

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

THE Old Year is dying—a sorrowful sight—  
 The New Year about to be born,  
 For ever the earth keeps unchecked on its flight,  
 And all the dark passages lead to the light,  
 And every night brings the morn.  
 —WALTER SCROPE.

#### "SPIRITUALISM AND RELIGION.

From an illuminating article on this subject by Sir Oliver Lodge in the "Forum," we take the following sentences as putting concisely some important points:—

The doctrines of the Spiritualists and the offering occasionally of opportunities for personal intercourse have brought comfort to many thousands. That there are faults and weaknesses, credulities and superstitions associated with and grouped round about the subject, no one would seek to deny. Is it not necessarily so with any widespread movement? The movement needs guiding, it needs sanity and reverence and modesty and open-mindedness; it should not seek to cut itself off from the great traditions of the past. Nor should we seek to limit ourselves to those either. The facts on which Spiritualism has been based should be brought into the service of religion. How to do this well and wisely, I know not. But we are guided and helped. Wisdom will be granted to those who try and will be denied to those who hold aloof. The existence of a spiritual world has been established or is in process of being established by the methods of science, and that is the basic foundation of all religion.

Sir Oliver has here packed into a few sentences a whole volume of sound instructions on the subject of Spiritualism.

\* \* \* \*

#### "KATHLEEN."

Mr. J. Arthur Findlay has already noticed this book by the Rev. John Lamond (Hutchinson, 6/-), but it is well deserving of further attention. Not the least of its merits is the variety and breadth of treatment of the theme chosen. The volume was primarily intended as a memorial to the author's gifted daughter Kathleen Ogilvie Lamond, who, after a life of devoted service, passed away in 1922, at the early age of 26. The home affections are strongly developed in the Scottish race, and the father's tribute to his daughter—a true "child of the Manse"—of whom two portraits appear in the book, is a touching record; simple and unaffected, it goes straight to the heart. Growing out of the subject Dr. Lamond's "Enquiries into the Meaning and Value of Modern Spiritualism" develop

in a brief compass almost every aspect of the question in a singularly clear and convincing way. The third part of the book, "Conversations with Kathleen," is full of illuminating thought and large philosophic views of life and Nature, with special reference to the life to come. It is a book which should have a special appeal to the Scottish reader as coming from an old Highland minister and containing many allusions that go right home, so racy are they of the soil and so eloquent of the Scottish point of view.

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#### A WOEFUL PROPHET.

Some dire prophecies for the year 1926 are given in the "Banner of Life" (Boston, Mass.) purporting to come from "Jet-all-red-din the Third" through the mediumship of Victor Fernstrom, and dealing mainly with the future of the United States. Amongst other predictions is the statement that in July great floods will occur in two of the States, and in one of them two-thirds of the entire population will perish as a result. Then there are to be earthquakes, which, however, will do very little damage. But hitherto extinct volcanoes will come into action. "Two volcanoes in Alaska will come to life after a sleep of two thousand three hundred and sixteen years," and will throw out ashes and larva, which is of course very usual with volcanoes. The ashes will remain in the atmosphere for sixteen months, and when it has become saturated with the resultant gases two new diseases will break out affecting those people most sensitive to the atmospheric poisons. Forty per cent. of the population in some places will be destroyed, according to this cheerful prophet; but we really cannot take him any more seriously than our own "Old Moore," who never goes to these horrible lengths in his forecasts. "One year from now," says this new Jeremiah, "I will again tell the human race what is to come within the year 1927." Heaven forefend!

#### THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS FUND.

We have to acknowledge with grateful thanks the following further donations, in addition to the amount previously acknowledged, viz., £83 4s.

	£	s.	d.
Major Peters .....	3	0	0
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Miss E. Maude Bubb .....	5	0	0

Further acknowledgments will be made next week.

DAVID GOW.  
 FELICIA R. SCATCHERD.  
 LEIGH HUNT.

# A CHILD'S TEACHING ON LIFE AND DEATH.

By E. W. DUXBURY.

In a recent issue of *LIGHT*, Mr. Stanley De Brath wrote a commendatory notice of the French translation of the work of M. Ernest Bozzano entitled, "Phénomènes Psychiques Au Moment De La Mort" ("Psychic Phenomena at the Time of Death"), 1923, with an appreciative reference to the undermentioned episode.

For the benefit of those who do not read French or who may not have an opportunity of reading this interesting book I have translated the account as given by M. Bozzano, who, it may be mentioned, is a Member of the Committee of the Metapsychic Institute, Paris. In a communication I received from the late Sir William Barrett, to whom the author had sent a copy of his work, that distinguished student of Psychic Science referred to it as an "excellent book."

Not only does the incident in question merit consideration by reason of its human interest and appeal, but also in virtue of the remarkable manner in which this purely spontaneous case corroborates the conclusions drawn from the induced or experimental phenomena of Spiritistic Research. It will be noticed that the incident occurred in the very early days of Modern Spiritualism.

## TRANSLATION.

I conclude this first category of cases by citing an episode which can be regarded as exceptional by reason of the quite unusual duration of the supernormal visions and conversations at the death-bed. From this point of view it merits a separate examination.

**24TH CASE.** This is taken from the "Journal of the American S.P.R.," 1919, pages 375-391. It is the touching story of a little girl patient who, during the last three days of her life, sees her deceased little brother and other spiritual beings and converses with them, whilst she perceives fugitive visions of the beyond. Unfortunately, the recital comprises seventeen pages of the "Journal" in question. I must therefore limit myself to a few quotations.

The little girl's father was the Rev. David Anderson Dryden, a missionary of the Methodist Church, and his wife has recorded what the child said in the course of the last days of her life. On the lady's death the notes she made were published in a brochure, with the view of affording consolation to any doubting and suffering soul. The child was named Daisy; she was born at Marysville, California, on the 9th September, 1854; she died at San José, California, on the 8th October, 1864. She was, therefore, ten years of age.

The Rev. F. L. Higgins in the introduction to the brochure in question, observes:—

What was quite remarkable in Daisy's case was the unwonted duration and, therefore, the extraordinary lucidity of her visions and revelations. She had time to become familiar with the marvels which she saw and heard.

Having been taken ill with typhoid fever, she had a presentiment of her end, in spite of the favourable prognoses of the doctors. Three days before her death she became clairvoyant; those about her remarked it for the first time as the sequel to a quotation from the Bible made by her father, a quotation which elicited from the patient the remark that "she hoped to return to console them sometimes." "I will ask Allie if such a thing is possible," she added. Allie was her little brother, who had died seven months previously from scarlatina. After some time she had added, "Allie says that it is possible, and that I shall be able to return sometimes, but that you will not know that I am present. I shall be able, however, to talk to your thought."

I extract this passage from the notes made by the mother:—

Two days before Daisy left us the schoolmaster came to see her. She spoke to him freely of her approaching departure and sent a last farewell to her companions. Before going away he addressed to the patient a rather obscure Biblical phrase: "My dear Daisy," he said, "you are about to cross the great, dark river." When he had gone, she asked her father what the master had meant by those words, "the great, dark river." The father tried to explain their meaning to her, but she replied: "What a mistake! There is no river to ford, no dividing curtain! there is not even a line of distinction between this life and the other." She stretched her little hand out of the sheets, saying with an appropriate gesture: "The Beyond is here; I am sure that it is so, since I see you at the same time as the spirits."

We asked her to instruct us about the Beyond. She then remarked: "I cannot describe it; it is too different from our world, and I should not be able to make myself understood."

While I was sitting at her bedside her hand pressed mine, and, looking in my eyes, she said, "Dear Mamma, I wish you could see Allie, who is near you." Instinctively I looked about me, but Daisy continued: "He says that you cannot see him, because your spiritual eyes are closed, and that I can, because my spirit is now attached to my body by a very weak thread of life."

I then asked: "He has told you that just now?" "Yes, just now." I then remarked: "Daisy, how do you manage to talk to Allie? I do not hear you speak, and you do not move your lips." She smiled and said: "We talk with thought." I then asked: "In what form does our Allie appear to you? Do you see him dressed?" And she: "Oh no, he is not exactly dressed, as we are. I might say that he has his body enveloped in something very white, which is marvellous. If you could only see how fine, light, and splendid this mantle is, and how white it is! And yet there are no seams to be seen, nor signs of tucks, which proves that it is not a garment. All the same, it suits him so well!" Her father quoted the following verse of the Psalms:—

"He is clothed with light." "Oh yes! just like that," she replied.

She liked very much her sister Loulou to sing for her, specially items from the Hymn Book. Once, when Loulou was singing a hymn in which mention was made of winged angels, Daisy exclaimed: "Oh, Loulou, isn't it strange? We always thought that the angels had wings; but it is a mistake, they haven't any at all!" Loulou remarked: "But they must have wings, to fly to Heaven." Daisy replied: "They do not fly; they transport themselves. You see, when I think of Allie, he feels it and he is here at once."

Another time I asked: "What do you do to see the angels?" She replied: "I do not always see them, but when I perceive them it is as though the walls of the room disappeared and my sight reaches to an immense distance. The spirits which I then see are innumerable. There are some which approach me; they are those whom I have known in life; the others I have never seen."

On the morning of the day of her passing she asked me to give her a mirror. I hesitated, fearing that she might be shocked by the aspect of her emaciated face. But her father said: "Let her look at her poor little face, if she wishes to." I brought her the mirror, and she looked at her image for a long time, with a calm but sad expression. Then she said: "My body is worn out now; it is like mamma's old dress, hanging in the wardrobe. She no longer wears it, and before long I shall be no longer wearing my dress. But I possess a spiritual body which will replace it. I even have it already on me. It is with the spiritual eyes that I see the spiritual world, although my earthly body is still bound to the spirit. You will lay my body in the grave, because I shall no longer have any need of it; it was made for the life here-below, and that is finished. It is natural that it should be put aside. But I shall be dressed in another body, much more beautiful, and like that of Allie's. Mamma, do not cry! If I am going away so soon, it is for my good. If I had grown up, I should, perhaps, have become a wicked woman, like so many others, and God alone knows what is best for us."

She afterwards exclaimed: "Mamma, open the window for me; I want to gaze for the last time on my beautiful world. Before dawn appears to-morrow, I shall be no more." I satisfied her desire, and she then said, turning towards her father, "Papa, lift me up a little!" And then, held up by her father, she looked through the open window, exclaiming: "Good-bye! my beautiful sky! Good-bye, my trees. Good-bye, flowers. Good-bye, pretty little roses! Good-bye, little red eglantines! Good-bye, good-bye my beautiful world!" She added: "I still love it so much, and yet I do not wish to stay."

The same evening, at half-past eight, she looked at the clock and said:—"It is half-past eight. When it is half-past eleven strikes, Allie will come for me." She let her head fall on her father's shoulder, saying, "Papa, I should like to die like this. When the time has come, I will warn you."

At quarter past eleven she said:—"Papa, lift me up! Allie has come for me." When she had assumed the desired position, she asked for some singing. Some one said:—"Go and call Loulou," but Daisy replied,

"No, do not disturb her; she is asleep." And then, just at the moment when the hands of the clock indicated half-past eleven, the hour foretold for her departure, she held up her arms, saying:—"I am coming, Allie!" and ceased to breathe.

Her father had replaced in her bed the little inanimate body, saying "Our dear child has gone; she has ceased to suffer."

A solemn silence reigned in the room, but no one wept. Why weep? We ought, on the contrary, to thank the Supreme Father for the teaching which He had been good enough to give us by means of a child, in those three days consecrated to the glory of Heaven. And while we contemplated the face of the dead little girl we felt that the room was full of angels come to comfort us; a very gentle peace descended on our spirits, as if the angels were repeating:—"She is not here, she is risen!"

Professor Hyslop entered into communication by correspondence with the sister of the little seeress, Miss Loulou Dryden, who confirmed the scrupulous veracity of the facts recorded in their mother's diary, and authorised him to reprint them in his Review.

I regret that I am not able to reproduce in its entirety the account in question. In this episode, besides the exceptional prolongation of the supernormal visions, with complete absence of delirium up to the last moment, there should be noted the other circumstance, that the remarks of the seeress about the spiritual world agree wonderfully with Spiritualistic teaching, and all this through the agency of a little girl absolutely ignorant of the very existence of this teaching. Who then suggested it to her? Certainly not her parents, by means of thought-transmission, since they were as ignorant as their daughter of the Spiritualistic doctrines which, in 1864, had scarcely been promulgated. How did she manage to conceive quite alone so many transcendental truths diametrically opposed to those learnt from the religion of her father? How could she spontaneously formulate profound conceptions such as those implied in the affirmation that "the Beyond is here"? That there is no line of distinction between the abode of men and that of spirits; that the latter converse among themselves by thought; that they perceive thought telepathically, that the living turn towards them and they arrive at once without limitation of distance; that spirits do not fly, but transport themselves; that the deceased return to see persons whom they love, but that their presence is usually unrecognised, although they converse with their thought (or their subconsciousness); that man possesses a spiritual body (or "Périsprit"); that the spiritual world is so different from ours that one cannot describe it, since she would not be able to make herself understood?

Let us frankly recognise that with all this the hallucinatory, auto-suggestive and telepathic hypotheses have nothing to do. It follows that the visions of little Daisy can only be explained by admitting that the seeress formulated her observations on the basis of data possessing a certain objectivity, and that she reported the explanations which were communicated to her by a third party, in conformity with what she affirmed.

On this head appear somewhat curious the dialectical efforts of the Rev. F. L. Higgins to distinguish the phenomena which occurred at the death-bed of little Daisy Dryden from those of Modern Spiritualism, in order to prove that the first alone were conformable to the teachings of Holy Scripture, and that, therefore, they alone ought to be envisaged as divine revelations. He remarks:—

The child was in no wise a spirit-medium, any more than were Moses, or St. John, who also dictated Books of Revelations. No spirit took possession of her body, even for a single moment, or spoke by means of her mouth. On the contrary, thanks to a concession from God, the spiritual senses were opened for her, in order that, in the last days of her existence, she could enjoy the spectacle of the Spiritual world, whilst remaining attached to the body, in consequence of the fact, already remarked by the doctor, that she actually took three days in dying."

It is needless to point out that the observations of the Rev. F. L. Higgins only prove his too vague knowledge of the doctrine which he combats. The truth is, in fact, this, that if we eliminate the hallucinatory hypothesis the visions of little Daisy appear clearly and classically Spiritualistic.

MRS. KELWAY BAMBER.—Just as we go to press we learn, with a regret that will be shared by our readers, of the sudden death of Mrs. Kelway Bamber's mother from a stroke. As the funeral will probably take place on Christmas Eve, and the shock has been very great, Mrs. Kelway Bamber asks us to say that she will not be able to write to her many friends this Christmas. We join with them in expressing our sincere condolence with her on her bereavement.

## THE ETERNAL FORCE.

By A. G. HALES.

[Mr. Hales is the well-known novelist and war correspondent.]

In response to the Editor's request for my individual opinion concerning the *future* of Spiritualism in the world, let me say there is no *future* for Spiritualism, just as there was no beginning.

Spiritualism is eternal. It began before the morning stars first sang together, and it will go on till the mountains and the plains are rolled up like a scroll. What the attitude of mere mortals towards it may be in the future will depend upon the growth of human mentality in the bulk.

If we look back upon the far piercing highways of the ages, into the gloom of earliest antiquity, we discover indisputable proofs that the earth has possessed a few human beings in each epoch, who have been endowed with an order of intelligence so far above the common, that they could peer as through a glass dimly into the hidden chambers of the unknown.

These individuals were not always of exalted station among their fellows. They were seldom judges, magistrates, or law-givers, though Moses was a law-giver, and he had the divine gift of communing with spirits, or there is no truth in the Book which men call Holy Writ.

It is easy for me to understand why men of the class from whom magistrates and judges spring have neither occult yearnings nor perceptions; they lack the higher intellect which generates the power to see and feel the motive forces at work beyond this mundane sphere.

Such people, speaking generally, are seldom possessed of soul-instincts that enable them to develop wider horizons than those that bound their little life adventures. They are of the earth earthy, and anything that is above their heads is to them sublimely ridiculous. Hence, we so often hear and read of magistrates and judges condemning Spiritualism as charlatanism. They have not the mental capacity to realise the grandeur and the greatness, the majestic simplicity of occult truths.

They are men learned in the law and as such, acting in their own sphere of usefulness, we must do them reverence. They are but the hewers of wood and the drawers of water in the mental make-up of a work-a-day world. To be learned in the law does not bespeak a capacity for profound thought. More often than not it is merely a proof of unflagging industry and the possession of a capacious memory. Like actors learning their parts they learn the laws that other men have laid down, but this does not bespeak a capacity for original thought. They are human sponges, and any sponge dipped into a bowl of fluid will soak up and retain the fluid the vessel contains.

This capacity to memorise the work of others does not invest them with the right to sit in judgment upon, and to attempt to cover with ridicule, those who have been gifted by the gods with a higher order of intelligence than their own in regard to things that bear the sign manual of Divinity itself. Like owls that cannot see in the broad light of noon they gaze owlishly at one another through the dim light of their own narrow mental vision and think that they look wise; but we can leave the owl to its owliness and let it howl. But all their vapid inanities will not affect the transcendent truths of Spiritualism; the breath of fools may flutter feathers—it will never shift a mountain.

Most of the great Spiritualists, the echo of whose footsteps still rings along the ever-changing highway of the ages, were men born and bred amid the humblest of surroundings. Jesus of Nazareth, born in the manger of an eastern caravansary, became the teacher and preacher of Spiritualism in its highest and purest form; Mahomet, the camel driver, born in a herd's hut on a lonely mountain slope, who, earning his bread by the sweat of his brow, driving his camels across the trackless spaces of the deserts, yet lived, through his unshakable belief in the reality of the spirit forces that hovered around him, to found a faith so vast that it shook dynasties and conquered empires and is to-day the most active vital force the eastern world possesses.

Perhaps a generation will arise in the fulness of time capable of grasping the mighty truths that real Spiritualism embodies, but many a Calvary will have to be trodden, many a desert will have to be watered with tears ere mankind in the bulk will be ennobled mentally to a degree sufficient to make human kind realise this simple but awe-inspiring fact that the flesh is nothing but a flower that fadeth, the spirit of each man and woman is what it was at the beginning—a thing imperishable, indestructible, a part and parcel of the river of life that flows in a circle that has no beginning and no ending.

## SOME EVENTS OF 1925.

## JANUARY.

The Spiritualist Community Services at the Old County Hall continued to be largely attended and to meet with great success.

The question of Psychic Photography was still warmly discussed.

The "Scientific American" investigation into the mediumship of "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon) proceeded.

Spiritual healing attracted increasing attention. The so-called "Abrams Magic Box" was stated by physicians of high repute to have undoubtedly great medical value.

Mr. Hannen Swaffer, Editor of the "People," lectured at Queen's Hall to a great audience on "The Return of Lord Northcliffe."

## FEBRUARY.

The mediumship of "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon) and the "Scientific American" investigation was still vigorously debated and the evidence keenly analysed by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

The Psychic Bookshop and Library in Victoria Street, Westminster, inaugurated by Sir A. Conan Doyle, was opened.

## MARCH.

The monthly magazine, "Animals," published a remarkable symposium on the subject, "Have Animals Souls?"

The investigation by the "Scientific American" committee into the mediumship of "Margery" ended, and opinions of the investigators were divided.

George Valantine commenced a series of sittings, carefully watched by the research officers of the S.P.R. The venue of the sittings had to be changed from Tavistock Square to Mr. H. Dennis Bradley's house, "Dorincourt," as offering better conditions for the sittings.

Mr. Hannen Swaffer, late editor of the "People," attended these sittings and published in the "Sunday Express" some remarkable descriptions of them.

## APRIL.

Miss Louise Owen delivered lectures on the Return of Lord Northcliffe.

The question of the mediumship of "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon) still excited considerable differences of opinion.

The National Laboratory of Psychical Research was initiated by Mr. Harry Price.

## MAY.

The outstanding feature of the month was the enormous success of the Bazaar, Fête and Exhibition of Objects of Psychic Interest held at Caxton Hall under the auspices of the London Spiritualist Alliance. All interested threw the whole of their energy into it, and were rewarded by the securing of the splendid total of approximately £1,000 net profit to be devoted to the equipment of the new headquarters of the L.S.A.

The "Ben Achallader Messages," resulting in the discovery of the body of the "missing mountaineer," were of great interest and highly convincing.

The Roskell-Ady libel case resulted in a verdict for Col. Roskell with £200 damages.

The mediumship of "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon) was described by Mr. J. Malcolm Bird in his book, "Margery the Medium."

The Community Services at the County Hall were still much appreciated and largely attended.

The Irwin Appeal Case ended in the failure of the appeal.

The May meetings of the London District Council of the Spiritualist National Union were held at the South Place Institute under the Presidency of Mr. Harry Boddington.

The action at law, Altoun v. Saunders, was settled on terms agreed in Court.

## JUNE.

The decease of Sir William Barrett, F.R.S., was keenly felt in psychic circles.

Another great loss was sustained through the passing of M. Camille Flammarion.

Sir Oliver Lodge completed his 74th year and was the recipient of many congratulations.

A discussion in the "Morning Post" on Spiritualism between Sir A. Conan Doyle and Sir Arthur Keith excited intense interest and was followed by a voluminous correspondence from people of all shades of opinion for and against Spiritualism.

## JULY.

Two books of exceeding interest to Spiritualists and indeed to all classes were published: Robert Blatchford's "More Things in Heaven and Earth," and Hannen Swaffer's "Northcliffe's Return."

## AUGUST.

Professor Richet retired from the Professorship of Physiology at the Faculty of Medicine, Paris, and gave a lecture on Metapsychic Science.

A fakir gave, in Paris, some astonishing exhibitions of the power of mind over matter.

## SEPTEMBER.

The Congress of the International Spiritualists Federation opened in Paris on the 6th amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. It was attended by delegates from all parts of the world. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was accorded an ovation and thousands were crowded out from his lectures.

A remarkable series of articles, entitled "My Religion," written by ten celebrated authors and other well-known people, appeared in the "Daily Express," and was followed by a voluminous and interesting correspondence.

## OCTOBER.

The Spiritualist Community Services were held in the Grotrian (late Steinway) Hall, for the first time on the 4th inst.

Two plays of psychic interest were produced, viz., "Fires Divine," at the Scala Theatre, and "The Glory of the Sun," at the "Q" Theatre.

A Society clairvoyante, "Estelle," was fined at Bow Street for fortune telling.

## NOVEMBER.

A series of articles, entitled "When I am Dead," was commenced in the "Weekly Dispatch," with contributions from well-known people of all shades of opinion on this absorbing topic.

## DECEMBER.

Mrs. St. Clair Stobart gave an address at the Grotrian Hall descriptive of her heroic war work in Serbia in 1915, the proceeds being devoted to the Spiritualist Community Services, in which she has played a prominent part.

Mr. Dennis Bradley's new book, "The Wisdom of the Gods," received marked attention in the Press.

The London Spiritualist Alliance and LIGHT removed from 5, Queen Square, to 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, at which the National Laboratory of Psychical Research is also established.

A. A. C.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## FAITH AS AN AID TO LIFE.

SIR,—The writer to the Hebrews produced that marvellous flow of eloquence on the subject of faith which must have inspired millions of men to "carry on." What is Faith?

Nowadays when the border line between matter and spirit has grown so faint that it often disappears, Faith and Love and Anger and Jealousy are seen to be as much material things, as carbon, iron, water, etc., are forms of spirit.

Perhaps we should be quite right in thinking of Faith as a kind of mist in the air, which has for ever been lying in space ready for those who wished it to reach out their arms and grasp its substance, feed on it and make their souls free and independent of those fears and that subservience which hamper the life and growth of their individuality.

How many millions are there who live all their lives in weak imitation of others, and never have an idea of the possible independence of their own power of initiative, of genius, of greatness and influence!

For the thousands who will hoot at a parson, there will be only one who seeks to know why the poor parson should be hooted, and decides to stand up for him. For the millions who talk only of matches and races, there will be only a few who mentally put these events into their sane order of things. Amongst the millions who rattle sabres, only a few foresee the consequences of the folly.

Yet all the while, over the vast expanse of the world and its millions, there broods the opalescent mist of Faith (not in dogmas forged amid hatred and quarrels and ambition, but) in the great God and His exemplar on earth—Jesus Christ. Faith as that of a weak man in a strong, unselfish friend; faith as Jesus had in God the Father.

The writer of this would fain know from the experiences which LIGHT records, that one's ideals of the "Glory that shall be hereafter," and of the ultimate vision of the great spirits, of the greatest spirit and of the Lord of All are realities of experience of those gone on. One feels, with Sir Hall Caine, much disturbed by the muddied waters through which one would seem to pass—muddied largely by one's own unfitness for higher fights, but still very largely by the sordid atmosphere of other sinners.

But much that we read throws doubt on this hope. Yet there is no escape; one must go through with it all. Faith, Hope, and Love as a means of freedom from life's worries and evils is what we used to believe in. Are we to give up this hope, and face another life like this one?—Yours, etc.,

J. H. S.

\*. Readers may like to reply to this letter, which comes from Bombay. In the meanwhile we need only say that the assurance of a higher, and happier life in the world to come can only deepen and strengthen our faith in a beneficent universe.

## THE COMMUNION WINE: A REMARKABLE STORY.

SIR,—When I read the accompanying article in the original it seemed to me so interesting that I thought you might perhaps like to publish it in *LIGHT*, and I consequently translate it into English. The fact that Professor Haraldur Nielsson found the story worth publishing, is, I believe, a sufficient proof that it is not altogether unworthy of attention.

I may be allowed to remark that the incident it relates is by no means an isolated one. Apparently clairvoyance was quite commonly regarded as a diabolical gift, and there was a popular belief that communion wine was a cure for this evil. Thus my great-grandfather—who from earliest childhood was in such a high degree clairvoyant that he almost constantly saw some spirit beings about him—was at the same age as Gudmundur Andr sson, taken to the parish minister, who poured communion wine into his eyes. Whatever the explanation may be the fact is that his second-sight was thereby greatly dimmed. But in other respects it does not seem to have affected him, for he grew up to be a man of more than average ability, was all his life highly respected, and filled some, at that time, fairly important official posts. He died at an advanced age about the middle of the last century.—Yours, etc.,

SNAEBJORN JONSSON.

## PROFESSOR NIELSSON'S NARRATIVE.

On July 12th in 1923, while I was the guest of Dr. Gisli P tursson, in Eyrarbakki, a lady of high standing called on the doctor. She was Mrs. Stefania Thorarensen, daughter of the Rev. Stefan Stephensen, who for a long time was rector of Mosfell. She related to me the following story, which I there and then wrote down:—

Some time about 1878, Mr. Gudmundur Andr sson, of K lbraun, in Skeidar, who was then in his 70th year, told me that he had been clairvoyant from the earliest time he could remember. He frequently saw people about in the cottage, especially a certain good-looking lady with his mother. But he had been forbidden to speak of this, and he was invariably reprimanded when he told people about it. Finally his parents consulted the rector in Olafsvellir, who laid the boy, then seven years old, on a bed, placed a compress soaked in communion wine over his eyes, and made him lie with this cataplasm on for 24 hours.

After this Gudmundur never felt his eyes to be the same as before, and after this he never was the same person. He became a social failure, and though he managed to earn his living while he retained full bodily strength, he finally fell to the charge of the guardians. But all his life he was an honest and trustworthy man.

He did not see visions after this—except that he sometimes dimly perceived the lady who was with his mother. He said that he deeply regretted the loss of his second-sight, and that he particularly longed to see the beautiful lady who accompanied his mother.

The New Testament teaches us that Christ Himself was in a high degree endowed with the gift of clairvoyance, and in the days of the apostles it seems that clairvoyance was highly esteemed and reckoned among the spiritual gifts. St. Paul calls it "discerning of spirits."

Is not this action of the rector in Olafsvellir a striking instance of the modern lack of understanding of some or two things which were most highly esteemed by the early Christians?

When the divine gift manifested itself, he smothered it by communion wine cataplasm. Indeed, the times have changed!

[The above article, written by Haraldur Nielsson, M.A., Professor of Theology in the University of Iceland, is here translated from the "Morgunn" (the official organ of the Icelandic Society for Psychical Research), Vol. vi., Pt. 1, 1925.

SNAEBJORN JONSSON.  
Translator to the Icelandic Government.]

## THE SURVIVAL OF PERSONALITY.

SIR,—Referring to an interesting article on the above subject by the Viscountess Masserene and Ferrard in the "Daily Express" recently, may I be allowed to state a few of my actual experiences and contacts with personalities who, through the aid of Spiritualism, have been able to communicate with me? The personalities varied in force and power when on the earth to a most astonishing degree. Among many others these include such "live wires" as Lord Northcliffe, whom I knew before his marriage, and W. T. Stead; also my own brother, who died some fifteen years ago, and my sister, who died twenty years ago; P lissier, well known

as the founder of the Follies; Albert Chevalier (whose brother, Bertram Chevalier, published "The Spirits' Message," a song by Miss Lilian Walbrook, the music inspired by her nephew, the late Lester Coltman, who also wrote through her hand, by automatic writing, the famous book, "The Case of Lester Coltman"), W. O. Walbrook, the well-known printer and publisher, known to many as "the grand old man of Fleet Street."

I could instance many more, including a most charming Chinese "control," who calls himself Wu Chu Chang, with whom I am constantly in touch, and to whom I have actually, by means of a medium, spoken on an ordinary telephone. I must not forget to mention a wonderfully sensitive Japanese "control" named Mhna, with whom I have held conversations for the last three months.

Viscountess Masserene and Ferrard's idea of the personality of a man or woman on the earth would appear to be governed by the outward sign of force given off by the person that she is able to observe. I think that the old saying, "Still waters run deep," is more likely to prove true, and that the quiet, unobtrusive characters in the earth life will be found to be the real leaders on the other side. I have only studied the great truth of Spiritualism since the War, so I am only a modest student, but my actual experiences have been, and are every day, so extraordinary and convincing that I feel I can answer the above query with truth, and I say without hesitation that all personalities do appear to survive death and, if they so desire, and have the link of sympathy with someone here, they can and do return to earth and those they love to help and inspire them.—Yours, etc.,

MALCOLM OWEN.

1, Princes Place,  
Duke Street,  
St. James's, S.W.1.

## "ELECTROCUTION NOT REALLY FATAL."

SIR,—In a treatise read before the French Academy of Sciences, by Professor Jominek, and reported in the "Evening News" of the 1st instant, under the above heading, it is stated that death caused by electricity is only apparent and that the victim's life can be saved by artificial respiration.

To those familiar with the spirit teachings in "The Dead Have Never Died," by Randall, the conclusions arrived at by Professor Jominek are particularly interesting. In the spirit communications referred to, it is stated that by pouring water over an electrocuted person who has been laid upon fresh earth, and then resorting to artificial respiration, the victim may be restored.

Now that the human mind has partially confirmed the information communicated by spirit intelligences, is it perhaps too optimistic to hope that the knowledge may now, after many years, be put to practical use?

Those responsible for the continuance, wherever it is practised, of the very up-to-date barbarity of electrocution, may like to reconsider the desirability of imposing this form of capital punishment, particularly in view of the further information from spirit sources, that the post mortem knife and not electrocution is the actual cause of death.—Yours, etc.,

J. E.

Tulse Hill,  
December 4th, 1925.

## POLTERGEIST AND PRINTERS.

SIR,—In a department of a prominent daily newspaper to which I am attached there have, for over two months past, been manifestations of poltergeist phenomena. The stool adjoining my own, on my right, has while vacant crashed to the floor without apparent physical agency on at least ten Saturdays (usually between 12 noon and 1.15 p.m.), and thrice on other week-days. All theories of trickery have been discussed and dismissed. The stool usually topples over laterally, but has twice fallen backward and only once forward. Recently, after a simple Saturday fall, I inwardly desired that next time it should lift off the floor: it did so by quite an inch. I then desired it should turn a somersault: it would have done so but for becoming tightly wedged, as the result of a particularly violent impulse, between a spar, a steam heating pipe, and the under part of my desk.

Replies to questions obtained through *pendule explorateur* tell me: "The movement is due to 'force electrical'"; that I am a very good natural medium; and as to the meaning of the phenomena, "It [the stool] crashes pagans to confound." Also that there is no human trickery in this affair.—Yours, etc.,

PENDULATOR.

## LIGHT,

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## THE CLOSING YEAR: A YEAR OF GRACE.

"On a drear-nighted December" the mind naturally turns to retrospect. We look back to our "green felicities," and to periods to which the term felicity does not exactly apply. As the last sands of the old year run out, our mental gaze is inclined to extend itself over a multitude of the years that went before, back to our earliest acquaintance with the Spiritualistic movement. We think of its strange and misunderstood activities, its little band of faithful followers, most of them now in a happier world, comical adventurings, great openings of the mind, inspirations, rhapsodies, dark passages in the pilgrimage, as of journeying in a tunnel; much argument with sceptics, phenomenal happenings in séance rooms but more often outside them; meetings with many great souls, some of them now world-famous, but more quite unknown to earthly fame. We think of many strange revealings of the future, some of them through the lips of seers in those earlier days, which we have lived to see fulfilled in the career of our movement, and in the later history of the world at large.

But this is the personal note which has no legitimate business here. Moreover, we must restrict our field of retrospect which should be concerned only with the year that is about to close.

Truly it was a year of great endeavour and great achievement, and its records will stand out in timé to come. It gave the crown and seal to much that was attempted in the past, and saw the beginnings of things which the future should bring to great fruition. Its many events have been set down in detail elsewhere, and we are giving general impressions rather than definite particulars here.

In this impressionistic vein, then, we set down that during the year we observed many things of the happiest significance. We were struck by the number of persons, some of them not definitely associated with Spiritualism, who have been drawn into the subject as workers by what they have recognised as a definite guiding influence coming suddenly into their lives. Some of them have come to the front in the year's activities and others are doing work less conspicuous but not less useful. Some of our pleasantest memories of this year will revolve about these dispensations, affecting not only the history of persons but of events—the marked and definite influence of those in the Unseen World, originating a work, raising up the workers, arranging events and bringing them to pass.

We could tell some strange tales of this kind, but they are not at present suitable for narration; some of the events are still in course of development, and from the strict standpoint of Psychological Research, they are not evidential, although the evidences to those immediately concerned are abundant and arresting.

We had noted these things in earlier years, but last year they were especially apparent and unusually momentous. All of which tends to strengthen our conviction that with every passing year the influence of the spiritual world upon this one grows stronger, more purposeful and more apparent. It is not unreasonable to suggest that before very long these influences and inspirations will become clear to the general eye as part of that spiritual outpouring to which we have been taught to look forward and which the events of 1925 have shown to be on the way to fulfilment. In a meaning more definite than that of the old almanack makers we mark 1925 as a Year of Grace. May the Grace grow from more to more in every year which follows!

## "THE CHRONICLE OF CLEOPHAS."

DR. OESTERLEY AND THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MISS G. D. CUMMINS.

We were only able to find space for a brief report of Dr. Oesterley's address at the Grotrian Hall, on Sunday 13th inst. But in the "Daily Express" of the following Thursday special reference is made to the address and its allusions to the mediumship of Miss Cummins, whose remarkable scripts, "The Chronicle of Cleophas," throw new light on the Acts of the Apostles.

Reference is made to the fame of Dr. Oesterley as a scholar, and to the fact that he is an orthodox churchman, and an authority on the Hebrew language. According to the "Daily Express," Dr. Oesterley claims that "the documents are an epoch-making and detailed elaboration of the Acts of the Apostles, and that they have been written in perfectly legible script at the rate of 2,000 words an hour."

Mr. F. Bligh Bond was, as we know, associated with the production of the script, his own psychic powers contributing to the result.

A portion of the revelations, it is stated, were given at a sitting held in the study of a London bishop who was present with Dr. Oesterley, two lady friends of the medium, and Mr. Bligh Bond.

In an interview given to a representative of the "Daily Express," Dr. Oesterley gave an account of the circumstances in which the script was produced on this occasion.

The account continues:—

A total of many thousands of words, telling of the sayings and doings of the Apostles, especially St. Peter, St. James, St. John, and St. Paul, has been written up to the present under the title given by "The Messenger" [her control] "The Chronicle of Cleophas." The language used is archaic in style, but beautiful and expressive, and the sentences ebb and flow in a tide of direct inspiration.

The article concludes with some passages from the script, giving an account of the martyrdom of Stephen, and how to his assailants it seemed that he was burning, "for there was a light like unto a bloom of fire about the countenance of Stephen, causing it to shine, and there was around him a radiance that was not of this earth."

## A SIMPLE DOCTRINE.

The Hall of Truth with open gate  
Invites you now, pray do not wait;  
But boldly knock and enter in,  
Life's education to begin.

Seek diligently till you find,  
Truth, Light and Wisdom all combined;  
Truth is made beautiful by time,  
And Wisdom is the Light sublime.

God's laws of nature we must keep,  
For as we sow, so shall we reap;  
We till the soil, God gives good seeds,  
And when we've toiled, supplies our needs.

Our greatest sin, our least offence,  
Entails its penal consequence;  
For all must suffer who offend,  
And after chastisement amend.

H. H.

## FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Amongst his International Notes in the current issue of "The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research," Mr. Harry Price relates one of the curious experiences that from time to time happen to him. One morning walking down the Strand he stopped to look in an optician's window, when a stranger asked him if he could direct the inquirer to another optician's shop. Following a short talk about various kinds of binoculars, the stranger asked Mr. Price whether he was connected with the optical trade. "Only in an academic way," was the reply, with the remark: "You will never guess what I am particularly interested in." Said the stranger: "Don't be too sure—I'm a thought-reader, and if I mistake not you also are interested in psychic matters!" Mr. Price was astounded. His new acquaintance was Mr. A. S. Aldrich, Jr., of Takapau, New Zealand, touring Europe with his wife and son. Mr. Aldrich said he had felt *impelled* to speak to Mr. Price as an investigator of the occult, and could not miss the opportunity of giving him this experience. Mr. Aldrich, who is a large landowner, has been clairvoyant since he was eight years old, and narrated some very extraordinary incidents illustrating his gift. Here is one, told in Mr. Price's own words:—

Mr. Aldrich one day saw clairvoyantly a relation of his (a niece, I think), laid out as if for burial, and, as is his custom, wrote in his diary a detailed account of the vision. They had recently heard from the girl, and there was then no suggestion that she was not in good health. *Three days after* Mr. Aldrich saw the vision, they received a wire to say that the girl had that day met with an accident and had died. Really, after our extraordinary meeting in the Strand, the incident I have related does not seem so very strange.

From the fourth number of Mr. Harold Begbie's series of excellent articles in "The Daily Mail," on "The Religion of To-day," we take the following passage regarding man's early consciousness of the supernatural:—

At the dawn of his consciousness man was aware of the supernatural. Unlike other creatures of the earth, he did not accept his natural conditions. An offspring of nature, bounded on all sides by nature, and accompanied by other animals which placidly accepted nature, man was nevertheless conscious of something all about him, invisible and mysterious, which transcended nature. The first mark of man was an *awareness* of the invisible.

This movement in his spirit was destined to travel with him through the myriad years of human history. Like the first movement in the ether which brought into being the starry host of heaven and filled our planet the earth with multitudinous forms of life, it was a developing movement, and a movement with direction. It was not a mere stirring of the chaos in his animal mind, but a creative impulse taking a course which led, after many years and through many strange vicissitudes, to the supreme grandeur of all human ideas.

The "Devon and Exeter Gazette" reports an address by the Bishop of Exeter (Lord W. M. Cecil), according to which we learn that he does not approve of psychical progression. Referring to the Witch of Endor with Saul and Samuel, and to Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, with Moses and Elias, his Lordship said that the Witch of Endor pretended to bring back the spirits of the dead, and that when Saul came to see her she actually succeeded:—

She herself was terrified with the result; that she had brought up the spirit of Samuel. Samuel knew what was happening, and that Saul would that day join him in the land of spirits. Again on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elias spoke with Christ of his decease which was shortly to be accomplished. They were compelled of necessity to believe, and it was quite in harmony with their Christian faith, that those who were dead knew what they were doing. There wasn't on their side the thick curtain that hid the dead from them. It was presumption—presumption far too common at the present day—to attempt to intrude further into the mystery. If they dared intrude in that way it was natural they might fall into the power of spirits who were not those friends they wished to see.

That is a curious mixture of thought to come from a Bishop. The one point clear is that he thinks nobody should try to do better than was done in the days of the Witch of Endor.

In the "Empire News" (13th inst.), there is a frank article by Sir John Foster Fraser on "My Experience at a Recent Séance," in which typical difficulties appear that to the unexperienced investigator seem insurmountable, but are nevertheless most interestingly manageable. More and more it is becoming evident that the world is being pressed forward to a consideration and eventual understanding of mental conditions that belong to what has been called "the psychological state"—a natural state of mind that is transitional from the primitive condition to one higher, and from its transitive nature is the source of much serious confusion of thought. Sir John writes:—

I went to the séance a sceptic; nobody was more on the watch for trickery than I was. There were only three of us in the room, my friend, an honourable man, the medium whom I knew nothing about, and myself.

I distinctly heard voices in the room, men and women, and the medium must have been an extraordinary mimic if he was responsible for them all.

But the spirit who came to me addressed me by the name of a distinguished namesake and friend, "Mr. Lovat Fraser." So I tackled the "spirit" for the mistake. There was a laugh and the name came right.

I asked questions. I got unilluminating replies. I demanded why I could not speak in the light instead of pitch darkness.

Was a trick being played on me? Or did I hear the voice of a man who had been dead for forty years? When my friend questioned me whether I believed I could only reply, "I am mystified." And that is my attitude in regard to Spiritualism.

An attitude entirely natural in the circumstances. When the "psychological state" is known and understood by mediums themselves and investigators of their powers, the mazes of mystification will be much less troublesome.

Under the title "On the Brink of the Unknown," "Tit-Bits," of the 19th inst., published a further selection of "eerie adventures." Lady Grey of Pallodon related a curious story of dream telepathy. Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny told of a night in a haunted house, and of terrible noises—bangs, crashes, and sounds as of heavy furniture being dragged across the room. The tumult was deafening, but when in the morning she went to the room from whence the uproar had proceeded, it was "an empty garret with a bare floor, and not so much as a broom handle to be seen in it." Dr. Bernard Hollander, the mental specialist, gave a remarkable psychic experience, as related to him by Dr. Lindsay Johnson, whose name, as a contributor to *LIGHT*, will be well known to our readers. This concerns the appearance to Dr. Lindsay Johnson of the apparition of a friend with whom he had been touring in Norway. Hearing a tapping at the window, Dr. Johnson looked up from his writing and saw his friend outside, dripping wet and with an agonised expression. The body of the friend, a Mr. Frith, was afterwards found downed in the river which ran near the house. The Editor of *LIGHT* contributes a personal experience of prevision strangely verified.

A Special Correspondent of the "Daily News," dealing with the troubles of the beginner in psychic investigation, remarks:—

Since Mr. Dennis Bradley announced that he constantly talked with the spirits of those who have "passed over" he has received 7,000 applications from people who are anxious to be present at his séances. Naturally he had to refuse the great majority.

Mrs. Osborne Leonard, who has a great reputation as a medium, is booked up, I understand, for two years.

According to "John o' London's" Weekly for December 19th, three little girls living in Nay, Southern France, are able to read pages of books, to thread needles and to detect colours of cloth without using their eyes. The suggested explanation of this power is that they see through the skin of the face, especially the forehead. It is stated that Monsieur Jean Labadie, the noted French scientist, has personally investigated the case and made some interesting observations. "He believes that it is merely some peculiar sensitiveness of the skin nerves which receives impressions of light and conveys them to the brain in the form of definite images. He precludes the possibility of trickery, but awaits further investigation to find a scientific explanation of the phenomenon."

In his address on the evolution of man at the luncheon-hour service at Christ Church, Westminster, on Wednesday, 16th inst., Sir Oliver Lodge said that apart from all puzzles of theology we were immortal beings with a great destiny before us, and were surrounded by a host of helpers "with whom, indeed, I know that it possible to have communion."

## DIRECT WRITING—SOME EARLIER RECORDS.

The subject of Psychography, or writing without the intervention of ordinary human agency, is by no means new, although it has of late attracted greater attention. It has been familiar to all investigators of Psychic Phenomena, and has been called variously Direct or Independent Writing. Records of its occurrence are found in the most ancient works on the subject, and it was perfectly familiar to those early and mediæval students of occult phenomena whose researches throw so much light on that which we now find so perplexing. The most remarkable record, however, of these special facts is made by Baron Guldenstubbé, in a book entitled "La Réalité des Esprits, et le Phénomène Merveilleux de leur écriture directe."

The Baron must have been a Psychic of great power, for all the writings were obtained without the aid of any other person, and under conditions which, in most cases, would preclude the hope of successful results. It is with experiments of this nature as with all others: certain conditions are required for success. These have been, and are, much exaggerated and misrepresented, darkness being popularly supposed to be the principal desideratum. This is not so. I believe that every phenomenon—except such as require darkness for their observation, as, for instance, luminous phosphorescent appearances—can be produced in full light. Much more time and patience would be required; but, granted these, light is no final barrier to success. It is much to be regretted that more persistent attempts have not been made to produce these phenomena in such light as suffices for exact observation. The fact that this is now being done, and with such success as I shall presently show, removes one impediment to observation in the future.

Baron Guldenstubbé seems to have been able to dispense with the usual conditions under which writing is obtained—a closed room with magnetically-charged atmosphere, subdued light, and a formal gathering of persons from or through whom the necessary force is evolved. He obtained his writings anywhere, and at any time, in the open air, and on a tombstone, of which locality he was specially fond. It squared with his idea of the source of the writing, and so facilitated its execution. This, I may say in passing, is far more requisite than any other condition for success, that the Psychic through whom the force is evolved should be at ease and comfort. If he have any special ideas as to the source of the phenomenon, to controvert them by argument is to cause almost certain failure. Left to himself, with surroundings that conduce to comfort of mind and body, and with liberty to follow out his opinions as to the best means of securing results, success will usually follow.

Hence it is that the best, more sure, and most reliable phenomena are seen in private circles, where none but friends, of one mind, and united by the bonds of friendship or affection, are assembled.

Among the places named as those where successful experiments were made are the Louvre, the Museum at Versailles, the Cathedral of Saint Denis, Westminster Abbey, the British Museum, the Cemeteries of Montparnasse, Montmartre, and Père la Chaise; the Bois de Boulogne, and various churches and ancient ruins in France, Germany, Austria, and England.

### THE WITNESSES.

The list of witnesses, twenty-seven in number, selected out of a vast number of distinguished persons who have repeatedly assisted at the Baron's experiments, includes the names of M. Delamarre, editor of the "Patrie"; M. Choisselat, editor of the "Univers"; Mr. Dale Owen; M. Lacordaire, brother of the great orator; M. de Bonuechose, the historian; M. Kiorbœ, a well-known Swedish painter; the Baron von Rosenberg, German Ambassador at the Court of Wurtemberg; Prince Leonide Galitzin, and two other

representatives of the nobility of Moscow; and the Rev. William Mountford, who has lately contributed his personal testimony in the "Spiritualist" of December 21st, 1877.

Mr. Coleman, of Upper Norwood, whose experience dates so far back, informs me that he well remembers Mr. Dale Owen going to Paris for the purpose of witnessing these remarkable experiments. He told Mr. Coleman in detail of his accompanying the Baron and his sister Julia to various chapels in Paris, where he laid down sheets of his own paper, without pencil or writing materials; retiring a few paces, but never losing sight of the paper, he found an intelligent message upon it in every case. Mr. Coleman has one of these curious Psychographs in his own possession. It was obtained at the Palace of the Trianon, Versailles.

The book is illustrated by sixty-seven facsimiles of Psychographs thus obtained, and selected from more than two thousand specimens in twenty different languages, and some of them covering several pages. These were obtained between the years 1856 and 1872. The first experiment was made by placing paper and pencil in a box, which was locked, and the key of which never left the Baron's possession. No one was acquainted with the fact that any such experiment was in progress. After twelve days, during which no mark was made on the paper, there appeared on it certain mysterious characters, and during that day ten separate experiments gave successful results. The box was then left open and watched, and writing was seen to grow upon the paper without the use of the pencil. From that time he abandoned the use of the pencil altogether, and obtained his vast number of Psychographs by the simple process of putting blank paper on the table of his room, or in public buildings, or on the pedestal of ancient statues, or on tombstones in churches and cemeteries. It apparently mattered little where the paper was placed; and it is more than probable that the Baron, by exercise of his will, could have obtained any given name in any given place. The association of name and statue or tomb was a consequence of his mental prepossessions.

The curious reader will find a full account of these experiments made by the Baron in his book above-named.

—From "Psychography," by M.A. (Oxon).

### "FIRE WALKING."

Dr. Lindsay Johnson, of Isipingo Beach, Durban, writing to the "Harbinger of Light" on this subject, refers to the newspaper account of a demonstration of fire walking by a tribe in Fiji, given in the presence of the Prince of Wales. He writes:—

I can bear testimony to this. It is perfectly genuine. Every year at Isipingo, near to my residence, during one of their great festivals, the Indians dig a trench about sixty feet in length, and fill it with shavings and branches of trees and logs. They then set fire to them and keep on heaping on wood until the entire trench is filled with red-hot ashes. One can see the glow for a mile or more away as soon as it gets dark. Then, about half-a-dozen or more of these "holy" men come forward and amidst a great hubbub of praying and shouting, they slowly and deliberately walk through the red-hot ashes, right from one end to the other, with nothing on except a loin girdle, and without apparently the slightest inconvenience, and yet the heat is so great that I was unable to get near enough even to look into the trench—in fact, to approach within three yards of it burns one's face.

I will swear there is no trickery about it, for the natives do not even wet their legs or put anything on the skin. You may say it is all humbug, but the fact remains, as I went there myself to witness it.

The Indians who were present, looked upon it as a most common-place event, but, then, they see it every year of their lives. It is very wonderful, I admit, for I could not have advanced three yards without my legs being burnt to a cinder.

BLESSINGS be with them—and eternal praise,  
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—  
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!

—WORDSWORTH.

## SENSATIONS OF THE DYING.

## HOW LIFE MEMORIES ARE RECALLED.

The apparent recognition by the dying of those who have gone before is a common and notorious fact. So very numerous, indeed, are instances of this kind, that each reader will probably be able to recall to his own mind incidents more convincing and better adapted to support my other assertions than a large collection of accounts received from strangers. I will, therefore, only mention a very few instances in illustration of all that has been; and remains to be, said on the process of death and the entrance into another state.

A very complete description of the feelings of a dying person is given in a letter from Admiral (then Captain) Beaufort, to Dr. Wollaston. This may be found, extracted from the autobiography of Sir John Barrow, in Haddock's "Somnolism and Psycheism":—

Many years ago, when I was a youngster on board one of His Majesty's ships in Portsmouth harbour, after sculling about in a very small boat I was endeavouring to fasten her alongside the ship to one of the scuttlings; in foolish eagerness I stepped upon the gunwale; the boat, of course, upset, and I fell into the water, and, not knowing how to swim, all my efforts to lay hold either of the boat or the floating sculls were fruitless. The transaction had not been observed by the sentinel on the gangway, and, therefore, it was not till the tide had drifted me some distance astern of the ship that a man in the foretop saw me splashing in the water, and gave the alarm. The first lieutenant instantly and gallantly jumped overboard, the carpenter followed his example, and the gunner hastened into a boat and pulled after them.

With the violent but vain attempts to make myself heard, I had swallowed much water. I was soon exhausted by my struggles; and, before any relief reached me, I had sunk below the surface—all hope had fled, all exertion ceased, and I felt that I was drowning. So far these facts were either partially remembered after my recovery, or supplied by those who had latterly witnessed the scene; for during an interval of such agitation a drowning person is too much occupied in catching at every passing straw, or too much absorbed by alternate hope and despair, to mark the succession of events very accurately. Not so, however, *with the fact which immediately ensued*. My mind had then undergone the sudden revolution which appeared to you so remarkable, and all the circumstances of which are now as vividly fresh in my memory as if they had occurred but yesterday.

From the moment that all exertion had ceased—which I imagine was the immediate consequence of complete suffocation—a calm feeling of the most perfect tranquillity succeeded the most tumultuous sensation. It might be called apathy, certainly not resignation; for drowning no longer appeared an evil; I no longer thought of being rescued, nor was I in any bodily pain. On the contrary, my sensations were now of rather a pleasurable cast, partaking of that dull but contented sort of feeling which precedes the sleep produced by fatigue. Though the senses were thus deadened, not so the mind; *its activity seemed to be invigorated in a ratio which defies all description*; for thought rose after thought with a rapidity of succession that is not only indescribable, but probably inconceivable, by anyone who has not been himself in a similar situation. The course of these thoughts I can even now in a great measure retrace; the event that had just taken place, the awkwardness which produced it—the bustle it must have occasioned, for I had observed two persons jump from the chains—the effect it would have on a most affectionate father, the manner in which he would disclose it to the rest of the family, and a thousand other circumstances minutely associated with home, were the first series of reflections that occurred. They took, then, a wider range; our last cruise—a former voyage and shipwreck—my school, the progress I had made there, the time I had misspent, and even all my boyish pursuits and adventures. Thus, travelling backwards, every incident of my past life seemed to me to glance across my recollection in retrograde procession; *not, however, in mere outline as here stated, but the picture filled up, with every minute and collateral feature*; in short, the whole period of my existence seemed to be *placed before me in a kind of panoramic review*, and each act of it seemed to be accompanied by a consciousness of right or wrong, or by some reflection on its cause or consequences—indeed, many trifling events, which had been long forgotten, then crowded into my imagination, and with the character of recent familiarity. The length of time that was occupied by this deluge of ideas, or rather the shortness of time into which they were condensed, I cannot now state with precision; yet, certainly, two minutes could not have elapsed from the moment of suffocation to the time of my being hauled up.

—From "From Matter to Spirit," by C. D. (Mrs. Dr. MORGAN).

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

Sometime ago I had to deal with a book full of the pedantic phraseology of a would-be philosopher. He had discovered that spirits are simply concepts of the human mind. This fondness for taking some particular subject and giving it a new name is well illustrated in the case of mesmerism, which was not accepted until it had been retitled hypnotism. But it remained essentially the same thing.

Some years ago another would-be philosopher claimed that mediums did not derive their information from spirits but simply tapped a "stream of memories" whereupon the late Dr. Hyslop retorted that this was only another way of describing the mind and memory whether of a mortal or a spirit. The mind, in short, represents a stream of memories.

Let us in fancy imagine one of these pedantic people breaking in on the revelry of a Christmas dinner with the information that the turkey, the plum pudding, and indeed the whole repast, are only masses of electrons, and that from the scientific point of view the whole feast is but an "unsubstantial pageant"—a concourse of fortuitous atoms. What should be his punishment? I think it should be to deprive him of any dinner, until he penitently admitted that things remain very much the same whatever they may be called.

I have been discussing with a visitor the question of new comers into our subject. It was agreed that many of them are quiet, sensible and modest people, and that there are lamentable exceptions—the persons who become intoxicated with the marvels, dazzled with the new region of wonders opened to their view, and who are apt to go off at a tangent and make statements in public so full of exaggerations and misconceptions that they give the sober Spiritualists cold shudders. It was this kind of thing which led a cynical observer to discharge his feelings in the following vulgar couplet:—

The aged dotard may retard our cause,  
But Heaven defend us from our "Johnny Raws."

At one time the discussion of Spiritualism in certain circles elicited results that resembled the squawking of infuriated cockatoos. I recall one sentence from a discussion of this kind—"a more hellish, diabolical and fiendish doctrine was never propagated." I like the pungency of it. There was nothing of the niminy-piminy, milk-and-water temperament about the author of that phrase. Ancient Pistol could hardly have done better. It was the true "Ercles' vein."

Times have changed to-day. Now, with a few exceptions, the opponents "roar as gently as any sucking dove." The subject is one, dear brethren, that needs the greatest care. It should be placed in the hands of responsible scientific persons. There are grave dangers. And so forth. In point of fact the dangers are far fewer and far less immediate than those which beset us at every step of our daily lives. I have mentioned the exceptions, which are mainly found in the conjuring fraternity, whose professional jealousy is excited. The professional conjurers believe (or pretend to believe) that mediumship consists in the production of physical marvels, whereas these things are, as we all know, only a very small fraction of psychical manifestations. Some of us are inclined to wish that physical phenomena were as common as the conjurers affect to believe it is. We should then have much more material for scientific investigation.

Meantime, so far as I can understand the conjurer's logic, mediums perform tricks and consequently ought to be put down. (It is, of course, understood that conjurers do not perform tricks.) Also, spirits do not exist, and consequently ought to be abolished. Spiritualists are a curious set of people, but they are increasing at a great rate and include many well-known persons, consequently they may be permitted to live, especially as they are useful for advertising purposes when a new "illusion" is to be presented to the public. If it were not that I have friends amongst the professional conjurers, and know some of them who are convinced Spiritualists, I would here record my solemn and considered opinion that, except in the practice of the tricks of his trade, the professional conjurer is not a very bright person.

D. G.

## HELP FROM THE WORLD UNSEEN.

SOME RECORDS OF SPIRIT MINISTRY.

BY A. M. FAIREY.

It is remarkable how often one comes across, sometimes in the most unexpected places, records of psychic and spiritual experiences. The present writer, some time ago, found in the pages of an ultra-orthodox magazine for children several striking accounts of what was apparently spirit intervention and ministry.

The first was the story of the Rev. John Jones and the mysterious horseman, referred to by Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, in *LIGHT*, of October 24th last. It is interesting, apparently well-authenticated, and well worth re-telling. The writer, whose name is unfortunately not given, prefaces his narrative by stating that, from enquiries, he heard that the Rev. John Jones himself related the incident to the assembled ministers on his arrival at Machynlleth, and that he (the writer) found also that it is recorded in a biographical memoir of Mr. Jones, published in the January number for 1853 of the "*Traethodydd*," a Welsh quarterly.

The Rev. John Jones, of Holywell, Flintshire, was travelling from Bala to Machynlleth. He left Bala about two in the afternoon, having with him money from his church to the annual meeting of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. His journey lay through a wild, desolate region. On emerging from a wood he met a man who, from his dress and the sickle which he carried sheathed with straw, looked like a reaper out of employment. Mr. Jones recognised him as a man he had seen at the village inn at Llanuwchllyn, where he had stopped to bait his horse. The man now touched his hat and asked the time of day. The minister pulled out his watch, and the man cast a peculiar look at its heavy silver case, but nothing else occurred to arouse suspicion.

When Mr. Jones had ridden half-way down a hill, he noticed something moving in the same direction on the other side of a large hedge, which, on his left hand, ran parallel with the road, and terminated at a gate through which he must pass. He thought at first it was an animal, but soon saw it was a man running in a stooping posture, and recognised the reaper, who was now pulling off the straw band from his sickle. The man continued to run till he reached the gate, and then hid behind the hedge near the road.

Mr. Jones looked round. No human being was to be seen. For a moment he hesitated, but his business being of importance, soon decided to continue his journey. He could not dash by, as the gate was shut. There was no way of leaving the road and crossing the fields. The minister bowed his head, and offered up a silent prayer.

Suddenly his horse started off and Mr. Jones, taking the reins from his neck to check him, looked up, and saw on his right hand a horseman in dark dress, mounted on a white horse. (Note that the horse was apparently aware of the presence before his master.)

Intensely surprised, as he had heard no sound of the horse's approach, Mr. Jones told the horseman of the danger. The latter, however, made no answer, but gazed at the gate, now about a quarter of a mile ahead. Mr. Jones followed the look and saw the reaper running away across the field, resheathing his sickle as he went, having evidently relinquished his intention of attacking as soon as he observed that the traveller was not alone.

Mr. Jones continued to talk to his new companion, but to his surprise, received no reply, until, seeing the reaper disappear over the brow of a hill he exclaimed, "Can it for a moment be doubted that my prayer was heard, and that you were sent for my deliverance by the Lord?" The horseman then seemed to utter the one word, "Amen."

After this he did not speak again, although Mr. Jones continued to address him in both English and Welsh.

On coming to the gate, Mr. Jones leaned over to open it with a stick, and then drew his horse aside to let his companion pass through. As he did not come, the minister turned, and, to his astonishment, found that horse and horseman had disappeared. He was absolutely alone. The horseman had certainly not passed through the gate. He could not have leapt the high hedges which bordered the road on both sides, and he was not visible on the road, though the astonished traveller could command a view of it for a long distance.

The minister knelt down on the spot and offered up a prayer of thanksgiving, firmly convinced that help had been miraculously sent him in time of need.

Commenting on this story, another writer in the same magazine gives two instances from his own experience of what he considers the care of guardian angels. As his name is not given the accounts are not of much value as evidence, but are interesting as resembling other stories of spirit ministry. He relates that his father and brother being on the banks of the River Lea, his father, who could not swim, fell into fifteen feet of water. His brother, also unable to swim, plunged in to the assistance of his father, and both were in great danger, though ultimately they got out safely. The brother afterwards said that, when in the water and holding his father, a hand pushed one of his own hands towards the bank, and he was able to grasp an old trunk of

a tree growing under water out of the bank, and by means of this was able to pull himself and his father to safety.

The same writer goes on to say that once, making a call in the city and getting to the top of Moorgate-street, he and his wife started to cross the road to get to the Mansion House. A heavy van and horse stood by the kerb, and a four-wheeled cab was coming in their direction. It seemed that the cabman saw them, and they supposed he would stop, but apparently not noticing their position he drove straight on, and they were in great danger of being crushed between the cab and the van. The wife screamed, but the narrator says that at that moment he realised "a sudden bright presence," and the horse stopped immediately. In his own words, they "were saved by the Lord's angel from being crushed." The wife saw nothing.

The third record, contained in another number of the same periodical, would, if it could be verified, form a striking instance of clairvoyance and prevision. It is at least interesting, apparently quoted from another journal, but unsigned.

Captain W. H—, of the ship "Providence," while on his way home from the White Sea, was overtaken by a storm. The crew worked frantically at the pumps, but the deck was swept by a huge wave that left the vessel almost a wreck. All the provisions were spoiled, nothing being left except a cask of water in the fore-cabin, and a few biscuits, to serve a crew of seven or eight men. The master went below, fell on his knees, and asked God to show him what to do. On rising from his knees he fell into a kind of trance, in which it was shown him what kind of coast they would approach, and the creek into which they would find an entrance. He saw a high, bold shore, with a cliff resembling a sugar-loaf in shape, a long, low reef behind, and three men in a boat coming towards the ship.

The captain went on deck and ordered the fore-sail to be loosed and set, which was done with much difficulty. He said to the mate, "We must get the ship before the wind, and make for some place where we may obtain water and provisions." An observation was made, and it was found they were about a hundred miles from the coast of Norway.

After watching most of the night, the captain lay down to rest, but was at length awakened by the mate, saying, "Here is a 'high, bold shore' ahead, sir! Going on deck, Captain H— recognised the shore he had seen in his vision the day before. He went aloft on the cross-trees, and told the mate to steer according to his orders. They passed two of three openings in the shore, but did not put into any of them, none being the place the captain had seen. He said to the mate that a sugar-loaf shaped rock would presently be seen, then a long, low reef, a sloop's mast at the end of the reef, and a boat with three men in it. This all soon came into view.

When they got to the end of the reef, the boat came alongside the "Providence," and the captain asked the men if they could take him to an anchorage. One man came on board, expressing great surprise that they had come in without a pilot, and said, "Then how have you got in here? You must be a good man. God has been your Pilot!"

The ship was brought to anchor alongside the fishing craft, and the strangers were supplied by the fishermen with water, bread and fish. The captain accompanied one of the fishermen to his home, and the man's wife, on hearing how the vessel had come in, made the same remark that "God must have been their pilot."

Next morning, the fisherman took Captain H— to a height from whence several creeks could be seen, and asked him to point out by which one they had come in. The captain pointed out the one by which they had entered, and the fisherman explained that it was the only one by which it was possible to obtain entrance to that coast, and repeated his former observation: "You must be a good man, for God has been your Pilot."

The "Providence" arrived safely in England after having been given up for lost.

## NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"The Silent Voice." Third Series. G. Bell & Sons, Ltd. (2/-)

"An Occult View of Health and Disease." By Geoffrey Hodson. Theosophical Publishing House, Ltd. (2/6.)

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From "The 'Controls' of Stainton Moses (M.A., Oxon)." By A. W. Trethewey, B.A.

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Ed. MR. F. BLIGH BOND.

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**Croydon.**—Harewood Hall, 96, High-street.—December 27th, 11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Mr. Percy Scholey.

**Camberwell.**—The Central Hall, High-street, Peckham.—December 27th, 11, service; 6.30, Service. Wednesday, 8.30, at 55, Station Road.

**Shepherd's Bush.**—73, Becklow-road.—December 27th, 11, public circle; 6.30, —

**Peckham.**—Lausanne-road.—December 27th, 7, local speakers. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Edey.

**Bowes Park.**—Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (down side).—December 27th, 11, Mrs. Redfern; 7, Mr. Horace Leaf. Wednesday, December 30th, 8, Mr. W. North, at 54, Whittington-road.

**St. John's Spiritualist Mission, Woodberry-grove, North Finchley (opposite Tram Depot).**—December 27th, 7, Mr. E. Meads. Thursday, December 31st, 8, to be announced.

**Central.**—144, High Holborn, W.C.1.—December 25th, no meeting. December 27th, 7, Mrs. E. Clements.

**London District Council.**—144, High Holborn, W.C.1.—December 28th, 8, Mrs. J. Scott, "Theosophy."

**Richmond Free Church, Ormond-road.**—December 27th, 7.30, Mrs. K. Fillmore, address and clairvoyance. December 30th, 7.30, Mr. Sisson, address and clairvoyance.

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