

# LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS & PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

"Light! More Light!"—*Goethe.*

"Whatsoever doth make Manifest is Light!"—*Paul.*

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thing to communicate to each other or to those who are not dead. After the old materialistic manner he makes a fetish of the germ-plasm which itself is hypothetical. We are, however, at one with Mr. Edison in desiderating messages as positive and unquestionable as the varieties specified by him. But as in many forms of communication *psychic states* have to take the place of material ones, it is the proper business of the Spiritualist to study and expound the different psychical states.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We plod on our way with a smile,  
For the stars show the passing of night,  
We've our feet in the mire for a while  
But our eyes are turned to the light.  
—LUCIUS.

### EDISON AND MESSAGES FROM THE DEAD.

In a special telegram to the "Daily News," Thomas A. Edison says: "I think it possible to devise apparatus to receive communications from the dead." On his guard against misquotation, he wrote:—

If my theory is correct—that the machine called man is only a mass of dead matter, and that the real life is in the millions of individual units which navigate this machine, and if on the destruction of the machine they keep together, including those individual units which have charge of memory (which is our personality)—then I think it is possible to devise apparatus to receive communications if they desire to make them.

Mr. Edison's theory is obviously framed upon a half-truth—the materialistic and mechanical half. He will not have anything spiritualistic: no "medium," no mystery, no "auto-hypnotism known to faith." But what if mediumship, of one sort or other, is universal—i.e., is integral to the universe—if mystery is the same, and if we understand the "auto-hypnotism known to faith" as only a phase of common psychological action running in varying modes all through human life? He means "messages as substantial and as susceptible of authentication as are those of the telegraph, telephone, phonograph and wireless." Our scientist does not observe that all those phenomena belong to one order of things; and he fails to see that the dead belong to another and tremendously different order. Disbelieving in the spiritual, although himself a spirit, he demands that every expression of intelligence should conform to the ordinary material mode; according to which there could be no dead having any-

### THE PRESENT POSITION.

Never before, we think, was the interest in our subject so widespread and at the same time so deep. We can recall occasions in the past when a sudden burst of popular interest and newspaper publicity disquieted the older and wiser Spiritualists. They were shocked by the rash statements made by reputed authorities on the subject and also by the impetuosity of some of the new converts, who were over-enthusiastic and over-sanguine. They had reason for their fears because they knew by bitter experience how quickly the interest would die down after the detection of some fallacy or absurdity which no experienced Spiritualist would ever have offered for public acceptance. But we are disposed to consider the present position of the subject in the popular mind as more than the usual "flash in the pan." We believe it has now a firm hold and will progress (with the inevitable "ups and downs") to an assured conclusion. We have learned, too, that we must face with composure what set-backs and fiascos may happen, for it is so plain that Spiritualism has an immense power of self-adjustment—it is always capable of righting itself no matter how much it may be misrepresented. The great need is to bring it to public knowledge, to get it firmly into the general mind as an idea. That means, of course, reviving in the race-consciousness a conviction that should never have been lost—a knowledge temporarily driven out by an excess of materialism, both social and scientific, in the past.

God sends his teachers into every age,  
To every clime and every race of men,  
With revelations fitted to their growth  
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth  
Into the selfish rule of one sole race,  
Therefore each form of worship that hath swayed  
The life of man and given it to grasp  
The master-key of Knowledge—reverence—  
Enfolds some germs of goodness and of right;  
Else never had the sage's soul which loathes  
The slothful down of pampered ignorance  
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

—J. R. LOWELL.

## THE FIRST MOVEMENTS OF THE SPIRIT.

BY SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

In the earlier half of the 19th century there were a number of sporadic outbreaks of inexplicable phenomena leading up to the episode of March 31st, 1848, which Spiritualists look upon as the first instance of organised and intelligent communication with the other world. That which is best attested and was on the largest scale was that among the Shaker community in the United States, of which some account should be given.

These good people seem to have had affiliations on the one side with the Quakers, and on the other with the refugees from the Cevennes, who came to England to escape the persecution of Louis XIV. Even in England their harmless lives did not screen them from the persecution of the bigots, and they were forced to emigrate to America about the time of the War of Independence. There they founded settlements in various parts, lived simple, cleanly lives upon Communistic principles, with sobriety and chastity as their watchword. It is not surprising that as the psychic cloud of other-world power slowly settled upon the earth it should have found its first response from such altruistic communities. In 1837 there were sixty such bodies in existence, and all of them responded in various degrees to the new power. They kept their experiences very strictly to themselves at the time, for as their elders subsequently explained, they would certainly have been all consigned to Bedlam had they told what had actually occurred. Two books, however, "Holy Wisdom" and "The Sacred Roll," appeared afterwards which arose from their experiences.

The phenomena seem to have begun with the usual warning noises, and to have been followed by the obsession from time to time of nearly all the community. Everyone, man and woman, proved to be open to spirit possession. The invaders only came, however, after asking permission, and at such intervals as did not interfere with the work of the community. The chief visitants were Red Indians who came collectively as a tribe. "One or two elders might be in the room below and there would be a knock at the door and the Indians would ask whether they might come in. Permission being given, a whole tribe of Indian spirits would troop into the house, and in a few minutes you would hear 'Whoop!' here and 'Whoop!' there all over the house." The whoops emanated, of course, from the vocal organs of the Shakers themselves, but while under the Indian control they would talk Indian among themselves, dance Indian dances and in all ways show that they were really possessed by the redskin spirits.

One may well ask why should these North American aborigines play so large a part not only in the inception but in the continuance of this movement. There are few physical mediums in this country as well as in America who have not a Red Indian guide, whose photograph has not infrequently been obtained by psychic means, still retaining his scalp-locks and his robes. It is one of the many mysteries which we have still to solve. We can only say for certain, from our own experience, that such spirits are powerful in producing physical phenomena, but that they never present the higher teaching which comes to us either from European or from Oriental spirits. The physical phenomena are still, however, of very great importance as calling the attention of sceptics to the matter, and therefore the part assigned to the Indians is a very vital one. Men of the rude open-air type seem in spirit life to be especially associated with the crude manifestations of spirit activity, and it has been repeatedly asserted, though it is hard to say how it could be proved, that their chief organiser was an adventurer who in life was known as Henry Morgan and died as Governor of Jamaica in the time of Charles II. Such unproved assertions are, it must be admitted,

of no value in our present state of knowledge, but they may be put on record, as further information may in time shed some new light upon them. John King, which is the spirit name of the alleged Henry Morgan, is a very real being, and there are few Spiritualists of experience who have not seen his heavily-bearded face and heard his masterful voice. As to the Indians who are his colleagues or his subordinates, one can but hazard the conjecture that they are children of Nature who are nearer perhaps to the primitive secrets than other more complex races. It may be that their special work is of the nature of an expiation and atonement—an explanation which the author has heard from their lips.

These remarks may well seem a digression from the actual experience of the Shakers, but the difficulties raised in the mind of the inquirer arise largely from the number of new facts without any order or explanation which he is forced to encounter. His mind has no possible pigeon-hole into which they can be fitted. Therefore, the author will endeavour in these essays to provide so far as possible from his own experience, or from that of those upon whom he can rely, such sidelights as may make the matter more intelligible, and give at least a hint of those laws which lie behind, and are as binding upon spirits as upon ourselves. Above all, the inquirer must cast away for ever the idea that spirits are necessarily wise or powerful entities. They have their individuality and their limitations, even as we have, and these limitations become the more marked when they have to manifest themselves through so foreign a substance as matter.

The Shakers had among them a man of outstanding intelligence named F. W. Evans, who gave a very clear and entertaining account of all this matter which may be sought by the curious in the "New York Daily Graphic" of November 24th, 1874, and has been largely copied into Colonel Olcott's work, "People from the Other World." This, like so many other psychic works, is of very great importance, and yet, on account of the indifference of a bemused public, has been allowed to become a rare work. It will be the author's privilege to convey some of the precious information in this and other such works to the public in the course of these essays upon the outstanding events in the long fight between spiritual truth and that form and dogma which has become mechanical and therefore dead.

Mr. Evans and his associates after the first disturbance, physical and mental, caused by this spirit eruption, settled down to study what it really meant. They came to the conclusion that the matter could be divided into three phases. The first phase was the actual proving to the observer that the thing was real. The second phase was one of instruction, as even the humblest spirit can bring information as to his own experience of after-death conditions. The third phase was called the missionary phase and was the practical application. The Shakers came to the unexpected conclusion that the Indians were there not to teach but to be taught. They proselytised them, therefore, exactly as they would have done in life. A similar experience has occurred since then in very many Spiritualistic circles, where humble and lowly spirits have come to be taught that which they should have learned in this world had true teachers been available. One may well ask why the higher spirits over there do not supply this want. The answer given to the author upon one notable occasion was, "These people are very much nearer to you than to us. You can reach them where we fail."

It is clear from this that the good Shakers were never in touch with the higher guides—possibly they did not need guidance—and that their visitors were on a low plane. For seven years these visitations continued. When the spirits left they informed their hosts that they were going but that presently they would return, and that when they did so they would pervade the world and enter the palace as well as the cottage. It was just four years later that the Rochester knockings broke out. When they did so, Elder Evans and

another Shaker visited Rochester and saw the Fox sisters. Their arrival was greeted with great enthusiasm from the unseen forces, who proclaimed that this was indeed the work which had been foretold.

One remark of Elder Evans is worth transcribing. When asked, "Don't you think your experience is much the same as that of monks and nuns in the Middle Ages?" he did not answer, "Ours were angelic but these others were diabolical," as would have been said had the situation been reversed, but he replied with fine candour and breadth of mind, "Certainly. That is the proper explanation of them through all the ages. The visions of Saint Theresa were Spiritualistic visions just such as we have frequently had vouchsafed to the members of our Society." When further asked whether magic and necromancy did not belong to the same category, he answered, "Yes. That is when Spiritualism is used for selfish ends." It is clear that there were men living nearly a century ago who were capable of instructing our wise men of to-day.

That very remarkable woman, Mrs. Hardinge Britten, has recorded in her "Modern American Spiritualism" how she came in close contact with the Shaker community and was shown by them the records, taken at the time, of their spiritual visitation. In them it was stated that the new era was to be inaugurated by an extraordinary discovery of material as well as of spiritual wealth. This is a most remarkable prophecy, as it is a matter of history that the goldfields of California were discovered within a very short time of the psychic outburst. A Swedenborg, with his own doctrine of correspondences, might perhaps contend that the one was complementary to the other.

This episode of the Shaker manifestations is a very distinct link between the Swedenborg pioneer work and the period of Davis and the Fox sisters.

\*. The third of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's articles in this series will commence next week. It is entitled "The Prophet of the New Revelation," and deals with the life of Andrew Jackson Davis.

#### A GENIUS OF THE PRESS.

If a man is to be known by his friends, W. T. Stead is indeed a kaleidoscopic character, for they included every nationality and every variety of type. Few men have given out and called forth so much real friendship of the finest kind. Like his intellectual gift of expression, the quality of it did not suffer in the quantity given out. A distinguished fellow journalist said of him.—

"Stead had not only big ideas, but inexhaustible powers of expression. Few men were ever so copious and at the same time so vigorous and original. He could overflow into vast spaces of letterpress without ever running thin and shallow."

And so with his power for friendship, though it embraced men and women from the most distinguished to the most obscure, his friendship never ran "thin or shallow."

His correspondence with many of these intimate friends testifies to his exceptional gifts of head and heart, showing him in many interesting lights, and will doubtless be of immense value some day in estimating this remarkable character. But the most intimately self-revealing correspondence, not excepting even that with his "Mère Pan" friend, was a series of writings which came to him through his own passive hand, talks with one who signed himself "Friend," and whom he addressed always as the Elder Brother, believing it to be no other than the spirit of Christ Himself. That such communications were possible he was firmly convinced; the spirit-world being to him an ever-present reality, he saw no reason why He who, when on earth, repeatedly affirmed His nearness, His instant response to a call for help, His actual Presence even to the end of the world, with those who loved Him, could not Himself guide the hand of a believing disciple. This series of writings resulted in disclosing the most intimate thoughts and aspirations of the writer, and turning a white light on the innermost recesses of his heart, which few could bear without shrinking, but before which this great lover of his kind stands revealed without a dark or ugly corner wherein self lurked. His questions testify to a deep sense of the failures and mistakes of his life, and a passionate desire to work while still it was day, using to the uttermost, for the good of others, the strength remaining.

—From "Sparks Among the Stubble," By CONSTANCE MAPP.

## PSYCHIC INVESTIGATION: EVIDENTIAL CASES.

### THE TESTIMONY OF A PROMINENT SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESS MAN.

[The following remarkable statement by a South African business man of high standing was sent by him to a famous journalist in England, with whom he was in correspondence. It was afterwards read by a leading member of the Society for Psychical Research, and came into our hands by their kind offices, the sender, Mr. T. A. R. Purchas, of Johannesburg, having intimated that he had no objection to his testimony being made public. But although we have this permission, we are not at liberty at present to disclose the identities of some other persons mentioned in the narrative, of whom full particulars have been furnished to us in each case. They are some of them persons of high standing, whose names carry weight.]

During the past thirty-five years I have been an investigator into what is known as Psychical Research, and the interest with which I started became more keen with the passage of the years and the gradual accumulation of first-hand experiences. At various times and in various places—whenever opportunity offered in a life embracing much travel in the wilder parts of the world—I have used any means that came to hand in pursuit of my investigations. I was determined, if it were possible, to get at the truth concerning the primary claims of Spiritualism, viz., that the human personality actually persisted after physical death, and that it was possible for the dead (so-called) to communicate with the living (still on earth) under certain conditions. I have worked with writing mediums (i.e., automatic writers), trance mediums, clairvoyants, and mediums for physical phenomena.

As far back as thirty years ago I had satisfied myself, in spite of many disappointments and difficulties, that there was something in the claim of the Spiritualists which transcended any physiological explanation. This conviction, while it left the most important features of the search still shrouded in mystery, kept my interest alive and stimulated me to continuous effort.

From the outset—and the position is unchanged to-day—it became evident that I was not in the least degree mediumistic, and could not, therefore, expect to get results without the assistance of a medium. This, though in a sense a disability, became eventually an advantage, as the knowledge of it had the effect, I think, of causing me to cultivate more carefully such powers as I did happen to possess in some degree—a keen sense of observation, a natural critical faculty, imperturbability, and the ability to concentrate upon whatever happened to interest me. Thus, I may say, I have been a critical and careful investigator, both by nature and induced habit, unable to accept as proven anything about which there could remain ground for reasonable doubt.

Until about six years ago such researches as I had been able to carry out had been dependent upon the assistance of professional mediums. By that time my convictions had not definitely passed beyond the stage of half-conversion. I was still without the knowledge which brings full conviction, but I had grown sure such knowledge was attainable if only the right conditions could be established.

I have no desire to reflect adversely upon professional mediums, as a class, but I had come to the conclusion that I should not be able to secure what I considered the right conditions, so long as I remained entirely dependent upon persons who, whatever their gifts might be, had to earn their living by the exercise—sometimes the prostitution—of them. I had grown to regard my search as having a spiritual rather than a material end in view, a religious rather than a secular objective, and the payment of fees for the production of phenomena of a transcendental nature seemed to me to introduce an element which might well be destructive of the conditions sought to be obtained. Furthermore, in an investigation which obviously travelled beyond the domain in which the purely physical senses are all-sufficing, it became necessary to take into account factors which no person bent on getting at the truth could afford to ignore. Fraud, trickery, and hallucination have been, and still are, inseparable from this kind of work, and no matter how carefully test conditions may be established one requires to know quite a lot to the good of the character of the medium upon whom one is dependent for the production of phenomena, before one can feel certain, beyond all doubt, about the results obtained.

#### RESULTS FROM A PRIVATE CIRCLE.

During the closing months of 1916 I succeeded in forming a circle consisting of seven persons whom I knew well enough to have no doubt whatsoever of their absolute integrity. The five members of this circle, in addition to my wife and myself, need not be separately enumerated and described, but two of the five merit special notice. One was a man holding at that time a high position here—he is now occupying in Europe a still higher position in the

Government of one of our Allies—and circumstances demand that his anonymity should be preserved. I will call him B.

He was already known to me as an automatic writer of remarkable power, and was the only member of our circle who—so far as I then knew—possessed any psychic power. The other, whom I will designate as O., was, like myself, an investigator on his own account; but, again like myself, not in the least mediumistic. He is an engineer and scientist, and possessed of an exceptionally acute intellect. My wife, who has been for years much occupied in public affairs, has the reputation among those who know her best of being a rather exceptionally well-balanced person. So it may be said that four out of the seven were moderately well-equipped for an investigation of the kind we were undertaking. By common consent I was appointed the director of our circle, in view of my longer experience in the work—which, in effect, meant that the direction and control of the methods to be adopted and pursued were left in my hands.

My first object was to discover if any member of the circle (besides B.) was likely to develop psychic powers. To her astonishment and mine, it transpired that my wife could also be “used by the spirits” for automatic writing. (I adopt the conventional phraseology, little as I like it, because it may conduce to better understanding.)

We possess a mass of records of the meetings of that particular circle. Among those records there is necessarily much that is not of an evidential nature to persons unconnected with its work, so I propose to select only one or two incidents which, if personal testimony be worth a moment's consideration, possess a special evidential value.

Before doing this, however, I propose—in spite of introducing possibly tiresome detail—to emphasise certain features of our work which constitute, I believe, a factor of uniqueness in investigations of this nature. If a narration of the kind I have embarked upon is worth the telling, and—which is more to the point—worth the consideration of others who are seeking the truth, no apology should be necessary for treating the matter with all seriousness.

#### RESULTS WITH CONSCIOUSNESS OF MEDIUMS NORMAL.

In the first place, the two mediums upon whom the circle had to depend for phenomena (B. and my wife) were never, at any moment of their mediumship, in any other state of consciousness than that in which all of us, ordinary mortals, function in our daily waking life. There was no appearance of trance condition, nor anything remotely resembling it; we were all, the mediums most certainly included, in possession of complete physical consciousness all the time; fully aware of everything going on around us—possibly, more than ordinarily alert and vigilant. This, as far as is humanly possible, disposes of the question of hallucination.

#### KEYNOTE OF THE CIRCLE.

Next, I desire to emphasise the fact of the intimate personal knowledge all members of the circle had of each other. The importance of this—for our work, as well as for the justly suspicious critic—cannot be exaggerated, as it ruled out entirely all fear of fraud and trickery on the part of our mediums, and of all the other members of the circle, and assured to us that any results we might obtain, if in themselves worthy of the consideration of thinking persons, would demand some more elevated form of criticism than that which appears to content persons who approach the subject from the standpoint of, say, Mr. McCabe or Mr. Maskelyne.

#### CIRCLE CONDITIONS.

Having in view the foregoing, and its special significance, it was decided at my request that we should carry on our work in complete darkness. I had—among others—two special reasons for suggesting this method: (1) I am satisfied (dogmatic as this may seem, I cannot explain my grounds of belief here, as that would entail a dissertation upon questions entirely foreign to my present purpose of merely stating facts) that light, and especially white light, renders the exercise of psychic powers very difficult, and is frequently a bar to the production of phenomena; (2) I suggested darkness as an additional means of keeping a check upon our results.

My reasons were these: I was fairly certain that the only kind of phenomena we could expect to get—considering the equipment for investigation possessed by the circle—would take the form of messages by automatic writing. Now, it is an undeniable fact that *true* automatic writing must be writing by the hand of a person which is not only produced independently of the volition of the person to whom the hand belongs, but is actually writing framed by that person's hand, which, *in respect to the matter*, is entirely beyond the conscious control of the mind of the writer. I have seen much of it—by many people, in many places, extending over many years—and I have always felt (even when no possible ground for suspicion existed of the writer's entire good faith) that the final element of doubt as to the interference of the writer's mind with what was in process of being written, could not be eliminated so long as there remained the faintest chance of his (or her) physical eyes seeing the writing as the hand formed it. As most—if not all—automatic writing is done in the light, and is, there-

fore, open to the above objection, I was determined to see if it could be produced, with equal facility, in complete darkness. This, so far as I know, was an entirely new departure, and it is worth while enlarging upon some of the novel features it introduces. Let anyone take a blank sheet of foolscap and a pencil, and, sitting at a table in utter darkness, endeavour to cover that sheet with writing—lined correctly and spaced and at the ordinary pace of handwriting—as could easily be done in the light, and it will at once be apparent that an almost impossible task has been undertaken. Anyone can prove to his own satisfaction that *normally* the thing cannot be done. Now comes the next fact—which can be proved beyond question, if human testimony is worth anything—that from the outset of our circle work, from the first moment that his hand commenced to write, *in the dark*, B.'s automatic writing was not in the slightest degree impeded by the novel conditions. His hand would cover with writing—correctly lined and spaced, and at the pace of a *very* rapid penman—sheet after sheet of foolscap with the messages which were in process of being transmitted to us. All this, as I have said, in blank darkness, the light being used only at intervals for the reading of the messages, in order to put to the communicators such questions as might arise out of the messages.

After some preliminary efforts, which lasted in all for a matter of a few hours at our earliest meetings, and which, as we were told by our communicators, were to “get used” to an unfamiliar writing medium, my wife's hand began to share the work of transcribing messages, and from the moment it got into swing proceeded to do precisely as I have already described in the case of the hand of B.

(To be continued.)

#### CURRENT ITEMS.

The Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, who occasionally contributes the “Queer Story” to “Truth”—a long-standing feature of that journal—has a notable contribution to the series in the issue of 11th inst. It is entitled “The Medium's Marriage,” and tells of a lady medium who is courted by an artistic young fellow who, although he despises Spiritualism, is enraptured by the lady. The wedding takes place, but at the close of the ceremony the bridegroom vanishes mysteriously. Later it is discovered that he had committed suicide on the previous evening. It was his materialised spirit which had gone through the ceremony!

The “Northampton Echo” of the 9th inst. prints a report of an able address on Spiritualism delivered by Mrs. Alice Jamrach, the well-known London medium, at the Vaudeville Cinema, Northampton, on the previous Sunday. The address was followed by successful clairvoyant descriptions by the speaker.

A “ghost” at Tooting, of which highly embellished stories were told by popular rumour, turned out on investigation to be merely a prankish boy, according to the “Streatham News” of the 6th inst. It seems that the lad was in the habit of running about in the churchyard at night. He had even made his bed there for several nights—a queer freak. The boy himself was “not frightened of ghosts.”

The decease of Lord Kitchener's sister, Mrs. Frances Emily Jane Parker, recalls the fact of her intense conviction that her famous brother did not perish in the vessel which was supposed to be conveying him to Russia, but was still alive and probably a prisoner in Germany. We believe that Mrs. Parker was interested in psychical research, but to what extent we are unaware.

The Panacea Society, which is an outcome of the Joanna Southcott movement, reports that its Free Healing campaign is making extraordinary progress; that it has treated some 6,000 patients in all parts of the world, and that thousands of cures have been effected. All the healing is carried out by post and is entirely free. Particulars are to be obtained from the Society by letter at 46, Ebury Street, S.W.

It is interesting to note—according to a recent issue of “The National Spiritualist” (Chicago)—that in the case of a woman charged with fortune telling, the judge said, “I concede that Spiritualism is a religion and the court is not questioning the National Spiritualist Association or its religion, but is trying the woman for fortune telling.”

MISS FLORENCE MORSE.—It is gratifying to learn that Miss Florence Morse is now out of hospital and making rapid progress towards recovery. She expects to resume her active work early next month.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## A TELEPATHIC DREAM?

SIR,—May I give an experience between a person awake and another one sleeping? I dreamt that a friend of mine in Australia was suffering from a bad headache, while packing up for a journey. I was further under the impression that she had come to London without visiting me, and that sponge bags and hats were in a measure her immediate objects of interest. I quote from a letter received from her the other day:—

"Your dream, dear, was most wonderfully true. As it happens, that particular day and time I can place exactly. The idea of my going to England and not seeing you is, of course, ridiculous . . . but at the hour you were dreaming of me I had a terrible headache, and I was packing Sylvia's and my things to go up to Beaconsfield. We were having an argument over sponge bags, and I was trying on everybody's hat in turn to find one I could knock about in there. So you had the headache, packing, sponge bags, and hat, correct at the actual hour, 3 p.m."

Is this an evidence of telepathy, or did I travel to Toorak, Melbourne, in my sleep?

ALICIA AMY LEITH.

10, Clorane Gardens, Hampstead.

## M. CAMILLE FLAMMARION AND HUMAN SURVIVAL

SIR,—Please excuse my trespassing on your space so soon again, and allow me to say a few words in favour of M. Camille Flammarion's conception of Jewish theology and ethics.

I see that most of the Rev. Walter Wynn's references speak of "angels" and supernatural phenomena generally, and no one doubts that the ancient Hebrews believed in their (tribal) God, in the existence of a spiritual world, and of angels as messengers to man.

What they do not seem to have believed in was human survival of death.

Let anyone who doubts this read, or read again, very carefully, the *Fourteenth Chapter of Job*, especially verses 10, 12 and 21, where the whole Hebrew conception of human life and destiny is eloquently and poetically rendered.

Moreover, the whole moral of Job, as a poem, is that rewards and punishments are dealt out to man exclusively in this world.

The conceptions of the Jews in ancient times resemble singularly those of Professor Charles Richet, who fully believes in the possibility of the existence of a spiritual world, inhabited by immaterial beings, who communicate occasionally with mankind. But he thinks that the human intelligence and soul are so bound up with, and so dependent on, the human brain, that the survival of man is an impossibility.

I think that many recent operations on the human brain, especially during and since the war, show that Dr. Richet's view is erroneous; but that does not concern the question in hand.

In the times of Jesus one of the principal Jewish sects, the Sadducees, believed neither in the immortality of the soul nor in the resurrection. The Pharisees, on the contrary, believed in the resurrection from the dead (a belief which was probably imported from Egypt); but they did not believe in survival in the spiritualistic sense of a revival of consciousness immediately or shortly after death. Many Christians do not appear to me to believe in it either. The principal branch of the Christian faith, however, the Roman Catholic Church, does believe in this, as Purgatory is a *conscious* state and not a state of latent faculties awaiting survival. It is, in fact, a spirit world.—Yours, etc.,

La Pavillon, Mauze,

C. J. HANS HAMILTON.

Deux Sevres, France.

## AN EXPERIENCE WITH THE OUIJA BOARD.

SIR,—Some few years since I went with two friends to spend a week-end with the G.'s, whose beautiful country home was not far from Baltimore. Our prospective hostess—who was unknown to me save through correspondence—was deeply interested in psychic questions, and had suggested by letter that, together, we might be able to get some messages through the Ouija Board.

Although for some twenty years and more I have been able to write automatically I have never got messages through in conjunction with another person, and before starting upon my journey I received a communication stating that I should not be able to do so then.

Notwithstanding this, upon the evening of our arrival—having left the gentlemen of our party to their cigars—we sat, three women, chatting in our hostess's cosy boudoir. On the proposal being made that we should try "Ouija," I consented to do so, although assuring the others that the board would most certainly not write for me.

Placing it upon a table between us, our hostess and I seated ourselves, while the third member of our party took a pencil and paper to note down the results. For some time there was no sign of life at all; then slowly, laboriously, the little conductor moved toward the alphabet, spelling the words: "T-h-i-s-i-s-t-o-o-s-l-" as it touched the letter "l" the sentence: "This is too slow for anything" was given directly to my mind, and at the same time Ouija made a dash for the word "Yes," and there stood stationary.

"You see, I cannot write!" I pleaded; but despite this ill-success both friends begged me to try again, and I, though reluctantly, consented to do so.

Placing our finger-tips upon the board it stood for a moment motionless, then with a curious *hump* lifted itself up on edge, pressing in so doing *against* our fingers, until finally, turning upon its back, it fell with its two feet and the pencil pointing straight up in the air, lying there motionless, while I, of course, saw that it was useless for me to try further.

It would be of interest to know a scientist's explanation of this matter. Our hands having been on the top of the board, it was utterly impossible for us to have raised it; and yet it turned itself completely over and lay there flat upon its back.

And because of this experience I should say, most emphatically, that there is something in the Ouija Board, even though its reasoning force be proved by so slight a fact as its refusing to write for one who has not the gift of communicating in that manner.—Yours, etc.,

SOPHIE RADFORD DE MEISSNER,

Author of "Old Naval Days" (Henry Holt & Company).  
1524, 31st Street, Washington, D.C.

## THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE.

SIR,—Everyone must be aware of the great upheaval in the thinking world just now, and we want all the helpers we can get to work, each one up to full capacity, in the great movement that has human progress for its aim.

Might I be allowed to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation of Mr. H. V. Osborn's generous reference to my own small contribution in the shape of a psychic and fiction library; more especially as he has his own bookstall at his meetings at 66, Chancery Lane.

I think all the enterprises intended to help in the great uplift need all the sympathy and friendliness available to enable the work to be carried on in its many branches, and in the efforts made to meet the requirements of every variety of temperament. Most movements in this direction are begun in quite small and humble ways, and are more often than not hampered by lack of funds and accommodation, and therefore the need is all the more acute. Nevertheless, where the definite offer of service has been made—and I believe nearly all societies and public works are based on this—there is always support and co-operation from helpers on both sides of life. The long, patient and often unrecognised efforts of the pioneers are like seeds that lie hidden in the darkness of the earth, perhaps to be reaped by another generation.

Mr. Osborn's letter is just one instance of the instinct of fellowship which prevails where the foundation stone is the ideal of unselfish service. He made one small mistake, however, in my address, which is Fulwood House, 33a, High Holborn, adjoining Chancery Lane Tube Station, and not Holborn Tube.—Yours, etc.,

ETHEL KNOTT.

## REV. G. VALE OWEN AT THE COUNTY HALL.

On Sunday evening last at the Spiritualist Community Services in the County Hall, all seats were filled long before the advertised hour of starting. The doors were closed and many for a time were denied admission. A little later they were allowed to enter and take up positions along the edges of the dais and other odd places about the hall.

THE REV. G. VALE OWEN spoke on the "Rationale of Prayer," taking for his text St. John iv., 23-24 ("God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth"). To speak of the rationale of prayer might seem to reduce it from a spiritual to a scientific basis. But teachers of religion had too long relied on what was called theology. Since the Copernican theory came into the schools science had progressed, while theology had remained more or less static. While science had asked questions and demanded answers, the Church had been content with theology. That was why there were empty churches to-day.

Had they ever reasoned out how their prayers got from this material universe to the next universe of spirit? To send a letter, a telegram, or a radiogram they had to comply with the conditions. For a prayer message to reach its destination it must be realised that as God was a Spirit, so those who worshipped Him must worship in spirit. Prayer was a spiritual appeal to the whole angelic world for co-operation.

MR. F. BLIGH BOND presided.

## LIGHT,

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"LIGHT" proclaims a belief in the existence and life of the spirit apart from, and independent of, the material organism, and in the reality and value of intelligent intercourse between spirits embodied and spirits discarnate. Its columns are open to a full and free discussion, its only aim being, in the words of its motto, "Light! More Light." But the Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by correspondents or contributors.

### "SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY."

Under the above title "English Mechanics" of February 6th publishes an article by Mr. W. S. Rogers, who offers us a "review of the rival claims, and a tentative suggestion."

Mr. Rogers observes that:—

This subject has provoked so much controversy between its exponents and the sceptics that it may be worth while impartially to examine the claims of each side to see whether or not it is possible to arrive at the truth.

He then refers to Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's book, "The Phenomena of Materialisation," and its great mass of evidence which is not to be easily dismissed; and touches on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's popular little book, "The Case for Spirit Photography."

Mr. Rogers is struck at the outset by the fact that Dr. Schrenck-Notzing clearly states that he does not attribute the phenomena to spirit agency, but that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, on the other hand, is fully committed to the spirit hypothesis. At such a stage of the investigation this consideration might well be left out of account; it is so clear that in this matter the investigator should proceed by consecutive steps. The first question is whether the phenomena occur—whether they are facts. The conclusion to be drawn from the facts can be left for later decision.

Mr. Rogers, reviewing some of the cases, refers to the Traill-Taylor lecture reported in the "English Mechanics" for October 3rd, 1924, and to the statement that Traill-Taylor, while convinced of the reality of supernormal photography, "came to believe more firmly in the materialisation or pictorial projection of human thoughts as the cause of the phenomena more than the intervention of disembodied spiritual beings."

The critic then proceeds to the question of the fairy photographs, which to him support the idea that psychic photographs are materialised thought pictures. He finds further support for this idea in the Schrenck-Notzing photographs.

It is worth pointing out, however, that the Schrenck-Notzing photographs hardly come into the same category as what are known as psychic photo-

graphs, since these were photographs of objective phenomena, whereas the average psychic photograph is an impression on the photographic plate of an appearance not recorded by the physical eye.

Mr. Rogers proceeds:—

What now is called for is a really earnest and scientific investigation into the phenomena of materialisation, which well might start from the hypothesis herein stated. Provided the investigators were trained observers free from any taint of Spiritualism, they might be trusted to establish once and for all whether or not the so-called materialisations are genuine phenomena, and, if so, they might then proceed to further investigations with a view to discovering the natural laws under which they are manifest. I have little doubt but what the result of such an investigation would be such as to dispose of the claims of the Spiritists that the phenomena are engineered by their friends "on the other side."

The idea of a materialised thought picture may, with our present knowledge, seem fantastic and contrary to the accepted views of psychologists and others, but many fantastic ideas eventually have proved true, of which we have many examples before us, for example wireless.

We welcome Mr. W. S. Rogers' article, passing over indulgently his thrusts at "Spiritism" as of no consequence. It is clear that he has a great deal more to learn on the subject, and might do well to refer to some of the investigators who have given many years to the experiment and study of a subject which has for so long fought an apparently hopeless battle for recognition. It is pretty evident now that the tide has turned and that even the unsympathetic observers of the subject are beginning to realise that there is something in it. A clear advance has been made from the old position in which the matter was dismissed in wholesale fashion as the outcome of imposture or delusion. It is possible that the matter was presented to the public in the wrong way, and that it would have been better (as Miss Scatcherd has long maintained) to have started from some such initial idea as the possibility of photographing human radiations, which would have brought the matter into the scientific purview in what would be regarded as an acceptable form. The rest would follow as the investigators gained in knowledge and experience. It would simply be putting the matter in graduated form instead of asking the sceptic to swallow a large proposition in one gulp!

### THE COMING UNITY.

In a lecture before the Royal Society of Arts, Sir Ernest Rutherford, O.M., F.R.S., expresses the view that energy can be obtained from the atom, and, commenting on the lecture, Sir Oliver Lodge said that the lecture showed the possibility of building up atoms in the laboratory. This question of atoms, electrons and the ether is becoming a matter of increasing interest to intelligent Spiritualists, for it seems to touch more and more closely the discoveries made in scientific psychical research. There seem to be parallel lines of enquiry—that of material science and that of psychic science—and we have observed of late that even un-instructed observers are beginning to suspect the connection. For there is a connection, however elusive it may seem at present. Some distinguished scientists who have taken the question of psychical research into their consideration, have, we believe, found some curious analogies. Nor should we forget the theory that seems now to be well on its way to being proved to be a fact, that the spiritual body is really an etheric body. Science is gradually approaching the region of the finer forces, and we look forward confidently to the day when there will be a unification of discoveries, since the physical side of things seems to glide imperceptibly to a point at which its connection with the psychic and the spiritual is being made clear.

## SIDELIGHTS.

## Selected Items from the Magazine and Newspaper Press.

From the "Manchester Guardian's" report of a recent lecture by the Rev. G. Vale Owen at Houldsworth Hall we take the following:—

Mr. Owen said that in the South Spiritualism was taking a firm hold upon the people. Sometimes, in fact, they felt it was spreading too fast and getting out of hand. But in the North they were up against great odds, for there were very few people in this part of the country who were earnest believers.

The lecturer warned his audience against mere dabbling in Spiritualism:—

It should either be gone into seriously or left alone. He did not advise anyone to take up the subject if they were cowards. It was a high venture that needed stout hearts. But he exhorted those who did take up the study to observe four rules—prayer, patience, humility, and common sense.

He said that humility of the heart was essential, and warned his hearers against "spiritual swelled head." If the four rules were observed, contended Mr. Owen, no student of Spiritualism could go wrong. A good purpose and reverent heart would be born from them.

Mr. Shaw Desmond, in the "South Wales Daily News," begins an article on "Is Faith-healing Fact?" by stating "an unchallengeable fact":—

That fact is that there are in England to-day hundreds of medical men, from eminent Harley and Wimpole Street specialists, some of whom I know personally or have interviewed, to general practitioners, who are profound believers in the direct effect of "faith-healing" and in the power of "faith" as a healer of disease, but who are mortally afraid of ridicule or of being dubbed "charlatans," and who therefore largely keep their knowledge to themselves.

One of the most famous of the Wimpole Street specialists who habitually use faith-healing in one or other form, laid before Mr. Desmond, some time ago, a long series of successful cures accomplished in this way by himself. M. Emile Coué gave him many striking demonstrations of his popular method:—

M. Coué emphasised to me that his treatment had nothing to do with will power. The slightest suggestion of *force* is fatal. The mind has to be held passive, which means receptive. In other words, only the *imagination* and not the *will* is to be used. We all know that the power of suggestion is paramount. A common example is that if we say over and over again to ourselves something which is not true, we will in many cases after a time come to believe it ourselves. Tell a sick man that he is looking well, and instantly he will feel better. Tell a healthy man that he is looking ill, and instantly he begins to feel that there must be something wrong with him.

Like the poor, the problem of the ether is always with us. We all know what Sir Oliver Lodge's attitude is, and how Einstein turns his back on it. The Secretary of the Royal Society, Mr. J. H. Jeans, in the sixteenth Kelvin lecture delivered before the Institution of Electrical Engineers, on "Electric Forces and Quanta," considered the question whether the ether may be regarded as fact or fiction. The following is from the "Morning Post" report of Mr. Jeans' lecture:—

## THE NEW CONCEPTION.

Science is still unable to give a definite answer to the question, "Does an ether exist?" One might be confident that if an ether existed it must be something very different from the Maxwell-Faraday ether. It must probably be thought of as a four-dimensional structure, and must be more subjective than the Maxwell-Faraday ether. Each person must carry his own ether about with him, extending through all space and all time, much as in a shower of rain each observer carried his own rainbow about with him. Whether such a structure, if it existed, ought to be called an ether others must decide.

The "Express and Star" (Wolverhampton) gives a half-column report of a lecture at Shrewsbury by Mr. Hope, of Crewe, on "Psychic Photography." The lecture was illustrated by many lantern slides. Mr. Hope said it had taken him nineteen years to gather the pictures he had to show. An "extra" was recognised by a member of the audience as the portrait of his father, the only one in existence.

In one case Mr. Hope showed the photo of a Darlaston lady, the "extra" being her husband, whom he supposed she had been told she would never see again, neither here

nor in the hereafter, simply because he had passed away as an agnostic. Lots of "extras" were never recognised, he said, and hundreds of plates were failures.

A special dispatch to "The Daily Telegraph" of the 6th inst. on "The End of the World" mania, says:—

In several American towns lately suicides are reported because of the forecast of the end of the world. Six Cleveland girls have anticipated the Day of Judgment by taking their own lives since Feb. 1st, according to Dr. Luckey, head of the local psychological clinic. To-day in New York William Smith appealed to a magistrate for aid in getting his money back on a house he had sold. Smith admitted that he had sold it voluntarily to help the "Apostle" Reid, but said he had now revised his ideas regarding the end of the world. The magistrate advised Smith to consult a lawyer.

## THE "MARGERY" CASE.

## MR. DINGWALL REPORTS ON HIS EXPERIENCES.

From a copy of the "Boston Herald" of February 1st we learn that Mr. Eric Dingwall, Research Officer of the English S.P.R., delivered an address at the Jordan Hall, Boston, on the 31st ult.

From a lengthy report of this address we take the following points:—

Mr. Dingwall is stated to have testified that:—

A cold clammy, dark brown or grayish ectoplasmic substance exuded from the medium's mouth and head and slowly extended itself to ring bells and flip papers on the floor from a near-by table.

Both Professor William McDougall, professor of psychology at Harvard, and the Rev. Dr. Elwood Worcester, rector of Emanuel Church, who were present at the tests, felt the mass of matter, witnessed its exhibitions of physical force, and heard the impact as it flapped against the table top. The verbal description was reinforced by a number of flashlight photographs of "Margery" with the ectoplasm flowing from her body, which were taken at the time by R. W. Conant.

Dr. McDougall, who presided and who took an active part in the procedure throughout the evening, introduced Mr. Dingwall as perhaps the best qualified expert in the world to talk on mediumship. After referring to his eight years of study at Cambridge University, and his position as chief research officer for the English society, Dr. McDougall added that the speaker was also a fully qualified magician. He closed with a warning to his hearers not to place a necessary spiritualistic interpretation on the phenomena they would hear described.

Mr. Dingwall commenced his address with a brief account of the history of Psychic Research and an explanation of the technical definitions used in the work, and then proceeded to his preliminary report of the "Margery" case.

Referring to the "Scientific American" Committee, Mr. Dingwall declared that from the first they had been attended with "an evil odour." The early articles of the publication had dealt a hard blow to Psychic Research in general, and the work of the Committee did not improve matters. The body lacked organisation, he continued, and its proceedings soon became chaotic. The séances were treated as though they were a vaudeville show, and it seemed to be generally assumed that it was the business of the medium to amuse her investigators.

Incidentally, he paid his respects to Houdini by referring to him as an individual "whose knowledge of the art of self-liberation is as profound as his ignorance of the methods of scientific investigation." This phrase was greeted with prolonged applause.

During the meeting a series of remarkable flashlight photographs were thrown on the screen. They showed Mrs. Crandon in various postures with the ectoplasmic matter exuding from her mouth or from the side of her head.

As mentioned, Dr. McDougall and Dr. Worcester contributed statements recording their own impressions and experiences, and the lecturer answered a number of questions that were put to him at the close.

## PSYCHIC INVESTIGATIONS: A MODEL OF PRECISION.

We direct special attention to the series commencing on page 87. Rarely have we seen a record of experiments so carefully and scientifically conducted, and so utterly convincing in the proofs obtained. Mr. T. A. R. Purchas, of Johannesburg, to whom we are indebted for the account, deserves high credit for the manner in which he conducted the investigations and the clearness and precision of his records. We are sure that all serious students of psychical research will on reading the statement share our appreciation of a document that should be of permanent value.

## FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SEEKER.

CONDUCTED BY F. E. LEANING.

## VI.—TELEPATHY AND DREAMS.

Although we all admit in these days the reality of ideas being transferred from one mind to another, it is of interest to come across spontaneous instances in which the troublesome possibility of coincidence is fairly ruled out. The experiment of inducing dreams in a sleeping brain, by a waking one, has been effectually carried out, but in the case which came to my knowledge within the last month no such attempt was being made. It concerns a mother and daughter intimately known to me.

On the evening of the third of January Mrs. Lambert (pseudonym) was reading an article by Lady Archibald Campbell on Scottish Folklore, in which many charming descriptions and anecdotes occurred. One of them was about a girl nursing a dying woman, and running out of the lonely little Highland hut to get some friendly help because she thought the end had come. As she opened the door there seemed to sweep in a "holovohoroe," a "scourthering thrum with music and much laughing" in the air, the sense of a crowd of merry-making invisible creatures. Seeing through the chinks a brilliant light in the room she had just left, the girl peeped in wondering, and saw the whole rout of fairy creatures leaping and dancing and the sick woman with them. But when she went in, only the quiet peat-glow lit the shadows and all were gone. Only the patient entirely and wonderfully recovered. Elsewhere in the article, which was very long, several accounts of brownies were given. The daughter was a girl in her twenties who slept in the inner of two rooms and had been keeping her room for some days with indisposition, so that the communicating door between her and her mother's room was left open. On the following morning when early tea had been served to both of them, Mrs. Lambert remarked without any preamble: "How nice it would be to have a brownie. They really exist, you know—they've been seen." At this point her daughter, also speaking for the first time, replied, "Yes, I dreamed of one last night."

In the account of her dream she had been in some big building with many people assembled in the chief rooms, and on going into her own little room she had found a brownie, with a tunic "the colour of wet maple leaves," close-fitting trunk-hose a little lighter, shoes of a pointed darker-hued shape, etc. She ran back to the main hall crying out, "There's a man in my room—a man!" for she seemed to be only a child in the dream. "They laughed," she added, "there was a gale of laughter at this child (herself) being so upset by 'a man' in her room."

The setting of this dream could be accounted for to some extent by reminiscences of school-days which she had been talking over, but the unexpected element of the brownie and the "gale of laughter" came straight out of the mother's mind.

I have read of an even better case of a mother's evening reading of an incident in the newspaper getting into the dream of her little son, who slept in a cot in her room. It concerned some hunting for treasure, and certain exciting details about the finding, of just the sort which would take the fancy of a child, so that of all the mass of available telepathic material in the adult mind this was probably the most easily transmissible. Undoubtedly children, like animals, are more open and susceptible to psychic influence than the pre-occupied adult, and the selection of some elements rather than others will be the measure of the child's proclivities. At a little private home circle, the little four-year-old son asked his mother one morning who the strange men were who had come and looked at him the night before. He slept quite far away from the room where sittings were held, but it was true that other *soi-disant* communicators had come to the table, as well as the relative who usually did so, on the night in question. It is fortunate for such children when they are not born to ignorant non-psychic or anti-psychic parents.

THE BROMLEY CIRCLE OF PSYCHIC STUDY are holding a series of meetings to proclaim the truths of Spiritualism at the Public Library, High Street, Bromley. The forthcoming meetings are as follows:—February 26th, Mr. Horace Leaf; March 12th, Mr. R. J. Lees; March 26th, Mr. Ernest Meads; April 2nd, Mr. Harry Boddington. The meetings take place at 8 p.m.

ARRIVAL OF VALIANTINE.—Mr. George Valiantine, the American medium made famous by Mr. Dennis Bradley's "Towards the Stars," arrived in London last Saturday for a stay of some weeks, during which he is to give twelve sittings under the most rigid test-conditions for the Society for Psychical Research. Mr. Dennis Bradley and Mr. Hannen Swaffer will represent the outside public on the committee formed to carry out the arrangements, the sittings of which will, of course, be private.

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

An action recently heard in the Chancery Division was concerned with a patent fortune telling cup, in which the tea leaves were used for purposes of divination. It was the subject of some humorous comments by the judge, who, however, did not refer to the connection between tea-cup and sorcery.

In his essay on Swedenborg, which I was reading some time ago, Emerson makes special mention of a Mr. Wilkinson, a "philosophic critic" who had translated Swedenborg's works from the Latin a hundred years after the great seer's death. This was Dr. Garth Wilkinson, who about 1845 carried out the translation, with the assistance of the Rev. Augustus Clissold and Mr. Strutt, and who was one of the founders of the Swedenborg Association.

It is now many years ago that at a meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance I was especially impressed by one of the speakers, an aged gentleman, who I thought bore a curious resemblance to Swedenborg. I was told that this was Garth Wilkinson, the great Swedenborgian, a man of ponderous intellect. I have forgotten now the tenour of his remarks, but they struck me as very profound. He was a kind of link with the past, for he was born long before the death of George IV. and was writing philosophical treatises in the early years of Queen Victoria.

"Discussion and inquiry do little more than feed temperament" was his sage remark to the Dialectical Society's committee of investigation when they applied to him for an opinion. He had many sittings with D. D. Home, and was, no doubt, well satisfied with the reality of psychic phenomena. A rare little book of his once came into my hands. It was a volume of the strangest and quaintest poems I have read. They were quite unearthly and indeed he called them "Improvisations from the Spirit."

He wrote them without using his conscious mind, and yet there were difficult and ingenious rhymes and whimsical fancies with strange flashes of wisdom. There is a remarkable poem on death omens as hints given by Nature that it is time to prepare for transition and also to

teach our race  
That even death's face  
With stern-sweet order shines.

The whole book only occupied him about fifty hours—the poems "came through" in a mysterious way and the results were as new and curious as though he had no part in producing them.

The "Daily Telegraph," in some remarks on the "End of the World" craze which had such tragic results in America lately refers to a story which used to be told by the late Sir Frank Lockwood. A Yorkshire prophet continually announced the approaching end of all things. People did not believe him, for he was always being proved wrong. But the local coal merchants were affected. Their business fell off after one of his prophecies. The canny Yorkshire folk "did not expect the world to end, but if it did they would not be caught with a stock of coal!"

This recalls the story of an end-of-the-world prophet who flourished in mid-Victorian days. He had a large following of credulous folk, but his reputation suffered a severe shock when it leaked out that a few days before the date which he had assigned for the final disaster, he renewed the lease of his house for twenty-one years.

I occasionally mention some of the curious coincidences that happen in our office. In a paragraph in the "Daily News" recently an example of a similar kind of episode is mentioned. The writer of the paragraph says:—

I was in a publisher's office this week when one of the partners suddenly went off at a tangent from the subject of conversation to talk of the Psychic Bookshop Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is starting. Almost immediately the telephone-bell rang, and a clerk from downstairs announced that Sir Arthur himself had just arrived at the publisher's office. There had been no previous appointment.

The incident is given as an instance of "thought transference."

D. G.

## "DIRECT VOICE" PHENOMENA.

BY E. W. DUXBURY.

It is sometimes useful, for the clarification of ideas, to assume a definite negation, and then to study the logical consequences arising therefrom.

Let us therefore assume, for the sake of argument, that spirit-intervention plays no part in the production of "direct voice" phenomena, and then see to what conclusions we shall be logically constrained.

We shall first be arrested by the possibility that no real phenomena occur at all, that the dozen sitters assembled in the dark room with the door locked merely imagine that phenomena occur which in fact do not occur, in other words, that they are all the victims of subjective hallucination. If this be regarded as an unsatisfactory explanation (and few who have had any actual experience of the phenomena would care to adopt it) then, on the assumption we have made, the real phenomena which actually occur, the "lights" and touches, the varying voices, and the ideas expressed, must all be due to the action of the organisms of the dozen human beings assembled in the room.

On this basis, many sceptics will provide ready explanations. The "lights" and touches they will explain as due to clever sleight-of-hand on the part of some person present (probably the medium) and the varying voices as due to skilful ventriloquism or the aid of accomplices. To these explanations it could be objected that the sittings are being held regularly for different sitters several times a week, and that the names of intending sitters are not communicated in advance to the medium. Yet in spite of this, certain sitters, who are by no means unintelligent, state that they have received voice-communications referring correctly to private facts connected with themselves, which it would offend the laws of probability to assume were all known to the medium's conscious mind.

Our sceptical friends would then probably feel that ventriloquism or collusion, alone or combined, would scarcely account for the expression of these specific ideas, and would probably fall back on highly theoretical explanations to account for them, such as "mind-reading" and "subconscious mentation." I say "highly theoretical," because these terms are often used in a loose and popular manner, which transcend the limits within which they have been shown to have a real operation by scientific observation and experimentation. To the extent to which they thus transcend these limits and represent merely the speculations of the imagination, their use as an explanation of actual phenomena infringes scientific principles and constitutes unscientific thinking. It is obviously unscientific to postulate as the explanation of obscure phenomena something which has never been proved to have any existence in human experience. In this respect spirit agency is on a different footing, since it has been demonstrated to have intervened frequently in human experience, and lies at the root of nearly all the great religions. Within their legitimate limits the terms "thought-transference," "telepathy," and the "subconscious mind" are based on definite scientific "data" of observation and experiment, but these limits are often extended "ad libitum" for controversial purposes by those who have little or no knowledge of scientific psychology, but who imagine that they are importing a greater scientific spirit into the question by making use of these terms.

Another sceptical class would perhaps maintain that the phenomena which actually occur are solely due to the "double" or "astral body" (the term matters little) of the medium, which exercises supernormal powers. This explanation was made use of by the German philosopher, von Hartmann, in his criticism of the spirit theory, but he tied himself into an intellectual knot in the process, as Aksakof, in his reply in "Animisme et Spiritisme," had little difficulty in showing.

The objection to this theory as regards direct voice phenomena would be that the medium is frequently not in the trance state (the condition in which supernormal powers are most readily exercised) but comments on what is happening in his or her usual voice and manner, and, so far as can be judged, with his or her usual mentality. This constitutes one of the most striking features of direct voice phenomena.

It will thus be seen that on the assumption with which we started, that spirit-intervention plays no part in the production of direct voice phenomena, we are forced to adopt some half-dozen different explanatory theories to account for the phenomena which actually occur, since an explanation which might suit one phase of the phenomena would prove recalcitrant to another. Such a multiplication of hypotheses to account for a specific and connected type of actual phenomena is highly repugnant to the principles and method of science, the great aim and ambition of which is to attain to a unitary explanation of phenomena generally.

## SEVENTEEN ELEMENTARY FACTS CONCERNING SPIRITUALISM.

1. Spiritualism is the science or art of communion with spirits.
2. A spirit is either an intelligent being somehow produced in the unseen, or a man, woman, or child promoted out of "this muddy vesture of decay."
3. A Spiritualist is a believer in the continued existence of the spirit after what is called "death," and the possibility of communicating with it.
4. Spirit-life is intensely real. If the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is the highest being in the universe, it is a proper inference that a human spirit or ghost may be in a superior or more intense condition in the spirit-sphere than when a tenant of the earthly body.
5. Spirit-substances may be to spirit-beings as real as, or more real than, earth-substances are to earthly beings.
6. The earthly senses are extremely limited. So much so that, as one of our most thoughtful scientists said, "The glories of the New Jerusalem might surround us and we know it not."
7. The spirit-world is a world with a teeming population and with endless occupations. We know this because we send into it a constant stream of human beings, sensible and senseless, gracious and spiteful, sober and intemperate, young and old, the worn out and the very babe. It must be a busy and active world.
8. At least part of it must therefore be near and all about us, and not far away.
9. Heaven and hell, as all-inclusive and guarded places, are a delusion. A spirit freed from the body is literally free, held fast only by the laws of its sphere, and by the vital realities of the spirit-self, whether fair or foul, wise or foolish, hateful or lovable.
10. The Bible is one long record of spirit communications and experiences of every grade, from lowest and most foolish to highest and most wise; gradually rising in moral worth and spiritual purity, and culminating in the life and experiences of Jesus.
11. All such communications and experiences were in no sense miraculous. They were merely more or less unusual, but they occurred in harmony with laws which, so far as we can see, are as fundamental and as orderly as any that regulate the affairs of our material sphere.
12. It does not follow that because a communication comes from "the unseen," it is therefore from God, as a revelation. It may be from the latest dead loungee, as an amusement.
13. The unpleasantness of this suggestion is no argument against its validity. No miracle, and nothing arbitrary, happens at death. Death is only the out-marching of the spirit, and the unpleasantness of the suggestion that idle spirits may trifle with us is more than compensated for by the suggestion that education and advance must, with freedom, be open to all.
14. Modern Spiritualism is only a revival of phenomena and experiences that were well known in ancient times. But modern Spiritualism has the opportunity of guarding itself against the ancient delusion that every spirit which calls itself "God" is God, or that everything which is said to be from "Heaven" is from Heaven, or that every message which comes from the unseen is infallible.
15. Spiritual phenomena can, of course, be simulated, just as pewter shillings can be made; or self-seekers may trade upon them, just as other self-seekers may trade upon the Church. But that only suggests purity and care.
16. As an evidence of the existence of an unseen universe and of human immortality, Spiritualism is of priceless value, not because the communications that come are superlatively lofty, but because they come at all.
17. Finally, it is of the greatest possible importance to accustom ourselves to the fact that we neither see nor know everything, and that "the universe is more than one storey high."

## ASPIRATION.

(LINES WRITTEN ON READING A SONNET IN "LIGHT" ATTRIBUTED TO F. W. H. MYERS.)

God send us Solitudes wherein we grow  
 To Him more near, attuned to understand,  
 And Silences, where we most surely know  
 A Guardian Presence and a Guiding Hand.  
 God grant us fellowship with flower and tree,  
 And rapt communion with the changing skies,  
 And seasons that may set the spirit free  
 Of many a glint and gleam of Paradise.

But more and more, around the doors of sleep,  
 God give us dreams, and waken us, aware  
 Of that undying trust we come to keep  
 With such as walk in a diviner air,  
 And woo and win us for the Heavenly steep,  
 And, with us, tread the paths of praise and prayer.

—E. M. HOLDEN.

## "THE SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE."

BY E. WAKE COOK.

It would be unfair to our great literature to pass over lightly the remarkable work for which Mr. Oswald Murray is responsible. It hints at the Everest heights we have yet to ascend in our quest of truth. "The Spiritual Universe" and "The Process of Man's Becoming"\* form the crown of the philosophic part of our literature. They claim to be from a higher source than any previous communications from the other world; and to me they prove their claim. In former times they would have been regarded as the Esoteric part of the system, and Mr. Oswald Murray has confined his exposition to the philosophical few by his adherence to abstract philosophical terms. These terms are as exact as a diagram, but as bald to the ordinary reader, while a more pictorial representation would convey infinitely more. While these terms are terse as they are exact, yet they require constant repetition before they will remain in the memory.

These higher revelations appeal to me personally because my own thoughts were throwing out feelers in the same direction. I regard the whole system as an advance on even the magnificent work of Andrew Jackson Davis. It is larger and more compacted into unity of principle; although unity of principle was the most remarkable feature of A. J. Davis's glorious work.

Its first principle is that all is life and latent consciousness; and that a spark of the Divine is incarnated in matter for the purpose of developing self-consciousness. The whole Universe of Universes is composed of positive and negative principles; electricity and magnetism; male and female, and their union produces all things. The nuclid which descends into incarnation is an atom of the Infinite Self-Existent which is moulded and prepared for its descent by angelic birth. This is a notable idea. Here the highest joys come from union in perfect love, and resultant offspring; and it has seemed to me a break in continuity that these joys should not be repeated, or sublimated into transcendent ecstasy on the higher planes.

Another notable statement is that angel-hood consists of a dual unity. We cannot picture this as it is, something more real than when we speak of man and wife as one. This unity is temporally divided into male and female in the embodied personalities; and although this happened before self-consciousness was attained, we come into this world with a sense of incompleteness; and there is always a craving for one's complement, one's other half, which craving is the essence of love. But in searching for the other half we make those tragic mistakes which are revealed in the Divorce Court. Davis told us that each one would ultimately find his soul-mate—a most consoling thought when we see the tragic cross-purposes of love, and the single cursedness and starved half lives, to which so many are condemned. One object of the division into male and female is that each may gain diverse experiences, and when these rejoin in angel-hood they combine their experiences, and their consciousness. Only the experiences having real value are carried to the higher or inner stages. As they progress the consciousness of whole communities tends to coalesce, and they share the experiences and the knowledge of all others. There is boundless significance in this.

It was some glimmering of this, and the value of experiences, which gave me the clue to the real purpose of Life, and the consequent Purpose of Art, which enabled me to supply the missing chapter in the Philosophy of Art in my last book. In "Nature's Divine Revelations," Davis describes seven Spheres, but when in his later works he tried to locate them he was at a loss and imagined a habitable sphere in the Milky Way. The new system gives the spiritual centre of our solar system as the great goal to which through a myriad experiences we make our way. There we meet and share the knowledge and experiences of the inhabitants of all the other planets in our solar system. We thus take one step towards the Omniscient. Having exhausted through unthinkable periods of our time all that such a sublime Centre can give us we may then begin another pilgrimage towards the Sun-Centre of a still more spiritual solar system. This is the most satisfying revelation yet given.

The whole work is full of most stimulating revelations, which will delight the philosophic readers who like to anticipate the future of thought; but for the general reader we have a splendid body of teachers like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the Rev. G. Vale Owen and other brilliant lights who are more suited for the time, being more in touch with current thought. But our literature is enriched immeasurably by two such works as these transcendent revelations which Mr. Oswald Murray has so nobly and so ably brought from an inner circle of selected readers and given to the world.

## THE VALUE OF PHYSICAL PHENOMENA.

BY H. A. DALLAS.

In his admirable concluding article in the "Two Worlds," December 26th, Mr. Leslie Curnow points out the close relation between the physical phenomena of Spiritualism and the import of the communications. He says, "Phenomena are the base, the rock bottom of modern Spiritualism. It is obvious that they are only a starting point, but they meet the materialist on his own ground, and they convince him as nothing else would." This is very true, and it has always seemed to me that to depreciate the value of phenomena, to treat these as something to be apologised for, as experiences which would be better dispensed with altogether, shows a curious lack of insight. If it is true, as Mr. Dennis Bradley says, that "exhibitions of physical phenomena sicken intelligent students," the reason must be either because the student is not quite intelligent enough, or, because the circle in which he has witnessed the exhibition has not treated the phenomena in the right way. When phenomena are encouraged to satisfy curiosity and amuse the frivolous, they are, of course, misused. But it is not often, perhaps never, that they are thus employed by genuine Spiritualists.

The tendency to undervalue the physical is very widespread among believers in the supreme value of the spiritual. One sees it among theologians, more particularly modern Churchmen. These seem ready to discredit the writers of the Gospels rather than admit the objective facts to which they testify. There is an instance of this in an article in the December issue of the journal, "The Modern Churchman." It is the sort of article which tends to make sceptics, for the writer rejects any statements that do not support his opinion that the appearances of Christ after death were only visions, that the witnesses did not really hear and see and touch an objective form. Such a view practically whittles away the evidence of the Apostolic band and the women. The writer of the article believes in "a spiritual resurrection," but not in bodily manifestation. He is in a dilemma; knowing nothing of materialisations to which scientific men have recently borne such abundant testimony, he sees no alternative between a permanent resuscitation of the flesh and an almost complete discrediting of the last chapters of the Gospels, which claim to record the testimony of the chosen "witnesses": he chooses the latter course.

If modern Churchmen were rather more modern they would seriously study the evidence collected by psychical researchers, and they would find that well-attested facts occurring in our own time show a way out of their difficulties; moreover, they would be more capable than they are at present of guiding those who look to them for help. But they too often decline to do this.

Mr. Stanley De Brath, at my request, sent a very able article to the editor of "The Modern Churchman," pointing out how modern research corroborates the records of the appearance of Christ in bodily, tangible form, after His death. This article was rejected. If the more liberal journals which claim to be "modern" thus close the door upon Psychical Research, we cannot expect much from Church papers of any denomination.\*

This decision is the more surprising because Mr. De Brath's articles have been accepted by this journal in the past, and, also, because the particular article to which his was a reply is calculated to disturb the faith and perplex the minds of readers, and therefore it seems neither wise nor fair to refuse a presentation of the subject which supports the veracity and credibility of the New Testament writers.

THE LATE DR. GEORGE WARNE.—Dr. George Warne, to whose decease we briefly referred last week, passed away on the 22nd ulto. at a hospital in Chicago as a result of paralysis. He was in his 74th year and had occupied the Presidential Chair of the National Spiritualists' Association of the United States for seventeen years. "The Banner of Life" (Boston, Mass.) of February 7th contains some heartfelt appreciations of his life and work by Mrs. Minnie Meserve Soule and Mr. Louis Lisemer. Mrs. Soule also contributes some verses.

UNCANNY TALES.—An interesting collection of uncanny tales "from Daniel Defoe to Algernon Blackwood" is to be found in "Ghosts and Marvels" (Oxford University Press, 2s.). The selection, which has been made by V. H. Collins, has an introduction by Montague R. James. The stories are by masters in the craft of letters, and they are distinguished by atmosphere and thrill. It is only when we come to judge them by psychical standards that some of them show sawdust and tinsel. There is one brilliant exception, Mrs. Oliphant's moving tale, "The Open Door," which rings true in every line. It is a gem of its kind.—L. C.

\* Duckworth & Co. 8/6 and 3/6 respectively.

\* "The Guardian" has shown itself much more hospitable to Psychical Research recently.

REV. G. VALE OWEN'S LECTURE TOUR.  
FEBRUARY ENGAGEMENTS, 1925.

DATE.	TOWN OR DISTRICT.	HALL.	LOCAL ORGANISER.
Feb. 22	London.	Old County Hall.	Miss Phillimore.
" 23	"	"	"
" 24	"	"	"
" 25	Manchester.	Church of the New Age.	Mr. F. H. Clarke.

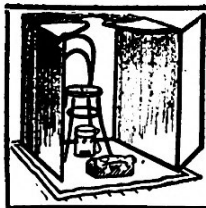
NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"Robert Owen: Co-operation versus Communism," a Play in Four Acts, and "Arcadia: The Bridal Mystery," Illustrated in One Act. By Rosamund Dale Owen (Mrs. Laurence Oliphant). Hollands & Son, Worthing.  
 "Cancer and Remedial Diet." By H. Reinheimer. Grevett & Co., Ltd., 119, Ewell Road, Surbiton. (2s. 6d.).  
 "Living Poets of Somerset" (a Somerset Anthology of Modern Verse, 1924). Edited by S. Fowler Wright. The Merton Press, Ltd., Westminster, S.W.1. (3s. 6d. net.)  
 "The Great Reveille." By D. S. Thomas. C. W. Daniel Co. (1s. net.)  
 "The Way of Attainment." By Sydney T. Klein. William Rider & Son, Ltd. (5s. net.)  
 "The Wolf and Other Stories." By M. A. Elwyn. Arthur H. Stockwell. (2s. 6d. net.)

SUNDAY'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

**Lewisham.**—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—February 22nd, 11.15, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. L. Brookman.  
 Wednesday, February 25th, 8, Mrs. Redfern.  
**Croydon.**—Harewood Hall, 96, High-street.—February 22nd, 11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Mr. F. Bligh Bond.  
**Camberwell.**—The Central Hall, High-street, Peckham.—February 22nd, 11, open circle; 6.30, Miss L. George.  
 Wednesday, 7.30, at 55, Station-road.  
**St. John's Spiritualist Mission, Woodberry-grove, North Finchley (opposite tram depot).**—February 22nd 7, Mrs. Balmer. February 26th, 8, Mr. Melton.  
**Shepherd's Bush.**—73, Becklow-road.—February 22nd, 11, public circle; 7, Mrs. Stephens. Thursday, February 26th, 8, —  
**Peckham.**—Lausanne-road.—February 22nd, 7, Lyceum Anniversary; L.L.D.C. speakers. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. A. Jamrach.  
**Bowes Park.**—Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (down side).—February 22nd, 11, Mr. Wm. Mooring; 7, Mr. H. Boddington. Wednesday, February 25th, 8, Mrs. M. Maunder.  
**Central.**—65-66, Chancery Lane, W.C.2 (close to Chancery Lane Tube Station).—February 20th, 7.30, Mrs. G. Davies. February 22nd, 7, Mr. H. J. Osborn and Mrs. M. Brownjohn.  
**St. Luke's Church of the Spiritual Evangel of Jesus the Christ, Queen's-road, Forest Hill, S.E.**—Minister: Rev. J. W. Potter. February 22nd, 6.30, Service, Holy Communion and Address. Healing Service, Wed., Feb. 25th, 7 p.m.

We learn that Mr. Robert Blatchford's new book will be called "More Things in Heaven and Earth," and will be published shortly by Methuen.



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