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"LIGHT," OCTOBER 26, 1929

THE SURVIVAL LEAGUE MEETING (Page 506).

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

Edited by **DAVID GOW**

No. 2546. Vol. XLIX. (Registered as Saturday, October 26, 1929. a Newspaper) Price **FOURPENCE**

Entered as Second Class Matter, March 15, 1929, at the Post Office at Boston, Mass., under the Act of March 3, 1879 (Sec. 897, P.L. and R.)

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AMONGST the contents of the present issue are:—

WHEN WE ARE GHOSTS.

EXPERIMENTS OF A MEDIUM
(continued).

THE REINCARNATION QUESTION.

THE SPIRITUALIST

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Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2546. VOL. XLIX. [Registered as SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1929. a Newspaper.] PRICE FOURPENCE

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

PROFESSOR RICHEL.

Professor Richet, who ranks among the world's foremost men of science, refers in his latest book *Our Sixth Sense* to his friendship with F. W. H. Myers, Sir William Crookes, Edmund Gurney and Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick. He is, as we know, one of the very few survivors of the little band who some fifty years ago laid the foundations of Psychical Research as a science. As is also well-known, he remains still undetermined on the question whether psychic phenomena really prove human survival. Reading his books, however, one is left with the impression that he is inclined a little to waver in his judgment that personality cannot survive apart from its bodily machinery. That is not unnatural for even a great physiologist may (as Richet has done) see things in his psychic experiments that make it difficult to hold on to the logic of the situation, i.e., no body, no man. Of course he is perfectly right—man's survival of death could mean little or nothing if he were *bodiless*. There is a psychic body, an etheric form. But Professor Richet knows nothing of any body but the physical body or at any rate can recognise none. This decision not to go an inch beyond his facts is one we can respect, and it should serve to show the courage of his conviction and the strength of his reasoning when he declares the reality of psychic phenomena. But equally we feel that those of us who stand for survival are likewise well within the facts known to us.

INTOLERANCE AND ITS MEANING.

In the current issue of the *Sufi Quarterly* the editor, Mr. Ronald A. L. Mumtaz Armstrong, quotes a saying of Rabindranath Tagore:—

... unfortunately words that represent truth have not the same immensity of life as truth itself. Therefore the words (and with them our attention and interest) become inert by constant handling, obscuring our faith underneath them without our being conscious of that tragic fact.

Commenting on that statement, the editor observes that this is the reason why innumerable societies and

movements which overrun the modern world, for the propagation of universal truths, are making small headway. Their followers are too busily engaged in *doing* good to *be* good. "They forget that one flower in the forest is worth all the words about flowers." There is growing up, too, despite their professions, that very spirit of intolerance which they desire to destroy. "They have armed themselves for the fight with Masters and dogma. . . . Of necessity, so armed, they have come to blows with one another." But there is no need to despair, for the secret of this intolerance is that there is in man a divine soul which suffers because of an apparent division from the universal soul. Elsewhere in the article we find the following:—

Just as intolerance is natural, so evolution towards tolerance, and even appreciation, is natural and will come in time with our deeper understanding of the Truth.

There is a deep wisdom in these statements and we cordially support them.

FAIRY ORIGINS.

For many years students of folk-lore have endeavoured to trace the origin of the fairy legend, and there are many theories, most of them connecting it with pigmy races, as, for example, the Picts. Lately Mrs. Barbara Bliss, who has travelled in the Arctic regions, gave a radio talk from the B.B.C., relating her travels in Lapland among the reindeer shepherds of the Arctic. She said that in summer dress the Lapps were the most fairy-like creatures she had ever seen. The modern Lapp, she tells us, is about four feet six inches in height, with thin, very bandy legs, tapering to shoes with turned-up toes, a very round head and pointed ears. They dress in bright blue jenkins and tight, close-fitting trousers with a belt of red, yellow and black braid, and a peaked cap with a large red pom-pom on top. They are bright and very roguish creatures with high, shrill voices. This sounds, indeed, very much like fairydom, and the lady aptly suggests that the Lapps must be the prototypes of the gnomes, fairies and "little people" of the Northern fairy legends. A humorous suggestion reaches us from a reader who listened to the radio talk. It is that instead of fairies deriving from the Lapps, it is more than likely that the Lapps may have got their ideas of dress from the fairies!

MANCHESTER PROPAGANDA MEETINGS.—The Manchester Spiritualists' Central Propaganda Committee has arranged to hold a series of lectures on the first Sunday of each month at the Ardwick Picture Theatre. The next meeting, on November 3rd, will be addressed by Mrs. P. Champion de Crespigny, who will speak on "Some Recent Developments". Other lectures will be given by Mrs. E. Hinchliffe, Mr. Geo. H. Letham, Mr. Shaw Desmond, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, and Mr. Florizel von Reuter.

THE SURVIVAL LEAGUE MEETING.

IMPRESSIVE ADDRESS TO CROWDED QUEEN'S HALL AUDIENCE.

There were few vacant seats in the Queen's Hall on Sunday evening, October 13th, when the Survival League held its inaugural meeting. It is not possible to give a verbatim report, one reason being the limitation of space, furthermore, I was in a position where audibility was bad, and much of what was said escaped me.

MR. H. DENNIS BRADLEY, who presided, opened the proceedings by announcing that the Survival League was entirely non-sectarian. On the platform that evening were Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Jews and members of other religious sects. The League had been formed for the purpose of getting together all the various people and societies who agree on the fundamental fact of survival. Mrs. Dawson Scott, the founder, had already organised another important body, the P.E.N. Club, for bringing together the best writers of the world. He, himself, had noticed a remarkable change during the past few years in the tone of the Press as to the facts that Spiritualists and Psychical Researchers had brought before the world. He had had experience of every kind of phenomena but his own studies had been concentrated on the Direct Voice.

He told a remarkable sequel to seances in Berlin and Italy with which he had recently been connected. The Medium was George Valiantine and a successful attempt had been made to obtain cross-correspondence with the Crandon Circle in Boston. A "number test" was arranged and the circle in Boston had chosen three calendar numbers at random. None of the circle had seen the numbers on those leaves which were concealed throughout the seance. The Medium was "Margery". By previous arrangement a simultaneous sitting was held in Venice with Valiantine as Medium. At that experiment in Venice the voice of "Walter" was heard. "Walter" directed that the figures 3, 5 and 10 should be written down. On comparing notes later it was learned that in Boston "Walter" had also manifested, giving instructions that the numbers 3, 5 and 10 should be recorded. These proved to be the numbers of the unseen calendar leaves. Mathematical odds against guess-work, added Mr. Bradley, worked out at some hundreds of millions to one.

MRS. DAWSON SCOTT briefly related her reasons for founding the League. She had noticed that a large number of societies held divergent views on many matters of detail while accepting survival after death as a fundamental basis of their existence. Realising that unity was strength, she felt that these various bodies should be linked up. Her own conviction of survival was based on many things. Her dead husband had frequently spoken at a table sitting; it was impossible to mistake his personality. Then again she had a son who was clairvoyant. She had also obtained the late President Wilson's signature by psychic means, although having no personal knowledge of Wilson, nor ever having seen his handwriting. Yet the signature was found to be identical with the dead President's writing in life. To her these constituted proofs though they might not be accepted as such by her hearers.

The message of the Survival League was to tell the world that "those they love, who have died, have only gone through a door into another room."

MR. MAURICE BARBANELL said he spoke for a race

whose early history, though little understood, was an astounding record of psychic and supernatural happenings. Survival was the most important subject in the world, chiefly by the moral and spiritual implications that arose out of that fact. The knowledge of this truth stimulated reform and progress, affording an opportunity for attacking the basis of the world's selfishness and materialism. Many still believe that death is the end of all, and if that belief were held, selfishness became logical. "When men realise as a fact that their lives here will re-act upon their next lives, it will be the greatest factor for progress and peace throughout the world."

THE REV. F. FIELDING-OULD, M.A., remarked that although all the speakers on the platform united on the question of the reality of survival, there was possibly no other point on which they were in mutual agreement. He himself had on many occasions heard the voices of those who had passed beyond the veil—not only in the seance room but once in an empty church. He had also seen materialised forms and touched them. He had sat in a room with six others, with doors locked; suddenly there was a seventh, a woman, who spoke French. She was dressed as a Carmelite nun and said she knew Mr. Fielding-Ould's little daughter. Next morning the child had said to her father: "Daddy, a woman in very funny clothes leaned over my cot and smiled at me last night."

MR. H. DE VERE STACPOOLE said: "I am not going to argue about survival; of course it is true!" He thought "Spiritualist" an unattractive word and suggested it should be changed to "Survivalist". Criticisms had been made as to the triviality of messages received in the seance room. The trivial nature of some of them, however, seemed to be a proof that man did not change. He was satisfied that a man who lived evilly in this life would "get it in the neck" in the next world.

Before sitting down the speaker urged that measures should be taken to protect the lives of sea-birds, many thousands of which were killed by oily waste products poured out on the waters by commercial firms. He had determined to bring this topic forward on every occasion that he addressed a public meeting.

MRS. JULIA CANNAN, of the Theosophical Society, said it had never been any difficulty for her to believe in survival after death. She had had many personal experiences.

Her husband had been killed in the War, and from the War Office had come an official notification of the number of his grave. This she placed in an envelope and kept in her attaché case, thinking that when hostilities finished she would visit the grave. Later she found the envelope had disappeared. The loss was not important as the information was obtainable by application to the proper official quarter. Then she received tickets to attend a memorial service at St. Paul's Cathedral for those, in her husband's regiment, who had fallen. At the last moment, however, she decided not to go, and remained in her room at home quietly at the time the service was in progress. She heard the handle of the room door turned and her husband entered the room. He was just as she had known him in life. He said: "Fancy getting tickets for that memorial service! I am here." Then he laughed loudly and said: "What about the number of that grave?" "I went to my attaché case," said the speaker, "and there was the envelope put back."

MR. F. WHITMARSH, the next speaker, disagreed with Mr. Stacpoole's suggestion of abandoning the word "Spiritualism". "'Survivalism' would not carry me so far as 'Spiritualism,'" said the speaker. Survival, as such, was not necessarily a desirable thing; on the other hand Spiritualism stood for certain definite teachings; it sought to develop the divine spirit in man.

MR. OLIVER BALDWIN, M.P., remarked that this was the first time he had ever spoken on a Spiritualistic platform. He related a supernormal experience which happened to him on October 20th, 1918. During an engagement on the banks of the river Selle, he was commanding a company of a battalion of the Irish Guards. There were no proper trenches and the company had dug themselves hasty shelters as a protection against hostile shelling, which was then heavy. After inspecting his men he had walked along a sunken road, accompanied by his runner. It was a very cold day and both men were extremely fatigued. Mr. Baldwin and his runner sat side by side. "There came a voice close to my right ear," said the speaker; "it spoke authoritatively and with an English accent—my runner was Irish—and said, 'Go and see your company'". This voice, which Mr. Baldwin concluded was of supernormal origin, could not have come from the orderly, who was seated on his left. Obedient to the summons the young company-commander strolled down the sunken road in the direction of his men. He had hardly gone thirty yards when a heavy shell exploded on the spot on which he had been sitting a few seconds before. The unfortunate runner had not moved away with his officer, and was blown to fragments.

MR. TREVOR BLAKEMORE, who spoke next, said he had come to a conviction as to survival in a two-fold way, through poetry and through laboratory experiments. He related a personal experience which happened in Sydney, New South Wales.

One evening he was developing some photographic plates in a hotel bedroom. The results were perfectly normal until he came to one which he knew ought to have contained a view of the Sydney Botanical Gardens. He poured the developer on the plate and to his intense surprise, instead of the Botanical Gardens, there came on the negative the face of a personal friend, which soon, however, disappeared. Mr. Blakemore learned that shortly before this phenomenon his friend had died in England.

THE REV. GEORGE VALE OWEN gave the audience information as to how and where spiritual healing was to be obtained, particularly mentioning the Grotrian Hall and the Guild of Spiritual Healing.

MR. R. A. BUSH said that he stood for the religious side of Spiritualism and the leadership of Jesus Christ. His conviction was reached after prolonged study, brick on brick. He could afford to lose a few bricks from his edifice without weakening the structure. He had listened to tens of thousands of clairvoyant descriptions; over a period of three years he had made careful notes of the clairvoyant messages given at 350 consecutive public meetings. All descriptions that were not boldly and definitely recognised he had marked as failures. Out of 1341 clairvoyant descriptions definite recognition had been obtained in 960 cases—or over 71 per cent.

MR. HANNEN SWAFFER said that the fact that in 1929 Mrs. Dawson Scott found it necessary to start a new Society to establish the truth of survival was almost as extraordinary as the fact that a few years ago she started the P.E.N. Club to unite the literary and artistic people of all nations. People of distinction, who in the past had carried on movements of various kinds to clean up this dirty old world of ours, were now coming forward after their training in those movements, to join in the effort to bring home to humanity the truth of survival. The speaker then referred to his visit to Berlin, where in the Prussian Parliament house he had spoken on the question, and to Edinburgh and Glasgow where he had addressed

large audiences, and to his debate with the Magicians. Will Goldston, the President of the Magicians' Club, had in *Pearson's Magazine* proclaimed to the world that he had survival proved to him. Mr. Oliver Baldwin, who had been fighting for other causes, had also received proof and that is why they could welcome him on the platform that night. Mr. Swaffer alluded to his book *Adventures with Inspiration*, and Mr. St. John Ervine's strictures upon it and challenged Mr. Ervine to debate the subject with him publicly. Referring to the attitude of the Church and its disposition to evade the question of inspiration, he said that the evidences which Spiritualists had discovered proved the reality of the power, and they did not have to explain away inspiration or to deny the existence of miracles, for the happenings recorded in the Bible were almost daily happening amongst them. The Survival League would do at least one important thing—it would provide a platform on which people of every creed could unite with a common aim—to proclaim the reality of those things from which the theologians ran away. He had himself found that these things were true and he had come before the public to say so.

MR. SHAW DESMOND remarked that there were some people who were impervious to conviction on any point. He had recently encountered in a restaurant an acquaintance who had boldly declared that all psychical phenomena were the result of hallucination. Mr. Desmond had retorted by suggesting that they should both lay their fingers on the restaurant table for a few minutes, adding that unless the table were clamped to the floor it would undoubtedly move.

"That would not convince me," said the friend, "because I do not even know if I exist!"

Continuing, the speaker said that the occult entered constantly into his literary life. His own experiences in this direction were duplicated in thousands through the world every day. "We challenge no church," he said, "nor any form of politics; our appeal to the churches and the scientists is 'Give us back our dead'."

N.

CURES BY SPIRIT DOCTORS.

A cure that is indirectly attributed to the healing power of "Dr. Lascelles", the spirit doctor, is reported from Wales. Mrs. B.W.M., wife of a member of Parliament, who claims to have been cured of cancer by "Dr. Lascelles", has established a healing centre in her Welsh home, after undergoing a course of training with Mr. C. A. Simpson. She has met with success in her efforts to cure the sick poor in her neighbourhood. The unseen collaborator of this lady is "Dr. Wilson", whose healing powers are attested to by a former patient, E.J., who writes from Rhondda that after being discharged from Bristol General Hospital, in September, 1927, suffering from chronic emphysema, he was taken in hand by the spirit doctor with amazing results. Since last May the patient has put on a stone in weight, an affected lung is healing and his general physical condition is abundantly improved.

Another letter from F.O.G., of Dimas, Rhondda, tells of the writer's sincere gratitude for the partial cure of her daughter Margaret, who suffered from paralysis in the legs for two years. F.O.G. says: "Through your kindly endeavours and attention she is at the present time walking without crutches and with a very slight limp."

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.—A letter from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at The Hague, tells us that at his first lecture there was an audience of 1,600 people and the meeting was in every way a great success.

CHAMELEONIC SCIENCE.

In the *Occult Review* for September there is a striking article by W. Wilson Leisenring entitled "Philosophical Science: Modern and Ancient". During the nineteenth century science was dominated by the Mechanical Theory, according to which everything was reducible to mathematical physics. Chameleonic science had been so long obsessed by the Comtian dictum that Science is Measurement, it was eventually obliged to "turn its back upon itself", without clear consciousness of the consequences. Formerly matter and motion were regarded as the beginning and end of all things, and the method of interpretation was procedure from the highest to the lowest, the former being explained by the latter. Mr. Leisenring well says:—

Modern science has no philosophy of its own, and yet some of its spokesmen take it upon themselves to "explain" the relationship of Man and Nature. Having been unable to discern the principles acting in Nature on which a philosophy of Nature could be based, they now undertake to explain Nature in terms of Man, although they are equally ignorant of the real nature of Man. This is a complete reversal of the nineteenth century standpoint from which Man was to be explained by Nature; that attempt failed, but prominent men of science are now trying to interpret the phenomena of Nature by "psychological conceptions" and terminology borrowed from metaphysical philosophers. . . . Scientists are seeking scientific truth in the fabrications of their own brains, not in Nature.

Scientific investigators in the fields of psychology and physics, finding mechanism everywhere, have discarded the old law of cause and effect, but cannot scientifically account for the action of the mechanisms. Certain properties are assigned by some physicists to "empty space", but they have no actuality, being only "functions" of physical matter "functioning in space without matter"! It is to be supposed that the scientifically empty space is only materially empty—without matter: conceivably it may be full of active Principles, by which even matter itself has its existence. Such is "the result of the relativity theory which abandoned the law of cause and effect and supplied no principle of unification; it is summarised in Professor Eddington's anthropomorphic statement: 'Everything is relative to human perception.'"

Unable to find a mechanical cause for the cellular life and complex organic structures that had been assumed to be of a mechanical origin, some modern biologists have turned right about and assert that behind each organism is an animal subject, in the ordinary philosophical sense of the term, belonging to an unknown inner world:—"Man is self-conscious because he is a subjective intelligence as distinct from his objective animal (sensational) intelligence. Science knows nothing as yet of the energy-matter in which subjective intelligence (such as the human consciousness or mind) functions."

After pointing out the infirmities of scholastic psychology in relation to individuality and human "free-will" Mr. Leisenring writes:—

Science has evidently completed its work. It has passed in review all aspects of Nature and found man everywhere; it has come back to man, and finds him unmotivated, unknowable, uncaused—and thus irresponsible. Science denies the existence of subjective states of matter, and it is impossible, therefore, for it to have any knowledge of the causes of objective states. There is only one kind of intelligence in Nature—that of the human animal!

Formerly, men of science declared that there was

in Nature no active intelligence at all; now, "unable to discover a mechanical cause, they have attached man's mind to every minute operation" of Nature. "The consciousness of our present materialistic race is the sole and only intelligence in the universe!"

Intellect, which is the central force of science, is correlated positively to what science itself has termed Extension, and is thus naturally sceptical of alleged converse realities. Hence its attachment to the concept of matter as "a thing in itself", as also its difficulty in apprehending the dual-unity of the universe and everything in it—being equally material and spiritual.

B. P.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BY W. H. EVANS.

QUESTION.—*What happens in sleep?*

I presume my questioner desires to know what happens to the spirit: whether during sleep it leaves the body. Many messages received from spirit people affirm that we do leave our bodies during sleep. This is largely a matter of evidence. People do at times leave their bodies, but it is unwise to infer that everyone does. We may have experiences of a spiritual nature during the sleep of the body, without leaving it. The closing of the usual sensory channels makes it possible for our spiritual faculties to become active, and what may be regarded as an excursion into spirit life may be simply a manifestation of clairvoyance. Seeing we are in spirit life now one has no need to go on a journey to the spirit world. Consequently one may have spiritual experiences in sleep without leaving the body. There seems to be too great a readiness to dogmatise about these matters upon insufficient data. Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis affirms that the spirit sleeps as well as the body; that as all energy is supplied by the spirit it is this which is used during the day, and sleep is essential to the spirit for its recuperation. This idea is contrary to the popular one of leaving the body, a notion which appeals to the imagination, but there is a great deal to be said for it.

QUESTION: *We are often told that our spirit friends are helping us in our difficulties. In what manner is it possible for them to do so?*

Doubtless our spirit friends have many more methods of helping us than we know, but probably their chief one is the utilising of what we vaguely call influence. This is probably exercised telepathically. For example: A. is in dire need and prays for help. His spirit friends seeing the need, and also the wisdom of supplying the need, cast about for someone who is able to assist; having found such an one in B., they impress him to do so. B. then becomes the channel for helping A., though he may not suspect that he is acting under spirit influence. But all prayers are not answered in the way we wish. Our friends inspire us with new hope, with renewed confidence in our own powers, with courage to grapple with our difficulties. This kind of help is often given to us when our bodies are asleep. How often do we fall asleep feeling depressed with our outlook, perplexed and seeing no way out of our difficulties, yet we arise feeling buoyant and hopeful, though our circumstances have not materially changed. We intuitively know that all is well. Whence, then, the renewal of faith? It has come from converse with our spirit helpers. It is sufficient to know that they can and do help us, without seeking to pry too closely into the means used. The old proverb of not looking a gift horse in the mouth may be remembered here.

THE REINCARNATION QUESTION.

Reincarnation as a question for debate has cropped up again, and we note that Mr. Shaw Desmond, in the *Link*, a journal for the study of superphysical science, psychology, philosophy and mysticism, in its issue for the quarter of the year ending October 15th, had an article entitled "The Case for Reincarnation". He begins by a statement that the whole world of his experience to-day is centred upon two things more than any other: the first is whether we survive, the second whether we return to earth. After dealing with the historical side of the question, with references to some of the great scholars of the past who accepted the doctrine, he discusses the question of genius and precocity, of which he remarks:—

There are, so far as I know, only three main explanations of genius and precocity current.

The first is reincarnation, with its accumulation of experiences in other earthly lives. The second is "direct inspiration" by the spirits of those who have gone before. The third, or "scientific", is that of a sort of universal telepathy which seeks, as it seems to me, quite vainly and superficially, to "explain away" any occult theory, stating that the human mind is "wireless" with every other human mind: Hence the precocious knowledge of a young Mozart, or a Korngold, or a Mischa Elman.

I believe that all three theories are true and all three false!

He follows with several cases, one of them relating to that classic work, *The Soul of a People*, by Fielding Hall, and he gives the case of the little girl who told Fielding Hall the story of her previous incarnation as a man who ran a marionette show. She said she had been married four times in that masculine incarnation and added very minute particulars of her previous "life". In order to test her story marionettes were brought to her and although a mere child she manipulated dolls that it requires years of training to handle properly. She even repeated some of the dialogues used in the marionette plays, although she had never heard of them in her present existence. Every word the child had spoken concerning her career as a man was found to be true.

Mr. Desmond proceeds to tell us that he has had laid before him the sworn statements of living people, magistrates, lawyers and medical men who confirmed half a dozen cases very much the same as the case of the little girl.

He mentions the signed statement of a transport engineer who claims that he has always had the gift of remembering his past lives. He recalls being married to a Greek girl in 390 B.C., and coming out of a temple while children scattered flowers before them. He recalls his next incarnation in the eighteenth century when he was killed at the battle of Leipzig at the age of twenty-one.

Another case he cites is that of a man who remembered his name as a member of a London club in the eighteenth century. "He went to the club, searched its records, and found his name exactly as it had come to him."

Another case which Mr. Desmond investigated personally was that of a small child of five or six. This child told its father and mother that it remembered exactly having lived, only a few years before its birth, in a certain city not a hundred miles away. The child was able to describe the city, the street in which he had lived, the very house and even its friends and relations. Taken to the city, in which it had never been, the child was able to find the street and the house, the inside of which corresponded to the account given by him.

Mr. Desmond says he himself has through childhood had memories of two other lives, one in Rome,

the other "a mere fragment of a reincarnation, a thousand years later, as a Viking". This last, by an extraordinary occurrence, he was able thoroughly to check.

He tells how when resting in San Antonio, Texas, after a strenuous lecture tour, he had an irresistible impulse to write down his memories of the days when he was an Irish gladiator in the Roman arenas. He resisted the urge but finally sat down to a strenuous ten days' job. Within that period he wrote nearly three parts of his very long novel *Echo*, the words pouring out of him faster than he could put them down.

To Shaw Desmond the only theory that seems to fit all the facts is that of Reincarnation. He concludes:—

Even our wildest and widest speculations about life and its evolution will one day be found to have fallen short of the irrefragable fact. We humans, in that little gap between one birth and another that we call "life", whether those births be here or elsewhere, see no more of the Future, and of the Explanation, than a fly creeping around the inside of a bowl sees of the phenomenon of existence.

Our own attitude on the question must needs be non-committal. We have long seen that there is possibly a principle at the back of the Reincarnation idea which, as a problem, is variously explained. In conversation with Mr. Shaw Desmond we learn that he does not put forward his idea in any dogmatic fashion, but is content to think that there may be other explanations of the facts; although he has so far failed to discover them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

A CHURCH PSYCHICAL SOCIETY.

Sir,—It is proposed to merge the old "Society of the Communion of Saints" into a "Church Psychical Society" for study and correspondence within the Churches. Will all those interested communicate with me? I should also be glad to have a post card from those who possess a copy of my book *Man's Survival after Death*.—Yours, etc.,

CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.
Weston Vicarage, Otley, Yorks.

PSYCHIC MANIFESTATIONS AND THEIR MEANING.

Sir,—The other day I heard the pursuit of psychic phenomena and messages at seances described as a "dead end". The person who used the phrase did not dispute the reality of the manifestations, but contended that they led nowhere.

I admit that in some cases this is a lamentable fact, but all it means is that, just as in other forms of education, the pupil fails to apply the lessons or to profit by them. It ought to be clear enough to intelligent people to-day that objective manifestations, of the kind offered in the elementary forms of Spiritualism, are sadly needed by the world to bring home concrete proof of those truths and experiences known directly only to the enlightened few. And there must be innumerable cases where the physical manifestations have broken down some obstruction in the mind of the enquirer, enabling him to realise interiorly the spiritual nature of life, and so enter on a line of progression.—Yours, etc.,

LANARK.

LIGHT.

Editorial Offices, 16, QUEENSBERRY PLACE,
SOUTH KENSINGTON, S.W.7.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE EDITOR should be addressed "The Editor of LIGHT, 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7".

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:—12 months, 22s.; 6 months, 11s.; or from newsagents, 4d. weekly.

Subscriptions should not be sent to the Editor, but should in all cases be addressed to "LIGHT, 34, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4". Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to LIGHT.

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

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WHEN WE ARE GHOSTS.

It was W. T. Stead, greatest of journalists, who said that in earlier times people believed in ghosts so much that they "cut" them, and that in modern days they believed in them so little that they would not even acknowledge their existence. But he went on to claim that those who believed the world to be divine were bound by that belief to look upon every psychical phenomenon as a window through which they might gain fresh glimpses of the glory and wonder of infinity.

That was more than thirty years ago. Things have changed tremendously in the meanwhile. To-day the ghost is being recognised as never before; we are beginning to understand that we also are "ghosts", that is to say, spirits, a little differentiated from the ghost proper by an inconsiderable garment of flesh made up of a few protons and electrons. We have discovered that as spirits we are all destined to become "ghosts". Certainly that would be the name we should receive if, after our departure from earth, we by any means contrived to show some faint phantasmal gleam of ourselves from the other shore. We shall then be regarded by many people as mysterious spectres, phantoms, subjective appearances, entities, unseen agencies, and what-not, in the jargon of the day. Yet we shall be just as human and actual as ever we were, perhaps a little more so. We shall be amongst those who, having passed over before us, have made the discovery of a world to the full as solid, as natural and as human as this, and who, having settled down to their new surroundings and become, so to speak, naturalised citizens of the new country, carry on the business of life with zest, some of them indeed with such superabundance of happiness that they seek eagerly to return to tell the good news to their brethren on earth. This is not, as many of them have discovered, at all an easy task; to begin with they labour under the disadvantage of being "ghosts", and any sign of their return seems frequently to create suspicion and even alarm. It may be that even some of those who, as Spiritualists, recognise the existence of ghosts are not too hospitably inclined to all these visitors, especially when they have listened to the nightmare stories of so-called occultists and some of the weird theories propounded by certain cults who make a great mystery of things which are perfectly natural and simple enough for a child to understand. But like some other quite simple and natural things, the existence of ghosts is frequently regarded as unsuitable for study until it has been clothed and

embroidered with fantasy, romance and a garnishing of the "supernatural".

In the meantime it is profitable to reflect that we shall all be ghosts one day and at no very distant time. And then for many of us "the tables will be turned"—we mean in the metaphorical and not the literal sense of the phrase. That is to say, we shall wonder what we had to shudder about, and further why certain dim shadowy creatures living, as they suppose, substantial lives in fleshly bodies, should regard themselves as such very real beings and us as phantasmal and rather objectionable existences—"ghosts!"

THE MYSTERY OF DREAMS.

A writer in a Manchester paper tells in a letter how he dreamed one night of a certain scene which he had never before beheld; it was so realistic that his mind retained the image. A day or two later he 'cycled through Stoke Poges and paid a visit to the churchyard and there was the scene of his dream! He inquires if anyone can explain the "mental television". Had the question been put to us we should have first considered the point whether he might not have previously seen, and forgotten, a picture of the place, for some dreams and apparent previsions are clearly traceable to such a cause. But, in any case, such dreams of the future, which are later verified, are comparatively common nowadays, and the possibility of reading the future has come under scientific attention, as exemplified by Mr. J. W. Dunne's *Experiment with Time*. This power of prevision is a gift—not everyone has it—and can be cultivated. The explanation, however, is not easily to be grasped, and is indeed rather speculative, even when the mathematicians get to work on it with ideas of a fourth dimension of Space, and Time as something illusory. To us it is rather like reading a story, and seeing beforehand how the plot will work out a few pages ahead; in short, events grow out of one another and sometimes we can see intuitively what will arise out of a given set of circumstances. In sleep the mind is freer to travel along a line of sequences and so we may get a picture more or less clear of some future happening. We know little yet of the latent powers of the mind. It may actually see into the future and occasionally convey something of what it sees to the brain, which is its physical instrument. We believe it does.

ANGUS McCRAW.

Angus McCraw of Aberdeen,
Preached from "the Word" each Sabbath e'en;
Exulted in the saints of old,
Suffered with those without the Fold—
The poor benighted heathen, who
Are doomed to hell whate'er they do.
A kindly, earnest man, I ween,
Angus McCraw of Aberdeen.

Now in the mosque at Ispahan
There dwelt a priest named Gundhla Khan,
Whose heart with zeal for ever burned
As Mecca-wards his face he turned.
He loved all men, and grieved to think
So many died who could not drink
Of those delights the Faithful know,
But grope in darkness, here below.

And sometimes I, in idle mood,
Ponder on both these men so good,
And wonder what their Faith had been
Had Khan been born in Aberdeen,
And if in far-off Ispahan
McCraw had lived his earthly span!

F. H. S. (Natal).

SIDELIGHTS.

Hannen Swaffer, in the *Daily Express* of October 15th, challenges Mr. St. John Ervine to an open debate, on the subject of inspiration. It will be remembered that Ervine, in a book-review column, contemptuously dismissed Swaffer's latest volume, *Adventures With Inspiration*. "I want to meet him on a public platform and test the extent of his capacity to criticise a book dealing with psychic power," says Hannen Swaffer, who adds that since the publication of his book (in which such writers as Robins Millar, Cosmo Hamilton, Shaw Desmond and Alfred Noyes admit that an outside influence has assisted them) other literary workers have come forward with similar admissions.

* * * * *

He tells how Mr. Herbert J. Nicol, of the *Glasgow Herald*, wrote him, describing the manner in which the plot and dialogue of a play came to his mind. "How I wrote it I cannot tell," says Mr. Nicol, who also says that this particular play is different from two other dramas he had completed, and that he "cannot recollect having written it all."

* * * * *

The experience (referred to recently in "Sidelights") of the five Stockport men who after waiting in a haunted house saw an "illuminated mist" that developed into the form of an elderly lady, has been duplicated by other witnesses, according to the *North Cheshire Herald*, of October 11th—though we are not told that their teeth turned black next morning as happened to the five Stockport ghost-hunters. Six other men, the leader being a clergyman, also obtained permission to spend a night in the haunted mansion.

* * * * *

According to the newspaper account they made no attempt to form a "circle", but merely sat quietly in the darkness waiting events. After a three-hours' vigil they noticed "a misty light in the dressing-room across the corridor". This illumination became stronger, and "seemed to fill the room in which they were sitting, although . . . the objects in the room were not revealed by the light."

* * * * *

Some of the party, including the pastor, are inclined to put the experience down to optical illusion, but one of the men fainted; his condition, we are told, "was alarming for twenty-five minutes; perspiration poured from his face, and his hair was quite damp." After regaining consciousness, this man said: "I have seen her." Later, he said that every time he looked towards a certain picture on the wall, he saw "a young lady with ringlets", although the room was in darkness.

* * * * *

Mysterious organ music in a church at Felling was the subject of a recent "Sidelight". Another case of the same kind comes from Little Warley, Essex. Henry Kettle, a farm labourer, has told an *Evening Standard* representative (*vide* that journal's issue of October 15th) that he has more than once heard the strains of organ music proceeding from the parish church after dark, when the building was locked, and no lights were visible through the windows. Mrs. Seville who lives close to the church reports sighing noises from the churchyard. Older inhabitants of Little Warley take the matter seriously, although the rector takes a different view.

MEDIUMS AND CONJURERS.

In the course of a long article on the "Current Status of the Schneider Mediumships" in *Psychic Research* (American S.P.R.) for September, Mr. Harry Price, referring to his challenge of a thousand pounds to be given to any person who could produce the same effects under identical conditions as those obtained at a seance with Schneider, writes:—

For very many years the conjurers of this and other countries have—they tell us—been yearning for an opportunity of this kind. J. N. Maskelyne, of London; Houdini, Dunninger, Rinn and de Heredia of New York; Heuze and Benevol of Paris; "Faustinus" of Copenhagen, etc., have been itching, if we can believe them, to duplicate the effects of a first-class medium under the same (or even more stringent) conditions.

Not that the conjurers have never had the opportunity they sought. On the contrary, they have occasionally competed with known mediums and usually came out of the business very badly. During the "thousand-pound ghost" controversy with Archdeacon Colley and the subsequent lawsuit, John Nevil Maskelyne lost heavily—both in prestige and money. History repeated itself when his grandson, Clive Maskelyne accepted—and then backed out of—the challenge of Dennis Bradley that the latter would pay the young magician a hundred pounds if he could produce the Valiantine phenomena under the same conditions. "John Nevil" was no more fortunate when he crossed swords with Sir Hiram Maxim. The great inventor had seen certain psychic effects in America which had impressed him and he challenged the eminent conjurer to reproduce them under the same conditions. Maskelyne refused, and except for some articles in the *Strand Magazine*, nothing came of it. Maxim wrote a pamphlet describing the challenge and its results. Maskelyne also had to pay five hundred pounds to the man who duplicated his famous box trick.

So it will be seen that though the magicians have occasionally entered the ring against the mediums, the former have experienced some nasty "tumbles" at the hands of the latter.

But here was literally a "golden" opportunity for the magicians to vindicate their assertion that every mediumistic phenomenon can be duplicated—under similar conditions—by trickery. I quite expected at least a few letters from conjurers asking for information, but a week went by without a single inquiry concerning the challenge. No one appeared to want that thousand pounds, and the magical fraternity showed a sudden lack of interest in things psychic. When at last Rudi was safe and sound at München (he returned on April 23rd) we received one or two timid inquiries concerning the medium and his phenomena, but when particulars were forwarded, we heard nothing further. A world-famous magician wrote asking what the conditions were, but when he heard them he took no further interest in the matter. One bright young man from the provinces wanted to bring three of his friends and *his own* cabinet and he would then "show us something". What baffled the magicians was the fact the phenomena occurred *inside* the cabinet while Rudi was *outside*, nearly five feet away. So the "thousand-pound challenge" like the "thousand-pound ghost" ended in the utter rout of the conjurers, not one of whom, I should imagine, will dare to utter again the word "medium".

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

EXPERIMENTS OF A MEDIUM.

BY FREDERICK H. HAINES, F.C.I.B.

(Continued from page 495.)

Let me give you a few instances of practical interest in my affairs.

As I previously said, the business man wants a *use* for Spiritualism if he is to adopt it as part of the living truth. That is where my Spiritualism scores. I use it more and more in daily life as part of my experience. For example, if I lose anything I seek the assistance of my spirit-friends to find that which is lost. They invariably help me.

Within a month after my conversion to belief in my own mediumship, I lost my spectacles under peculiar circumstances. I am a bee-keeper. That March morning I went to examine a hive and, upon opening it, the bees swarmed out disturbed and angry. I had no veil on, and so, promptly shutting the hive down, I beat a retreat, waving the bees off from my face with my hands. *I was not stung*, so—if you like—we can assume that I was protected by spirit influence. My garden is a large one. Before I was free of the irate bees, I had travelled some distance from the hives, and it was not until I took refuge in a studio at the other end of my garden that I realised my glasses were gone from my eyes. At first, I thought that I abstractedly had taken them off in the studio, but they were not to be found there. The loss inconvenienced me very much, and consequently I sought the aid of my family to find them. Five persons searched the paths I had traversed in my flight. We made a minute examination of the ground and the bushes and undergrowth, but without success. I put on my bee-veil and looked in the hive but with equally futile results. Finally, my family abandoned the search with the expressed opinion that they had vanished beyond recovery, and presumably, attracted by the glitter of the glass, etc., some bird had taken them away. This supposition was plausible to the others, but not convincing to me. I wanted my glasses.

Now let us examine the process of their recovery. For the benefit of the scientific mind I will give all the points so that you can explain "the miracle" to your own satisfaction. Remember, I had only realised my psychic powers a few weeks previous to this incident; and consequently knew little about how far they had a practical value; therefore when I casually said I would have to ask my spirit-friends to help me to find my glasses, I was by no means sure of help, and the remark was greeted by my family as a great joke. With the exception of my daughter no one believed in such a possibility. They generally derided the idea of spirit-presence. But I was keen to experiment. So I retired to my room and asked for spirit-help. Patiently I sat with a pencil, waiting a reply to my polite request—a very mad business you might deem it if you are worldly-minded! But presently I found that the pencil was scribbling without my conscious direction and among the scribble was the word "studio". Let me say that I was convinced myself that the glasses were mislaid by me in the studio. But I was wrong. They were not there. The word written was just the product of "sub-conscious me" reaching at the end of my pencil. This was made evident when I searched the studio without avail and then went back to my room for further direction from my spirit-friend. I got it: "Rest, my child, you are too distraught. Wait till to-morrow." Now, Mr. Psychologist, there was sense in that, wasn't there? I was too upset for experiments. Anyhow, it seemed a sane instruction to me and I acted upon it; I abandoned the search and waited until the morrow.

After a night's rest and a morning toilet and—I

must not omit this—my morning prayer, I turned once more to the business of seeking spirit help. "Where are my glasses, good Elizabeth?" I asked. "On the mound by the bee-hives," the pencil wrote without hesitation. This sounded definite enough, so off I went full of faith to put the direction to the test. But although I diligently searched the long mound on which the bee-hives are lifted (to give the bees free flight over a protecting hedge) I again failed to find my glasses. You who are not a psychic, you who are "a practical person" would have closed down at this point convinced of the inadequacy of spirit direction and possibly convinced that "there was nothing in it"! Most of us are impatient of failure. But I am endowed with a strange persistence in the presence of defeat.

I went back once more to my room and solitude and my spirit-friend. "Elizabeth," I said, "please give me more particular directions." The pencil replied: "By the tree on the mound near the bee-hives." Now this was certainly "getting warm" for there were three fruit-trees on the edge of the mound, and I only wanted to know which one; so I said: "Please guide me, dear friend, to the particular tree." Let me say here that there is a state which we Spiritualists speak of as "semi-trance" in which we are conscious of all around us and appear to the onlooker to be quite normal despite a preoccupied air which is significant of "control". I went, thus controlled, once more to the mound, more or less oblivious of anything but the desire to be guided towards the object of my search. I went direct. The mound is a good way from the house for I live in a two-acre garden. But please believe me when I say that I seemed to be led without hesitation straight to the second of the three trees thereon, my eyes semi-closed, I came to a standstill, and, bending down, without a pause or a search, picked up my glasses, which lay close to the bole of the tree, on edge so that they were practically unnoticeable among the verdure and fallen leaves.

Victory! The thrill of achievement which shot through me as I put my hand on the glasses was something which I had never experienced before; it was a reaction from the spirit-world, a satisfaction from their side which revealed how much they rejoiced at success. You can talk for ever about the activities of the sub-conscious and of the watchful ego which memorises all that happens, etc., but you cannot destroy my definite sense of success shared with some intelligence on another plane of being. You can invent any hypothesis you like to explain the incident and quibble as much as you please over the indefiniteness of direction that made so much ado of what, after all—so you may allege—should have been so easy; but I am convinced within and without of a guiding hand. I know that I have a spirit-friend who helped me to find what was lost.

This incident recorded is but one of many in which directions from "the Beyond" are clearly indicated. Many sceptics will deride such an explanation. Let them do so. If you wish to pursue the matter further and would exercise your intelligence in seeking another explanation than the "spirit-presence" in explaining my experiences, you will enjoy further instances of this abnormal faculty. I will give them, without exaggeration, in simple truth, that you may be led to a larger understanding and, maybe, to investigate the matter for yourself in your own experience. For I am sure that these experiences we term "psychic" or "super-normal" will be common to the majority of men and women when mankind rises to the spirit opportunities present in this life.

(To be continued.)

[The following books through the mediumship of Mr. F. H. Haines have already been published and illustrate The Higher Spiritualism: *Spiritual Development* (on Mediumship) 4s. net; *The Book of Spiritual Wisdom* (Cuno's teachings) 6s. net; and *Thus Saith Cephra* (Philosophy of the Soul) 5s. net. These can be obtained by return post free from The Pure Thought Press, 178, High Street, Watford, Herts.]

LOTTE PLAAT: PSYCHOMETRIST.

A remarkable psychometrist is Frau Lotte Plaat-Mahlstedt, of Oldenberg, whose powers have been made the subject of exhaustive researches by Continental scientists. Although she only discovered her psychometric gift some two years ago her experiences as a psychometrical reader have been numerous and in some cases startling. Several times she has been employed in the detection of crime by police officials.

On one occasion, on being handed a knife and a revolver, she described the crimes for which these weapons had been used and gave a detailed description of the assailants, two young men. Asked whether she could recognise the criminals she replied that she could, and was then taken to a house of detention used for persons on remand. In the exercise yard were a number of men taking their daily spell of fresh air. She instantly picked on two of these, saying: "There is the revolver, and over there is the knife," indicating the men with whom these weapons had been associated. Later these two men were brought before her for a personal interview. They protested their innocence but after hearing Frau Plaat's reconstruction of their crimes, they ultimately confessed their guilt.

On another occasion Frau Plaat was asked to psychometrize a pencil. Instantly she spoke of a forged cheque. "That is the very matter on which we desire information," said the client, who was a detective. Pressed for further details the psychometrist described a bank wherein would be found the forger. She was taken by a high police official to the bank and was able to identify the guilty individual.

Among the hundreds of clients who have consulted Frau Plaat is Herr Henrychowski, a state official of Aurich, Germany, who was anxious to trace a missing diamond pendant which his wife had lost; in order to give the Medium a means of contact he brought with him a small mirror belonging to Frau Henrychowski. Frau Plaat took the mirror in her hand and at once intimated that the diamond pendant had fallen on to the carpet and that one of the servants had picked it up and taken it to her home, where it was placed side by side with a gold wrist watch which the girl had stolen from another lady.

In a letter, written on March 25th, 1929, Frau Henrychowski records her joy on recovering the diamond pendant which was found in her servant's house. The girl was charged with the theft and after telling numerous lies to account for her unauthorised possession of the jewel, eventually confessed that she had taken it, in the circumstances indicated by the psychometrist.

Frau Plaat, who is a very attractive young woman speaking excellent English, is now in London, where her professional services are being widely sought. At present she is at the British College of Psychic Science.

THE S.O.S. SOCIETY.—An appeal, signed by Sir Oliver Lodge, has been sent out on behalf of this Society, of which Mr. Denis Grinling is the prime mover. Donations and subscriptions can be sent to Mr. Grinling at the offices of the Society, the "Old Cheshire Cheese", 61, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1., and he will gladly forward all particulars of the society which aims at the rescue of homeless outcasts—the "down and outs". Amongst the vice-presidents are the Duchess of Hamilton, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Gilbert Murray, the Marquis of Carisbrooke, Lord Cushenden, Mr. Dennis Bradley, Dr. Cyril Norwood, Admiral Drury-Lowe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Lady Doyle, Mrs. Studdert Kennedy, and others.

RAY'S AND REFLECTIONS.

One of Mr. Dennis Bradley's best known books is *The Eternal Masquerade*, a title which a humorous friend suggests might very well apply to the procession of embodiments known as Reincarnation.

* * * * *

Hannen Swaffer's book on Inspiration has been much discussed amongst authors. One of these told me he had never any consciousness of being inspired—all his work was done laboriously. It was, he said, more a matter of perspiration than of inspiration! But as he looks rather coldly on the idea of spiritual aid that might account for it. It is probably better to believe in the "sub-conscious mind" than in nothing at all. Still, it is too often the case that, as an old-time author put it: "Easy writing makes curst hard reading!"

* * * * *

When the priest called upon the French nobleman—it is an old story—the nobleman is said to have remarked that it was intolerable that religion should be allowed to invade the sanctity of private life! There was some point in the remark, for, as we know, an otherwise quite amiable social gathering may be turned into a bear-garden by the introduction of religion as a topic of conversation, especially if it is a gathering of Irishmen of opposing religious views. Very wide and painful is the difference between Religion itself and the various sectarian forms of it which vex the peace of the world with their bickerings.

* * * * *

It is well to be able to speak to every man "in his own tongue". The preacher, for instance, who can talk to commercial men in their own language, knowing their mind and methods, can drive his message home far more effectually than one who, without that knowledge, approaches them as a stranger to their ways. Any unfamiliar form of speech is always suspect, although it may be full of truth. A story is told of a new boy at a public school whose pronunciation of his Greek struck the master as very odd. "Where did you get that outlandish accent?" he inquired. "In Athens, sir," was the reply. "I was born and brought up there!"

* * * * *

My friend, M. René Sudre, in the course of an article in the September *Psychic Research*, in which he sets out his objections to "Spiritualism", writes: "There can be no emotional interest in denying survival: emotion lies only in affirming this religious doctrine with its promise of a future recompense." As an abstract sentiment this sounds quite plausible. But it is not borne out by the facts. Perhaps M. Sudre has never met, as I have done, people who are moved to strong emotion in their repudiation of the doctrine of an after-life. I could mention at least one literary man whose attitude towards it is one of fear and abhorrence. I mention this particular instance because M. Sudre writes (oddly enough) that "spiritism is from literature and the literary mind." Spiritualism (or "spiritism", if M. Sudre prefers that term) began with people who were neither scientific nor literary, but very human. Not for many years could the scientists and the artists be induced to pay it any serious attention. To-day, as we all know, a great many of them are proclaiming their conviction of the reality of a life after death, and their numbers are growing all the time.

D. G.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE.

(From the *Zonia Scripts*.)

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

... True religion is of the mind and spirit, something that concerns each separate individual and none besides.

It consists in the cultivation of good within the human consciousness and the out-picturing of it in the life and affairs of the individual.

THE GREAT TEACHERS.

Man-made religion is, at its inception, an attempt to follow the dictates of some particular individual, who, having gathered a measure of truth for himself, strives to disclose it to his fellows. The founders of all the great religious movements of the day were, without exception, unpretentious individuals. What they sought, originally, was truth and enlightenment for themselves, concerning the difficult problem of living. Having achieved their object, in varying degrees, they endeavoured to reveal to their fellows the new knowledge that had come to them. This difficult task, which they all undertook so willingly because of the joyous release that had come to their own spiritual natures, could of necessity achieve only partial success. This is due to the entirely individual nature of spiritual experiences. What these great leaders and teachers *did* succeed in doing, in no small measure, was to lift the thoughts of their fellows above the ordinary, everyday affairs of life, thus making it possible for them to come into touch with their own spiritual natures.

Wonderful results followed this uplifting of the human consciousness, lasting, in very many instances, even unto this day. But, because of a lack of spiritual understanding among the followers and successors of these mighty personalities, the religions, to which their personal experiences gave birth, gradually deteriorated after their founders had been removed to other spheres. They became, eventually, without exception, more materialistic in character, form and observance. Thus it is that the older religious teachings are proving totally inadequate to meet the pressing needs and requirements of present-day living. They have long been so hampered by ritual and cloyed by dogma that their very essence has been lost.

SPIRITUALISING RELIGION.

What the world needs is not so much a new religion as the cleansing, purging and spiritualising of the old. The same truths, simple, noble and inspiring in their purity and simplicity, have been presented to men's minds by each of the great religious teachers in turn. The clarity of thought and depth of understanding which these remarkable individuals enjoyed enabled them to perceive truth for themselves, but they could not convey any really adequate conception of it to the majority of their fellows. Hence the lack of vitality and spiritual uplift that is so apparent in present-day religion. It is suffering from a too prolonged immersion in the murky sea of a materialistic conception of life, over which rage fierce storms of controversy concerning minor details of form and ceremony.

Humanity must drain away the clouded, vitiating waters and quiet the thunders and lightnings of intolerance in order that the great truths, which lie at the heart of every religion worthy of the name, may spring into rich and abundant life. Once these truths are released in the world their mighty power will revolutionise thought and accelerate the spiritual growth of human beings everywhere. Hasten the coming of that great day by searching for truth continually, with open minds and understanding hearts.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Coleridge the Sublime Somnambulist." By John Charpentier. Translated by May Nugent. (Constable. 15s. net.)

To the present discussion on inspiration, its nature and causes, this book comes as a valuable contribution, and that is to take only one aspect of the book; it has an interest that will be appreciated by the lovers of literature and worshippers of genius, for Coleridge was a very great genius. A study of his life gives one the impression of a soul too mighty for the feeble frame in which it was embodied. The book gives us an illuminating biographical study of the poet-philosopher who to Charles Lamb was almost an "archangel", and even to crabbled old Carlyle was a "good soul full of religion and affection, of poetry and animal magnetism". Carlyle, however, as a lover of heroic masculinity failed to understand the subtler types of genius, but that phrase "animal magnetism" shows that he did see something. Indeed the "sublime somnambulist" all through his life not only gave utterance to oracles of wisdom, and such enchanting talk that he is regarded as the most brilliant conversationalist of his time, he also possessed such a power of presence, such an "aura", that he drew people to him and held them spellbound by his personality.

The book is one that, as already indicated, is full of interest not only to lovers of literature but to that increasing body of persons who are studying the nature of man in psychological directions.

G.

"The Fourth Mystery: Birth and Death." By C. G. Harrison. (Rider & Co., Ltd. 2s. 6d. net.)

It is gratifying to intimate that this book is the work of a thinker, worthy of earnest attention even where the reader and author cannot agree. It is markedly reminiscent of the Rosicrucian school of thought. The Fourth Mystery (of the Occult Seven) is one that "neither spiritualism, psychic research, nor theosophy by themselves can explain", although each in its degree contributes to the solution offered, and is duly acknowledged. The author tries to answer the question: "Where were we ordinary people before we were born, and what becomes of us when we die?" He says that what is now called Spiritualism was formerly known as necromancy, and remarks that one of the first things that strikes us in the alleged messages from the dead is their extreme fatuousness. To the informed Spiritualist this discounts the author's ideas of Spiritualism; likewise may be dismissed what he says about the spirits Katie King and Raymond Lodge.

From a cosmogonical point of view the mystery of Birth and Death is one, not two mysteries:—"Life and mind use matter for a time and then disappear. We have no right to say they go out of existence, for if they are real things that is quite unlikely. What we know is that life and mind temporarily animate and control matter and then go out of our ken. . . . So far I have said nothing of the relations of the dead to the living, except to try and prove that the seance-room 'Spirits' are not really *dead* people, and also that the phenomenon of obsession is due to certain exceptionally wicked spirits among those who have departed."

In this short notice it is not possible to follow the interesting course of thought that forms the full answer to the question of our state of being before birth and after death. The interested reader must refer to the book itself, cheered by the knowledge that it does not run quite to a hundred pages, and is not a mere variant of other books.

B. P.

On Monday, November 11th, at 3 o'clock, at Aeolian Hall, Miss Bruce Adams will give the fifth presentation of her sacred and cosmic pictures, "Visions of the Innermost", with interpretation, sacred songs and organ accompaniment. Applications (enclosing stamped addressed envelope) for tickets may be addressed to her at "Aurora", Oakington Avenue, Wembley Park.

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 Friday, November 1st, at 5 p.m. ... MRS. CANNOCK

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 circle: 6.30, Mr. H. Boddington, October 30th, 8, Mr. Ronald Brailey.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—October 27th, 7,
 Mrs. F. Kingstone, address and clairvoyance. October 30th, 7.30, Mr. Ella,
 Trance address.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—October 27th,
 3.15, Lyceum: 6.30, Mrs. E. Hinchliffe, October 30th, 7.45, Mrs. J. Wesley Adams.

Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41, Ashford Road.—October 27th,
 6.30, Miss Eva Clark, October 30th, 3 and 8, Mrs. Florence Stephens.

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 Thursday, Oct. 31st, at 7.30 Clairvoyance ... MR. GLOVER BOTHAM

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 Thursday, October 31st, at 7.30 ... MISS MANSFIELD

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 Monday, October 28th, at 7.30 ... MRS. HENDERSON
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