

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

Edited by **DAVID GOW**

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Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research

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

No. 2543. VOL. XLIX. [Registered as SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1929. a Newspaper.] PRICE FOURPENCE

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	...	...	...	...	469
The Valiantine Sittings in Italy (continued)	...	...	...	...	470
Mysterious Sounds	...	...	...	...	471
Mass Meeting at Brighton	...	...	...	...	471
The Practice of Telepathy	...	...	...	...	472
Letters to the Editor	...	...	...	...	473
What is a Mystic?	...	...	...	...	474
The Purposes of Spirit Teachers	...	...	...	...	474
Sidelights	...	...	...	...	475
A German Psychometrist	...	...	...	...	475
The Understanding of Life	...	...	...	...	476
The Human Cry	...	...	...	...	476
Spiritualism among the Icelanders	...	...	...	...	477
Rays and Reflections	...	...	...	...	477
Clement Scott and Poppy Land	...	...	...	...	478
Notes on New Books	...	...	...	...	478

NOTES BY THE WAY.

"WILL O' THE WISP."

Referring to a note in "Rays and Reflections" (LIGHT, September 14th) Dr. Margaret Vivian writes us calling attention to three articles by M. de Vesme in the *Revue Spirite* for June, July and August, entitled, "Ceux qui ont vu des feux follets?" Originally M. de Vesme invited correspondence from anyone who had actually seen these luminous appearances, and the letters he received seemed to show that there is more than one kind of "Will o' the Wisp". Some are mere phosphorescent flashes, and others balls of fire that follow or precede human beings, and are not necessarily limited to marshes, churchyards, fens, etc. She remarks, "the usual explanation in text-books of chemistry is that they are connected with methane or marsh-gas, but one can hardly imagine that methane could give rise to a luminous ball that ran hither and thither." M. de Vesme suggests that some of these lights might be spiritualistic phenomena, while others, the mere phosphorescent flashes, may be due to gases produced by decomposing corpses, marsh-gas, etc. Our correspondent observes that there seems to be very little real knowledge concerning these lights. We had noted this on previous occasions when this question was discussed in other journals as well as in LIGHT. As a purely natural phenomenon, of course, the "jack o' lantern" is not so frequent nowadays, so many marshes having been drained and built over. As regards the theory that "Will o' the Wisp" is sometimes of psychic origin, we should imagine, in the light of what we know to-day of psychic science, that this is highly probable.

PERSONAL IDENTITY IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

Somebody asked us lately whether spirits always remember who and what they were when they lived in this world. We replied that much depended on the kind of spirit, whether he was, or was not, naturally a person of "clear mind, memory and understanding", as the lawyers say. Some people, even in this world, owing to a lapse of memory, forget who they are; we read of such cases occasionally in the newspapers. A sense of identity is, of course, closely bound up with a recollection of the past, and as we know by experience, some spirits have no very clear memories of their earth-experiences, and when returning into our cloudy conditions may become very confused indeed. But

the inner sense of identity is never lost. In a remarkable book, *The Process of Man's Becoming*, by "Quaestor Vitae" (Mr. Oswald Murray), we find a passage dealing with this question. The author, referring to the advanced spirits who control the general lines of communication with earth, remarks:

Man must not flatter himself that these mighty operators are working for him solely. When they project a life-current through spirits in the inner personal plane, who have passed out of relation and association with this earth and relate them temporarily with a medium here, it is not done solely in order to bring evidence to their friends on earth. It is also done to re-awaken recollections of their earth-life and thus stimulate their evolution by reminding them of their personal experiences here. There are as many sceptics in the inner state, as to their having had a prior existence on an outer earth, as there are unbelievers here in a subsequent spiritual existence.

THE BOGEY OF FEAR.

In the course of his recent address to the members of the St. Albans Society for Psychic Study, the Rev. G. Vale Owen is reported to have said, regarding Spiritualism, "If you have any fear keep right out of the subject." This is the kind of advice we have given in the past, and indeed we have gone so far as to suggest that the tremulous doubter who fumbles and vacillates is not a desirable recruit for a movement which is most helped by strong characters and sensible minds. There is no doubt that much of the reproach levelled against Spiritualism has resulted from the presence in its ranks of people of low intelligence and feeble will; people who are mastered by the subject instead of resolutely mastering it. But such a consideration applies equally to every subject which concerns the fundamental issues of life. We know Love as the most powerful principle in the universe; its terrific power is exemplified not only by its splendid conquests but also by its terrible tragedies. Miss H. A. Dallas once observed of Spiritualism that, in Scriptural phrase, it was "set for the fall and the rising of many". So we are never dismayed by the "scare" stories told by those enemies of the subject who set themselves to rake up everything which tells against the question, carefully suppressing everything in its favour. Their sensational diatribes frighten away the weak and timorous souls and we are frankly willing that they should be frightened away. The clear and critical mind investigating the subject is never bamboozled by such disingenuous appeals.

QUEEN'S HALL MEETING.—Attention is drawn to the public meeting and discussion to be held on Sunday, October 13th, at 7 p.m., under the chairmanship of Mr. Dennis Bradley, for the purpose of laying before the public, evidence of survival after death. Among the speakers will be Hannen Swaffer, Oliver Baldwin, M.P., Shaw Desmond, H. De Vere Stapoole, Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, Rev. G. Vale Owen, Maurice Barbanell, Mrs. C. A. Dawson-Scott, Miss Lindaf-Hageby and Mrs. St. Clair Stobart.

THE VALIANTINE SITTINGS IN ITALY.

BY H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

(continued from page 459.)

IV

ON the morning of Wednesday, May 22nd, Mr. P. E. Rossi and the Marquis Centurione called on Mrs. Bradley at the Grand Hotel Isotta, an hour or so before their departure from Genoa to Venice. Quoting from her letter to me, she said: "They wished to speak to me alone and were shown into a sitting-room. To my astonishment Mr. Rossi then made the statement that at the very end of the last sitting, he had distinctly felt Valiantine lean forward and speak into the trumpet. Mr. Rossi also said that during the early part of the sitting, Mr. Castellini had caught hold of my [Mrs. Bradley's] hand and I was touching the back of his [Mr. Castellini's] head."

Mr. Rossi also said that Mr. Castellini had stated that he reached out his hand and caught hold of Mrs. Bradley's hand or wrist. Mrs. Bradley unequivocally affirms this to be an absolute lie. Continuing from Mrs. Bradley's letter: "Of course I was simply furious with them, and demanded that they should at once fetch Mr. Castellini, so that he might repeat this outrageous statement in my presence. The Marquis Centurione then said that Mr. Rossi should not have told me that. Then I asked them how they dared to make a charge against Valiantine, with the remarkable evidences of his genuineness which had been given during the controlled seances. Mr. Rossi replied that he thought Valiantine was a wonderful medium, but that he faked at times. Rossi added that at one of their own sittings they had been told that Valiantine would fake on the last day, so I told them that if this were the case Rossi had built up upon his own imagination the charge that Valiantine was cheating. I sent for Valiantine to come to my room and he was told of the charge that had been made against him. He was amazed and furiously indignant. There was a violent scene between him and Mr. Rossi, during which the Marquis kept very quiet. Mr. Rossi then referred to the money side of the question, and said that they would pay Valiantine's railway fare and his hotel expenses, but they would not pay the £50 towards his general expenses which had been arranged.

"Valiantine, outraged at Rossi's scandalous allegation of fraud at the last sitting, told them that he would refuse to touch one penny of their money. To Valiantine the money side was a minor matter in comparison with the insult which had been offered to him."

It should be emphasized again, that actually it cost Valiantine over £70 out of his own pocket to make this visit to Genoa.

Mr. and Mrs. Valiantine, with Mrs. Bradley, left Genoa that morning, disgusted with the treatment which had been accorded to them.

The following day, after their arrival in Venice, Mrs. Bradley wrote the Marquis Centurione a strong letter, expressing her intense resentment at his behaviour and that of Mr. Rossi. She also demanded that Mr. Castellini (whose address she did not know) should furnish her with an explanation and an apology for his false allegations against her. Some days later, the Marquis Centurione replied to her in a letter which I shall deal with later, since certain paragraphs are contained therein which, by a curious slip, confound Mr. Rossi's statements.

It is essential to analyse the illogical allegations which Mr. Rossi made against Valiantine. If fraud

had been discovered by Mr. Rossi it was his duty *immediately* to announce the fact at the time in front of Valiantine and in front of the other sitters who were present in order that an instant investigation might be made. The charge, however, was not made against him at the time, but the next morning, on the eve of his departure. The Marquis Centurione and Mr. Rossi acknowledged to Mrs. Bradley the genuineness and the powerful mediumship of Valiantine which had been exhibited in previous sittings. A series of successful sittings had been held in Genoa, at which acknowledged "voice" phenomena had occurred, both under control and without control. Despite all this, however, Mr. Rossi's accusation is that at the last minute of the last sitting of all, Valiantine suddenly became a lunatic and bent forward to speak into the trumpet itself. Can any logical credence be based upon such an assumption?

Mrs. Bradley can attest, with six years' experience of Valiantine's mediumship, that at the end of this particular sitting it was the "voice" of "Dr. Barnett"—*and his only*—which was speaking through the trumpet. Mrs. Bradley has conversed with "Dr. Barnett" literally on hundreds of occasions. Mrs. Kelly Hack, in her report, records the "voice" as that of "Dr. Barnett". What then was Mr. Rossi's motive in making this allegation? This question involves intricate psychological problems.

It may be noted that the accusation was made simultaneously with the question of payment of money. That question may be immediately dismissed, since Valiantine refused to receive one penny from them. One must then consider very carefully the mixed conditions and the somewhat alarming forces which were exerted during the last two seances. There existed in these circles a certain mixture of extraordinary forces. There were the Valiantine forces, and the Centurione—Mrs. Rossi forces. Whatever may have been spoken in Italian by the spirit "voices" was unknown to Valiantine or Mrs. Bradley, but the physical forces were unquestionably obvious. When the spirit "voice" of the son of the Marquis says that he would bring apports through, Mrs. Rossi falls into trance and crashes her head against the floor, and is carried unconscious from the room. The Marquis, at the next sitting, loses all power of his legs, and is also carried from the seance room. These are interesting points which may occupy the mind of the student of Psychical Research and Spiritualism.

In a letter dated May 28th, 1929, the Marquis Centurione replied to Mrs. Bradley's letter to him, saying that he could not question Mr. Rossi's word, but elaborated the following two important points, and I quote from his letter verbatim:

- (1) Mr. Valiantine absolutely could not notice the slightest touch of the fingers of Mr. Rossi's right hand, because as soon as he observed the body of Mr. Valiantine resume its position in the chair, after having spoken the first time *into the trumpet*, Mr. Rossi withdrew his hand.
- (2) Mr. Rossi at once informed his companions in the circle in Italian in a loud voice of what he had discovered and made known to them *his intention to catch Valiantine in the act*, but it was precisely at this moment that the medium, perceiving by intuition probably, in Mr. Rossi's voice a warning to his companions, at once suspended the seance a few minutes after it had opened.

These two statements are in direct contradiction to what actually took place. They are in contradiction to Mrs. Kelly Hack's report of the sitting. Mrs. Kelly Hack speaks Italian and, therefore, would most certainly have heard Mr. Rossi say that he was going to "catch Valiantine in the act", if he had made such a statement. Beyond this, both of the points stated by the Marquis Centurione in his letter are in *direct contradiction of the verbal statements made to me by Mr. Rossi himself*, when I saw him in London on June 18th, 1929. In his letter the Marquis Centurione made only a brief reference to the allegations against Mrs. Bradley. All he said was (quoting verbatim): "I also have to state that the word of Mr. Castellini (in whom we all believe) is quite beyond suspicion and he will write you direct."

(To be continued.)

MYSTERIOUS SOUNDS.

BY CAPT. Q. C. A. CRAWFORD, R.N.

Be not afraid, the isle is full of noises
—"THE TEMPEST" (Act III).

In the issue of LIGHT for September 14th under the heading "Rays and Reflections" by D. G. there appeared a notice of certain kinds of manifestation which are very well known. One of the commonest of these is the sound of a carriage driving up to the door. Such things are often put under the heading of collective illusion, or hallucination.

The word "hallucination" seems to me to be a particularly happy word to use because it derives its meaning from "wandering in the mind". Mind is here used as if it was some peculiar region to which the attention has been drawn.

I suggest that it is useful to consider this region as if it were a region of a semi-material kind such as the well-known electric and magnetic fields which can be mapped out around objects by supplying the field with material in a finely-divided state.

When iron filings are supplied to a magnetic field they show us an invisible region of magnetism by presenting an illusion in materialised form. It is often forgotten that this visible map of magnetic lines is not the real thing, for by their presence the invisible force is destroyed and turned into visible minute magnets each with its own minute invisible projection into space. They merely inform us of the distribution of forces which were there before the material was supplied.

I have sometimes spoken of the magnetic field as an aura of magnetism because it seems to illustrate the region of psychic force which exists about the human and animal body which psychics describe as the "aura". The aura is, of course, not a magnetic field but it is something like it, and it seems probable to me that any interference with the aura, must produce a reaction upon the individual to whom it belongs, just as any attempted interference with the field of a magnet produces material motion in the magnet itself.

In these days of portable wireless sets we have an amazingly good symbol, because here we have an instrument with an electrical aura which we know a good deal about. We know that when it is in the right tune it can render audible musical sounds that are present as wireless waves, but which are totally beyond our senses to perceive. Similarly, it seems to me, a hypothesis may be constructed on which we begin to understand such things as collective hallucination.

If the consciousness of the mind be seated in the psychic aura of the body, the act of "wandering in the mind" may be likened to the act of searching on the wireless field with the tuning controls. By this act the aura may be brought into tune with the so-called astral world, and things happening in that region may be rendered as real in fact as is the tune "material-

ised" by a loud speaker in the case of the portable wireless set. It is necessary to believe that the human aura acts like a magnetic field and produces in the brain precisely the same impression as the material senses produce from the material world.

Thus a carriage drives up and horses paw the ground, a key rattles in a lock or footsteps are heard.

These things are present but not in material form. There is no reaction on the door, no mark of hooves or wheels. Yet if material be supplied in a finely-divided form (ectoplasm for instance) reaction may take place just as a certain type of solidity is recognised in the bunch of filings arranged round a magnetic pole.

As D. G. says, it is a suggestive fact that the sounds often preceded the actual arrival of somebody in the flesh. The inference is that the aura is not necessarily pure and that every finely divided material from the flesh can be seized upon within the aura and produce physical effects.

I imagine that this is the secret of a powerful materialising medium. In his presence the "field" can become obvious to the senses just as in the presence of iron particles the magnetic field exhibits itself as a material projection of the original magnet.

MASS MEETING AT BRIGHTON.

The Dome at Brighton has seating accommodation for 2,000 people but on the evening of September 21st on the occasion of a big Spiritualist Rally, the stewards had great difficulty in finding room for the late-comers. Mr. Alfred Morris occupied the chair with distinction. The speakers were Miss Estelle Stead, Vice-Admiral J. G. Armstrong, R.N., and the Rev. G. Vale Owen.

In his opening address Mr. Morris said that, to many, the portals of death were painted black, and beyond them was spread a thick grey veil. Spiritualism essayed to lift that veil and to throw a light on those sombre portals, transforming them into veritable golden gates. We lived in a selfish world; this would not be the case if a greater knowledge of things unseen were widespread; such knowledge would enable mankind to see life in its true proportions.

MISS ESTELLE STEAD described a seance in America at which she saw her father, the late William T. Stead, who had recently passed on. He took her hand and held it and talked of things which the Medium could not possibly have known.

ADMIRAL ARMSTRONG, in the course of his remarks, said that a few years ago a friend suggested that he should go to a Medium by way of a new experience. He went anonymously. A voice came to him, and he spoke to that voice for twenty minutes. He knew without a shadow of doubt it was his wife.

THE REV. G. VALE OWEN spoke of Spiritualism and the Bible. He asked his audience to have no fear of any of the darker powers; the sons and daughters of God were stronger than any forces that could be brought against them.

MR. EVERETT, president of the Spiritualist Church, Mighell Street, Brighton, proposed a vote of thanks which was seconded by Professor James Coates, the veteran Spiritualist, who mentioned that he had had nearly sixty years' experience of Spiritualism.

Successful clairvoyance was given from the platform by Mrs. Barkel.

The success of the meeting was in part due to the generous action of Mrs. Crawford-Smith, of Brighton, who kindly guaranteed a certain sum as an indemnity against possible financial loss.

ANIMAL SURVIVAL.—A correspondent to LIGHT wishes to get into touch with any circle which may have been formed to investigate animal survival. Letters addressed to "Animal Lover", c/o the Editor will be forwarded.

THE PRACTICE OF TELEPATHY.

As Mr. Drayton Thomas in his new book remarks of telepathy, so meagre is the evidence for it (as between mind and mind on earth) that orthodox science does not yet accept telepathy as proven. Sir Oliver Lodge has said that we have still to begin at the beginning in producing evidence for telepathy. With such considerations does Mrs. F. E. Leaning introduce a valuable article on Spontaneous Telepathic Impressions in *The British Journal of Psychological Research* (November—December, 1928).

The well-known meticulous carefulness of Mrs. Leaning in all her work renders this article of hers particularly worthy of attention, there being so little reliable data available for students of this important subject. She was therefore much gratified to meet two people who not only exercise the faculty but in their busy lives have taken the trouble, "the one to record, and the other to corroborate, the impression received".

Mrs. Leaning writes:—

The Sender, or it would be more accurate to say, the Source, of the ideas transmitted, is a warm-hearted, imaginative, but very capable young woman, earning her living by "honest toil", but having plenty of family and personal interests. She lives in a South London suburb, and goes daily to her post as assistant in a shop in Town. The Receiver is one of her employers. . . . She resides with her family in the West Central district of London, and therefore when the business day is over, the sender and receiver depart in opposite directions; and the private life of neither is known to or discussed by the other. . . . Those who desire to know more will find it in Mr. Hubert Wales's report of his own experiences with the receiver, Miss Jane Samuels, printed in *Proceedings, S.P.R.*, Vol. XXXI, pp. 124—217 (1921).

Mrs. Leaning explains that the impressions are received usually in the morning, just after awakening. The receiver (Miss Samuels) writes on the left hand page of a notebook the date and hour, with her impressions; the right hand page is reserved for the sender (Miss Moore) to fill in as the case may require. Every day something is received, although there may be gaps in the record.

The original report by Mr. Wales contains fifty-one examples out of a much larger number. An idea that emerged from his considered analysis of the series is "that what we have been accustomed to call telepathy may comprise two utterly distinct phenomena, as widely divided as the poles . . . a physical phenomenon, operating over limited distances . . . and there may be also a psychological phenomenon—requiring us to contemplate the mind as existing independently of the organism and having a different relation to space". Mrs. Leaning continues:—"He might have added also, having a different psychological orientation, based on the difference between conscious and subconscious activity. . . . Experiments in thought-transference have been numerous; they are all of one kind, involving fixed time, and conscious attention on both sides, and they prove that thought-transference can and does take place. But telepathic impacts, properly so called, do not involve those conditions, often do not respond to them, are even impeded and negated by them, as nearly every experimental series shows. They must be spontaneous on the part of the sender, who does not know what, or whether anything is being sent; and they are just as spontaneously noted by the receiver, into whose mind the image or idea floats casually. But series of receptions like this cannot be planned, and they are not so common that we can afford to ignore them when opportunity brings them our way."

Mrs. Leaning had no more doubt of the sender's integrity than had Mr. Wales of the receiver's, and

the original notes, etc., were all in her hands. As the direct report of the telepathic experiments extends to a dozen pages of the *British Journal*, only a sample or two can be quoted. The following are selected from the half-hundred total as representative:—

The letter A signifies the impressions received by Miss Samuels, and B the content of Miss Moore's mind or experience, in each case.

3A.—A bell clangs; people are terrified and snatch up their children, but someone calms them, and one—a woman—goes to see what it is and sees men and boys marching and cannot understand why, as it's in the night.

3B.—The Boy Scouts started to camp very early in the morning and it is quite dark. The Ambulance comes along, ringing the bell furiously. We had all got up because we thought there must be a fire somewhere.

12A.—Trying to buy overall. Shop closed or just about to close. Assistant very cross. Also pretty and all blue three-piece suit.

12B.—Went to buy an apron for my sister. Shop was just closing and assistant spoke very sharply to us. Farther up the road I fell in love with a three-piece suit and bought it.

41A.—A little sweet-shop but no one to serve.

41B.—I was kept waiting a long time in a small shop and thought there was no one to serve me.

69A.—Standing amongst bursting siphons and bottles.

69B.—A siphon of soda burst and I thought how awful it would be to be in a factory where they might all burst.

73A.—A piece of string about two feet long out of a wall, a circular feeling.

73B.—I went to bed early in the light and as I look up I see a piece of string poking out of top of window.

[Note.—Miss Moore informed me in conversation that she was lying wondering vaguely whether she should try to send an intentional thought to Miss Samuels, and "couldn't think of anything" and fell asleep, but her eyes had been meanwhile fixed on the round-headed window ("A circular feeling"), from which a piece of string (a blind cord?) projected.]

98A.—Kisses lady on back of neck.

98B.—My sister had just had her hair cut and her neck looked very pretty, so I kissed it.

105A.—Washing the face of a little statue of a little man with a beard.

105B.—Someone had made a red nose on an elfin statue so I washed face.

Mrs. Leaning concludes her article with an important remark in relation to mediumship: "The general liability of a psychic, or receiver, to obtain ideas from other minds, ought never to be lost sight of when weighing the results of mediumship. Whoever is open to telepathy from the spirits out of the flesh is surely also open to it from spirits in the flesh, and the examples laid before us, in the mass, in the present paper go to show how normal the matter is."

B. P.

THE SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY.—Os-Ke-Non-Ton, the famous Mohawk singer, will give a song recital at Grotrian Hall, Wigmore Street, W.1, on Wednesday next, 9th inst., at 8.15 p.m., in aid of the Community's funds. Tickets, numbered and reserved, 5s. 9d. and 3s. 6d., can be obtained at the Box Office, Grotrian Hall, and at the offices of the Spiritualist Community, 115, Wigmore Street, W.1. Admission 2s. 4d.

MISS H. A. DALLAS, of Innisfail, Crawley, Sussex, would be glad to hear from any reader willing to pass on LIGHT, when read, to a country clergyman.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF JESUS."

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

FEDA ON REFRESHMENT.

Sir,—May I give my own interpretation of Feda's message to the societies on the above subject? She is not, I am sure, advocating the taking of *food* before a meeting. Tea and coffee are not foods, but brain stimulants. Taken just before the evening's work they do clear and brighten the mentality and remove fatigue. That, at least, is the experience of some of us.

But—and this I feel certain is Feda's chief point—taken after the work is done, tea and coffee are like a spur to a tired horse.

On the other hand, food—a sandwich, or a cup of cocoa, or hot milk (which are not brain stimulants)—are invaluable after the meeting, and I should say are absolutely necessary to such workers as Mrs. Estelle Roberts and Mr. Vout Peters. Even I, with my limited experience, generally come off the platform with the appetite of a schoolboy!—Yours, etc.,

ANNA E. MENZIES.
(Mrs. John Menzies).

22, St. Luke's Road, Bayswater, W.11.

MORE ABOUT LILYDALE.

Sir,—In my article on the subject of Lilydale Camp (LIGHT, September 28th, p. 464) I omitted to mention the work of Dr. Burgess, the powerful Spiritual Healer, and one of the pioneers of Spiritualism in the States. He is the Pastor of one of the leading churches in Chicago, but during the Camp season gives his services, at all hours of the day or night, to the relief of suffering humanity. He has performed many most startling cures. During our stay he cured of blindness an old lady who had been given up as incurable by a number of specialists, and we saw him treating a man who had been paralysed from his waist downwards, and bed-ridden for five years. The patient was carried into the class-room by two men and placed on a chair. After a short treatment he was able, for the first time, to stand up on his feet, with his hands resting on two chairs. Before we left Lilydale Camp he was able to move one leg over the other in bed and was making rapid improvement.

The Marion Skidmore Library in the Camp is a fine building and contains many original editions and bound copies of the earliest newspapers of the movement in America.

We also visited the "Inspiration Stump", in a glade in the woods, where open air meetings are held thrice daily, and at which many of the Mediums, living in the Camp, give public demonstrations.

In addition to the two large and popular hotels, the "Leolyn Inn" and the "Maplewood", which are nearly always full, there is a very large and excellent Cafeteria, at which visitors are able to procure meals at reasonable prices.

One special feature of the Camp, at which so many thousands of persons are present weekly, is the absence of regular policemen. It is patrolled about four times a day by a motor-police officer, as a matter of form, but his services are never needed. This is a fact which speaks for itself, and is, I think, unique. I have heard of no occasion on which his services have been required.—Yours, etc.,

E. A. S. HAYWARD.

Canada.

Sir,—With reference to the description of Our Lord, it might prove of interest to your readers to know that in the East He is visualised amongst a certain section of occultists as dark, tall and of a most majestic appearance. His eyes are dark and brilliant, the nose nondescript but well-cut, the mouth very sweet with dimpled corners; the hair, worn long, is very black and wavy. He has exquisitely-formed hands and feet. He is very thin as befitting His ascetic life. As Christ wore an Asiatic body this description seems to me more correct than the European golden hair and blue eyes; though to reach Christ one need not meditate on His physical form at all, seeing Him merely as a flame in one's heart, and making that heart a pure altar fit to install Divinity.

As regards Christ's never smiling, His face in its wonderful beatitude has a happiness that we, for want of words, might describe as a perpetual smile. But it may prove of interest in this connection to learn that in an old Sanscrit manuscript, a description of the Divine Man occurs and one of His characteristics is that He never laughs. This does not seem to me an error. Laughter admits of some element of surprise. To the Man who knows everything, there can be no source of wonder. But if I might repeat without being pedantic: it is the Christ within that matters; forms and names are limitations, and He is beyond a limit.—Yours, etc.,

ELIZABETH SHARPE.

Dig Bhuvan Palace,
Limbdi, Kathiawar, India.

A VISION IN A FLOWER.

Sir.—A friend has given me the following account of a vision she had at her home in the country, a short while ago.

As this vision, which took place on three consecutive afternoons, has some (to me) unusual and interesting aspects, I send an account of it to you, in the hope that you may think it worthy to find a place in LIGHT.

My friend, who is quite an old lady, told me that she was standing, one afternoon, looking out into her garden from one of the windows of her house. In a bed, a little distance from the window, a tall and beautiful white hollyhock attracted her special attention. As she gazed admiringly at it, she became aware that through the blossoms, the face of an exceedingly beautiful young man was looking at her. Much astonished, she moved slightly to one side, to see if the face was simply an optical delusion on her part, but it still remained perfectly clear, and extraordinarily beautiful. My friend called to her daughter, and pointing to the vision asked her if she saw it; but the daughter did not, and was rather troubled that her mother evidently was convinced of the genuineness of the apparition.

The next day, about the same time, in daylight, the old lady again saw in the hollyhock the head of this beautiful young man; but this time, he looked much older; his face was turned to one side, with a downcast expression. For the third time, on the following day, the vision appeared. But now it was the head of an old man, with white hair, and a black skull-cap. His expression was inexpressibly sad, but even that did not detract from the extraordinary beauty of his face. That she had seen the same man, at different periods of his life, the old lady had no doubt. But who was he? Her house is built on the site of an old monastery, and she feels sure the vision is that of a monk who once lived there, but has found no verification of this, as yet.—Yours, etc.,

(Miss) M. SPENCER.

Dorset.

LIGHT.

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

WHAT IS A MYSTIC?

We were once introduced to a man who was described to us by his friends as a "mystic". A talk with him shewed that his mysticism was confined to an interest in palmistry and numerology, and that even of these subjects he knew very little. However, to himself and his friends he was a "mystic". It seemed rather a mis-use of terms. Still, it is not easy to say in a short sentence exactly what a mystic is. It would seem that a man may be a Spiritualist or psychical researcher, or possessed of psychic gifts, without being necessarily a mystic, because there are mystics who have no interest in these matters.

A Scottish correspondent has suggested that a mystic is one who has the "sense of eternity", who sees deeply into life and is conscious of the mystery under the surface of things—a "man of vision" in the fullest sense. A learned bookseller whose trade is mainly confined to works on Theosophy, Spiritualism and Mysticism once told us that it was astonishing how many people were interested in the third subject rather than in the other two. When we consider that the word "mystic" comes from a Greek work signifying the closing of the eyes, we can understand what the ancients thought about it. It suggests that the mystic is given to trances, like Socrates, Behmen, Swedenborg, Madame Guyon and a host of other illuminated and inspired men and women; this, however, would hardly bring in the average trance Mediums, although they might possess in themselves mystical perceptions. And we may not overlook the fact that Tennyson had his trances, and some of Wordsworth's poetry shows him to be a man with such a sense of the deeper mystery and beauty of Nature as to stamp him also as a mystic.

In these matters, as in others, it is not easy to draw sharp lines of distinction. The power and vision shown by the leaders of men are not qualities possessed by them alone; they are only higher expressions of faculties more or less developed in every one of us. It seems, indeed, to be mainly a question of perception. This is well illustrated in the story of the meeting between two Arabians, one a philosopher and the other a mystic. They conversed together; and on separating, the philosopher said: "All that he sees, I know," and the mystic said: "All that he knows, I see."

The mystic then is a Seer—and the "closing of the eyes" clearly refers to the power of abstraction from the visible world, where for those of us who have to face the hurly-burly and discharge the

practical duties of life, it is so very necessary to keep our eyes open. Yet there is such a thing as *practical* mysticism—the follower of which is able to live in both worlds alternately, performing in turn the business of heaven and the business of earth.

Quite naturally the practical mystic is rather a rare bird, which may well be due to the fact that few of us use our brains to anything like the limit of their capacity. We have, some of us, brains of forty horse-power capacity, so to speak, and we employ only some five or ten horse-power of the energy available. This discovery made quite lately by authorities on the brain brings us up with a shock to the discovery how large a part the physical side may play in the development of one's soul. It is not really wonderful, however. Our ladders must rest on the earth to be secure. And finally we may reflect that the mystic, however he may be defined, never despises the earth and its common things. If he does, he is a humbug, or at any rate unbalanced. And perhaps the practical mystic is rare because that very lack of mental energy, which comes of only a partial use of the brain, means that there is a tendency either to live in one world—nearly always the material world—to the exclusion of the other, or to try and live in both worlds at once. That last consideration supplies us with the explanation of much of the confusion and muddlement which arises in mediumship, psychic faculty and even in some varieties of mysticism itself.

THE PURPOSES OF SPIRIT TEACHERS.

In LIGHT of August 24th, 1912, in the course of an article on "Difficulties of Control", Miss H. A. Dallas quoted from a spirit communication received by the late Dr. Hyslop of the American S. P. R. The statements in that message are so appropriate to the present day that at Miss Dallas's suggestion we quote the following passages:—

It is now so hard to get started that we are weary before we get to the evidential message. Now all the work that is being done in the world to-day is a more or less personal matter, and the mighty questions which confront the thinkers are left untouched in the haste to get the personal equation.

I wish we could once get the truth of the possibility of things we know so firmly established that we might be free to express all that we need to for the upliftment of the human race. It is not the purpose of any group of intelligent people on this side of life to spend energy and time in recalling small matters of identity unless through that method the attention of the student body of the world be drawn to the truth of God's love made manifest among men.

The whole purpose of the work is to save the world from its woe by letting the light of truth shine on its face. It is so dreadful and uncertain a state in which men dwell, as if they built their cottages on the slopes of Vesuvius and saw death in every cloud and smoke. We desire to have them build intelligently and live where no cloud of death obscures the clear view of heaven.

It is absurd that men in the universities and pulpits and churches do not see what the trivial twaddle as they call it, is the sign of. It does not hurt or hinder us, but it shows the temper of the age, and so we are forced to use the selfishness of desire as a ladder to the sky. . . . We strive to be patient and wait the day when the soul thirsts. . . . It is all the desire. Desire is the open door always. Create desire for the noble, the good, the true, and the world is saved.

SIDELIGHTS.

The Dover Town Council has been recently considering the "nuisance" caused by crowds assembling outside the Spiritualist Church in Market Street. One councillor complained that so great was the crowd that he found difficulty in passing the building; another saw the assembly and thought there was a fire. The *Kent Evening Echo*, of September 18th, gives this news item.

* * * * *

Mr. Frederick Stone, who lives near Bude, has the strange power of being able to "divine" the presence of precious metals in the ground, according to a *Sunday Chronicle* report. This unusual faculty had apparently disturbed his health for we read that after being an incurable invalid for many years, due to a nervous complaint, he has recently been cured by wearing thick rubber on the bottom of his boots. This insulates him from the ground and prevents the "electric shocks" which formerly had made his life a misery for many years.

* * * * *

A writer in the New York *Herald-Tribune*, Mr. Richard Watts, junior, in a criticism of current "talking pictures", has some agreeable things to say about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's movietone film, which is described as "interesting and valuable". Says the writer: "His [Sir Arthur's] lecture on Spiritualism was not only the most attractive defence of his favourite theory imaginable, but it possesses a dramatic earnestness that made it rather thrilling even to one who found the subject of less than the most intense importance."

* * * * *

The *Wharfedale Observer*, of September 13th, contains a statement confirming that the psychic communication, correctly predicting the result of the Schneider Trophy race, received by the Rev. Charles L. Tweedale was recorded in their editorial office prior to the contest. The statement is as follows:—"On September 4th, four days before the race, the Editor received a letter from Mr. Tweedale, dated September 3, in which he stated: 'Last Saturday (August 31st) we got a psychic communication re the Schneider Cup race, the communicator being an Italian, saying that an accident would happen to one of the competitors and that England would win. Asked the nationality of the person whose machine would have the accident, the communicator replied, "Italy"'"

* * * * *

A curious case is recorded in the *Daily Chronicle* of September 25th under the title, "Murder Revealed in a Dream". The report comes from Berlin. According to the account a certain farmer, Friedrich Dierckert, aged fifty-nine, disappeared mysteriously some ten years ago. Lately a wheelwright in the village has declared that the missing man appeared to him in a dream, which was repeated on three different occasions. In this dream the missing farmer indicated that his body would be found buried at a certain spot on his own farm. So impressed was the wheelwright that he searched at that spot and discovered bones at a depth of about four feet. Further digging by the police has resulted in the discovery of a skeleton, and of an old-fashioned silver watch, since recognised as having been the property of Friedrich Dierckert. Four

arrests have been made and it is stated one of the prisoners has confessed to having killed Dierckert some ten years ago.

* * * * *

A member of the staff of the *Northampton Echo* records in the issue of that journal dated September 23rd, his amazement on listening to the clairvoyance of a young Medium, Miss Potts of Gateshead-on-Tyne, given recently before a crowded audience in the Exchange Cinema, Northampton. He describes how this lady picked out members of the audience and gave them descriptions and messages from beyond the veil. In every case, he says, members of the audience knew the persons described. Says the writer: "Either I saw and heard the dead speak through the living before 2,000 Northampton people on Sunday night, or I listened to a ghastly mistake on the part of an earnest young woman. . . . It was an uncanny experience."

* * * * *

Many attempts have been made to trace by psychic means the criminal who committed the Ilkley Moor murder. At one seance, it was alleged, the murdered girl communicated, giving an account of the crime and speaking of a man who "went into a field and asked which was the best field for mushrooms". There is a sequel to this, according to the *Evening Standard* of September 23rd, from which it appears that a mushroom gatherer has made the following statement: he was gathering mushrooms in a meadow at Ben Rhydding, about a mile from Ilkley, when a strange man came up and said, "Is this the best field for mushrooms?" The mushroom gatherer took little notice of the incident at the time. Later on reading the account of the Spiritualistic seance he gave the authorities a full description of the mysterious stranger in the mushroom field. It is understood that the West Riding police are following up this clue.

A GERMAN PSYCHOMETRIST.

During October the British College of Psychic Science, at 15, Queen's Gate, will have, as a visitor, Frau Lotte Plaat of Oldenberg, Germany, whose work as a psychometrist has attracted the attention of a group of able German scientists—including medical men—who have recorded their experiences with her in a book published by Oswald Mutze, of Leipzig, in the present year.

Dr. Paul Sünnner, who edits the book, compares her work with that of the famous South American psychometrist, Maria Reyes, of whose work, Dr. Pagenstecher has written so carefully. Dr. Sünnner notes that both these sensitives need only to touch an object to gain impressions. They speak of the panoramic unfolding of pictures to their soul-vision; they feel the whole gamut of sensations, hearing, smelling, experiencing cold, pain, and anxiety.

"It is," says Frau Plaat, "as if someone were speaking into my ear; not as if I were saying things, but as if I had to repeat what I hear." One investigator reports handing her a letter from a young man in prison; marked personal characteristics were described; then: "It seems as if I am in prison; I see iron bars. I am bored and depressed. . . . Someone has a good influence on him—works on his better nature." This was verified by a Pastor who visited the prison. The act for which the young man was imprisoned was also accurately described.

In various instances Frau Plaat has been asked, successfully, to help the authorities with mysterious cases.

She is herself interested in spirit return, and receives excellent messages proving survival, but her work, so far, has been centred on psychometry.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

THE UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE.

(From the Zonia Scripts.)

BY V. MAY COTTRELL (Napier, New Zealand.)

Thousands are bound to the wheel of tradition, and false belief, for every one who goes free. This is due to the blindness of human beings, not to the will of a tyrannical God who has planned their lives and destinies in advance.

So long as people persist in believing themselves to be oppressed by God for some good and useful purpose, instead of recognizing their own lack of knowledge of the truth, so long will they remain bound and helpless, the victims of their own false and futile beliefs and superstitions.

A greater understanding of life means a greater freedom of thought and action and an increasing usefulness in the life of the individual. Millions are gradually losing their mental shackles, and many are already launching out into the great ocean of thought and speculation concerning life in general and its spiritual aspect in particular.

Storms of abuse are raging round those brave and hardy mariners who are charting new islands, discovering new continents and scaling hitherto inaccessible peaks in their search for truth. That some suffer shipwreck or injury during their search is scarcely to be wondered at, but many are returning from their mental journeyings with truth in their minds and victory in their hearts. And so the age-old fight against error continues, and its opponents increase enormously with each decade.

New methods of revealing truth to the minds of human beings are constantly being discovered. New means of dealing with old problems and ancient superstitions are being continually presented to receptive minds everywhere. This work of enlightenment goes on as ceaselessly as life itself, for it is a part of life and essential to the advance of humanity at large.

Out of knowledge comes release from the thralldom of ignorance and fear, and with this mental freedom comes a new and enlarged vision which tends ever towards the contemplation of life as a whole, rather than in part, as heretofore.

RELEASE FROM FEARS.

This broadening vision brings release from countless fears, minor worries and troubles, because it concerns itself with the larger issues and works towards their consummation unceasingly. With mental release comes increased freedom of action, as well as an accelerated spiritual unfoldment which makes for the greater happiness and usefulness of the individual.

It is the mentally-bound men and women who willingly injure others. Those of a wider vision, with a deeper understanding of life, realise that in harming others, knowingly, they injure themselves most of all. The wounds which human beings inflict upon their fellows, in jealousy and malice, eventually become festering sores in their own consciousness, wounds which love alone can heal.

Wrong living is ever the outcome of ignorance concerning life; even where there appears to be a definite choice of evil rather than good, such a choice is always made because of the clouded nature of the thought-life of the individual. Clarity of vision means uprightness of living and wise decisions between the opposing forces of right and wrong. For, though wrong is entirely negative in quality, it is instrumental in the wrecking of countless numbers of lives. This is because it obscures the good and presents only the evil to unenlightened minds.

A belief in predestination produces a fatalistic attitude of mind in those who have accepted this false assumption as a fact of life. It has a detrimental effect upon the life and character of all those who believe in its truth and verity. It is not the erroneous doctrine of predestination which seeks to place the responsibility for our acts elsewhere but an ever-increasing realisation of our own personal responsibility that leads to right thinking, right living and good citizenship.

Not by a jealous, vengeful, capricious God are men's harmful acts planned; there is no such unwise and tyrannical ruler of the lives and destinies of human beings. These breaches of social and moral law have their origin in mentalities sadly lacking in a knowledge of truth and righteousness.

Good deeds and noble acts are the outcome of the release of those fine impulses and desires that lie imbedded in the human consciousness. Out of a desire for good comes realisation, and from realisation springs conscious endeavour and useful action.

FREE WILL AND TRUTH.

The amount of free will enjoyed by the individual is governed by his ability to discern truth for himself. Predestination is not true, or actual, for any human being. Inherited tendencies, upbringing, and environment all play an important part in the life history of the individual; but it is his own thought-life that is the real, determining factor in the making or marring of his career.

Men's minds will be open to receive the new knowledge that is destined completely to revolutionise life on the earth once they are freed from erroneous beliefs, false doctrines, misleading creeds, superstitious ideas concerning life and death, and crude conceptions of the mighty Ruler of the Universe.

The continual reiteration of untruths, in the name of religion, saps the vitality of the hearers and retards spiritual growth. Millions are bound by mental fetters that were forged for them in their youth, while millions more accept as truth that which is so obviously false to their more enlightened fellows. Many are proud of their faith, not realising that faith in a man-made religion, whatever its merits, is a vain boast.

THE HUMAN CRY.

Give me a joyous Christ!
No "Man of Sorrows";
But one who trod,
With springing step, the mountain sod;
Who saw in every flower and tree,
In changing sky, and open sea,
In songbird's note of ecstasy
The hand of God.

Give me a human Christ!
Not one apart—
But to the end,
A fearless leader, loving friend.
No Superman; but one who knew
Hopes and doubts and sorrows too,
Yet kept, life's chequered journey through,
A child's pure heart.

So to this joyous human Christ
Who was *all* love
I humbly pray
That I may follow in His steps,
From day to day.
That He, who loved each flower and tree,
The changing sky, the open sea,
May some day find a home for me,
In Heaven above.

—FLORENCE SIMPSON.

SPIRITUALISM AMONG THE ICELANDERS

BY OLIVE MURRAY CHAPMAN, F.R.G.S.

Before starting on a recent journey across Iceland, I spent a few days in Reykjavik, the capital, where I was glad to find a widespread interest in Spiritualism. I noticed several copies of Sir Oliver Lodge's works, the *Script of Cleophas*, and *Claude's Book*, prominently displayed in one of the bookshops, for many Icelanders both read and speak the English language which, together with German, is now a compulsory subject, taught in the schools. I found that the British Consul, who is an Icelandic business man, and his wife, a charming Scotswoman, were both keen Spiritualists, and I had an interesting interview with Mr. Einar Kvaran, poet and author, who told me some of his psychic experiences. He is the founder of the Icelandic Society of Psychical Research in Reykjavik, which has about 400 members and a good library. Both the late Professor Nielsson, professor of Theology at the University, and also the Lutheran Bishop of Iceland, took a keen interest in the work of the Society, and the remarkable phenomena obtained through the wonderful mediumship of Indridi Indridason, the son of a farmer, whom Mr. Kvaran came across in 1905. Until shortly before that date, Modern Spiritualism was, to all intents and purposes, unknown in Iceland, whereas to-day universal interest is taken in the subject, and the promised visit of Mr. Vout Peters to Reykjavik was eagerly awaited.

Mr. Kvaran told me how at the beginning of his investigations with Indridason the medium was controlled by a Danish spirit, named Jensen, who said he had been a cloth manufacturer in earth life, and had lived in Copenhagen. He told Mr. Kvaran that while the medium had been resting for half an hour, during the sitting, he, Jensen, had gone to Copenhagen, and had noticed that a fire was taking place at a factory in one of the streets of the city. He subsequently stated that the firemen had conquered the flames.

As there was, at that time, no telegraphic communication between Iceland and the outer world, it was not possible at once to investigate the statement, but on the following day, November 25th, 1905, a written account of the message was placed in the hands of the Bishop of Iceland, in order that he might attest it. At Christmas, there came the first boat from Denmark, and in the Danish paper, *Politiken*, the Bishop read a report of the fire described by the spirit of Jensen. Both day and time were correct, and the fire had occurred at a lamp factory, in Store Kongensgade.

This spirit, having proved his integrity, was, shortly afterwards, able to materialise. After many sittings, these materializations became so perfect, that on one occasion, with forty witnesses present, including the Bishop, Jensen appeared eleven times, in a radiant light, during the same sitting. By means of the brilliant light which radiated from the spirit-form, the medium and the materialised spirit were both seen simultaneously. On one occasion the spirit was seen by Mr. Kvaran on the opposite side of the room to the medium.

Indridason later developed direct voice mediumship, and two voices were often heard singing at the same time, one in French, a language unknown, to the medium.

Unfortunately Indridason was taken ill with typhoid fever, in 1909, when his powers were at their height. He later developed consumption and died in 1912. There are many persons living who can witness to the wonders that took place during his time on earth. Although there are now no professional mediums in Reykjavik, many use their psychic gifts in their own homes, and the result is a widespread belief in communication with the other World.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

Mrs. F. E. Leaning sends me a little story concerning the people who make martyrs of themselves. An old Essex woman, "one of those wise, sharp-witted people whose words are like arrows", was reflecting on a neighbour who was too much inclined to bear other people's burdens and to call attention to the fact. "All martyrs get their crown," said the old dame. "The martyrs that the Lord afflicts, He crowns. The others are allowed to crown themselves—with thorns."

* * * * *

That example is better than precept is such an old platitude that few of us realise how true it is. If Jonas Hanway, for example, had delivered thousands of public speeches advocating the use of the umbrella it is highly probable that his advice would have been wasted. But when, instead of merely talking, he walked the streets with the first umbrella, and it became clear to the people that it was a valuable protection from the rain, they were soon converted and the use of the umbrella became universal.

* * * * *

Two correspondents write to LIGHT on the subject of coincidences, with special reference to a surprising case described in a recent letter to the *Daily Mail*, which has doubtless been noted by many of our readers. The writer of the letter, a governess, says that her first four engagements were held at *Westgate, Eastbourne, Southwold, and Northwich*; that in three consecutive engagements the butlers' names were North, East and West, and that in her last engagement she worked with a Mr. Southern. I did not find the case to be more than a curious instance. In the billions and trillions of happenings in the world such things, by the law of chances, are bound to happen at some time, as in the case of a long sequence in card games where one player holds ace, king, queen, knave, and so on, all of the same suit. To me a coincidence, to have any "psychic" significance, must mean something and lead somewhere. It must be constructive and continuous in its nature, showing signs of some "special grace", some "leading from above", or "something given", as the poet says. I have had many experiences of both kinds of coincidence, and that is why I draw a distinction.

* * * * *

In the troublous days which followed the defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden, it was a grim joke that no Stewart who fell into the hands of the Campbells, and was haled off for trial at Inverary, had the ghost of a chance, however innocent he might be. He was tried with a Campbell on the bench, a Campbell as counsel for the prosecution and a jury of Campbells. In short, the trial was a farce—just the same sort of farce that would be enacted if the Romish Church, being in supreme power, could bring a Spiritualist to trial, with a Papist on the bench, a Papist prosecutor and a jury of Papists. I don't make a point of Papists—much the same thing I suppose would happen if the ruling power were Rationalism. In neither case, I imagine, would the Spiritualist have any possibility of a fair trial. But the Rationalists would hardly resort to the old "religious" methods of dealing with heretics, methods which education and civilisation have made impossible to-day. All that the two communities are now able to do is to write books against us in the intervals of writing books against each other, neither side apparently finding sufficient employment in looking after its own affairs. When one or the other launches an attack on Spiritualism it naturally provokes a book or two in reply, for Spiritualism is like the animal which was described as "very wicked" because "when it is attacked it defends itself".

D. G.

CLEMENT SCOTT AND POPPY LAND.

Miss Winifred Graham, the well-known novelist, who in private life is Mrs. Theodore Cory, has sent us the following verse received by her from Clement Scott, who was a great friend of herself and her family.

The name of Clement Scott will be remembered as that of one of our leading dramatic critics. He was also the author of a remarkable series of articles on Poppyland and the famous song "The Garden of Sleep", which is still remembered and sung. It was one of the songs of the day many years ago.

"Poppyland" was the region about Cromer, and the "Garden of Sleep" was an old churchyard on the cliffs not far away. That neighbourhood has sadly changed since Scott passed away; coast erosion has wiped out much of it.

DEAD POPPIES.

Dead are the poppies of long ago.
When Clement sang of their deep red glow.
We see no more of that scarlet band
With its shining wonder of silver sand.
The tripper tripped across the ways,
With raucous laugh and vacant gaze,
And every poppy bowed its head
And withered away—the poet said.

THE WEST RIDING PSYCHICAL SOCIETY.

There was a large attendance at the Mechanics' Institute, Bradford, on Monday, September 23rd, when the Rev. C. L. Tweedale delivered an address on the subject of "Premonitions" under the auspices of the West Riding of Yorkshire Psychical Society.

The lecturer referred to instances of premonitions in the Bible. He pointed out that there were many who professed to believe the Scriptural witnesses but were unwilling to admit modern evidence. The pages of Holy Writ were full of remarkable cases but such things can also occur at the present day. He referred to his own personal experiences which included four premonitions of death, foreseen with amazing accuracy as to detail. It was wrong, however, to assume that premonitions were always of gloomy significance and he gave other instances in his own experience to support this view.

The Rev. S. Lewis Britten, of Heckmondwyke, presided.

At the next lecture of the West Riding of Yorkshire Psychical Society, on Monday, October 21st, the speaker will be the Rev. Frank Ballard, M.A. Others who will address the society during the coming session will be the Rev. G. Vale Owen and the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas. Lectures are being arranged at Keighley and Huddersfield by the society, whose headquarters is at 96, Tennyson Place, Bradford.

THE "OPEN DOOR" PSYCHIC CENTRE.

The "Open Door Library and Psychic Centre" was recently removed from High Holborn to more commodious premises nearby, at 14, Hand Court, W.C. Members already greatly appreciate the comparative roominess of the new building, although "new" is something of a misnomer as the structure is about 200 years old and has about it a quaint "Dickens" flavour. There are four rooms available for the use of members, the Library proper being housed on the ground floor in what was formerly a shop, the large old-fashioned window panes of the frontage being still in evidence.

The "Psychic Centre" is open from Monday to Friday inclusive between the hours of 12 noon and 7 p.m., and its avowed purpose is the investigation and open discussion of all psychic subjects "with a view to raising the standard of thought and action and to bring about helpfulness and tolerance in our search into the mysteries and science of life."

J. H. K.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"The Science of Seership." By Geoffrey Hodson.
(Rider & Co. 7s. 6d.)

Illustrated with diagrams by D. Kendrick, this book is a study of the powers, attributes, and faculties connoted under the term Seership; its purpose is to examine critically the subject of supernormal cognition, and to offer an explanation of the rationale of psychic powers. The author desires "to make it clear from the beginning that his approach to the subject of clairvoyance has nothing in common with that of the professional seer, fortune-teller, or Spiritualistic medium"; although it is admitted that "such people do possess a certain form of hypersensitivity". It is contended, however, that the atmosphere in which their faculties are employed is "for the most part of such a nature that the scientific mind is inevitably repelled". Hence the author begins by a translated quotation from an article in *Heroldo de Esperanto*, by A. A. Hill, M.D., giving an account of "The Child with Röntgen Ray Eyes"—"an inexplicable mystery". The translation was published in *The Medical World* of May 10th this year, and the facts embodied in it are fairly well known. They are related to a small boy, Benito Paz, who could see the objects people had in their pockets, and easily read letters enclosed in three or four coverings—or in a metal case—but "could do nothing when plates of wood, instead of metal, were used"; the latter fact terribly upsetting the child when he found it out, and affording to scientific investigators evidence that "in this matter there is no question of clairvoyance, but simply powerful vision". Here, however, Mr. Hodson remarks that seers (both ancient and modern) have declared that man possesses *within himself* all the instruments of research he can ever need, and may be developing a sixth, and even a seventh sense. Proceeding to a consideration of recent scientific developments, such as the concept of "quanta" as a fundamental of scientific thought, he says: "This is rapid travelling indeed, and we may well ask where the next ten years will lead us. One answer seems certain: 'Beyond the range of any instrument of research at present known.' Will the new instrument be clairvoyance?"

The work of Heisenberg, Eddington, Einstein, Poincaré, Rutherford, J. J. Thomson and others, is then touched upon in a manner that leads the reflective reader to expect similar treatment of the subjects under notice. Mr. Hodson carefully distinguishes between the natural faculty of positive clairvoyance and "the negative impressionability which popularly passes under that name, and is usually associated with mediumship and trance". The theosophical view of the subject comes into sharp focus, Mr. C. W. Leadbeater being cited as an authority upon it. Various cases of disease are submitted as illustrations of the power of clairvoyance in the diagnosis and cure of disease generally, and it is stated that "sleepy sickness" is an etheric disease: "The physical causative poison lodges largely in the head, because it has a chemical affinity with certain constituents of the brain. With these it enters into combinations, which at the solid level cause deterioration of certain of the brain centres. These constituents are chiefly situated in that portion of the brain behind a plane passing through the vertex and the external auditory meatus."

Cancer is described as "an elemental disease":—"The tissue forms the body of an actual elemental entity. . . . It has been almost incurable, because it is the duty of the creator of an evil elemental to become its destroyer before the Karmic debt can be paid and release obtained. . . . The cure for cancer lies primarily in the exorcism and destruction of the elemental."

Some sixteen interesting pages are given to the subject of psychometry, ending thus: "Whatever the final explanation may be—and the author does not pretend to have given it—enough has, perhaps, been written to show that in psychometry we have a subject worthy of study and further elucidation."

B. P.

MRS. ETTA M. WRIEDT.—We learn from Colonel Berry that Mrs. Wriedt, of Detroit, the famous voice medium, is at present in the north of Ireland. Communications from those wishing for sittings should be addressed to: Colonel Berry, Ardalun, Newcastle, County Down, N. Ireland. It is uncertain, however, whether she will visit England.

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 Friday, October 4th, at 5 p.m. **MRS. ROUS**
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 Dr. Vanstone, address. October 9th, 7.30, Mrs. Edey, address and clairvoyance.
Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—October 6th,
 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. J. Buchan Ford, M.A., LL.B.
Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41, Ashford Road.—October 6th,
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a simple fact in Nature, and probably operates naturally and frequently without conscious awareness on our part. Those communications of which we are intellectually and emotionally aware, depend upon the exercise of the psychic faculties, which are by no means simple. We know comparatively little about them. They are associated with certain mental and physical peculiarities requiring much study.

RELATIONSHIP OF SITTER AND MEDIUM:

It will readily be seen that the enquirer who becomes familiar to some extent with the nature and scope of mediumship is better able to appraise the results of a sitting than one who comes with preconceived notions, all of which may be influenced by mistaken ideas. The experimenter needs to be capable of sympathetic and intelligent response to what may be given him. He must use common-sense in this, as in all things; he must be content to accept and examine carefully in the light of his reason whatever is given to him. He will court failure if he demands particular results. It should be remembered that in every psychic experiment the initiative and constructive work is from the spirit world. The medium is in effect a passive recording instrument and the sitter an observer. The sitter should also endeavour to be passive and sympathetic, merely recording all impressions and statements. The critical analysis should be made after, not during a seance.

The extreme delicacy of the psychic states should never be overlooked. The mediumistic gift is subject to constant variations in power and sensitivity. A variety of factors go to make either good or bad conditions. The gift itself varies in power. The psychic state of a medium may harmonise with the psychic state of a sitter, or it may not. The experiment is influenced not only by the state of mind of the sitter at the time of the experiment, but by his general mental condition and character. As in ordinary human Society, some people mix with their fellows more easily than others, so in psychic experiments some combinations are favourable and others unfavourable. Every sitting is thus in the nature of an experiment. The sincere enquirer with an open mind, will receive experiences of a supernatural nature, and usually, when he has the co-operation of an interested spirit friend, he will sooner or later obtain evidence of the identity of his friend.

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