

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,034.—Vol. XL.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The year 1920 seems destined to be a notable one in psychic annals and to prove the beginning of a period of growth and realisation. There have been periods of great activity in the movement in earlier years, but no time, it is agreed, when there has been such an uprising of consciousness in the things of the spirit. It is a fateful time, too, for on the issue depends to a large extent the future of the world. Thus it behoves us all to realise the responsibility that rests upon us. Mr. V. C. Desertis, in the course of a review in this issue, touches on a point of importance in this connection, for he raises the question of the right attitude to take in the furtherance of our subject. He refers to "the weighty obligation that rests upon Spiritualists to leave defence of isolated phenomena which have been proved over and over again, and to advance to a synthesis which will command respect by its application to the needs of the day." Few will deny the cogency of his argument or the need for its utterance. The library of the London Spiritualist Alliance—the British Museum of the psychic world—is a sufficient storehouse of facts and their verification. Ours should be the task of co-ordinating them and seeing how to think and live in the light of the philosophy underlying them.

Of the Spiritualistic movement in Scotland we hear great things. How far the fact is traceable to racial quality we cannot be certain. We all remember that Mr. George Bernard Shaw, in one of his "diabolically clever" plays, depicts the Irishman as cold, shrewd, practical, looking facts boldly in the face, while the Englishman is drawn as an impulsive sentimentalist, full of compromises and evasions—quite reversing the ordinary view of the two nationalities. Those who have studied the two races calmly will admit that there is a great deal of truth in the apparent paradox. The "cautious Scot," too, when drawn by one who knows him intimately, would probably yield some similar surprises. It is curious to think, for instance, that a few centuries ago there passed current among the English of the Northern Border a saying that "The Scottish man is wise behind the hand"; that is to say, wise after the event! This arose from observation of the warm, tempestuous temper of the Scots which in battles enabled the English to draw them on by feigning a retreat, when the Caledonians forgot all their reputed caution and foresight and rushed furiously into ambushes. But the Scot was always a "bonnie fechter," and our movement owes not a little to the militant zeal of the Spiritualists North of the Tweed. Their strong mingling of Celtic and Scandinavian blood gives them

powerful psychic qualities, and that ardent temperament of which we have spoken is just the thing to enable them to carry with a rush those strongholds of materialism against which the lukewarm arguments of the academic type of mind prove unavailing.

On the other hand, we have the fact that Spiritualism does not easily take root in Ireland. We have our own explanation of the fact—we need not be too explicit on this point, some religious susceptibilities might be offended. In any case, we can remember that the Irishman and the Scot are near akin, however much they may differ in outlook. Writing of the Scot we remember how in this column some years ago we mentioned the fact that in the Gaelic speech in earlier days quite a different phrase was used to describe the death of a man in contrast to the death of one of the lower animals. The man "changed his state" or "went travelling"—so we translate the Gaelic—but the horse or the cow, or whatever animal it was, "died the death." Those who decry the idea of human survival because it obtained most deeply in the remote past think they are praising modern intelligence. They are really paying it a very poor compliment. They are showing how far it has gone astray from the true vision which came of a simpler and more natural mode of life. We are returning to Nature to-day—in some respects at least, and very much under the coercion of "the afflicting rod"—and winning back to a truth we should never have lost, but for the pride and sophistry of unqualified intellectualism.

We have on several occasions expressed our conviction that there is no fixed fate in human affairs; that individual will and choice may and do have a determining effect, however small that effect may be. We do not believe in a machine-made Universe; we hold that man is himself part of the Power or Destiny by which he is governed, and that he may sometimes actually hold a casting vote on the happening or non-happening of some event in the future. Holding these views, we read with no little interest the following observations by Sir Oliver Lodge in the "Observer" recently:—

I believe in a subordinate element of contingency; that the actions of the future are partially decided by voluntary actions in the present; that the future, though in some way already existent or inferrible, is dependent on what has gone before, and is not an inexorable, dull, completely pre-arranged mechanical necessity that has to go through the solemn farce of obtruding itself on our perception—"the hollow form of taking place." A universe so constituted would lack interest and be un-Divine.

We are glad to have such high sanction for our opinion, not that we felt any lack of it—the thing seemed so clear. Nevertheless we confess to meeting many able thinkers who cannot see it at all, and who are unable to get away from the idea of predestination. Logically their position is difficult to assail. One must use imagination as well as logic, for imagination flouts the idea of a mechanical fate by its own creativeness.

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THE NEW ERA.

By S. DE BRATH.

A general impression prevails that we stand on the threshold of a new order of things. Some deduce this from spirit assurances that it is so; some from Biblical prophecy as interpreted forty years ago, that 1919, 1923, and 1934 would be crucial years in that New Order; some, again, from the general movement of public opinion and a vague feeling that such a cataclysm as the world-war must necessarily be a new point of departure.

But perhaps we are all apt to forget that though there may be foreknowledge nothing is "fated." All political events come about by causes; they arise in the pure, or perverted, or mixed, impulses of mankind. They have their origins in ideas. Just as every invention, and even every discovery, exist in thought before they are manifest in fact or in print, so the entire fabric of a nation's civilisation is but its thought externalised—it is the reflection of its mind in the mirror of outward things.

Let us turn our minds back to the middle of the 18th century. Then, as now, a great new departure was eagerly looked for and ardently desired. Into the old agricultural world, governed by kings, nobles, and clergy (and not so ill governed as some would have us believe, for wars were on a smaller scale, and, outside Germany, were mostly confined to operations in the field), France flung the seed of an idea. Rousseau's "Rights of Man" and later on Paine's "Age of Reason" spread like a flame in dry stubble. Just at this time acute scarcity in France, and consequent high prices, led to a state of things which only the greatest care of a stable government could have dealt with successfully. That government had disappeared; each Commune was an independent unit, and those districts which had corn denied it to those which had not. The mobs plundered the shops and the granaries; trade came almost to a standstill; unemployment increased; and disorder was unrepressed. This co-operated with political doctrines which claimed to have abolished God in any practical sense, to have disproved the soul of man, and to sanction any means to ends. The result was the Red Terror.

It is a misfortune that such knowledge as the English educated classes have of the French Revolution is drawn from Dickens' "Tale of Two Cities" and Carlyle's rhapsody, both equally remote from the historic temper which collects and compares documentary evidence. The archives published by Taine show that so far from being a revolt against feudal exactions, these had all been legally abolished in 1790, and had ceased before the Terror began. That Terror was organised by a small minority, which, having secured arms and being restrained by no scruples, adopted as deliberate principles the abolition of all debts, public and private, the annulment of all treaties and national engagements, that manufacture should be "for ourselves alone," and international revolution to bring about the dictatorship of the proletariat in all lands, which meant government by self-elected committees. Reliable estimates place the victims of the Terror at about a million, and of these only forty to fifty thousand were members of the "upper classes." All the rest were "people of no account," as the agent of the Jacobin Carrier described those whom he nailed down in barges and sank in the Loire. Savage enactments were enforced against labour, and the twenty millions of French peasantry, like those of Russia to-day, had no voice whatever in the acts of the Convention. Apart from a peaceable and orderly government it is obvious that they could not have. Trade was paralysed, industry arrested, misery was universal, and the hatreds engendered by the excesses were so virulent that only the strong hand of Napoleon could hold them in check. Military dictatorship succeeded to mob rule (as it always does), and the Jacobins were hunted down like rats by the relatives of those they had murdered.

It is superfluous to draw the parallel; sufficient to show that the root cause of the Terror was the negation of Spirit and of all that it implies. This negation persists still, and Jacobin doctrines are vigorously preached in the little red books circulated in thousands in the workshops of Britain. After the Revolution, concurrently with the vast strides made by commerce and physical science, there sprang up a materialistic philosophy which is the complement of Jacobinism—the application of the brute struggle for existence to human life.

The task before Spiritualism is to displace this philosophy by affirming the reality of Spirit and the survival of the soul of man, its responsibility for its acts, and the truth that it reaps the quite unavoidable consequences of those acts in the conditions it has made for itself. Spiritualism has a vast duty before it, and all endeavours to turn it into a creed, a cult, or a doctrine, or, still worse, into a plaything for idle hours, are hindrances to the work it has to do, and obstacles to the lesson of real brotherhood which is the law of Spirit and the actual and unchangeable law of civilisation and progress.

Opinions are many, all are free, and they change like the weather; only facts are permanent. Theological disputations only hinder. We have scientific proofs of the reality of a living unseen order. Leading men of science—such

as Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Barrett, Professor Hyslop, and many more, in Britain, on the Continent, and in America, are convinced that the proofs extend to the survival of personality. The common-sense of hundreds who have received messages, and even portraits, of those who have gone beyond, corroborates those proofs. The time is not far distant when all except the wilfully blind will see that the life of the spirit is not merely a "future life," but is the mainspring of the present one; and will realise that obedience to the laws of the spirit brings peace, and revolt against them brings war. These great facts, and not any dogmatic definitions, are the basal truths of the new era. They will prevail; and they will bring in their train the good will which is the harbinger of peace.

But when they will prevail depends on human receptivity. There is good reason for the hope that humanity has suffered enough in these terrible years to be willing to learn, by the lessons of the past, by the example of Russia, and by the spiritual teaching of the present, instead of by the agonies of civil strife which some are endeavouring to bring about, the great truth; human evolution is not the brute struggle for existence, but kindly co-operation in equity of all men and all classes. When that is seen, we may hope with better reason than Shelley had, just a hundred years ago, that

"The world's great Age begins anew,
The golden years return,
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream."

WHAT IS TELEPATHY?

By LILIA BOUSTEAD.

The reply might be "The refuge of those convinced against their will." The day is gone when anyone denies its existence. The man who derisively did so a few years ago, now falls back on it as an explanation of things to him otherwise unexplainable. It has a broad back now, and everything is laid upon it, although it only shifts the mystery to another spot. So the sceptics retire and retire. They will come to a wall soon, through which they cannot pass. Meanwhile, even our friends, the professional conjurers who (out of an unreasoning fear that their domain is going to be infringed upon) so indignantly deny the occult—even they call out cheerily, "All Telepathy!" and think they have knocked everyone into the middle of next week.

So they have if their object is to bewilder. And what other object has a conjurer? What do they exactly mean? They don't know themselves, but they have a vague notion that it is something comfortably physical, like sneezing. Let us examine this idea. The faculty has been defined as "communication between one brain and another, by some means other than the known channels of sense." Exactly. In what way does it differ from all the other senses? It seems to me to differ just in this. Apart from the fact that it is not part of our daily life, being something so subtle, uncertain, and elusive that up to lately it has not been recognised by science at all, it differs in being the only sense that can function outside the limitations of Time and Space. The faculties of sensation, the feelings produced by pain, heat and cold, etc., are either generated in the body itself, or have to be produced by immediate contact. The same with taste. The senses of sight, hearing and smell have wider extension, but still very definite limitations. In short, all physical processes of the body can only operate within a certain radius. A man can only run, jump, see, hear, or smell within certain distances. The faculty of Telepathy transcends all such natural laws. Time and Space for it are non-existent. It can traverse the globe with lightning instantaneousness. The hackneyed expression "with the rapidity of thought" unconsciously embodies the whole truth. And thoughts are things—imperishable, un-dying. No one can now talk of it as a force, outside of matter, for Einstein's theory, as vindicated by the latest discoveries of science, argues, so I understand, that all force is matter—though, like the soul or ego which animates the body, it is matter of so fine a nature that it is invisible to normal human senses.

And who can say where this discovery of the bending of light may lead us? I am no scientist, and I must not, as a fool, rush in where angels fear to tread. But dimly I see infinite possibilities looming out of the abyss of knowledge into which we have been granted one further glimpse. A fourth dimension, a realisation that there is, after all, nothing really super-natural (it is only a question of extension of senses and consciousness), the understanding that Telepathy is spirit acting upon spirit, through the instrument of the human brain, and is therefore the first link in the chain that binds us to the Unseen—all this, with no scientific knowledge to lead me, but with perhaps only the intuition of a woman—I believe to lie, with the clearing up of many other occult mysteries, in that region where the Great of the Earth have set their feet.

Fools get all the rosewater, sherbet and the sugar-candy,
While I see wise men fed on sorrow.
I see the high-bred Arab steed galled beneath a pack saddle,
While round the neck of the ass is a golden collar.

—HAFIZ (Ode 443.)

THE PSYCHICS OF TYBURN.*

REMARKABLE, WHETHER ONLY FICTION OR A RECORD OF FACT.

REVIEWED BY ELLIS T. POWELL, LL.B., D.Sc.

This is the story of quite a nice set of people who take a house at the Oxford-street end of Edgware-road—that is to say, very near to the site of the Tyburn gallows, upon which thousands and tens of thousands of men and women, large numbers of them perfectly innocent, have been executed. The exact spot where the gallows stood is marked by a small brass triangle let into the wooden pavement of the road in a straight line between the Edgware-road corner of Bayswater-road and the refuge in the middle of the street. Every 'bus which turns up the Edgware-road from Oxford-street passes over the memorial. Personally, I never ride over it without raising my hat as a tribute of respect to the memory of all the thousands who have died there.

But although a good many, perhaps the majority, were quite innocent, there were others who were guilty of the foulest crimes. It is very likely, therefore, that psychically sensitive people going to live in the neighbourhood would very soon come within the reach of influences which must still haunt the locality and are likely to do so for many years to come. This is precisely what happens, and constitutes the basis of the story told in the latter part of the book. Kathleen is the psychic, and even a visit to breezy Hampstead does not avail to shake off the influences which beset her:—

"She lost her way on the Heath, coming back. The blank was permanently lifted from her mind, but a newer terror sat there in the shape of perception abnormally distorted or magnified. Along the road ghoully figures crouched with slight movements on the seats, and hounds with pointed tails and gaping jaws raced behind her. Finding she had come the wrong road, she retraced her steps, found the tube, and arrived again at Marble Arch. There, too, the ghouls and dogs appeared at intervals. At the end of Edgware-road a mass of tangible blackness loomed and enveloped their shapes. The house looked utterly different as she entered it. She had some dinner, and during it experienced the worst sensation of any. It seemed as if a thousand voices poured into her mind and began to talk at once. She fell back in her chair."

Then comes what I take to be the record of the resurrection, so to speak, of Tyburn in what it is the fashion to call the cosmic memory. We get a picture of Tyburn as it was when Oxford-street was a country road and London ended about the point where now the British Museum stands:—

"At the top of the stairs Kathleen felt a disinclination to go to her bedroom. She went instead into the little room next the drawing room, which Theo used as a study. She walked to the window and looked out. Grotesque figures of animals and persons crowded among the shadowy *débris* of the houses she was usually accustomed to see there. Some ravens croaked and flapped their wings upon the leafless trees of the high-road, and far below a brook flowed between the cobble-stones into the distance. Another personality had interpenetrated her nature. It lent her unhabitual attitudes and gestures. It used her organs of speech, but the voice which came from her lips was a man's, slow in utterance and deep in timbre. Her consciousness, still in partial habitation of her brain and body, knew this, but was not averse, for in some peculiar fashion the experience gave the sense if not the act of sleep; it rested her."

At the end we get the diagnosis of the trouble at the hands of Mr. Merton, "a very matter-of-fact and genial-looking man—the last person one would have imagined as being connected with psychical research." Anyhow, Mr. Merton tackles his task by means of psychometry. "I would rather not see your sister," he said. "Don't tell me any of the conditions till I have found out what I can alone. Have you any article she wears, such as a comb, that I could have?"

Theo went upstairs and returned with the side-combs his sister always used. Mr. Merton took them, pressed them to his forehead, and seemed to be working out a mathematical problem. He described Kathleen's appearance and the room she was in accurately.

"She has an exceptional mediumistic gift," he said. "Circumstances which have lately happened seem to have developed it suddenly and dangerously. The medium's personality always tinges the manifestation to some extent, and therefore it is seldom that exceptional spirits can use, with any success, the average medium. Your sister is not what we call the usual mediumistic type. She is well balanced and artistic, with a strong individuality. If her gift could be used she would be one of the most valuable mediums on record, but she must never come in touch with any psychic affairs again so long as she lives, for she has not the physique necessary to stand the strain. This house is in an awful psychic condition. I have had

much experience in these cases, but I have never been in such a place before; there are evil entities in it, and it is on the site of a much older house whose conditions permeate it, and which seems to have been a house of bad reputation and to have been used for gambling, opium-drinking, and murder a long time ago. The neighbourhood is also a bad one, astrally, because it is close to Tyburn. All these conditions have been set in motion in this house, and unless they can be stopped your sister will die. They will stop, however, and she will get better shortly, but she must be got away immediately. I get that there is a man here who is also mediumistic, but in another way. He has saved her from certain conditions, which would have fastened on her, by absorbing them himself. You yourself do not 'take on' these conditions, though you see and realise them, but you have remarkable force of will which has been invaluable in helping to drive the current back. On the top of all this, some powerful and unusual spirits appear to have been trying to communicate with your sister. I feel, too, some historic association in some way, but not clearly. Once she is out of the house this psychic stream will be diverted gradually. She must not return till it has completely disappeared."

It is not absolutely clear to me whether this little book is fiction or whether it is the record of actual experience. The preface seems to suggest that the latter is the case, especially as there is an allusion to "the evidence of five people in the same house at the same time and with respect to the same events." If the story is a record of real experience it certainly is a most vivid and valuable contribution to the literature of the "cosmic memory," and incidentally it demonstrates how a given locality may come to be saturated with personalities and associations surviving from a revolting past in such a manner as to be "sensed" by a psychic. That, perhaps, is the sinister aspect, for we must not forget that if this is true all the beautiful and pleasant associations must survive in the same way. So that we ought to be capable in another life, and perhaps ultimately in this one, of tapping all the secrets of the past and recovering all its interesting episodes as additions to our own knowledge and as supplement to our own experience.

BEYOND THE FIVE SENSES.

The course of six lectures given by Mr. W. J. Vanstone in the Alliance rooms last session have been marked by much illuminating and lofty thought. In the last of the series (delivered on the 18th ult.) he dealt with the subject of "Consciousness and Sub-Consciousness in Humanity and Nature." It was clear, he said, that human consciousness proceeded along the lines and conditions of certain sense-avenues. But when the five senses had reached the limit of their power of registering our response to external influences there still remained a receptive region of the mind which was known as the subconscious or subliminal, and which was capable of receiving communications or emanations from without, apart from the mediation of the senses, but not always of interpreting them to the objective mind. This region was also the storehouse of past events, and on its register was inscribed the record of all past history. When the objective mind learned to dive down into the subjective mind and, bringing up therefrom some of these stores of past or present subconscious records, interpret them in the light of sense and reason, then we attained to a super-conscious state wherein spirits of a high order were able to make known their communications to us. It was thought by some that the greater self within us was not always able to communicate with our external personality by the senses or even through our reason and intellect, but did so by means of this sub-conscious mind, and that by this means the higher self held fellowship with lofty spirit beings of whom the mortal self would be quite unconscious. Turning from man to Nature it was plainly evident that consciousness existed in the animal kingdom. Vegetable organisms, again, exhibited signs of appreciation or antipathy demonstrating their possession of some degree of consciousness. With regard to metals and minerals, we were familiar with the phrase, "the fatigue of metals." We knew that metals could be charged with magnetism, and if consciousness was expressed by receptivity, then they were conscious. It had also been demonstrated to the satisfaction of careful investigators that metals could receive characteristic influences which to sympathetic minds could be given a clear record through psychometry, and which might almost be attributed to the existence of a sub-consciousness. From all this there arose the inquiry whether trees, plants, minerals and metals might not have an essential entity capable of responding to the influence of harmonious spirits, carnate and discarnate—thus establishing the principle of a subconsciousness in inanimate nature.

THE Editor is compelled, through the partial failure of his health, to take a month's rest. Personal correspondence must, therefore, be temporarily suspended, but the conduct of the paper will in the meantime be in most capable hands at this especially important phase of the career of the movement.

* "Both Sides of the Door," by Irene Hay (A. H. Stockwell, 29, Ludgate Hill, E.C.4, 2/- net).

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1919—1920.

THE PASSING OF MODERN MATERIALISM.

It is customary at the close of a year to review its salient events, either in a very general way or in some special relationship. This is so common a practice that our readers are likely to have a variety of such retrospective surveys of passing time and its products brought before them by other sections of the Press; therefore on this occasion we may refrain from adding to their number. Moreover, the stringing together of a number of events, howsoever selected from the multitude available, is liable to have something of a catalogue effect, static rather than dynamic, leaving on the mind slight impressions as of things now negligible. Far otherwise should this be as the Old Year, with its burden of good and ill, gives place to the new one—not only should, but may be so, if instead of a mixed collection of facts, strung like odd beads on a necklace, there is substituted something of broad and simple design, central, in some sense unitary. This need not be localised in time to a year. It may have been a movement of centuries; but if it culminates or seems so to do, in a round of the seasons, it is a great event of the year, perhaps the greatest of many.

THE TRUE PLACE OF MATERIALISM.

Looking backward into time it is much easier to place chronologically any phase of a world-movement than at the period of actual occurrence. The Stone Age, the Iron Age, the Ages of Faith we readily recognise, transition stages not troubling us. With the Age of Materialism it is different, although many writers of the past have rashly declared the doctrine of Materialism to be dead. Whatever its dogmatic case may be, Materialism, as a mode of mental motion, in the sense of heat as a mode of physical motion, can never, whilst man inhabits the earth, be even in danger of death. The terms Materialism and Spiritualism are alike perversions of truth when put in false opposition. Their status in the Universe (*ordine ad Universum*) is that of pure complementaries, co-equals, polar constituents of a perfect dual-unity. Not from defect in the constitution of the world, not from imperfection of the great Universe—not in any wise due to God is their dissociation into two antagonistic ideas. This is wholly the doing of man, and the undoing must be his—himself equally material and spiritual, like the Universe of which he is a part. Materialism, as the denier of spirit, an utter absurdity—Materialism, a splendid masculine truth, scornfully repudiating a beautiful feminine truth, is the errant Materialism with which the world is acquainted, from which it has suffered grievously, of no divine necessity. Materialistic mis-direction of the mind, materialistic extremism in every field of human activity, long corrupting the general life of mankind, has now, we believe, reached a cyclical climax; not one of a punctuation period, or full stop, but of a crescendo, as in music, followed by a rhythmic diminuendo. To expect a transformation of sectarian Materialism into a sectarian Spiritualism would be ridiculous. But the restoration of their natural correlativity in human consciousness has begun, man himself the active agent, according to the principle of universal justice.

DESTRUCTION AND SALVATION.

Having laboured long and feverishly in the production and accumulation of material wealth as if it were the one thing needful to happiness—wealth, as defined by the nineteenth century political economists whose degrading systems Ruskin so courageously exposed—

spiritual man, hardly aware of it, has set about his salvation by first destroying most of the vast stores of his worshipful wealth, acquired at such spiritual loss. Unmeasured miles of storehouses filled with everything the world wanted of material use and pleasure, armies of millions and millions, organised and supplied for years as by magic with all things requisite to the maintenance of life as well as for its destruction; floating mountains of machinery and men scattered over the oceans, terrible to look upon in peace, appalling in the action of war, frightful flying craft equipped for destruction and death by day and night, and under the seas swimming terrors that at any moment might emerge with deadly purpose and effect. For more than four years the world mobilised itself to destroy or to save from destruction, staked its garnered riches of generations for a spiritual idea and lost them heroically for it. Wealth, here incalculable, the supreme aim and object of modern man, blown into the air, shattered into fragments over the lacerated earth, and littered like rubbish on ocean floors; to what has it all come? Nothing materialistic worth reckoning; spiritually, who shall frame an estimate? The negative labour of destruction is not yet complete; the positive work of reconstruction has only begun.

THE EMERGENCE OF A SPIRITUAL ORDER.

Politically, a new world is promised us, but many others besides pessimists and cynics quite fail to see any sure sign of it. Their spiritual mathematics fail them. In mechanics they can understand laws of action and reaction, the composition and transformation of forces, relativity in space and in time; yet the spiritual equivalents of these, not of less practical importance for right conduct of individual and collective human life, are to them like speech in an unknown tongue.

The geometrical sign of a crescendo in music closely followed by a diminuendo one may be taken as symbolical of the rise and fall of modern materialism; and if a crescendo sign be superimposed on the diminuendo one, expanding as the lines of the latter converge, this combination becomes a geometric symbol of Materialism and Spiritualism in composition and perspective from past and present to future. Time is thus graphically shown to be, as the lawyers say, "of the essence of the contract."

According to conceptions of time and relation applied in the new form of scientific relativity, we may without poetic license wish for our readers a truly Good New Year.

PROPHETIC MESSAGES FULFILLED.

Our attention has been called to a brief article by Theodore D. Moschonas in a recent number of a Greek paper published in London, the title of which, translated, is "The Voice of London." Mr. Moschonas, writing as neither a Spiritualist nor an enemy of Spiritualism, says:—

"Before the war there was at Cairo a Spiritualist society consisting of five members. The first epistle of John, Chapter 1, gave it its statutes. This society published a collection of articles with the title "Athanasia" (Immortality). These articles were messages from Constantine, the last Emperor of Constantinople, from Tolstoi, Lombroso and others. The book contained also a curious and new theory of the planetary system and of those planets which are inhabited. The séances of this society were strictly private, and I was only once admitted, in February, 1916, by special permit of the spiritual president—Saint Gregory. That was a few days after the fall of Erzeroum. Before the séance there was a religious service and burning of incense. I am not at liberty to divulge what I heard during the séance, but it is enough to say that all that was predicted has since happened. The spirit of King George of Greece was the communicator, and it was he who made the predictions. The book, "Athanasia," should be translated into English."

As we have often stated, no message from the Beyond derives any added importance in our eyes from the mere fact that its author claims to have been in earth life a noted historical character or to have occupied some high position in Church or State. As it is impossible to check the truth of the claim, any such message must be judged entirely by its intrinsic quality. In the above case it would be interesting to know what the predictions were that have been since fulfilled.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

"Dagonet" wrote recently in the "Referee":—"This is the second Christmas after the war, but its shadow still hovers above the feast. There will be ghosts at the banquet, and ghosts at Christmastime may be pleasant companions to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but most of us would prefer their room to their company."

A correspondent, commenting on the above, says, "Alas! Alas! I know of many who would rather have five minutes of the company of the loved and lost than all the revelry and feasting in Europe."

Large numbers of people have visited the Walker Galleries, New Bond-street, to see the remarkable picture painted by Mrs. Spencer. Viscountess Churchill, it will be recalled, expressed the belief that her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Spencer, had strong psychic power, but the latter in a telegram from Nice to the "Daily Mail," denies that her painting is a spirit picture. She says that she claims no psychic power, and that the picture was painted in a normal manner, but without previous training.

Mr. Gambier Bolton is leaving London for Devonshire, where he will continue his work in connection with supernatural photography. Mrs. Carew has been appointed in his place as Hon. Secretary of the Psychological Society.

A further edition of Stainton Moses' book, "Spirit Teachings," has been put in hand, and it is a sign of the times that people are showing such appreciation of what is perhaps the best of all books of automatic writing.

Mr. Richard A. Bush, who presided at the recent gathering at the Steinway Hall, when Mrs. Susanna Harris executed paintings while blindfold, writes to claim the responsibility for any "indiscretion" there may have been in making the test a public demonstration. At the same time he pays a generous tribute to Mrs. Harris for her courage and kindness in undertaking such a test.

For a fortnight beforehand, he says, Mrs. Harris had carefully prepared herself to ensure proper conditions. To do this she refused remunerative engagements, and in addition gave her services freely, besides purchasing the frames, canvasses, and artists' sundries. We can thoroughly endorse Mr. Bush's opinion that Mrs. Harris entirely accomplished what she set out to do. The profits of the gathering were, we are informed, given to the International Home Circle Federation. Mr. Ernest Meads also writes expressing his appreciation of Mrs. Harris's remarkable performance.

Joseph Brodie Brosnan (Bulford Camp) has an article in the December "Nineteenth Century" entitled, "The Change After Death," in which is set forth what purports to be the Roman Catholic Church's attitude towards Spiritualism. The writer is mainly occupied in attempting to refute statements made by Sir Oliver Lodge in an article in the same review in January last. For the rest he is in line with the Roman Catholic view that Spiritualistic communications are with the devil.

Mr. J. B. McIndoe writes from Glasgow to say that definite arrangements have now been made for the public debate between Mr. Horace Leaf and Mr. C. Cohen, Editor of "The Freethinker." The title of the debate will be "Does Man Survive Death: Is the Belief Reasonable?" It will take place in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, on February 26th, and will be under the joint auspices of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists and the Glasgow Secularist Society.

Mr. Horace Leaf should be thoroughly familiar with his opponent's position, since he was himself once a Rationalist, and on more than one occasion debated in support of the Rationalist platform.

The Rev. A. V. Magee continues his campaign of non-sense about the dangers of Spiritualism. His last appearance in print is in the "Pall Mall Gazette," where he repeats his former diatribes. But an unexpected critic has come forward and denounced him—a clergyman, and one who says he is not a Spiritualist.

Writing in the "Saturday Westminster," the Rev. T. Eric Davies says:—"Dr. Magee invites the submission of 'authentic information' re the above (Spiritualism) to be investigated by him and his friends. What value would any conclusion have that had been arrived at by a man whose mentality is so obviously that of the common and biased Anglican clergyman as that which has been disclosed by Dr. Magee in his recent public utterances regarding Spiritualism? The mind that could indulge in the gibes and

flippancies that stand to the credit of Dr. Magee since the late Church Conference, where Spiritualism was discussed, does not appear to be fit to investigate anything to which it stands opposed, as is the case between this clergyman and Spiritualism."

This outspoken critic continues, "If there is an investigation let us have one that in its turn will stand investigation. I may say that I am not a Spiritualist myself; have never attended a Spiritualist meeting, and am somewhat dissatisfied with Spiritualists as I know them individually, and with Spiritualism as I know it from books. Spiritualism, like everything else, merits an unbiased mind to investigate it with any degree of success; and that is the very commodity that seems to be scarce with the present would-be investigator." We wonder how Mr. Magee will relish this plain talk.

So it seems that we may safely leave the Magee type of opponent to the common sense of readers. Epes Sargent aptly described this kind of mind when he wrote in his "Scientific Basis of Spiritualism" in 1884, "Thus far the assailants of Spiritualism have done nothing but call it hard names. They have confounded with the great subject itself the human abuses, follies and errors attending it, but have not solved or made less credible one of our facts; have not accounted for the simplest of our phenomena; and yet they think to put a stop to investigation by telling us of its evils and dangers."

Arrangements are now complete for the forthcoming debate between Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, representing Spiritualism, and Mr. Joseph McCabe, representing the Rationalist Press. The large Queen's Hall, London, has been engaged for the evening of March 11th, and although a chairman has not yet been selected, care will be taken to secure for that office some person of note, whose views are not biased in either direction. During this month an announcement will be made in this journal respecting the sale of tickets, which will, of course, be obtainable at the office of LIGHT.

Information reaches us from America that the latest convert to Spiritualism is Mrs. de Koven, wife of America's most famous musical composer, herself a poetess, and one of the leaders of New York society. So deeply impressed was Mrs. de Koven by her recent experience in psychic investigation that she has written what is said to be an intensely interesting book, which is expected to be published here early in the New Year.

Mrs. de Koven's first insight into psychic matters came in this way. She received an unmistakable spirit message from her sister, Mrs. Hobart Chatfield Taylor, who was also a society leader before her death last year. Speaking through a medium, Mrs. Taylor referred to a table cover she had been making, but left unfinished at her death. She stated that it would be discovered in a house in a certain town in California. Mrs. de Koven found this information to be correct.

Johanna Southcott's friends are apparently engaged in a "big push" with a view to gaining public recognition of their prophetess. Recently, an advertisement calling attention to her appeared in the Personal column of "The Times," and now we see posters exhibited in the Tubes with the words, "Open Johanna Southcott's box and save Britain from ruin." This is rather a drastic means of trying to enforce a prophecy.

In the January number of the "London Magazine" there is an article, entitled "The Mystery of Johanna Southcott's Box," wherein a history of this extraordinary woman is given, and mention made of a number of her predictions. Many of these came to pass during her lifetime.

We see that Miss Lind-af-Hageby and Mrs. Despard are announced to take part in meetings that are being held to-day (Saturday) in the Central Jewish Girls' Club, Alfred Place, Tottenham Court-road, in connection with a Conference on "Revolution and Peace" organised by the League of Peace and Freedom and the London Union of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Miss Lind speaks at the morning meeting, fixed for 10.30, on "Revolution and Sex," and Mrs. Despard in the afternoon (2.30) on "Revolution and Comradeship."

Lady Molesworth opened the recent bazaar in Reading promoted by the Reading Spiritualist Mission in aid of the Memorial Church. On the second day the proceedings were opened by Mr. Henry Withall, who spoke of the difficulty experienced in coping with the large number of inquirers who came to the London Spiritualist Alliance. Those who came represented the thinking, well-balanced section of the community, and not, he said, as some seemed to imagine, the weaklings. The sum of £100 was realised by the bazaar.

A BOMBHELL IN BOOKLAND.

THE AUTHORS' CLUB INTRODUCED TO ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

At the House Dinner of the Authors' Club on the evening of the 15th ult., Mr. E. Wake Cook threw a sort of literary bombshell amongst the members. Sir Frederick G. Kenyon, the principal librarian of the British Museum, was the guest, and the subject was "Books and Libraries."

After a brilliant discourse from Sir Frederick, Mr. Wake Cook was the first called on to speak.

He said that the most wonderful book in our language had gone through over forty costly editions in America, but was almost unknown in England. It was amazing alike in its contents and in the means of its production. It was more than encyclopædic in range, as it penetrated further into the beginnings of things, and further into the future than any encyclopædia would venture to do. It was a history and a philosophy of the Universe, of the whole range of existence, informed by a greater unity of principle, and more prophetic of coming thought than anything ever written. It gave the best analysis of the evils afflicting society that he had ever met and prescribed the best remedies; and if those remedies had been applied we should have been saved all our labour troubles. Its scheme of social reconstruction was founded on profounder principles than had ever been applied by economists. The work gave the grandest, the most splendid view of the whole range of existence that had ever got through the mind of man. It gave an outline of universal history, not of dynasties and their wars, but of all the great teachers of science, philosophy, and of religion; and added to this the most soul-satisfying description of the after-life imaginable.

This amazing work, he said, was dictated from beginning to end in hypnotic trance by a young man who began to earn his living at 12, had only five months' schooling, and who did not care for books; its title was:—

"THE PRINCIPLES OF NATURE: HER DIVINE REVELATIONS," By Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie Seer!

Davis was the father of Modern Spiritualism, but this book was produced by the action of those spiritual faculties which are latent in all of us and only await the touch of the enchanter's wand, "Death," to burst into boundless activity. The deeper trance was analogous to "Death," and the spirit body, with its spiritual faculties, was able to leave "this muddy vesture of decay," as Shakespeare calls the most wonderful thing in the world, the human body; and by means of the hypnotiser was able to return and report its findings in the vaster field of knowledge of the next plane. It was not necessary for the spirit to travel far, so long as it got quite clear of the mortal body; so that it was a physiological fact that a man was divided from the spirit world by just the thickness of his skull!

The latent spiritual faculties were (said the speaker) already functioning on the higher plane; but the great difficulty was to get their knowledge through into the ordinary consciousness. In some cases it did get through slightly and gave us the higher intuitions; and when it could gleam more brightly, it gave the inspirations of genius. He further declared that psychical research was going to do for this century what physical science did for the last, and he urged his hearers to look into these things, as the results would enrich every branch of learning.

The speech was received with great applause, and the vice-chairman, the witty and genial Charles Garvice, complimented the speaker on the consummate art with which he had kept them in suspense until the last moment, as to the title of the book and the name of the author. The effect was striking, and it was amusing to see the exceptions to the general rapt attention in members of the clerical and official classes who could be seen bolting and barring their minds against any gleam of new light into their self-satisfied heads!

The "Daily Telegraph" gave a fairly full report of all the speeches, but although Mr. Wake Cook's came first, no word of it was given, and only at the end was the note, "Mr. E. Wake Cook also spoke"! Oh, the funny smallness of great editors! But the movement is gaining momentum and will sweep these obscurantists off their feet ere long. *Magna est veritas!*

"THE SHINING PRESENCES."

Mr. Morris Hudson writes:—

What is said concerning "the presence of beauty" in man's life in the article, "The Shining Presences" (LIGHT for the 20th ult., page 403), is so exactly paralleled by some lines in "The Recluse" of Wordsworth, that you may think them worth publishing in your columns:—

"Beauty—a living presence of the earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
From earth's materials—waits upon my steps;
Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour."

COMMONLY we say a judgment falls upon a man for something in him we cannot abide.—SELDON.

SKETCHING A GHOST.

LADY BLAKE'S DESCRIPTION.

It must require considerable coolness of nerve to make a sketch of a ghost—not from memory but in the actual presence of the apparition! Lady Blake, of Myrtle Grove, Youghal, Ireland, tells us, however, of a case in which this was done and has kindly sent with her account a copy of the drawing made at the time, of which we give a reduced reproduction below. Her story is as follows:—

"The original of the accompanying sketch was taken by Mr. Richard Hill, a well-known member of the Jamaica Legislature, an author, and an ardent collector of whatever related to the island.

"In his day the seat of Government in Jamaica was at St. Jago de la Vega—now usually called Spanish Town—and there Mr. Hill had a house, which was constantly visited by the veiled form of a Spanish lady. The denizens of the house became quite accustomed to the apparition, which sometimes remained so long in the room that one day Mr. Hill took the sketch of which the enclosed is a copy. The original sketch was kindly lent to me by Mr. Lewis Hutchins during my husband's term of office as Governor of Jamaica, and I fear it must have perished in the earthquake of 1907, when Jasper Hall, the residence of Mr. Hutchins, the owner of Mr. Hill's drawings, was destroyed with all its contents.

"Mr. Hill's house in Spanish Town had disappeared when we lived in Jamaica, but the site was pointed out to me by the late Mr. Edward Lynch (Deputy Keeper of the Records), who remembered Mr. Hill, and who was well versed in everything concerning Jamaica and its history, and from whom I heard the story of the figure of the Spanish lady and the sketch taken of her by Mr. Hill."

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S POEMS.

Waiting in a long queue for our tram home we opened Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Guards Came Through, and Other Poems" (John Murray, 2/6 net). Straightway the present became remote. Our pulses quickened in response to the stirring vigour of the verse as, with alternating tension and relief, we watched on Flanders fields the tide of battle roll forward and back and again forward, or, standing on the Surrey hills, listened to the distant booming of the guns. Then we caught ourselves smiling at the story of "The Wreck on Loch McGarry" and feeling a glow of sympathy and satisfaction as Sir Arthur poured out his vials of scorn on "The Bigot." So we came, by way of parable and vividly pictured scene and incident, to the closing poem of the book and found ourselves, with a yet deeper sympathy and more profound respect, in the presence of one of the most sacred experiences of the author's life (it is recorded in the last number of LIGHT):—

"It was granted me to stand
By my dead,
I have felt the vanished hand
On my head,
On my brow the vanished lips,
And I know that Death's eclipse
Is a floating veil that slips
Or is shed."

But Sir Arthur is a born fighter, and he cannot feel that such an experience is meant to be received with a gratitude that is silent and actionless. It is rather a call to strike harder against the foes of human progress and enlightenment, and he ends with a prayer that the great Guide of his life will

"Trace my pathway among men,
Show me how to strike, and when,
Take me to the fight—and then
Oh, be nigh!"

D. R.

EACH friend brings thee a different jewel for thy life's mosaic.—ELIZABETH GIBSON.

"THE HILL OF VISION."

This notable book* is one of those which are signs of a transition to a new social order. It also vindicates automatic writing as a possible means of real communication with unseen and higher intelligences, however much its manifestation may ordinarily be obscured by the sub-conscious mentality, or the low spiritual development of the human (or the discarnate) agents. In this case complete elimination of conscious action was secured by absorbing the conscious mind of the automatist in matter read aloud and commented on while his hand was unconsciously writing.

Proof of the genuineness of supernormal influence is given (as it must always be) by the internal evidence. Two instances only can be mentioned here: (1) In 1909 we find very distinct prophecies of the coming war and its desolations, together with the intimation of greater changes to follow. (2) In March, 1918, it was positively stated that at the end of August in the same year the issue of the war would be decided. This was fulfilled by the great advance of August 26th, when the German line was broken from Arras to Albert, and the great French advance in Champagne.

But the war predictions, of which there are several, are but guarantees of supernormal knowledge; the essence of the book lies in its reasoned anticipations of events still to come. This reasoning deals with causes; it is philosophical and not mere prediction. The victory of spiritual enlightenment is assured, but the New Era can set in only by the opening of human minds to receive the teaching of the spirit. Spiritual principles can, however, be apprehended only through the intellect, and the antithesis is not between reason and intuition, but between the materialistic doctrines of physical evolution, misapplied to social life, and the principles of brotherhood and solidarity of all classes and nations; the one leading logically to perpetual conflict, and the other to good will and peace. Not less emphatic is the denunciation of the "False Democracy" which is "sovereignty reversed."

"Fear not Democracy, if properly led and instructed. Ignorance is the great danger of the world ruled by intellect, as the senses are the foes of intuition. Humanity senses its spiritual ideal in a true brotherhood of man. . . . Great is the power of pure intellect with the power of perfect sympathy. . . . The intuitive leader, the great soul or passion, needs intellect, needs mind, but rules by virtue of the sympathy, intuitive and Divine. Thus each specialised cell in the Divine body of humanity should contribute to the perfect whole; not following that common law of the lowest instincts of jealousy, envy, and cupidity, misnamed Democracy" (p. 88).

This false democracy, being spiritually baseless, is predicted to be defeated, but what disasters may occur before that defeat depends on the degree of perception of spiritual principle possessed by those who ought to lead, but are now all too ready to wait on events. It is stated that the German nation, by reason of its mastery of material processes, has a great future before it, and there are further reasons alleged for the coming development of Asia. It is impossible in the brief space of a review to touch on other lines of thought which are corroborated by many signs of the times. The book merits close attention from the political and philosophical, as well as from the Spiritualist standpoint.

From the latter point of view it shows the weighty obligation that rests on Spiritualists to leave defence of isolated phenomena which have been proved over and over again and to advance to a synthesis which will command respect by its application to the needs of the day.

V. C. DESERTIS.

THE KNOT-TYING TRICK EXPLAINED.

Anent the article on "Thought-Reading and Spiritualism" in our issue for the 20th ult. (p. 408) a correspondent writes:—

"The perplexity expressed by C. E. B. (Colonel) as to how a man can have his wrists tied with tape behind his back and yet can release himself immediately is easily dispelled. The tape is tied tightly round one wrist; then the other end of the tape is taken and tied round the other wrist. It will be found with regard to this second tying that no matter how many knots are made the whole is inevitably a slip knot, because only one end of the tape is free for tying. With the least pull of the knot towards the other wrist the loop is loosened and the second hand can be released in a moment, replaced and pulled tight again. Note that the first hand is not extricated, though of course it is free to move, with the tape tied on it, when the second hand is released. Anyone trying this experiment will at once see how simple the trick is, but I once saw a conjurer non-plussed when, having imprudently engaged a sailor to do the tying, the knowing mariner carefully tied a knot on the tape before tying the second wrist, thus effectually preventing the slipping of the second knot."

* By F. Bligh Bond, Script by J. Alleyne. (Constable, 1919, 7/6 net).

A PSYCHIC SOCIAL CENTRE.

STEAD BUREAU IDEALS FOR 1920.

Miss Estelle Stead is an enthusiast, and at the same time a calm, level-headed business woman. Her heart is wrapped up in the splendid work bequeathed to her by her father, and for the Stead Bureau she sees visions that her sound, practical common-sense is translating into enduring realities. In a talk with a representative of *LIGHT* regarding the future operations of the Bureau, Miss Stead outlined some of her ideas. She said:—

"It is my ambition to bring every phase of the movement before our members. I know that this will require organisation, but I hope to be able to accomplish it. I specially desire to see the Bureau used more as a club, where people feel that they can come to read, to meet friends, to enjoy light refreshments, to smoke, and to chat together. I want, in fact, to make it a social centre for all who are interested in psychic subjects."

Miss Stead recognises that there must be co-operation among the members in assisting development, and she looks forward to an active spirit of initiative in promoting discussions, in the arranging of drawing-room meetings, and in the formation of home circles.

Speaking of the changes which led to the occupancy of the present quarters of the Bureau, Miss Stead gave the following story:—

"At the beginning of last year we had only one little room at the International Club, and this held our library, while for meetings we were allowed to use the club's drawing-room. The accommodation was quite inadequate, but we did not see our way to getting anything better. Then came a change of proprietorship of the club, and we had perforce to move.

"My father had some time previously given me a message saying that I should be undertaking something much bigger than I had contemplated, and would be coming out more prominently in the psychic world. The sequel shows that he was right.

"When we were given notice we had nowhere to go, nor had we much in the way of funds. I put the case before our members, and they came forward with promises. Although these promises did not amount to any large sum, I felt justified in going forward in the belief that Providence would aid us in securing our new home. I set out and inspected many impossible places, and then seemed to be guided to 13a, Baker-street. I had been invited to go there first, but felt somehow that I could not, and went on to many other localities. When I entered the Baker-street premises I discovered in possession Miss Earle, of the Psychological Society, whom I had not seen for two years, and on passing into the room which is now our Temple, I found my father's photograph on the wall; also I became at once strongly conscious of his presence, so that I felt sure that I had lighted on what was to prove our new home. My father told me later that the friends on the other side had been preparing this place for us ever since Miss Earle took it, but they thought it wiser to impress me to visit other places first before bringing me there. The premium demanded for the house was rather high, but just as I wavered came a promise of £100 from our president, Mrs. Bayley Worthington, and that decided me. We took possession in August, 1919, and opened the Bureau on September 16th. Since then, I am happy to say, we have never looked back. Members have come in increasing numbers, and we have been able to do many things we never hoped to accomplish in so short a time.

"For instance, just when we opened, Mrs. Etta Wriedt, the famous Direct Voice medium, who was introduced into England by my father, and who had done such splendid work in connection with Julia's Bureau, offered to dedicate our Temple, and we had two beautiful sésances with her for that purpose. Another prominent feature was the visit to us of the Crewe Circle early in December. Mr. Hope and Mrs. Buxton remained with us just over a week, and during that time they gave two sittings a day to our members, and in the pictures taken, 'extras' were obtained at all but one sitting. During his stay, Mr. Hope lectured in public on Psychic Photography under the auspices of the Bureau, and exhibited lantern slides of the results of many years' work.

"For the future I can say confidently that we hope to extend our activities in many directions. Our ideal is to be a real live centre where people can come for direction, for help, and advice, for communion and for recreation."

HUSK FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwell, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges with thanks the following donation:—J. U. W., £1.

WHAT fairy in the falling rain,
Takes the robin's small refrain,
And twists it to a tiny charm
To keep a tempted heart from harm?
It puzzles me a wild bird's song
Should save my soul from doing wrong

—F. W. Harvey.

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE.

FROM SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, invited by the Editor of the "Sunday Express" to give a message to the readers of that paper for 1920, contributed the following:—

"I look upon religion as the basis of all society, and truth as the basis of all religion. Therefore the recognition of truth concerning our destiny is the most important thing in the world. My wish for the New Year is, therefore, that people shall set aside foolish incredulity and shameful levity and shall seriously examine with honest and reverent criticism the enormous new revelation which has been sent us recently by God, realising that His methods are not as ours, and that there is neither small nor great in His sight. The last two great creeds came the one out of a camel driver's tent, the other out of a carpenter's shop."

THE FAIRER CLIME.

Nearly eleven years have elapsed since *LIGHT* reviewed a book consisting of communications received through the mediumship of "Parma" (Mrs. Lamb Fernie), and entitled "Not Silent if Dead," by H ! ! ! ! ! We have now to welcome from the same source a second series of messages, called, with a slight variant on the former title, "The Dead—Active!" The present reviewer owns that in beginning to make their acquaintance he was conscious of considerable prejudice. "H ! ! ! ! !" was a well-known pulpit orator in his day, attracting large congregations by the originality of his ideas and his method of giving them utterance. It is quite possible that in expressing himself through the mind and physical organism of another, some of his old-time mannerisms have become distorted. From the spirit and matter of these communications one may judge (on the assumption that he is communicating) that the man himself has learned much since he passed over, and has grown in width of view and the gentler graces of character, but till the reader can get a little accustomed to it, the exclamatory style of the writing, with its extreme diffusiveness and effusiveness, imposes some trial on his patience. Apart from this, however, there is much that will appeal as sensible and beautiful, and, therefore, credible in these messages, especially in the pictures they give of life on the other side—a life to which all that is fairest here would seem to be transferred, only with an added glory. "I see" (begins one chapter) "a vast plain covered with vegetation and villages nestling in glades and up hillsides, clumps of trees here and there, running streams, and I hear the lowing of cattle going to drink—just the same scene you may see any day in the country on earth. . . . You are wondering what next I shall say when I tell you we have cattle here! Yes, we have! Would a rural landscape be perfect without animal life?" And then, after some moralising and the reflection how much better balanced we on earth should all be if we could blend spirit more with matter, he goes on: "My one aim and object is to try, if possible, to bring you in line to realise the wonderful peaceful simplicity of the life in the spirit world; no hurry, no constant rush, but first to be ourselves and do our duty in the place we are in, remembering that what we are lacking in spirituality can and will be ours when in real earnest we endeavour to throw off certain contaminating influences which handicap us. There seems so little difference at first in earth and spirit conditions until we advance; but, without doubt, the more we accustom ourselves, while in the body, to the contact of the spiritual body, with its fruitful spiritual gifts, the more we shall be helped and feel satisfied with the conditions we find ourselves in on transition.

"Let your translation be indeed into higher spheres than those interpenetrating the earth plane. If you knew how hard it is for advanced spirit people to pass through the clogging elements around the earth, you on earth would indeed try your best, however little that best may be, to make the atmosphere a little purer, a little less heavy."

The book, which is priced at 4/6, post free 4/11, can be obtained from Mrs. Lamb Fernie, 40, Bedford-gardens, Kensington, W.8.

D. R.

HE who has followed, even in secrecy, many lights of the Spirit, can see one by one the answering torches gleam.—Æ.

A FINE spirit is like tempered steel. The dull mind being biased in some particular direction remains warped like bent iron. The bright steel springs back to its normal shape when the pressure is removed.—G.

ONE life alone, one end, one way to reach,
But many substitutes and ghosts of each;

Lord, lest the false lights—moving round and round—
Too long bewray, do Thou, with secret speech,

Direct us truly unto stable ground!

ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE.

TESTIMONIES OF GRATITUDE.

Against the accusations of our opponents may be set the abundant testimonies of those to whom the revelation afforded by Spiritualism has brought unspeakable comfort and relief. We may quote from two letters we have recently received; they are only samples of many:—

The first is from Mr. C. W. Newcourt (Hinton Wood, Eastcliff, Bournemouth). He states that nearly five years ago when he was residing near Liverpool, he saw a letter in a local paper from Mr. R. A. Owen, and, on communicating with the writer, received an invitation to Daulby Hall. Accordingly on the following Sunday afternoon he went to Liverpool, and after inquiring his way two or three times succeeded in reaching his destination. He entered the hall, and took his seat—an absolute stranger to all the assembly. Soon he found himself listening to a long and beautiful inspirational address, at the close of which the speaker, suddenly pointing to Mr. Newcourt, told him that there was a lady with him, and proceeded to give an exact description of his late wife, her features, and dress, and also the place in North Wales where they resided before she passed away. "I am not ashamed to own," says our correspondent, "that my tears flowed freely for a while." Soon afterwards, he left the building, but feeling that he wanted more, he returned in the evening. After the address, the speaker—the same who had occupied the platform in the afternoon—again pointed to Mr. Newcourt, though he was now sitting in a different part of the hall, and told him that the lady was again present, and that she was placing her hands on his shoulders. Once more he described her, but this time in a different dress—a dress which she wore twenty years before—and with it a diamond brooch with a little pin and chain attached to it for safety. The brooch, Mr. Newcourt tells us, was an heirloom, and his wife had added the chain and pin by way of precaution against losing it.

To verify this second description, our correspondent, on returning home, looked up a photograph taken twenty years before in Amsterdam, and found it correct in every particular.

Ever since that memorable Sunday, Mr. Newcourt has been connected with Spiritualism. To him it is a religion. "I have never," he declares, "in all my life—and I am nearing three score and ten—found such satisfaction." He adds the interesting fact that the speaker and clairvoyant on the occasion to which he refers was Mr. Aaron Wilkinson, of Halifax—a gentleman whom we expect to have with us at one of the Alliance meetings in the coming session.

No less happy has been the experience of Mrs. Corelli Green (20, South Kinver-road, Sydenham, S.E.). She writes:—

"In 1917 we lost our two eldest sons. On February 25th one fell in action in Mesopotamia (aged 21) and in August I was called out to my eldest boy in France, who died of wounds while I was with him. Now I get automatic letters myself from both of them—and have done so since last July (on Peace Day).

"It is all so natural and simple, and I have never been to a medium, but sit down myself, and my pen runs easily along.

"Sometimes their own characteristic signature is very plain, and they use their own characteristic expressions time after time."

Mrs. Green proceeds to quote one or two passages expressive of the beauty, wonder, and delight of the new life, and concludes:—

"This is only what many others are experiencing to-day, but surely these simple direct letters are very real and comforting."

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE, in a letter to the "Daily Express," points out the essential difference between a psychograph and a photograph. The former, he says, is rather a transference by abnormal means of something which exists elsewhere. "This would amply account," he continues, "for faces being of disproportionate size, for light seeming to come from the wrong side, and for all those other puzzles which have worried the student and given texts to the sceptic."

WITCHCRAFT ACT AMENDMENT FUND.—The treasurer of the Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd., Mr. T. H. Wright (10, Victoria-avenue, Sowerby Bridge), sends us the following statement of the above fund up to date: Brought forward, £1,266 17s. 8d.; New Zealand Association of Spiritualists (per Mrs. E. Birdwell), £24; Mr. G. Wale, Hants, £1; Northern Counties Union, £19; Manchester and District Union of Spiritualists (per Mr. W. H. Wolstenholme), £100; bank interest, £11 2s. 3d. Total, £1,421 19s. 11d.

THE HOME CIRCLE MOVEMENT.—Mr. Thomas Pugh, we learn, has now withdrawn from the reconstructed society for the promotion of the Home Circle movement, and, acting on this withdrawal, that body, in order to avoid friction with any other society, has adopted the title "The Spiritualists' Rendezvous for Psychical Research." It has, further, appointed a new chairman (Mr. H. J. Osborn) and arranged for a vigorous continuation of the work which it has carried on since August last. The secretary is Mr. George Ward, and the offices are at Furnival Hall, 3, Furnival-street, W.C.

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.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1.—January 4th, New Year's Service. 11th, Mr. A. Vout Peters.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, W.2.—11, Mr. E. W. Beard; 6.30, Mr. Percy Beard. Wednesday, January 7th, 7.30, Mr. Horace Leaf.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.—11, Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush; 6.30, Mr. J. Osborn.

Reading.—16, Blagrove-street.—11.30 and 6.45; speaker, Mr. P. R. Street.

Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall, Thames-street.—6.30, address by Mr. E. Meads.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—7, Mr. R. Boddington. Thursday, Mrs. Imison.

Brighton.—Athenaeum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mr. H. J. Osborn, addresses; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mr. Cager.

Battersea.—45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.—11.15, circle service; 6.30, address by Mr. H. J. Adams, B.A., clairvoyance by Mrs. Bloodworth. 8th, 8.15, psychometry.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 and 5, Broadway.—11, Mrs. Stanley Boot; 6.30, Mrs. Mary Clempson. Wednesday, 7th, Mrs. Annie Brittain; doors closed 7.35 p.m. Healing daily, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., excepting Tuesday and Saturday.

Holloway.—Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).—11, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Jones; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. G. R. Symons. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Mary Gordon. Sunday, 11th, 11, Mr. W. W. Drinkwater; 7, address by Mr. Thos. Davis; clairvoyance by Miss Moy.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—11.30, Mr. J. J. Goodwin. Monday, 7.15, Mrs. Jennie Walker. Tuesday, 3, public circle. Thursday, 7.15, enquirers' questions and clairvoyance. Lyceum every Sunday at 3 p.m. Forward Movement see special advert.

THE VITAL MESSAGE.

By SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

Cloth, 228 pages. 5/4½ net post free.

Office of "LIGHT," 6, QUEEN SQUARE, LONDON, W.O.1.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
*Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction ...	11-30	6-30
*Brixton, 143a, Stockwell Park Road ...	...	7-0
*Camberwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill ...	11-0	6-30
Church of Higher Mysticism, 22, Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W. ...	11-30	6-30
*Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road ...	11-0	7-0
*Croydon, Harewood Hall, 96, High Street ...	11-0	6-30
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ...	...	7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earlham Hall, Earlham Grove ...	...	7-0
*Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road ...	11-15	7-0
*Hackney, 240a, Amhurst Road ...	...	7-0
Harrow, Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone ...	...	6-30
*Kingston, Assembly Rooms, Bishop's Hall, Thames Street ...	...	6-30
Lewisham, The Priory, 410, High Street ...	...	6-30
*Little Ilford, Third Avenue Corner, Church Road ...	...	6-30
London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W. ...	11-0	6-30
*Manor Park Spiritual Church, Shrewsbury Road ...	11-0	6-30
Marylebone, Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. ...	...	6-30
*Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road ...	11-30	7-0
*Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Bræmar Road ...	...	6-30
*Plumstead, Perseverance Hall, Villas Road ...	...	7-0
Richmond, Castle Assembly Rooms ...	...	7-0
*Stratford, Idmiston Road, Forest Lane... ..	...	7-0
*Tottenham, "The Chestnuts," 684, High Road ...	...	7-0
*Upper Holloway, Grovedale Hall, Grovedale Road ...	11-15	7-0
*Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway ...	11-0	6-30
*Lyceum (Spiritualists' Sunday School) at 3 p.m.		

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (Oxon.)'

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

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

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

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

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

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

STANDARD BOOKS SUPPLIED TO ORDER FOR CASH ONLY.

Post free from the Office of "LIGHT," 6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C. 1, at the prices quoted. Remittances must accompany orders, otherwise they cannot be sent.

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