

# 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.

At the time of writing the interest of the popular Press in our subject shows no signs of subsiding, and the activity under the surface is greater than ever before. To those of us who have seen this kind of thing many times before, it presents some familiar features. In some ways it is encouraging. The opposition is not so confident as of old, and it has manifestly diminished. And once more we observe that those who want the truth get it, and those who don't can always contrive to avoid it. There are few more futile tasks than trying to convince people who don't wish to be convinced. Take a little instance in the case of the stale objection, "Why do physical phenomena always take place in the dark?" On the argument being raised, someone replies that many of them have occurred, and still occur; in the light, and proceeds to explain why darkness is, in most instances, a necessary condition imposed by Nature. The very next time the subject crops up, the same objector will repeat the same objection in the same words, totally ignoring all that had been previously said. We have seen examples of this attitude over and over again, and realised that some critics do not write in any serious spirit—they simply want to obstruct a disagreeable truth and annoy those who champion it. Those motives are distinctly apparent to the observer who, having experience in controversial tactics, can look a little below the surface. Life is too short to be wasted in answering arguments entirely insincere, frivolous and perverse. In fine, while some people raise questions because they want to know, others raise them because they don't want to know, and find this a convenient way of keeping the subject at a distance. They have their reward.

\* \* \*

A new book which we read through with great interest and pleasure is "A New Heaven," by the Hon. G. W. Russell, the New Zealand Minister of Internal Affairs and Public Health (not to be confused with the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell, also an author, whose death was announced last week). Prefacing the work is an inscription by the author, "To the Mothers, Wives, Sisters and Sweethearts of Brave Men belonging to Britain and her Glorious Allies who have 'Gone West,'" in which he assures them that the men they loved are not dead, but live "in a nobler and better world, free from pain—a World of Great Ideals and Unlimited Opportunities." He assures the bereaved ones of the continued presence and help of their departed, who are oftentimes "with you and near you, watching with loving care, reading your thoughts and speaking to you." That conveys an idea of the standpoint of the author although it does not

disclose the nature of the book, which is a romance of life in the next world based on experiences in a dream, or rather trance. For aught we can tell to the contrary Mr. Russell may have drawn on his imagination for the striking pictures of life in the next world. But the things he describes and all the sentiments he expresses tally so curiously with communications from the spirit world that the result is arresting. "Spirit Telepathy and Prayer" is the title of one chapter which hardly sounds like fiction. But the whole tone of the author is so earnest and impressive as to suggest that he may simply be clothing real experiences and convictions in the "similitude of a dream." It is a striking book, and we shall return to it later.

\* \* \*

"I was once at a meeting of the Spiritualist Alliance," writes Mr. Arthur Machen in the "Evening News," "and one of the speakers observed, quite seriously, how odd it was that 'spirit photographs' were rarely obtained under strict test conditions, but were frequently produced when no special precautions against fraud had been taken. This circumstance did not strike me as odd." That reminds us that a number of credulous (or incredulous?) people do not believe that Mr. Machen's now famous story, "The Bowmen," was his own invention. They could argue that it was not produced "under strict test conditions." If we say that having seen nothing but the story itself, we are, nevertheless, firmly convinced of the true authorship, will Mr. Machen accuse us of credulity? Some day he may go to a psychic photographer—a complete stranger—and obtain a portrait of some departed friend, clearly recognisable, and not a copy of any photograph taken in life. Many people have done so. There are other criteria of the genuineness of a thing than observation of the conditions of its production.

\* \* \*

"Gerson" writes:—

I note from a recent article by Miss Evelyn Underhill that she regards high conceptions of a future life as being out of harmony with the idea of any perpetuation of the pleasanter features of earthly intercourse; and she quotes Mr. A. E. Waite as observing that the mystics are singularly uninterested in the question of reunion with departed friends—"they are concerned only with the union of the soul with God." To which I would reply that the really greater always includes the less. No man ever loved brother or sister, wife or child, the less for loving God: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" I would suggest that the kind of mysticism which excludes natural human affection, far from being a true "union of the soul with God," may be only a form of absorbed, self-contemplation or introspection—unlovely and undesirable—not a spiritual expansion at all, but a contraction, a shutting up of the soul within itself. Fortunately such experiences as those narrated in *Light* by Mr. Frank Knight and duplicated in abundance by other investigators into our subject furnish abundant evidence, against which mere theorising is of no avail, that the ties of family affection do survive physical death.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S CHALLENGE TO THE PRESS (referred to in last week's issue, page 93) has resulted in the visit to him of several representatives of daily papers, who publish accounts of the evidence he submitted in the letters received from persons who consulted the medium, Mrs. B. Our readers will doubtless have read the accounts of some of them, so a fuller reference here is unnecessary.

## COMMON-SENSE SPIRITUALISM: TWO SYMPOSIA.

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

(Continued from page 91.)

## SYMPOSIUM II.

Once more the party met together at the house of the Engineer for a discussion on the vexed question. The artist was absent—he could not get over his dislike of the whole subject; and his place was taken by a Chaplain returned from the Front in Flanders. The Physician set the ball a-rolling.

PHYSICIAN: I have been looking over the books mentioned at our last meeting, and I certainly must admit that the evidence for a super-normal force is overwhelming, and that there can be no reasonable doubt that it is directed by intelligence of some sort, but I am by no means convinced that this intelligence proceeds from the spirits of those who have gone over from this life; in fact it obviously does not, in some cases.

ENGINEER: Well, I only say that I respectfully agree with Professor Hyslop that "there is not nearly as much evidence for telepathy between living persons as for spirit-intercourse," and that "the telepathic theory seems to be favoured mainly because it is supposed not to involve the credulity which spirit-intercourse is held to imply."

P. But why should the "messages" not proceed from the sub-conscious mind of the medium, or those of the sitters, or from both?

E. No doubt it sometimes does, and may often be tinged by them, but the messages themselves are the best answer to that. It would be extremely difficult, without making large additions to the known facts of telepathy, to make that theory cover such cases as those given by the Société Universelle d'Etudes Psychiques (Paris), in their issue of December, 1914, where parts of a message were given to one automatist in Paris, and parts to another automatist at Wimereux, near Boulogne, within the same hour—the two making no sense till combined. My objection to the theory is that it proves too much. The only authoritative version of it that I know is Mr. F. L. Rawson's statement, "Spiritualistic phenomena are produced by the sub-conscious mind of the medium, due to the fact (*sic*) that the sub-conscious mind of a man knows everything in the material world, and consequently can reproduce not only faces, but knowledge not even known to those present, if the conscious mind can be caused to vibrate synchronously with the sub-conscious mind." (!) I have not much respect either for the statement or the authority. Besides, you will agree that the burden of proof lies on those who put forward a theory.

P. Yes, I admit that, and I do not say it is so. But biologists are now inclined to refer what used to be called "instinct" in animals to sub-conscious mind, and to explain by it the homing instinct of birds, and many actions of animals, such as the extraordinary anatomical skill with which the SpheX wasp stings its prey exactly on the nerve-centre which paralyses only the motor nerves of the caterpillar it conveys to be the living food of its larva; and many other cases of unerring knowledge. If a semi-blind caterpillar and the blind Driver ant can proceed straight to distant sources of food, why should not the sub-conscious mind in man have access to information of which the conscious mind knows nothing?

E. It certainly may, for aught we know to the contrary; but if we agree that the whole subject is experimental, the holders of the theory must prove that it does. And I think it proves too much—it not only involves the enormous assumption of a practically omniscient sub-conscious mind, at the disposal of every half-educated medium, but it does not account for the exceedingly low, ignorant, occasionally dogmatic, and frequently untrue, nature of many quite genuine automatisms. Let us keep to the scientific theory, *i.e.*, the simplest which covers the facts at present known. There may be a sub-conscious mind (which, apparently, has all, and much more than, the powers which are denied to the human spirit)—what the Theosophists call the Astral Memory or the Akashic record, but the spirit hypothesis is certainly more comprehensible, more in accordance with the evidence, and has much more practical bearings. I take it as a provisional hypothesis covering the facts, but limited severely by conditions not yet fully understood, and by the sub-consciousness of the transmitters.

P. But if the communications really proceed from those who have passed over, what about their inability to tell us much about their conditions? How do you explain that?

E. I really scarcely dare to say—you will think me horribly pedantic and mystical at the same time.

P. Go on. I am not frightened.

E. Well, then, I am inclined to think that they live in fourth-dimensional space, and we in three-dimensional; hence we can only understand such of their conditions as include our own.

CHAPLAIN. What do you mean?

E. I said you would be appalled.

P. But you must explain yourself.

E. To do so, I must prove mathematically that space can be of four dimensions. For the full proof you must go to Riemann, Gauss, and Klein, W. K. Clifford, Sir R. S. Ball, and the publications of the Mathematical Society. I am really afraid to go on. But they show mathematically that there must be different kinds of space.

P. I am not going to bow before any authority, scientific or clerical. Bergson says that any philosophy can be put in ordinary language.

E. Well, if you will have it, here is the best I can do:—

A line, or "row" of indefinite length is composed of an infinite number of points; that infinite number being symbolised by the sign  $\infty$ . In a flat "pencil," *e.g.*, of light, there are  $\infty$  lines, and each line contains  $\infty$  points, while each point in the plane lies on one of these lines. Each line in a plane cuts a fixed line in one point. But this fixed line is cut at each point by  $\infty$  lines, and contains  $\infty$  points; hence there are  $\infty^2$  lines in a plane. A pencil in space contains as many lines as a plane contains points, and as many planes as a plane contains lines, for any plane cuts the pencil in a field of points and lines; therefore a pencil contains  $\infty^2$  lines and  $\infty^2$  planes; therefore the pencil and the field are of two dimensions.

C. I find it much easier to say that a plane has length and breadth.

E. So it is. But that is a *finite* plane, and we are reasoning about infinities, which is *your* province. Am I to go on?

P. Yes; go on, though I can attach no meaning to (infinity)<sup>2</sup>.

E. You will likely attach less to what follows; and to relieve myself of responsibility, I will quote from the article, "Geometry," by Professor Henrici, Ph.D., LL.D., F.R.S., in the "Encyclopædia Britannica."

"To count the number of points in space, we observe that each point lies on some line in a pencil. But the pencil contains  $\infty^2$  lines, and each line  $\infty$  points; hence, space contains  $\infty^3$  points. Each plane cuts any fixed plane in a line. But a plane contains  $\infty^2$  lines, and through each pass  $\infty$  planes; therefore space contains  $\infty^3$  planes."

"Hence, space contains as many planes as points, but it contains an infinite number of times more lines than points or planes. To count them, notice that every line cuts a fixed plane in one point. But  $\infty^2$  lines pass through each point, and there are  $\infty^2$  points in the plane. Hence there are  $\infty^4$  lines in space. The space of points and planes is of three dimensions, but the space of lines is of four dimensions."

P. Great Heavens! I don't understand a word of it.

E. I don't understand much, I confess; I follow his reasoning, but cannot visualise the idea. Perhaps this four-dimensional geometry is the geometry of the next state.

P. That restores the terror of death! I used to find Euclid bad enough.

E. Oh, well, you need not learn it, you know. For my own part if it is the geometry of the next state, I am quite content to leave it to them.

C. But what is the object of all this jargon?

E. The object is to show mathematically that there are functions of space that we do not understand. You must remember that on these axioms there is built an actual science of Projective Geometry which gives correct solutions to actual problems, just as the Differential and Integral Calculus do, which deal with infinity in the diminishing direction.

C. I feel like a fish out of water.

E. What! Among the infinities! And you a parson!

C. Don't chaff. You don't mean to tell me that you understand this?

E. Frankly, I don't, but Professor Henrici does, apparently. It seems to me an attempt to bring within our *finite* faculties the concepts of infinity, and therefore to involve an impossibility. But I think I understand it better by referring the "dimensions" not to space but to substance. Three-dimensional Matter we are all familiar with, though mathematically, the "solid" is only a shell, limited by planes of no thickness. Returning to the finite, however—points limit lines, lines limit planes, and planes limit "solids," but that says nothing about the interior of the "solid." As the Ether permeates, and perhaps composes, the atoms which form a material world (interiorly), it seems rational to think of the Ether as fourth-dimensional substance; it being substantial to solid form. And as the spirits tell us that their bodies are of organised Ether, as ours are of organised Matter, the soul-body must be limited by fourth-dimensional conditions, which allow of action that seems to us instantaneous, but also makes Matter as intangible to them as Ether is to us.

P. That seems fairly intelligible, though of course it is not proof.

E. Certainly not; but it is explanatory, and it agrees with the facts so far as we know them. Now let me read you an alleged spirit-message from Allan Kardec, Vol. II., p. 277 (I translate the French freely): "We communicate with incarnate spirits, as with spirits properly so called, by the simple radiation of our thought (Telepathy). Our thoughts do not need the garment of words to be understood by spirits; they perceive the thought we desire to convey by the mere fact that we direct our thoughts towards

them; and they can do this in proportion to their intellectual faculties—that is to say, such and such a thought can be understood according to their degree of attainment; whereas in the case of others, our thought, awaking no remembrance or knowledge, is not perceptible by them.

"With a medium whose actual or latent intelligence is well-developed, our thought is communicated as by spirit to spirit. In this case we find in the brain of the medium the elements necessary to give our thought the garment of words. . . . That is why, however great the diversity of communicating spirits, the script obtained by a medium will always carry a stamp of form and colour peculiar to himself. . . . We are like a composer who has, it may be, a piano, a violin, a flute, a bassoon, or a penny whistle. With the three former the piece can be played so as to be very comprehensible to the hearers, but not so with the other two instruments." . . . "With some, we have to decompose our thoughts and to proceed word by word and letter by letter, which is wearisome for us and a real obstacle."

C. What has this to do with the fourth dimension?

E. Only this: that the power we call telepathy agrees with fourth-dimensional ideas, and is directly stated to be the means of communication.

(To be Continued.)

### THE L.S.A. MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND.

Once more we may refer to the scheme for establishing the London Spiritualist Alliance on a solid foundation by providing it with a house for use as a centre for its activities which, with an adequate equipment, could be greatly extended and efficiently carried out. One of the original contributors to the fund, who gave us £250, indicated his desire that the sum of £10,000 should be the amount aimed at. So far we have collected towards this ideal sum the actual amount of £1,080. It may be useful now to give the names of the Council of the Alliance who are practically in the position of Trustees for the Fund:—

Henry Withall (Acting President and Treasurer), Ellis T. Powell, LL.B., D.Sc. (Vice-President), D. Rogers (Hon. Secretary), Mrs. W. P. Browne, Mrs. Florence M. Finlay, David Gow, H. Ernest Hunt, Mrs. Catherine E. Lucking, W. R. Moores, E. R. Serocold Skeels, H. Biden Steele, F. W. Thurstan, M.A.

We are well aware of the fact that movements are on foot for the establishment of other and separate centres and institutes. We do not regard them as rivals—recognising as we do the great variety of minds and the different degrees of interest and opinion which need to be catered for. Persons who are bent upon active public propaganda may of course not find their ideas adequately met by an institution whose main object will be to form a centre for study and discussion and the provision of information and facilities for those who, being attracted to the subject, require guidance and advice. But there is no reason why such an institution should not be able to co-operate with the more public forms of work to the common benefit.

The Alliance has for a long time past been rendering much service outside of the strict lines of its regular duties, in assisting inquirers. The task of dealing with the multitudes of people who are not members or supporters, while a strain on our resources, is ample proof of the work which could be accomplished under better conditions.

\*\*\* It should be mentioned that a considerable number of members of the Alliance have not paid their subscriptions for the current year. We hope that they will continue their support and send their subscriptions without further notice, as postal reminders, of course, entail trouble and expense.

**MUSIC AND THE DYING.**—Mr. Joseph Clark, of Hind Hayes, S.O., Somerset, writes: "Can any of your readers tell me of any cases of music being heard by people whose friends or relatives were passing, or about to pass, from this life? I shall be obliged if those who know of any such cases would relate them through the pages of LIGHT. —[\*]. There are several cases recorded in the literature of Spiritualism, and we have heard of others from those who have had such experiences. But we are willing to publish any striking example in the knowledge of readers.]

**BRITISH SPIRITUALISTS' LYCEUM UNION.**—We learn with regret that Mr. Alfred Kitson has been compelled, owing to ill-health, to resign his position as president as from June next. The Lyceum movement in England was the outcome of the labours of Mr. Kitson, who has been one of the hardest workers in the cause for many years. We cordially concur with the tribute to his work published in "The Lyceum Banner," in which it is said, "The Children's Movement has learned to love, honour and depend upon him." His faithful services to the Lyceum movement are worthy of the warmest commendation, and we are glad to learn that the Management Committee recommend that he be asked to continue them as adviser to the Lyceum Union at a salary of £60 a year.

## GOVERNOR CURTIN'S SPIRIT MESSAGE.

### A DIPLOMATIST'S STORY.

We are indebted for the following striking extract, relating an episode in the life of Sir Horace Rumbold, to Mrs. Louise Berens, who in an accompanying letter writes: "Sir Horace regarded Spiritualism and mediumship from the 'all-humbug-and-rubbish' standpoint. In the first volume of his reminiscences, describing the strange cosmopolitan crowd collected at Baden-Baden, in 1856, he remarks, 'A face in the throng not to be forgotten for its weird haunted look is that of Home, the Spiritualist, whose startling impostures are just beginning to attract public notice, etc.' . . . It argues much for Spiritualism that Governor Curtin's amazing experience penetrated (to a certain degree) Sir Horace Rumbold's hide-bound convictions."

From "Recollections of a Diplomatist," by Sir Horace Rumbold.

In the course of this autumn and winter we saw much of the American Minister, "Governor" Curtin, so called from his having administered the great State of Pennsylvania all through the Civil War. Curtin was very friendly to England, and did us essential service in exposing the intrigues by which the Russian Minister at Washington endeavoured to frustrate our then pending negotiations with the United States Government for the settlement of the "Alabama" and other claims. My chief recollection, however, of the American diplomatist is in connection with a very different subject. There was just then in Petersburg Society a craze for table-turning, spirit-rapping, etc. My little wife also amused herself trying her hand at planchette, and certainly the results she obtained quite puzzled me, knowing how incapable she was of deceit in the matter. One evening at the Curtins she was thus engaged, when Curtin, habitually the blandest of men, almost sternly requested her to desist from this amusement, which touched, he told her, upon questions much too serious to be trifled with. His earnestness so impressed me that I begged him to explain his objections, whereupon he related what follows. At the very eve of the great war he was hard at work one day in the Government offices at Philadelphia, when he was told that a person wished to speak to him on important business. Although very busy, he consented to see the applicant for a few minutes. The man ushered in was unknown to him and apparently in poor circumstances, while he evidently hailed from some Western State. "Mr. Curtin," he said, "I have a very urgent message for you which I must put in writing." He forthwith sat down and began to scribble, Curtin watching him with feelings that turned to utter amazement when he recognised, in what flowed from the pen of this entire stranger, the unmistakable handwriting of the mother he had lost not long before, and to whom he was devotedly attached. The message was not lengthy, but of so extraordinary a character that, when the writer had finished, Curtin asked what he could do for him, offering him money, or at any rate a free pass on the railway to take him to his distant home. The man thanked him, but declined any assistance, and repeated that he had simply been impelled to deliver the message in this form, Curtin remaining under the impression that he did not understand its import, and was acting mechanically under some mysterious influence. What he had thus written was a rough forecast of the chief events of the great contest which then had not yet broken out. Curtin was so struck by the circumstances, that he imparted them in confidence, at the time, to friends at Philadelphia who, with him, afterwards watched with intense interest the developments predicted in the message. The result of this incident, however, was that, whenever he was in any doubt or difficulty, he resorted to the means so strangely indicated, and always received replies which he felt absolutely certain were in his mother's handwriting. That Mr. Curtin told me this singular story in perfect good faith I cannot for a moment doubt.

### THE DOCTRINE OF HELL-FIRE.

With respect to Mr. Wake Cook and the abolition of the doctrine of hell-fire, I do not think it will be necessary for the Churches to sweep away the plain statements of the Bible, but only to read them with a little more intelligence. It is definitely stated in both Old and New Testaments that Hell and Hades do exist, and that bad people go there, but I never could find any reason for the idea that they remained there. The "fire is not quenched," but the spirits pass through and on. Indeed, there seem to be many hells, and some Easterns hold that this world is one. It might be, in times of war. With regard to remarks on the disappearance of the Devil also, may I remind your readers of a quotation from "Alton Locke": "And see the Deevil's deid," said Sandy. "Eh, puir Nickie! and a' body pitting his ain sins on Nickie's shoulders! Aiblins he's but shammin'."

"When pleasant days came on apace,  
And showers began to fa'  
John Barleycorn rose up again,  
And sair surprised them a'."

KATHERINE ST. HILL.



## London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.;

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The Alliance possesses the largest Library in existence of occult, mystical, and psychical books. Members' annual subscription £1 1s. For prospectus, syllabus of meetings, classes, &c., apply to the Secretary.

### COUNTING THE COST.

Many years ago—more than we care to remember—a certain enthusiastic man discovered that he had the gift of magnetic healing. The thing was so strange and wonderful (to him) that he decided that his powers must be at once placed at the service of the community. Behold him then shortly afterwards making public announcement of his ability to heal all and sundry, and taking for the scene of his operations a London mews, where, in the open air, he offered to magnetise any patients who presented themselves. After which, as the late "M.A. (Oxon.)" would have said, *solvuntur risu tabula*—the proceedings were dissolved in laughter and cat-calls.

The moral of the story is quite a personal one; it does not reflect in any way upon the reality of psychotherapeutics. Our Don Quixote of the magnetic healing adventure retired from the contest surprised and hurt. He had not counted the cost, or taken care to ascertain the risks he ran. Like Moses, in the "Vicar of Wakefield," he should have "known his company." But the results, although bad for him, must have left some small residuum of good. He had, in his own way, broken down some prejudices, however slightly, made one or two people think, and paved the way for future adventurers, as did Jonas Hanway when he hoisted the first umbrella.

There is, to the credit of humanity, a long roll of men who have sacrificed themselves for the benefit of their fellows. We may instance—although it is not the best example—the exploit of Winkelried, the Swiss patriot, at the battle of Sempach, when his comrades tried in vain to penetrate the dense mass of steel represented by the spears of the Austrians. We remember how Winkelried grasped as many of the spears as he could and bore them to the ground, thus making a path for his companions over his mangled body. Here was a man who "counted the cost," who met the consequence of his adventure with his eyes open.

Nowadays there are few of us who are liable to rush into adventures of the end of which we have not some knowledge, derived from observing the experience of others in the past, our heroes and pioneers who, having counted the cost, went, figuratively speaking, to the pillory or stake for love of what they believed to be the truth. There are still some splendid examples of this spirit amongst us to-day. It is not necessary to mention their names, they are known to all of us. To say that they have not to face such ordeals as were endured by their exemplars of thirty or forty years ago is not to detract from their merits, as they themselves would be the first to admit. The opposition to-day is not so formidable or so numerous as it was in the past. Its power has dwindled tremendously, but it is still able to look very menacing, making up in malice what it lacks in strength. Truth to tell, there is reason to believe that it has begun to suspect its weakness. To borrow a metaphor from the card-table (if one may do so without offence), it fears that all its skill will not avail it against the "hands" held by its antagonists. Certain easy triumphs do not tend altogether to complete assurance of the final result "when the game is played out."

In the old days the subject of psychic evidences was one for laughter. The public "laughed consumedly"; there were guffaws all round. We do not see so much of this laughter to-day—indeed, we see hardly any of it. But we do see a larger amount of bewilderment, annoyance, indignation, and a still larger measure of serious, even anxious, inquiry. A great many people want to know the truth. For every single enquirer forty years ago there are a thousand to-day.

Even as we write there enters to us an old acquaint-

ance—a gentleman who was concerned in the conjuring entertainments of the early seventies, designed to prove that physical phenomena are fraudulent. He found out the truth of the matter for himself, and can now testify to it. But we feel we have heard enough of the matter for the present. It is an unseemly wrangling over an aspect of the subject which is quite rudimentary. It belongs to physics and is designed entirely for the benefit of those minds whose prejudices can be broken down only along lines of physical demonstration. It is a matter for serious, scientific study, experiment and record, and not for popular demonstration conducted in a haphazard, sensational manner by those who are unacquainted with the most elementary principles of the inquiry, or who, being made acquainted, find it to their interest not to observe them.

Here again it is a question of counting the cost. We do not countenance these chance-medley "popular" investigations. They are too costly. The investigation should be conducted with at least as much care as the trial of any invention for commercial uses. Of course, in the long run, the "costs and damages" consequent on hasty, foolish, and insincere investigations will fall upon those who promote and countenance them, and will not injure us. It is they, also, who should count the cost. We may have to discharge a small debt in the present in the way of "moral and intellectual damage," but the bill, in the end, will be a long and heavy one, and it will not have to be settled by Spiritualists.

### "PSYCHIC SCIENCE, THE PRESS, AND THE PUBLIC."

(FROM SIR WILLIAM F. BARRETT, F.R.S.)

To the Editor of LIGHT.

SIR,—

Allow me to thank you for your excellent article in last week's LIGHT on "Psychic Science, the Press and the Public." The "Daily Express" inquiry into the phenomena of Spiritualism was, of course, foredoomed to failure. The methods of journalism are not the methods of science. The only useful fact in the "Daily Express" enterprise is the testimony it affords to the widespread and growing interest in psychical research, in general, and Spiritualism in particular. The subject evidently *pays*, from a journalistic point of view. But how could any but an inconclusive result follow from the conditions of this experiment—a crowded, noisy room, a very mixed company, and absolute darkness?

As you rightly say, "the question is not to be decided by a general inquisition of newspapers, or a whole universe of conjuring entertainments. It can only be settled by serious and scientific study and experiment, by people who are willing to abide by the logic of facts."

It is to be regretted that any who have psychic gifts lend themselves to advertisement by the newspapers. The brothers Thomas are doubtless sincere, and you express no doubt of the reality of Mr. Will Thomas's mediumship. This being so, might I suggest that they should ask such a competent and sympathetic investigator as Mr. W. W. Baggally to conduct a series of private sittings to test their super-normal powers?

The Society for Psychical Research has special funds for research, and a few pounds from this fund could not be better employed than in asking, say, Mr. Baggally to make this enquiry.

Yours, etc.,

W. F. BARRETT.

### "HOW TO LET THE WORLD KNOW."

This will be the title of the address to be delivered by Mr. H. W. Engholm at the social meeting of the L.S.A. to be held at 6, Queen Square, at 7 o'clock on Thursday, April 10th, following the lecture by Dr. W. J. Vanstone at 5. Mr. Engholm, who is a gentleman of long and wide experience in publicity work in connection with journalistic and other enterprises, will, we understand, have some striking ideas to express, and we hope that all who are interested in the promotion of our work will attend and support him.

## A SCIENTIFIC CONFESSION OF FAITH.

By H. A. DALLAS.

One of the signs that France is gradually returning to normal conditions is the re-appearance of "Annales des Sciences Psychiques." We welcome it again, and congratulate its able editor on the very interesting issue which reached us last month. The first article is of such importance that a summary and partial translation is desirable, so that readers of LIGHT may be aware of the conclusions reached by Dr. Gustave Geley as the result of his prolonged experiences with the medium, Eva C., who, it will be remembered, has been under the careful supervision of Mme. Juliette Alexandre Bisson, and has been the subject of close scientific scrutiny for several years. Prof. Schrenck-Nötzing's book has helped to make her phenomena widely known. The value of this particular article is not so much because it adds yet another testimony to the genuineness of these phenomena (which for fair-minded students are already proven through many past experiments with materialisation mediums) but its value lies mainly in the tremendous conclusions to which Dr. Geley has been led, and which he affirms with absolute conviction and deliberation. At the close of his interesting paper he says:—

"All this proves to us, and one may henceforth affirm this without reserve, that in the individual being there is something quite different from a congeries of cells; as there is in the universe something quite different from an aggregate of atoms."

Those who may be repelled by the rather grotesque photographs reproduced with this article, and who, like Miss Helen Mathers (whose interesting article appeared in LIGHT of February 22nd) hold "in holy horror" all such phenomena as "materialisations," would be wise to suspend their judgment in view of the great revolution which the study of these phenomena is effecting in the philosophy of men of science. It is no small thing to assert, as Dr. Geley does, that these experimental facts necessitate "the complete overthrow of materialistic physiology" and that the future philosophy of science will be idealistic. Let us now consider the line of thought pursued by Dr. Geley in this article.

He begins by saying that when we speak of "supra-normal" and "supernatural" phenomena we use these terms only because we are ignorant of the laws which govern and control living creatures. If we could solve the mystery of normal life we should find in that the solution of what we call supernormal phenomena. The physiology of the normal is a mystery, and it is only because the average human mind imagines that it understands experiences which are familiar that we fail to realise how miraculous are normal life and reproductive processes. He says:—

"Normal physiology and supra-normal physiology are equally mysterious; we are not faced with two problems, requiring two different solutions, but with one and the same problem—the problem of life."

"If the individual being is regarded as nothing more than a congeries of cells the double problem is insoluble. The mystery becomes clearer only if we admit that over and above the changes, the organic and physiological modifications, the revolutions in the chemical balance of life, there exists a dominating factor, the dominating guidance (*directrice*) of a superior dynamic force."

He illustrates this statement by reference to the metamorphoses in insect life:—

"In the protecting envelope of the chrysalis which shelters the animal from disturbing exterior influences and from the light, a strange elaboration occurs which singularly reminds us of that which I am about to describe [e.g., materialisation phenomena] in what is called supra-normal physiology. The body of the insect dematerialises. It disintegrates, melts into a kind of uniform jelly, a uniform amorphous substance, in which all organic or specific distinctions disappear. There is no muscular, vascular, visceral, or nervous substance. There is merely substance; essential substance, the basis of life. Then, very rapidly, the substance begins to organise itself and a fresh materialisation is effected from it. The adult animal is constituted in quite a different form from the primitive larva."

Dr. Geley then affirms that, having many times witnessed the whole process of "supra-normal" materialisation with the medium Eva, and having seen and touched, and confirmed the witness of his senses by registering instruments and by photography, he has no longer any doubt of the genuine reality of the experience. He adds that the medium has always shown in his presence absolute honesty. He continues:—

"The phenomena may be summarised thus: From the body of the medium issues—exteriorises itself—a substance which at first is amorphous or polymorphous. This substance takes various forms."

From his experiences Dr. Geley draws these important conclusions:—

"That all biological processes point to the conclusion that the physical being is essentially constituted out of a

primordial unique substance of which the organic formations are simply representations.\* The essential unity of organic substance is thus the first term of the problem of biology.

"The second term is found in the necessity of admitting the existence of a superior dynamic organising, centralising and directing force."

"The necessity of this conception is the result of all our physiological knowledge."

"There is a third term, the most important: the dynamic directing force is itself obedient to a directing idea. This directing idea (*idée directrice*) is found in all biological creations. It reveals an aim—the directing idea does not always fully achieve its aim. The result of its activity is often imperfect . . . but whether it succeeds or not we find the directing idea always present."

Dr. Geley adds that the term "idéoplastie" (i.e., living matter modelled by an idea) is the most suitable term by which to denote the process:—

"The notion of *idéoplastie* which the facts compel us to adopt is of capital importance; ideas are no longer dependent, a product of matter. On the contrary, it is ideas that model matter, giving to matter its form and attributes. In this discovery materialistic physiology is totally upset."

The materialised forms in mediumistic séances are the product of the same biological process as generation. They are neither more nor less miraculous, neither more nor less supernatural, or, if you like, they are equally so; it is the same ideoplastic miracle which forms from the material body hands, face, viscera and all the tissues, the whole organism of the fetus and which forms out of the body of the medium the hands, face or entire organism of a materialisation.

"Doubtless in the idealistic philosophy of the future, which I firmly believe will be the science of to-morrow, there will still be large room for hypotheses; but one thing, at least will be established by indisputable evidence, as it seems to me—that is, that the materialistic conception of the universe and of the individual is false. It cannot be reconciled with our present biological knowledge."

## HOUDINI—MEDIUM OR CONJURER?

From Mr. J. Hewat McKenzie:—

Your correspondent, H. W. E., asks on page 88 how I tested Houdini's powers, do I imply that I did so by S.P.R. methods? My reply is emphatically "No." The S.P.R. methods are often detrimental to success, rather than otherwise, and with one or two exceptions the Society has done very little investigation with physical mediums. Sir A. Conan Doyle, who has been an S.P.R. member for thirty years, is reported to have stated recently in the public Press, that if he had "had anyone to show him the way, he could have arrived at the knowledge of spirit intercourse in thirty weeks instead of thirty years." We scarcely want or need to adopt S.P.R. methods at this stage of progress.

My investigations with Houdini were made on the public platform, and not as a member of the audience. I handled his implements and submitted him to the same tests as any genuine medium allows. If I had, however, tested Houdini in my own rooms, the sceptic would be the first to refuse to believe that this private performance was the same as the public.

H. W. E. also says, "The conjurer and his friend, Mr Hereward Carrington, disclaim the employment of psychic methods." Houdini has nowhere to my knowledge made any such claim; but as a matter of fact has advertised in the United States that some of his manifestations are claimed by me (as the author of "Spirit Intercourse") to be achieved by psychic power.

I am aware that H. W. E. knows much about the possibilities of the cinematograph, but to discuss the photographing of dematerialisation within a closed metal tank is but a waste of your valuable space.

I have never claimed that all the demonstrations by Houdini were accomplished by supernormal means. It is this mixture of the real and the imitation so frequently practised by professional physical mediums that causes so much trouble to the inexperienced psychic investigator, and it would be well if this were more generally known.

MISS LIND-AT-HAGEBY AT BRIGHTON.—Speaking at the Athenæum Hall, on Sunday last, Miss Lind-at-Hageby described Spiritualism as the link between Science and Religion. It led Science, which had hitherto concerned itself with matter, to a consideration of the subtler forces which belonged to the mental and spiritual realms. The first thought of the ordinary person was communication with the dead, but it was a far larger question than this, important as spirit-communication was. It was a matter of realising the spiritual nature of the Universe, that we are all spirits here and now. She was convinced that Spiritualism had a great message for humanity, throwing new light on its origin, its career, and its eternal destiny.

\* Dr. Geley regards the discovery made through these experiments as "one of the greatest discoveries in biology."

## FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton announce as ready shortly a new book by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle — "The Vital Message"—a companion volume to "The New Revelation."

It is announced that a volume of reminiscences by the late Madame Liza Lehmann, who, it will be remembered, was a member of the Alliance, will be published later in the year by Mr. Fisher Unwin.

The "Daily Express" corrects the statement which we quoted from the "Sunday Express" last week that Sir Henry Lunn will devote his energies to propagating Spiritualism. It appears that he is speaking against it.

The last issue of "The Two Worlds" (the 21st inst.) marks the commencement of the editorship of Mr. Ernest Walter Oaten. We cordially congratulate him on his leading article, "Our Task," which is filled with a fine quality of sincerity, vigour and insight. It augurs well for his future conduct of the paper.

Many of us have read with admiration the work of Mr. J. L. Garvin, editor of the "Observer," whose articles in that journal are marked by a deep insight and a spiritual quality that lifts them far above the level of ordinary journalism whatever its merely literary merits. Mr. Garvin is clearly a Seer, and we need seers very much in these transition times. Vision is, unhappily, a rare quality. Let us hope that it will grow more abundant, since "where there is no vision the people perish."

From a letter received from Mr. James Coates, formerly of Rothesay, and author of "Photographing the Invisible" and other well-known books, we learn that he has been making an extended tour, in the course of which he has addressed meetings and attended private gatherings in Birmingham, Liverpool, Glasgow, Belfast and Edinburgh. He hopes to visit London and Brighton during April and May and give lectures on "Psychic Photography," with lime-light illustrations. One lecture will be given to a London Camera Club affiliated to the Royal Photographic Society. Mr. Coates's address to which letters for him should be forwarded is "Jesmond," New Balderton, Newark-on-Trent.

The mass meeting at the Royal Albert Hall, under the auspices of the Spiritualist National Union, will take the form of a national memorial service for the fallen in the war. It will be held on Sunday, April 27th, at 7.30 p.m. Amongst the speakers will be Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Dr. Ellis T. Powell and Mr. E. W. Oaten. The reserved seats (numbered) will be 10s. 6d. and 5s.; the unreserved, 2s. 6d. and 1s. Tickets can be obtained from all Spiritualist organisations in London; the London Spiritualist Mission, 13b, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W.; Messrs. Keith, Prowse and Co.; the ticket office, Royal Albert Hall; or by post from Mr. Charles J. Williams, 115, Tanner's Hill, Deptford, S.E.8.

Several letters on the subject of "Astral Journeys" have appeared in the "Daily Mail." One of the best is by a writer signing himself "Viator," who tells of occasions on which he was apparently seen at places distant from where he actually was. "Some years ago my brother and his little boy were quite certain they had both seen me and spoken to me at Earl's Court Exhibition. I was miles away from Earl's Court at the time." This kind of thing has happened so frequently and in such circumstances—as for instance when his "double" was seen carrying a parcel, he himself being engaged in preparing a parcel to carry to the person who saw him—that he is apparently much impressed. It is not to be explained by "coincidences."

"Viator" is naturally puzzled. Let him be re-assured. Many people have recorded similar experiences. These things are doubtless the result of thought projections (usually unconscious). They may take the form of sounds as well as visual apparitions. Andrew Lang, for instance, tells of "The Grocer's Cough," in which a cough was frequently heard at the door of a house not long before the arrival of a grocer whose cough was habitual and recognisable. A family known to us often hears the latch key turn in the lock and the door open shortly before the return of the head of the house in the evening. The real sound is preceded by a phantom one, which is yet so like the reality that even the domestic animals seem to perceive it.

Under the heading, "I Talk to Ghosts," "Zonke" writes in the "Daily Mail" of the 21st inst. describing herself as the person who advertised in the "Times" lately offering assistance to persons who have "haunted, disturbed or per-

sistently unlucky houses." Zonke states that she has "seen or talked to lots of ghosts," and it appears that she is possessed of clairvoyant and clairaudient powers. "When one takes up the subject seriously, ghosts as ghosts become merged in influences," she writes, and adds, with equal truth, "the influences of the dead may be present as active spirit 'influences.'" There is certainly scope for Zonke's powers. The last haunted house to which our attention was invited was a soldiers' sanatorium, where the Tommies frequently saw and heard strange manifestations, some remarkably objective. It was not merely the evidence of the soldiers ("what the soldier said, etc."), but of nurses and others that lent this case its importance.

## THE "MASKED MEDIUM."

The "Daily Express," having offered "£500 for a ghost," has discovered a "masked medium"—a mysterious lady who has magnanimously refused the reward and is reported to have "raised a spirit." We don't know what that means, but it appears to have raised the spirits of the newspaper in question. Its special correspondent attended a séance with the "masked medium" and related that she "opened the proceedings, informally, with a mental, or, as other spiritualists term it, an intellectual manifestation." (Do they?) The "intellectual manifestation" consisted, *inter alia*, of telling him he had three pennies in his overcoat pocket—he says he was not aware of the fact. Also, she gave the correct date of each coin. After this she "raised" a spirit which resembled an aged woman in a shawl. At the end of the séance there were found on the medium's lap "numerous sweet-smelling violets scattered about." It may be all right, but at present we don't know what to think of it, being reluctantly forced into retaliating upon our critics some of the incredulity with which they regard us. We are not impressed with the type of investigator who writes of "raising" or "calling up" spirits, and who behaves towards discarnate men and women as though they were a set of oddities unworthy of the slightest respect or consideration. If the investigator questions our idea of the true nature of spirits, we can only ask him to hold his judgment in suspense, and give them the benefit of the doubt—a small concession, costing nothing. It would even be showing a little courtesy towards those who believe in the reality of spirits. But perhaps that is too much to expect. Still, it would not impair the value of the advertisement.

## "DAGONET" AND THE "ARTHURIAN LEGEND."

Writing in the "Referee" of the 23rd inst., "Dagonet" says:—

My friend, Mr. David Gow, the editor of *LIGHT*, a journal of Psychical, Occult and Mystical Research, writes me, "I note your remarks in reply to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. I suppose the real reason of the 'present discontents' is that we insist that facts to be credible and useful ought to take a certain shape or conform to our ideas of how they should present themselves. This, so far, they have resolutely refused to do, except in a few instances of persistent and scientific inquiry, like that of Dr. Crawford, of Belfast, for example, who found evidence of spirit agency and said so. As an old inquirer, I have found that the scientific method requires us to accept the physical facts, however uncouth and opposed to our preconceptions, and see what they lead to in conjunction with other lines of enquiry—e.g., mental and psychological."

TO CERTAIN CORRESPONDENTS. — Communications from writers who give neither name nor address are useless to us.

ANNIVERSARY OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.—The Marylebone Spiritualist Association will hold a special service at 6.30 p.m. next Sunday, the 30th inst., at Steinway Hall, when Mrs. E. A. Cannock will give an address and clairvoyant descriptions.

THE USES OF PSYCHOMETRY: A STRIKING CASE.—Mr. Harry Fielder, of Pimlico-road, S.W., reports an illustration of the genuineness and value of the psychometric gift. He states that the eldest daughter of the engineer under whom he has been working for many years past had been missing from her home ever since the 13th ult. and no trace could be found of her. Recently Mr. Fielder called at the house, borrowed a pair of gloves which had been worn by the young woman and took them, enclosed in an envelope, to a lady psychometrist, Mrs. Graddon Kent. Before the gloves were taken out she correctly stated what colour they were. Next, touching the empty envelope, she gave an accurate description of their former owner, adding that she had been to Victoria Station and other places, that she was drowned in the Thames, and that confirmation of the fact would speedily follow. These statements were all verified. At the inquest on the recovered remains, reported in the evening papers of the 14th inst., it was clear from the evidence that the poor girl had thrown herself into the river while suffering from great mental distress caused by bereavement and sickness in the family.



## MEDIUMSHIP AND ITS CRITICS.

ADDRESS BY THE AUTHOR OF "I HEARD A VOICE."

At the social gathering of the London Spiritualist Alliance held on Thursday, the 13th inst., of which a brief account was given in our last issue, the author of "I Heard a Voice" ("A King's Counsel"), addressing the company, said that he felt some natural hesitation in speaking to a body of persons who were probably all experts on the subject of psychical investigation.

About four years ago he had been present at a meeting at which a man had publicly stated that he was in communication with a friend who had been killed in the war. "I remember," proceeded the speaker, "that the statement was received with a suppressed titter all round the room. I did not feel particularly amused myself; but at the same time I thought that the man who made such a statement was under a delusion. It is not more than three years ago that I obtained any proof which satisfied me of the genuineness of spirit intercourse, and the evidence which came to me came apparently as an accident. It was a complete surprise to me to find that my two daughters, of whom one was eleven years of age, and the other three years older, were extraordinarily good mediums."

Proceeding, the speaker related how the discovery had been brought about by the use of the planchette, which the children were using as a toy. After a time evidential messages began to come through, as related in his book. Both mediums remained perfectly normal, and the experiments appeared to have no more effect upon them than the writing of an ordinary letter. There was a rapid and remarkable increase in their mediumship after the first communications. He did not accept the genuineness of the results until he had demanded and obtained conclusive proofs. In the course of time the planchette was discarded, and both wrote with pencil on paper in the ordinary way, except that the nature of the communications was far beyond their normal powers. It was not within the power of the children, or indeed even of their parents to write such poems as were given in this fashion—it was poetry of high quality. Drawing and painting were added to writing. Communications were also received giving information unknown to any of them, but afterwards verified. Much valuable teaching was also received, and "A King's Counsel" at this point described the receipt of passages in Greek, notwithstanding that the medium did not know a single Greek character and that he himself had forgotten his Greek. The lecturer laid stress on the argument that a single genuine communication from the spirit world was sufficient to overthrow the whole case of the anti-Spiritualists, who contended that all such communication was impossible. There was no reasonable explanation of the Greek writings in question except that they were direct spirit messages.

"A King's Counsel" then passed to a consideration of the utility of mediumship and psychic communications, as exemplified in the thousands of helpful and stimulating communications he had received. It had abolished for him and his family any fear of death, and had enabled them to be the means of consoling various friends and correspondents suffering the pangs of bereavement. They learned that their departed friends still lived and watched over them with solicitude. In one message, received from a young officer killed in the war, were the words "I try to put good thoughts into your hearts and am grieved when you do not listen." The teachings given proved the main principles of religion, and proved to demonstration that cardinal principle of religion that there is a future life.

After some further observations on the subject of the reality and benefits of spirit intercourse the speaker referred to the attitude of the Press, which in some cases took the form of hostile criticism. One particular journal—a Sunday paper—was conspicuous by pouring on the subject columns of scurrilous abuse. It coupled Spiritualism with Bolshevism, referred to "its pernicious appeals," and found its tendencies "dangerous to the national well-being," and capable of "leading through mental suffering to insanity and death." (Laughter.) These were strange statements to make of a movement which had relieved so many thousands of mental suffering, and which had convinced its adherents that there is no death.

With the keen analytical skill of the trained lawyer, the speaker dissected the article, exposing the hollowness of its argument and the confused mental condition of its writer, who was shown to be clearly obsessed with the reality of death and the tomb, a theme on which he continually harped. "The Veil," he wrote, "is thick and impenetrable." No doubt, said the speaker, it was—to him. (Laughter.) "The silence of the tomb is not to be broken; the secrets of the after-life are not for our penetrating." "It is criminal to permit the charlatan to exploit grief, to play upon the deeper feelings, to pretend that spirits can be called from the vasty deep." On this passage the speaker remarked sarcastically that apparently it was not criminal to "call spirits from the vasty deep" (whatever that might mean), but only to pretend to do so. (Laughter.)

Alluding to another passage in the effusion, which stated that "Men of science as well as writers of fiction are joining hands in the great conspiracy," the lecturer remarked that

the author of this balderdash became apparently nervous at this point—perhaps fearing he had gone too far, and having the law of libel before his eyes, for immediately afterwards he writes, "It is not necessary to question the purity of their motives!" That was to say they were first charged with a conspiracy to deceive, and then told that their motives were pure. (Great laughter.)

The speaker, alluding to several references in the article, remarked that the writer was indignant with those who disturbed the silence of the tomb, evidently requiring the quiet enjoyment of one for himself!

The final passage which excited "A King's Counsel's" caustic criticism was the following: "To pretend to seek to roll away the stone, and to reveal not only the habitations of the dead but their lives and their thoughts is to play the part of the ravisher of the tomb." So then the crime was to pretend to seek and not to seek to roll away the stone. (Laughter.) Apparently, also, it was not wrong to reveal what the habitations of the spirits are like, but it was wicked to inquire into the lives they lived or the thoughts they entertained. (Renewed laughter.)

After some further remarks on the absurdities of the article, "A King's Counsel" commented severely on the ignorant and barbarous legislation represented by the Witchcraft and Vagrancy Acts, the provisions of which he analysed carefully. As to the first-named Act, its absurdities made it improbable that it would ever be set in operation, but it was still on the Statute Book, and was a blot upon English law. As to the Vagrancy Act, in his opinion the essence of the clause used in the prosecution of mediums was contained in the words "with intent to deceive and impose." The intention to deceive should clearly be proved, but as the average magistrate knew nothing at all about psychic science, he apparently held that as spirit-communication is impossible, the strong presumption is that any person claiming to be a medium must be fraudulent. That was their position in the present era of civilisation, and it was a disgrace to the State.

After the address, which was listened to with keen interest, the chairman, Mr. H. Withall, expressed the thanks of the audience to the speaker. In his opinion such articles as that which their lecturer had scarified did them no great harm. The intelligent readers of it saw that it was an exaggerated statement conflicting with much that they had heard or read on the other side, and they were consequently induced to inquire into the matter for themselves. Alluding to the various meetings of the Alliance, he appealed for a larger spirit of fellowship and mutual helpfulness amongst the members. But new-comers should not passively wait to be spoken to by the friends present, but make themselves known to those who could render them advice and assistance and who would only be too pleased to have the opportunity. (Applause.)

### SIR REDVERS BULLER'S GHOST STORY.

Under this title the "Evening Standard" of the 22nd gives the following:—

"Lady Ritchie's ghost story reminds Lady Redvers Buller of an incident in the life of her husband, Sir Redvers Buller. Some time after the Franco-German War of 1870, she writes to the 'Spectator,' 'Sir Redvers left England to visit the battlefields, and on arriving at the town of — gave directions that his letters should not be forwarded, and started on his tour of inspection. After he had been away some days, he awoke suddenly one night, thinking he saw Lord Wolseley, and that he heard him say: 'I wonder where that fellow Buller is. I can't think why he has not answered my letter.' This so impressed him that he returned at once to the town of —, where he found a letter awaiting him from Lord Wolseley, saying that he must return to London immediately, as an expedition against the Ashantees was imminent."

### "COMMON-SENSE SPIRITUALISM": A QUESTION.

In his symposium (p. 82) Captain De Brath makes his Engineer speak of "A heaven and a hell which are all the more real for being created by states of mind, not fixed localities." As Captain De Brath himself is evidently the Engineer, I should like to ask him if he means that the apparently objective features of the spirit world exist only in the imagination of the spirit observing them, that they correspond with that particular spirit's state of mind and keep changing as his state of mind changes. Does he mean that all those scenes which spirits describe have no locality, but that each spirit creates his own apparition of a landscape and carries about with him, as it were, a sort of dissolving view perpetually changing with his states of mind? I have often wondered what was the exact meaning of this theory. If Captain De Brath will develop his idea a little, I shall be very grateful.

N. G. S.

"O statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul,  
Of Europe, keep our England whole."

—TENNYSON,

## "THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS."

(REPRINTED FROM "LIGHT" OF MARCH 30TH, 1889.)

The "Daily Telegraph" of March 16th, in its "London Day by Day," says, "Precocity in extreme youth has been from time to time observable in all ages." In the reign of Charles II. there was at Manchester a small boy, aged three; whose parents were exceedingly anxious that he should be presented to his Majesty on the ground that the bantling could speak Latin, Greek and Hebrew without even having been instructed in those tongues."

Spiritualism must not be judged by the eccentricities of some of its professors, any more than by the revelations of the police-court, or in the fierce light of the recent "exposure." These are the accidents—in its present phase the *inseparable accidents*—of its existence. To regard them as in any way of the *essence* of the subject is the common blunder of the ignorant. Spiritualists who have penetrated below the repulsive exterior are not in danger of falling into such an error as to regard even the phenomena of Spiritualism as any essential part of the system. They are the porch, the ante-chamber through which most of us pass to the room in which we live in that great mansion which we inhabit. If we have been content to remain in the porch, we have not penetrated the mansion; if the phenomena that have attracted our attention still engage it exclusively, we cannot boast much of our knowledge. In my judgment the most encouraging sign of the times, amid much that must be admitted to be discouraging, is that Spiritualists are beginning to recognise this.

—From Notes by the Way, by "M.A. (Oxon)."

## "TONGUES OF FIRE": AN EXPERIENCE.

[We receive the following from "Sigma," a clerical correspondent. It is a story which is not without a parallel in the experience of others.]

Can any of your readers suggest an explanation of the very strange experience which has recently been reported to me by a lady who is one of my oldest friends? I will tell the story in her own words:—

"I was late in getting to bed, so it was somewhere between 12.15 and 12.30 when I blew out my candle (which was at my left hand on a table in front of a window with curtains drawn tight). Before I had time to lie down, my head was surrounded with bright flames, flickering and dancing round it, so that I really thought I had set fire to myself, and turned round quickly to see if the pillow was on fire. But no! the flames were lovely—quite harmless, but dancing and swooping round my head on the right hand side, lighting up the corner of the room with their brilliance. I can only compare them to some big birds, but with no form except wings that seemed to flash round and round me. I sat up in bed and watched them, with no feeling of fear or awe; but just praying that if I was required to say or do anything, I might be guided to do so. Nothing came through, however, and in about three or four minutes, perhaps—it might be less—the "wings" gradually faded away, leaving me in perfect darkness. The light could not have come from any outside cause, for the window by my bed was closely curtained, and the other window, whose curtains I pull back every night, was so dark that I could not see its outline. I lay down and was some little time getting to sleep, for I could not help trying to think whether I should have done anything, but I was not a bit nervous about it, and slept quite well afterwards."

I have perfect confidence in the veracity and good sense of my friend; and I give her narrative in the hope that it may prove less mystifying to some of your readers than it is to myself.

SIGMA.

**DREAMS AND THE SOUL.**—"Myself and Dreams," by Frank C. Constable, M.A. (Kegan Paul, 6s. 6d. net), covers much ground on subjects that many readers find of fascinating interest: Sleep, Dreams (waking and sleeping), Multiplex Personality, Hallucination and Illusion, the "Realm of Faerie," Phantasy and Ecstasy. Mr. Constable is a distinguished member of the S.P.R. and the author of some now well-known books, notably "Personality and Telepathy" and "Telergy." In the first part of his present book ("Myself") he follows closely the thinking of Kant and Spinoza, but in the second portion ("Dreams"), he breaks new ground. Pressure of space does not permit us at the moment to give the work all the attention it deserves, but we may at least quote from his closing chapter, in which he states some conclusions: "Transcendental Being we must leave as a fact of the incomprehensible, transcending thought, even insight. But for the transcendental subject—myself—there can never be the accomplished: there is the accomplishing in the Eternal; an eternal process in the transcendent of the accomplished in the accomplishing." In short, "End and Beginning are dreams."

## SOME RECENT BOOKS.

"The Ancient Road, or the Development of the Soul," by Frances Swiney (G. Bell and Sons, Ltd.: 12s. 6d. net). This is described as "a great and suggestive work of illumination on the many problems confronting humanity at the present time," and, as might be expected, the authoress, an able writer on the Feminine aspects of life, gives us a work rich in suggestion and wide in its survey. Indeed in its five hundred odd pages it covers a large area of study, medical, legal, mystical, psychical, philosophical themes being discussed in its various chapters. It was perhaps natural that in such a work the consideration of the feminine side of things should come to dwarf everything else. The "masculine phase" of life is treated rather as it were something quite subsidiary and incidental to world-evolution: "The male, as male, will disappear; having served the purpose for which he was evolved," we are told in one place. This is rather shocking to the philosophical observer who essays a balanced view: but doubtless man has done a great deal to deserve it! The book contains seventeen illustrations in colour and black and white. It mingles quotations and references to received authorities with much derived from purely occult sources, which may give the uninitiated reader a sense of incongruity. But however much one may disagree with some of its conclusions one must admit its stimulating properties. Even its over-emphasis of certain ideas strikes us as a healthy reaction from the disease and misdirection of the time. So we must excuse the want of balance in the author's outlook. Logic as a masculine quality is naturally cast out.

"Elements of Success," by Lily L. Allen (L. N. Fowler: 4s. net), is one of the James Allen Library series, and is much on the lines to which previous works of this authoress have accustomed us. It is a book of counsel, admonition and suggestion as to right living, garnished with many anecdotes, which latter indeed only preserve it from being too didactic to hold the attention of any but the most serious readers. However, it strikes us as generally sound and true in its teaching where it touches general principles. In details the writer may go a little astray—as, for example, in the statement that "it is indolence that lies at the root of the usury system." No business man would accept that statement as a general truth, knowing that amongst the "elements of success" in commerce is the ability of young men to borrow capital to start themselves in business. The practice of borrowing in such cases is a fundamental part of the commercial life, and is in no way indicative of "a craven desire to live at ease." These sweeping statements are a common fault of "new thought" teachings, which should be judged more by their tendencies, which are usually healthy, than by their literal applications, which are often faulty.

"Love's Way," by Orison Swett Marden (Riders: 4s. 6d. net), is a work similarly didactic and anecdotal to the book previously noticed. Love, and its moral, social, mental and spiritual activities are its theme, and it is charged with vital sincerity. It will have its message for many who will respond to such appeals far more readily than to teachings of a more pretentious order.

"The City of Renown and Other Poems," by Charlotte and Reginald Salwey (Heath Cranton, Ltd.: 2s. 6d. net) recalls the qualities of a poetry which we previously noted in reviewing "Adoration and Other Poems" by the same authors; some three years ago. There is word music, felicitous phrasing, and a sense of unseen presences which give the verses charm and suggestion.

D. G.

## THE POSITION OF "LIGHT."

We dislike extremely to make appeals for the Sustentation Fund, but it is to be remembered that LIGHT has, in the interests of its readers, steadily resisted the temptation to increase its price when most of the other journals did so. The cost of producing it has grown tremendously. The item of printing paper alone is several times as costly as before the war; we had once to pay ten times the old price. We do our best to produce a journal that shall be of use and interest to our readers, and that is the utmost that in present circumstances can be done.

Courage and faith in the people will carry us further along the road to national happiness and prosperity than puny attempts to preserve the semblance of an order which has passed away—"THE OBSERVER."

"THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY," a sequence of spirit messages, describing death and the after-world, by Mr. Harold Bayley, with an introduction by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Cassell and Co., 6s.), is an excellent rebuttal of the statement continually made by the ignorant as to the triviality of all psychic communications. The book cannot be too widely known, and it is to be hoped that all those who desire to reply to the accusation will bring it under the attention of such critics. It brings into portable compass many passages from amongst the best communications "from the other side." It can be obtained from the L.S.A. Library or purchased at LIGHT Office, post free, at 6s. 6d.

## 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, Mrs. E. A. Cannock. April 6th, Rev. Susanna Harris.  
*The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke-place, W.2.*—11, Mr. Percy Street; 6.30, Mr. Percy Street. Monday, March 31st, 3.30, Mr. A. V. Peters, clairvoyance. Wednesday, April 2nd, 7.30, Mr. Robert King.  
*Harrow and Wealdstone.—Gayton Rooms, Station-road, Harrow-on-the-Hill.*—6.30, Mrs. Edith Marriott.  
*Croydon, 117b, High-street.*—11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.  
*Walthamstow.—342, Hoe-street.*—7, Mr. Sarfas, address and clairvoyance. April 3rd, 7.30, Mrs. Jamrach.  
*Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.*—6.30, Mrs. A. Bcd-  
*ington.*  
*Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall*—6.30, Mrs. M. Gordon, address and clairvoyance.  
*Reading.—Spiritual Mission, 16, Blagrove-street.*—11.30 and 6.45, Mr. A. Punter. Wednesday, Mr. Street, clairvoyance.  
*Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.*—7, Mr. B. Wilkins. Wednesday, 8, Mr. E. Hickman, address; President, J. Lewis Wallis, psychometry.  
*Camberwell Masonic Hall.*—11, Mrs. C. O. Hadley; 6.30, Mrs. Beaumont-Sigall. April 6th, 6.30, Mr. Nickels, of Luton.  
*Battersea.—45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.*—11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mrs. Mary Crowder. April 3rd, 8.15, Miss Ellen Conroy, M.A., lantern lecture, "Symbols of the Soul."  
*Brighton.—Windsor Hall, Windsor-street.*—Miss Violet Burton, addresses; Mrs. Curry, descriptions; 11.15, Windsor Hall; 7, Athenæum Hall. 3, Lyceum. Monday, 8, healing. Wednesday, 8, public meeting.  
*Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood—Old Steine Hall.*—11.30 and 7, addresses and clairvoyance, Mr. A. Maskell. Also Monday, 7.45. Tuesday, 7.45, astrology class. Thursday, 7.45, questions and clairvoyance. Friday, Guild. Next week-end, Mrs. Neville, Forward Movement, Athenæum Hall, 3 p.m., April 6th, Mr. A. Vout Peters.

**A SPIRITUALIST WEDDING.**—A very interesting event has taken place in connection with the Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood, viz., the wedding of two members of the Society—Jillian Rose, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Goodwin (Mr. Goodwin is president of the society), and William S. Willmer, R.N. There were four bridesmaids, sisters of the bride, and Mr. Fred. Silvester, R.N., acted as best man. After the ceremony before the Registrar, the party drove to the Old Steine Hall, where, in the presence of a large gathering of members and friends, a very bright service followed, in which Mr. Goodwin, Mrs. Neville, Mrs. Marriott and Mrs. Bloodworth (of London) took part.

"Subdue the angry by friendliness; overcome evil with good; conquer those that are greedy by liberality, and the liar with the speech of truth." DHAMMAPADA (From "Lotus Blossoms." Price 7½d. post free.)

SUNDAY, March 30th, 7 p.m. MR. D. B. JAYATILAKA, B.A., "Pilgrimage," at 43, Pennywern Road (near Earl's Court Station).

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