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Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on his Experiences in Africa (Page 268)

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

PREVISION AND WARNING DREAMS.

Mr. J. W. Dunne, author of that epoch-making book *An Experiment with Time*, was lately discussing in the *Daily Mail* the question of warning dreams. His attitude is that the human consciousness is four-dimensional, and that the whole of a man's life from birth to death is equally "present" to him. The warning dream means that in some way the consciousness is sometimes able in sleep to travel a little beyond the point we call *now* and see "coming" events, although Mr. Dunne quite wisely and accurately points out that the foreseen event is not fixed—it is only probable. He does not believe that true dreams of coming disaster are delivered by an outside agency—"they seem to be merely accidental stumblings upon the event which lies ahead". In our observation, that is only partially true. We have sufficient experience to know that such things occur, just as in everyday-life we can sometimes see the future for ourselves, and sometimes have to be advised by others more far-seeing than we are. But it is sufficient for us at the moment to know that prevision is now receiving scientific support, which is the more remarkable in view of the fact that we have known Spiritualists who were by no means convinced of the possibility of prevision, abundant as is the evidence for it.

A NOTE ON MIRACLES.

When we look back on the stories of miracles in all ages we are struck by the fact that not one of them was ever scientifically investigated. There were no researchers then to test medically whether the entranced person was really in a trance, or whether he actually rose from the ground (as in levitations) without the aid of some conjuring trick. So gradually the scientific conclusion has been reached that all these marvels had a natural explanation—illusion, imagination, epilepsy, hallucination, and all the rest of it. When the reasoner, having the results of modern psychical research before him, compared the new with the old, he could not fail to see the extraordinary resemblance between them—some of the peculiarities in the modern cases and the ancient ones were identical, as every student of the subject knows. But this, of course, is not Science; it is only Reason, which has never been very popular. The coincidences are of a kind that

would impress the lawyer if they formed part of any case he had to present, for lawyers are strong on precedents and hold that circumstantial evidence is sometimes stronger than direct testimony to facts by eye-witnesses. They are always impressed when witnesses without any possibility of collusion tell the same tale and corroborate each other even in minute particulars. These things, however, leave the scientific man cold, unless he happens to be a reasoner also. And in any case it is not to his interest to support the Church and its miracles. Did not a great scientist once say something to the effect that the cradle of Science was surrounded by dead theologues, like the strangled snakes round the cradle of the infant Hercules? But Science in the end will have to "eat the leek", and the Church will be justified in spite of itself.

SCIENTIFIC PREVISION.

It has occasionally happened that when some new scientific discovery has been made the newspapers have magnified it to a sensational degree, much to the annoyance of the sober scientists, who have complained bitterly of exaggerations of irresponsible scribes catering for the crude appetites of the crowd. This was the case with wireless telegraphy at its beginnings. To-day we find that even the wild imaginings of the newspaper men have been outdone by the accomplished facts of Radio. It may be the same with the recent discoveries concerning prevision and the nature of Time. We have so far seen no sensational articles on this subject, of a kind calculated to shock the mathematicians. And yet there is probably a great future for these discoveries, even though at present they are little more than hints and gleams. The time may well come when so many people will be able to read the future with some approach to accuracy that it will be quite impossible to punish them all at the police-courts in the customary fashion of an asinine Legislature. Will Science permit itself to be held up by a Witchcraft Act, we wonder?

RIGHT AND LAW DIVINE.

By right divine the world belongs to me,
To sail its seas and roam each distant shore.
By right divine my human will is free
To search for truth, its hidden paths explore;
Then surely should I use the gift that's mine,
Nor cramp my soul with dogmas ready-made,
No ancient lore my reason should confine
Till I of all clear thinking am afraid.

By law divine I tread my lonely way,
Amid a crowd as lonely all as I;
With jest and laughter that shall not betray
The solitude we feel and would deny.
By law divine I chisel out my fate,
But only from the stone that's mine to use:
The freest will not here may arrogate;
The shape alone we have the power to choose.

—E. HALL HAINS.

MR. FLORIZEL VON REUTER IN ICELAND.

HIS OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES.

On Sunday evening, 26th ulto., at the Æolian Hall in Bond Street, under the auspices of the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Mr. Florizel von Reuter, who is famous as a violinist, and now becoming well known in connection with Spiritualism and Psychical Research, gave an intensely interesting account of the recent visit of himself and his mother to Iceland.

He began by referring to the capital Reykjavik, and its founding in the year 870 by Ingolfur, a Norwegian chief, who, being banished from Norway, set out with a following of one hundred vassals in two galleys. The voyagers sailed on until they reached the shores of what is now known as Iceland, landing in different parts and later building up the city which is now the Icelandic capital. It seems, however, that the Norse visitors were not the first inhabitants, for they found the ruins of monasteries which had been erected by Irish monks who had all gradually perished, chiefly through the severity of the climate.

Referring to his personal experiences in Iceland, Mr. von Reuter said:

In no European country does progress in psychic research and Spiritualism present so pleasing and encouraging an aspect as in Iceland. This little country with its hundred thousand inhabitants has a surprisingly large percentage of firm and earnest believers in spirit communication, not to mention the comparatively large number of persons who, though interested in occult matters and favourably disposed to psychic science, have not yet joined the "pros". Progress in psychic research in Iceland is largely due to the unceasing efforts of that grand old man, Einar Kvaran, Iceland's leading novelist, one of the most lovable men I have ever met. Mr. Kvaran himself told me that when, many years ago, he first declared his psychic beliefs, he was subjected to the customary persecution by the scoffers and was even hooted upon the streets by certain fanatics. "All this is now changed," he said, "and now there is not one newspaper which would venture to attack Psychic Science or Spiritualism."

The Reykjavik official Society for Psychical Research numbers over 400 members, among these being the most prominent and learned men of the city, such as Professor Thordus Sveinsson (leading alienist, physician, and director of the Reykjavik Lunatic Asylum), Professor Einar Arnorson (Professor of Law), Jacob Smari (Master of Arts at Reykjavik College), Dean Christien Danielson (ex-member of Parliament), Chief Justice Pall Einarson (Music Director and Organist), Pall Isolfson, Halldor Jonasson (writer and philosopher), and many others. Einar Kvaran is President of the Society, which, while not relaxing its critical attitude in research, is, nevertheless, pronouncedly Spiritualistic in its views. Kvaran gained an important ally when Haraldur Nielsson, Professor of Theology, and one of the leading clergymen of Reykjavik, declared his acceptance of Spiritualism. Haraldur Nielsson was Iceland's most celebrated researcher. His books upon psychic phenomena have been widely circulated in Europe, several of them having been translated into European languages. Nielsson died about two years ago and has since been indefatigable in giving proofs of his continued existence. His son-in-law, Svein Sveinsson, visited Mr. Hope in Crewe about a

year ago, and obtained an absolutely perfect "extra", which all Reykjavik was able to identify as the deceased Haraldur Nielsson.

Continuing, the speaker said that Reykjavik had several trance mediums, as well as apport mediums.

A most authentic case of apport was experienced by Mr. Kvaran during Mr. von Reuter's stay in Reykjavik. He himself was not present, but heard the facts the next day from Mr. Kvaran (whose reliability is naturally beyond doubt).

It seemed that the medium had not been in the house for over a month. In the course of the sitting it was announced that a photograph, which Mrs. Kvaran remembered having dusted that morning on the piano, had been transported to another house, and placed in a drawer in a certain room. Upon examination it was found that the picture was no longer on the piano. Mr. Kvaran then telephoned to the friend in whose house the picture was stated now to be, and upon search being made, it was actually found exactly where the control had said it had been put. The medium had not been in the house in question. "There seems consequently to be no question about the genuineness of this phenomenon, though none is more sceptical than myself where apports are concerned," said the lecturer.

Another remarkable case of psychic phenomena was related by a well-known pianist in Reykjavik, whose daughter had considerable psychic power. It chanced that the piano in the house was greatly out of tune and the pianist had repeatedly talked of having it tuned. He had, however, omitted to give the order for the tuner to come.

One evening he was out, and his daughter was alone in the house. Without having a light she sat down at the piano and began to play. She continued to play for about half an hour, and it seemed to her that the piano was growing less out of tune as she played. However, she did not pay much attention.

When her father returned he went to the piano, and after striking a few chords said, in surprise: "So the tuner has been here. I did not order him." His daughter then declared that no tuner had been in the house. The tuner, upon being interviewed subsequently, stated he had not been near the place, nevertheless the piano was now in perfect tune. A few days later, the daughter, who occasionally wrote automatically, received a communication from a deceased friend, also a well-known Icelandic pianist, who wrote: "It was I who tuned the piano while you were playing."

Mr. von Reuter gave this story "with all reserve". The principal actors were well known in Reykjavik, and their word would seem to be above suspicion. Certainly, if true, it was a unique psychic phenomenon.

Clairvoyance was widely prevalent amongst the Icelanders. In fact, there was scarcely a family amongst the more simple folk which had not had some personal experience of this sort. Probably the exceeding clearness of the atmosphere, as well as the fact that the eyes of the inhabitants have not been weakened by the crowds and sights of the more densely populated countries, has helped to develop second-sight. The eyes of the Icelandic people were singularly beautiful, large, clear, calm, and expressive. They are accustomed to looking at wide open country and unbroken expanses of land, consequently they have nothing of the nervous tension in their eyes which crowded thoroughfares and narrow streets invariably cause to the residents of modern capitals.

Professor Sveinsson, the aforementioned alienist specialist, possesses the faculty of separating the astral body from its physical shell, and always retains a clear memory of his experiences while out of the body. It is these experiences which have convinced him of the truth of life after physical death. His astral body has occasionally been seen and recognised when separated from the physical body. Speaking to Mr. von Reuter of his experiences in the astral body, Professor Sveinsson said: "Upon emerging from the physical covering I always saw my physical body lying unconscious. I was greatly struck by the *naïveté* of the undeveloped or earthbound spirits, waiting for a chance to slip through an open door or window."

Dealing with his experiences and those of his mother, Mr. von Reuter said:

In Iceland the interest in psychic matters is so great that, though I was ostensibly in Reykjavik to give concerts, a psychic lecture which I announced was sold out in the course of a few hours, and had to be repeated. Upon arriving in Reykjavik I found that nearly everyone had read my book *Psychical Experiences of a Musician*, and that it was still selling well. There was consequently considerable interest in various circles to have some experiments with our "Additor", especially to see whether my mother would be able to get through messages in Icelandic. At first there was some difficulty in getting used to the conditions. Our friends on the other side explained that the confusion was heightened by a crowd of ignorant Icelandic spirits, many of whom were unable to read or write, who filled the room and curiously pressed around the board, seeking for a chance to communicate. These intelligences, many of whom were centuries old, interfered at first with the more legitimate communicators. However, little by little, order was restored on the spirit side and a system organised which ultimately led to excellent results, whole messages in Icelandic coming through from communicators who were almost invariably identified by the sitters. Two methods of procedure were employed. Either the controls themselves wrote the words, merely repeating them as they sounded to them, in which case the spelling was often phonetic, or they occasionally permitted some communicator to write, only joining in when the intelligence failed to make itself understood. In the latter case the writing was almost always correct Icelandic.

For the benefit of the sceptic it should here be pointed out that it would have been theoretically impossible for my mother to acquire any knowledge of the language without taking lessons. There is not such a thing as an Icelandic phrase-book for tourists to be had in all Iceland. Though the animistic theory, according to which it would be possible for my mother to write Icelandic by drawing the knowledge from the subconsciousness of the sitters, may be entitled to consideration, I regard it as a considerable stretch of imagination to suppose that my mother could successfully use a language unknown to her, or personate people unknown to her, giving upon each occasion a series of names belonging to the family of the person supposed to be communicating.

In the course of our Iceland sittings the following names of persons unknown to us were given: Magnus, Kristina, Gunnor, Einar, Sigurdur, Hansina, Jochum, Matthias, Hendrik, Frederik, Elizabeth, Anna, Josep, Gislina, Adalbjorg, Asland, Jakobina, Sophie, Inga, Sigridur, Ottar, Svein, Haraldur, Hjorleig, Halldor, Boldur, Gudrun, and Thorlakur. Many of these names were absolutely new to us, nor had we ever seen them spelt. The name Thorlakur is pronounced so differently from the way it is written that the control first wrote: "I get a

name which sounds like Fetlock (corresponding more or less to the pronunciation Thetloggur). It begins with a funny P." This applied to an Icelandic letter, similar to P which is pronounced "Th", the name Thetloggur looking like "Porlakur" when you see it written.

At one sitting no fewer than five clergymen (in spirit) were present, the control being able to give the names as well as relationship of all five to the sitters. Special interest centred upon those communications purporting to come from Haraldur Nielsson. At the time the first message was received my mother was unaware of the identity of the Haraldur in question, not having studied the history of psychic research in Iceland.

In all, four messages were got through from Nielsson. The last one was the most evidential. It read (in correct Icelandic): "It gives me great pleasure to be here with my dear old friends. I am often with you. I wish to give proof. Greet from me Adalbjorg, Sigurdur's daughter." (Note: In Iceland there are no real surnames.)

Upon one occasion the name Jon Espolin was given, together with the information that he had been a well-known Icelandic historian. All present immediately recognised him, and one sitter, whose grandfather, it afterwards transpired, had been a half-brother of Espolin, remarked that it was exactly 100 years since he died. The intelligence contradicted and gave the year 1836 as his death year. Subsequent inquiry proved the truth of this statement, though all present had supposed he died in 1829.

The second case took place in the house of a doctor living in a village about twenty minutes distant from Reykjavik. We had motored over with friends, even the name of the people we were to visit being unknown to us. An impromptu sitting was arranged, and our hostess immediately received greetings from a certain Benedico. Later the name Greendale was given. (The person in question was the father of our hostess, named Benedict Grondal, called intimately Benedico.) Then the name Magnus was given, the control writing: "He wants to say, 'thank you', and speaks about a doctor." Dr. E. (our host) said: "That is probably my friend, Professor Magnusson, who was a doctor." Shortly after we left the house. Now, unknown to us, it seemed that the doctor and his wife had taken in an orphan girl, to whom they were giving a home. This girl had been in Reykjavik on the afternoon of our visit and, upon returning, was not told that we had been there. The morning after she came down to breakfast, saying: "I had a queer dream last night. I dreamed that my father came to me and said: 'I tried to reach you yesterday by writing with a strange lady who came to the house in the afternoon. I also wanted to thank the doctor and his wife for their kindness to my orphan daughter.'" The doctor and his wife, during the sitting, had quite forgotten that the girl's father's name was Magnusson and that he, too, had been a doctor.

In the course of his concluding remarks, Mr. von Reuter referred to the excellent work done by Mr. Vout Peters on his visit to Iceland several years ago. Mr. Peters's prospective visit in the autumn was much looked forward to. A fund had also been raised for the purpose of bringing Valiantine to Reykjavik, and it was to be hoped that this medium will see his way to accepting the offer, as direct-voice mediumship is as yet unknown there.

After leaving Reykjavik, Mr. von Reuter gave a concert and two lectures on one of the Westman Islands, a group of islands only one of which is inhabited, situated a night's cruise from Iceland itself. This has a population of some 3,000, mostly fishermen. Mr. Kvaran accompanied them as interpreter for the lectures.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE DARK CONTINENT.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE TALKS OF HIS AFRICAN TOUR.

Describing some of his recent experiences in Africa to the members of the Spiritualist Community at Grotrian Hall on Sunday, May 26th, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle said he was greatly impressed by the keen interest in psychic matters shown in the quantity, as well as the type, of questions submitted to him at his numerous lectures. On the voyage out from England his fellow-passengers had persuaded him to lecture on Spiritualism, and he had given three addresses, to the first-, second-, and third-class sections respectively. Written questions from these audiences were numerous, those from the third-class passengers being particularly intelligent, and in some instances highly abstruse.

Some of the questions he was called upon to deal with during his tour were mirth-provoking; a favourite poser—from ladies in the audience—was: "Must I have the same husband in the next world?" One gentleman, evidently a believer in reincarnation, had sent in an unsigned query: "Who was I the last time?" "I answered," said Sir Arthur, "I don't know who you were the last time, sir, and I don't even know who you are *this time*."

NO ATTACK ON RELIGION.

Sir Arthur had been at great pains to make it quite clear to his African audiences that Spiritualism was in no sense an attack on religion. Our present civilisation had been largely built upon the ethics of Christianity, and the great enemy of religion was the individual—frequently a person of noble mind—who said there was no life after death. Spiritualists were changing that materialistic attitude, and were really defending the "holy of holies" of all religions. As a Spiritualist, Sir Arthur only wanted to "scrape the barnacles off the boat, not to scrape a hole in the vessel".

AN OPERATIC CONTROL.

In Capetown Sir Arthur had sat with a medium, Mrs. Butters, whose control, "Signor Sabatini", claimed to have been an Italian vocalist while on earth; at this seance Sabatini sang to the assembly, using the medium's vocal apparatus; it was a magnificent male voice they had heard, and the experiment had greatly impressed a gentleman who was present, and who was a considerable musical critic.

WAS IT ABDUHL LATIF?

After one of his lectures Sir Arthur received a letter from a lady in the audience describing a spirit-form which had stood behind him during the address. It was an Eastern figure—a man wearing a curious turban which appeared to be of antique Persian design. This occurred in Nov. 26th, 1928. On Dec. 8th, Sir Arthur opened his mail which had just arrived from England. Among the letters was one from Mr. R. H. Saunders, who told of a spirit communication to the effect that Abduhl Latif, the Persian physician, was assisting Sir Arthur in his work—the text of the message was: "Abduhl Latif is with him now; he is well looked after."

"I think that is really beyond coincidence," added Sir Arthur.

A NATIVE CLAIRVOYANTE.

At Durban, one of the district commissioners wrote that a native woman wished to speak to "the man who had come to Africa to talk about spirits". "That message," said Sir Arthur, "was evidently intended for me; but I could not go to the kraal, some ninety miles away, where the woman lived, so Mr. Ashton Jonson and my son went as my deputies." They duly reached the kraal, after some difficulty, and were met by a black woman who went into trance and spoke, in native dialect, which was translated by an interpreter

for the benefit of the white visitors. Part of the trance message ran: "Tell the white man he will have success. Great opposition to his coming had been prepared here, but this has now been broken down."

KEIR HARDIE'S PHOTO.

At Johannesburg a photograph was brought to Sir Arthur's notice. A local gentleman, well known to be an atheist, was "snapped" while sitting under a tree. When the film was developed there appeared on the tree-trunk the clear reproduction of a man's face bearing a strong likeness to the late Mr. Keir Hardie. The atheistic gentleman admitted that in his youth he and Hardie had been close friends.

AT THE GRAVE OF CECIL RHODES.

While staying in Rhodesia Sir Arthur received a communication purporting to come from Cecil Rhodes. "Rhodes said that if I would go to his grave on the Matopo Hills he would communicate with me. We all went. My wife sat on the edge of the slab round the monument, pencil and paper in hand. We waited, but nothing happened. After a bit the pencil gave a few hesitating jerks. Later on it moved rapidly, and there came in full flood a message that bears every sign of being genuine, although it is not finally evidential. I shall give this message," added Sir Arthur, "in the appendix of my forthcoming book [*Our African Winter*]."

After this pencilled communication had come through, and while the party were preparing to go, the Matabele guardian who was on duty beside the grave, and who had been watching the proceedings from a short distance away, came forward and, without a word, made a most profound obeisance before Lady Doyle. Evidently this native watcher had seen something that made a deep impression on his mind.

THE MAKING OF MAN.

"Are we as yet only semi-human?" is the opening sentence of an article by Professor Low in the *Sunday Express* of the 19th ulto. The answer must plainly be in the affirmative, although the proportion of the human element may not be quite exact—it may be less or greater than half. But we cannot be fully human while the proverbial ape and tiger (and other lower creatures) still manifest their existence in us. It is interesting to observe that the Professor considers that in time men will develop new senses to take the place of the old, which in these days of defective physical senses is becoming acutely necessary. He refers to telepathy, and thinks that its existence, as, possibly, an electrical process, will soon be established. He considers that "everyday communication between two minds separated by great distances is bound to come". Gazing into the future he sees startling developments through those new-born senses. But, as usual, the poet has gone before the scientist, for, to cite but one instance, Mr. Stephen Phillips in his poem *Midnight*, 1900, predicted these and other marvels, some of which have already been fulfilled.

MR. VON REUTER'S FORTHCOMING CONCERT.

The many admirers of Mr. Florizel von Reuter will welcome the news that he is giving a violin recital at Grotrian Hall, London, W., on Tuesday, June 18th, at 8.30 p.m. Mr. von Reuter is well known to Spiritualists as the author of the remarkable book, *The Psychic Experiences of a Musician*, and as a convincing lecturer on psychic subjects. If psychic messages are to be believed, he is in intimate touch with that great wizard of the violin, Nicolo Paganini (who died 1840), who has communicated many times through von Reuter's mother.

Tickets (including tax): Reserved, 8/6 and 5/9; Unreserved, 3/-; can be obtained at the Box Office, Grotrian Hall, and from the usual agents.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(The Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by Correspondents)

TRUTHS—ANCIENT AND MODERN.

Sir,—LIGHT describes the progress being made in our knowledge of spiritual truths, but is it within the scope of LIGHT to inquire into ancient truths? I refer to the question of how far St. Origen and St. Jerome taught the truth when they compiled the Bible, and accepted the old Jewish teaching of the Omniscient and Omnipotent Jehovah creating man, and then—because man disobeyed Him—cursing His creation. Can this be true? Personally I have only obtained contradictory replies from “the other side”, but some of your readers may have had more satisfactory results.—Yours, etc.,

A. L. BEGBIE.

36, Rowan Road, W.6.

THE CROSS IN THE SKY.

Mrs. M. Robertson Rodger writes :

Many years ago, in the 'seventies I think, my father went for an Easter holiday to Worthing or some place near. He came home very much excited and impressed, and told me that he had been walking on the shore on Good Friday evening when he saw “form itself in the sky, a beautiful cross of light, and underneath the arms were dark spaces, through which I could see the stars”.

I was only a child then, but have never forgotten the impression that the story, and its effect on my father, had on me.

He was very reserved in character, and not easily convinced, which made his story much more easily believed. I send you this as you asked in LIGHT for any similar signs in the sky having been seen on other Good Fridays.

“SCIENCE AND THE INFINITE.”

Mr. F. C. Constable writes :

You state in your review (May 18th) of Mr. Klein's book *Science and the Infinite* that the author attempts “to show that, apart from the physical senses, there is no evidence for the separate existence of Space and Time”.

In his Inaugural Dissertation of 1770, Kant states : “Time, then, is the absolutely first formal principle of the sensible world.” He also states : “Space, then, is the absolutely first formal principle of the sensible world.”

If we are no more than beings of body and brain, then we are subject to Space-Time as a reality. We enter the sensible world at birth and leave it at death; with this Kant agrees, giving relative reality to us as such subjects. But Kant held that the real proper self of man is a transcendental subject. (This terrible word “transcendental” means simply that the real, proper self of man is not conditioned by the materiality that pertains to scientific Space-Time, the limitations of which it transcends. It may be roughly termed a soul or spirit. Kant himself refers to it as the soul of man.)

As subjects, then, we are but forms conditional in Space-Time of our real, proper selves—not the extensional Space-Time of official science. When at death we pass out of the sensible universe we are freed from the limitations of extensional Space-Time, and as real, proper selves survive.

There are arguments which can be offered in proof of the reality of scientific Space-Time, hence the

“impossibility of survival”. But, I think, far stronger arguments can be offered against the reality of Space-Time, and for the reality of survival.

THE SOURCES OF TRUTH.

Dr. Elizabeth Sharpe, of Limbdi, Kathiawar, India, writes :

In the article by Mr. F. C. Constable, M.A., entitled “Time, Space, and the Spirit World”, he says that “at death our bodies, brains, and all brain-thought come to an end. There is, as materialists hold, *nothing material to survive*, and they are quite right”.

From the grey matter of the brain comes a registered thought: from another grey matter a physical body. Both are to suffer change (not death, but call it death, if you choose). *Nevertheless, the conditions that made that matter evolve, they remain. Study those.* In them lies the germ of every ideal; and further I would say to those who clairvoyantly see “lights”: Keep these sacred fires ever lit by intensest purity, intensest selflessness, clean food, and clean thought, for you who see them are potential saints.

SPIRITUALISM IN FINLAND.

Mr. A. Vout Peters writes, from Jyvaskyla, Finland :

Finland is associated by long tradition with the mystical side of life; in ancient days sailors would “buy a good wind” from Finland soothsayers, and to have a Finn on board ship was regarded by those simple mariners as a happy omen.

Modern Finland is materialistically progressive in the cities, but in the country districts, remote from the towns, old beliefs still linger, and obscure forms of psychic faculty are still practised. For instance, there are country-folk who can stop the flow of blood from a wound by the laying on of hands; such a gift would naturally be of immense value in small isolated villages, far from medical aid, particularly in the depth of winter when communication becomes difficult. The faculty of dowsing for water and metals is also known, though mineral deposits in Finland are limited. There are many natural clairvoyants, but their gift is generally not of a highly-developed order. I am told that in the more remote northern parts of Finland spells and incantations are still employed among the peasantry, these practices having been handed down from far-off generations. In the Finnish national epic, the “Kalevala”, these magic rites are touched upon.

I am writing these lines in Finland, where I am engaged upon a lecturing tour, visiting a number of towns in this wonderful country, and giving tests in clairvoyance and psychometry, in addition to addressing meetings. In many of these places nothing in the way of Spiritualistic teaching or demonstration has been given before, but the message is welcomed, and my work is most enjoyable. I am received with great kindness, and have been asked to come again. Though Spiritualism, as we know it, is practically unknown, there is a definite awakening of interest in our subject, and Sir Oliver Lodge's *Raymond* has now been translated into Finnish. In the course of our travels I, and my translator, are distributing leaflets on psychic matters, as well as a book by a well-known Finnish author, the title of which (in English) would be *Do the Dead Live?* This book is compiled from tests given in my public and private work here.

May I add that for those who love natural beauty and would appreciate a complete change, I can thoroughly recommend Finland, a land of song, forests, and kind hearts.

MR. MAURICE BARBANELL asks us to state that his future address will be 77, Meadway, N.W.11. Telephone, Speedwell 3560.

LIGHT.

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AMERICAN and CANADIAN subscribers are reminded that the price of LIGHT is 8 cents weekly, and that the subscription rates—although varying slightly according to the rate of exchange—work out approximately at \$5.50 for 12 months and \$2.75 for 6 months; remittances can be made by International Money Order obtainable at all post offices, or from the foreign-exchange departments of most national banks. A sealed letter to England goes for the same postage as domestic letters of the first class.

ADVERTISEMENTS.—For rates, apply The Advertisement Manager, LIGHT, 34, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4. (Phone: Central 1462.)

THE FLOWING TIDE.

Shakespeare has said that there is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to Fortune. And Byron observed that there is a tide in the affairs of women which, taken at the flood, leads Heaven knows where! But that as being a mere flippancy may be dismissed.

We are concerned with Shakespeare's dictum, which is eminently true since the state of ebb and flow is a condition of all human affairs, and has been noted as one of the phenomena of Nature, shown in a myriad forms.

Just now there is a tide in the affairs of Spiritualism, a flow-tide. We have several times noted that in our movement there has been for many years an alternate succession of tides, the ebb and the flow. But we have also observed, each time that it comes in, it comes always a little farther up the shore and marks a new tide-line. Watching the present flood of interest in the subject, we are conscious of the immense advance which has been made. The question is much better understood and observed with more sympathy than ever before. The waves have come higher up the beach. Never at any time in the past has the Press responded to the appeal of Spiritualism and psychical research to the same degree.

There are, of course, several aspects of the matter to consider. There is the religious, the philosophical, and the scientific. We have put them in the order generally accepted. But there is little doubt that at the present stage the scientific is the most important—although its priority can be only temporary. Still, it is clear that until official Science is finally convinced of the reality of the matter the progress of the idea in the general mind must be slow, so far at least as the external evidences for a life after death are concerned. The clearing away of the old crudities and superstitions (especially of theology) in the matter of ghosts and miracles, was naturally indiscriminate, true and false alike being swept out by the progress of Science and critical scholarship.

But the inextinguishable quality of truth preserves it in all circumstances. It is driven out many times, but it always returns. As Bryant put it:

Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers.

Apart from that, the world's teachers and leaders have to do with a questing spirit in humanity, and a deepening suspicion that neither Religion nor Science has yet told the whole story of the nature of man and his destiny.

That story is to-day being disclosed, bit by bit, in a fragmentary fashion, every item of it being hotly disputed, which is all to the good, for the fight against Truth has at least the merit of sifting out error and preventing the addition of spurious interpolations to the authentic tale.

The tide has returned. It is coming to the flood. Small doubt it will ebb again as it has done so often in the past. But it has brought us much to keep the thinkers of the world employed. Nor are Spiritualists neglecting the opportunity so presented. But even if they omit to do so we should not expect that "all the voyage of their life" would be "bound in shallows and in miseries", for Shakespeare was there writing of the personal fortune, the neglected opportunity of the individual man to "make good". This is a larger matter. It concerns a cause, a world-movement; and the flowing tide, although it must ebb at length, will flow again, and in greater volume than ever before.

THE HOMEWARD WAY.

BY ETHEL WILTON.

I should like to feel that these few words may be of some help and comfort to anyone who is watching a dear one pass through the Valley of the Shadow and who is perhaps feeling that when the beloved spirit leaves this world it may feel lonely and bewildered in its new surroundings. I now feel sure that those who have loved us and have passed on before not only meet us on the Farther Shore, but are permitted to help us through our final journey and lead our spirit to its brighter home.

During my mother's final illness, which lasted for three months, she passed through many stages of mental and bodily distress, but I am thankful to say that the last three weeks or so of her earthly life were quite peaceful and happy; she seemed to live in the spirit world far more than in this material one. She evidently suffered not at all, and took very little notice of what went on round her, and had no interest at all in the outside world.

She spoke often of my father, who passed over many years ago, and of her sister and many others who have left us, and evidently they were very real presences to her. She spoke of meeting my father, not as if her mind had gone back to old times, but as if they had recently met after long separation, for one day when my brother and I were sitting by her bedside she said, with a glad smile, "I saw father to-day. He knew me at once; he was so delighted to see me again." And another time she said: "I have been for a lovely walk with father, and in a beautiful wood where daffodils were growing—I am a little tired now and father says I must rest." And then she had a quiet sleep and woke refreshed. Her spirit seemed constantly to move in beautiful country where the sun was always shining and the flowers were bright.

One day she had been quiet for some time and had evidently been talking to my father, for she turned to me and gave me a message from him to me and one for my brother, who was also by her side. The last words she spoke were two days before she passed over. She had been sleeping, and woke with a lovely smile on her face and her eyes shining, and said, in a hushed voice, "It was beautiful." Her passing was very peaceful, and I think her spirit was quite unafraid and glad to go, and I feel sure my father was with her to lead her spirit home.

Go, gentle spirit, soar to realms above—
Find peace and joy in lands of Perfect Love.
But in thy new found happiness bestow
A thought, a prayer for those you love below,
That when our earthly pilgrimage is o'er
There'll be a glad reunion on that radiant shore.

SIDELIGHTS.

Professor A. S. Eddington, Plumian Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge, made some arresting statements to the Society of Friends in the course of a lecture, prominently reported in the *Evening News*. The address was principally directed to answering the question: Does God really exist? He attached no great importance to academic arguments as to atheism and deism. Theological or anti-theological argument which sought to prove or disprove the existence of a deity seemed to him to occupy itself largely with skating among the difficulties caused by our making a fetish of the word.

* * * * *

"It is probably true," he said, "that the recent changes of scientific thought remove some of the obstacles to a reconciliation between religion and science." This did not, however, imply a proposal to base religion on a scientific discovery, and he would be opposed to such an attempt.

* * * * *

Continuing, Professor Eddington said: "We have to build the spiritual world out of symbols taken from our own personality, as we build the scientific world out of the symbols of the mathematician. I think, therefore, we are not wrong in embodying the significance of the spiritual world to ourselves in the feeling of a personal relationship, for our whole approach to it is bound up with those aspects of consciousness in which personality is centred. Science has an important part to play in our everyday existence, and there is far too much neglect of science, but its intention is to supplement not to supplant the familiar outlook. Religious creeds are a great obstacle to any full sympathy between the outlook of the scientist and the outlook that religion is so often supposed to require. In religion we are repelled by that confident theological doctrine which has settled for all generations just how the spiritual world is worked, but we need not turn away from the measure of light that comes into our experience, showing us a way through the unseen world."

* * * * *

Dr. W. B. Selbie, in answering a correspondent in the *Christian World* of May 23rd who writes in some distress because relatives of hers have turned Spiritualist (though the correspondent admits that their whole lives have been changed for the better), replies that he does not think there is much to regret or fear, for if Spiritualism turned certain individuals "from being worldly, indifferent, and sensual people into good and useful Christians, one can only be thankful for it".

* * * * *

The *Sunday Chronicle* of May 26th gives a report of a seance held in New York City, in the home of Mr. Charles Squire, the medium being an "amateur from London". Somebody at the seance made the extraordinary request that an attempt should be made to communicate with the spirit of Nero—a proceeding which will strike the experienced Spiritualist as somewhat extravagant. The result was somewhat startling. "The air in the room seemed suddenly to grow chilly. There was a horrible, awesome feeling of impending disaster. . . . Then the table went over with a vigorous bang." Says Mr. Squire: "I managed to switch on the light, and an amazing sight met my eyes. There lay the table, upside down, and with one leg broken off. Part of the wall was slightly damaged, and two vases that had been on the mantelshelf were lying shattered to pieces on the floor. Next, when I looked at the corridor outside, more havoc met my eyes. Several relics I had secured from the catacombs of Rome, and which had been standing on a table, were likewise in fragments."

That cautious and conservative journal, *Nature*, notices in its columns of May 18th a recent volume put out by the American S.P.R., *The Thumb-print and Cross-Correspondence Experiments made with the Medium Margery during 1927 and 1928*. In a guarded manner, our contemporary admits that the thumb-prints (which were obtained on dental wax) are of some interest considered merely as a question of mechanical production, but considers that an examination of the wax originals (which are in Boston) would be more satisfactory than of the photographic reproductions. It concludes with these words: "It would appear that, under much stricter conditions than those described in this paper, it might be possible to test these phenomena in a manner free from those objections which usually prevent any adequate examination of supposedly 'psychic' manifestations."

DREAMS AND PREVISION.

BY MRS. PHILIP CHAMPION DE CRESPIGNY.

In the review of Miss Mary Monteith's volume, *A Book of True Dreams*, an instance is given of prevision, through a dream, of an incident taking place a few hours afterwards. In the dream, Colonel S. was out shooting with a party, had no luck; and at a certain cove a white pheasant rose and was shot. This incident was repeated accurately in real life the morning following.

The reviewer speculates on the object of such prevision, there being apparently no particular value in foreknowledge of the movements of a white pheasant; in the same connection an experience of my own, almost similar, may be of interest as indicating a possible object in such a phenomenon outside the details of the incident itself.

I have frequently had an experience, half-vision, half-dream, at the instant of waking up, predicting some development in which at the moment I may have been vitally interested. When this occurs I have never known the prediction to prove false. Some time ago I had such a "vision", but the fulfilment was so long delayed that one day I began to doubt the reliability of information given to me in that way, and to think I must have been "let down".

The following morning, as I woke up, still partly asleep, I was suddenly in a high belfry. I glanced at the criss-crossed beams upon which I was standing and saw the ground far below. Great bells were balanced round me, up-ended as I believe they sometimes are when at rest. I caught hold of the edge of one of them, and to my horror it turned over and threw me off my balance. I caught at the clapper and was swung down beneath the bell. There I hung at the end of the clapper, and my anxiety as to whether someone would come and ring the bell was so great that I woke up!

At 11 o'clock, a few hours after the "dream", I went by invitation to the trade show of a film, without the least idea of what I was going to see. To my astonishment the incident of my "dream" was enacted before my eyes! The girl in the principal part went up into a belfry precisely as I had, with criss-crossed beams through which she looked down into the dizzy depths below. She caught hold of the clapper of an alarm bell that was going to sound her lover's death-knell and swung to and fro at the end of it.

At first glance there seemed to be no meaning in such prevision of an utterly unimportant event. But on thinking it over I realised it was intended to reassure my doubting mind as to the reliability of those waking-moment messages—a definite message in itself. Beneath such apparently meaningless demonstrations there often may lie something worth delving for.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

HYPNOTISM IN RELATION TO MEDIUMSHIP.

BY HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S.

There can be little doubt that mediumistic "control" is analogous to hypnotic control. The fact that by means of hypnotism supernormal faculties can often be stimulated to activity indicates this. There are many other similarities, including the varied reactions of people to hypnosis. The grades of hypnotic response are almost identical with those of mediumship, ranging from zero to complete unconsciousness so far as the waking mind is concerned.

To the skilled observer there are numerous similar reactions, many of them so slight as not to be noticeable, even by the subject. Among the preliminary reactions are: acceleration of the pulse, deepening of breathing, muscular relaxation, coma, and so on, to complete mediumistic entrancement in the one case, artificial somnambulism in the other.

The most vital difference lies in the fact that the medium does not respond to a visible operator, while the hypnotic subject does. Even this difference is not absolute, and just as a hypnotised subject will occasionally respond to the commands of a person other than the hypnotiser, so will the medium, especially in the early days of development. In both cases the same psychological factors are at work, as there must be confidence on the part of the subject and medium towards the extraneous person. In hypnotism, consent must usually first be given by the operator; in mediumship the suggestion must come either from the tutor or the sitter. Lack of confidence gives rise to powerful inhibitions in the medium, and antagonism may be felt and shown.

The most profound difference in the development of mediumship and hypnotism is the time-factor. Hypnotisation may be complete at the first sitting; mediumship seldom is. The reason for this is probably in the instinct of self-preservation, which causes fear in connection with the unknown. There is a natural disinclination for the would-be medium to yield too quickly to the mysterious forces developing his mediumship. Repeated effort creates a sense of familiarity, and gradually the individual lowers his resistance. This is seldom a conscious resistance unless in the later stages of development. In fact, the conscious mind is in favour of rapid unfoldment. The resistance comes from the subliminal mind to which all the instincts are more intimately related.

Spirit controls long ago admitted that the exercise of mediumship involves a condition analogous to hypnotism. That it is not identical with it is shown by many factors, chief among them being that a good hypnotic subject is often apparently devoid of mediumistic powers. I have known the finest kind of hypnotic subject, who would become deeply somnambulist instantly on command, to sit for mediumistic unfoldment for more than fifty consecutive times under skilled supervision, and never show the slightest sign of mediumship. This person yearned to be a medium while she had little or no desire to be a good hypnotic subject.

No effort was made to induce mediumship through hypnosis in this case, and as the subject appears to have been somewhat exceptional in her psychic constitution, it is possible that very little advancement could have been made by that means.

Developed mediums generally lose a considerable amount of their hypnotic sensitiveness, owing, no doubt, to it being restrained by their controls. Spirit controls appear to adopt a practice well known among expert hypnotists when they have a particularly good subject whom they wish to keep to themselves—they insulate them (by suggestion) from the commands of other people. This would be a wise precaution in mediumship, the success of which depends to a large extent upon the individual's response to his controls only, to the exclusion of other influences. Failure to

achieve a suitable degree of such insulation lays the medium open too much to impressions from outside sources, and leads to confusion.

Hypnotism has already been proved an invaluable aid to well-known mediums, and has often been adopted by leading scientific researchers to enhance supernormal phenomena, although, so far as I know, there is no instance in which the development of mediumship has been due solely to its aid. The awakening of psychic faculties has frequently been brought about by mesmerism and hypnotism, but there has seldom been reason for believing spirits to have been involved in these cases.

Perhaps the best way in which hypnotism can be recruited to the aid of mediumship, especially during its development, is a preliminary treatment for giving suggestions that the sitter's mind and body will be sufficiently passive during the period devoted to mediumistic unfoldment. This can prove to be invaluable to those who experience considerable restlessness during their sittings. I have used this treatment to excellent purpose, and believe its adoption by qualified people would do much to reduce the high percentage of individuals who make no headway owing to their mental and physical activity during their efforts to develop mediumship.

TELEPATHY—BEFORE AND AFTER DEATH.

Lecturing at the British College of Psychic Science on May 22nd, Major C. C. Colley reminded his audience of a previous address he had given at the College when he had shown how his father, the late Archdeacon Colley, had sought to make him receptive to thought communications. Mental communications between father and son had been established, and even as a child Major Colley would at times receive from his father a thought which occasionally was couched in the form of a command. He would obey this mental order instantly. While he was serving in the Army his father, the Archdeacon, had died suddenly, in 1912; that same evening Major Colley, while going about his ordinary military duties, had the mental message: "Come along, my boy, I've gone!"

The lecturer discussed the question of telepathy between persons on each side of the veil. It was an hypothesis which might bring official Science a little nearer to understanding the Spiritualists' position.

Since his father's death Major Colley had continued to receive directions from him which were as clear and cogent as before. He gave several instances. Counsel as to his work had been received at critical moments, and on several occasions the advice from his father "over the border" had been of considerable service, particularly during the War.

Professor A. M. Low, who took part in the discussion that followed, suggested that many of Major Colley's telepathic communications could be accounted for by the Major's own brilliant inventive brain; so far telepathy could offer little that interested scientists. He agreed, however, that communication might be possible between two minds in the body, due to some stimulation caused by thought—which he named "etheral oscillation".

Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, in thanking the lecturer, pointed out that many of Major Colley's communications received from the unseen—for example, advice as to the avoidance of danger—could not be accounted for by Major Colley's mind. Furthermore, the experiences formed only a part of a much wider knowledge shared by a large number of students of the subject. She emphasised the necessity for obeying certain laws of receptivity, consciously or unconsciously. Without these there would be no telepathic action between living persons or between the living and the dead.

B.M.

THE PERSONAL SIDE.

MISS ESTELLE STEAD.

Mrs. Carr Shaw, the mother of George Bernard Shaw, once remarked to us in humorous vein, that she was in danger of being completely eclipsed as a personality by the shadow of her great son. Similarly, Miss Estelle Stead has stood in some peril of being overshadowed by her famous father—the greatest journalist of his age. Nevertheless, since his passing she has emerged into a prominence that is not altogether dependent on the reputation of her sire. Born in Darlington, she came at an early age with her parents to London, and after an educational period in Germany, became her father's secretary. With him she visited South Africa after the Boer War, where she met Jameson (of the famous "Raid"), Louis Botha, and other distinguished men and women. In a second visit to South Africa, this time alone, she carried out a lantern-lecture tour in connection with her father's series of *Books for the Bairns*. Later she joined Sir Frank Benson's Shakesporean productions, performing at Stratford-on-Avon and going on tour with the company. Her theatrical career indeed was varied and picturesque. She was closely associated with Miss Lillian Baylis, to whom she gave invaluable assistance in putting on Shakesporean drama at the "Old Vic" and playing some of the principal parts. Journalism next claimed her attention, and for three and a half years she edited the *Review of Reviews* which her father had founded, and which is now edited by Mr. Wickham Stead, the former editor of *The Times*. From the other side of life, her father still inspired and guided her actions, as might be expected, and under his direction she revived "Julia's Bureau" which had come to an end, and under the title "The W. T. Stead Borderland Library and Bureau" it was carried on, first at Kingsway, and after some removals—Oxford Street, Regent Street, and Baker Street—it settled down in its present home in Smith Square, the family home of the Steads. Such in a few words is a story which has about it more than a flavour of romance, and of the central character it may well be said that Miss Stead is not only carrying on her father's work, but is very courageously and efficiently doing her own as a leading figure in the missionary labours of Spiritualism to-day.

THE KINDLERS OF LIFE.

The day had been long and wearisome, and resting awhile, I fell into quiet sleep. When I awoke there alternated in my mind the words, "Joy and Sorrow, Sorrow and Joy", as if in dream I had been weighing the question of their place in human life.

I then saw in the mind's eye a vast concourse of peoples as they passed on their way, and I thought: What is it that kindles life—that eternal life of the human spirit—if it be not Joy and Sorrow?

By what means could we reach out towards each other, and feel the touch of that Spirit, were it not for the kindling power of these great twin forces? They are not to be separated one from the other, for where joy is greatest, there also may be the greatest pain—pain irradiated with joy.

I saw that were it not for this dual force in human life, there would be no means of penetrating to the heart of humanity, and the soul would be choked by its own solitude, as the ivy chokes a discarded ruin.

"Joy and Sorrow, Sorrow and Joy," I repeated to myself again; and they were no longer mere words, but living pulsations from the heart of humanity.

L. M. BAZETT.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

When a drowning Scotsman after having been rescued by another Scot rewarded his preserver with sixpence, a third Scot (it is said to have been Robert Burns) dryly remarked that the rescued man must be considered to be the best judge of his own value. Similarly of the man who is willing to pay a large sum, to be rejuvenated by monkey glands we may say that surely he must be the best judge of the kind of life most suited to his requirements.

* * * * *

Just as the Scots enjoy the jests against themselves, so do some Spiritualists appreciate the humours of the over-credulous followers of the subject. One of our veterans, the late Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers, always laughed heartily over Charles Dickens's story of the "spirit-rapper" who received as a spirit message the words "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" In the rapping process the last word came out as *bosh*, but the fanatical "rapper" would not have it altered, because that was how the "spirits" had given it!

* * * * *

Psycho-analysis, of which we hear so much nowadays, is apparently no new thing. In 1821 Charles Lamb told of an old gentleman, a friend of his, who when he met any young man ambitious of becoming a poet would inquire: "Young man, what sort of dreams have you?" for the old fellow maintained that dreams are a sort of index to the creative powers of the soul in its waking state. There are certainly poets who seem to have derived their inspiration from a series of horrible nightmares!

* * * * *

Queer reading in days to come will be those elaborate essays and treatises on psychical research, in which mediums are treated with lofty contempt as an h'less and generally uneducated tribe. It was a great opportunity for the prig and the superior person to air their dignity and intellectual quality at the expense of these poor creatures. But those days are passing away, for at present we are aware of the existence of highly educated mediums whose intellectual standing is sometimes in advance of their critics.

* * * * *

Of an ancient saint of the Church it is said that he taught a bird to say: "Hail, Mary!" Being attacked by a hawk, it said: "Hail, Mary!" and the hawk fell dead! The Church has quite a long list of miracles of this kind, although the faithful are not required to believe them all. Indeed, I have known good Catholics who have grave doubts about saintly levitations, although we know from modern instances that these things are possible. And as for the bird that talked, with such examples as the parrot and the jackdaw before us, we can believe at least a part of the "Hail, Mary!" miracle.

* * * * *

It is not so many years ago that Dr. Watts' hymns sent shudders through the minds of sensitive folk. Whether the hymns dealt with the joys of heaven—which was compared to an eternal Sabbath with an unending Church service—or the terrors of hell, they presented revolting pictures of life after death. But not probably to the average small boy, little affected either by imagination or sensitiveness. Small doubt when he came to the exhilarating line of one of the hymns which speaks of "Damnation and the Dead" he roared it out with great gusto, only too pleased to use in a hymn a word forbidden to him in his common speech.

D. G.

"MUCH THE SAME—THOUGH DEAD."

Michael was a vagrant who, during his earth life, caused much anxiety to several parish officers, amongst whom was my father. A good-natured, witty Irishman when sober, Michael, when under the influence of drink, was troublesome to the last degree; he would demand admittance to the Workhouse and then proceed to give inaccurate details of himself until it was almost impossible to obtain the necessary information required to fill in the parish books, etc.; then he would come back sober, and beg to be pardoned for his many delinquencies. That is only just a short note of his "activities". (A full account would unnecessarily occupy space here.) Michael went the way of all flesh, however, and within three weeks of his death the following conversation took place at our family circle. (The medium was a lady of advanced age, whose friendship we had enjoyed for many years. She was most particular person, her habits of speech and life generally most carefully regular. We never told her half what Michael said when controlling!)

"Do you know me? I'm Michael. Much the same, though dead, but I'm sober. I'd like a pipe o' tobacco, though; I can smell the tobacco." (I had two ounces in my pocket and was sitting next to the medium!) "Oh, there's the Overseer (pointing to my father), I'd better be off."

"No, don't go, Michael, we're all glad to hear you. Tell us of your passing and all you can." Whereupon Michael, in broad Irish tones, told us of his death. "I woke up to find the Overseer's daughter by my side. She has been a God's Angel to me ever since," said Michael, "and now she's brought me here, but I don't like it at all! I don't understand how it is I can speak to you. They tell me I'm talking through a medium. What's that! I'm just being taken hold of by a little black girl [the medium's guide] and my God's Angel—one on each side of me—and am told to keep on talking. Faith, I can do that, only what will the Overseer say? Will he forgive me for the dance I led him when alive?" (This, we learnt afterwards, was the main reason of Michael being brought to the seance—to ask forgiveness.)

My father at once said, "Michael, I am only too glad to hear you. I forgive you all the trouble you caused me, and the others, I know, will do the same."

Then Michael—profuse in his thanks and calling down blessings, etc., upon those he had "tormented" while in the flesh, proceeded to give us details of himself and his passing—details which conveyed ample evidence of his identity—and of his sincerity, which, by the way, was often most evident in his sober intervals when on earth.

That was our first introduction to the post-mortem Michael, and now after twenty years he has indeed atoned for his tormenting (to use his own word), for he has proved himself in very many instances a friend and helper to people on both sides of the veil, bringing new friends to the circle and convincing many inquirers by his inimitable control, his striking personality, and his true Irish humour, that death is truly but a gateway to the larger life where progress is possible if the spirit is but willing.

LEIGH HUNT.

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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"DET OPPNADE FONSTRET." By Eira Hellberg. (Böckernas Biblioteksforlag, Stockholm.)

This book in the Swedish language (entitled in English *The Open Window*) is a record of the personal psychic experiences of the Swedish researcher, Mrs. Eira Hellberg, who founded the first Society for Psychic Research in Sweden and is now busy organising the first official Swedish Psychic Congress, to take place next July on the island of Gottland. (Professor Drlesch has accepted an invitation to speak at the Congress and Frau Silbert, the well-known medium, is also to be present.)

Mrs. Hellberg became widely known through her first book *Telepathy and Occultism*, in which book she treated psychic science from the animistical point of view; she has since become convinced of the truth of spirit communication and in her new book she relates the story of her conversion to Spiritualistic belief, a change of outlook largely due to the evidential messages received from her deceased brother. Her treatment of the case is critical and scientific. There are many valuable accounts of experiences with professional mediums, among the most interesting being those with Klusky, with whom she obtained many complete materialised forms under convincing conditions. Altogether the book may be considered to be an excellent addition to the continental literature of psychic research, the more so as the author has definitely abandoned the animistical theory in favour of Spiritualism.

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"SHORT-TITLE CATALOGUE OF WORKS ON PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, SPIRITUALISM, MAGIC, ETC." Compiled by Harry Price. With forty plates and illustrations. (National Laboratory of Psychical Research. 15s. od. net.)

Of the making of books there is no end, and the truth of this axiom is not weakened when we are dealing exclusively with psychic books. In the new *Short-Title Catalogue* just issued by the National Laboratory of Psychical Research there are some 7,000 titles (representing, of course, a far bigger number of individual volumes) all of which are devoted to what may, broadly speaking, be termed "supernormal subjects", and among which are to be found every important work on phenomena and pseudo-phenomena. Many of the works in the National Laboratory Library (to which this catalogue refers) are rare, and of great value, but from the psychic student's view-point the chief interest in such a collection lies in the evidence of the psychic idea persisting through the centuries. One of the gems is a Black Letter volume *Tractatus Maleficorum* (with contemporary woodcuts) by de Gambilionibus, circa A.D. 1490. Another item of great interest is an original copy of *The Second-Sighted Highlander* by Daniel Defoe, put out in 1713, while another that claims attention is *A Treatise of Specters*, dated 1605. Among the first editions is a copy of Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584, while two much-sought-after rarities are Boissard's *De Divinatione & Magicis* (circa 1616), and due Triez's *Les Ruses, Finesses et Impostures des Espritz Malins*, published in 1563 at Cambrai.

The library is indeed a mine of valuable information upon general psychic history, containing records of ancient psychic phenomena, the work of the early Spiritualists, the activities of fake seance-mongers, denunciations of Church authorities, manuscripts by well-known mediums (including a letter written by Daniel Dunglas Home describing the events which led to his expulsion from Rome), Burmese scripts dealing with Indian magic, old scrapbooks, portfolios, treatises on psychic healing, old-world ghost stories, and innumerable other items of peculiar value to the student and enquirer. Among the MSS. are letters from the late Harry Houdini, as to which Mr. Harry Price remarks in his Introduction to the catalogue: "Those members of the Laboratory who think that the late Harry Houdini was an utter sceptic in psychic matters will find in his letters evidence that he was convinced that a 'spirit extra' of the late Professor James Hyslop, produced by an amateur photographic medium, was a genuine one." He adds that the student, by diligent search among the books and documents of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, may become acquainted with the work of every medium, magician and trickster, who has graced the world's psychic stage for the past five hundred years.

H. G. A.

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Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—June 9th, 11, Open Circle; 6.30, Mrs. Filmore. Wednesday, 7.30, Public Meeting at 55, Station Road.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—June 9th, 7, Mrs. Brownjohn, address and clairvoyance. June 12th, 7.30, Crusader, trance address, and Miss Herbert, clairvoyance.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—June 9th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30 Rev. G. Vale Owen, address.

Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41 Ashford Road.—June 9th, 6.30, Mrs. E. Morris. June 12th, 3, Circle; 8, Miss Maddison.

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