjurers, a proposition which, by the way, no sensible person would dispute. And it proved something else also, *viz.*, that Mr. Nevil Maskelyne is a very astute business man. Which also, it may be inferred, nobody would deny.

D. G.

THE EDITORSHIP OF THE "TWO WORLDS."—As we go to press, we learn that Mr. Ernest Oaten, the President of the S.N.U., is to be the new editor of the "Two Worlds."

MR. TOM TYRRELL IN LONDON.—This famous provincial clairvoyant occupied the platform at the Æolian Hall, New Bond Street, on Monday last at a meeting held under the auspices of the Battersea Spiritualist Church. Mr. Percy Smyth occupied the chair, and an address was given by the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, M.A. As to the clairvoyance several accounts have reached us of a strongly conflicting nature. The meeting appears to have been at once inspiring and helpful and very much the reverse, according to the mental outlook of the observers. As it seems impossible to reconcile the different reports received, and as we have no more space we must reserve any further account of the matter.

THE MOVEMENT IN BRIGHTON.—Speaking at a meeting held at the Athenæum Hall, Brighton, held in connection with the forward movement inaugurated by the Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood, Mr. Ernest Hunt dealt with "Some Practical Issues of Spiritualism." There were, he said, two aspects of Spiritualism—the phenomenal and the philosophical. The former was only introductory to the latter, but in the correspondence and articles now appearing in the Press this more important aspect of the subject was barely alluded to. Spiritualism demonstrated the existence of human faculties and powers of which the ordinary person was ignorant. The business of the earnest student was by their exercise to acquire a perfectly developed personality.—The expected visit on April 2nd of Mrs. Wheeler Wilcox has had regretfully to be postponed on account of her continued ill-health.

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

These notices are confined to announcements of meetings on the coming Sunday, with the addition only of other engagements in the same week. They are charged at the rate of 1s. for two lines (including the name of the society) and 6d. for every additional line.

Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1.—6.30, Mr. A. Vout Peters. March 23rd, Dr. W. J. Vanstone. See front page.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke-place, W.2.—11 and 6.30, Mr. Percy Street, Wednesday, March 19th, 7.30, Mrs. Mervyn.

Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.—6.30, Mrs. E. Neville.

Harrow and Wealdstone.—Gayton Rooms, Station-road, Harrow-on-the-Hill.—6.30, Mr. A. J. Maskell.

Camberwell, Masonic Hall.—11, church service; 6.30, Miss Ellen Conroy, M.A. 23rd, 6.30, Mrs. Cannock.

Croydon.—117b, High-street.—Services at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Reading.—Spiritual Mission, 16, Blagrove-street.—11.30 and 6.45, Mrs. Jennie Walker, addresses.

Walthamstow.—342, Hoe-street.—7 p.m., address by Mr. Davis, clairvoyance by Mrs. Pulham.

Battersea.—45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.—11.15, Circle Service; 6.30, Mrs. Podmore. 20th, 8.15, Mr. and Mrs. Pulham.

Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall.—6.30, Mr. Hunt, address. Wednesday, 7.30, Mrs. Crowder, address and clairvoyance.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.—7, Mr. H. Boddington, address. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. E. Marriott, address and clairvoyance.

Holloway.—Grove-dale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).—11.15, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Pulham; 3, Lyceum; 7, meeting conducted by L.L.D. Council, Mr. J. Forsyth presiding. Wednesday, 19th, Mrs. Mary Gordon.

Brighton.—Windsor Hall, Windsor-street.—Mr. Alfred Punter, addresses and descriptions, 11.15, Windsor Hall; 7, Athenæum Hall, North-street; 3, Lyceum. Monday, 8, healing circle. Wednesday, 8, public meeting.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—11.30 and 7, and Monday, 7.45, Mrs. Marriott, addresses and clairvoyance. Tuesday, 7.45, lecture, "Astrology," Miss Samson. Thursday, 7.45, enquirers' questions and clairvoyance. Friday, Guild

"I Heard a Voice," or, The Great Exploration.

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