

# Light:

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

Edited by **DAVID GOW**

No. 2554. Vol. XLIX. (Registered as Saturday, December 21, 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. 397, P.L. and R.)

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### CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:—

Notes by the Way	...	...	601
Modern Evidences for Human Survival (continued)	...	...	602
Does Mediumship harm the Medium?	...	...	603
Some Comments on Professor Richet's Position	...	...	603
Dr. and Mrs. Crandon in London	...	...	604
Dream and Inspiration	...	...	605
Knowledge Awaiting Transmission	...	...	605
Letters to the Editor	...	...	605
The New Ghost Story	...	...	606
Sidelights	...	...	607
Growing Up in Spirit Life	...	...	608
The "Dew-Men" of Southern Crete	...	...	608
The Direct Voice: An Evidential Episode	...	...	608
"On Earth Peace, Goodwill Towards Men"	...	...	609
Rays and Reflections	...	...	609
Some Thoughts on Humbug	...	...	610
Notes on New Books	...	...	610

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No. 2554. VOL. XLIX. [Registered as SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1929. a Newspaper.] PRICE FOURPENCE

TO all its Readers, in every part of the Globe, **Light** tenders its Cordial Good Wishes for the Christmas Festival.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

### THE FEAST OF THE CHILD.

Yule, Noël, Christmas—there is a rich colour and suggestion about the words. They call up pictures: the holly and the mistletoe, the fireside revel, the carol-singing in country lane or crowded city street, the anthem in the church, the walls festooned with greenery, and many more that come lustrously in the mind, conjured up by the names. To the older people there come memories, too; to them the festival is dear more by reason of what it was than what it is to-day. But there are always the children: to them the season is full of colour and romance. They cannot look back over a vista of years. They are unaware of any sharp contrasts as between the old-fashioned Christmas and its highly modernised and mechanised version to-day. They are unaware of a glory that has departed—if, indeed, it *has* departed or is only veiled under the more sophisticated and urban forms. Be sure the Christmas spirit is always there, a spirit that is deathless. It is the festival of a birthday and of a Child. And in so regarding it we may set aside much of that disappointment and disillusion which comes of looking at things too much in "the light of common day", for the light of Christmas belongs truly to other worlds than this and shines with especial brightness in the heart of a child.

### CHILDREN AND FAIRIES.

It was a wise woman writer ("E. Nesbit") who said:

It seems to me so foolish to tell children that fairies don't exist, and then later on to expect them to believe in spiritual things—in all the great wonderful world that lies behind the things we touch and see.

Nowadays we are becoming more generally conscious of the fact that the region of reality is at the back of that phantasmal region of daily life which the unimaginative regard as alone real. The same writer went on to say that it was not necessary to tell a child that a fairy exists "in the same way as a poker or flower-pot". Of course not; the unspoiled imagination of a child would know that instinctively. "Heaven lies about us in our infancy," as Words-

worth wrote, but with a few exceptions the "clouds of glory" depart and the "vision splendid" "fades into the light of common day". We grow up into practical, commonsense—sometimes rather dull—folk. It is a very necessary development in a world like this. Yet with the return of the Yule season even the dullest mind may catch some of the divine infection which leads to faith in some world more ethereal than this. But we never expect to reach the stage when a fairy or any other kind of spiritual being will have for us the kind of "reality" represented by the poker or the flower-pot.

### SIR OLIVER LODGE AND PROFESSOR EDDINGTON.

It is worthy of note that Sir Oliver Lodge's address to the London Spiritualist Alliance was delivered at the same institution—the Friends' House, London—as Professor Eddington's Swarthmore Lecture, "Science and the Unseen World", to which we gave attention at the time of its publication. It is notable, too, that both these great scientists showed a curious similarity of outlook. Each represents a point of view which the advanced minds of the race are beginning to adopt—an outlook which, as Professor Eddington remarked, "has modified the challenge from the material to the spiritual world". He showed how advanced science is breaking away from the old idea that concrete things represent ultimate reality. The mechanism of concrete particles like the atoms of the brain, is no longer regarded as providing any satisfactory explanation of the mind's activities, at any rate by physicists, for, as the Professor observed:

Physics to-day is not likely to be attracted by a type of explanation of the mind which it would scornfully reject for its own ether.

Professor Eddington was addressing the Friends themselves, and one of his remarks in the lecture has rather a close application to Sir Oliver Lodge's allusion to the differences between Science and Religion. We take the following from the Swarthmore Lecture:

I think it may be said that Quakerism, in dispensing with creeds, holds out a hand to the scientist. The scientific objection is not merely to particular creeds which assert in outworn phraseology beliefs which are either no longer held or no longer convey inspiration to life. The spirit of seeking which animates us refuses to regard any kind of creed as our goal.

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## MODERN EVIDENCES FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL.

BY H. A. DALLAS.

(Continued from page 591.)

### DANIEL DUNGLAS HOME.

We note also that if these remarkable psychics had not been brought into contact with men of influence in the world they would have remained in comparative obscurity. For instance, the wonderful manifestations that occurred with D. D. Home would have been to a great extent wasted if he had not come into contact with Sir William Crookes (then Professor Crookes), one of the greatest scientific men of the age, and not less distinguished for his courage and loyalty in the pursuit of truth at all costs. Having once satisfied himself that he was on the track of a new truth he said, "that single object should animate him to pursue it without regarding whether the facts which occur are naturally possible or impossible." In this spirit Crookes set himself to study what occurred with D. D. Home.

Home's mother died in 1850, when he was still a boy, and a few months later he heard "three loud blows on his bed"; these were repeated, and alarmed him. As he sat down to breakfast with his aunt (who had charge of him) he was frightened by hearing the raps again. He adds: "I ought here to state that there had been some talk of the so-called Rochester knockings through the Fox family, but apart from casually hearing of them I had paid no attention to them—my aunt on the contrary considered them as some of the works of the Evil One. In her uncontrollable anger she took a chair and threw it at me." She then called in the Baptist minister to pray with her nephew, hoping to exorcise the fiend. Home continues: "While we were thus engaged in prayer, at every mention of the Holy Names there came gentle taps on the chair and in different parts of the room; whilst at every expression of a wish for God's loving mercy to be shown to us and our fellow-creatures there were loud rappings as if joining in our heartfelt prayers. I was so struck and so impressed by this that there and then, upon my knees, I resolved to place myself entirely at God's disposal and to follow the leadings of what I then felt must be only good and true. . . . This was in fact the turning-point of my life, and I have never had cause for one instant to regret my determination, though I have been called on for many years to suffer deeply in carrying it out."

Other phenomena followed. One psychic manifestation after another spontaneously occurred until he became one of the most remarkable psychics of the century. His gifts were appreciated more highly in foreign lands than in his own country. If he had chosen to ask for fees he might have made a big fortune, but he never consented to receive one.

### SIR WILLIAM CROOKES'S TESTIMONY

It was after prolonged study of this man that Crookes gave emphatic testimony to the genuinely supernormal (not supernatural) character of the phenomena that occurred in his presence. These phenomena were accompanied by visions and communications claiming to come from the Departed. Of the rappings Sir William Crookes has said: "With a full knowledge of the numerous theories which have been started . . . to explain these sounds I have tested them in every way that I could devise, until there has been no escape from the conviction that they were true objective occurrences not produced by trickery or mechanical means."

Of the supernormal lights he has given the following record:

"Under the strictest test condition I have seen . . . luminous points of light darting about and settling on the heads of various persons; I have had questions answered by the flashing of a bright light a desired number of times in front of my face. . . . *In the light* I have seen a luminous cloud hover over a heliotrope on a side-table, brush a sprig off and carry it to a lady; and on some occasions I have seen a similar luminous cloud visibly condense to the form of a hand and carry small objects about."

In 1898 before the British Association Crookes referred to his published record of materialisations of a woman called "Katie King" witnessed with Florence Cook, and said: "I have nothing to retract. I adhere to my already published statements. Indeed, I might add much thereto."

Someone may be thinking: "Could not this vision of Katie have been an illusion, hypnotically induced?" A photographic plate is not liable to be hypnotised! In the book from which I have abstracted this account Crookes states that five complete sets of photographic apparatus were brought to bear upon the form of Katie. "I have forty-five negatives," he writes, "some inferior, some indifferent, and some excellent. . . . One of the most interesting of the pictures is one in which I am standing by the side of Katie. . . . Afterwards I dressed Miss Cook like Katie, placed her and myself in exactly the same position, and we were photographed by the same camera, placed exactly as in the other experiment and illuminated by the same light. When these two photographs were placed over each other the two photographs of myself coincided exactly as regards stature, etc., but Katie is half a head taller than Miss Cook and looks a big woman in comparison with her. . . . The photographs show several other points of difference. . . . I have the most absolute certainty that Miss Cook and Katie are two separate individuals as far as their bodies are concerned."

THE REV. WILLIAM STAINTON MOSES—  
"M.A. (OXON)."

Another notable psychic, a contemporary of Home, was Stainton Moses, a lecturer at University College, London. In his case also the effect of his remarkable experiences would, to some extent, have been wasted if he had not been brought into touch with F. W. H. Myers, a man whose influence would carry weight in a wide circle.

On May 9th, 1874, Myers first met Stainton Moses. Of that meeting he wrote that it was "epoch-making" in his life, and in that of his friend Mr. Edmund Gurney. He said: "We now met a man of University education, of manifest sanity and probity, who vouched to us for a series of phenomena . . . which seemed at least to prove, in confusedly intermingled form—(1) the existence in the human spirit of hidden powers of insight and of communication; (2) the personal survival and near presence of the departed; (3) interference, due to unknown agencies, with the ponderable world. He spoke frankly and fully; he showed us his note-books; he referred us to his friends; he inspired a belief which was at once sufficient, and which is still sufficient to prompt to action."

Although Stainton Moses's experiences had profoundly changed his own conceptions of life, he was not in a position to influence so wide a circle as that

which Frederic Myers had reached. Are we not justified in believing that it was no mere coincidence which brought these two men together? Myers says, in the same article from which I have made the above quotation, that "it may be that by such experiences as those of Stainton Moses our race is being obscurely guided into an avenue of eternal hope," and he adds: "Who of mortals need ask for better than to be made, whether by chance or merit, a landmark on such a way?"

In his case, as in that of D. D. Home, at the outset startling physical phenomena occurred, and tokens of intelligent agency were obvious, the physical experiences being accompanied by intellectual phenomena of a very impressive kind. Raps, levitations, lights, etc., were apparently intended to convince him and his friends of the objective reality of the agencies who undertook to instruct him. The effect of Stainton Moses upon Myers was to make him a veritable prophet. His literary gift enabled him to reach and impress the minds of thousands, his grasp of the rationale of the subject and his zeal in spreading the knowledge he had gained fitted him to be an apostle in the field. He was one of the most active founders of the Society for Psychical Research.

The phenomena, which, as I have already pointed out, have occurred at intervals in all ages, have of late become much more abundant, and have been of a character adapted to the present time. Now that there is no danger of psychics being burnt as witches (although they are subject to other forms of persecution), many develop their faculties who would not have dared to do so in former times. It has been interesting to observe the enlarged scope of the movement through the past quarter of a century, and to note that doctors of science and medicine, archaeologists, artists, literary men and all sorts of professional men, even journalists and the clergy are being drawn into it.

(To be continued.)

#### DOES MEDIUMSHIP HARM THE MEDIUM?

At the British College of Psychic Science, on December 4th, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas opened a discussion as to the possibility of trance mediumship being harmful to the Medium.

The speaker discussed the various types of trance condition common to mediumship. There was the deep trance for physical phenomena, wherein it appeared that vital energy was temporarily withdrawn from the Medium's body and which, if wrongly used, might have harmful results physically and mentally.

In the case of light trance there might be some danger in the confusion of ideas on the part of the Sensitive if poise, discrimination and training were disregarded.

In the case of deep trance for mental work, where the outer consciousness of the Medium is temporarily submerged, it was reasonable to argue whether the use of the Medium's brain by another intelligence might harm the Sensitive. The speaker thought that if the use is not confined totally to the acknowledged guide, and promiscuous control is allowed, there might be some danger.

Other questions to be considered were (a) whether harm might result in rescue circles if deprived people were allowed to control; and (b) whether a deep-trance Medium might suffer obsession more readily than a normal Medium under such control.

Mr. Thomas concluded that the general answer to all these questions would depend on the character of the Medium. The path of safety lay in knowledge and more knowledge. Mediumship, he felt, was no more fraught with danger than, for example, film-acting or the stage.

B.

"THE RESURRECTION OF MERION LLOYD."—Miss Mabel Beatty, author of this volume which was reviewed in LIGHT, desires to make it clear that it is "in no sense an inspired novel".

#### PROFESSOR RICHEL'S POSITION.

SOME COMMENTS BY H. A. DALLAS.

Serious students, who have been led by their experiences to the conviction that the hypothesis of the survival of personality is true, will give careful consideration to the seven points in the statement of so distinguished an investigator as Professor Charles Richet (published in LIGHT of November 30th); and they will try to discover how far they can accept his conclusions, and why they cannot accept them all.

(1) To the first point—that of facing the question without prejudice—they can give complete consent of course.

(2 & 3) They will also agree with him that primary importance must be attached to facts, and secondary importance to the theories suggested in order to interpret the facts. Facts carry value whether they are rightly interpreted or not; but a false theory has no value at all. Nevertheless, Professor Richet would doubtless agree that bare facts, apart from any theory which may co-ordinate them and show their significance, are of far less value than facts which have been interpreted and classified by a reasonable hypothesis.

The great astronomer Herschel stressed the importance of formulating theories, and stated his belief that, apart from such interpretation, facts remain barren, their value being in proportion to their intelligibility.

(4) Professor Richet states that it is necessary that an acceptable theory should take into account all the phenomena; and that the hypothesis of survival is powerless to explain everything. Spiritualists do not claim that it explains everything; but neither do scientific men claim that the electrical theory of the constitution of matter explains everything. It does not, for instance, explain the differentiation of the embryo, the sub-division of the cells and groupings which result in the formation of the different elements and members in a human body; it does not *explain* biological facts; the validity of the theory in relation to the facts it *does* explain is in no degree impaired by its inability to explain *all* the facts. No doubt it has an important connection with the facts which it does not explain, just as the spirit hypothesis probably has an important bearing on the phenomena of premonition, ectoplasm, and clairvoyance; although in each case our knowledge is not yet sufficient to enable us to recognise clearly what that bearing may be.

(5) If Professor Richet's statement that memory is a function of the brain means that it is merely a product of cerebral changes, this is, of course, the point at which not only Spiritualists, but many other authorities in science and psychology, will be at issue with him. Professor William James in his essay on *Human Immortality* shows that this hypothesis is by no means indisputable, that it is not more definitely proven than the alternative hypothesis that brain is not the producer of mental manifestations but the *instrument* through which the mind acts, and apart from which it cannot manifest in our material condition; that the function of the brain is that of a transmitter, not an originator of thought.

I am sure it is not necessary to apologise to Professor Richet for venturing to comment on his statement of his position since it was intended for the consideration of those who, like myself, belong to the rank and file of serious students.

Professor Richet truly says that we should face facts without considering whether they are "agreeable or painful". Sir William Crookes went even further: he said a man must pursue truth "without regarding whether the facts which occur before his eyes are naturally possible or impossible". It is because some of us think that we have had positive evidence that mind and memory persist after bodily death that we are not deterred from holding this conviction by the "prodigious difficulties" which such a belief may involve.

## DR. & MRS. CRANDON IN LONDON.

### GREAT MEETING AT KENSINGTON TOWN HALL.

An eager, expectant crowd besieged Kensington Town Hall on the evening of December 10th, when a Reception was given by the London Spiritualist Alliance to Dr. and Mrs. Crandon, of Boston, U.S.A. The large hall was filled to overflowing and the seating accommodation was strained to the utmost. It was a happy, friendly and harmonious gathering.

In a brief and felicitously-worded speech, DR. ROBERT FIELDING-OULD, Vice-President of the L.S.A., welcomed the two guests. He expressed great appreciation of the invaluable work for psychic science which had been done and was still being done by the famous Medium and her husband. He had been particularly struck by the admirable reticence shown by Dr. Crandon in his statements and reports of the experiments. The Doctor had shown wonderful tenacity of purpose and a commendable sense of dignity. The speaker was also struck by the high tone of Dr. Crandon's letters to the London Press. He felt sure that all those present would desire to give the heartiest welcome to Dr. and Mrs. Crandon, and to assure them of their most cordial good wishes. (Applause.)

DR. L. R. G. CRANDON then addressed the assembly. "We find ourselves so overwhelmed with British hospitality," he said, "that it is very difficult to express ourselves adequately." He then briefly reviewed the history of the "Margery" mediumship, which was about six years' old and had been started in a very sceptical frame of mind. At the outset he and a group of friends had endeavoured to follow along the lines of the experiments of the late Dr. Crawford, of Belfast. A number of psychic manifestations had been observed, and, naturally, the group wondered which among them was the Medium. "By a process of elimination," said Dr. Crandon, "we at last found out who was the guilty party." (Loud laughter).

Continuing, Dr. Crandon said that since then the phenomena had come so rapidly that there had been no adequate pause to enable an extensive survey to be made. Now, however, they appeared to have reached the closing-point of one phase of the manifestations. They had had a numerous variety of manifestations; almost every form of psychic phenomena had been observed. The group in Boston, which had undertaken the task of examination, had been sitting weekly for almost six years under the most rigorous conditions of control. Time after time new test methods were devised; no effort was spared to retain strictly scientific laboratory methods. He would not say that it was impossible for those examining to fool themselves after six years, but he would content himself with suggesting that it was extremely improbable. "We decline," says Dr. Crandon, "to be put on the defensive." He and his fellow-investigators did not commit themselves to explanations. Their task was to observe meticulously and report accurately what took place. He personally had a feeling that the physical phenomena were in some way at a lower level than the mental phenomena, but it had been brought home to him and his fellow-enquirers that carefully-examined and punctiliously-recorded physical phenomena were the foundation of the whole subject.

With regard to ectoplasmic structures, Dr. Crandon said he agreed with the observations of Professor Charles Richet, of Paris—if these manifestations were observed two or three times, or even ten or a dozen times, the observer might reasonably feel he was being deluded. When they were repeated hundreds of times in immaculate conditions, however, one could not but feel that the reality of the manifestation was established, although it would be necessary to wait for some time until its precise

position in relation to physical laws could be determined.

Describing the method of controlling the Medium during trance, and the other precautions taken to insure against any suggestion of deception, Dr. Crandon said he thought that such precautions, rigid to the point of discomfort though they might be, were very necessary; a long protracted examination by the same group of observers was also necessary; it was infinitely more satisfactory than to submit the Medium to a brief and inevitably superficial survey of an ordinary committee. His own experience was that members of the usual kind of committee fought among themselves; they would agree that a certain thing had taken place during the seance, and forget it or deny it when the seance was over. There were also various personal considerations—the fear of losing social prestige, and other human weaknesses—which militated against the true verdict. His own group, after prolonged and repeated observations, had obtained a certain technique.

Dr. Crandon then gave a number of interesting sidelights on the "Margery" phenomena. He mentioned that frequently the Victrola in his house would play, although no person was near the instrument; these supernormal musical interludes always occurred at some significant moment. A number of tests had been carried out to exclude any remote possibility of fraud, but so far no normal explanation had been found.

Another interesting point was the fact that occasionally at the beginning of a seance the sound of whistling would be heard at the foot of the staircase in the Crandon household. It was "Walter's" whistle and could be heard getting closer, as though "Walter" were mounting the staircase; then it would be heard in the seance room itself. "Walter" so far from resenting scientific tests of his phenomena, on the contrary welcomed these and was not resentful of the various scientific interpretations that had been placed upon himself; he had no objection to being referred to as a "secondary personality"; words like "entelechy", "prosopopesis" etc. caused him no offence. He had said, "I do not mind what you call me—but do not refer to me as 'it'". (Laughter). On another occasion he remarked: "When you die you only go from a small room into a bigger one."

At the conclusion of the address a cordial vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, who said that he had had the privilege of having sittings with "Margery" and had been deeply impressed with the results. He had no fault at all to find with any of the conditions. A great many very remarkable manifestations had taken place and he hoped to have the opportunity of seeing more of them.

Mr. H. E. Hunt, who seconded the vote, referred to the remarkable team work carried out between "Margery", Dr. Crandon and the spirit known as "Walter". It was a fact that made the "Margery" experiments unique in the annals of psychic research.

\* \* \* \* \*

DR. AND MRS. CRANDON were entertained at luncheon by the British College of Psychic Science at the Criterion Restaurant on Tuesday, December 10th, and by the National Laboratory of Psychical Research at the Piccadilly Restaurant on December 11th. We hope to give fuller details of these gatherings in a later issue.

"S.O.S." SOCIETY: OPENING OF THE NEW HOSTEL.—The opening at 61, Mount Pleasant, London, of the new hostel for homeless men, established by the S.O.S. Society, took place on Thursday evening, the 12th inst. The dedication service was given by Dr. Maud, Bishop of Kensington, and Sir Oliver Lodge gave a short address dealing with the methods of helping the outcasts of civilization who found themselves homeless and friendless in London or elsewhere. The hostel is dedicated to the memory of the Rev. G. Studdert-Kennedy ("Woodbine Willie").

## DREAM AND INSPIRATION.

Mr. W. R. Bradbrook, Hon. Secretary of the Ipswich Psychic Society, sends us the following story, with some authenticating particulars:—

Being unexpectedly called upon a Coroner's inquest, I requested a Mr. Winkworth to officiate for me at the I.P.S. meeting, and give an address. Mr. Winkworth accordingly prepared a paper at short notice. Instead of giving this studied matter, however, he felt impressed to speak extempore upon the subject of "Meditation and Concentration". As a local preacher, this gentleman is usually decidedly diffuse, but on this occasion in about fifteen minutes he had given in compact, pregnant sentences, an admirable disquisition on the subject, emphasising its value in psychic development. In style, as well as in argument, the address was admittedly well above his usual standard.

"Have you ever given that address before?" asked a Mr. Barton, adding that he asked because he had heard it previously. Taken rather aback, Mr. Winkworth assured him that it was just impromptu and that he had quite a different subject prepared on paper in his pocket. Mr. Barton explained that several nights before he had dreamed that on asking Mr. Winkworth the best method to adopt for psychic development his advice had taken precisely the same form in much the same words. In proof of this he called upon a lady present at the meeting to witness that he told her the facts of his dream on the following day. She promptly confirmed his statement.

Does it not seem that the group of Unseen Helpers, who are ever assuring us of their support, had realised that instructive and suggestive assistance could be given by combining the previsionary faculty of one person with the impressionary faculty of another in his conscious state, thus emphasising the reality of their power and influence?

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## KNOWLEDGE AWAITING TRANSMISSION.

[The communication which follows is a seance-record of a message given in the name of a pioneer of Spiritualism—a distinguished writer and thinker.]

It has been stated, and with painful frequency of late, that nothing of much value has been obtained from contact with the spirit world, and I should like to speak of this matter.

To a certain extent, when one on this side knows, as I know, of the wonders and benefits here waiting to be conveyed to man were man ready to receive, this is true. Unfortunately the blame has been laid at spirit doors by those least qualified to judge. I wish I could take you with me, in thought, on a tour through some of the laboratories, some of the hospitals, some of the workshops of invention, and then you could see for yourself the marvels, the benefits only waiting for some harmoniously-attuned mind to receive them. If man would only realise that every blessing which he enjoys has its origin here he would perhaps in due humility prepare himself to receive more.

I have been taken just recently through one of our spirit-hospitals. It is, of course, obvious that medical science is not required here in the same way as in your hospitals on earth where illness and disease are rife. All the workers in the hospitals here are those who have passed through their earth-probation, not necessarily medical, although many of our workers were doctors and nurses on your side; but the great beauty and value of the work here lie in the fact that only those who love it for its own sake are qualified to participate in the work through their innate love and pity for sorrowing, suffering humanity.

They drift as naturally into this work as the needle is drawn to the magnet; thus it is that their work is of the highest value in that it is bestowed for love.

What I have stated applies equally to all branches of knowledge, and I feel sure you will believe me when I state that all this wealth of knowledge is waiting to be transmitted to the mind attuned to receive it. Only after the fullest investigation into our subject of spirit-communication, when conviction has been reached and all doubts cast aside, can the necessary workers here make it their business each one to find another on earth attuned unto himself. But until man prepares the way, as I have said, the difficulties are enormous. Spirit-impression, even if unconsciously bestowed can do and does a vast amount; but if we had man's intelligent, willing co-operation, what might we not achieve?

QUESTION: *Could a doctor get this information through a professional Medium?*

No, I do not mean that exactly. I mean were the doctors of earth sufficiently enlightened to sit at the feet of the teachers in the spirit world themselves by means, for example, of medical circles, then full instruction could be given and received by those best qualified to teach and receive. It is a counsel of perfection, but half a dozen earnest seekers after medical truth and instruction, in harmony and in unselfish agreement, would work miracles, actual miracles. Thus it is very grievous to listen to the dogmatic statements of ignorant people as to the value of what is received from the spirit world, when it is really themselves, their own limitations and ignorance which are at fault. Tune yourselves to the necessary vibration, and there is no blessing here which God intends to be withheld from His children there.

QUESTION: *You think, then, that the reason why more valuable information does not come through is because the Medium and circle are not competent to receive the information?*

Decidedly so. The limitations are theirs. It is again the Law of Harmony and Attraction which determines these matters. People sitting in a circle to receive messages from their relatives only, create a barrier which is very difficult for other spirits to break through. There is no welcoming ray, and how can they intrude where they would not be welcome?

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

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### TUTANKHAMEN'S TOMB.

Sir,—With reference to your Note by the Way in LIGHT, of 30th ulto., I should like to draw attention to the fact that in LIGHT for April 17th, 1926, I published an account of communications coming to us from a personality, giving the name of Tutankhamen, who gave a remarkable message and added that there would be another death in connection with the opening of the tomb. These messages were followed by the deaths of Dr. Georges Bénédite and Dr. Casanova, who had taken part in the work.

On July 15th last, another message was received, purporting to come from the same personality, saying that there "would be another death in connection with the tomb". This has been followed recently by the tragically sudden death of Capt. the Hon. Richard Bethell, who also was associated with the excavation of the tomb, and had many of the articles taken therefrom in his possession.—Yours, etc.,

CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

Weston Vicarage, nr. Otley, Yorks.

## 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 newsgagents, 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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## THE NEW GHOST STORY.

That pleasant and fragrant festival, the Old English Christmas, required for its due and proper fulfilment certain traditional elements. First, there was the blazing fire (preferably of crackling Yule logs) which threw out a generous cosy warmth that comfortably contrasted with the out-door snow—there was snow, of course. And there were other heartening things—mistletoe, prickly holly with jolly red berries, luscious mince-pies, a monster pudding lit up with dancing flames, a punch-bowl, and the soul-stirring carolling of the "waits". But perhaps the most "Christmasy" of all was the fireside ghost-story, told round the cheerful hearth after the feasting was done and—for added effect—just before the united guests and hosts were ready to seek their bedroom candlesticks.

That was the appropriate concluding ornament, the *coda* to the symphony of Noël. They were genial ghosts, those that figured in the old-time Christmas narratives. True, they were of a kind that caused the blood to chill and the flesh to creep; but it was a pleasant chill, a thrilling creepiness. For the old Christmas Ghost might clank a chain or utter a dismal wail along the deserted corridors of the ancestral hall, but his presence carried with it nothing sinister.

And then times changed. Learned men began to look with stony eyes on the ghost-legend. The friendly clanking of his chain brought, not shivers, but smiles; and they were smiles of contempt, for, according to the learned ones, there *were no ghosts*. And so, in many homes, the Christmas ingredients remained, but in an altered form: gas fires took the place of the Yule' log, while the lusty songs of the midnight carollers were rendered by the phonographs. The Christmas Ghost, however, had gone, seemingly never to return.

But there were some among the learned ones who did not entirely scoff at the phantom; they recognized that there might be "something in it". And so, in course of time, the haunting spirit was examined, tested, weighed up, analysed, reduced to the form of a duly certified "manifestation". It was a sad blow to some of the older ghost-loving Englishmen. Perhaps they felt it might have been better to annihilate the amiable ghost altogether, rather than degrade him to the cheerless and humiliating form of a supernatural or psychic phenomenon. Maybe the ghost himself felt chilled. Nevertheless, he continued his friendly visits, hoping, no doubt, there

might be some who would greet him with a welcoming gesture and a grateful smile. He was not always disappointed.

And now it seems as if the ghost were coming into his own again. He has had, poor fellow, a sorry time of it in the past. His presence has been hailed with shrieks of terror, prayers of exorcism, blank stares of oblivion, smiles of contempt—and also the business-like clatter of scientific apparatus designed to register his pulse and heart-beats. But always there were some who held out a friendly hand. To-day the number of his earthly friends is growing apace. When the feast of Noël is upon us, we shall know how to receive our ghostly company. Our carols will reach us through the radio; our seasonable snow will, perhaps, take the form of a cheerless drizzle; the cheerful punch-bowl will, perhaps, be replaced by the more sophisticated flask of Benedictine or *creme-de-menthe*. But the Christmas spirit will be abroad, and dear "family ghosts" will be with us again, as in the old days, but more real and human than ever before.

## THE TEST OF EXPERIENCE.

Life as a phantasy may be trifled with and its meanings changed and turned. Life as a reality will bear with no trifling. When the facts join forces it is time for vain theories to beat a retreat. Achilles catches the tortoise in the practical world, however vainly he may pursue it in the shadow-land of metaphysics. In the practical world the man knows when he is awake, although he cannot prove it according to the rules of academic thinkers. He may still be dreaming, they say. It is a pretty problem—and the only reply is that he is awake for all *practical* purposes. He has his ideal world, his world of aspirations and ambitions, but unless he is continually bringing it into the region of practical life, it is, as far as he is concerned, mere moonshine.

There is a New Revelation abroad to-day. It is a practical issue. It should be more than a match for logic-choppers, pedants, sophists, obscurantists, and all who shrink and slink from the vision of things as they are; it is a part of Reality. If it is not, then let it pass away with all the other figments and fancies which have so long deluded a world that is still "deceived by ornament". That it will not so pass we are assured. We have applied the final test, the only test whereby we may know the truth of anything—the test of experience.

## THE SPIRIT OF NATURE.

No longer with self or with Nature at strife,  
The soul feels the presence of Infinite Life;  
And the voice of a child, or the hum of a bee—  
The somnolent roll of the deep-heaving sea—  
The mountains uprising in grandeur and might—  
The stars that look forth from the depths of the night—

All speak in one language, persuasive and clear,  
To him who in spirit is waiting to hear.

There is something in Nature beyond our control,  
That is tenderly winning the love of each soul;  
We shall linger no longer in darkness and doubt,  
When the Beauty within meets the Beauty without.  
Sweet Spirit of Nature! wherever thou art,  
O, fold us like children, close, close to thy heart;  
Till we learn that thy bosom is Truth's hallowed shrine,  
And the Soul of the Beautiful is—the Divine.

—LIZZIE DOTEN.

SIDELIGHTS.

Professor Fornario, of Rome (reports the *Daily News*, of December 5th), received a curious telepathic message announcing the death of his daughter, who died on November 19th on the Island of Iona off the West coast of Scotland.

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The *Bristol Evening World* recalls, in its issue of December 2nd, an old ghostly tradition centring around a turnpike house at Batheaston. On dark wild nights sounds of a fast approaching coach, with the tooting of a coachman's horn, would be heard, and the shadowy outline of a coach-and-four would seem to pass through the closed turnpike, as though it were open, and vanish into the air. Elizabeth Hill, who lived many years in the turnpike house and died during the War at the age of ninety-nine, was one of those who insisted on the reality of this manifestation.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sir Oliver Lodge, in the *Daily Mail*, of December 9th, contributes an admirably restrained and well-reasoned article in answer to the question: "Have we lived before?" Says the writer: "I am acquainted with plenty of evidence in favour of persistent existence, and even temporary utilisation of other organisms, but I am not acquainted with any real evidence in favour of what may be called full-blown reincarnation." He adds that a belief in reincarnation is prevalent among Theosophists "who possibly have acquired some evidence, unknown to me, derived from Indian experience or meditation".

\* \* \* \* \*

Sir Oliver then discusses the views held by himself and many psychic investigators in this country on the subject of incarnation—association with matter. This process, he says, has for its object "the development of individual character or personality by a materialising process applied to some entity *which, though in a vague way existing previously, did not exist in that specific form.*" [Our italics.]

\* \* \* \* \*

"Assuming (as well we may)," says Sir Oliver "that earthly existence is of value in the age-long process of evolution, it may be surmised that in the case of frustrated incarnation, like that of still-born children, for instance, a second chance may be permitted. I do not know. But for any fully developed individual no second chance seems necessary or desirable."

\* \* \* \* \*

Continuing, the writer adds: "It has been suggested, however, by Myers and others, that we are none of us fully and completely incarnate here and now; that in fact our present manifestation is a portion of a larger subliminal self, a self beneath the threshold of consciousness . . . which is a considerable storehouse of knowledge. And it has been thought that some other portions of this larger self may hereafter become incarnate; so that a complete self shall ultimately emerge and survive as a group or composite of many experiences and memories, each fraction contributing an element of value to the whole." Sir Oliver discusses this theory, and although refraining from any definite opinion on its merits, says "this doctrine, I venture to think, may be some approximation to the truth".

Writing to the *Daily Mail*, of December 9th, giving his reasons for not consenting to an offer, on the part of that journal, to test the mediumship of his wife "Margery", Dr. L. R. G. Crandon says: "That we have not accepted your proffer we hope you will not construe as any misunderstanding of your motives. To one who has had no experience in scientific mediumship, or to the average reader, nothing would seem more simple than to have a group of intellectuals observe the alleged supernormal phenomena and give an opinion on them. In our opinion, however, the matter is not simple, and observation by such a committee, covering a few sittings, is almost without value."

\* \* \* \* \*

Dr. Crandon continues: "This problem of mediumship our group in Boston, U.S.A., has been studying now for six years. The group consists of a physician and his wife, a surgeon, a lawyer, and a mechanic engineer. They have developed a technique for the conduct of the sittings." After briefly describing the rigid control imposed by the group on the Medium, Dr. Crandon goes on: "Real experimentation, under laboratory conditions is what is needed to dignify the subject into an exact science. Our experiences with committees is that they disagree among themselves."

\* \* \* \* \*

Mrs. Dora E. Blumenthal, writing in the *Jewish Chronicle*, of December 6th, says: "In spite of the great concentration of our [Jewish] Race upon business and material benefits, I am convinced that there is a steadily increasing number who desire something more in life than material enjoyment and prosperity. In response to the interest aroused by previous letters I have founded the Jewish Society for Psychic Research. I wished to make this Society a nucleus of people who were interested in something higher than the physical plane without, however, limiting its activities, but realise that the main stress should be laid on Spiritual unfoldment. I propose, therefore, to call the Society 'The Golden Dawn'."

SELF-OBSTRUCTING SITTERS.

"Why is it that some people cannot get into touch with their loved ones in the beyond?" This was a question frequently posed by the inexperienced enquirer, said the Rev. G. Vale Owen, addressing the West Riding of Yorkshire Psychical Society recently. It was one of those questions that could not be exhaustively answered, even by the experienced Spiritualist, he added. He, personally, disclaimed the ability to do so, but he could give some of the reasons. One was the unconscious wish to disbelieve, frequently accompanied by more intellectuality than intelligence on the part of the seeker. Another hindrance was, he thought, excessive concentration on the part of the enquirer in the seance room.

He recalled an instance where one who should have known better unconsciously put up a barrier between herself and the communicating spirit. A certain married couple, living in comfortable circumstances, were both endowed with psychic gifts, and interested themselves in "rescue circles". Then the husband died. The widow expressed great disappointment because he had not communicated with her. "Actually, however, he had communicated with me," said Mr. Owen, adding that the communicator was also disappointed that his widow had checked his efforts to get into touch with her, by reason of the "wall of selfishness" with which she had surrounded herself; she was, in fact, indulging in excessive self-pity for her loneliness.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

## GROWING UP IN SPIRIT LIFE.

BY R. H. SAUNDERS.

In the British Empire we hold the monopoly of a certain phase of psychic force, and stand well in many of its other aspects. In England we have the principal Mediums through whom that curious and inexplicable phenomenon of spirit photography (commonly labelled with the undignified term of "extra") is produced, and our Direct Voice and Trance Mediums compare with the best in the world. And now, it appears, we have a remarkable materialising Medium in New Zealand in the person of Mrs. Lily Hope, of Wellington, the account of whose mediumship recently formed an interesting feature of LIGHT. I read the record of these seances with the greatest interest, and in particular was struck with the incident where a spirit who passed over thirty years ago came back as a child; this is in keeping with many of my own experiences.

I have, in the spirit world, six children, all of whom made the passage from thirty to forty-five years ago; yet when these children first announced themselves in the seance room, some years ago, they came as children with the voice and vocabulary of childhood. But at all the subsequent sittings at which they manifested (now some hundreds in number) they came as *adults*, and each revealed a personality, culture and education acquired in the spheres, far beyond that which fell to my lot.

I have frequently known Mrs. Roberts Johnson at her seances describe an adult spirit whom she saw clairvoyantly but which could not be recognised by any sitter; then Mrs. Johnson would exclaim: "Why, I see the same spirit now as a child!" and a full description, with any distinctive features the spirit showed, would be given. Then she would say: "I see the same spirit now grown-up, as I first described." Instantly a sitter would say: "Yes, I lost a child at that age," and the link being established the spirit and sitter would in all probability converse.

So many of us fail to realise that growth continues in the spheres, where the life of the child and young adult corresponds very much to that on earth, in so far as their education is concerned, with this great advantage—it is conducted on more sensible, and consequently more effective, lines than on earth.

Charles Dickens, who had considerable knowledge of psychic matters, and whose intuition provides the key to much of the beauty of his writings, often meditated on this very point, and wrote to his biographer, Forster, that he contemplated making a story of a young married couple where the husband passes away in youth, and the wife visits his grave in her old age, always visualising her husband as he was in youth.

How is it, it may be asked, that the spirits can manifest to us in precisely the aspect of babyhood or childhood in which they passed over, and even in habiliments? The answer embodies a law of profound significance to every human being.

From the cradle to the grave every thought, word and deed is automatically recorded in the spheres, and on our passing we are shown this record, and can at any time have access to it. If we, as spirits, wish to reveal ourselves for the purpose of identification as we were at our passing, we can, by an effort of will, manifest as we were at that time. It is not a question of memory, but of definite record. I have seen this demonstration in etherealisation, materialisation and in supernormal photography on many occasions.

The Book of Life is not a myth but a literal fact. It is not composed by any Recording Angel, but by ourselves, and the accuracy of the record can never be disputed, for we shall see ourselves, as the pictures flash by our vision, thinking, saying, or doing that which is chronicled for all time.

"THE 'DEW-MEN'  
OF SOUTHERN CRETE."

On Thursday, 5th inst., Captain E. N. Bennett, M.P., addressed the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance on the supposed supernormal origin of the phantasmal figures seen at certain times in Southern Crete. Captain Bennett, who had visited Crete on several occasions, and had most carefully investigated this question of the appearance of the "Dew-men", embodied in his address some deeply interesting matter he had gathered concerning this phenomenon and, although he had not himself seen the "Dew-men" he had nevertheless heard enough, from various people, to feel assured that the strange vision of a column of armed men carrying spears and wearing helmets had been observed by persons whose testimony was reliable.

The "Dew-Men"—so-called because they appeared just before dawn when dew was falling—were described as marching along a highway of Crete and then vanishing as they approached a fortress, apparently entering this ancient structure.

A well-known Greek general and numbers of harvesters told Capt. Bennett that in 1906 they had seen these "Dew-men", and in 1924 three men deposed that they had also witnessed the phenomenon. An Abbot, living near to the Old Castle fortress, gave a detailed account of what he saw. Five years later an Archbishop testified to witnessing the march of the "Dew-men". Accounts were also given to Captain Bennett by people who had seen these phantasms in May 1926 and May 1927.

Capt. Bennett, whose address was listened to with deep attention, said that the hypothesis that the phenomenon was due to a "mirage" could hardly be accepted as a mirage was the reflection of something material, and in his investigation of the "Dew-men" phenomenon he could not find that any such explanation was adequate.

The Chair was taken by Mr. Shaw Desmond who contributed much to the discussion which followed by giving examples of supernormal happenings which he had personally observed. Several others in the audience, including Miss Nellie Tom-Gallon and Mr. A. Vout Peters, gave interesting accounts of supernormal phenomena of a like nature to that of the "Dew-men", which they had witnessed.

Capt. Bennett's address, which included a short account of the history of Crete, narrated in a most attractive way, delighted his audience, and the eloquent appreciation of the address uttered by Mr. Shaw Desmond, at the close of the meeting, was re-echoed with enthusiasm by all present.

THE DIRECT VOICE :  
AN EVIDENTIAL EPISODE.

BY MRS. JOHN MENZIES.

Surely a convincing piece of evidence of "survival" is given by the following true and well-authenticated incident. I have had, however, to use synonyms for the actual names concerned.

Some months ago a lady, Miss "Ellison", a clear-headed woman, holding an important position in London, and well-known to me, went anonymously to a sitting with two direct voice Mediums.

The result was excellent, the trumpet not being used, and the voices sounding directly in the room. Both parents of the sitter came, giving their names with short messages, and another spirit-friend furnished an excellent "test". Then, when Miss "Ellison" was congratulating herself on the proofs she had received, came a "set back". A spirit spoke, giving the name of "James Moffat".

"I am sorry, I do not know you," said Miss "Ellison".

"You *do* know me—you must—I am your father's brother," said the voice.

Now "Moffat" was not the name of the lady's father; but the sitter, having experience, guessed the communicator might be a wandering spirit who had seen the "light" (the light emanating from all true Mediums, and visible to clairvoyant sight), and had come through by mistake.

But "James Moffat" was very decided and, insisting that he was Miss "Ellison's" uncle, held the floor for some minutes.

My friend went home delighted with the evidence she had received from parents and friends, but a little regretful that such a good sitting had been marred by one palpable mistake.

The incident, however, stuck in her mind; and since the following explanation came to her knowledge later, the thing stands out as a most remarkable piece of evidence.

Miss "Ellison's" grandfather had married twice; at the time when her father was an infant there was a son of twenty (by the former wife) who was something of a scapegrace. This youth left home and became a sailor. At that time—nearly 100 years ago—life at sea was a "hardening" process, to say the least. The boy hated it, deserted, and, managing to evade the authorities, reached his father's house. The father (Miss "Ellison's" grandfather) bought the papers, passport, etc., of another man named "James Moffat", and with these the boy escaped to Australia.

Naturally the affair was not talked of, but Miss "Ellison" remembers, that in her childhood, photographs used sometimes to arrive from friends in Australia.

Out there, as "James Moffat", the young man married, brought up a large family, lived to be an old man, died, and on that morning, last winter, came to the Misses Moore's London flat and introduced himself to his niece.

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## "ON EARTH PEACE, GOODWILL TOWARD MEN."

BY W. APPLEYARD, J.P.

---

Peace was the burden of the angels' song,  
The sacred chorus of the heav'nly throng  
That broke the silence of the early morn  
When Christ, the promised Son of man was born;  
Transcendent theme of love to all mankind,  
The common joy of all to seek and find.

Peace is the guerdon of the world's desire,  
Though but a flick'ring flame of holy fire,  
It burns each day with more intensive heat  
That must ere long its enemies defeat;  
Then will the nations of the earth rejoice,  
And pay their tribute to the angel voice.

Peace—but at what a cost of precious life  
Our young men stood, in that unholy strife,  
When boldly they went forth to pay the price  
Of all they had, in glorious sacrifice!  
Was their blood shed for naught, and all in vain?  
Shall all our cherished hopes, like them, be slain?

Peace—God forbid that we should now reject  
The noble purchase of our brave elect,  
Their pain and suff'ring on the field of death  
Enforced the plaintive cry, with dying breath—  
That from the higher spheres wherein they dwell  
Bids us to urge the peace for which they fell.

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

Referring to the statement that, from the standpoint of physics, man is a "strain in the ether", a humorist remarks that to him it rather seems as though man is a strain *on* the ether! However, even though he taxes its resources pretty severely in wireless, it is doubtless equal to all the strains put upon it—even the strains of the jazz band.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Funds urgently needed" is an announcement which constantly meets the eye. I noticed it last in a statement concerning the establishment of a clinic to provide mental healing for the poor. The "triumph of mind over matter" cannot be said to be complete while a monetary fund, whether for mental healing or any other humane work, is regarded as a fundamental necessity (the pun is accidental and may be ignored). There is something wrong when monetary values are continually involved in even the highest efforts of human-kind.

\* \* \* \* \*

Being unable to dispose of the subject in any other way, certain authorities have now decided that Spiritualism is a mental phenomenon—something mysteriously produced by the subconscious mind—so that it can only be adequately dealt with by mental specialists and psychiatrists. Well, even this marks an advance. In other days the appearance of a ghost led to a call for the police! Now it appears necessary to send for the doctor! Somehow the priest is in danger of being overlooked, which means, I take it, that a sceptical humanity has lost its faith in the Church as the custodian of spiritual things, and places a touching and not always well-based confidence in the power of Science.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;  
And then they say no spirit can walk abroad.  
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power or charm.

It is beautiful poetry: but it seems rather hard on the fairies who have lately become such objects of admiring study. Perhaps the allusion is only to the evil variety of sprite and elf. But, in any case, it is not Shakespeare himself who is speaking. It is only Marcellus (in *Hamlet*) telling Horatio a piece of folk-lore.

\* \* \* \* \*

When the Christmas guest met the Christmas ghost, in old stories, there was a scene of terror and alarm, and the household was awakened by shrieks of fright. To-day how different! I suppose the guest would address the ghost as "Old sport" or "Old bean" or some other gem of modern slang, and pass the time of day (or night) with easy unconcern. Nowadays, it is said, we have been made more familiar with death than ever before, and those who are not afraid of death are not likely to be scared by ghosts. Still there have always been people who have no particular fear of ghosts, and who live comfortably in haunted houses, regarding the spectre much as they would the domestic cat. It was one of these people—a gentleman residing in an old country-manor—who told me that he had himself no objection to the ghost; it was "quite all right", and he did not want it to be driven away. His only complaint was that it frightened his wife and his servants. He thought it would be unfair to hold the ghost responsible for that. And I quite agreed, knowing that ghosts, as a rule, never seek to frighten anyone, being sometimes terror-stricken creatures themselves, homeless waifs who, at Christmas time, should be made welcome at the fireside!

D. G.

## SOME THOUGHTS ON HUMBUG.

BY E. HARVEY.

When Milton named some of the fallen Spirits—Mammon, Moloch, Beelzebub and others, he did not mention Humbug. Possibly this minor spirit, as the confidential adviser of Mammon, kept in the background. I was about to say he didn't "cut much ice", but in that company "ice" sounds gratuitously offensive!

As well as being humbugged by others, we humbug ourselves. The line of least effort being the pleasantest I have often humbugged myself into following it. Social humbug, beginning with the harmless "Not at home!" formula, goes to unsoundable depths; but is not a serious matter. The candidate at an Election has some pretty tales about the wonders he will perform, but when he is seated and has accepted the Party Whip, his constituents see no difference—or very little. There are thousands of broad-minded Catholics and Protestants both in Orders and out of them who give a hearing to Spiritualism and keep their minds open—many believe in it—but their Churches officially reject it. As we all know, these Churches are founded on Psychicism. From the Annunciation—thus before Bethlehem—to the death of the Founder, when the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, it is an endless run of marvels. Also, it continued long after and has never ceased entirely. The hierarchs take up the unsporting, humbugging attitude that the psychic doings they speak of were the work of good spirits while those the Spiritualists advance are done by devils. It really makes one think of rival showmen, and for sheer humbug takes some beating. The rank materialist is an angel of light and straight-forwardness by comparison. He says the whole work of the seance room is imposture, and that is all there is to it.

There is the promoting bucket-shop man (by courtesy a "financier") who will wheedle you out of your money from the high regard he has for you. He prefers doing (I should say doing work for) people of small fixed incomes such as old maids, widows and clergy of limited means. Before their eyes is the mirage of increased or doubled means. But the mirage recedes and fades away and leaves the travellers worse off than before. If, like Silas Wegg, I might "drop into poetry" I should say:

All hail to thee, great Sham! Immortal Humbug,  
hail!

What though some orphans weep and widows cheeks  
turn pale

At thy fell, cozening name, with bland, Pecksniffian  
smile

Thou wilt for ever have new victims to beguile.

THE BOSTON-VENICE EXPERIMENTS. Mrs. Kelley Hack, of Venice, draws our attention to a small inaccuracy in the account of "Walter's" second cross-correspondence test given in our issue of November 30th. At one point in the experiment a message was received thus:

"The current is better. Carry on. Listen.  
4-2-9."

This was followed by the name "Walter S. S." Mrs. Hack points out that the sequence actually given here was: "2-4-9" not "4-2-9". In the interests of accuracy we have pleasure in giving publicity to Mrs. Hack's correction.

THE MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION held a successful Bazaar at the Kensington Town Hall on Thursday and Friday, 12th and 13th instant, in aid of their funds. The approach of the Christmas holidays, however, makes it necessary to defer a report of the event until a later issue.

## NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Eneres, or the Questions of Reksa." By J. William Lloyd. (Geo. Allen & Unwin. 6s. net.)

In an introduction to this book Mr. Havelock Wilson gives some account of the author, J. William Lloyd, whose work as an American philosopher has so far attracted attention in but a limited circle. Yet William Lloyd belongs to the class of "prophets", and Mr. Havelock Wilson regards him as being in continuation of the line of Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman; he may not be quite on the same plane, but he brings a newer message to a later age.

The book is cast in the form of conversations between a boy (Reksa) and an old sage (Eneres), who teaches his pupil many wise things in answer to questions covering a wide range of subjects, including Religion, War, Justice, Sex, Civilisation. The teachings of the old philosopher are everywhere marked by deep insight and ripe experience. They convince by their evident truth—at least they so impressed the present writer, who found in the book many passages of clear illumination and right reason.

LUCIUS.

"The Life and Work of Mrs. Piper." By Alta L. Piper. (Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d. net.)

The name of Mrs. Piper has almost become classic in the annals of psychic research. The modern generation knows little of her work, and it is with pleasure that the present reviewer draws attention to the biography of a lady whose psychic gifts came under the notice of such eminent investigators as Dr. Richard Hodgson, Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, and Professor William James. It is more than forty years since James went to Boston, in a sceptical frame of mind to test the Piper phenomena. Eight years later he said, in the course of an address: "A universal proposition can be made untrue by a particular instance. If you wish to upset the law that all crows are black you must not seek to show that no crows are; it is enough if you prove one single crow to be white. My own white crow is Mrs. Piper." That was in 1894. And in 1924 we find Mrs. Piper's psychic power "apparently as clear and strong as ever".

Miss Piper recalls in the present volume the story of her mother's first psychic adventure which occurred in childhood:

One afternoon, after school, when my mother was about eight years old, she was playing by herself in the garden, busily engaged in the, to her, all absorbing occupation of pushing oak acorns through a hole in one of the garden seats. Suddenly she felt a sharp blow on her right ear, accompanied by a prolonged sibilant sound. This gradually resolved itself into the letter S, which was then followed by the words, "Aunt Sara, not dead but with you still." Terrified, the child ran sobbing into the house holding on to the side of her head and calling loudly for her mother. . . . Several days later . . . word was received [by the mother] from a distant part of the country that, at the very hour and on the very day of her little daughter's strange experience, her sister "Aunt Sara" had passed out of the body, suddenly and unexpectedly.

Some interesting chapters are devoted to the work of those who investigated the Piper phenomena, to the communications from the "Imperator Group", cross-correspondence experiments, and other matters on which the Society for Psychical Research have reported fully in their records. In a brief, appreciative foreword to this volume (which is illustrated with plates) Sir Oliver Lodge remarks that "so long as the power, exhibited in a state of trance, is regarded as abnormal or uncanny, so long will the services of genuine mediums fail to meet with their due share of gratitude and recognition". He deplores the atmosphere of doubt and hesitation that, in scientific circles, still clings round psychic matters—"too reminiscent of the struggle for truth which our ancestors underwent in the past when they testified to novel experiences." He concludes, however, on a hopeful note, thus:

The facts are too strong much longer to be resisted; and this conscientious and careful volume may be of some assistance as well as considerable interest inasmuch as it publishes, and republishes, some of the facts, and at the same time displays to the world the private history of one of the most famous mediums of our own day.

H. A. G.

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 6.30, Mrs. Baxter. December 25th, no service.  
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