

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NUMBER 4d.

LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF
SPIRITUAL, PSYCHICAL & MYSTICAL RESEARCH



THE LIFE BEYOND THE VEIL

SPIRIT MESSAGES RECEIVED
AND WRITTEN DOWN BY THE

REV. G. VALE OWEN

Preface and Notes by H. W. ENGHOLM

The Beauty and Uplifting Power of
these Messages cannot be overrated

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With an Introduction by
SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

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LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF
SPIRITUAL, PSYCHICAL & MYSTICAL RESEARCH

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,085.—VOL. XL. [Registered as] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1920. [a Newspaper] PRICE FOURPENCE

To All Our Readers and Friends

"LIGHT" sends its most cordial Christmas Greetings. May the true Christmas Spirit be present in the homes and hearts of you all!

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Every return of the Christmas festival brings up in the literature of the time accounts of the old Pagan myths and ceremonies and folk-lore traditions which cluster round the season. The feast of the winter solstice, which falls at Christmas, was really meant to celebrate the birth of the sun and was observed long before the birth of Jesus. And we are told of the sun-myths and curious parallels to be drawn between the story of the Christ and the story of the heavens. One need not go deeply into these matters here. It is sufficient to say that the more closely they are studied by the reverent mind the more they confirm the saying of Emerson that the whole world is an omen and a sign, and that every great spiritual truth is written in symbol in natural phenomena—the history of the soul is blazoned in starry characters on the scroll of the sky.

* * * *

They are very beautiful, some of the old legends. The decoration of houses and churches with evergreens, holly, mistletoe, laurel and bay has some tender and delightful meanings, some of them relating to the rites of ancient peoples who followed the spirit in their own fashion. Fairies and elves come into the story, for one tradition tells us that the evergreens are put up to please them, as children of Nature, the viewless denizens of woods and heaths. Our Christmas tree, we are told, is a relic of tree worship—the god of the groves and forests. Its lighted candles testify to the fire worship of the past. "Pagan, I regret to say," to quote the remark of Mr. Pecksniff, who worshipped meaner things, more superstitiously, and who would have been astonished and grieved had he been told as much. For there is a wide difference between what people profess to worship and what they really worship in their secret hearts.

* * * *

Worship is one of the many words that have become twisted out of their original meaning. Whatever we hold in reverence and affection we "worship"—not necessarily by a rite of prayer or adoration. Some worship children: the way of the little children is one that all will yet love and follow. Indeed, in its chief aspect Christmas is the Feast of the Child—the Christ Child, the divine image and prototype of childhood. All the sweetest memories that cluster round Christmas-tide in the mind of each of us go back to our early years, and all that glamour and sweetness arises, as we have reason to know, from the fact that at Christmas the Christ floods all Christendom with the

influences of His child nature. He comes to us again as the Christ Child, His presence permeating our murky world with celestial gleams to which all the children respond in some measure, smaller or greater, and even those of an older growth are inspired with the feeling—love for the children, gifts for them, a feast for them. And the more child-like they are in spirit the more they enter into the gladness of the Festival. For this is the Feast of the Child.

* * * *

Santa Claus—that patron saint of Childhood at Christmas—takes all kinds of queer forms in the child mind, even sometimes rather impish ones. They must amuse the saint if he is still actively engaged in ministering to the little ones—as high and holy an office as any saint could well fulfil. We are glad to think of him as having been a Father of the Church, for in his earthly days he was the Abbot Nicholas (or Nicolas), afterwards Archbishop of Myra, and died in 326. He was the patron saint not only of children but of travellers and merchants, and is a saint specially honoured in Russia. His wide popularity—even in strange forms—in Christendom at the Yule season is an evidence not merely of the human link, but of that wide spiritual fellowship that transcends all boundaries of time and place and nation. That is the fellowship at which we aim.

* * * *

It is the season of ghost stories, and when genuine they are well worth study. As we have before noted, all psychic phenomena have many features in common from wheresoever they come. Next it may be observed that some of the happenings appear to be merely of a pictorial character and the figures seen apparently phantoms going through mechanical movements and showing no sign of personality or intelligence, while on the other hand other phantasmal images appear to be "real" in the sense that they show consciousness of the presence of incarnate human beings and make attempts to communicate with them. We have heard explanations of this from psychic sources, as being due to a combination of psychic receptivity to thought images on the part of the percipients and the actual presence on some occasions of the spirits concerned. These may or may not be present. But we have still a good deal to learn on this point in order to straighten out some of the complications in the problem. As with many other questions in connection with the supernormal, there are certain difficulties eagerly urged by sceptics who do not, however, succeed in disposing of the facts themselves.

THE COMING OF THE CHILD.

The same ingredients are in all men; the art of balancing them is wanting in some. Inside each man can be found Herod and Pontius Pilate, Nathaniel without guile, Judas, honest Peter, and John, who can lean into the very bosom of the Lord. Surely as these are within him, deep in his farthest centre lives the Child, waiting for his own words, own encouragement to increase in grace, wax strong in wisdom; for unto each of us this *Child is born, unto us this Son is given*. It is upon His shoulders we should lay the government and call His Name *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*; until, growing in favour of God, man shall come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.—From "The Law of Being," by HELEN BOULNOIS.

"Light" can be obtained at all Bookstalls and Newsagents.

CHRISTMAS DECORATION FUND FOR ALL HALLOWS, ORFORD.

A Happy Thought that Materialised.

We go to press with this issue with a happy realisation that with the co-operation of hundreds of our readers the little church of All Hallows, Orford, will be a veritable shrine of flowers on Christmas Day. On Monday of this week we sent Mr. Vale Owen a cheque for £50, on account, of the donations received, so that he and the churchwardens and those in charge of the altar and the chancel could make arrangements for procuring what will certainly be a record floral display in any church this Christmas.

Mr. Vale Owen writes to us to say that he is busy autographing the Christmas cards that donors will receive on Christmas morning. To say that the Vicar has been deeply touched by this outward and visible sign of appreciation of the Script, which he says he was but a humble instrument in giving to the world, is but mildly to express the great sense of happiness that at present pervades the Vicarage at Orford. Willing helpers from the village have come forward to take their part in arranging the flowers, each bloom of which represents a loving thought and an act of reverence and devotion towards those angel friends whose presence will further sanctify and bless the precincts of the church on Christmas morning.

As we promised our readers last week, we have sent Mr. Vale Owen the letters which accompanied the donations. These letters will, we are sure, be held by Mr. Vale Owen as a precious legacy and a continual reminder, if that is

necessary, of the joy and comfort, help and blessing the Script has brought into the lives of many. The thoughts of thousands will turn towards this little church on Christmas morning, and many a dear one who is on the Other Side will, we are confident, be present at All Hallows, and though unseen, will join with the congregation in a song of thanksgiving that will rise to the throne of Him in Whose honour this festival is celebrated.

It almost seems out of keeping to thank those who have sent their gifts for the All Hallows Decoration Fund, for to them, we feel sure, it has been an act of pure unselfishness and love, but we would like our readers to know how deeply we appreciate their wonderful response.

Christmas comes but once a year, but the Christmas spirit can permeate our lives and live with us through all time. We hope that the spiritual awakening that comes to those who realise the true meaning of Christmas will give them strength and courage to face life's battle in 1921.

On the opposite page we give a list of the names of the donors, but owing to lack of space there are many names we are unable to include in this issue. A further list will be given in our next number. Should any donors, through inadvertence or postal delay, not receive their Christmas card, we shall be greatly obliged if they will notify us by postcard, when the matter shall be attended to and rectified.

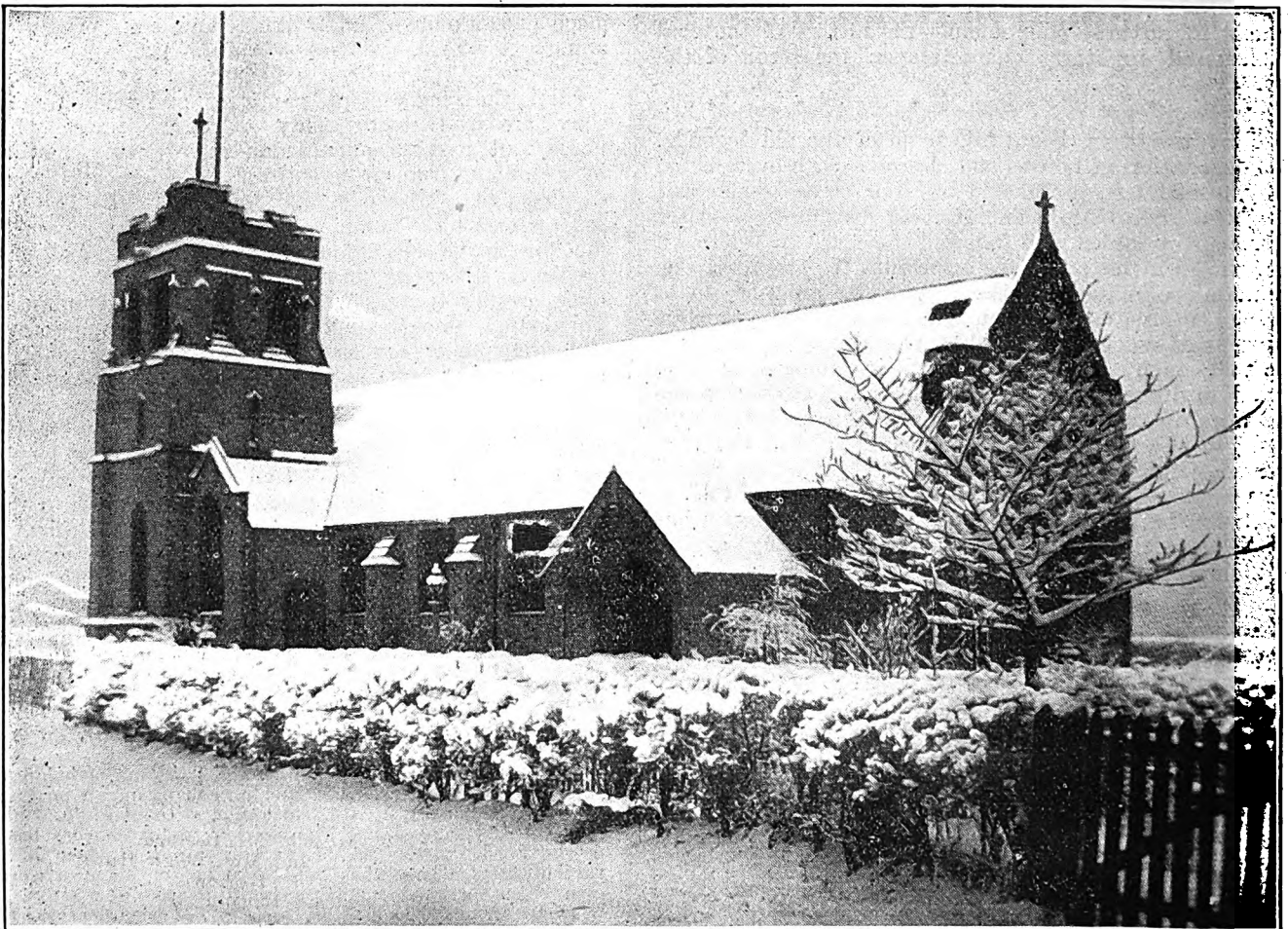
Christmas in the Highlands of Heaven.—From "Arnel,"

When this assembly came together it was the Eve of Christmas with you on earth. Our people, therefore, made their devotions to the Christ Child, and with their attention directed on Christendom. In the various spheres like Services were being held.

The power of blessing from all these congregations is gathered in by those whose business it is to do so, co-ordinated and mingled, and then it is projected into the earth plane. Here also are stations at various centres where the mass of power is again dealt with, this time analytically.

The myriads in the heavenly congregations include those of the different systems of Christendom. In the Higher Spheres these have shed the merely temporal characteristics and have drawn nearer together as children of the One Father.

From "The Weekly Dispatch," December 19th, 1920.



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The little church towards which the thoughts of thousands will be turned this Christmas Day.

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WHAT THE CHURCHES CAN LEARN FROM SPIRITUALISM and PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

8.—By the REV. ELLIS G. ROBERTS, M.A., Vicar of Alberbury, Salop.

Resolution 57—Official Report of Bishops' Conference held at Lambeth Palace, July 5th to August 7th, 1920

"The Conference, while prepared to expect and welcome new light from psychical research upon the powers and processes of the spirit of man, urges strongly that a larger place should be given in the teaching of the Church to the explanation of the true grounds of Christian belief in eternal life, and in immortality, and of the true content of belief in the Communion of Saints as involving real fellowship with the departed through the love of God in Christ Jesus."

PART II.

"Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter therein."—Isaiah xxvi., 2.



REV. ELLIS G. ROBERTS,
M.A.,
Vicar of Alberbury, Salop.

Will Spiritualists come to the aid of the Church? Again my answer must be a partial one. Many of the fraternity are now outside, and outside they will remain. The Church has lost them. It is easier to drive men away than to bring them back. Others will come in on their own terms. They will decline to be treated *de haut en bas*. By sheer weight of character and intellect Spiritualists have risen to power, and that power shall be respected. We shall have no mercy on the flippant and ignorant fool who hurls cheap invective at such gallant gentlemen as Conan Doyle, such saints of Science as Oliver Lodge. We shall not hesitate to tell the Church, if need be, that it is she who is on her trial. Her blunders have been many, her sins have been great; these faults must be remedied and these sins must be frankly acknowledged before her claims to leadership can be entertained. In the one domain of practical affairs alone the flagrant injustice of the Church has cried to heaven during ages, and it continues so to cry. Perhaps her new brooms will sweep much of this injustice away: let them have a fair chance. I turn to other matters.

Spiritualists will demand that the Church shall preach, and by her practice set forth, the Supremacy of the Spiritual. She may lose adherents. She will offend the wealthy "churchman" who attends Early Communion on Easter Day and spends the rest of that day, and every other Sunday in the year, in senseless amusement: who squanders thousands of pounds on his motors, and grudges his guinea towards Church expenses. But methinks the loss will not be great. She must insist that a prayer-meeting should take precedence of a whist-drive, and that the preacher of a thoughtful sermon is of more value to the Church than the organiser of a parochial dance. True that to make a successful stand against the mad frivolity of this senseless age is a tremendous task. It is impossible for an individual, but it should be within the power of a real Church. The Anglican Church must reform herself, and then she may think of reforming the nation. But she must shuffle and temporise no more. She must take her courage in both hands and once more proclaim the message committed to her charge. The language of her formularies is obsolete, but the principles are unchanged. Man is a Spirit. He has before him the choice of far higher than material joy, or far bitterer than material pain. He might gain the whole world of sense, and it would profit him nothing, for by his selfishness he would lose his own soul. Preach these things first: drive them home to the souls of men, and the rest will follow.

"Ecce iterum Crispinus!" Here is Mr. Magee again! He is welcome, for he will throw light on the orthodox ideas of a future state. Certainly these are far in advance of those which were preached by the clergy of my youthful days. Yet methinks they leave something to be desired. "Our friends are moving onward and upward." So we believe, but where did Mr. Magee get the information? From some mystic, I fancy. Not from his Prayer-book, which teaches very little as to the condition of the departed, while the little that it does teach appears, at any rate on the face of it, to be based upon two contradictory conceptions. Mr. Magee accepts the idea that they are moving, not sleeping. So far so good. But what does he mean by "onward and upward"? Let us study his decree. "You must not call them back." Evidently, then, they are in a state of felicity, part of which consists in the fact that they are no

longer troubled with the less fortunate companions they have left behind. They have escaped into a bomb-proof shelter while their comrades—some of them badly wounded—are still toiling across the shell-swept plain. Be it so, but will they sit down and enjoy themselves forthwith, or will they send out a thought, perhaps reach out a hand, to the men that have been left outside?

Lord William Beresford, in command of a small company, was surprised by an overwhelming force of Zulus, and gave the order for retreat. Riding along in the rear he saw one of his soldiers struck down, and on the point of falling into the hands of the rapidly advancing impi. Galloping to the spot he sprang from his horse and began to lift the man into his own saddle. He resisted and told his officer to save his own life. Beresford bade his too scrupulous comrade come along quietly, or he would punch his head. And he carried him off into safety.

If to enter into the orthodox Paradise means that henceforth I must concern myself no more about a friend in need, then the orthodox may "possess that brave country alone for me." It is a stormy life that I have weathered for more than sixty years, but I have never scuttled into shelter leaving a comrade exposed to the wind and the rain. Few can have less desire to return even in thought to scenes once traversed, but I shall be well content to do so if thereby I can bear a message of cheer to a loved one left behind. If I can do so in no other way than by moving a table or thumping a tambourine then I will move that table and thump that tambourine. I will not stand upon dignity when a comrade is in despair. So much for the different conceptions of myself and Mr. Magee.

But enough of conceptions! Let us come to facts—those "brute banal facts" so abhorrent to the sensitive feelings of Dr. Inge. Our loved ones have returned to us. The comrade of my life had stood by me through sorrow after sorrow, trouble after trouble, during nearly twenty years. The last ten years of her life were spent in almost unbroken suffering, mental and physical. It broke down her fragile body; it all but subdued her powerful mind. For the last five years of her life the mere absence of pain had been to her a sheer delight. When on that third day, so significant to the mystic, she awakened to the consciousness of a glorious life to which she had looked forward so long did she stay revelling in the sensations she could appreciate so well? No: as I stood by the coffin there suddenly came upon me a rush of glowing happiness; wave after wave of strength and gladness seemed to be pouring into my whole being. The sensation was physical as well as spiritual—I felt as though I were in contact with an electric battery. It lasted not for moments but for hours, and the effects have never passed away. What was this but the influence of her radiant spirit brought to bear upon me in my gloom? Such feelings are utterly unfamiliar to me, for unlike hers, mine is a sombre soul. There was no "compact" between us: no expectation on my part: I had not grudged her the entrance into rest: her sufferings had been so great that I could not ask her for my sake to

"Absent her from felicity awhile

And in this harsh world draw her breath in pain":

still less did I think of breaking in upon her well-earned peace. She came back of her own free will—like brave Beresford she came back to the wounded comrade lying on the field. And in other ways, more familiar to readers of *LIGHT*, she has come back again and again. And if she has not carried the old comrade into safety, she has raised him to his feet again.

He Who, after enduring the Agony and Bloody Sweat, the Cross and the Passion, rested not in Paradise but forthwith went and preached to the spirits in prison, still permits loving ones to come back to those they loved, bearing them the lamp of cheer as they sit in darkness and the shadow of death, being fast bound in misery and pain—the misery of bereavement—the iron of Despair.

That truth comes so often through humble channels may be the meaning of the ancient myth that false and misleading dreams came through the Ivory Gate, and true dreams through the Gate of Horn.—G.

SURVIVAL A NATURAL FACT.

A SYMPOSIUM.—II.



MR. STANLEY DE BRATH.

The Doctor came in one evening more than usually radiant, and could hardly allow himself time for greetings, so eager was he to enter on the purpose of his visit. Producing Mr. Wells' "The Undying Fire," he said: "Now I've found a book which disposes of all your Spiritualist notions. Listen to this": (reads)

"What a poor phantom of a world these people conjure up! What a mockery of loss and love! The very mothers and lovers who mourn their dead will not believe these foolish stories. Restoration! it is a crowning indignity. It makes me think of nothing in the world but my dear boy's body broken and crumpled, and some creature, half

fool and half impostor, sitting upon it, getting between it and me, and talking cheap rubbish about planes of being and astral bodies. It needs no sifting of the evidence to know that they are untrue. No sane man believes this stuff for ten minutes together. It is impossible to believe it.

"This certainly has no reality. It has none of the feel of reality. I will not even argue about it. It is thrust now upon a suffering world as comfort, and even as comfort for people stunned and uncritical with grief, it fails. You and Lady Burrows may be pleased to think that somehow you two, with your teeth restored and your complexions rejuvenated, will meet again the sublimation of your faithful Fido. At any rate, thank God for that, I know clearly that so I shall never meet my son. Never! He has gone from me.

"I will not have you slipping by on the other side, chattering of planes, of living and sublimated atoms, while there is a drunken mother, or a man dying of cholera in this world. I will not hear of a God who is just a means of getting away. Whatever foulness and beastliness there is, you must square God with that. Or there is no universal God, but only a coldness, a vast, cruel indifference. I would not make my peace with such a God if I could.

Now, that expresses just what I have always wanted to say. What can you put against that?

Engineer: Experimental facts.

D.: What do you mean?

E.: I mean that the supernormal facts are part of the natural order. Scientific experiment, just as scientific as radio-telegraphy or those of your biological laboratory, have shown solid facts that you cannot get over except by denying them as frauds and exposing yourself to ridicule; and these physical facts are linked to an immense series of telepathic and other connected facts which imply the existence of the subconscious mind and its survival. I thought we had agreed in all these discussions to take the facts as admitted. You did admit them when you looked into the evidence.

D.: I did, as a hypothesis; but I find it leads nowhere. My commonsense reasserts itself. And I feel that even if there is this sort of survival I don't care about it: I don't care much about survival anyway. I do my best to leave my bit of the world a little better than I found it. I try to cure people, and if there is any future life I shall take it as it comes.

Parson: That is not so very different from what the Church has always taught—Do your best and leave the future to God.

D.: I think I mean it in a quite different way: the Church's idea was, Do your duty and you will be "saved," whoever else is lost. My idea is, Do your duty and you will help to make the world better, whatever becomes of yourself.

Soldier: Was not one of the points we agreed on when we started these meetings that we would not argue on terms like "the Church," which carry such different meanings to different minds?

P.: *Mea culpa!* I forgot. But, of course, one may have a selfish form of religion or a selfish form of Spiritualism. It depends on our character.

S.: That form of religion, which was usual sixty years ago, reflected a mentality like the political economy of the time: the industrious apprentice marries his master's daughter and becomes a master, no matter who remains behind; the soul that has faith is saved, no matter who is not. It was a phase of the selfish mind and a good introduction to "the survival of the fittest"! It is now generally discredited, as regards the next life at any rate, and we need not try to fix responsibility for it, nor inveigh against past phases.

D.: But I still think H. G. Wells is right when he says:

"It is not I that am immortal, but the God within me. All this personal immortality of which you talk is a mockery of our personalities. What is there personal in us that can live? What makes us our very selves? It is all a matter of little mean things, small differences, slight defects. Where does personal love grip? On just these petty things."

S.: I do not concur with that. Is not durable love founded in the character we can honour and sympathise with? But are you quite correct in saying that this is Wells' view? He puts these sayings in the mouth of Job Huss under circumstances of great trial. Would it not be fairer to take Mr. Wells' own view to be expressed by the Deity at the climax of the drama? And, personally, I much admire the modesty and the literary skill with which he avoids the anti-climax of making the Almighty expound Mr. Wells' opinion! Hand me the book, please (reads p. 225):—

"God did not speak by words but by light; there were no sounds in Job's ears, but thoughts ran like swift rivulets of fire through his brain. . . the thoughts that it seemed to him God was speaking through his mind can be put into words only after a certain fashion and with great loss, for they were thoughts about things beyond and above this world, and our words are all made out of the names of things and feelings in this world."

P.: Is that indeed Mr. H. G. Wells? I must read the book. It seems to me that the form Spiritualism is taking in many minds is a complete answer. It is agreed that the personality shows but a small portion of the whole self, which is mainly subconscious. Therefore, all the petty things must be outgrown even though they may be present for a while. That which survives may, in a certain limited sense, be called "the God within," for it is the Self which is in touch with the Divine.

D.: Then your "future life" consists mainly of negations of all that makes personality here?

P.: Except knowledge, love, and goodness, and a few other things of the spirit. Do we give sufficient weight even to the negations? For instance: If on the other side no one can physically injure or compel another; if we are relieved from the endless task of feeding, clothing, and sheltering the body; if no pretences are possible because all characters and thoughts are known; does not all this imply joint activities and close friendships which even here are felt to be the truest happiness? Would you mind, doctor, a little Socratic dialogue?

D.: Not if others will be silent, and you do not try to put me in a hole.

P.: Well, you are indifferent about your own survival?

D.: Yes, quite indifferent; I am not sure but that I should prefer extinction.

P.: For your wife and children, too, and your patients?

D.: No, I cannot feel indifferent about them.

P.: Then if they feel the same about you, I suppose your extinction would make your real friends the poorer?

D.: If you put it so, I suppose it would.

P.: Extending that to all, does it not follow that extinction would make the world by so much the poorer?

D.: Yes, I suppose it would; but I did not maintain extinction; I only said I do not know—*agnosco*.

P.: Well; I do not wish to press it further than this: If others feel that they do know, even a little, and base their knowledge on experimental facts, why not admit the facts; even if they seem as opposed to "commonsense" as Galileo's theory seemed to those who considered a flat earth with the sun daily rising on it to be obvious commonsense? They are "a beam in darkness. Let it grow."

D.: Let it grow, by all means. Perhaps when it has grown beyond producing a phantom reproduction of this world I shall admit the inferences.

P.: And meanwhile we return to our first position; admitting the facts but not deciding on their full explanation?

D.: Yes, I must agree to that I suppose. But let us hear your explanation: we know the engineer's, and your present position is not what it was some months ago. You are taking a much more decided line.

P.: Well; I have thought a good deal in the past months, and now that the bishops—to whom Churchmen do owe respect—have opened the door, I feel more at liberty. I do not think that the inferences lead to "a phantom world," but show the reality of God's governance and the reality of the human soul.

D.: I should like to hear how you think that the facts demonstrate that.

P.: Not in ten minutes at the end of an evening. That must be for our next meeting if you really care to hear a tentative view.

V. C. D.

QUININE IN PHOTOGRAPHY.—Mr. Ernest C. Craven writes: "The reference to the photographing of quinine by Mr. J. Arthur Hill is interesting. I would suggest in explanation of the varying results that as quinine only absorbs the violet end of the spectrum, an ordinary plate would have to be used and the inscription illuminated mostly by transmitted light."

CLAUDE'S THIRD BOOK.*

Being Further Messages Recently Received
and Collated by Mrs. Kelway-Bamber.

From Her Son Claude Killed in France November 11th, 1915.

THE ETHICS OF CLAUDE.

(Continued from page 460.)

CONCLUSION.

XX.—THE PATHS OF BLUE.



CLAUDE KELWAY-BAMBER,
Pilot, R.A.F.
Fell in the Great War, 1915.

At the resurrection Christ showed Himself to the faithful few, and still to the faithful ones do the "dead" show themselves sometimes to-day; to those who love, and watch, and pray and so keep the right mental and spiritual atmosphere. They come in a vision or a dream or speak by impression but it is a reality, nevertheless. The spirit incarnate communes directly with the spirit still held in its physical bonds who has made the conditions necessary for this experience and is enabled subsequently to bring through the wonderful knowledge to the physical brain. The impression is so deep that it remains a beautiful and never-to-be-forgotten memory. This is of course a spiritual, not a psychic, experience, and is not

common nor broadcast; for, in the past, people laughed and scoffed at the idea of spirit return and so made the conditions very difficult.

As I have often told you before, thought is an actual, tangible thing and can therefore create a very effective barrier. The world has an "aura"; a condition round it set up by the thoughts and feelings of its millions of inhabitants. This varies in colour and density, as do individual auras, in different places according to the mental and spiritual development of the local inhabitants. We have, after passing the Astral, to penetrate this world aura to get to you. Where people generally are spiritual the aura would be blue, which synchronises with one of the heavenly colours. It would be easy for us to get to places in that condition. Others it is almost impossible for us to reach; one that is very materialistic, or where the conditions are revolutionary, for instance, would be almost impenetrable, so thick, and dark, and heavy.

Where love and spirituality exist we can come most easily; these are better even than power. There would be very little difficulty in spirit return if these conditions were general. When I submerge myself in the world's aura it looks grey, and brown, and dark to me, but I come along a narrow path of blue that leads me to you, this is the spiritual link that connects us. It is a chink of light of pure colour, and round me as I come along it I see the brown of avarice, and the dirty green which is the travesty of hope, and the dull, murky red of cruelty and sensuality, but I also see other paths of blue and pink penetrating and shining through the gloom.

Because of the difficulties of our earth surroundings we are limited and hampered now, so make a wide path of blue, Mummy, by thinking beautifully, and spiritually, and faithfully *always*, and if only enough people will do this the collective paths of blue will join up and become wide roads and we will be able to come back easily and so bring through much more help and comfort to you all.

L'ENVOI.

I have tried to make you realise that God meant men to be healthy, and happy, and wise, and to enjoy life in the material world; that sorrow and pain came through ignorance, and that the wise man takes care to learn from his lesson, through them remembering always his life on earth is but a short phase of his existence—merely his school time. I have tried to show you, too, that he can always draw power and help to any extent if he seeks it aright. That the everlasting arms of God are ever open to receive His children, that none are too wicked or too miserable to return to Him. Above all I have tried very emphatically and continually to impress upon you throughout this book the reality of Spirit and the superficiality of everything else that is not founded upon it.

It was because men in the ages that have gone did not realise or understand this essential fact that the mighty Empires of the past lost their glory and fell into decay. A nation that establishes itself purely on material things must eventually perish, it has no reserve vitality, nor power, nor

* All rights reserved.

force on which to draw—it has nothing to bind it into cohesion. It is like the immature tree of which I spoke before which is forced into bloom but because the sap flowing through it is insufficient and poor it shrivels after the effort of flowering instead of growing and flourishing and producing more flowers in beautiful succession, which it would do if it were full of healthy sap. We have lived in the most wonderful period of the world's history; it is full now of glorious possibilities. It is up to the men and women of this country—this England that we love—to live to make her noble because so many have died to keep her free. It is a great inheritance. Their task is not a light one, but if each and everyone will be honest enough, and brave enough, to do his or her utmost to think spiritually and act accordingly she will reach and hold a position that no nation has ever approached. Men must learn to think greatly, to realise they are sons of a great King, the greatest of kings—God, and because of this they must behave royally, they must be above doing what is petty, mean and unclean. They must learn to think universally and then they will forget their own small individual troubles. They must realise the true brotherhood of man and their duty to each other, they must learn to be unselfish. It is as I said before, not easy. It means each must try to climb that "Difficult Road" to the top of the Mount of Vision. And the guerdon? For each individual health, strength, honesty, purity and unselfishness of character, wonderful happiness through the content that comes from the "peace that passes all understanding," and for the nation composed of such people unexampled and lasting prosperity.

MATERIALISATION: A CURIOUS EXPERIENCE.

By HORACE LEAF.

I read with great interest the strange story of C. T., in *LIGHT*, page 455. In her presence a hand—presumably that of her husband sleeping in the next room—materialised at her bedside.

Last June I had a similar experience in Edinburgh. I would not venture to record it but for the confirmation it appears to receive from C. T.'s experience.

One night I retired to bed and fell asleep, but was awakened later by something moving in the bed at the back of me and against my right shoulder. On attempting to turn round, I discovered that I was in a cataleptic state, able only to move my head up and down, and my right arm freely about. Realising from past experience that something had probably materialised, I immediately looked at the pillow, which was quite visible, and purposely moved my head up and down several times, and then looked fixedly at the window facing me, with the intention of remembering these things, should I happen to fall asleep after the object had dematerialised. Then, putting my right hand over my right shoulder, I seized what appeared to be a human hand.

The fingers were long and tapering, in no way resembling those of anyone I knew; but this was doubtless due to the fact that they were only partially materialised. Feeling some resistance on the part of my strange visitor I began to coax it, saying: "Come along. Let me see you. It's quite all right," or words to that effect, at the same time gently pulling the object over my shoulder.

Imagine my surprise when on getting it in front of me I saw it was a replica of the face of my wife, who was at that time in London—four hundred miles away!

At the time I had not the slightest doubt it was my wife who thus appeared to me. What makes the matter more convincing was the conversation I held with the form, in which among other things it mentioned a matter concerning an acquaintance of my wife's and myself in whom I had practically no interest. Before the form dematerialised I turned round facing the wall for greater comfort, the head and hand, which I still held, turning with me. Finishing our conversation, we said good-night to each other, and I fell asleep, awakening in the morning none the worse for my strange adventure.

I mentioned the matter to my hostess, her son, and her sister at breakfast, and immediately wrote to my wife, asking whether anything unusual had happened to her the previous night. All that she could remember was that she had fallen asleep whilst thinking deeply of me.

This coincides with the case of C. T.'s husband, who meant to bid her good-night, but fell asleep without doing so.

Another interesting similarity between C. T.'s experience and my own is that in each case only partial materialisations occurred. C. T.'s materialised finger is paralleled by my materialised head and hand. As to whether an arm ma-

terialised I am uncertain, as I distinctly remember wondering how the hand and head were related since I could neither see nor feel an arm or shoulder. That so much more should have materialised in my case than with C. T.'s, is probably owing to my possessing some materialising power, as I have had such manifestations before (though never in the case of living persons). Unfortunately, when this has happened I have always been alone.

It is a grave drawback that such experiences as the above cannot be demonstrated to others, but must rest upon the testimony of a solitary witness. There are, I believe, upon record one or two cases where more than one person has been present on such occasions; but such phenomena are apparently quite beyond scientific experiment at present. They serve, however, as additional instances of a psychic law about which we know very little, but which nowadays few well-informed people would venture to deny.

FATHER CHRISTMAS AND THE FAIRIES.

By Mrs. Philip Ch. De Crespigny.

Has any clairvoyant seen and recorded any instance of a sight of Father Christmas? If there be any authenticated case of the sort it might help to a conclusion as to what the "fairies" lately photographed really are.

There are two solutions offered. There may be more, but I have not heard of them.

That they are thought-forms only—the crystallisation of the imaginative thought of generations of children, and of their elders; visualisations so persistently conceived as to assume a form and a degree of life in finer matter. The arguments urged point out that, even to the Pan-pipes, they take on the form and accessories—such as clothes, pointed caps, wings, and so on—of the conventional fairy, and are, therefore, the outcome and presentment of what has had birth in man's brain. There is much to be said for this view. If we ourselves, as some have it, not unreasonably, are God-created thought-forms, the result of His imaginative conception, inspired with a spark of His Consciousness, and, therefore, gods-in-little, it is reasonable to suppose that we in our turn can also create thought-forms that, through the concentrated thought and attention of long periods of time, become likewise inspired to a vastly lesser degree with consciousness and a power of independent action. The characters of Shakespeare, Dickens, of all fiction that really lives—certainly of Sherlock Holmes—that none of us will ever believe was not an independent entity—would all come within this category. We know that thought is a real thing, a form of matter transmuted by the brain from the physical matter that feeds it; the question is, does it explain the phenomenon of the fairies? There is much to be said for the thought-form theory.

But, again—in primitive times when man was nearer nature, clairvoyance was much more general than it is to-day. Why should it not be that the "fairies" are nature-spirits—the real thing, in fact, and that the conventional fairy of to-day was built up on the knowledge acquired through the inner vision of what was already in existence? This is to me the more likely explanation of the two. Man, inspired with what one may call a reflection only of the creative power of the Deity, has never been able to create any form or conceive any vision of anything not already come within his own observation. He adapts, in fact, from things already created. His imagination is limited, it cannot fly beyond the bounds of what his senses have observed. That is why it is so impossible for those in Four-dimensional space to translate to us in three-dimensional. It appears to me easier to believe that the sylphs, gnomes, salamanders, monsters of mythology, and nymphs, banshees, and all the rest of them, were not born of man's thought, but have existence independently of him.

If a photograph of the snow-bearded, benevolent old man laden with Christmas presents and making his entry down the chimney—who is obviously born only of children's brains—should ever be obtained, it would be evidence favourable to the thought-form theory in explanation of the fairies, but if Father Christmas, that most lucid and persistent of visualisations in all countries, remains invisible to the camera, it would argue, at all events negatively, that the fairies are not altogether of the stuff of which dreams are made.

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	£	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged ...	90	13	0
Miss Edith Cole ...	3	18	0
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THE CHRISTMAS REVELATION.

It is interesting to note that, according to St. Paul, the actual object of the revelation of or by Jesus was to give "the light of knowledge." How curious is it that Christendom has, for the most part, acted as though the object of Christianity was to bother us with mysteries! Surely the object of a revelation is to reveal, to simplify the difficult, to throw light upon dark problems, to solve mysteries, or dissipate them! And truly, spiritual Christianity, rightly understood, is a clearing up of mysteries, and not an addition to them. We have suffered many things from the critics; but we have suffered more from the commentators. Said one, only half in jest, "How plain the New Testament would be if it were not for the explainers of it!" And so we may say, "How plain the Gospel of Christ would be if it were not for the creed-makers!"

According to Paul, the "knowledge" which Jesus came to bring is "the knowledge of the glory of God." "Of the Glory" be it remembered. "The glory" must mean the heavenly goodness, the spiritual beauty, the shining justice—that which makes God what one well called "The Altogether Beautiful of the universe." When we think of the old vehement assertions of total depravity, a cursed earth, a fallen race, an angry God, and an eternal hell, and then turn to this revealing of "the glory" of God, it is like waking from a nightmare to find that a sweet summer morn has dawned; it is like leaving the dingy crypt of a musty cathedral in order to ascend a hill and see the sun rise.

Paul's assertion culminates in the statement that this "light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shines in the face of Jesus Christ, a statement which has really nothing mysterious in it. Paul also said that this light shines in our hearts—the same light. Jesus, then, was a revealer of God, and specially so as a spiritual light. His compassion, His forgiving spirit, His victory over self and over the powers of evil, were revelations of the Infinite Love. His Sermon on the Mount and his Prayer were wonderful and sufficient disclosures of the spiritual bond that united God and Man. When He took the little children in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them, He revealed "the glory" of the Father God. When He dared to touch the leper, and make him clean, He manifested the heavenly healing power. When He calmly faced and fought the world's ignorance and brutality, and made His way from earth to heaven through manger and through cross, He gave to the world an object-lesson which revealed, as no splendour could do, the eternal secret of the heavens.

But He stands not alone as the revealer of the glory of God. The happy mother, this Christmas time, may say with George Macdonald:—

My child is lying on my knees,
The signs of heaven she reads;
My face is all the heaven she sees,
Is all the heaven she needs.

I also am a child, and I
Am ignorant and weak;
I gaze upon the starry sky,
And then I must not speak;

For all beyond the starry sky,
Behind the world so broad,
Behind men's hearts and souls doth lie
The Infinite of God.

So, Lord, I sit in Thy wide space,
My child upon my knee:
She looketh up into my face,
And I look up to Thee.

There is the perfect truth. As the child looks up to the happy mother's face, and sees there all the heaven it needs, so we, looking up to Jesus, looking up to the beautiful heavens, looking into our own souls, behind and beneath and above all passion, sin and fear, see the ever-shining light of the ever-present God.

That faith is enough to live by; it is enough to die by: and we shall lose it only as we lose the stars, when they melt and are lost in the glorious sea of light—in the splendour of the perfect day.

J. P. H.

ERRATUM.—In the concluding line of Dr. Powell's address on "The Last Judgment" (page 463) "The Land of Magnificent Distances," is unfortunately and absurdly printed "the Law of Magnificent Distances."

EVERYTHING in nature is engaged in writing its own history; the planet and the pebbles are attended by their shadow; the rolling rock leaves its furrows on the mountain side; the river its channel in the soil; the animal its bones in the stratum; the fern and the leaf inscribe their modest epitaphs on the coal; the falling drop sculpts its story on the sand and on the stone—not a footstep on the snow or the ground but traces in characters more or less enduring the record of its progress.—EMERSON.

LIGHT,

6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON,
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AT CHRISTMASTIDE.

THE GOLDEN MILESTONE.

The time was when the Christmas feast was said by waggish folk to be an especially appropriate time for LIGHT, for it was the time for ghost stories—the "creepy" variety, in which the ghost came in as a fearsome, unnatural creature, "with a flavour of churchyard mould." But although we have found that the ghost of fiction and tradition was very often founded on fact, he carried with him so much of superstitious embroidery that, having made the acquaintance of the real ghost, we have no further use for any spurious variety, either to point a moral or adorn a tale.

The "affable familiar ghost"—a man, a friend, a brother moving in worlds as natural as this and vastly more genial—has replaced for us the spectre, the bogle, the hobgoblin. The public has moved on to a certain extent with us, and has grown not only willing but eager to hear of ghosts that neither affright the gaze nor affront the reason. Here and there amongst the ignorant and self-sufficient who think that when you are confronted with a thing you do not understand the best thing to do is to snigger at it—amongst these people we still hear a derisive cry of "Spooks!" but it is a very subdued one to-day. It has grown thin and shrill and there is a dubious note about it. The events of the last few years in connection with Spiritualism have taken much of the old cocksureness out of the Sadducee. The real ghost story is having upon him the effect that the ghost story of the old type had upon its old-time auditors—it is giving him cold shudders. If he was never afraid of ghosts before he is beginning to be very much afraid now. We are producing for his discomfiture a ghost that will stand scientific scrutiny—"the ghost in man, the ghost that once was man," and that, we may add, still is man.

That is quite a new Christmas Ghost Story, a story which round the Yule fire this year will be illustrated for many of us by signs and tokens of the actual presence and companionship of the ghosts themselves—our friends and companions, with us still although unseen, because of some (probably very slight) difference in their condition as a result of having lost the garment of flesh.

It gives the Christmas fire an added brightness, a warmer glow—it gives a new occasion for happiness. It banishes for good the old sad memories that for many of us used to linger about the Christmas festival.

Science is having its word in great books, Philosophy is taking close account of the matter, and the Average Man, sometimes shrewder than both, especially when it is a human question, is awakening to the fact that life is rather larger and longer than he thought it was.

Just now we would rather consider the Poet, for he has always been the seer, and his vision has sustained the thought and hope of humanity through the ages. We take the homely poet of the affections, Longfellow, who got nearest the heart of the mystery which we are solving to-day in practical experience.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian
Whose portal we call death.

To him, as he sat by his evening fire, came the sense of spirit presences:—

Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved, the true-hearted
Come to visit me once more.

Again he can write:—

There are more guests at table than the hosts
Invited: the illuminated hall
Is thronged with quiet inoffensive ghosts
As silent as the pictures on the wall.

That is because:—

The Spirit World around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapours dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air.

We could spangle the pages of LIGHT with gems from the poets as with stars, all proclaiming the presence and companionship of spirits. But Longfellow is the most worthy of attention here, for we are dealing with homely human things as best befits the Christmas fireside.

It was dear Charles Lamb, who saw things quaintly rather than deeply, who said that in his dream life he cultivated the acquaintance of phantoms as knowing that he would ere long be a phantom himself. To-day he might speak more hopefully, and say with us that he cultivated the friendship of spirits as knowing that he was himself a spirit.

That is a thought we may also carry with us to the Christmas fireside; that we may welcome our spirit companions the more ardently as being no less spirits than they, although a little handicapped by the troubles of this mortal life, and not yet made free of certain sordid bodily necessities. But even that condition we may outsoar for the time—in thought, aspiration and sympathy. At its worst Christmas stands for a Golden Milestone on the way home. At its best it may be a period of spiritual emancipation and expansion—a foretaste of the greater Fellowship and the diviner Festival to come—"So hallowed and so gracious is the time."

THE SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

By THE REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS.

As Christmas and the New Year approach I am reminded of the most remarkable expression of good wishes ever addressed to me. It happened two years back. I was in frequent communication with my father through Mrs. Osborne Leonard, and for some months he had given me book-tests, often introducing others of a similar type, but referring to book titles. During my last sitting before Christmas he asked me to look in my study at a certain spot, which was indicated within a few inches latitude. There I should find a book the title of which expressed his Christmas wish for me. Having changed about all my books so that memory should be of no assistance in these experiments I was entirely in the dark as to what titles were in the vicinity described. On going home the title that greeted me from the particular part of the shelf described was "Heart's Ease." Outside came the carol singers with their "God rest you, merry gentlemen." It was the same wish differently expressed.

I next visited Mrs. Leonard in the second week of the year, when Feda, her control, transmitted the following:—"Within a span is a title expressing a New Year's wish, to you in particular; he would like to include your wife, but is afraid he must leave her out in this instance. You will understand why when you see the title, for either that or the sub-title will give you the clue as to why he does not include her in this." Now, I found it quite impossible to conjecture any title which, used as a New Year's wish, would not be equally suitable for us both. But my father constantly exhibits a mental ingenuity which leaves me in the rear. Immediately beneath the book from which the span was to be measured there stood one by Professor Charles exhibiting the motto of the Oxford University Press, "*Dominus Illuminatio Mea*." No wish for the New Year could have been more gratifying than this prayer for Divine enlightenment, and the fact of its being coupled with the name Charles showed why it had been singled out as personal to me. My name is Charles. Both these ingenious expressions of loving thought from the other side gave me a pleasant surprise, and a renewed sense of touch with the sender. If it be objected that my father might have expressed his good wishes more directly my reply is that he had already done this, and these two title-tests were added by way of exhibiting his close acquaintance with my home surroundings.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

The working of the leaven of Spiritualistic ideas is to be seen in the Law Courts. The other day, at Brockley, Judge Parry questioned a witness concerning a noise of bagpipes coming from a house next door, and continued: "It may be hallucination on your part. We have heard of many eminent people returning to earth playing banjos. Perhaps your spirits play bagpipes instead."

And at Bow County Court this illuminating passage was recently reported:—

Mr. Abinger: I object to evidence of a conversation with a man who is now dead.

Judge Graham: I agree.

Mr. Abinger: A dead man cannot come here and answer questions.

General Booth, at a Salvation Army meeting at Clapton, on December 16th, gave an account of his recent visit to Canada and the United States. Hearty laughter greeted his remark that at one meeting which he addressed a Spiritualist came forward and said he had had a message from the "Old General" (the present general's father). The message was that the "Old General" was dissatisfied with Heaven. He thought there ought to be some alteration there.

Miss Julia M. Smith's account last week (p. 472) of her experience at Hampton Court recalls many previous instances of figures seen in these historic surroundings. Mrs. Russell Davies (Bessie Williams) has put on record the dramatic story of her seeing there, and conversing with, the two Queens, Catherine Howard and Jane Seymour.

A writer in "Cassell's Family Magazine," who was a resident in the Palace, once related, some years ago, how on a certain night she was aroused by her cook, who was in deadly fear because she had seen a tall lady, dressed in black, with a long train, come through the Queen's Gate, though the door never opened when she came out, nor shut after her.

The next day the cook came to her and said: "If you please, mum, I must leave you this very day. I came to oblige you, mum, and left a pore lady in town, who I was nursing, very bad with haricot (varicose) veins, but I can't stay no longer in such a place as this, where the partition of Anne Bullion (Boleyn) walks, and where the ghosts are so harbacious (!), and it worrits me dreadful to think of it. My only comfort is, mum, that them ghosts is all royal ones."

At the last social gathering of the L.S.A. the outburst of applause which greeted Mr. Engholm's announcement that he proposed to give Readings from the Vale Owen Script showed how deeply our members are interested in these messages.

We referred last week to two articles on Spiritualism in the "Pall Mall Gazette." The discussion started on Monday with an article by Mr. Arthur Lynch on "The Humbug of the Spiritualists." Champions were quickly forthcoming. Next day there was a powerful reply from Mr. Roger Pockock, and on successive days articles by Mr. David Gow and Mrs. de Crespigny were published. On Friday, "A Scientist" took the side of moderate opposition.

Mr. Pocock said in his article: "The thirty-eight volumes I possess of messages purporting to come from the 'dead' present a body of testimony concerning the spirit realms which only very stupid people could possibly deride. Some of these tests are of great value as literature; nearly all are lucid, the worst are readable. Comparative analysis shows that in the main they are agreed on all essential statements."

Mr. Pocock concludes:—"The study, then, upon which we rest our hope of proving the immortality of the soul is not, on the whole, a tissue of nonsense, quackery, fraud, and vulgarity. It is not disturbed or distracted by the exposure of cheating mediums. It is not even dispersed and exorcised by the ridicule of good men like Mr. Lynch, who, being blind, would have us bandage our eyes lest we should see."

The message entitled "For the Peace of Ireland," which appeared in our last issue (p. 463) has attracted considerable attention, and has been received with satisfaction even in some unlikely quarters. Certainly, the message in itself was a counsel of excellence, from whatever source it may have come.

The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, in a recent address on Spiritualism to the members of the Bickley and Widmore Literary and Debating Society, said at the outset that he

did not propose to waste any time with endeavours to prove what he thought had been abundantly proved, but would speak on the significance of the great fact that it was possible, under conditions which they did not fully understand, to communicate with those who had loved them and who still loved them, though risen to a higher state of existence.

This recalls Dr. Hyslop's famous remark ("Life After Death," p. 306), "I regard the existence of discarnate spirits as scientifically proved, and I no longer refer to the sceptic as having any right to speak on the subject. Any man who does not accept the existence of discarnate spirits and the proof of it, is either ignorant or a moral coward. I give him short shrift, and do not propose any longer to argue with him on the supposition that he knows anything about the subject."

Mr. Drayton Thomas is evidently active in making known the true facts of Spiritualism, for we see from the "Jewish World" that he has been delivering a lecture on Spiritualism to the Jewish Old Boys' Club. At the close of Mr. Thomas's remarks there was an interesting discussion.

We notice that the "Eastern Morning News" (Kingston-on-Hull), of the 12th instant, has a leading article endorsing the attitude of LIGHT with regard to the conjuring performance given recently at Pocklington by the Vicar of Wislow, Sussex. Our contemporary writes: "The Rev. W. E. F. Rees gets his reply in very dignified fashion this week from the Editor of the Spiritualist paper, LIGHT, who puts before him a few questions which those who are now following the psychic developments of to-day will be very interested to see him answer."

The Diarist in the "Pall Mall Gazette" writes:—"Sir A. Conan Doyle, the famous author of 'Sherlock Holmes,' believes that we have entered on a new apostolic age, and that it is the mission of those who have received the latest message of Christianity to go forth, even unto distant lands, and proclaim the faith that is in them. This attitude explains, I believe, his interesting pilgrimage to Australia as an Apostle of Spiritualism. Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle, with their respective secretary and maid, left England last September, and since their arrival have been touring the cities. The novelist may be described as a 'star' turn on the Spiritualists' platform, and I am not surprised to hear that he has had crowded meetings everywhere."

By the way, we notice that this week "Sherlock Holmes" was filmed at the Ambassador's Theatre, the part of the great detective being impersonated by Mr. Eille Norwood.

We observe that there is in some quarters a proposal to establish Home Circles, but this is a recommendation that needs to be followed with discretion. It is very necessary that such Circles should be under the control of persons of mature experience in the subject. Consequently, we cannot approve of indiscriminate efforts in this direction.

The phenomenon of materialisation is sufficiently rare nowadays to make it interesting to record a successful séance described in the "Two Worlds" by Mrs. Gladys Davies, which occurred during her recent Northern tour. The medium was Mr. Potts, and seven fully materialised forms are stated to have appeared, in dim gas light. The names of the twenty-two sitters are appended to the report.

Dr. Ellis Powell, in the "National News" (December 19th), discusses the question whether the Angels at Mons were a reality. He says:—"The tale is true. At Bethlehem, as at Mons, the messengers of God, by drawing upon the boundless reservoirs of Divine power, made themselves visible. Bethlehem and Mons stood for crises in the history of humanity, when the intervention of the highest spiritual forces had become necessary, and it took place."

He continues:—"As we hear the venerable Christmas story, as we sing the unforgotten Christmas hymns, teeming with associations that are too sacred for utterance, we may be quite assured, largely thanks to the progress of Spiritualism, that we are concerned with solid fact, and not with conventional fiction. The herald angels *did* sing on the world's first Christmas morning."

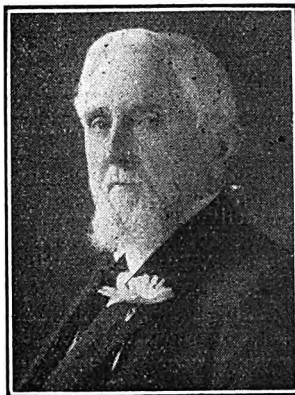
We are informed that Sir Philip Gibbs, the famous war correspondent, has accepted the editorship of the "Review of Reviews," the first number of which, under his auspices, will appear on January 15th. We are glad to learn from him that he intends "to search out the truth-tellers in all classes and countries," and to publish articles on the most vital problems of the age, while retaining the general character of the Review, established by the genius of the late W. T. Stead.

PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

Practical and Theological Aspects of "Supernormal Pictures."

By [JAMES COATES.

Fourth Article: Continued from page 467.



MR. JAMES COATES.
Author of "Photographing
the Invisible," etc.

book-case." Mr. Blackwell thereupon sat and obtained a capital likeness of his father, wearing the white stock as in

Mr. H. Blackwell, of London (a member of the S.S.S.P.), is a gentleman of whom it may be said that few men have had such experiences—at home or abroad—with photographic mediums. With the late Mr. Boursnell, of Shepherd's Bush, he had many interesting test experiences. The fact of psychic photography is for him no longer a debatable matter, though to me some of the deductions to be drawn from that fact are very much so. His opinions are appropriate here. When I was writing "Photographing the Invisible" he gave me valuable help. I remember that he told me in a letter that one day Mr. Boursnell informed him that: "There is an old gentleman here who says you have a painting of him at home in your dining-room, near the

like their last photographs, except that they are now surrounded with spirit drapery." (The italics are Mr. Blackwell's).

But granting the possibility of the departed refreshing their memory by referring to photographs or portraits, the evidence for the actual photographing of the old gentleman in spirit is not strong. The supernormal portrait obtained was that of the departed as he appeared in earth life.

I have already referred to semi-materialised forms and the fact of their being photographed. But even here, while accepting the facts, the law of identity underlying all these phenomena—materialisations, etherialisations, psychic photographs and other resemblances—has yet to be solved. An attempt must be made to do so later, as identity is the crux of the problem.

In the remarkable supernormal photograph of Mr. A. W. Hobbs—which might be a case of refreshing the memory of the departed son and soldier—we have not only the recognisable features of the young man, but part of the frame of the locket, in which his treasured portrait was carried on his mother's breast. The psychics, Mrs. Buxton and Mr. Hope, had never seen that locket. It seems clear that the portrait was a psychic production—a photograph, not of a departed spirit, but of the locket and the picture therein. The how and why are unsolved. My conjecture is that the mother had a burnt-in memory of her dear boy, and strengthened her vision by frequently looking at the locket. The original

TWO PORTRAITS OF A. W. HOBBS.



FIG. I.

Fig. I.
Taken in France
during life. A
painted reproduction
of this portrait
was kept in a
locket and worn by
Mrs. Hobbs.



FIG. II.

Fig. II.
Taken at Crewe
after death. Mr. and
Mrs. Hobbs, sitters.
Mr. William Hope,
photographer, and
Mrs. Buxton
present.

NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS.

I am indebted to Mr. E. T. Hobbs, of Purley, for permission to produce the portrait of his son, who was killed in France. To aid identification a photograph of his son, taken in life, is also given (Fig. 1). In April or May, 1919, I had several conversations with Mr. Hobbs about the psychic picture, which proved to be an attempted reproduction of a painted portrait in a locket, which the mother was wearing, and which had not been seen by the psychics, Mrs. Buxton and Mr. Hope. Mr. Hobbs expressed his doubts and wondered why this should be so. Part of the frame of the locket was reproduced also. I had no difficulty—even if the psychics had seen the locket—in assuring Mr. Hobbs that the psychic production was genuine. The intelligences operating had succeeded in obtaining an identifiable portrait from that locket. It was not a photograph of a spirit, but a portrait produced by spirit power.

the painted portrait at home. Mr. Boursnell had never seen that portrait. Since then Mr. Blackwell has assured me that it was the photograph of his father. I had assumed it might be the psychic production of the painting, but Mr. Boursnell described the old gentleman as being present. If Mr. Blackwell's deduction is correct, the problem arising therefrom is not yet solved. However, to help investigators to a solution of the difficulties presented by this and similar results, Mr. Blackwell said:—

"Some spirit people seem to find it very difficult to remember how they look in earth life, and refresh their memory by referring to a photograph or portrait. I have had the privilege of photographing some partially materialised spirits in my own house. They were clearly visible to the visitors and myself. Yet, two of these forms are exactly

In getting permission (November 1st, 1920), to use the photographs, Mr. Hobbs wrote:—

"Did I tell you that about six weeks after I obtained the first excellent result at Crewe, I asked Mr. Hope for a still further test of the reality of the phenomena? To this Mr. Hope consented. Under strict tests—which I need not detail—I again got my boy's picture on my own selected plate. It is not a duplicate of the former one (Fig. 2), and differs especially in the drapery effect, and the absence of the miniature frame."

This proves to be the better likeness of the two of the late Mr. A. W. Hobbs. But I found it too delicate—without touching up—to reproduce in these pages. It is a very striking case, but does not stand alone. A genuine portrait produced by spirit power, but distinctly not the photograph of the original, in spirit.

was not merely a son, but a friend and companion. Nay, more, Mrs. Hobbs had actually put the chain and locket on, before going to Crewe, in the deep and ardent hope of obtaining a portrait of her boy.

We know something of telepathy, and have experimented in thought-transference. We know the first is the more powerful, operating as it does below the threshold of consciousness. It is conceivable that the intense thoughts of the parents—especially the mother—found a resting place in the subconscious stratum of either Mrs. Buxton or Mr. Hope, or of both. Their guides, operating in their aura, became aware of what was sought and produced or precipitated or otherwise deposited the picture of the departed on the plate.

I do not say I have solved or can solve the mystery, but

the fact that there was an attempted re-production of a material object, not of a discarnate spirit, calls for calm reflection, and suggests that all so-called spirit photographs are of material—if invisible—objects, produced by super-normal power. Telepathically or not, it seems to me the bulk—if not all—of these psychic productions have a material basis—whether photographed or deposited on the plate.

Although it is most difficult to speak with full assurance of anything beyond the fact of psychic photography, it would be interesting to note a few more opinions—in due course—for and against my tentative statements based on results so far as these are obtained.

Mr. Frank Foster, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, a medium photographer for over forty years, and who took pictures in various cities in the United States, was convinced that the faces were not produced through the lens. Hence he posed and took his sitters in the ordinary way. This done, the camera was treated as a dark chamber, over which the sitter and he held hands. When a shock was experienced, the plate—as in psychographs—was said to be operated on. In this way both Frank Foster and his son, Bemier, obtained thousands of identifiable psychic pictures. We know similar results have been obtained through most psychics—while not adopting Foster's methods of procedure. Plates have been operated upon not only in the dark slides, or carriers, but in packets of plates, which have not been exposed to light. Most mediums generally keep their negatives. Not so with either Wyllie or Foster. The former, while in America and in this country, had no desire to carry about his negatives and left them behind. He did this in Rothesay, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester. He was delighted to let some interested investigators develop the negatives. Mr. Ward, a well-known dealer in photographic supplies in Manchester, not only tested, but developed Wyllie's plates. Poor Wyllie did not mind. No one was more pleased than he when identifiable pictures had been obtained. As to Mr. Frank Foster, who travelled much and who had no studio, he sent the bulk of his work to Mr. C. B. Scott, 340, Fulton-street, Brooklyn. This practical photographer, in his letter to me (dated May 6th, 1900), said: "All of his (Foster's) have two to four faces, and we have always been watching to see if we could detect the same faces, but we have never been able to do so."

Mr. Scott did not doubt the fact of obtaining these, but added:—

"I don't think the spirits have much to do with the matter, but there is something about it (spirit photography) hard to detect."

Mr. Scott had a photograph in which a sister of his was the sitter. There were several faces of relatives on it which he recognised.

As to Mr. Scott's conjecture, the fact remains that these supernormal pictures are only obtained in the presence of a limited number of media. Also that each medium's work has its own special characteristics, Bournsell's work being different from that of either Mr. Wyllie or Mr. Hope. In the work of the last mentioned, again we get a clearness and definiteness that are not so marked in the work of Mr. Vearncombe. But the latter's mediumship is of comparatively recent date.

Do we not get, then, in psychic photography the decided influence of the operator's personality—as in all media—as well as evidence of intelligences in the invisible operating by or through them? It seems to me that this is true of all mediumship, and photographic mediums are no exception. The psychic results cannot be produced without them. The question is, "How much of the medium is in all or any communication, voices, or photographs?" Their equation is found in all. For instance, when a medium is over-worked, we have less evidence of spirit power. Indeed, whatever affects the psychics—be it cold, damp weather or sunshine, good nature, irritation, health, ill health, or old age—the bodily or mental condition affects their work. This is worth noting in passing. Still the greater questions remain. While we know that the camera can record things invisible, nothing—so far as research has gone—has been photographed which, although invisible, has not had material existence—whether stars or thigh bones, for that matter. The photography of materialised human forms is admitted. They cannot be classed as invisible. Can it be proved that the departed, whose material bodies are mingling with dust, or absorbed in the elements and therefore cannot reflect light, can be photographed? Can the departed assume at will a refined substance of some kind to be photographed? For so far as evidence obtains, only that which is material can be photographed. If spirits, by refreshing their memory or by any other unknown method, have, regardless of the lapse of time—our time—been able to assume forms like unto those they possessed in earth-life, then we must assume that they have the power to fashion themselves after or approximating to what they were while incarnate. Have we evidence for this occult, miracle-working operation either from the departed or from the photographs obtained? I think not, as will be seen from the suggestions thrown out, and from the reasons which will be presented for consideration. It is better to claim too little for psychic photography, than make claims which cannot be properly substantiated by evidence. To adopt the former method would be to be on safer grounds, for the acceptance of the fact of psychic photographs, etc., by either men of science or by—our last citadel—practical photographers.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS IN THE LIFE TO COME.

By DR. ELLIS POWELL.

Year by year the Christmas holiday fever, with its indomitable gaiety, infects us all. In part, it is an instinct to get away from the noise, the whirl, and the conventions of the social complex which we have so laboriously built and so foolishly try to perpetuate. But it is also a survival of our prehistoric habits, a craving for the free and hearty life led by our far-away primeval ancestry. The craving survives, though the vast majority of us know not what it really is—just as the dog always turns himself round and round before he lies down on the hearth-rug, though he dreams not that this is an inherited habit from wild progenitors who did it in order to crush down the grass into a soft and cosy bed.

Well, we begin our Christmas holiday, and we wish it would last for ever; but after a time, after pudding and turkey have lost some of the zest they once inspired, we begin to turn a longing eye towards the old activities. The creative passion, the desire to be up and doing, which is characteristic of every healthy-minded man and woman, stirs our blood again. And when we find ourselves once more in the arena where we lead laborious days, we resume the interrupted tasks with more than the pristine vigour and a greater than the accustomed energy.

Are these holiday intervals a law of life, both in this world and in that which is to come? The Divine institution of a compulsory rest on every seventh day would suggest it. The theory is supported by the ever-stronger recognition of the beneficence of the periodical relaxation as evidenced in the ancient institution of the *dies refectionis*, and in the modern practice of early closing, the Saturday half-holiday (fast tending to become whole instead of half) and the annual vacation. Certainly a man or woman will do more and better work in a year of forty-four weeks' labour plus a total eight weeks' holiday, than in fifty-two weeks of unbroken toil. When we reach that world where (as the Spirit says) our congenial activities will follow us, is it not likely that the same law will hold good? We shall do better with 300 years of holidays out of every 1,000 years of eternity, than if the whole of each ten centuries were spent in tasks howsoever congenial to the enfranchised spirit.

And that is exactly what Christ has said. He knew the entire holiday philosophy. "In my Father's house," He declared, "are many resting-places." The word "mansions," with its suggestion of an elaborate and luxurious residence, is entirely foreign to the sense of the original; but then "mansions" itself, in its basic significance, only means a place where you stay, as the Scottish parson lives in his "manse." The "many resting-places" are the pauses for quiet and refreshment on the upward pathway that shall lead us all at last to the Beatific Vision. We can only dimly conjecture what they will be like. But of this we may be certain, that the best our hearts can desire in restfulness, in beauty, and in congenial companionship will fall infinitely short of the tender and gracious reality.

Not the least of the joys of an earthly holiday (but not always of a Christmas holiday) is the opportunity which it gives of quiet self-communion, away from the inexorable hurly-burly in which so many of us are immersed. We can look in upon ourselves, and see what manner of men and women we are. Let us, in these earthly interludes of retreat, think for a moment upon the many heavenly resting places. Perhaps we may cogitate with greater vividness and profounder interest if we reflect that while Christmas, 1920, finds us with the peremptory certainty of a return to the laborious arena of every-day life, it will be very different with us in 2020. Around us, then, will be the circle of eternal beauty, its thrill enhanced by the glad retrospective of the River passed, its hope irradiated by the prospect of unending joy in spiritual progress and congenial labour. There will be no return to the toil and whirl, the tumults, jealousies, anxieties, and disappointments that surround us here. Reader, will 2020 find you and me among the workers of the summer land, or shall we just then be guests in one of the promised resting-places, enjoying a celestial holiday with many a happy retrospect at our old terrestrial rambles by sea and river? I wonder. Let us agree to meet in 2020 and compare notes. With all eternity before us, we should not need to hurry over comparison.

To adapt the words of Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra":—

And we shall thereupon
Take rest, ere we be gone
Once more on some adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed
When we go onward next
What pathway to select, what armour to indue.

TO "LIGHT" SUBSCRIBERS.

All subscribers who have not yet paid their subscriptions for 1921 are requested to forward a remittance for renewal at once.

All subscriptions are payable in advance.

THE MESSAGE OF EVOLUTION.

DR. GELEY'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE LARGER SCIENCE.

Dr. Geley's book, "From the Unconscious to the Conscious,"* makes its appearance in English at a time when some of the ideas of which it treats are receiving an extraordinary amount of attention, not merely from the scientists but from the world generally. It is a notable proof of this interest that large and learned tomes dealing with psychic phenomena, even when published at high prices, are eagerly acquired by investigators and students, if it be well understood beforehand that the authors of such books are writing from first-hand experiences. The reading world, indeed, in this matter is very much more alert than it was. It has become aware that its inexperience has been traded upon in the past by a group of persons who have affected to give trustworthy and authoritative information upon Spiritualism and Psychic Research, in volumes large and small. It has found out that its money was obtained under false pretences by authors who, while well-informed on some subjects, were grotesquely ignorant on this particular theme, and so invariably took up the attitude of hostility, that being at the start always the most popular position to adopt towards any new idea or discovery. A critical attitude was well, but why should the reader be gulled into wasting time and money on ignorance and incompetence?

In the present instance we have an authoritative work by a distinguished French savant who, in a wide survey of the processes of evolution, traces the operation of the psychic factor even from the cell, and gives a definite scientific meaning to the philosophical poetical concept of the "creative idea" in Nature. He has taken a great step towards the perception of the essential unity of mental and material processes in Nature which is so necessary for all who aspire to see life steadily and see it whole.

Mr. Stanley De Brath, the translator of the book, has more than once in these pages given an able summary of Dr. Geley's system of thought, so that it is hardly necessary to recapitulate the argument here except in brief outline.

It may be interesting, however, to take some excerpts from the book under notice as illustrating the author's method in a matter that touches our subject closely:—

"What, then, does death matter? It destroys only a semblance, a temporary representation. The true and indestructible individuality assimilates, and so preserves, all the acquirements of the transitory personality, then bathed for a time in the waters of Lethe, it materialises anew in personality, and thus continues its evolution indefinitely. Yes, that is what Nature teaches us very clearly, and Nature never lies. If the realisation of consciousness is really the undeniable end of evolution, it is not possible to imagine the disappearance and annihilation of individual consciousness."

Here we have the scientific statement of a truth which in its philosophical or mystical form we have heard, or read, many times in the past in connection with the doctrine of Spiritualism as set out by its wisest speakers and writers, to say nothing of the inspired teachers of all ages who went to the principles of Nature for the source of their teaching.

The work, although moving on a plane of thought calling for the use of terms not easily grasped by the general reader, abounds in passages full of illumination. Thus:—

"Ideally, full consciousness should extend to the present, the past and the future. This implies a species of divination now incomprehensible. But this much we can logically infer: that it must be a state of knowledge of the Self and the Universe sufficiently extended to restore the past from oblivion, to permit the regular and natural use of faculties that are now transcendent and meta-psychic, and to allow some insight into a free and happy evolution enfranchised at last from the darkness of ignorance, the bonds of necessity, and the pangs of suffering."

"Evil, in short, is but the measure of inferiority; alike for worlds and for the living beings they contain. In the lower phases of their evolution it is the price of this supreme good—the acquisition of consciousness."

"Death will no longer be feared either for ourselves or those we love. It will be looked upon as we look upon rest at the end of day—a preparation for the activities of the morrow. There will be no reason to desire it prematurely, for life will show a great predominance of occasions for happiness and a diminution of occasions for pain. Disease will be vanquished, accidents will be rare; old age will no longer devastate and poison existence with its infirmities, but instead of coming as it now does even before full maturity, it will come only in the closing years, leaving physical and intellectual strength, health, and energy untouched up to the end."

There is the message, as delivered by Science. It is a paraphrase of innumerable deliverances from truly inspired teachers which have been given for the last thirty or forty years—many of them the despised mediums of the Spiritualistic movement.

It is difficult to give an adequate idea of the magnificent range of the book, which seems to take in and imply all the

fundamental ideas of Science and Philosophy regarding the origin, processes, and general meaning of Life, conscious and unconscious. It deals alike with Physiology and Psychology: there are chapters on Hypnotism and Mediumship, and the problem of Supernormal Physiology is covered in a chapter in which the materialisation phenomena described by Schrenck-Notzing and Mme. Bisson are discussed. There are, by the way, a considerable number of photographs of these materialisations designed to give an idea of the process. Of one of these Dr. Geley writes: "This fine materialisation took place under my eyes, and I could follow its whole development."

There we may leave the book for the present, warmly complimenting its author on an invaluable contribution to the Science of the immediate future and on his good fortune in having a translator so able and so sympathetic and understanding as Mr. Stanley De Brath.

THE FIRE TEST.

EXPERIMENTS WITH D. D. HOME.

One of the phases of supernormal phenomena in which Mr. Andrew Lang was deeply interested was the "fire test," and the last letter which he sent to *LIGHT* dealt with this question.

It is indeed a fascinating subject. For most of us the earliest acquaintance with it lay in reading of the three men who were cast into the fiery furnace by the order of Nebuchadnezzar. When taken from the furnace, not a hair of their head was found to be injured. Nebuchadnezzar then was one of the earliest witnesses of the fire test, for it is recorded that he observed that his three victims were unhurt by the flames. But he saw more than this, for he is represented as saying, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the son of God."

That testimony has a certain significance; it suggests that the immunity from fire did not reside in Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego themselves. There was a spiritual presence with them giving protection against the fiery element.

The account has doubtless long since been consigned to the limbo of myths by rationalistic critics and probably also by some of the "higher critics." But whether the story be true or not, its possibility has been demonstrated many times since, especially amongst those whom we know as saints, mystics, or wonder workers. It would be possible to compile a long list of such examples.

It was not always a question of complete immunity from fire. Sometimes the fire consumed the flesh of the martyr without apparently occasioning any pain—there was a great spiritual exaltation which raised the victim above the torments of the body. We remember in Foxe's "Martyrs" the story of a woman whose persecutors held her hand over a flame until it was almost incinerated, the victim uttering no cry. We recall how Cranmer placed his right hand in the flames and seemed to endure but little suffering.

The stages at which the power at work protects not only the nervous system but the flesh and clothing itself against fire are deeper and more mysterious. That they are not the monopoly of any race or religion, but rather powers in nature, is shown by the fire ordeals amongst savages of which there are so many stories.

The religious element may or may not come into the matter. Bernadette, the "Seeress of Lourdes," held her hands in a flame for a quarter of an hour without pain or sign of fire on them. Such, at least, is the testimony of Dr. Boissarie.

But amongst modern instances stand pre-eminent the experiments with D. D. Home, most famous of mediums. He gave many exhibitions of power over fire in the presence of capable witnesses—amongst them Sir William Crookes. It was established that there were no artificial forms of protection—no trickery—and Home's explanation was always the same. He was protected by the aid of spirits.

On more than one occasion Home strengthened his case by distributing live coals amongst the witnesses, although, as Mr. Andrew Lang notes, the power of resisting fire was not always successfully transferred. A clergyman, after receiving a red-hot coal had his hand blistered (perhaps his faith failed him or he was not a good subject for the experiment). On the other hand we have the case of the venerable author, Mr. Samuel Carter Hall, on whose silvery locks Home placed a live coal. Mr. Hall was not only unhurt, but not a hair was even singed.

Here and there we have come across other mediums who have been able to demonstrate the reality of the fire-test, but the feat has been possible only now and again under some special influence, and consequently there was no satisfactory scientific proof in the particular instances related, although the witnesses were always positive.

Fire-tests and other examples of power over the elements, while they have as keen an interest for many people as the fairy tales of our childhood, appeal to us chiefly as testifying not only to the existence of a spiritual element in Nature but also to the tremendous possibilities of the future when this power has fuller play and man becomes lord of all the forces below him in the universal order. Clearly he will never enter into his full inheritance until he realises its existence.

* Wm. Collins, Son and Co., Ltd. 17/6 net.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.

By H. W. S.

(Continued from page 467.)

My next experience was of far greater importance and complexity. It took place at the same friend's house, and under similar casual circumstances. It was in the afternoon of a bright sunny day. I had been there probably a quarter of an hour when the same lady called. Again she interrupted a conversation—saying, just as I had risen to leave: "Don't go yet—I have something to tell you." I resumed my seat, and she held a conversation with a spiritual presence which she averred was that of my wife, whom by this time she knew very well. There was nothing evidential about it, and when it ended I once more rose to go, but as I did so I was again requested by her to resume my seat, as there was a man standing by me, and he had abruptly introduced himself by saying: "Tell him that I have come to see him, too." She went on to describe the man with great minuteness—the clothes he wore, his height, hair and whiskers, the pallor of his face, and other details—and asked if I recognised him. I said I did not. She continued: "This man says you were his best friend, and he has come to thank you for your kindness to him." I gave several names of old friends who have passed on, but none of them belonged to this man.

The clairvoyant continued: "He is most anxious that you should recognise him. He says he had a great trouble through his own folly, and you helped him."

"Can you give me," I inquired, "an idea of his age or how long he has passed over?" She replied: "I should think he would be from twenty-eight to thirty years of age and that it is that number of years since he went out. Do you know him now?" I thought for a while, and said, finally: "I do not recognise this man."

"He says," she added, "that you gave him a sovereign." I replied that I had given sovereigns to more than one man in trouble. She went on to say: "He is very much distressed that you cannot recognise him." I said I was sorry, too, that I could not, as I was very wishful to do so.

Then came the dramatic incident of the proceeding. She said: "He has now put his hand into his trousers' pocket and has taken out a purse. It is a long, narrow sealskin purse with a clasp, and he has opened it, and dropped a sovereign into it. Do you remember him now?" I said I believed that I did, but to be sure I wanted something else.

Now, the only experience that I had of this class of phenomena until then was the incident previously described, and I was still a great doubter of their reality. But it flashed across my mind that I had the means in this case to subject them to a proper test. There was not a single living person left in this mundane sphere, but myself, who knew this man in this life, and the circumstances of his departure. So I said: "If this man is the person I know and have now in my mind, there is something else which I want to make me sure."

The medium proceeded: "I now see him differently dressed. He is in a very hot country, with a very oppressive air, which I can feel in my breathing. He is wearing a pair of loose cotton pants fastened at the waist. His shirt sleeves are rolled up, and the shirt breast is unbuttoned and turned back wide, and he has on a big, wide-brimmed straw hat, or what looks like it."

I said: "Yes, but there is something else."

The Medium: "Now I see him lying on a bed in a long room with several others. He is very ill, suffering from something in the chest, for I feel it so badly that I can hardly bear it. It is a very hot country; I feel smothering."

"Yes," I said, "but there is something else."

"Now," she said, "I see him holding up a sheet of paper—like large notepaper—bluish green, or some such colour."

"Yes," I said again, "but if he is the man that I remember, there is something else."

Then the clairvoyant appeared to take a somewhat strained look at whatever was within her vision, and said: "There is a signature at the foot of the paper."

"That will do. It is enough. I know the man."

"Now he smiles, and is gone," the lady concluded.

I was fairly astounded. I have many times since regretted that I did not ask for the name to be read, but I had never attended a séance, knew nothing about psychic phenomena, and was simply dumbfounded by having brought back to memory in this extraordinary manner particular circumstances in a man's life of which I was the only living being in the body who had knowledge. There were three other persons in the room at the time, who heard what passed, but to all of them it was a meaningless jumble. To me it was a chapter of life in which I certainly had a part. The medium was unborn when what she described about the purse occurred, and had never heard of the man.

This is the real, living story: Within 50 yards of the house where this phenomenon happened I lived in the year 1868. There lived with me a young man about 28 years of age. He was employed in the office of the newspaper of which I was editor and manager. He had charge of the accounts and cash. He was a good sort of fellow, but unhappily fell a victim to drink, and got into difficulties which led to the loss of his situation. One morning, at breakfast with me alone, he said he must get away

somewhere, and make a new start. I asked him what he proposed to do. He said he wanted to get to Liverpool where he hoped to be able to get a working passage to America—would I help him? I asked him how much he required, and he said enough to pay his railway fare and a few shillings over. I said "Will a sovereign be enough?" He said it would. I took a sovereign from my purse, and gave it to him. He put his hand into his trousers' pocket, drew out a long, narrow, steel-framed, sealskin purse, and dropped the sovereign into it. Then he collected a few things together, tied them in a parcel, and wished me good-bye with many tears. He was dressed exactly as described by the clairvoyante. A week later I received a letter from him to say that he had secured his passage to America.

I heard nothing more from him for two years. Then I received a letter bearing the post-mark of a town in the State of Mississippi. He said he had had a very hard time in the States through scarcity of employment; and had drifted down South intending to get to the nearest port from which he could get to the Pacific coast. He said I should laugh when I knew what he was doing. He was out of doors wearing a pair of cotton pants and a cotton shirt with sleeves rolled up and all open at the chest, and a great sombrero to protect him from the sun's heat, and his employment was the teaching of nigger children under a great magnolia tree.

Less than two years afterwards I received a letter from San Francisco. It was dated from a ward in a hospital in a particular street of San Francisco, and written on a bluish grey or green sheet of large notepaper. The writer stated that he wrote to me in fulfilment of a promise given to a young man who occupied the bed next to his in the hospital to inform me, as his only friend in the old country, that he was dead. In order that there might be no possibility of mistake when the promise to write was made he got the young man to write his name at the foot of the sheet of notepaper for satisfactory identification.

There was the name written by the deceased in pencil as clearly as I had seen it in his lifetime.

I have many times asked myself what part the subconscious played in this experience of mine. It must be considered what difficulty the clairvoyante had in bringing my conscious memory into touch with the incidents which were presented to her before she came to the crucial fact. This man had not wholly passed out of my recollection, but he certainly was far away from it on that day. It occurred to me in trying to explain his coming that he probably fell in with my wife on the other side, and learning from her that it was possible to communicate with this side came along with her. Of course, when my memory was recalled, all the facts were in my waking consciousness, and I used them for test purposes. If it may be regarded as a case of telepathy it is not a little singular that the pictures presented in the apparition should have taken the incidents in their chronological order of happening—which certainly was not an arrangement of mine. It was natural enough that the spirit should have given them in that order because he was awaiting my final declaration that I recognised him perfectly, and he did not stop his points of evidence until I was satisfied. Possibly if I had asked for the name written I might have had it. One circumstance has always impressed me—that he exhibited a blank sheet of paper with his own signature only upon it; which is conclusive that he held up the paper in the actual condition of which he had personal knowledge, and not written over as it was received by me. I think that is an extremely important point for consideration. My sub-consciousness must have had the record of a fully written speech.

VOLUMES OF MYSTERY.

In "The Happiest People in the World" (Wm. Rider and Son, Ltd., 5/- net), the Rev. Holden Edward Sampson gives us a message for the time, based on the Seven Beatitudes with which Jesus opened His Sermon on the Mount. Mr. Sampson finds the root of every kind of evil in human society and the cause of all selfishness, egotism, individualism, etc., in the fallacy that happiness depends upon the things that are attainable by money only. Surely he is putting the cause in place of the effect. The root of evil is the selfishness which, whether through the agency of money or by any other means, seeks its gratification irrespective of the good or happiness of others. "Love is the keeping of the law." While we sympathise with many of the ideas expressed it seems to us that the writer has confused the simplicity of the original teaching with over-elaboration. Every page is thickly besprinkled with words printed in capital letters, and there is much talk of Divine Mysteries—where no mystery seems to be needed. We can give less consideration, and no sympathy whatever, to the same author's "The Rise and Consummation of the Æon" (Riders, 6/- net), for here we are deluged with positive assertions, rivalling those of the late Dr. Cumming and the Prophet Baxter, regarding the end of the world and the final events and circumstances of the reign of Antichrist, including an awful massacre of the saints, from which, however, our friends of the Roman Church will be exempt because, forsooth, though they do not suspect it, they will bear the marks of the First Beast on their foreheads. Frankly, we are tired of this sort of thing in whatever guise it presents itself.

SOCIAL MEETING OF THE L.S.A.

THE CHILDREN AND THE ANGELS.

The Christmas Festival, as Mr. H. W. Engholm reminded us at the closing social meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, the 16th inst., has always been specially associated with children, and has also from the very first been linked in childhood's imagination with the idea of angel messages and angel presences. It was a festival the joy of which, he was assured, was not peculiar to earth, but was shared in by the heavenly spheres, and especially by the little ones there. He, therefore, asked his hearers to return again in thought to their own childhood, and to help them to do so he had brought a number of beautiful lantern slides illustrating the ideas of well-known artists regarding angel ministry.

ANGEL MINISTRY.

The scene of the appearance of the angelic host to the shepherds "watching over their flocks by night" suggested to the speaker that the future destiny of the child Jesus was known to those heavenly spirits, while the angel's warning to Joseph led to the expression of his conviction that not that Babe alone but every infant born into the world had its guardian angel, for not one of us was less precious in the sight of the Almighty Father than was the Babe of Bethlehem. One of the most beautiful fancies of childhood regarding the advent of an infant into the world was that an angel brought it. If there was anything in that idea we might be sure that the angel, though handing over its sacred charge to the care of the earthly mother, would not forsake it, but would continue to watch over it.

Other pictures illustrated angel guardianship of the living, and angel ministry to the dying. The Vale Owen Script assured us that angel ministers, waiting for the released spirits of little children, would not suffer their tender souls to be saddened by the sight of their parents' grief, but took them at once to homes in the heavenly realms where they could play games and grow strong, and be taught. An illustration depicting the Saviour surrounded by the heavenly host recalled a description given to Mr. Vale Owen by "Arnel" of a similar scene in the tenth sphere—the angels forming themselves into a wonderful pattern, those nearest our Lord being of so pure a nature that they appeared like flames.

AN ANGEL VISITANT.

In connection with a view of the little parish Church at Orford, Mr. Engholm related an incident told him by Mr. Owen as having occurred there about four years ago. He was feeling so ill that when the time came for delivering the sermon he feared he should not be able to do so, but as he mounted the pulpit steps he sent out a prayer to his guide, "Zabdiel" to give him strength, and at once he was conscious of an influx of strength and vigour. After the service was over and the congregation had departed, a little girl who had been waiting behind, came timidly up to him and asked if angels ever came into the church. He answered yes, and she then told him that she had seen an angel with him when he went up into the pulpit, and that the angel smiled at her—the clairvoyant vision of the child thus confirming his own impression of his guide's presence with him in his time of need.

Having familiarised us with the winged and white-robed conception of angels portrayed by artists, Mr. Engholm endeavoured to give us an idea of what an inhabitant of one of the higher spheres really does look like by reading a description given by Zabdiel in 1913 of his own guardian angel—a wonderful description, aglow with colour and beauty.

Reminding us that throughout the Bible angels are never represented as coming on their own account, Mr. Engholm thought that as we grew in knowledge we should find that at the back of all angel ministry, as well as of all the Christmas spirit and the Christmas influence, was the Christ sphere. The great love that filled and overflowed that sphere was a mystery which even those high beings who dwelt therein could not reveal. We could only faintly realise what the coming of the Babe long ago meant. It was affecting the whole world. We could see it at work. Even the rats were coming out of their holes; and it was a good sign for evil to come out into the light of day. If we but let the spirit of Christmas prevail we might be sure that the good would yet win the day.

A feature of the evening which afforded great enjoyment to the audience was the brief musical programme provided by Miss Dorothea Walenn and Miss Emmeline Brooke. It began with a violin and piano duet, "Allegro" (Schütt), followed later by two piano solos by Miss Brooke "A Waltz in E" (Moskowski), and "Noel" (Balfour Gardiner), concluding with a violin solo by Miss Walenn, "Habenera" (Margetson).

Mr. Withall, on being called upon by Mr. Engholm to say a few words, made a special reference, after expressing his pleasure at being present, to the kindness these ladies had shown, not only on the present but on former occasions, in freely giving the Alliance the benefit of their splendid musical talents.

RELIGION REINTERPRETED.

"Religion and the New Psychology," by W. S. Swisher (Routledge, 10/6).

We owe the dear Germans more than we shall ever pay. So do they to us, but that is another matter! We owe them not only the war and most of its consequences, but a whole logical system and its results: Haeckel, who taught us that Christian ethics are as baseless in theory as useless in practice; Nietzsche and his Superman, ruling the slavish herd with the motto "Blessed are the war-makers," who "has searched the New Testament in vain" and found nothing that could be called free, kind, frank, or loyal; and lastly Freud, who refers Religion to suppressed sexual instinct. The book before us claims to be "the first attempt in book form to apply Psycho-analytic or Freudian Psychology to the entire problem of Religion and the conduct of human life. It discusses in a rational manner the psychic phenomena of modern spiritism" and the myths of primitive religions." Our home-grown rationalists assured us that Religion originated in the dreams of savages, who found that the enemy clubbed yesterday visited their sleep, whence arose the idea of a spirit. It was a neat and harmless little theory. Some of us, however, thought that as there really are waking apparitions and premonitions, that fact might count for something and that prophetic inspiration might count for more. Others thought that God's Spirit works in men, giving courage, resourcefulness, self-sacrifice and decision. Wordsworth considered that "we grow by admiration, hope, and love." Plato thought an instinct for Beauty, Truth, and Goodness to be inherent in the nature of Mind. The Indian schools regarded Essential Being, Pure Intelligence, and Joy of Life as anterior and interior to human existence. The Hebrew pictured the life of the soul as the Breath of God, and the words of the Law and the Prophets as His inbreathing. Jesus said that the principle of life is unity with God, and that man's path of evolution is to follow that inward Guide. All these, it seems, are quite wrong. The "New Psychology" cares nothing for experiment and very little for history: it is founded on the Freudian Wish—the sexual wish. This book tells us that "Primitive Religion originated in sex" (p. 10), it is "idealised sex-emotion" (p. 17) in its higher forms, repressed sex-emotion finding another outlet. The whole book is permeated by this idea. "The Unconscious" is a mere question of "complexes"—groups of latent feelings and thoughts, mostly sexual; of which one of the chief is the "Oedipus-complex"—the fixation of love on one parent producing hatred of the other.

Spiritualism is barely mentioned, and only in the forms of table-tapping and automatic writing; it is dismissed in nine pages. "In modern spiritistic systems, the evidence is gathered either through professional or amateur mediums, or through such devices as ouija, planchette, automatic writing or the like. *There can be no doubt* (my italics) that the phenomena thus produced well up directly from the Unconscious." It is admitted that all spiritistic evidence may not be produced by the Unconscious, but nothing is said in explanation of any such. The Problem of Evil is settled in fourteen pages—it arises from neuroses or hysteria, and has no real existence. There are some passages in the book with which we can agree, but they do not flow from the premises. Even the old introspective psychology was better than this; it, at least, looked upward. The real advance must rest on a synthesis of the whole mass of normal and supernormal experimental facts, not on any small group such as mental aspects of sex. V. O. D.

BIRTHLESS and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever,
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems.
—ARNOLD.

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 8d. for every additional line.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—6.30, the President, Mr. Leechman.

Peckham.—Lauzanne-road.—7, Public Meeting; 8.15, Mrs. Mary Crowder.

Croydon.—Harewood Hall, 96, High-street.—11, Mr. Percy O. Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. Mary Gordon.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.—11 and 6.30, Church service.

Holloway.—Grovevale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).—Closed Christmas Day. Sunday, 11 and 7, addresses by Miss Mary Mills, of Bristol. 29th usual meeting conducted by members. 30th, Dr. W. J. Vanstone, "The Spiritual Meaning of Stonehenge"; silver collection. 31st (New Year's Eve), grand social and dance; a welcome to old and new friends.

Brighton Athenæum Hall.—11.15 and 7, addresses by various Spiritualist workers; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, Mr. A. J. Howard Hulme; clairvoyance, Mrs. Ormerod.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Conducted by H. W. Engholm, Editor of the Vale Owen Scripts.

Our readers are asked to write us on all questions relating to Psychic and Spiritual Matters, Phenomena, &c., in fact, everything within the range of our subject on which they require an authoritative reply. Every week answers will appear on this page.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for manuscripts or photographs unless sent to us in registered envelope, and all communications requiring a personal answer must be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

ANGELS AND SAINTS.

To Mrs. Stella Boyce, who sends me questions on this subject: (1) The "Recording Angel" is probably a figurative expression for the Memory, not merely the individual memory but that wonderful memory-record in Nature which stores up impressions of everything that happens. We see an example in psychometry which shows that every object we handle receives some subtle record of ourselves. "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed and hid that shall not be known." There is really no necessity to imagine the existence of an angel with a book and a pen! That is merely a figure of speech. (2) As to the difference between Angels and Saints, an angel is literally a "messenger"; a Saint a holy person. That is all the words in themselves mean, however much fancy and superstition have embroidered the original ideas. As regards Cherubim and Seraphim, these are Hebrew terms, denoting orders of celestial beings. There is reason to believe that there is a truth behind these forms of imagery; that there are beings so exalted and unearthly as to justify the terms, however much of poetry and fancy has been woven round them in the minds of men.

FACIAL TRANSFIGUREMENTS.

Mrs. du Pont Lee tells me of a friend of hers in spirit life, a clergyman whom she knew in the flesh, and whose face is occasionally seen super-imposed, so to speak, upon the faces of other persons. This is not an unknown phenomenon to mediums and clairvoyants. It suggests that in certain cases a partial materialisation or an etherisation for clairvoyant purposes requires a kind of focussing point involving the apparent transformation of the face of a medium into that of the communicator. Of course, in considering cases of this kind I do not overlook the possibility of fancy and imagination, but apart from these things, there are many well authenticated examples of this kind. A friend tells me he has had frequent experiences of the sort in his investigations of clairvoyance.

SPIRITS, WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

H. W. M. tells me he reads *LIGHT* with interest, but it has not yet converted him. That is a matter which we may regret for the sake of H. W. M., although it is not the particular function of *LIGHT* to convert people, but rather to assist them to convert themselves, if conversion is necessary, which may not always be the case, although anything that enables us to see our way a little more clearly is usually welcome. My correspondent goes on to say that he would like to know where the spirit world is. This has raised a difficult question, because it has to do with considerations of Space, which, like Time, is rather a subjective matter. Putting it in ordinary mundane terms we might say that what we call the spirit world, in its first stages, at least, permeates this world, and its higher conditions rise in zones of rarefied matter, or substance, around the earth, but these, of course, are not yet matters of strictly scientific acceptance. It is sufficient to say that spirits are human beings living in another stage of evolution; and that they must live *somewhere*. They tell us a great deal about their different places of abode, but their accounts vary, according to their grades of intelligence and understanding. It is a matter to which *LIGHT* may devote an article some time, although many books have been written on the subject.

IS THERE AN EIGHTH PLANE?

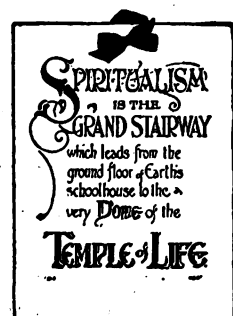
I. T. W. S. asks me whether any recognised section of Spiritualists believe in an eighth plane, where murderers, etc., pass at death into the forms of were-wolves, vampires, and phantoms half animal and half human. I would rather not be answerable for the beliefs of Spiritualists except on fundamental truths. Differences of opinion abound on smaller questions, some of them quite speculative, although they are put forward as facts. It is safer to confine oneself to broad principles. After all, some of these statements which, in their bald forms, seem fantastic, may probably have some germs of truth, the falsity arising in distorted representations rather than in essential realities. We should remember that in the spiritual order things which we regard as symbolical present a quite different appearance. I know nothing concerning this eighth plane of which my correspondent writes.

THE FOX SISTERS.

LADY BLAKE asks me if it is true that, as stated in a contemporary, "the movement [Spiritualism] received its death-blow by the confession of the Fox sisters in 1888." My correspondent will, of course, know that the general statement is not true, for Spiritualism to-day has not the appearance of having received any sort of death-blow, but very much the reverse. As regards the Fox sisters it is a long and rather sad story. Like some of the early mediums, whose gifts were abused and themselves left in the hands of "friends" from whom they might well have prayed to be saved, they were considerably under a cloud; so two, at least, of the Fox sisters in their later years showed lamentable weaknesses. But they were human, and made their mistakes like the rest of us. In any case, the movement cannot be judged by the failures and backslidings of any of its members, and this method of criticism can only be described as one-eyed. Even Rationalism could not endure such a one-sided test.

NEWSPAPER MISREPRESENTATIONS.

MR. T. MACGREGOR (Glasgow) sends a cutting from a Scottish Sunday journal containing an "exposure" of Spiritualism, and like some other correspondents, thinks they do mischief and should be answered. My experience is that they usually are, and that the net result is always to the good, for the controversy stirs up inquiry, and the truth gets a chance of coming to light. Anyway, such attacks do not disconcert us in the least. If we were never publicly criticised it would show that we were held in very light esteem. These violent reactions are a measure of the effect we are making on the public mind. Moreover, *LIGHT* is in the hands of Pressmen of experience who can pretty well gauge the true situation, and who know that behind these displays of animosity there is often a very real desire to know more of the truth of Spiritualism. It is simply that the curiosity on the subject takes a hostile instead of a friendly form. I commend this consideration to Mr. Macgregor and the other correspondents who frequently write to us on the point. Of course, I am in favour of replying to such attacks, but the replies should be addressed to the journals concerned rather than to *LIGHT*.



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CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The Offices and Library of the L.S.A. are closed from Thursday, December 23rd, until Thursday, December 30th.

The Programme for the coming Session—January to May, 1921—will be advertised in this column in an early issue.

A New Syllabus, with Rules, is now ready, and all persons intending to become Members or desiring information regarding the Society's work will be sent a copy on receipt of postcard addressed to the Secretary at above address.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd.

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26TH.

At 11 a.m. ... MR. PERCY BEARD.
At 6.30 p.m. ... MR. ERNEST HUNT.
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 29TH, AT 7.30 P.M. ... MR. THOMAS ELLA.

The "W. T. Stead" Library and Bureau,

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TUESDAY, JAN. 11TH, AT 7 P.M. ... MRS. NEVILLE.
THURSDAY, JAN. 13TH, AT 3.30 P.M. ... MR. WOODWARD SAUNDERS.
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