

Light:

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Edited by **DAVID GOW**

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"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S OPEN LETTER.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has issued an open letter addressed to "Those of my own generation". It is an appealing document. Sir Arthur reaffirms his conviction of human survival after death and he writes:—

Let us look things in the face. We are about to die—you and I. My age is just seventy, and I suppose an Actuary would give me five more years. It may be ten, or it may only be one. Who can say? But you and I are suffering from a wasting and incurable disease called old age, and there is but the one end to it. Young folk, even though Death may really be very near them, can reasonably put off the consideration of what is probably a distant event. But it is very different with us. The matter presses and has to be dealt with. That is why I am writing you this letter. I want you not to be overshadowed, but to take the same cheerful view of the future which I do myself.

It is a heartening document and might well take its place with the pamphlets intended especially for enquirers inasmuch as it gives information of value to the uninitiated. It is published by the Psychic Press at the price of threepence.

CONVERSION—SOME ASPECTS.

We all know the type of mind which, having adopted a particular religion or philosophy, is eager to convert others to the same views. It is sometimes said that this zeal is due to egotism; but in many instances it is a better motive than that. It is the expression of a very fine trait in the average person—the desire to be of use, to confer benefit. We see a great deal of this in Spiritualism, but experience shows us that "conversion", while it may mean a change in the point of view (sometimes only temporary), does not always indicate a change of heart. Whether a man is made better for the conviction that life is

continuous depends on the man. So that conversions in themselves are not necessarily matters for enthusiasm. Some Spiritualists are not anxious to convert anybody—it is sufficient for them that the fact of human survival shall be established and proclaimed and made a part of everyday knowledge and experience. However, as it takes all kinds of people to make a world, and as all great truths advance by a multitude of methods—methods that seem to help and others that appear to hinder—we may be well content each to do his own part in his own way. Much of the mischief comes of a failure to follow this rule, and of a meddling desire to interfere with the affairs of others as not being in accord with the busybody's idea of the way they should be conducted. We are justified in trying to suppress follies and abuses, but this is usually done better by example than by preaching.

SCIENCE AND THE UNSEEN WORLD.

It is not so very long ago that the recognition by Science of the electrical nature of the atom led to the conclusion that (as someone expressed it) the bottom had fallen out of Materialism. But it was clear enough that this did not apply to Science, for the knowledge did not come suddenly. We recall the remark of Sir William Crookes who, on being asked many years ago to give some definition of Matter, replied that he had begun to have serious doubts whether there was such a thing as Matter at all! But it seemed that with the discovery of the Electron, Science would have to adventure into a new world. It was also evident to the sober thinker, however, that Science would go, as always, cautiously and with gradual steps since, like Nature, Science makes no "leaps", confining itself as far as possible to the definite and measurable. If it ever discovers and recognises spirit-agencies, it will regard them as human and natural, just as we do. It will never accept them as supernatural or metaphysical beings after the fashion of Theology. In this direction Sir Oliver Lodge is leading the way in some eloquent articles in the newspaper Press, the best organs of which are rapidly becoming the leaders and teachers of the general public. Assuredly Science will in the end accept the reality of human survival, whether it calls discarnate human beings "spirits" or not. We wish, by the way, we could find some other word less objectionable to the scientific mind.

A HEALING VISION.—A case of healing in Westphalia, reported in the *Morning Post*, recalls the story of Dorothy Kerin which excited so much attention in London some years ago. In the present instance, a boy had been completely paralysed in the lower part of his body for four years and was declared incurable by the doctors, but the boy, who is very religious, told his parents that the figure of Christ had appeared to him and told him he would be healed at 9 o'clock in the evening of the same day. At 9 o'clock the boy asked to get out of bed, did so alone, and walked about the room. The local medical men are said to be "completely baffled".

SOME MORE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF THE LATE MR. J. J. MORSE.

(*Question*): "While the medium's physical organism is presumably used by 'Tien', what relation does the medium's Ego bear to his physical body? And is the medium's Ego conscious of the purpose for which his physical organism is being used?"

The control replied that this depended very much upon the circumstances of the audience and the condition of the medium. Under certain circumstances there was no connection between the personal consciousness of the medium and the medium's physical brain, when that brain was under the direction of the operating intelligence. Under other conditions the subjective condition was less perfectly maintained and the Ego of the medium was conscious of what was being transmitted, but the recollection of the transmission depended very much on the condition of the brain when normal relations were restored. It was entirely a matter of conditions and circumstances as to what the degree of relationship between the medium's Ego and his physical brain might be at any particular time.

Another question ran: "You have cited the formation of the physical body as analogous to the formation of the spiritual body on the death of the former, but the one is a slow process, while the other we assume to be nearly instantaneous. How, then, do you reconcile the discrepancy in time as consistent with the analogy?"

In reply, the control said, in the first place there was no discrepancy. The growth of the spiritual organism and the material organism proceeded virtually side by side. When the physical organism had attained maturity that was the external indication that the spiritual organism had attained maturity. The process of separation, detailed in the lecture alluded to by the questioner, was a matter of years; it was represented in the declension of the physical, and was consummated at last by a final process which brought about the complete separation of the spiritual body from its physical counterpart. That the former was withdrawn apparently in a state of dissolution, or rather of solution, was true enough, but every particle was imbued with the principle of elective affinity; this principle governed every particle, relegating it to its appropriate place in the organism. Hence then it could not be said that it was an instantaneous process. The same laws had operated all through, and the death process only represented the final result of a long series of antecedent causes.

Another inquirer asked: "If you are interested in mathematical subtleties, have you given any attention to the hypothesis of space of four or 'n' dimensions, and if so, do you consider it in any sense a probable explanation of some of the spiritual phenomena?"

The control answered that, as an explanation of some of the probabilities of spiritual phenomena, the hypothesis mentioned by the questioner might be accepted; but as an explanation of the phenomena, certainly not. There were conditions of consciousness that varied with the conditions of the development of the phenomena, and when it was remembered that the personal phenomena on the spirit side of life were greatly different in character from the personal phenomena of this life, it would be perceived that there might be states of consciousness impossible of conception by minds under the limitations of time and space, and, therefore, impossible to translate into the terms of the physical. That was one of the reasons why spirits often failed to convey any intelligible idea of the facts of their own personal surroundings in the vernacular of human life.

"Will 'Tien' " (asked another inquirer) "inform us as to the precise distinction which we should draw between the words *soul* and *spirit*? Is not a soul an individualised semi-material body, animated by, and being a portion of, the great Eternal Spirit?"

Dealing with this question, "Tien" spoke as follows: "We must frankly confess here that there is far too much looseness in the terminology of the spiritual philosophy, and that words are bandied about from hand to hand with so many different meanings associated with them, that it would puzzle even the acutest legal mind to catch these elusive birds and imprison them in their appropriate verbal cages. According to our use of the terms, the body is the external physical organisation, the soul is the spiritual body—that spiritualised body which exists after death. The term 'spirit' we use as signifying that central consciousness which constitutes the absolute 'I', 'me', or Ego. Hence, then, that absolute 'I', 'me', or Ego controls the soul, and through the soul and its relationships to the external body, controls the body, thus making the trinity of body, soul, and spirit. We should, however, prefer the terms body, spiritualised body, and spirit ('I', 'me', or Ego), in other words, the self-consciousness."

Next came the questions: "Has the life principle expressed in a human form been previously expressed in animal or plant form? What is the condition of the spirit immediately before incarnation in human form? Has it form? When and how does the spirit become connected with the physical organism?"

In reply "Tien" said: "As a principle, that is to say, as something separate and distinct, we do not know anything about life. As a latent possibility of the Universe immanent in all conditions of the Universe, and manifesting itself in varying degrees, according to the conditioning of the Universe, so we understand what is called 'life'. In the mineral world there is a certain activity—a chemical activity—which we recognise as a manifestation of that grade of this latent energy which eventually brings forth life. In the vegetable world there is a further evolution of the manifestation of this in-dwelling energy, and life has crossed the boundary line of the purely inorganic manifestations, and has become organised on the grade of vegetable life." A little further on, continued the speaker, and the animal kingdom was reached, a kingdom which included man, who was physiologically as much an animal as any of the animals lower in the scale of creation. The chemical activities of the mineral realm, in their higher combinations, thus resulted in the possibility of human intelligence. Obviously, then, life had been immanent in the constitution of the Universe from the beginning; as had been the conditioning of the Universe, so had been the manifestation which was called life, coming upwards from inorganic to organic, and at last entering into the animal structure. Evolution explained the method of its development, but did not explain the thing itself. Motion, sensation, consciousness, intelligence, all expressed the latent spirituality of the Universe which became individualised in man. It was not possible, therefore, to deal with the point raised as to the condition of the spirit before incarnation; all that could be said was that the Divine element which had become consciousness—which had become individualised—had been active on all the lower grades of existence, but, so far as he (the speaker) knew, it had never been rationally and personally individualised until the human organism came on the scene and rendered such rational individualisation possible. As to the condition of the spirit after

its departure from the physical world, that was largely dependent on the character of the earthly life and the moral and intellectual development. It went into that condition of spiritual life for which it was fitted by its previous growth and training.

"Can spirits, without a medium, see what we are doing, and hear what we say? In short, do they know what is going on in this world?"

If by the word "medium" ("Tien" said), the questioner meant to denote one who had become developed and known as a medium, the question could be answered in the affirmative, but if the term medium was merely used to cover persons who were more or less psychically related to the spiritual world, then the answer would have to be "No", since the vibrations which had become consciousness in the human being must be conveyed in some fashion to the consciousness of the spiritual being and a certain psychical relationship established between medium and spirit. When this condition was established perfectly between the medium and the spirit or spirits, then the latter obtained the ability to enter into the thought and experience of those on the physical side.

Another inquirer asked: "By what means do sensitive photographic plates, which have been carefully secured against light, receive impressions of figures and other forms while simply held in the hand, or otherwise placed in contact with the human organisation?"

The reply was as follows: "When such results are obtained they are due to the excitation of certain invisible rays or forces which would give the appearance or effect of light, very much in the same way as what are known as the 'X' rays. We say, when such results are obtained, for they are entirely dependent on certain knowledge possessed by spirits as to the chemical constitution of matter and the method of producing the particular vibrations requisite to effect the desired results. It is practically impossible for us to explain the process to you, because you would have to stand on our side of life and watch the operation in order to understand any description we might give you."

"What training is required to enable an ordinary mortal to establish direct communication with a loved one in the spirit sphere?"

To this question "Tien" replied: "Very much depends upon the condition of the organism, and environment, its sensitiveness to mental impression and psychical influences. One of the best ways to discover your susceptibility is to put yourself into the hands of a practical mesmerist, in order to be subjected to the mesmeric influence. If you readily respond to such influence, there is a strong probability of your being able to develop some form of mediumship."

DISCUSSIONS IN THE PRESS.

A remarkable amount of discussion on Spiritualism is going on just now in the newspapers all over the country, as shewn by our sheaves of Press cuttings. A study of these is another evidence of the extraordinary progress made during the last few years, for a conspicuous feature of these discussions, is the number of letters answering opponents and the keen intelligence shewn in many of the answers. Occasionally we come upon some defence of Spiritualism against its enemies, which is not merely effective, but really brilliant in its reasoning. Some of the defenders show a pretty wit, and contrive expertly to defeat the attackers with their own weapons. This is especially the case where the attack comes from "the religious side", when the critic is confronted by the fact that his criticisms of psychic phenomena apply equally to his own case. Indeed, the application is even stronger, for his case rests upon ancient documents, whereas, as it is effectively shewn, the case for Spiritualism rests not only upon the records of the past but the facts of the present.

THE STORY OF THE ROSE-BUSH.

BY MRS. BERTHA KEMP.

Our son, Lieut. Kenneth Kemp (a brilliant artist, and member of the Royal Society of British Artists), had been two years in Flanders at the front when he was transferred in May, 1917, to the Home Service Depot (Supplies) of the Motor Transport; there he fell a victim to the terrible influenza epidemic whilst on active service, and died on October 18th, 1918, aged twenty-three years.

Before leaving for France the last time, he had made my husband and me promise that if he fell we would, if possible, when the War ended, bring his physical form to rest at Dawlish, the place he had known and loved from childhood.

As he died in England we were able to keep this promise without great difficulty, and his beloved earthly casket now lies amongst the beautiful Devon hills and valleys.

The love between my dear son and his parents was extraordinary and the bond between mother and son was deep and strong, so the following narrative may be the more easily understood and believed.

On my last birthday, before he passed over, he gave me a very beautiful double *white* cluster rose—and soon afterwards he came to me and said: "I have done such a silly thing—I have given you a *white* rose, which means parting—I should have given you a *red* one, for Love. But never mind, Mother darling, nothing in Heaven or Earth could ever part you and me; but I do wish I had given you a *red* rose." Then, alas, six months later the earthly parting came.

After his passing the *white* rose-bush which we had planted in the garden, flagged until it was one sickly little branch. This troubled me very much and we decided that the best thing would be to plant it on his resting-place at Dawlish. This we did, and for four years it flourished and grew lovely clusters of *white* roses. Then came the miracle.

I drove down to our country cottage at Dawlish in July, 1927, and the same evening went up with flowers to the dear "Garden of Sleep". As I turned the path and saw my boy's resting-place, I thought something had happened to my eyes, for growing from the grave was a glowing mass of *red* cluster roses with a perfect ring of *white* ones completely encircling them.

I went to see the gardener on duty who told me that he and his fellow gardeners had noticed the growth of these *red* flowers with puzzled interest, because they could not account for them in any way; there was only one root originally and every rose-bearing branch had sprung from the parent one, so they had named it the "Miracle Rose".

Doubtless there will be many horticulturalists and materialists who will smile pityingly and attribute the appearance of my *red* roses to natural causes. I know the message these flowers are intended to convey: "Where there is great Love there is only a very little Parting."

As my husband was not with me in Devon on this occasion and I was anxious he should see the rose-bush in its beauty, I asked a cousin who was staying with me to photograph it. I found my camera was empty, so my younger cousin fetched a new roll of six films and put them in the camera. We drove up to the cemetery and my cousin exposed the six films; after developing, we found four showed perfectly normal pictures; the fifth had a spirit-light on the rose-bush; while on the sixth, in addition to a spirit-light, there appeared the figure of my dear son, dressed in the last mufti clothes he ever wore. It was the suit he used to wear when standing at that particular spot to watch the wonderful sunsets—a thing he often did. He is shown between myself and my cousin's wife, who is psychic. There was not another person in the cemetery at the time, as it was not open to the general public until an hour later.

ARE WE TO HEED DREAM WARNINGS?

BY CHARLES WICKSTEED ARMSTRONG.

(Author of *The Mystery of Existence*, *The Survival of the Unfittest*, etc.)

Believers in the occult have long complained of the attitude of scientists towards the supernatural. But the time has come at last when such a question as that which heads this article has actually been discussed and answered in the affirmative in the light of exact science. And it may well be that the day will shortly dawn when even such transcendental problems as that of immortality will be discussed and settled beyond dispute in that same light.

To heed dream-warnings would appear to involve a belief in our power to alter the future, and this indeed is what Mr. J. W. Dunne, the author of *An Experiment with Time*, says we are able to do. And yet it has seemed to me that to talk of altering the future is a contradiction of terms, for a future which is not to come off is no future at all. If this is so, does it follow that, if I dream of an accident about to happen to me, it would be foolish to attempt to alter that which is fated to happen?

To discuss this question from the scientific point of view we must first have a clear notion of the nature of Time. The popular idea of Time is that only the Present actually exists; the Past having ceased to be and the Future being as yet unmade. But people who think a little more deeply cannot help seeing that instead of things existing only in the Present, they must, in reality, have their being during Past and Future Time, since the Present is a mere dividing-line, and has no duration whatever itself, any more than the Meridian of Greenwich has width. To think, therefore, of events happening in the Present is like thinking of places existing in the meridian.

Now Relativity has shown Time to be a dimension, and that being so, Past and Future are seen to be directions, comparable to East and West, North and South. The Present is shown to be our field of vision, and is a cross-section moving through the Space-Time Universe in a Past to Future direction.

It is evidently more scientific to suppose it a cross-section moving *through* an existing universe than to try to picture it as the extreme forward limit to that universe, because in that case its forward movement would imply continual creation. Moreover, it would imply that the universe was unbounded in one direction—that of the Past—and bounded in the other. This would be mathematically unsustainable.

Now whatever our definition of *reality* may be, it is certain that a cross-section, moving through an existing universe, will have things just as *real* on one side of it as on the other.

The equal reality, therefore, of Past and Future events seemed clear until Mr. Dunne told us that dreams were more or less disorderly excursions into the realms of both Past and Future, made by us while in a four-dimensional existence: that is one in which the barrier between Past and Future is removed, or partially removed, and our lifetime becomes all one block. Still there was nothing contradictory between this theory and that of an existing Future into which our field of vision is advancing while we are awake, until he told us, too, that by taking warning from dream-*pre*vision, we were enabled to *alter* the *probable* Future. Then, at one blow, our four-dimensional universe was shattered, for the Future became a direction to be put into an entirely different category from all other directions—its events were non-existent since they had yet to be determined; or, if existent, they could somehow be annihilated and others put in their place. If this is so, our field of vision is not a cross-section at all, but a limit to

the existing universe, and that view we have seen to be unsatisfactory. It would also be fatal to Mr. Dunne's own theory of dream-excursions into the Future.

Perhaps Mr. Dunne found himself up against the following dilemma and preferred to discard his belief in a real existing Future rather than that in prophetic dreams. After stating the dilemma, I will try to show why I think he need not have sacrificed either belief.

The dilemma is this: If the Future is as unalterable as the Past, and dreams may represent coming events, then on dreaming, say, of a railway accident about to happen to myself, what should I do? I must either act on the warning or not do so. That is, I must either avoid travelling and make the accident impossible, or I must travel in spite of the dream, so that it may come true, which, if I believe in prophetic dreams, would be to act like an idiot. Thus either the dream is not a true representation of coming events, which is contrary to hypothesis, or I must do what I certainly would *not* do, which is absurd.

Many people must have seen this dilemma, in one form or another, and, like Mr. Dunne, have rejected one of the hypotheses. And yet I would reject neither. I should heed the dream, although I believe in an unalterable Future.

It is presumed in the minor premise that it is possible for me, even though I may believe in dream warnings, and be sure to act on them, to have a prophetic dream of an avoidable accident to myself. But since I should then avoid the accident, the dream would not be prophetic. It is therefore impossible for me to have such a dream, and the dilemma contains the fallacy of a false assumption in one of its premises.

But, you may say, what is to prevent your dreaming? The fact that it would upset a theory is not going to prevent your dreaming. True, but in that case the dream would not be prophetic. It may be possible for me to dream of accidents—as a matter of fact I never do—but such dreams, if I had them, would not belong to the category of excursions into Future events, for, as I should act on the warning, the accident would not come off; and, as we saw, a future that does not come off is not a future at all.

"But," you may insist, "why would you heed the dream if you cannot alter the Future?" Because, if I did not, the dream might prove to have been prophetic.

Many people do not like the theory of an unalterable Future, because it seems to do away with Free Will. But when we consider that the things we *choose* to do are the things we certainly *shall* do, and that though we invariably choose in accordance with the law of the strongest motive, we nevertheless *do* choose, it should become evident that a belief in an existing Future is not inconsistent with Free Will. This means, of course, that from our own point of view our will is free, but not from that of an independent observer.

A belief, therefore, in the life in four dimensions, with a real existing Future is scientifically sound, and is not in the least contradictory to the belief in odd and perhaps distorted glimpses of the Future, while the brain, being nearly at rest, the brain-made barrier between Past and Future is partially removed. Nor does it contradict Free Will. We make the Future ourselves, as far as human affairs are concerned, and we make it with a Free Will.

If it be asked how we can make that which already exists, the answer is that our acts are an integral part of the fabric of Past and Future, whose invisible parts become visible for a moment and then again become invisible.

But the time may come, after death, when the brain being permanently put to rest, the barrier will be broken down completely and all become visible.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

"PUBLIC CIRCLES: A PROTEST."

Sir,—Mr. Peter Trolove, commenting upon a letter of mine in your issue of 16th March, advises, however deplorable may have been one's seance experiences—"carrying on for the proof of the truth that Spiritualism stands for. This is the right spirit." With such a sentiment I am, of course, entirely in agreement. Still, is it not an attitude both desirable and fair always to expect at a seance some reasonable evidence of the genuineness of phenomena? One naturally desires proof that the control "carrying on" (if Mr. Trolove will excuse my flippancy) is also the "right spirit". Though as Spiritualists we must keep open minds, we ought not to lay ourselves open to foolishness and fraud of any description whatever. Otherwise a drunkard, or even a lunatic, might enter a seance room at any time to hold forth *ad libitum*; the ravings of such an individual being accepted by us as wisdom surpassing our own, so beyond our full comprehension. Granted that the spirit people properly require of us patience and sympathy, are not we equally justified in looking for intelligence and sanity of behaviour from them?—Yours, etc.,

FRANK LIND.

The Gerard Studio, 33 and 34, Shoe Lane, E.C.4.

TIME, PREVISION AND CLAIRVOYANCE.

Sir,—Mr. Shaw Desmond commenting on Mr. Dunne's *Experiment in Time* says: "There is neither present, past nor future: time and space are the same, but time has no existence as such."

I suggest that this statement goes too far and that it would be more correct to say that:

1. Time is eternal.
2. That it is divided into "future", "present" and "past" by the sequence or order in which we meet the events of our lives while they and we move therein.

It will make my meaning clearer if we postulate Time as a funnel-shaped spiral, wide at the top and narrow at the base, and imagine ourselves as climbing up *inside* the spiral, rung by rung, to meet the events and happenings of our experience as they come down to meet and pass us.

At various points on each rung of our ascension it is possible to see the rung ahead (the future) and, provided our "awareness" is not turned inwards, it is possible to see that which is coming towards us. This is "prevision".

When our "awareness" is centred on someone other than ourselves, we see *their* progress on the rungs of the spiral and, according to whether we look forward or back from their position, we see events in their relative positions of "future" or "past". This we term "clairvoyance". Our vision being necessarily influenced by our own position on the spiral, our task of estimating the distance between events becomes difficult, hence the "time" difficulty of all clairvoyance.

Time being eternal, the wider rungs of the spiral continue into our next stage of evolution, and it becomes increasingly difficult to compute time in respect to events on this plane of existence.

Those who have read Mr. Muldoon's *Projection of the Astral Body* will realise that in the astral or etheric body, sight or "awareness" is extended to the higher, wider rungs of the spiral, and that "dreaming true" means the training of the recording power of the memory.

I believe that the "spiral" form affects us in many ways. It may possibly have some relation to the "original spin" of which Sir Oliver Lodge speaks in connection with the common origin of all members of our solar system.—Yours, etc.,

V. V. FARONE.

HAMLET AND HUMAN SURVIVAL.

Sir,—A few weeks ago a paragraph in *LIGHT* referred to Hamlet's soliloquy, "To be or not to be". Since I have become interested in Spiritualism it has struck me that Hamlet's doubts of a future life, as expressed in this soliloquy, are hardly in keeping with the positive proofs he had received of his father's survival. His father had appeared to him and to his friends; had told him he was his father's spirit; described the sufferings he was undergoing for his evil deeds while on earth, and giving him all the details of his murder. And yet Hamlet can say "perchance to dream" and speak of the "undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns". Has this ever struck any other readers of *LIGHT*?—Yours, etc.,

MARIE CONSTAS.

Constantinople.

[Hamlet's lack of logic has been many times the subject of comment. But he was very human in this respect and Shakespeare was the supreme delineator of humanity, as he knew it. That is our interpretation of the puzzle—there may be others.—ED.]

MEDIUMSHIP AND FORTUNE-TELLING.

Spiritualists are certainly not the exclusive objects of solicitude from the other side of life, and they cannot claim to have superior consideration. Cases are frequently recorded of individuals being saved from disaster by warnings conveyed in dreams or in more mysterious ways to persons who have no connection with Spiritualism or the slightest interest in it. But Spiritualists are the only people who have direct communication with, and receive instruction from, affinited intelligences.

Inasmuch as such intelligences can foresee events and incidents affecting mortals, but do not always deem it good for us to know, they should not be pressed to foretell; we should be content to await spontaneous revelation if it serve any good purpose. That is why we deprecate indiscriminate fortune-telling. Consultants may be far more blameworthy than the mediums they pester and treat as mere "spawwives"; it is, indeed, difficult to stall them off. It is true that while some consultants are prompted only by frivolous or interested motives, others may be stricken souls seeking sympathy and solace. These, moreover, may not be in the way of holding direct communication themselves with discarnate intelligences. In their case, such help and assurance as can be given might be conceded—police permitting! But the solicitations of silly women to know whether a dark or a fair suitor is coming their way—one, preferably, with tons of money—should be sternly resisted. To encourage the folly and the levity of such is not Spiritualism; it is a profanation.

—From *Life—Death and Destiny*,
by ROBERT ALEXANDER.

THE B.S.L.U. ANNUAL CONFERENCE.—At the Annual Conference of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union the officers elected for 1929-30 were: President, Miss E. Elliott; Vice-president, Mr. E. A. Keeling; Treasurer, Mr. W. Burrows; General Secretary, Mr. G. F. Knott; Adviser, Mr. A. Kitson. There was a loss of £211 during 1929, and a decrease of 17 Lyceums on the Union's roll; probably due to the industrial depression throughout the country. There was an encouraging report from the Overseas Lyceums.

LIGHT.

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

THE HEREAFTER OF THE AVERAGE MAN.

D.M.J., a professional man, writing from Holland, is rather disturbed by a recently published spirit-message in which the communicator states that "no sin is unatoned for" and no "idle blunder" is excused. He finds it difficult to reconcile this statement with the teaching that the life after death is one of greater happiness than we have ever yet known, and that few need look forward to death with any degree of apprehension. Our correspondent remarks:—

If we consider the endless sins of commission and of omission, not to speak of the "idle blunders" of an ordinary lifetime, it would appear that the average man will be faced with a prolonged period of acute mental suffering not a whit better than the Roman Catholic Purgatory, the substitution of mental for physical torture being no improvement.

Proceeding, our inquirer asks whether the average man's immediate future depends on what he actually is at the time of passing over, as the result of his experience and struggle in the school of life. He adds some other questions arising out of the same problem, all of which we think may be answered by a consideration of the general principle involved.

In the first place, then, we are to consider that every day of our lives is a "judgment" on the previous day, and that the law of cause and effect goes on all through our lives whether in the flesh or out of it. It is a mistake, therefore, to suppose that the judgment is deferred until the time of death. The law is the same on both sides of the way. Now what does this mean to the average man? It means that the results of many of his sins and blunders will have been worked out in this life. He will have paid the penalty here. We see countless instances of the fact all around us. Every good and every ill act and thought will bring its consequences—how could it be otherwise in a Universe governed by law? There is no question of punishment in the matter—it is simply a matter of cause and effect.

His immediate state in the next world depends on the individual. But for each and all, generally speaking, the change is an improvement, for Divine Beneficence as well as Divine Law is at work. The fullest happiness comes to those who pass out naturally and are fully matured—ripe for transition to the next stage of life.

In this imperfect world the great majority pass out prematurely as a result of broken laws—by war, sickness, disease, evil habits, and a few by their deliberate action—suicide. All these things entail conse-

quences. There is no "punishment" in the human sense, and even if there were, it would always be remedial. All suffering is designed to shape and perfect the individual life—to bring it into line with the spiritual order. But so beneficently is the Universe framed, that death involves no abrupt change, no sharp transition from a known to an unknown state. Even the evil-liver on first passing over may find things very congenial to him; he remains very much in the same mental and spiritual conditions—although to the more advanced souls those conditions would appear to be horrible and repellent. They do not seem so to the undeveloped spirit who has simply gone to "his own place". But as time goes on he has feelings of disquiet, a lurking uneasiness. That is the first sign of spiritual growth, and it becomes gradually a state of remorse and suffering. The law of consequences is at work at last. For the majority—the average man and woman—it is operating all the time, and the process of purgation is not delayed by callousness of soul. But in the end for all alike—the average man and the man above or below the average—there are progressions and continually unfolding states of happiness and harmony. The law is perfect and mathematically exact. There is justice, tempered always by mercy. The Universe is governed by Omniscient Wisdom and by its twin principle Omnipresent Love.

If that is not the teaching of Spiritualism then we do not know what Spiritualism is.

THE REASONABLENESS OF THE SPIRIT HYPOTHESIS.

From the current *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* we take the following passage from Sir Oliver Lodge's address on "The Asserted Difficulty of the Spiritualistic Hypothesis" delivered before a General Meeting of the S.P.R. in May last, and a short summary of which was given at the time in LIGHT.

The spiritistic hypothesis, pressed to the full, probably involves far more than we can in our highest flights imagine. It leads us into the region of æsthetics and genius and inspiration and theology. But our ordinary daily life is conducted on lower levels, and for them the simple primitive ideas suffice. Struggling and bereaved humanity seeks to learn something of the fate of its loved ones, seeks to be assured that affection continues, that they are not far removed from us, and that reunion will not be postponed to some absurdly distant date. My hypothesis is, that they are all round about us, in what we call the ether of space rather than in matter; that intercommunion is still possible; and that simple souls may derive comfort from their intuitive perceptions and naïve experiences, without being deterred by the difficulties which successful concentration on material mechanism, for the last two or three centuries, seems to raise in their path. After all, it is now found that that material mechanism itself contains more mystery than had been conjectured, and that the full explanation even of it, if ever such explanation is forthcoming, will lead, and already is beginning to lead, towards an idealistic view of existence, not at all dissimilar from the animistic or spiritistic view of the real and permanent universe here and now. In brief, we are immortal spirits in temporary association with matter. Probably it is through this bodily restriction and isolation that we become individualised and acquire a permanent personality, which hereafter is able to adapt itself to new surroundings, in accordance with the well-studied biological adaptability of the rest of animate existence.

SIDELIGHTS.

Charles Edward Holland, a railway constable of New Cross, went to a police outing at Felixstowe on Wednesday, June 19th. About one o'clock that night his wife had a premonition that he was dead; this was, unhappily, only too true, for the unfortunate man was discovered during the night, decapitated on the line near Shadwell station! The *Referee* of June 23rd gives a report of the case.

* * * * *

Writing in the *Jewish Chronicle* of June 21st Mr. Isaac Levy mentions that a few years ago he and some friends formed a Jewish society in the East End of London for the study of Spiritualism, but "the subject was so perverted that it was a disgrace both to Spiritualism and Jewry." He adds that those who desire to investigate psychic phenomena might bear in mind the contention maintained by many Spiritualists, "that the best results are obtainable in one's own home, among friends."

* * * * *

Discussing the African native "fetishmen", a writer in the *African World* of June 22nd remarks, in reference to the various rituals employed by that fraternity, "No method is considered more efficacious than an appeal to the dead, for who can better declare the will of the spirits than those who have gone to the spirit world. Here, civilisation and savagery meet on common ground; the European Spiritualist is brother to the African necromancer. In spite of differences of culture and religion there is much in each which is common to both."

* * * * *

Among the *Morning Post* correspondents who have discussed the correct title of the Witch of Endor is Mr. G. Vale Owen, who, in the issue of June 24th, sides with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in objecting to the word "witch". He says: "Those seventy Hebrew scholars who translated the Old Testament into Greek in the third century B.C. (the Septuagint) gave expression of their opinion by rendering it 'gunee' throughout. This is not equivalent to 'witch'. It is a term of respect, and, used in the vocative, signifies 'mistress' or 'lady'. It is the expression used by our Lord when addressing His Mother (John II., 4; xix., 26)."

* * * * *

In the *Revue Spirite Belge* for June, Mr. Van de Voorde tells of a spirit communication which correctly told of the death of a distant relative of the sitters. This occurred on October 16th last. The writer, who lives in a first floor apartment, had gone down, one evening about ten o'clock, to see a friend and his wife who dwelt on the floor below, finding them engaged in a psychic experiment. A spirit communicator, purporting to be the mother of the lady, had just announced, in English, "Bad news". In spite of the interruption due to Mr. Van de Voorde's arrival, the communicator went on, giving the information that "Florimond" was dead. This was the name of an old gentleman distantly related to the sitters. The message continued to the effect that death had taken place about four o'clock that afternoon. Other details were given in English and Flemish. The seance finished, and all three persons discussed this piece of news, which they regarded as false. As they were speaking, the telephone bell rang. It was an announcement from the sister of Mr. Van de Voorde's friend—to say that "Père Florimond" was dead!

"Our Life Beyond the Veil" is the title of an impressive article in the *Sunday Chronicle* of June 23rd by Sir Oliver Lodge. It is the first of a series of four. Sir Oliver refers sympathetically to the aims of the group of scientific men who are concerned with visible, tangible, and concrete things. "That region," he says, "they have made their particular province, and it is so extensive and satisfying that they usually feel no need for any other point of view. . . . By limiting their field to the concrete and the measureable, scientific workers have reduced the universe of reality to a manageable amount of complexity, and have thereby been enabled to make immense progress."

* * * * *

Continuing, Sir Oliver remarks that "men of business, men of letters, theologians, professional and educated men generally" work in another region—a field where human considerations are involved, "where other aspects of the universe, from commercial enterprise and the pursuit of pleasure, up to those loftier aims which we may briefly summarise under the words Faith, Hope, and Charity, are equally real, and still more satisfying to the human spirit." All these avenues, he suggests, lead to one conclusion: that the universe is infinite in many different ways, and the task of the philosopher is to try to correlate the various aspects of reality, "and trace a comprehensive unity running through them all."

THE NEW SCALA THEATRE.—Attention is drawn to the advertisement in this issue of the performances of "The Lilies of the Field", by John Hastings Turner, to be given at the Scala Theatre on Wednesday afternoon next at 2.30 and Monday evening, 15th inst., at 8.30. As will be observed, the performances are under the patronage of H.R.H. The Princess Royal, the Rt. Hon. Ramsay Macdonald, Prime Minister, and many other distinguished persons.

ETERNITY FOR ALL.

I read of battles with their thousands slain,
Of plagues that buried myriads side by side,
Of savage hordes that seem to live in vain
And, unregarded, died.

And through the histories, sacred and profane,
What hecatombs of unknown dead I see,
And marvel if at death they rise again,
And if all these still be!

That Shakespeare lives we easily believe—
The wonder were that such could ever die,
But those unthinking swarms, who can conceive
How they should live, or why?

Why not? If here life's lowly ends they serve
May there not be hereafter lowly ends?
The ruder mission for the ruder nerve:
One makes, one only mends.

Their numbers shake us? Though the stars had
been
Like earth, each one the cradle of a race,
And all immortal, there were room within
The eternal dwelling-place.

For infinite as space, and in its needs
As various as creation, it demands
All modes of being, intellect, and creeds
Outnumbering the sands.

—ROBERT LEIGHTON.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

DOES SECTARIANISM HELP?

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

Looking through the reports of Dr. T. Glen Hamilton's test seances in Winnipeg, I find occasional references to a famous Nonconformist minister whose name was, during his life-time, a household word. His preaching was brilliant, his sincerity seemed undeniable, and, from the orthodox point of view, he did untold good and led thousands of souls to salvation.

Since his death he has purported to communicate through mediums, and I have talked with several people in different parts of the world who believe they have spoken with this preacher. They all told the same story: this spirit is now in deep distress trying to undo much of the work that he did when on earth!

It is intimated through the Winnipeg messages that during the latter part of his earthly ministry he lost belief in the conception of the after-life that he so vigorously taught. But to hold his place in his profession he continued publicly to support certain crude theological concepts, in which he had lost belief.

Now anybody who has passed through the intense religious experiences that characterise emotional Christianity knows how stultifying it can sometimes be to intellect and reason; how nervous it may make the sensitive soul; how it may weaken spiritual and intellectual courage. Such an experience may bring certain benefits but it tends to strengthen the emotions at the expense of the more progressive and virile qualities. Not only does it make the believer fearful for his own spiritual welfare, it also makes him nervous for the well-being of others who cannot believe as he does; if he is a student of life and science it may befool him, and lead him to fool others.

One of my own memories is of an occasion when in a theological class which I used to attend in my younger days, I ventured to ask the class leader, a minister well known in his persuasion, a difficult question about the Bible. He was unable to give a reasonable reply, and instead of admitting this, he treated me with open contempt; he also kept behind after the class a fellow-student (to whom I was attached by a strong bond of friendship) to warn him not to have anything to do with me as I was a dangerous young man!

The best claim that can be made for intense sectarianism is, that it keeps the believer actively conscious of spiritual values—although the conception is usually a narrow one. Life, however, is composed of more than scriptures and creeds. It is a workshop with more tasks to be performed than praying, and making oneself safe for the hereafter. It is an adventure in which the healthy-minded explorer must strive to find all he can about himself and about Nature, and this involves more than the practice of crude mysticism.

The scientific method has justified itself and should be applied to religious as well as secular subjects. It has already done more than lift the veil from much which Nature hid of the objective world; it has revealed hitherto unsuspected potentialities of man's inner self.

Conventional evangelicism has checked this healthy growth of the human mind, and this is, no doubt, recognised by the deceased preacher who, in the spirit world, regrets his earthly popularity. Has he discovered that by making people afraid of life and of God he weakened their spiritual powers and checked their progress? Has he seen, as has been implied, that when his followers pass into the next world they continue too long in their inferiority complexes and retard their own advancement?

The experienced student of psychic science is not unfamiliar with the excessively religious person who returns after death to the seance-room, to warn the sincere investigator that he is on the wrong path—that by seeking knowledge he will find the Devil! These

narrow, inexperienced souls continue to paint Nature and God in dark colours, endeavouring to show that death has been no gain to them; for they linger long in a dull religious world of their own creation, unable to appreciate the beauty of their new state.

The plain fact is that simple Evangelicism has nothing to teach Spiritualism, but has much to learn from it. We need a movement for the conversion of unthinking religionists, to free them from the limitations of the "dead hand", to expose the ignorance of their so-called authorities. They need to realise that life becomes a snare and a delusion to anyone who fails to claim its fullest scope, and to do this the mind must be free.

THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF JESUS.

I have read with great interest the article by Mr. Henry Collett which appeared in LIGHT of the 29th ulto. under the above title. A few weeks ago a member of the London Spiritualist Alliance gave me a copy of the "Description of the Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ", stated to have been copied from an original letter of Publius Lentulus at Rome. This manuscript reads as follows:

"It being the usual custom of Roman Governors to advertise the Senate and the People of such material things as happened in their Provinces, in the days of Tiberius Cæsar, Publius Lentulus, president of Judea, wrote the following to the Senate, concerning Our Saviour:—"

There appeared in these days a man of great virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted for a prophet, but his own disciples call him Son of God. He raiseth the dead, and cureth all manner of diseases. A man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with very reverend countenance, such as beholders love and fear, his hair of the colour of ripe chestnut, plain to the ears, whence downwards it is more orient and curling and waving about his shoulders. In the middle of his head is a seam or partition in his hair, after the manner of the Nazarenes. His forehead plain and very delicate; his face without spot or wrinkle; his nose and mouth so formed as nothing can be reprehended. His colour beautiful with a lovely red. His beard thickish, in colour like his hair—not very long, but forked.

His look, innocent and mature; his eyes grey, clear and quick. In reproof he is terrible; in admonishing courteous and fairspeoken; pleasant in conversation, mixed with gravity. It cannot be remembered that any have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep.

In proportion of body excellent. His hands and arms most delicate to behold. In speaking very temperate, modest and wise. A man, for singular beauty, surpassing the children of men.

As to whether the foregoing is a copy of a genuine document I cannot say, but much of it is strikingly in accord with the now famous picture of Jesus which was the inspirational work of Miss Bertha Valerius, a Swedish lady totally untrained in art.

I have quoted this graphic description of the person of Jesus, thinking it might prove of interest to the readers of LIGHT. Any comment of my own may seem superfluous but I cannot refrain from being surprised that so many people seem to think, like the writer of the above description, that Jesus was never known to laugh! Surely anyone who reads even the fragmentary accounts of His life that are found in the Gospels, cannot have failed to note occasions when He must have been amused! If He did not laugh, then to me at least, He would not be what He ever is to all who revere Him, the most splendid expression of divine humanity that the world has known.

LEIGH HUNT.

THE PERSONAL SIDE.

MR. AND MRS. GRAHAM MOFFAT.

Mr. Graham Moffat began his working life as a reciter and teacher of elocution, thus following in the footsteps of his father, William Moffat, who was a Professor of elocution, and famed throughout Scotland for his delineations of Scottish character. Graham Moffat's stage career came much later in life when he tried his hand at play-writing, with results that have made not only himself but also his wife and family famous. Everybody has heard of *Bunty Pulls the Strings*, the Scots play which ran for sixteen months at the Haymarket Theatre with the Graham Moffat family in the cast. His other plays are best appreciated in Scotland and the colonies. He married Miss Maggie Linch in Glasgow in 1897, and husband and wife have since been in the fullest sense life-partners. She was an ardent suffragist in the early days of that movement, and he assisted her as a platform speaker. His experience as a trainer in elocution served him well when he set out on his stage career and made an actress of his wife, who under his training rapidly showed that outstanding ability which revealed itself in the Scottish plays. Her performance in *Granny* is a conspicuous instance. Together they have toured the English-speaking world with their plays, and, sharing the same psychic experiences, they became convinced of the reality of Spiritualism. Readers of LIGHT will remember the address on his experiences given by Mr. Moffat at Queen's Gate Hall in February last. He is a firm believer in the propagation of psychic facts through the agency of books, for it was through his own reading that he first came into touch with our subject. The addition of Mr. and Mrs. Moffat to the followers of Spiritualism forms for us another of those important links with the dramatic world which are so well exemplified in the case of Sir Frank Benson, Mr. William Archer, and (to a considerable degree) Mr. Hannen Swaffer.

WITH WHAT EFFECT?

Just what effect the intervention of Spiritualists, as such, had upon the results in the General Election it is impossible to say with any exactness. But we have been informed that, in the North, where Spiritualism is at its strongest, a great impression was made by the fact that in many of the constituencies Spiritualists put forward their case at the political meetings and demanded legal recognition. This publicity could scarcely fail of some effect, and it is said that large numbers of voters, not themselves Spiritualists, shewed great sympathy, and a disposition to champion the cause of an oppressed body of people on general principles of religious liberty. The subject has thus been brought under the attention of many thousands who might otherwise have heard nothing of the matter, and the removal of that obsolete legislation which furnishes weapons to enemies of Spiritualism has been brought a stage nearer. So that although it is impossible to state definitely the effect of the intervention of Spiritualists in the General Election, it is clear enough that a strong impression was produced.

MR. HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S., yielding to a number of pressing invitations to return to the United States and Canada, will sail for the American continent early in August on a lecturing tour. He will also take in British West Indies, by special request. Mr. Leaf feels that it is in the best interests of Spiritualism that he should accept these invitations for abroad, although it necessitates cancelling a number of engagements in this country; he feels sure that, in the circumstances, the various societies will excuse the cancelling of his engagements from August 8th to the end of December, 1929.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

In a letter to the *East Anglian Daily Times* in defence of Spiritualism, a correspondent, Mr. Arthur Barker, protesting against the purblind "leave it alone" policy of ignorant alarmists, puts the case in a sentence when he says, "Unseen evils cannot be combated by ignorance of unseen good."

* * * * *

The following true story has just reached me from a friend in New York. During a Seventh Day Adventist meeting a member of that community arose to his feet to give the following experience. His mother had died some time previously and since then she had returned to him on a number of occasions, a fact which the speaker seemed to regard with the greatest repugnance. "The only way I could get rid of her was to say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan!'" he remarked. Comment seems to be superfluous!

* * * * *

I knew it would come—it was inevitable after the references in the newspapers last year to telepathy in football-matches. This time it is "Subconscious Tennis", for that is the title of an article by Senorita de Alvarez in a London daily. And now we may confidently look forward to cryptaesthesia in cricket matches, hypnotism in horse-racing, and retrocognition in racquets. The sporting scribes will get hold of the phrases even though they may have but a hazy notion of their meaning.

* * * * *

Mr. A. A. Milne writing in *Britannia* has some critical observations upon the literary rubbish published as messages from great poets. He instances an alleged poem by Dryden and another by Longfellow. Mr. Milne is presumably unaware that these follies give pain to many educated Spiritualists but it is possible to take them too seriously; there is a comic side to them. If Spiritualism could have been killed by the absurdities of some of its followers it would have died long ago; but it has all the vitality of truth and its critics in the meantime may be regarded as doing a useful service by providing a purge.

* * * * *

About forty years ago a man named Ashcroft—a Nonconformist minister—gained some notoriety by touring the country on a campaign against Spiritualism. I used to read of his activities which provoked strong resentment amongst Spiritualists. Many years afterwards at a direct voice seance at the British College a communicator who gave the name of Ashcroft came through expressing penitence for his attacks on a subject which he had since his death found to be true. As I knew the name of the communicator I was able to identify him; none of the others had ever heard of him. It was a rather typical experience, for on other occasions I had listened to similar apologetic messages from old-time enemies of Spiritualism who, having found after death what life had failed to teach them, had the grace to return and confess their mistake.

D. G.

UNDER the auspices of the Croydon National Spiritualist Church a Garden Fête and Bazaar is to be held at 58, Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood, S.E., on Saturday, July 13th. An excellent programme of entertainment has been arranged, and the Fête, which is in aid of the Church Funds, will be formally opened by Mrs. E. Hinchliffe. The Duchess of Hamilton, Viscountess Molesworth, Sybil Viscountess Rhondda, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir Frank Benson, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, the Rev. G. Vale Owen, and Miss Estelle Stead are among the patrons, and a number of other well-known Spiritualists and psychic students are expected to be present.

AN INTERVIEW WITH HOMER.

From time to time we have published curious and inexplicable experiences, as, for example, the story of the lady who deposed to being ferried across a lake in the Highlands by a boatman who it was afterwards discovered had been dead many years. Mention of such cases has reminded us that some twenty years ago we received from the late Mr. W. T. Stead a story related by a Highland schoolmaster whom we believe to be still living, although so far as we can gather he is still without any explanation of the experience he then narrated.

The incident which took place in the highlands of Banffshire in March, 1895, when the narrator was little more than a schoolboy, was as follows:

The lad was trying to translate a passage in the first book of the "Odyssey" into English when he was approached by a man who appeared to be a wandering mendicant of venerable aspect, who asked what book the boy was reading. He replied that he was trying to make sense out of the first few lines of Homer's "Odyssey", although he thought the question rather profitless because the aged man did not look as though he were likely to be familiar with Greek. To his surprise, however, the old man immediately started on a long oration in Greek and followed this by singing some Greek songs in the original.

He advised the lad not to puzzle himself any longer over what is called the "Homeric problem", remarking:

"Do not think of Homer dead;
For Homer still doth beg his bread."

"You do not look very much like an ancient Greek," said the astonished lad, when the very mysterious visitor had declared that he was the author of the world-wide "Iliad" which owed its existence to him nearly 3,000 years ago.

Answering the question concerning his personal aspect, the visitor remarked that he had often had his hair cut, although he had frequently referred to the long-haired Greeks in his "Iliad". He advised the lad to study this historic poem most carefully so that he might obtain a good sound knowledge of the age of Troy.

The mysterious visitor's next step was to offer the lad assistance in reading Homer. Accordingly, the boy handed him his book, but this was declined, the old man saying: "That poem was composed by me almost thirty centuries ago—do you truly think that I would require such a length of time to transmit my own poems to memory?"

He then commenced to recite the "Odyssey" with the utmost ease and then with the same fluency rendered it into English prose.

This had a curious effect upon the young student's mind; he sat dumb with wonder.

The supposed Homer carried with him a large bag completely packed with manuscripts written in the Greek of Homer's time, that is to say, that it included the digamma. All these writings concerned the Trojan wars.

The old gentleman at length departed. The subject of this strange experience said that he could never make out from whence he came or where he went, after leaving.

Accepting the truth of the story, the problem to be solved is whether the experience was objective or subjective, that is to say, whether it actually happened or was simply the result of hallucination on the part of the lad while steeped in his Greek studies. But the mere fact that the strange visitor knew vastly more Greek than the lad, indicates that there was a considerable degree of actuality about the experience.

It may be mentioned that the narrator of the story says that on referring the question to some of his University friends, they felt convinced that the strange visitor was an educated madman who fancied himself to be Homer; which is, of course, quite possible. But, as with most stories of this kind, the interpretation must needs be speculative.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"FOUR MILES FROM ANY TOWN—AND OTHER VERSES."
By David Gow. (Cecil Palmer. 3s. 6d. net.)

For more than a quarter of a century the fugitive pages of the periodical press, including LIGHT, have been disclosing to the discriminating few a delicate and distinctive note in the poetical work of Mr. David Gow. At long last he has been induced to reward their patience by issuing in more permanent form a representative selection from this once scattered treasury, and here it is under a title both apt and provocative.

The book is one to possess, for the lyrical grace and charm of his more descriptive poems are undeniable. At every turn an almost reckless imagery, coupled with a highly finished technique, is found to mirror some aspect of that spiritual tenderness which only the born lover of Nature in her ever-changing moods is able to capture for us, whilst the secret of winning a wistful beauty from things familiar and unfamiliar alike is abundantly evident throughout.

His philosophy, too, is at one with his faculty for seeing in the pageantries of the universe, a potent and a promise for the future:

The rule of the winter is strong,
But beyond its might,
Lo! the mystical rose of song
Is a-bloom to-night.
And a river of dreams flows by
That no frost may stay,
And there shines a light from the sky
That is never grey.

I should like to quote freely from the many fine things that crowd the pages of the volume, but space forbids, and I must content myself with but two more lines that confirm the spirit in which Mr. Gow dedicates his Muse to our service:

I pen my dreams as captives carve their sorrow
Upon their dungeon walls.

The reader must explore this harvest of song at the source and as the singer himself presents it in all its fullness. It is rich in that happy inspiration which is the prerogative of the true poet.

F. E. K.

"THE IMPRISONED SPLENDOUR." By R. Dimsdale-Stocker.
(Elmer S. Prather, Brussels. 4s.)

In this book Mr. Dimsdale-Stocker gives us a series of valuable essays. They are clearly and closely reasoned, and yet written in a style that makes them not only profitable but interesting. There are some apt quotations from the poets and philosophers which delightfully illuminate his various themes. He treats of "The Myth of Laziness", "The Right to be Happy", "The Fear Impulse" and "Reincarnation" amongst his other themes, and on each he has something to say well worth noting. Indeed, his essays cover many questions of vital importance. He is not only an able thinker but a man who knows how to set out his thought in an attractive and clearly intelligible way.

LUCIUS.

"ASTROLOGY AND BIRTH CONTROL." By E. H. Bailey,
D.A., F.A.S. (W. Foulsham, 2s. 6d.)

This latest addition to the astrological literature by the editor of the *British Journal of Astrology*, deals, as its title implies, with the question of birth control in relation to astrological teachings. The question is treated with knowledge and ability. The author considers the occult laws underlying the physiology of sex and the pro-creation of children, and contends that "birth controllers in their ill-advised eagerness and enthusiasm, blindly and wilfully ignore several vital facts which cut at the root of all their arguments". We learn also that the people in the present age who adopt Birth Control as now taught are pandering to the same evil forces which overthrew Atlantis. But it seems that these hostile forces will not this time succeed.

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Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—July 7th, 11.15, open circle; 6.30, Mr. Ronald Brailey. July 10th, 8, Mrs. S. D. Kent.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—July 7th, 11, Service; 6.30, Mr. Melton. Wednesday, 7.30, Public Meeting at 55 Station Road.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—July 7th, 7, Mr. Horace Leaf, address and clairvoyance. July 3rd, 7.30, Miss. J. Proud, address and clairvoyance.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—July 7th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Major C. C. Colley.

Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41, Ashford Road.—July 7th, 6, Mrs. Croxford. July 10th, 3, Circle; 8, Mr. S. Foster.

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ORIGIN OF THE ALLIANCE:

More than fifty years ago, when enquiry into the evidence for Human Survival was at its beginnings, the leading London Society devoted to this question was the British National Association of Spiritualists, then established in Great Russell Street.

It was founded in 1873 by a group which numbered several distinguished men, amongst them the great naturalist, Alfred Russel Wallace, who was the co-discoverer with Darwin of the principle of Natural Selection. In 1884 the B.N.A.S. was reorganised under the title of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Later, as it grew in strength and importance, and the need was felt for making it a corporate body, application was made for a charter of incorporation, but this attempt failed; it was, however, incorporated in 1896 under the Philanthropic Clauses of the Companies Acts of 1862-3, with the result of becoming the London Spiritualist Alliance Limited. It may be mentioned that among the signatories of the Memorandum of Association in 1896 were Lord Radnor, the Hon. Percy Scawen Wyndham, Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.S., General Drayson, and Mr. E. Dawson Rogers. At the present day the Alliance has the support of many men and women of high distinction.

ITS AIMS AND OBJECTS:

The objects of the Alliance, which are fully stated in its Memorandum of Association, may be thus briefly indicated:—

1. To investigate the phenomena commonly known as psychical or spiritualistic, including hypnotism, somnambulism, thought-transference, second-sight, and all of a kindred nature. 2. To maintain a Library of books, pamphlets, documents, and publications for the use of members of the Alliance. 3. To assist enquirers, especially, of course, its members, in their researches.

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SOME OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING MODERN SPIRITUALISM:

Investigations and experiments into psychic phenomena have been carried on not only by thousands of Spiritualists in their homes, but also by a large body of scientists, some of them of great eminence, both in this country and on the Continent. The result of these investigations has been to place the reality of a life beyond the grave beyond all reasonable doubt. So that for the first time in human history, life after death has been placed upon a scientific basis, and has no longer to rest simply upon tradition and religious faith.

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There are many evidences, quite outside Spiritualism proper, that powers of clairvoyance, telepathy, and the like are possessed by certain persons, but beyond this it has been proved that there is a faculty of mediumship which represents an extension and special application of these psychic powers, forming a link with discarnate humanity. Hence spirit-control and spirit-communication.

There is a vast amount yet to be learned regarding the nature and scope of these powers; the field of enquiry is inexhaustible, and, to many students, full of fascination, but to the average man or woman the main question will present itself in connection with the proof of human survival and spirit-communication.

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Finally, reference may be made to the tremendous implications which turn upon Spiritualism in regard to the world in which we now live; it throws new light on many of the problems of existence, and with its message that each of us must in the end reap what he has sown, it represents the greatest force for world-betterment that is at work amongst us to-day.

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