

LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS & PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way 457	Letters to the Editor 461
The Work of Spiritualism in the World. Dr. Joseph Maxwell at the Paris Congress 458	Human Wireless 462
An Italian Saint of To-Day 459	From the Lighthouse Window 463
In the Harmonial Library 460	Personal Notes from Paris 464
Pathetic Fancies 460	Messages from the Living 464
	For the Knowledge Seeker 465
	Rays and Reflections 465
	The Doctrine of Re-Embodiment 466

NOTES BY THE WAY.

LIGHT that makes things seen
 Makes some things invisible.
 —SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

LIFE AND EVIDENCE.

There is a passage in Mr. Hannen Swaffer's book, "Northcliffe's Return," which has arrested the attention of many readers. It is that which contains the message given by the spirit communicator, "Daniel," at the Potter circles. Here are some excerpts:—

There is one law and it does not proceed according to conditions on your side altogether. The law is that which is taught in life and not evidence. If you request evidence then you shall not receive it. If you request life then it is yours. . . . You cannot write down the evidences of life in words, because they are spiritual, and being spiritual they are beyond the physical and mundane. There is no evidence which can be truly complete. My words apply to every phase of mediumship. . . . If you want evidence of the spirit world make of yourself a saint, beautify your soul, uplift your nature, let true communion be your evidence.

This is an exalted counsel. It takes us right outside the region of scientific psychical research. It flaunts the persistent seeker of séance proofs. We are given a large inclusive truth in place of the shreds and patches so carefully accumulated and so frequently in dispute, but only a few can perceive and appreciate Daniel's saying. They will see that it is a true word. An advanced soul seeks first to gain life and then to communicate it to others. Yet arresting as is the message, we cannot accept it except as a comprehensive truth more applicable to the large issues of our subject than to the smaller ones. But on this point we shall have more to say in another place.

THE COMING OF TELEPATHY.

There is a law of life which ordains that the finer forces shall not come under the control of man until he is fit to be trusted with them. We see the operation of this law in the psychic realm in which all experiments conducted by the unfit end invariably in

confusion and disaster. Telepathy as a regular and guided process in human intercourse will infallibly come to pass and we may well proceed to investigate its possibilities. That will call for mental and moral fitness to a vastly greater extent than any of the discoveries which have preceded them, and it may well be that some of the greatest results will be achieved by those who with little knowledge of engineering and mechanics have made themselves acquainted with those psychic laws which we now realise to be most closely related to the spiritual evolution of mankind. "Impossible!" is the word we often hear when any idea of telepathy as a controlled process is discussed. That word need have no terrors for those who remember how it has been used for every invention and discovery in the past. "Difficult," perhaps—that is a word which has a true application, because we are going largely outside the realm of mechanics, into a region that is for the most part uncharted. We shall need not only science but imagination, not only skill but *sympathy*. That indeed is the magic word.

SCIENCE AND THE SOUL.

We still hear so much about the necessity for scientific investigation of psychic phenomena that we are moved to some further remarks on the question. It is not scientific to hold chance-medley circles in which the sitters are constantly changing and, when assembled are grouped in haphazard fashion without regard for the combination of the necessary psychic elements. We mean no reflection on the Valiantine circles because here there was a special purpose to be served and some of the rules had to be abrogated for the time. All the same the best evidences can rarely be obtained under such conditions. Rough and ready methods may be necessary at times, but they can never elicit the results to be achieved by a scientific study of the essentials. The old Spiritualists with all their shortcomings, who desired successful results had imagination enough to see that science is not a mere question of mechanical formulae. The soul—that "very fiery particle" as Byron described it—is not safely to be ignored. It is indeed not truly scientific to ignore it. Even the commercial men and the industrialists have found that psychology is an important thing in business. Indeed, they seem to pay more attention to it than some of our "scientific" psychical researchers.

TRUTH fails not; but her outward forms that bear
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime.
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain
 And is no more; drop like the tower sublime
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear
 His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
 Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

—WORDSWORTH.

DR. JOSEPH MAXWELL
ON
THE WORK OF SPIRITUALISM IN THE WORLD.
PAPER READ AT THE PARIS INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

Dr. Joseph Maxwell, a Judge of the Appeal Court of Bordeaux, contributed to the recent Spiritualists' International Congress in Paris a valuable paper which will be read with the utmost interest by English students. These latter may reserve their judgment regarding his views on reincarnation—a thorny point at the Congress, by the way, but they will agree that Dr. Maxwell is a great authority, whose opinions must command attention.

L. C.

Addressing his communication to M. Jean Meyer, Dr. Maxwell said:—

You have done me the honour to ask me to give you some communication for the Spiritualistic Congress. Although I do not share all your ideas, the movement which you support with such untiring devotion and such disinterested generosity appears to me to possess great social importance. I remember our conversation of a few months ago; you understand the important rôle of belief in the moral evolution of the individual and of societies; you deplore the absence of all ideal, all hypothesis even concerning the destiny of humanity and of living beings in general in the conceptions of the intellectual *élite* of our Western civilisation.

Persons who possess a religious faith do not suffer from this evil, for they have an ideal which is not limited to material experience founded on our imperfect senses; unfortunately, the principal religions have rigid forms and their dogmas are fixed. Every religion is the product of the human spirit, however divine its primitive inspiration may be. From the moment that it has assumed a definite form it loses all the plasticity indispensable to progress, then the march of humanity passes beyond the point at which the special religion has stopped, and the latter ceases to be in harmony with the more rapid progress of science and ethical ideas.

It appears that the profound trouble in human societies arises indeed from the discord between the great forms of religious sentiment and human progress. It follows from this that the rules of conduct for the individual and for society possess no certain basis or only an unsound one.

The old ideal no longer corresponds to the collective thought, which severely criticises dogmas incompatible with its conceptions. The dogmas have taken a precise, material, concrete form, and have lost the spirit which gave life to their symbolism.

Materialism, sanctified by the admirable progress of the 19th century in the knowledge of natural laws and their technical applications, has set its mark on the human mind, it has aimed to limit its researches to the study of phenomena, denying the possibility of going beyond these. This habit of thought has had sorry results on social evolution; the ideal has become materialised, reduced to the dimensions of the personal life, degraded to inferior forms of well-being, of pleasure, of an individual and collective egoism whose blindness is calculated to appal one. Where are we going on this mad course, led on by guides who have no vision, on a path whose descent is ever steeper and ever more slippery? You feel this, as I feel it, who study without passion and without prejudice the movement of the contemporary mind.

It is not to be doubted that the race will finish in the destruction of the runners, in the ruin of our civilisation. This ruin is perhaps fatal, civilisations are born, and die when they no longer know how to transform themselves. They may endure more or less long, they do not escape the end destined to every human work.

They die, but they are also reborn, and the problem presented to your minds is to prepare the soil for the new forms that human culture is developing for the future. You know that no work is durable if the confidence of man in his future destiny remains unrelated to his edification; and you see in the growing power of Spiritualist doctrines the cement which will give solidity to the structure. I wish this, for these doctrines in their principles and their essence have nothing inconsistent with good sense. I speak specially of Continental or "Kardecist" Spiritualism, which teaches the doctrine of Reincarnation. Personally, this hypothesis appears to me actually the most acceptable. It is not through Spiritualistic phenomena that I have been led to prefer it. You will bear me no grudge if I tell you that if the phenomena observed in satisfactory Spiritualistic séances seem to me to possess a capital interest, their study from the point of view of natural phenomena interests me more than the revelations

of which they are too often the confused and contradictory source.

When studied from the biological point of view, they throw an unexpected light upon the constitution of the living being, particularly of the human being. They allow us to catch a glimpse of the mechanism of life which directs natural forces towards determinate ends, but is not opposed to them.

I have always hesitated to think that human intelligence should be less privileged than the purely material forces of which it makes use.

The conservation of energy, its transformation into heat, into motion, into electricity, etc., is an axiom whose truth is doubtless relative, but whose reality is certain in relation to us.

Energy is transformed, but it is not lost. The same is true of matter, which is perhaps in reality only a form of energy. The transformation of elementary bodies would not overthrow the law of conservation, which would remain valid for primitive matter—ions and electrons. Hence, I do not understand the disappearance of the intelligence when death destroys the body. The elements of the body again become carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorus, calcium, etc. Why should the intelligence disappear when the phenomena of life demonstrate its superiority?

The doctrine of Reincarnation, or of successive lives, brings to the problem a solution which satisfies the mind in the present state of our knowledge. It makes evolution, heredity, comprehensible; and the spontaneous variations, the different forms which life assumes.

The materialistic theory fashionable in the nineteenth century is no longer seriously supported and the works of its most ardent protagonist, Haeckel, are curiously out of date, after half a century. Evolution has for its principle, adaptation, but also progress, and the most elementary examination shows that progress is defined in the direction of the adaptation of the body to the functions of the intelligence. The effect of the environment (that is the changes of climate, habitat, existence) has not directly contributed here, it has indirectly aided by placing the intelligence in presence of new difficulties to be surmounted. Matter also is adapted to the conditions of the environment under the influence of heat, pressure, motion. Limestone crystallises into marble, carbon into diamond, but these purely internal reactions have nothing in common with those of living beings, they reveal no tendency to progress; the forms which matter assumes are the same since the origin of the world and depend upon conditions above indicated.

Living beings have been profoundly modified since the appearance of their primitive forms in the primary epoch. They have become adapted, not only to live, but to live better. There have been beings without ambition (if I may use this expression) who have remained at a low stage of development without desiring to progress. If, as it would seem probable, the superior species, and particularly the human species, derives from lower ancestors, this would presume an initial individual difference in the capacity for adaptation and progression. We observe this inequality and we understand its necessity, for this is the condition of true progress. This progress does not present itself as a law fatal and natural; it presumes an effort on the part of the individual, it evokes the idea of an ordeal to undergo, of a merit to be rewarded.

It reveals itself to us as a moral law, not as a necessity of nature. If this idea conforms to what we conceive as justice, if this philosophical doctrine founded on the value of intellectual and moral effort is correct, if follows that progress under all its forms is possible, but is not necessary and fatal. It presumes an action of the individual energy, an action persistent and tenacious, which sometimes succeeds and sometimes fails. It involves choice. From this general idea, discovered in the analysis of the phenomena of life, flow those of liberty and human responsibility.

The inequality of human conditions is a fact comparable to that of living species; evolution and heredity play their part in it, and every being prepares its future destinies. This is the Karma of the Indian philosopher conceived in a mode, larger and more profound.

This conception explains inequality but shows the justice of it, at the same time that it indicates to us its temporary character and teaches us its utility. It is not our personality which endures indefinitely but rather our individuality. The functions of the personality linked to the conditions of the external environment are those of a

AN ITALIAN SAINT OF TO-DAY.

PADRE PIO OF PIETRELCINA.

guardian which the individuality constitutes to protect itself and to accord itself the freedom to watch over and perfect the physical organisation of which it is compelled to make use. We do not know why the intellectual principle is obliged to associate itself with material elements, but we observe this as a fact.

Hence the individuality becomes the continuous chain of being during the successive phases of its life as manifested in matter. This is our true essence, the seat of our intellectual faculties, this it is which is free and responsible in face of itself. Here is found the mystical sense of the speech of Anchises to his son Aeneas in the Elysian Fields when he explained to the latter the origin of life, the rôle of the intelligence, the immortality of the soul and its incarnations, *quisque suos patimur manes*, each one of us undergoes his ordeals in his immortal principle.

This is the essential doctrine of the Orphic mysteries and of the Platonic philosophy.

This doctrine is old; it is illuminated by all the beams which the greatest minds, founders of religions and philosophic systems have gathered at the sources of light still veiled from the eyes of the mass of mankind. It possesses important moral consequences; the gravest of these is the faith in human liberty, the faith in our destiny, the confidence in Omnipotent and just nature.

We do not live to amuse ourselves or to seek distractions. To live is a serious thing, a school where we have lessons to learn, duties to accomplish, a formation to undergo. The lot which falls to us is not the result of blind chance, it is something which is our own work. It must be accepted not with passive resignation, but with docile and conscious courage in doing everything to prepare ourselves for a better destiny. This consciousness of duties that life imposes is the base of individual ethic whose springs are liberty and responsibility, whose sanctions are progress, or recoil, the better or the worse.

Thus may be constructed an ethic almost scientific in character, the practice of which brings peace of mind and faith in the future. There is nothing, even up to the obligation of paternity and maternity, which it does not explain and justify by the conditions of heredity. The same peace would reign in societies if each member would understand that there is a solidarity with others to a certain degree, and that the amelioration of his lot resides less in his capacity to enjoy life than in his aptitude to make use of it by the accomplishment of the duties which fall upon each one of us.

Here is the solution of the moral problem which, at the same time, is the social problem. This is what demands your attention, and our conclusions are the same. The Spiritualist doctrines represent the present-day effort of the human mind to seek the reciprocation of nature seen and unseen. They represent the path traced out for us by great philosophers since Pythagoras and Plato, and many others. It is not by the study of Spiritualist phenomena alone that the founders of Spiritualism will have rendered service to Science in permitting us to push forward in the knowledge of living beings and particularly of man. They have enlarged the domain of Biology and Anthropology, but the phenomena remain natural phenomena. They help us to understand great laws such as Evolution and Heredity, in causing us to perceive fragments of Individuality hidden within ourselves, which must unceasingly compel us to prepare ourselves for better lives.

It is in this moral work that Spiritualism appears to me destined to play a great part; it may restore to humanity the ideal which seems lost, that faith in itself which humanity no longer possesses, the sentiment of its permanency, and its continuity with the obligations imposed on it by its immortality, free but responsible.

LUCKY STONES.

Geologists tell how some of the rocks are igneous in formation and so on. But if you will carefully examine some of these you will find that they give off a certain vapour, or one might almost say magnetic influence.

These characteristics are worthy of deeper study than they have hitherto received. The chemical composition has been, more or less, ascertained. But the more subtle influences proceeding from the ever-vibrating particles has been neglected.

Yet when it is remembered that no piece of rock or stone is still, but that all its particles are in movement orderly and constant, it is only one step onward then to realise that, in order that this movement be maintained, there must be present some great force, and at the back of that force a personality of which it is the expression.

This is true, and the baleful influence which some gems do exercise on those whose sentiments towards them are not governed aright is an evidence of this. On the other hand you have heard of lucky stones, which is a phrase which shows some rather vague notion of the underlying truth.

Eliminate all idea of chance from these matters, and substitute an orderly system of cause and effect, and remember the consequence of ignorance in traversing all natural law, and you will see that there may be something in what we have been trying to explain.

—From the Vale Owen Script.

In the Southern Adriatic, on the Italian Coast, is to be found the Gargano Peninsula, known as the "spur" above the "heel" of Italy. The Peninsula is little known to the traveller, yet it is full of interest, containing wonderful oak forests and magnificent mountain scenery. The coast line is dotted with mediæval fishing villages, the climate is healthy and, some day, the Gargano will become a second Riviera. Orange and lemon gardens and olive groves stretch through the wide valleys, right down to the seashore, and it is indeed amazing that this beautiful region should attract so few visitors. In the forests are Etruscan, Greek and Roman ruins of great interest. Mediæval chapels and fortresses crown many of the hills. At Monte San Angelo is to be found the oldest Christian Grotto Church in Italy. Right in the centre of the Gargano, high up in the mountains, is situated the mediæval town of San Giovanni di Rotondo. Perched still higher up in the hills is the Capucin Monastery of San Giovanni, and here is to be found Padre Pio. Padre Pio's story is an intensely interesting one; he was born of peasant parents 38 years ago at Pietrelcina, being one of a large family. He grew up strongly determined to join the Order of St. Francis. After superhuman efforts he secured an education which enabled him to enter a Franciscan School, and ultimately he became a Friar and Priest in that Order. In September, 1918, while praying in the Chapel of the San Giovanni Monastery, Padre Pio fell into ecstasy, and was found next morning lying unconscious on the altar steps. The signs of the stigmata showed upon his hands, feet and side, and it was with difficulty that the flow of blood was stayed. Padre Pio has become famed throughout Italy and elsewhere for his saintly character and his wonderful healing power and spiritual vision. Pilgrims pour into San Giovanni from the world over, and come away inspired and uplifted by the words and deeds of this remarkable Seer. Many people have been healed of diseases said to be incurable.

It was to pay my respects to Padre Pio that I set out lately from Rome, accompanied by a famous Italian General and a Venetian friend. We arrived at San Giovanni by car from Manfredonia, the nearest station, and immediately climbed up the hillside to the Monastery Gate. It was a Sunday and we entered the Monastery Chapel about noon. Mass was being sung, and the Chapel was filled with peasants from the surrounding country. We were told that Padre Pio was hearing Confessions, and that he had been in the Confessional Box since 5 a.m. without a break. It was fascinating to watch the crowd of peasants and farmers awaiting their turn to approach the Confessional Box. As each man or woman rose from their knees and walked toward the altar of the little church to receive Holy Communion after Confession, their faces seemed to be illuminated by an inner light. Evidently Padre Pio's influence upon the simple-minded people of his flock is of a high spiritual order. I was told by the Mayor of the town that brigandage, theft and drunkenness had disappeared as if by magic since Padre Pio's arrival in their midst.

Soon after noon Padre Pio emerged after seven hours in the Confessional Box, and we followed him into the Sacristy. He is a man of medium height, dressed in the simple garb of the Franciscan Order. His hair and beard are brown, and his brown eyes seem aflame with an inner fire. We asked for his blessing upon the work of freeing the district of Foggia in Southern Italy from the age-long curse of malaria, work with which we were intimately associated. We were rewarded by a wonderful smile, and the promise of his prayers and help. I noticed that Padre Pio wore mittens to cover the marks of the stigmata on his hands, and that he walked with difficulty, owing to the wounds on his feet. He gave me the impression of being a simple-minded, child-like soul, filled with an otherworldly spiritual ardour. I can well understand how pilgrims from many nations, and of divers faiths, have been drawn to San Giovanni by the influence of this holy soul, whose one aim in life is to retire from the gaze of man and work in his own humble sphere for the spiritual welfare and physical healing of his peasant flock.

The Vatican authorities discourage visitors, and it is only with the utmost difficulty that it is possible to seek out Padre Pio in his seclusion amidst the fastnesses of the Gargano Hills. But the experience is a wonderful one. It is impossible to analyse the cause of Padre Pio's ever-growing spiritual influence throughout Italy and elsewhere, until one has met him face to face. Then one can understand—but to share such understanding with those who have not shared the experience is quite beyond my power. Locally Padre Pio is looked upon as a reincarnation of St. Francis, and the people speak of him with reverence and with the light of loving adoration in their eyes, but Padre Pio is the first to discourage hero worship, and he is only anxious to be left in peace to carry on the work which he feels God has given him to do.

We returned to Rome feeling that our pilgrimage had been well rewarded, inspired to take up the struggle of life once more.

W. T. P.

IN THE HARMONIAL LIBRARY.

SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT WORLD.

By W. BUIST PICKEN.

Following the article on Mind and Matter (22nd August) this one touches upon the subject of it only as considered in the "Stellar Key." Going a step farther in the exposition of matter, the author of the "Key" observes:—"Science is proving by induction that these external material forms are only appearances of fine, ethereal, everlasting essences." The "material world is only spirit materialised, condensed, and made up into forms under light and shadow." It is not spirit that we see and touch, but only phenomena; *sense-reality* alone. He continues:—

Hence you see the view I take that the only substance in the universe, in the first instance, must be Spirit. Whatever it may become afterwards, in appearance, in phenomenon, in manifestation, whether it be in the solar atmosphere breaking off into circles of suns, one after the other, from the great vortex of the Univercœlum, or the systems of planetary worlds derived from the great central source, or the vegetation and the animal life that exists on those planets, it is all one original stuff emanating from the great Central Sun, through ever-expanding circles towards the circumference. But action and reaction are equal, and if these material worlds are spirit materialised, then the spirit-spheres are body spiritualised. We cannot have a spiritualising or upward process until we have a materialising or downward process. These are complements of each other. One is attained by the translation of heat into the mechanical motions of the heavens, while the attainment of spiritual development, or the spirit-spheres, is but regaining the heat so lost. And you will find, as you rise through the sphere of immortal life, that you are departing from mere mechanics—that, as you approach nearer and nearer the impersonal God, the Divine Intelligence—you flee farther and farther from the limited and bounded; that the shadows of these material bodies are disappearing, while the reascending energies of this one only substance are unfolding spirit.

The Spirit-world is developed by a reverse complementary action of the "materialising" process . . . you must have a process of building the spirit-sphere exactly the reverse of that of building these planetary worlds. When you realise this law of analogy, you will see how vast must be that second sphere—the Summer Land.

The seer here takes up the question of location of the second sphere, about which some minds, he says, have fallen into a most illogical mistake—one writer placing the spirit-zone immediately around the earth's equator, sixty degrees wide, too absurdly small and near to the moon. "Against this limited notion, the Spirit-world is made up of the aggregate emanations, in zonal forms, of all the teeming planets of one great circle of suns, each one of which contributes its quota of spiritualised elements. As you approach a flower-garden you first discover it by your senses. You cannot see the emanations of its life. *I have seen the flaming aura of these forms in Nature.* . . . You may see these emanations by means of spirit-vision, . . . surging towards the spiritual zone, . . . and thus forming a vast zonal circle called the Summer Land. . . . It is a process of eliminating what you call "matter" into spirit, unfolding its powers and qualities, and making it real, substantial, perfect. . . . But man alone as a personality ascends. Why? Because he alone is a microcosm. The other forms contribute elements; man contributes his personality."

A clairvoyant looking into space from the earth sees a great number of shining belts in different directions. These nebulous rings in the sky, which diminish and increase, symmetrically, as they recede from and approach to their respective aphelions and perihelions, mislead clairvoyants, mediums, and even many spirits, with respect to the location and dimensions of the different spirit-worlds. The cause of conflicting testimony is thus disclosed. *The first year or more of my own observations I was frequently mistaken on these identical points.* The judgment improves in the state of clairvoyance as under any other educational stimulation. . . . Between the orbits of Earth and Mars there is a space of about 50,000,000 miles in width, and between Mars' and Jupiter's orbit there is an interval of "airy nothing" not less than 319,000,000 of miles broad. In this space we observe a vast bright belt of apparently continuous solid matter, which, upon closer examination, is revealed as a river of small stars flowing, or revolving like numerous other rings, around the positive sun of our system. This splendid panorama of stellar beauties I formerly supposed might be the second sphere. But further growth in clairvoyance sharpened the discriminating faculties, and thus

the circle of asteroids in that portion of the heavens became clearly understood. There are about 31,400,000 miles of space between the orbits of Venus and Mercury. In this interval, also, as between Mercury and the Sun, I perceive rivers of cometary bodies—looking like the gorgeous rings of Saturn, only far more loaded with the red flames of fire, and a kind of blazing ether, from which a vast white reflection is sometimes spread through the whole southern hemisphere of the heavens. Some seers have supposed (and myself among them) that one of these broad, continuous asteroidal rings was the real spirit-world belonging to our earth. More accurate information, however, conveys new ideas of magnitudes and relations; and the first Summer Land is found to be revolving near the grand orbit of the Milky Way.

PATHETIC FANCIES.

Mr. Michael Temple's opinions (quoted in LIGHT for September 12th) are most interesting, chiefly on account of their inaccuracy.

He says: "I notice that the 'messages' are invariably either childish or in close accord with what the recipient expects, never a real revelation of a new world."

His references to conjuring tricks refer, presumably, to physical phenomena, a field which I will leave to such men as Mr. Jeffrey, who knows probably more about conjuring than Mr. Temple, and certainly more than I.

But the messages "are never a real revelation of a new world." Well, obviously we cannot be sure that the revelation is "real" until we get there to see. But many profess to be a revelation of a new world—I need only allude to the writings of Mr. Vale Owen. These may not attract everyone. We all have a right to our ideals of happiness in a future state; some of us may sympathise with the man who wanted to be doing nothing except "just a-sitting still." And I have an old (and valued) friend whose ideal, I believe, would be to ride a motor cycle of celestial make, on roads with a perfect surface, where chickens, pigs, and pedestrians should not be allowed to stray. Probably Mr. Temple has his own pathetic fancies on the point. Tastes differ.

But there is another thing to consider. As evidence such revelations are worth very little, unless, indeed, they show strong similarity when obtained through different mediums, under conditions that practically make certain the independence of the messages. If Brown is investigating, a message from his deceased Aunt Jane to the effect that the stove, in the back kitchen of the house where she lived as a child, always smoked when there was a north wind, though doubtless very "childish," would be better evidence than the most beautiful "revelations of a new world."

Seriously speaking, these revelations may appear unsatisfying to profound thinkers like Mr. Temple. But is not this very natural? To take a somewhat stale simile; if the perfect dragon-fly were able to open up communications with others of its kind still leading the underwater life of their immature stage, would there not be the utmost difficulty in conveying to them any idea of life above water? How, for example, could the thought of flying be expressed to them in such a way that they could understand it? Yet both states of existence are equally natural, and both are lived through by the dragon-fly in different stages of its being. It seems probable that similar difficulties may attend the effort to explain to us, in the present world, the life that awaits us when we have taken the next step.

"GWENHYWFAIR."

THE VALUE OF NOTE-TAKING AT SEANCES.

By G. O. T.

In July, 1924, I went to Mr. Vout Peters anonymously for a private seance. In the course of it, he gave me a personal description that I could not recognise. It came in association with matters that I understood, and I therefore sought its explanation with hope though with no certainty of success. To my satisfaction, when I read the record to a friend in America, in the winter, she recognised it as to a considerable extent fitting her husband (deceased). He had communicated to her some of the same details and still others that were clearer, in a sitting she had had anonymously with Mr. Vout Peters a year previous to my own. As I had not met the gentleman in his life-time, I did not, of course, get the value of the description given me, which was not as clear as that given his wife, but yet had sufficient points to identify it. And Mr. Peters said, "This would be a gentleman whose wife is very much about you at the present time," which was singularly true and perfectly identifying at the time. But it was only on going over the complete notes that other items were seen to be clear and pertinent. Had verbatim notes not been taken, we should have missed a number of supporting data, which is far too often the case in the reception of purported communications and accounts for much of the easy scepticism with which such messages continue to be met.

* The writer is well known to us.—Ed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

FALSE MESSAGES, THEIR SOURCE AND EXPLANATION.

SIR,—The article by the Rev. W. Reid on this subject is an extremely interesting contribution to a very important subject.

An opponent of Spiritualism wrote the other day to the Press that it was a mistake to contend that the manifestations of the Spiritualists were the work of evil spirits, because, if evil spirits could manifest, then good spirits could do so likewise. He went on to say that the safer contention was that all manifestations were subjective.

His first point was a logical one; but its reverse application has a bearing upon the present discussion, for it may be fairly said, "If we know that evil spirits on occasion do communicate, how can we be sure when we get a communication which we believe to be from a good spirit that it is not in fact an evil spirit personating someone we have known!"

I proceed to give three interesting examples of evil communications in my own experience:—

During the war in 1918 my daughter-in-law and myself received several communications on the planchette. Many of these were from a dear lost one, and they were evidential and characteristic. When I say convincing, I mean that they had all the elements that go to give conviction.

From time to time other intelligences presented themselves, saying nothing of importance.

One evening the intelligence professed to be my late daughter and the message given was to the effect that I was shortly going to France, as my son (who was serving there) was dying. The intelligence spoke as my daughter would have spoken, calling me by the name she gave me, and so on. There was not a word of truth in the statement, which, it seems to me, could only have been given to cause alarm and give pain, and was, in the circumstances, a sheer piece of cruelty.

On another occasion the intelligence presenting itself professed to be the father of my daughter-in-law. He told her that her brother was very ill, giving his name, and told her to go to him at once. There was no truth in this communication either.

A third communication may be placed under the head of simple mischief.

We had great difficulty in getting the spelling correctly of one of the intelligences which presented itself. At last I got impatient and said if it could not spell the name we would stop further experiment. We then gave it a last chance, when it spelt very clearly and deliberately the letters, "R A T S."

It seems to me that such stories as these, which I am quite aware are not novel, raise a very wide question. It looks as if there were wandering and irresponsible intelligences in the other world whose minds were entirely evil. It is for the future to discover how far these intelligences are under control and how circumspect Spiritualists require to be in dealing with them.

It would appear, I think, in regard to the examples I have given, that the balance of probability is far greater that the messages proceeded from ex-mundane evil intelligences than from the minds of the two listeners at the planchette.—Yours, etc.,

ALLEN SIMS.

AUTOMATIC WRITING AND THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND.

SIR,—Miss Cummins, in her letter to LIGHT in the issue of September 5th, refers to my remarks attributing the greater part of the productions of automatic writers to their own sub-consciousness.

I hasten to add that my observation was incomplete, for I should have added, "and the sub-consciousness of the sitter."

Continental research, and especially that of Dr. Eugène Osty with the best Parisian mediums, has shown that the sub-consciousness of the sitter can be tapped by the medium, not only as regards the past and the present, but even the future (as Dr. Osty observed in his own case).

The Swiss novelist Zschokke had the same faculty with reference to chance acquaintances; and Miss Goodrich-Freer, in her "Essays in Psychological Research," gives striking instances of her own powers in this connection. It is no doubt a phenomenon of *syntonisation of human radiations*, emitted and received by the human brain (or aura, or etheric organism).

Not that I believe for a moment that the 3,192 names obtained by Mrs. Dowden, were filched from the sub-con-

sciousness of all those sitters, for the phenomenon of syntonisation is probably rare, being of the nature of telepathy. I only draw attention to the fact that this exists, and is extremely powerful with certain mediums, and with persons like Zschokke, Miss Goodrich-Freer, and Madame Fraya, of Paris; not to mention the classical instance of Jesus Christ.

Whether *names* are as easy to obtain from the sub-consciousness as *facts* is a question on which I possess no information. I presume they would, or might, be harder to obtain, as in spiritistic communications.

As regards the eminent psychical researcher, who wants "a fact that nobody knows"—and with which Mrs. Dowden has supplied him—I think we can offer him something better.

There are a certain number of cases where a communication has been received by automatic writing in a language *unknown to all present*. I regret not to have made a collection of such cases, but one was published not long ago in the French periodical "Psychica," the language being English, and the message appropriate to an acquaintance. It was indecipherable to the receivers (medium and one other person).

Another case was a message received, at sea, in an *extinct dialect* of one of the Pacific Islands (Easter Island), and deciphered by an expert who happened to be on board. This case was reported in LIGHT some time ago, but I have lost trace of it.

In *direct* writing, without referring in detail to the various cases where messages in unknown languages have been obtained on closed slates and photographic plates (of which there are some quite authentic instances), I may refer to the famous message in ancient Greek written by the materialised form "*Nepenthes*" in one of Madame d'Espérance's sittings in Sweden, and related in one of her lectures to the London Spiritualist Alliance members in 1905. None of the sitters knew ancient or modern Greek. It is impossible to learn the *elements* of a foreign language in less than three months, and still more so to compose *topical messages in the language on the spur of the moment*. Yet the thing occurs in almost every "Direct Voice" sitting where foreigners are present!

A collection of well-authenticated cases concerning automatic and direct writing would be of the greatest value; I mean those cases where *all present* were ignorant of the language used in the script.

I hope any such instances will be published in LIGHT, as their theoretical importance is very considerable.—Yours, etc.,

C. J. HANS HAMILTON.

Le Pavillon Mauzé,
Deux Sevres, France.
September 15th, 1925.

GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

SIR,—I would be glad if you would give publicity to the fact that as a consequence of the amazing behaviour of the Abbey Trustees in denying me access to the relics which I had been commissioned to classify, and thus preventing the completion of the work for the information of the public, I have formally withdrawn from all association with the existing régime and shall await the taking over of the charge of all antiquities on this site by the Royal Society of Antiquaries of London, who have agreed to undertake systematic excavation work in conjunction with the Somerset Society as from January, 1926.

For the benefit of your readers, I would say that the Trustees have never been willing to give any reason for their constant obstruction of my work, but one of their number has now been willing to say that in his opinion it is due to the belief that it has tended to revive the cult of the miraculous and thus to bring back the atmosphere of mediæval superstition. Hence the new public appreciation of this sacred site, though valuable in a monetary sense, has been most unwelcome, and they are determined to give these ideas no countenance. Unfortunately it would appear that they have been willing to see the evidences of my discoveries obliterated by neglect and damage rather than that they should continue as a sign to later generations of truths that they are unwilling to admit. Their attitude is very suggestive of Sadducees, who, whilst officially members of the ruling religious body, yet will not tolerate any proof of the survival of the soul or its continued activity, and hold such evidence as being self-delusion.

Whether I renew my work in Glastonbury now depends upon the policy of the Antiquaries, who may prove to set a value upon the discoveries quite apart from the means whereby they are brought about.—Yours, etc.,

FREDK. BLIGH BOND.

12, Inkerman-terrace,
Kensington, W.8.
September 15th, 1925.

LIGHT,

Editorial Offices, 5, QUEEN SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

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TELEGRAMS: "Survival, Westcent, London."

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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.

HUMAN WIRELESS.

We quoted some time ago from the "Sunday Herald" Miss St. John Montague's remarkable story of how, while she was engaged one night in writing a chapter in a romance of Oriental life, a girl sleeping in another room had a dream coinciding with the scene depicted in the romance.

It was an especially striking instance of experiences which are not uncommon. We have given cases of the kind in LIGHT in the past, in which well-known writers, having imagined what they regarded as something unique in the way of a plot or an episode, have found later that the same thing had occurred or was occurring in real life, and to make the matter even stranger the cases coincided in such close detail that it was not easy to assign them to mere coincidence. That, of course, had to be the explanation at the time—there was no other. To-day we are finding out more of the secrets of life and the hidden possibilities of human consciousness, but there are still some deep problems.

One of these concerns the correct delineation of things not of the present or past but of the future. These have sometimes crept into the writings of men of letters in the oddest way. We will not pause to give instances here—some of them are well known. Nor would it be profitable to hazard speculations as to how the future can be foreseen whether by literary men unconscious of their previsioning or by clairvoyants and seers. We will only venture one theory. It has seemed to us that progression in time and progression in the scale of life are mysteriously blended. An advanced spirit, that is to say, is ahead of us, not only in his state or condition, but in point of time also. He is in one sense living in what to us is the future. He has reached a state of evolution which to him is a *present* state, but to us is a *future* one.

We know that each newly returning spirit coming again into earth-conditions, even though it be many years after his death, appears to make contact at the point of time at which he departed. The intervening period has been spent in another state, with a different time-measurement.

That these telepathic or "wireless" transmissions in the case of authors are associated with certain psychic conditions we may take for certain. Consider the case of that great seer and writer Jung Stilling. Two of his works, "Nostalgia" and "Scenes in the Invisible World," were composed by him in a state between sleeping and waking. He describes his condition while writing as a state of wonderful serenity and peace—an inexpressible felicity. When "Nostalgia"

was published, it created a tremendous impression. And then some curious discoveries were made. Stilling had described what he imagined to be purely fictitious people and events. But he had been depicting real things with almost photographic accuracy. He received inquiries from persons concerned as to how he had discovered the existence of matters which they deemed secret. The story runs that, in one instance, he was visited by a gentleman who on entering his presence saluted the author with great veneration, as one high in the counsels of a secret brotherhood. Jung Stilling was naturally surprised. He knew nothing of such a fraternity, and said so. "Then," said the stranger, "how did you contrive to describe so accurately the great brotherhood in the East, to point out our meeting places in Egypt, in Mount Sinai, in the monastery of Canobin, and at the temple at Jerusalem?" "All fiction," replied Stilling. "Pardon me," said the visitor, "that cannot be. It is all fact and reality as you have described it. Such things do not happen by chance." He departed very much perplexed, leaving Stilling, of course, in a similar state of mind.

Jung Stilling's case is an example from the past. We expect in the future to see such experiences immensely multiplied. Modern evolution is increasing human sensitiveness to impressions. The "fitful flashes" of information conveyed by faculties higher than the sense-organs will become more orderly as time goes on. Knowledge will be transmitted from mind to mind in a methodical way. This will be part of the process in spiritual evolution which takes us towards unity—that ideal of the prophets and seers of all the ages. At present that process is mainly carried on by mechanical methods, but there is a stage at which the physical is transcended and merges imperceptibly into realms unseen and worlds not realised. It is rather a stormy passage just now, but all transition states are painful and disquieting. For the most part the world is unconscious of what is happening. But a few know, in some dim fashion, how events are shaping and preparing the way for things to come.

THE SOUL AND THE STARS.

The astrology that makes its chief purpose the foretelling of the future by means of the horoscope, is not only placing the less before the greater, but is obscuring an important principle by the undue weight given to a particular application of it. The stern sentence passed by Dante on those who would fain foresee the future, when he placed soothsayers in the eighth circle of his Hell, with their faces turned backwards, "because they had desired to see too far before them," was his condemnation of the lower uses to which the wisdom of the stars had been put. It should, however, be placed beside the speech of Marco in the sixteenth canto of the "Purgatorio" in which, while the existence of free-will is asserted as against the influence of the stars, it is admitted that our impulses are set in motion by the heavens; the mind, however, being outside the stellar influence, can battle with it. In the "De Monarchia," moreover, he argues that the stars are the instruments by which the work of God, the Artificer, is carried out in the material universe, and again asserts that "the disposition of this world follows the disposition that inheres in the circulation of the heavens," while in a beautiful passage in the "Paradiso" he shows how each of the circling spheres through which is differentiated the essence of the highest heaven uses its own characteristics for its special ends, receiving from above and operating below. "And the heaven which so many lights make beautiful, from the deep mind which rolleth it, taketh the image and thereof maketh the seal"; thus revealing himself as essentially in sympathy with that astrological mysticism which had gradually developed out of the star-worship of the ancients. The belief that the stars were divine was the foundation of both the worship and the mysticism. The philosophy of Greece and Rome had always admitted this conception; Plato indeed accuses the naturalist philosophers of atheism in affirming the sun to be merely an incandescent mass. Of the great astronomer Hipparchus, who in the second century B.C. discovered the precession of the equinoxes, and who appears to have given his support to the leading doctrines of sidereal religion, Pliny remarks that "he will never receive all the praise he deserves, since no one has better established the relation between man and the stars, or shown more clearly that our souls are particles of heavenly fire."—From "Astrology: The Link Between Two Worlds," by S. Elizabeth Hall, M.A.—(J. M. Watkins).

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

"The Chicago Tribune" tells how a huge crowd stormed the doors to see Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's photographs of ectoplasm at the Paris Congress. The "Tribune" pays a high tribute to Sir Arthur for the lecture that preceded the screen exhibition.

Voices trembled, as they plaintively urged the great Spiritist to assure each one personally that he would see the particular object of his affection, in the great crowd that swirled around the platform at the end of his lecture. Febrile hands reached toward him, to give it a pressure of gratitude for the comfort he had given. Gorgeously-gowned women, shabby little midinettes, rough day-labourers, and old gentlemen erect in frock coats pressed toward him, their eyes gleaming with a new hope. Billy Sunday may have had greater successes but never one so moving.

The spirit-forms shown on the screen by Sir Arthur were in various stages of emergence from the ectoplasm, which he described as a subtle vapour radiated by everybody, but in special measure by mediums—"a sort of half-way house between spirit and matter."

The possibility of taking pictures of it, Sir Arthur explained, is a result of the sensitiveness of ectoplasm to a photographic plate, even though it does not register on the human retina. It is a soft, chilly, fluid substance, full of life. It is sensitive to white light, hence séances must be held in the dark. It can take the form of a human face or even of a whole figure, hence the photographs.

A gasp arose from the crowd, of conviction and of startled incredulity, as the picture was thrown on of Lady Lodge sitting with the famous medium, Mrs. Leonard, and between their heads the head of the dead Raymond, Lady Lodge's son, veiled in an aura of ectoplasm. This was that Raymond, son of Sir Oliver Lodge, who was killed in the war, and about whom his illustrious father wrote the pathetic story of his messages from the spirit world.

A new thrill came as Sir Arthur showed by two successive pictures the development of a spiritual body from a mass of ectoplasm. On the first plate, taken too soon, the ectoplasm appears simply as a vague mass, a sort of bag rising from the head of the medium. The second plate showed the bag opened and from it a head revealed with the face of the dead wife of the man sitting with the medium.

From "The New York Herald" notice of the "social evening" connected with the Congress of Spiritualists at Paris we take the following excerpt:—

Remarkable experiences with the spirit, visible and invisible, of the late William Stead were numerous. A document signed by eleven reliable witnesses told of the appearance of Mr. Stead's face, surrounded by a brilliant light, during a séance held at his Wimbledon home a few weeks after he was drowned in 1912. "It disappeared suddenly," said the witnesses. "After a while the face again appeared in the corner of the room, much clearer, and with his head and shoulders in ordinary attire. Afterwards he was heard to speak, characteristically, in his own way, and we all distinguished what he said."

Miss Scatterd declared that during séances the chair Mr. Stead had formerly occupied was seen to move without being touched by anyone. His chair at the supper table was half-turned as though Mr. Stead was about to take his place, and when a heavy pot of flowers was used to weigh it down, each of the blossoms (hothouse daisies) was seen to nod its head separately, as though saluting the little family gathering.

The following is from "The Daily Telegraph":—

The International Spiritualist Congress, meeting in Paris, decided that the time has arrived for simplifying the means of communication with the unseen world, and to this end it is proposed to open a competition for the construction of an instrument which would enable the shades of the departed to communicate more easily with the living. The idea is by no means new, for Edison once set his hand to the invention of such an apparatus, but eventually abandoned the attempt. Since then two inventors have claimed to have discovered a kind of Spiritualist wireless.

In "The Daily Express" series of articles on Religion, Mr. Arnold Bennett says he does not believe, and never has at any time believed in immortality. That is what he states in the first paragraph of his article; but in the fifth paragraph he says:—"On a balance of probabilities I am inclined to accept the theory of a future life; and I am fairly sure that, if indeed there is a future life, my conduct in this present life will materially affect the nature of it."

From Miss Rebecca West's contribution to the "Daily Express" series of articles on "My Religion," we quote a few words:—

"After one has watched a dying person with the clairvoyant eye of affection the idea of death as a triumph of decay passes for ever. One perceives that he is not ceasing to exist, but passing into another universe."

"The Yorkshire Post" (9th inst.) has a long article on the Rev. G. Vale Owen's new book, "The Kingdom of God." After quoting several substantial passages from the book, the last one dealing with mediumistic communications, the writer of the article thus concludes:—

Having endeavoured to show the methods and purpose of communication between the spiritual "spheres" and the earth, as related parts of the Kingdom of God, the author goes on to deal with other and equally interesting aspects of his subject, writing with an air of calm but unaggressive assurance which suggests a personal realisation on his own part of the intimate collaboration of the invisible helpers whose mouthpiece and amanuensis he claims to be.

The "Manchester Evening Chronicle" prints a selection of authenticated psychic stories from the new (and third) edition of the Rev. C. L. Tweedale's book: "Man's Survival After Death." An impressive one is quoted from the records of the Society for Psychical Research, of a soldier who appeared to a friend in London almost at the moment when he was killed during the Transvaal War:—

"We shall meet again," said the soldier, as he bade farewell to his friend on leaving for the front.

Some months later his friend woke with a start in the middle of the night. "Standing by my bed, I saw a figure which I at once recognised as that of my old brother officer. He had on the usual khaki suit worn by officers on active service in the East . . . and a brown leather girdle with his sword attached . . . a revolver . . . and he wore a pith helmet."

"I'm shot," said the apparition, looking at his friend steadily.

"Shot! Good God, how and where?"

"Through the lungs," replied the apparition. As he spoke his right hand moved slowly up his breast until the fingers rested over the right lung.

Some months later the facts were ascertained that the soldier, a major, was killed, shot through the right lung, while leading his men, almost at the very minute he appeared in London.

The dress of the apparition was confirmed by a brother officer and also the fact that since he had left England he had grown a beard. *The apparition was bearded, and the friend had never seen the major in life with a beard.*

In "The Banner of Life" Louis Lisemer thus touches the jewel consistency:—

Editor Toledo Blade: In discussing trance mediums, "A. B." concludes that the Great Maker of All wouldn't communicate with His creatures through table tapping, tambourines, megaphones, whistles, pencils and note paper, nor would His angels talk in Indian dialect.

"A. B." might have continued his findings by concluding that the Great Maker of All would not communicate with His creatures through horned and stringed instruments and organs in the churches.

There are ghosts and ghosts. The "Daily Graphic" glimpses one or two of the literary variety, a pleasant contrast to the creepy sort of the Christmas season:—

The ghosts of Brunswick-square are worried, for a sinister rumour has reached them. They search their memory to find support in those London hearts which loved to repeat the lines:—

"Enough for me in yonder Square
To see the perky sparrows pair
Or long laburnums gild the air
In Bloomsbury"

Laburnums have vanished, but sparrows abound, and, indeed, where would they be if not in the Squares? . . .

And just off Brunswick-square, in Marchmont-street, less aged memories come a-crowding. For there lived and worked the great Shelley, while quite close by are the Thackeray-buildings. If you are really bent on discoveries, most of the Bloomsbury knockers might spin you tales of great fascination, for many a great hand must have touched them in the past. . . .

"For a quiet hour and a breath of air,
Give me the paths of Mecklenburgh-square."

PERSONAL NOTES FROM PARIS.

BY LESLIE CURNOW.

M. JEAN MEYER was an unobtrusive but pervading personality at the recent International Congress in Paris. It is through his generosity that the Spiritualists possess the splendid headquarters at 8, Rue Copernic, known as Maison des Spirites, and he is also the benefactor who provided the equally fine Institut Métapsychique, of which Dr. Gustave Geley was the distinguished Director. M. Meyer made but one speech of greeting—a silent worker was something of a blessing, for there was a surfeit of oratory—but he conversed with members, and kept a watchful eye on the arrangement of many necessary details. He was a benign guiding and directing force.

Speaking of oratory, those who regard the "gift of tongues" as a lost art would change their opinion if they spent a week at an International Congress. Continental delegates are masters of volubility, as one showed when he spoke for an hour and forty minutes, as introduction to an exhibition of lantern slides!

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE was the great popular idol of the Congress. How often he was photographed and how often interviewed during his short stay in Paris it would be impossible to say, but at the Congress and at his hotel (he was staying at the fine Hotel Regina in the Rue de Rivoli, near the Tuileries) he was constantly surrounded by photographers and newspaper men. His correspondence, too, was very large. Strangers wrote to him asking for personal interviews, for advice, for the addresses of mediums or to be placed in touch with dead relatives. The writers had unlimited faith in him and belief in his power. To them he was the great high priest of Spiritualism.

It is worth remarking that for Sir Arthur's overwhelming meeting in the Salle Wagram not one penny was spent in advertising. The newspapers regarded the event as so important that they wrote freely about it in advance. That fact is surely significant.

M. LEON DENIS, the most eminent French Spiritualist who addressed the Congress, is of medium height, square built, with piercing eyes, and speaks in an incisive manner. He starts his speech with folded arms, and despite his white beard and flowing moustache, there is a suggestion of the Napoleonic pose. His words ring out, though he is advanced in years, and one is conscious of a spirit of burning, passionate sincerity in the man. He was inspired by his high subject, and on one occasion when our gifted representative, Miss Felicia R. Scatcherd, was translating for him—what an interesting couple they presented!—she could barely get out her words before the speaker was off in full flow once more. I was interested, when I procured the French edition of one of his books, to find its bold title to be "Jeanne d'Arc, Médium." It was a characteristic nailing of his colours to the mast.

M. ANDRE RIPERT, the General Secretary, was the indispensable man throughout the Congress. I don't know if it was so, but he seemed to be multi-lingual, and thus he had to be the constant intermediary between members of various nations. This language difficulty was a serious one, and it undoubtedly handicapped the work of the Congress. M. Ripert had many duties to perform, and was not always available. There were others, but they were not always as efficient as he. English representatives, with a few brilliant exceptions, and French and other ones, too, were thus cut off from that interchange of personal views which should form almost the most valuable part of such a gathering. M. Ripert is an ardent Esperantist, and he looks with hope to Esperanto to form the channel of international communication in future congresses. He is also, by the way, a strong pacifist, and a friend of Norman Angell.

No notes of the Congress would be complete without a mention of M. Pascal Forthuny, the irrepressible and seemingly all-gifted—artist, orator, writer, poet, musician, composer, and sensitive. Nothing appeared to come amiss to him. He acted as master of ceremonies at a very enjoyable *soirée musicale* at the Maison des Spirites (or, as we should term it, House of the Spiritualists) at which many of us were delighted by the singing of Madame Boulard D'évé and others. His exhibition of Psychometry on this occasion seemed to furnish evidential data.

At the Reception at the Hotel Gallia, at which the hostesses were the Duchess of Hamilton, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, and Miss Felicia R. Scatcherd, short recitals were invited of personal evidential psychic experiences. A time limit of ten minutes was fixed, a very necessary proviso, for otherwise with the fatal prolixity so much in vogue one speaker might have carried on for the whole evening. Among those who came forward were Miss Lind-af-Hageby, Miss Scatcherd, Dr. Abraham Wallace, Leslie Curnow, Frank Blake, W. Tylar, and M. Thibaut. The last named told, at length, of an apparently remarkable series of

materialisations, but marred his narrative with wholly unnecessary details, the account of which in one Paris newspaper next day appeared with the characteristic heading, "Mystic Madeline Kisses, Plays Piano, Say Spiritists." Miss Lind, in her story of a striking manifestation by the spirit of Mr. W. T. Stead, provided an example of the kind needed, an episode documented by the signatures of those present.

All who know Paris are aware of the wild traffic of tearing, rushing taxis in the great space round the Arc de Triomphe, with its many converging avenues. As the solemn procession of Spiritualists, headed by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and bearing the two wreaths to be placed on the grave of the Unknown Warrior, threaded its way across this maelstrom of traffic every driver stopped dead and, following our example, doffed his cap. For this part of the French capital there was a tense hush—an abbreviated edition of our wonderful Two Minutes' Silence.

MESSAGES FROM THE LIVING.

As an illustration appropriate to the discussion of the question, "Do we travel in sleep?" we give by request the following quotation from an article, "Communications from the still incarnate at a distance from the body" by Miss H. A. Dallas in the "Occult Review" of July, 1924:—

Some seem to suppose that anything which did not happen recently is of small account; of course, this is quite a mistake. If *sufficiently strong evidence* can be obtained for an event which is not recent it is as valuable as if it occurred yesterday.

The case was published in the "Contemporary Review," February, 1918, in an article contributed by Sir William Barrett, entitled, "The Deeper Issues of Psychical Research." It is necessary to summarise it here, which may detract somewhat from the extraordinary interest of the record. The facts are these:—

A gentleman called Mr. Arundel Mackenzie-Ashton* paid a visit at a vicarage in Notts in September, 1882. After his visit he went to his home 130 miles away. A few days later Colonel and Mrs. Nicholson arrived as visitors at the vicarage, and one evening they amused themselves with "table-turning." When they asked who tilted the table, they received the name "Arundel Mackenzie." Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson were not acquainted with Mr. Mackenzie-Ashton, and the latter did not know that these visitors were at the vicarage. What followed was so strange that Colonel Nicholson wrote to Mr. Mackenzie-Ashton and asked him what he had been doing between 10.30 and 11.30 on this particular evening. Also he asked for an assurance from him, "on his word of honour," that he had "heard nothing whatever from the vicarage that evening." This assurance was given, and an account of his actions was written and sent to Colonel Nicholson.

When one of the sitters expressed incredulity, the movements ceased and nothing happened until he removed from the table; then, in reply to the inquiry as to why movement had ceased, one word was tilted, "Flippant." Colonel Nicholson adds: "This is literally an exact statement of what took place." Mr. Mackenzie-Ashton was not given any particulars as to what occurred after the question, "How is his body occupied?" until he had himself stated by letter what he had been doing during that evening.

Sir William Barrett points out, by way of comment, that such "well-attested facts of the mind acting independently of the body add to the probability that the mind survives the dissolution of the body."

TABLE TILTED COMMUNICATION, RECORDED BY COL. NICHOLSON, SEPTEMBER 13, 1882, 11.15 P.M.

We . . . asked to tilt if a spirit was present; it did so.

Asked, whose spirit?

Arundel Mackenzie.

Where is he?

His soul is here.

What is his body doing?

. . . Playing billiards.

Who is with him?

Father.

Who is winning?

Son.

How many games have they played?

Two.

What has he been doing during the day?

Shooting.

* The latter name had been recently adopted.

FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SEEKER.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

CONDUCTED BY F. E. LEANING.

XXI.—DE ROCHAS' EXPERIMENTS.

A study of the definitely psychic works of De Rochas shows that he began as far back as 1882 to be interested in the science and the art of healing in ancient times, and the book he wrote then went into a new edition in 1912. Mesmer had introduced the idea of a healing fluid, or magnetic influence passing from the healer to the patient, and the nature of this magnetic fluid, or "odic" force, as Reichenbach called it, or "psychic force," as Sir William Crookes named it, or "undefined force," was a fascinating problem to De Rochas, as to many others. Experiments in getting this force to give evidence of itself, either in the form of radiation, or as a sort of psychic envelope which could be removed to various distances from the body; occupied him for years. It led up quite naturally to attempts at getting the perisprit or "double" to separate as a whole from the person whom it clothed; some will remember how Stead tried to do the same thing. The way favoured in France, and one which often takes place spontaneously, is that of the operator "willing" to project himself; but the method of De Rochas was to hypnotise someone else and so compel the separation. He wanted to see the double, or if he could not see it himself, to have the evidence of a clairvoyant witness, or to satisfy himself otherwise that the sensitivity of his subject was outside his body. It is true that he never got the double to do anything, or go anywhere in particular, and his results seem to have been limited to producing sensation in it, and occasionally the very rare and curious effect known as repercussion. One unusual phenomenon he describes as the formation of two phantasmal forms, one on the right and the other on the left of the mesmerised subject, to which forms were transferred all power of feeling, and when they had coalesced into the complete double it was attached by a "lien fluidique" to the physical body.

It has been suggested that the use of anæsthetics has the effect of driving out this double, which takes sensation with it, and so leaves the body incapable of feeling pain.

De Rochas goes on to say that several times, and with several different subjects, he had caused the double to prick its finger, and that the scratch appeared on the corresponding finger of the body, and bled ("L'Ext. de la Sensibilité," Chap. II., Pt. 5). In some experiments published about ten years later, at L'Agnélas, he wished to verify the existence of the fluidic cord. His subject, Mme. Lambert, was on the ground floor of a house, where she had been put to sleep by passes, and declared that her double was floating at a great height. Without saying anything to her or anyone, de Rochas went quietly upstairs to the room overhead and extended his hand to a point which he judged to be vertically above the head of the lady. On returning to the drawing-room below, all was in confusion. "Madame had suddenly leapt from her chair, uttering a violent cry of pain and joining her hands over her head. Her whole body was contracted, the movements of the heart and of the respiration had stopped." When he had with difficulty brought her round, she was still in a miserable state, and he adds, "I was obliged to have the poor woman put to bed, where she remained without being able to eat or sleep, during all the night and a part of the following day," and the whole matter was so painful that this experiment was never repeated. It gave the investigator some perplexity, for he reflected that these experiments had been going on for over twelve years, and that it was impossible but that other persons, strangers, had often passed between the subject and her separated double. He came to the conclusion that only the operator or a person "en rapport" with him could thus affect the psychic life-cord of a hypnotised subject. He remarks that a similar state of affairs had occurred with Lina after some séances with a M. Jean-Bernard. Lina was another of de Rochas' mediums, about whom he wrote the book, "Les Sentiments, la Musique et le Geste," a quarto volume with many photographs and coloured illustrations, published at Grenoble (1900) at the price of thirty shillings.

Besides his continual investigations into the nature of the double, our author also followed several curious by-ways, such as Dr. Hyslop names the residua of science, and among them the transference of sensitivity from the person to objects touched by her, and to photographs. From this it was an easy transition to the subject of "envoutement," or what we should call enchantment, spells, and magic. This seems to have drawn de Rochas' attention to an extraordinary degree, and did not enhance his reputation with any serious investigators. The impression which his collection of historic cases makes upon one is that people are sometimes willing to take an amazing amount of trouble to work ill to their neighbours.

The "American Literary Digest" publishes the following jest concerning Houdini under the title, "Disillusionment": "Houdini charged with disorderly conduct after smashing up an office replied: 'They locked the door and I had to fight my way out.' Bang goes another illusion! We thought he could open anything but a car window."

The reference to the car window is not quite clear. Probably it is an allusion to the difficulty of opening American car windows. But Houdini's trouble in escaping from the locked room is easily explained. He was not "performing" on that occasion. There was no theatre full of spectators present to be mystified.

Talking of dreams, a topic which has recently been the subject of discussion in these pages, I recall the fact that some years ago a French medical man, M. Delaunay, asserted that by covering the forehead with wadding the brain is stimulated during sleep and dreams become logical and intelligent. I noted the statement at the time, but did not hear of any experiments being made to test it.

Sleep should mean as far as possible complete rest, and nothing that prevents the brain from resting is desirable. To that extent, then, absurd and illogical dreams are not objectionable, since they show that the brain is at least partially asleep. Ideal visions and true dreams do not originate in the physical brain, but in the spiritual and etherial one, which transfers them—usually in a broken way—to its physical counterpart. They are rarely recalled on awakening with any distinctness, but they always leave some impression on the mind; hence, for example, the hope and assurance with which some of us awake to meet the day's work.

We are so accustomed to reading circumstantial stories of verified dreams that the following tale comes as a refreshing variant. A correspondent of a Chilean paper tells how while staying with his family in Costa Rica he dreamt that he was home at his house in San José, and that a boy in a white shirt, blue knickers and a felt sombrero, held out to him a roll of lottery numbers, saying: "Buy this, 12756." The dreamer told the story to his family the next morning, and it was agreed that they must look out for this number. Later he returned home and communicated the news to other members of the family, and later while he was in the street, a strange thing happened. Some one said to him, "Buy this, 12756." He turned, and it was the same boy as he had seen in his dream, and the same number the boy had recommended. Of course, said the narrator, "I bought it immediately, and the lottery was drawn the next day and . . . I drew nothing!"

Clairvoyance, as I was remarking the other day, has been forbidden in Colorado. If taken literally, this sounds sufficiently comical. I place it, as an example of legal drolleries, with the case of the German clairvoyant who in 1921 was called in to assist the police in detecting a criminal, which he did with success. Afterwards he was arrested as a fortune teller. The sufferers, of course, are not expected to see the humour of these things unless they are very philosophical indeed.

It was after Mr. Winkle had accidentally shot Mr. Tupman in the arm during the rook-shooting that (as recorded in "Pickwick Papers") the spinster aunt who was in love with Mr. Tupman, was greatly agitated.

"Then you are not dead!" ejaculated the hysterical lady. "Oh, say you are not dead!" "Don't be a fool, Rachael," interposed Mr. Wardle. "What the devil's the use of his saying he isn't dead?"

That passage in Dickens' great novel is recalled in a grim way when returning spirits seek to assure their sceptical friends that they are still living, although in another world. It is all in vain. We may repeat Mr. Wardle's rough comment, although in a more decorous way—What is the use of their saying they are not dead?

D. G.

"FIRES DIVINE."—This play at the New Scala, which has attracted considerable notice in the Press at large, introduces a new note in the drama of to-day, as conveying along psychical and spiritual lines a message to the age. It has been well described as ingenuous; it has indeed a radiant sincerity. Its appeal is largely to the emotions, and in this direction it makes a deep impression on those who are in sympathy with its message. Miss Marjorie Mars gives an admirable rendering of the heroine of the piece, and Mr. John Foulds' music is superb.

THE DOCTRINE OF RE-EMBODIMENT.

A POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION.

There is, perhaps, no part of "our" subject more puzzling to the inquirer than that which concerns itself with re-incarnation, and yet few more intriguing, though the approach to it is specially thorny.

The fact that diametrically opposed views and statements on this point are expressed in messages received from the other side does not disturb us now as it did in the earlier days of the movement; since the notion of a discarnate spirit being necessarily wise and all-knowing has been gradually modified.

It is recognised now that character and knowledge—including in many cases deeply-rooted prejudices—are the same when first the step through the veil has been taken, and that this is the same with all of us; that, on the other hand, the conditions and surroundings to which we pass differ so greatly that they are perhaps never the same for any two individuals. We find ourselves with the like-minded and if, for instance, we have, when on earth, resented the idea of re-incarnation, we are not likely, at first at any rate, to hear much evidence in favour of it from those we mix with. Hence, in forming our judgment it is well to consider whether what we are told of it comes from the higher sources—the more progressed—or not; and I think from my limited reading and experience that we do not often get from the more advanced a complete denial of the fact—at any rate not as a partial and occasional occurrence.

It would seem, therefore, that there probably is "something in it"; and this brings me to the suggestion whether this "something" may not be more spiritual than corporeal—more in the nature of a reappearance on earth of the character, the aspirations, the force or, in some cases, the genius of a man rather than of his actual individuality.

May it not be—to take an instance almost classical and "orthodox"—that it was the essential part of Elijah's character, of his mental and moral "make up," that lived again in John the Baptist—leading perhaps to a similar way of life and environment and even, it may be, to a similar outward aspect—and that the "spirit" of Elijah, in the sense of his "ego," his individuality, still continued to function in the sphere to which he had attained, and did not confuse itself with that of the Baptist.

It is, no doubt, claimed by some that there have been instances of men who have remembered incidents of a former life, and also, that the reason for a return to earth is said to lie in the need of further training and purging; but some such recollection might well be part of the intimate connection which I am pre-supposing between the inspirer and the inspired, and some such "working out" of earthly failings might be accomplished by the work of "influencing" from the other side.

And finally if we do not find it easy to draw a definite line between inspiration or guidance and actual re-entrance into bodily conditions, that is hardly to be wondered at. If the truth is spiritual it can only be fully apprehended by the spirit—and perhaps by no spirit that is not set free from the body—temporarily at any rate, if not permanently.

A. M. H.

"MY OWN WILL COME TO ME."

In a valley mist—enshrouded
I, as pilgrim, make my way,
Heavy burdens bend me earthward,
Stony paths are hard to tread.
Breath is laboured, heart oppressed,
I see no ending—have no rest,
Yet I murmur, bond or free,
Still "my own will come to me."

Now the rugged hill upclimbing,
Staggering, yet determined, too,
Obstacles for overcoming,
Undergrowth to break right through.
Gritting teeth, yet pressing onward
Till the height is reached at last,
And unto the uplands free
I gasp, "My own has come to me."

Struggling, striving, longing, yearning,
Slow the clearer truth discerning,
That what is good is worth the earning
If my own ne'er come to me.

Shall I know the satisfaction
And hear afar the praise of men?
Will such applause be sure attraction,
Life be fully circled then?
Shall I scarcely hear the "Thank you"
Of some faint-hearted who was helped—
Just the feeling, just to be
So sure my own has come to me!

—M. H. WALLIS.

SOME NEW BOOKS.

"TALKS ABOUT WIRELESS." Sir Oliver Lodge.
(Cassell, 5/- net.)

Although wireless is only indirectly within the scope of LIGHT, the close association of Sir Oliver Lodge with our subject affords sufficient grounds for drawing attention to a most interesting book. Sir Oliver is, of course, a pioneer of wireless telegraphy, and he speaks with authority and intimate knowledge. The following, which I take from page 243—the closing paragraph—has an appropriateness which makes it worthy of quotation here:—

Finally it may not be impertinent to suggest that the matter of our communications should be worthy of the manner, that the educational facilities of broadcasting should be utilised, that as we increase in intelligence we can increase in wisdom, too. We can realise better our place in the scheme of existence and not be satisfied with merely material achievements. Our achievements are now not only material, they are ethereal also. Spiritual development should keep pace with the others. So I conclude with the warning expressed long ago by Mrs. Browning, with remarkable foresight and poetic anticipation of what then must have seemed distant dreams, but which now, by submarines and aviation and wireless, have been in some measure accomplished:—

"If we trod the deeps of ocean, if we struck the stars in rising,
If we wrapped the globe intensely with one hot electric breath,
'Twere but power within our tether, no new spirit-power comprising,
And in life we were not greater men, nor bolder men in death."

"THE SENGTA AND SERN." By Ezbaran. (Arthur H. Stockwell, 7/6 net.)

This is a curious book, and not easy to describe in the short space at our disposal. The Sengta, we are told, is, in its simplest form, a thin disc of wood, "suspended horizontally by means of three double silks." The Sern is a circular reading chart, and the method of using appears to be to take the silk in the right hand and suspend the Sengta over the centre of the Sern, about half an inch from its surface. By this means messages can be communicated. The author gives numerous descriptions of other-world conditions, and revelations of a strange, not to say startling, kind. Many unusual terms are employed, and the author has supplied a glossary at the end of the book.

It is a book which will be read with interest by those who are attracted by the more mysterious side of psychic experimentation.

"GHOSTS OR GOSPELS." By Henry B. Wilson, B.D.
(Elliot Stock, 5/-.)

The scope of the book is indicated by the sub-title: "The Methods of Spiritualism in Healing, Compared with the Methods of Christ." The author, who is stated to be a director of the Society of the Nazarene, has quite obviously striven to be fair and unprejudiced, though on reading statements like the following, one realises that Mr. Henry B. Wilson has something still to learn:—

Yet men and women glibly tell us they believe that the souls of the departed are ever near us, watching us and desiring to communicate with us. Such persons do not realise that they are constructing a system which would place God, the Creator of that system, in a class with Nero.

On the other hand, no fault can be found with the conclusion expressed on page 96: "I believe in communication with our dear ones, but I believe it should be carried on only in the highest, purest character to which it most rightly belongs—spiritual." The author's target is evidently the right one, even though his aim is a little erratic.

"SPIRITUALISM, A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE." By W. H. Evans
(Two Worlds Publishing Co. 1/- net.)

A sane and well-reasoned exposition. Mr. Evans, who appears to have been influenced in part by Andrew Jackson Davis, handles his thesis with skill and moderation, as well as with a disarming logic.

For instance:—

The old idea of disturbing the dead by holding séances is still expressed; it is even put forward by those who should know better, for many who claim more than a nodding acquaintance with occultism tell us that it is injurious to seek communion with arisen humanity. One might as well say it is wrong to receive letters from friends over the sea. But the point that both classes of objectors overlook is this: it was the spirits who first sought communication with this world. If it was injurious, why did they do it?

D. N. G.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

(Music). "My Mary, Sweet and Brown." (Song). By J. M. Stuart-Young. Enoch and Sons, Ltd. (2/-).
 "Mind, the Healer." By Vernon Drew. L. N. Fowler and Co. (4/6 net).
 "Talks on the Great Pyramid." By D. Davidson, M.C., M.I.Struct.E. D. Davidson, 47, Park-square, Leeds. (1/).
 "The Ethics of the Gospel." By F. A. M. Spencer. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. (7/6.)
 "Sound in Relation to Health." By Horace Leaf. Published by the author, 41, Westbourne Gardens, W. (6d.)

Mrs. M. E. CADWALLADER addressed a crowded congregation at the Æolian Hall, on Sunday last, and her service to the Marylebone Spiritualist Association on this occasion recalled her previous kind help some twenty-seven years ago. Mrs. Cadwallader gave an eloquent exposition of Spiritualism, which was intently listened to and highly appreciated. This gifted lady and world-wide worker for Spiritualism sails from Liverpool to-day (Saturday), on the Cunard liner "Carinthia," for her home in Chicago, where for so many years she has edited "The Progressive Thinker." She carries with her the warm goodwill of all friends and messages of greeting to the Spiritualists of America.

ANIMALS' WELFARE WEEK—CHRISTMAS FAIR.—The National Council for Animals' Welfare Week has arranged for its annual Christmas Fair to be held in the Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday, 28th November, 1925, and the Council hopes that all humanitarians and lovers of animals will attend the Fair and accept the many opportunities it offers to help the work of the Council. The National Council is under the Presidency of H.H. Princess Marie Louise, the Honorary Secretary being the Lady Emily Lutyens. The office is at 1, Robert-street, Adelphi, W.C.2.

THE "ROYAL MAGAZINE" for October contains an article, "What is Spiritualism?" by Mr. Hannen Swaffer. It replies very effectively to a number of questions put by a confirmed sceptic for reply in the magazine.

MEDIUMS' ADVERTISEMENTS.—It is essential that mediums and psychics advertising in LIGHT shall give references as to their bona fides, whether as members of established Spiritualist Societies or otherwise.

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Subject: "Mediumship."

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GARDEN MEETING.

MRS. HENRY WITHALL much regrets that owing to ill-health the Garden Meeting arranged to be held to-day, September 26th, has had to be cancelled.

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The Law of Psychic Phenomena.—By Thomson Jay Hudson. Cloth, Post Free, 8/-.

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Phantoms of the Dawn.—By Violet Tweedale. Cloth, Post Free, 8/-.

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Beyond the Valley; An Autobiography of Andrew Jackson Davis.—A Sequel to The Magic Staff. Published 1885. Post Free, 10/-.

The Message of Anne Simon.—"Anon." Post Free, 5/6.

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