

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	1
Psychical Investigation: Right and Wrong Methods	2
Fate and Free-will	...	...	...	...	...	3
Temporary Survival: A Hypothesis	...	...	...	...	...	4
Letters to the Editor	...	...	...	...	...	5
For the New Year	...	...	...	...	...	6
Spiritualism and Wireless	...	...	...	...	...	6
Sidelights	...	...	...	...	...	7
Luncheon to Dr. and Mrs. Crandon	...	...	...	...	...	8
A New Year's Message	...	...	...	...	...	9
Rays and Reflections	...	...	...	...	...	9
The Passing of a Spiritualist	...	...	...	...	...	10
Notes on New Books	...	...	...	...	...	10

William Barrett once quoted a definition which appeared, many years ago, in a Spiritualistic journal, and which was as follows:—

A belief based solely on facts open to the world through an extensive system of mediumship, its cardinal truth, established by experiment, being that of a world of spirits and the continuity of the existence of the individual spirit through the momentary eclipse of death.

This, of course, is an excellent definition, but to us the original meaning of Spiritualism as the idea of the universe and man being of a spiritual nature still applies; indeed it may be said to have gathered strength by the vast quantity of phenomenal evidence which has been given during the last fifty or sixty years. The multitude of observed and recorded facts so gathered brought it under the attention of Science in the only possible way, for while Spiritualism remained as a purely theoretical proposition Science could not touch it, and it became entirely a matter of faith, unless in those rare cases where the mind could intuitively discern the reality. In such cases the term Spiritualism was usually replaced by Mysticism.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

GHOSTS AND DREAMS.

Charles Lamb, Charles Dickens and Andrew Lang were alike amongst modern authors in connecting the idea of spirits with the world of dreams. Probably it was a true instinct, for now that we are receiving clearer and more reasoned communications from those who from "the other side" are anxious to tell us about their conditions, the "similitude of a dream" is often employed. This can only give the impression of figment and fantasy to those without imagination—those who have not realised that this seemingly solid world is itself an "unsubstantial pageant", and that we ourselves are "such stuff as dreams are made of". But sleep and trance have always been, as it were, the windows through which man, in the flesh, has gained his notion of the land of the hereafter and its inhabitants. Dream and vision however can never give us more than hints and clues to what awaits us when we have passed through the "main entrance"—the doorway of Death. Then we shall find that the "ghosts and phantoms" belong really to this side and not to that.

DESCRIPTIONS AND DEFINITIONS.

Many *descriptions* have been given of what Spiritualism really is. Satisfactory *definitions*, however, are few. As most people know, the word had a different significance a few generations ago from what it has to-day. The original use of the term was to indicate the doctrine that all that exists is Spirit. The term idealism was also used to convey the same idea. The thinkers of those days had a very slight acquaintance with interpositions from the spiritual world in the way of what was then called miracle, or apparitions from the dead. There was, of course, a vague belief that the dead occasionally communicated with this world and, no doubt, to many of the philosophers of these days this seemed to give colour to the belief in a Spiritual universe. But, as regards modern Spiritualism, Sir

ANALYSING THE CRITICS.

In considering the attitude towards Spiritualism of some leading minds we are often tempted to think that their criticisms are not always directed so much against the subject as against some of its implications. It is as though there were "cross-sections" of view. We feel that certain of its religious opponents oppose it because it threatens—or appears to threaten—some of their views on theology. At the other extreme we find those who condemn it for reasons exactly the reverse. These are the sceptics, the rationalists, the "anti-clericals", as we may call them. To them it seems (and they are quite right) as though Spiritualism supports some of the religious ideas they so heartily detest. It is very droll. Here we find one man (a Rationalist) attacking Spiritualism because it seems to lend colour to religious beliefs, and another man (a zealous Churchman) raging against it because he regards it as a menace to the Church's monopoly of spiritual knowledge. But the battle between Prejudice and Fact can end only in one way. It will not be Prejudice that wins.

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Psychical Investigation: Right & Wrong Methods.

SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE.

BY W. H. EVANS.

The saying, "fools rush in where angels fear to tread", often comes to mind when considering the haphazard way in which the investigation of psychic phenomena is frequently carried on. Despite over eighty years of psychic manifestations we know very little about the conditions essential to, or the best methods for, successful psychic work. In carrying out research work in other departments of human knowledge one can adopt a cold and detached habit of mind. Chemical elements or electrical phenomena are not, apparently, susceptible to the moods and mental habits of the researcher. But in psychic matters the case is different, for here we have a body of phenomena dependent upon the living organism of some person called a Medium. We know practically nothing as to the mysterious element in the make-up of the sensitive which causes him to react in an unusual way to psychic stimuli. This lack of knowledge and the failure to realize the delicacy of the machine at our disposal, (together with a profound ignorance of the modifying effect of the Medium's, and our own moods upon the phenomena) is, no doubt, responsible for the many fiascos with which the path of the psychic researcher is so often strewn.

Although mediumistic qualities are to some extent independent of the character of the Medium, yet character has some influence—probably more than we at present suspect—upon the moral content of the phenomena. These manifestations, whether they be of a physical or a mental type, are profoundly influenced by the prevailing atmosphere of the seance-room. This atmosphere is not altogether of a local nature in the sense that certain places are more favourable than others for the evocation of phenomena. It is generated by the sitters; each one carries with him his own particular mental and spiritual atmosphere.

The success of a seance probably rests more with the sitters than with the Medium, and if, instead of occasionally complaining of the paucity of results, the sitters were to examine *themselves*, they might perhaps discover they had introduced an inhibiting atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust, instead of approaching their study in a sympathetically-critical attitude of mind. The use of all kind of "gadgets" to control both sitters and medium may, as we know, act rather as a deterrent than an aid to phenomena. Medium and sitters may acquiesce in these methods, but the sub-conscious resents any imputation of dishonesty, and this array of mechanism can do more to inhibit results than we imagine.

Of course where there is darkness some sort of control is needed, and it would be well if dark seances could be ruled out entirely. Results have been, (and still can be) had in good light, and these are more satisfying to all concerned than many of the effects produced in the dark.

When there is no light to check what is going on, suspicion may lodge at the back of the mind that someone may have played false.

In voice-phenomena it is the *matter* conveyed which is of importance. In such seances one looks

for evidence of identity of the one speaking. This is not always easy to obtain, even when one is reasonably sure that the voice speaking is that of the person claimed. Usually it is advisable not to let the conversation flag. We have experienced those awkward silences which occur at times when people meet, and how difficult it is to think of something appropriate to say just to break the ice. That phrase "breaking the ice" is descriptive of mental cold, a freezing of the mind, and holding back the stream of thought. The best evidence not infrequently comes when we are chatting in a normal and easy manner with the communicator.

In such seances darkness doesn't matter. One is not concerned where the trumpet is, but with the messages conveyed. The trumpet may be in the hand of the Medium, but if the message given is one which is known only to yourself, and one other in spirit life, the fact that the trumpet is held by the Medium is of no real importance.

Where messages are given orally through the lips of the Medium the conditions are perhaps even more delicate. In voice-phenomena the spirits, while dependent upon the Medium for power, have a quasi-independence, and are not so restricted to the Medium's idiosyncrasies as when speaking through a sensitive under control. Anyone who has had experience of the trance state will know how it varies, from a mere impulse to close the eyes, up to a deep sleep. In the former state the sense of hearing is quickened. Slight noises, which, in the normal state would pass unnoticed, assume an embarrassing importance. They often act as an irritant, deflecting attention from the matter in hand. Instead of the stream of consciousness subsiding and becoming placid it races in eddies and distorts the inflow of thought. In this stage it is almost impossible for the controlling spirit to get anything "over". It is a transition state and most sensitives have experienced it.

But even when the trance has advanced to the deep sleep the underlying consciousness of the Medium will often distort the message. The normal thinking of the Medium has worn paths in the brain, and as thought will take the line of least resistance, the matter of the controlling spirit has more or less to conform to the grooves already existing.

At such times there are two streams of thought, or rather consciousness—the Medium's, which is slow and placid, and that of the controlling spirit, which may be said to flow over that of the Medium. If the sitter be over-anxious or mistrustful, he sends out a current of thought which, because of its positive nature, may agitate the consciousness of the Medium. I do not wish to put all the responsibility upon the sitter, but only to warn him that his own attitude must be right if he desires a successful sitting.

Professional mediumship is nearly always suspect, though it need not be. There is nothing wrong in people using their psychic abilities to get a living. The endowment of psychic ability is, in itself, no more sacred than that of having the ability to paint, or write well. There is too much snobbery about this question. People seem to think that mediumship is pure if no money is taken for it. To use an Americanism, that is "bunkum". Psychic ability may suffer more from spiritual pride on the part of the Medium than from using it to make an honest living. A Medium is no more likely to be dishonest because he takes money for the exercise of his gifts, than he is for doing his work without

pay. The desire to be thought a wonderful person may prompt a Medium to "fake", equally with the desire for gain.

Perhaps the least likely person to get proof of survival is the man who imagines it is very important that *he* should be convinced, as though the success of Spiritualism depends upon his conversion. How little he knows himself or the spirit people! In the great work of bringing the world to a realization of the persistence of man beyond bodily death, there is often more good done in giving comfort to some humble soul than in striving to convert some great personage.

One of the great difficulties of spirits in controlling a Medium is to subdue his mind; to keep the current of the sensitive's thought submerged so that their own thought-stream may flow over it. Of this difficulty we know little, and when we add to it by our wilful perversions and suspicions the wonder is we get so much as we do. The prime factor in the evocation of phenomena, both physical and mental, is an intelligent sympathy. Wrap the sensitive in a warm, congenial thought-atmosphere. Get him to feel you are co-operating with him. Sympathy, intelligence, quiet alertness, and readiness to co-operate mentally and spiritually with both Medium and spirit will work wonders in the seance room. But if you introduce the Medium to a mental refrigerator don't be disappointed at the paucity of results. You will probably be the one to blame.

FATE AND FREEWILL.

By J. L. AMES.

It may perhaps be presumptuous to suppose that anything new, and consequently of value can still be written on this age-long controversy of Freewill v. Determinism; nevertheless, the great changes taking place in the views of present-day Psychology, and the revelations of Psycho-analysis do undoubtedly throw a new light on this ancient question. I quote some sentences from a recently-published paragraph which neither lose nor gain anything in significance by being taken from their context:—

One of the most general sources of error and of evil to the world is the notion that infants, children and men are agents governed by a will formed by themselves and fashioned after their own choice. . . . That Human Nature, up to this period has been misunderstood, vilified and savagely ill-treated. . . .

Surely if men ever become wise—if they ever acquire knowledge enough to know themselves, and enjoy a happy existence, it must be from discovering that they are not subjects for praise or blame, reward or punishment.

At first sight this appears to be a revolutionary, not to say dangerous doctrine: the whole question of moral responsibility is involved.

What are the facts and what bearing have they on the subject of Freedom of Will?

Throughout life man is continually faced with alternatives. In many cases this necessitates conscious deliberation and definite decision. What has happened here. Is he not conscious of two incompatible motives, two conflicting impulses? In other words, is he not in a condition of incipient dissociation? Clearly he is "in two minds" about the thing, as we say, and, in this psychological condition of "pull devil, pull baker", it is obvious that the strongest impulse will win the day, and the morality of his conduct consequently depends upon the relative strength of these impulses. Now it is equally obvious that this condition cannot occur in a unified mind, and psychologists to-day are becoming increasingly

convinced that dissociated conditions of the mind or personality are the result of some past shock or *trauma* to the growing soul that has become repressed and driven below the threshold of consciousness where these complexes, as they are called, continue to work their evil way and give rise to conscious or unconscious conflict. Also it is more or less agreed to-day that the will cannot be differentiated as a separate function of the soul or personality; rather should it be regarded as the whole personality acting in unison.

When a man is faced with two or more alternative lines of action, is it true to say that he is free to choose? Would it not be nearer the truth to say that he is *bound* to choose if he is to act at all? Can he be both *bound and free*? The Truth seems to be that we do not lead our lives as we have hitherto supposed; we are driven to them; goaded on to action by the life urge, psychic energy, Spiritual force, Libido—call it what you will, they all mean the same.

If we analyse the actions of life we find that, essentially and fundamentally they are efforts; and not only are they efforts, but can be shown to be efforts towards one goal, and one only, and that goal is Freedom itself: freedom from conflict (decision), freedom from desire (satisfaction of desire), freedom from this unconscious, driving dynamism of the soul. The conscious mind of man, in this present physical condition, is, as it were, the penetrating point or cutting edge of the Spirit, the Spirit that is ever striving to cleave its way through this material universe to gain the freedom that once it knew, and must, and will find again. Can we wonder if sometimes this point, or edge, becomes blunted, twisted out of shape, frayed or split; forced, as it is, through this world of material conditions with the whole weight of the Soul behind it? To do its work, past injuries must be repaired; it must be kept sharp and truly tempered, and free from being clogged with the *débris* of its passage like any mechanic's drill.

Would we be far wrong then in regarding Freedom—freedom of the will, that is freedom of the personality as a whole, as a goal to be attained? And is not freedom of greater value to us as an ideal than it would be as a possession?

DEATH AN INCIDENT—NOT A CATASTROPHE.

The gospel of Spiritualism emphatically asserts the continuity of man's life after death; that death is an incident, not a catastrophe; that men leave their bodies behind them, but take themselves, their consciousness, their intellect, their emotions and memories, and all that belongs to them mentally, morally, and spiritually into the other world. While it may occasionally appear that they have only an imperfect or hazy recollection of their earth-life when speaking to you through the lips of a Medium, yet it may not be—as it actually is not—that they have forgotten, but that they are unable to reproduce through the agency of an intermediate intelligence, and under conditions with which they are not exactly familiar, the experiences of the past in the same ordinary and evident fashion with which they may be present to their own minds.

There has grown up of late years in the religious world a very beautiful thought. How far it owes its existence to the influence of the facts and philosophy of Modern Spiritualism, as one of the religious influences of the times, we will not pause to consider, but we have our opinion. The thought we refer to is that at death *each one goes to his own place*. Naturally, if each one goes to his own place, he goes there to fulfil his own life; to live out the purpose of his being.

(From a *Trance Address* by the late J. J. Morse.)

TEMPORARY SURVIVAL: A HYPOTHESIS.

BY M. KORNITZER.

There is one tentative explanation of psychic phenomena that I have not yet seen attempted in so many words. It may seem like an effort to bridge the gap between theosophy and the belief in the causal hypothesis; but, unlike them, it does not claim to do more than enunciate a rational theory, a theory which, being concerned with the irrational, must of necessity be inconclusive.

Shortly the possibility is this:

Energy is held to be as indestructible as matter. Certain kinds of energy, those whose force can be determined in foot-pounds, are as measurable as matter. The energy of the human mind, however, the energy released by peculiarly mental activity, is not measurable; a certain amount does work that can be reasonably assessed, such as art and literature, or active pity, or demonstrated religion. But there is, with all this, a vast leakage of human thought; whereas, in the animal world the amount of thought produced is roughly equivalent to the result in practical action, much of human energy is diffused in the shape of unharnessed imagination—dreams which have no apparent relation to work done. Every human being is, unlike an animal, potentially capable of much more than is ever accomplished by him. No one ever produces to his limit. But the energy does emerge somehow, in the shape of seemingly unrelated and idle images. Projected only to the extent of thought, too tenuous to produce practical results, this "wasted" energy once generated does exist. What then happens to it?

It came from the universal pool of energy; no thinking can take us farther back than that. But when does it return to that vast undifferentiated reservoir of plastic unity? An immediate return does not seem likely. The energy caught and tangled in the movement and swift play of personality, imprinted by the activity of the human brain with the incisive urgency of human thought, is likely still, after it has been released from the individual, to retain something of its acquired but deeply involved human quality; though almost certainly without the specific attribute of egoism. Thus this energy has no centred "self"; it is a lesser pool of common life-force, however, and specifically human.

So much by way of preliminary. Now to turn to the particular subject of these remarks.

The paramount property of the human intelligence is consciousness, the human, jealous "I". An individual is, from a child, continuously directed to an exclusive regard for his ego; he is also predisposed to an exacting regard for the requirements of self. He becomes, as he grows, a distinctive and definite personality, a bundle of such predispositions, habits, appetites and inhibitions, bound more or less coherently and with more or less directional bias, in the narrow confines of a physical body. This bundle is highly concentrated and moulded by the stress of outside life, by the pressure of all those other human bundles that makes up existence. Tendrils of feeling are stretched outside, it is true, but in essence the ego is self-centred and self-contained. The nucleus of self becomes at last in a sense independent of the physical machinery of being. It creates its own world of thought while still in the flesh.

The physical body dies. It is now that there enters a possibility of other deductions than those usually drawn from psychic phenomena, whose objective certainty seems by this time incontrovertible. There is either the usual, and more attractive, conclusion, that individual survival is permanent and that the real self, like a sword grown loose in its worn scabbard, is unsheathed by death and freed for infinite action; or there is another conclusion, not so attractive but still tenable.

The physical body dies. The ego is homeless; there is no gross matter to hold its divergent particles together. But it does not immediately disintegrate. The powers of association are too strong. This appears to be conclusively proved. On the other hand, a temporary persistence of personality might explain the phenomena equally as well as the hypothesis of permanent survival. Say that the ego-unit has been subjected to such pressure while yet in the body that it holds together for a certain period of time after death, this period varying greatly with the intensity of consciousness. It is still centralised and controlled from within; but it must have a mechanism through which to act, an objective agency. Then this mechanism might be supplied from the common stock of humanised energy. Though this must be infinitely more diffused than matter, which may be called the particularised thought energy of a central Intelligence, i.e. God, it may be still utilised as a common stock of life, just as the nature we know is, in effect, a common stock of life.

The disembodied ego instinctively seizes on this common store, and makes for itself by expecting, that is by willing to occur, a duplicate body and environments with characteristics such as consciousness would dispose it to imagine. These would be much the same as the conditions left behind at death, though without the grossness and appetite inherent in physical existence. Also, as these conditions would be strictly objective in a sense peculiarly parallel to the objectivity of matter, this duplicate body could in certain circumstances demonstrate its reality in terms of physical reality.

Consciousness would then correspond to the varying peaks of a dying wave, a declension from the positive through varying stages of cohesion to the negativeness of all-pervading unity. There would be a series of "little deaths" until the self was merged again in the main stream from which it came, for as the stress of outside conditions on the personality weakened it would fall apart and be absorbed in the commonwealth of life.

Consciousness would naturally be prolonged, in this theory, as is borne out in fact, by the desire of a personality for its companions of the flesh, or in the case of an earthbound spirit. Such a central thought would hold the "bundle" together from inside, would give it purpose and urgency. So long as this individual purpose was involved, the individuality would remain. But let once the will to accomplish lapse or be achieved and the interrupted disintegration of self would proceed without further check.

[We print this article in the interests of free discussion of the subject for which we stand. The writer's theory is not a new one. It has been discussed before. For the present it is sufficient to say that the continuance of life after death is not, as the writer of the article suggests, dependent on the human will, but on the Universal purpose—the Divine will, as expressed in Nature.—Ed.]

1930

Why must you still, unfaltering wing of time,
Beat ever onward! Can there be no rest—
No halting place—some fragrant scented nest
Where hidden dreams like pale sweet roses climb,
And love and laughter hear no more the chime
Of tolling hours, that speed the well loved guest?
Can nothing stir the pity in your breast,
To pause awhile when life has reached its prime?
Or is it Pity's Self that drives you on—
That we, unknowing, worship beauty here:
A transient thing, a mirage born and gone
Before our dazzled eyes can hold it clear;
A dim reflection of a joy to be
When reaching journey's end you set us free?

E. HALL HAINS.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

SPECTACULAR SPIRITUALISM.

Sir,—It is with some reluctance, but also with a sense of some compulsion that I write with reference to an advertisement which recently appeared in a London newspaper. This advertisement advised the public of a weekly journal containing remarkable spirit messages from a Christ-inspired source, and stated that recent issues have contained communications from many and various notabilities from John Bunyan and Joan of Arc to Lord Northcliffe.

It is not for me to do otherwise than register my own opinion for what it is worth, but I must dissociate myself from the type of Spiritualism thus represented. My own experience—psychic and psychological—would lead me to an exposition of the subject of a humbler and less spectacular kind. Such communicators as I have been privileged to come in contact with have ever been chary of giving their names at all. It seems that in their wider knowledge they sense something of the comparative unimportance of the individual and of the greatness of the theme. While of those who claimed to be inspired I have never heard any who suggested that he had reached direct so high a source as the Christ.

There must, of course, be many presentations of Spiritualism, but when we endeavour to impress the general public let it be known that there are at any rate some who are not prepared to subscribe to claims such as those put forward in this case. And one of those non-subscribers is—Yours, etc.,

H. ERNEST HUNT.

30, Woodstock Road, W.4.

"MODERN EVIDENCES FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL."

Sir,—In the excellent paper by Miss H. A. Dallas, she states that the logical outcome of materialistic philosophy is the belief in eternal things. And she refers to the philosophy of Hume, in support of the statement.

Now Hume relies on the reality of things-in-themselves. But he acknowledged that his philosophy was faced by an inexplicable difficulty. For he states:—

In short, there are two principles which I cannot render consistent, nor is it in my power to renounce either of them: viz., *that all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences, and that the mind never perceives any real connection among distinct existences.* [His italics.] Did our perceptions [my italics] either inhere in something simple or individual, or did the mind perceive some real connection among them, there would be no difficulty in the case.

Hume relied on *perception*, and that did not satisfy his philosophy.

Then came in Kant and he, relying on *conception as transcending perception*, got rid of Hume's difficulty. Shortly, Kant held that the things we perceive are not things-in-themselves, not separate existences. They are all phenomenal of a transcendental object; the transcendental object forms the basis of phenomena, that is, of things we *perceive*. He thus got the "something simple or individual" that Hume required.

Kant gets rid of "the logical outcome of materialistic philosophy in the belief in external things." It follows that if we and other objects were things-in-themselves then there would be nothing in us to survive death, in which case Hume's scepticism would be justified.—Yours, etc.,

F. C. CONSTABLE.

Lansdown, Bath.

"THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF JESUS."

Sir,—Nearly two years ago (in the issue of February 18th, 1928) LIGHT published the following on the above subject.

He is not like the pictures you have on earth, which make Him just an Eastern Jew. In appearance He is manly, strong, a living human being. There is no straggling beard, but a square, strong chin, giving the impression of tremendous strength, though the mouth is tender and beautiful. A broad forehead, strongly marked brows, hair wavy, and only long at the top, the wonderful eyes blue, strong, not weak, and the complexion not pale.

This was the description given me from the other side of life through the mediumship of Mrs. Osborne Leonard. On my reading it at a public meeting, a man in the back of the hall remarked that the description was almost exactly the same as that given from the spheres to Miss Louise Owen, whose inspired painting of the Master holds such deep interest for many of us.—Yours, etc.,

ANNA E. MENZIES (Mrs John Menzies).

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

MESSAGES FROM THE LIVING.

Sir,—On my way back to New Zealand from England some months ago, I had an experience which interested me, as a student of psychic matters.

A relation of mine gave me an introduction to a friend of hers living near San Francisco. This lady possesses considerable mediumistic power, and she kindly used it for my benefit. The whole sitting was interesting, but I will mention only one episode.

She saw my husband, who is still in the flesh, standing beside me—her description was perfectly recognisable—and gave me a message from him. This message she tried to interpret to me, but her interpretation was not the correct one; I at once understood the inner meaning, which she, knowing nothing of the circumstances, could not perceive. Owing to the difference in time between San Francisco and New Zealand, my husband may have been asleep at that hour. Various explanations suggest themselves to me. (1) Did the Medium actually see the etheric body, which, we are told, often travels during sleep? (2) Was it a case of ordinary clairvoyance plus telepathy between him and the Medium? (3) Or was it unconscious telepathy between my husband and myself, and in that case, did the Medium read the message in my subconscious mind after drawing his image therefrom also?

She was, to all appearances, quite normal at that moment, and indeed, during a large part of the sitting. She finally went under control. But that belongs to a different order of phenomena and I am not concerned with that now. I have heard of people who are still "on this side" appearing to others, and I have heard of messages being received from people at a distance, but have not previously known a case of both happening simultaneously; and to a complete stranger such as this Medium was.—Yours, etc.,

E. LOUISE STURGE.

Hereworth School,
Havelock North,
Hawke's Bay, N. Zealand.

[Our correspondent's experience is not an isolated one. The "phantasm of the living" is a well-known phenomenon among psychic students. There are, of course, various alternative explanations, but although we willingly place these cases on record, as a matter of interest, we are of the opinion that at present no final pronouncement can be made as to their origin.—ED.]

LIGHT.

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

FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Let us commence with a greeting in the fashion of the North: A Good New Year to one and all!

And now let us look forward with hope and confidence for the future as it will be measured by the next twelve months. 1929 was a year of achievement in many directions. It gave some completing touches to the work of the past; it opened up new channels and was rich in suggestion.

Looking at that part of our movement which is more or less organised—it is not by any means the larger part—we see opportunity for more effective organisation. We have before called attention to the need for greater consolidation and greater unity of aim. For some years we have had in mind the necessity for some Central Institution to provide a means of co-ordinating the activities of the various bodies of Spiritualists which, although united in sentiment, differ considerably in outlook and method. And although we see no immediate prospect of carrying this idea into effect on practical lines, we are convinced that it must eventually come, and that in the meantime the mere ventilation of the idea will serve a useful purpose. Every form of activity must begin as an idea in the mind, and naturally the greater the idea the longer it takes to germinate and come to substantial growth.

The elder people amongst us can recall some instances of things which from humble beginnings have risen to great developments. The London Spiritualist Alliance began, many years ago, with a little group of devoted people who started a small and, at that time, very obscure society near the British Museum, and after several changes of name and quarters, and innumerable struggles, won its way at last to an established position. The Marylebone Association began even more humbly, some years before the L. S. A., with even severer struggles, and after some narrow escapes from complete extinction gradually climbed to its present assured status.

Those are two examples out of a considerable number, and will serve to illustrate our point, viz., that on the basis of past achievements, we can look forward with confidence to fresh advances, greater consolidation and newer developments in the year before us.

The idea for which Spiritualism stands has wrought strongly in the national mind during the past twelve months. It has broken fresh ground and taken new forms. The very severity of the struggle tells of

its effective impact on the thought of the time. We are "bringing in a New World to redress the balance of the old".

It is the scientific aspect of Spiritualism which—for the time—is the most important. We are fully in agreement with those who represent this side of the subject, and who say that when Science—official Science—admits our facts, the war will be practically won. Very important work has been and is being quietly accomplished in this direction, as the next twelve months may serve to make additionally clear. We can at present only give hints.

Naturally these things are not very visible on the surface. Science has no sympathy with publicity and sensationalism. These are not the conditions in which it works. It never rushes to the newspapers with accounts of its work, especially when its experiments are only in a partly-finished stage. The scientist makes his discoveries in silence, and as a rule imparts them at first only to his compeers.

We saw during 1929 how many issues formerly confused and chaotic had become clearer—as, for example, the difference between Spiritualism as a religious matter and its presentation as a scientific and a social question. In the coming year we look to see these divisions more clearly established. This will tend to simplify our work and to methodise it.

Nationally we are going through a period of adversity, but material trials should always mean spiritual evolution. And if in purely mundane matters the darkness deepens as we go on, we may be sure that the light we carry will be the more useful and the more welcome.

We look forward to 1930 with confidence based on experience of the past, and with hope, sustained by the assurance that, above and behind all, there is a Spirit that makes all things new, conserving all the gains of the past and bringing them ever to greater fruition.

SPIRITUALISM AND WIRELESS.

Mrs. Madge Donohoe, widow of the famous War correspondent, writes:—

At the Queen's Hall meeting, on Armistice Sunday evening, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle spoke of the gratification he felt when in Holland and elsewhere during his recent tour he was invited to broadcast the Spiritualist Evangel, and he contrasted the attitude of the wireless authorities in almost every country he has visited with that of the British Broadcasting Corporation, who have systematically refused his repeated requests to find a place for Spiritualism in their programmes.

There seems no justifiable reason why the B.B.C., who throw open the wireless platform to speakers from such diverse religious bodies as the Salvation Army, Unitarians, Wesleyans, Baptists and Roman Catholics (to name only a few), should close it to Spiritualists, and it has occurred to me that if, collectively as societies, and individually as members, we bombarded them with requests, they might yield to the force of numbers and public opinion.

May I, through your columns, ask the co-operation of every Spiritualist in carrying on the campaign begun by Sir Arthur? I cannot imagine anything that would be more cheering to him in this time of his illness, which we all deplore, than to have this matter brought to a successful issue.

I should be grateful if every Spiritualist journal throughout the length and breadth of the land would bring my suggestion to the notice of its readers, asking them, one and all, within the next few weeks, to write to the Director of Programmes, British Broadcasting Corporation, Savoy Hill, London, requesting that the same programme facilities be accorded to Spiritualists as are now granted to other religious bodies.

SIDELIGHTS.

In the course of a broadcast talk about Psychical Research on December 10th last, Dr. William Brown, the distinguished neurologist, said: "A common criticism of spiritism is that the puerilities it considers messages are unworthy of serious attention. This attitude can be understood, but it is not well founded. Psycho-therapists have founded their science on evidence that was once considered trivial."

* * * * *

"The fact that mesages do not seem intelligent," he continued, "does not alter the fact that they may be messages all the same. Our subjective reactions to the evidence do not destroy its objective value. One gets exactly the same confusing sense of stupidity in attempting to conduct a rational conversation over a bad long-distance wire, when other voices insist on breaking the connection, and fading adds to the trouble."

* * * * *

Dr. William Brown went on to describe a seance with a famous Medium to whom he was referred by Sir Oliver Lodge. He visited the seance room incognito, and the Medium had no previous knowledge of the sitter. Said the lecturer: "At my first interview four people were supposed to come to me and they were just the four people who, if they survived bodily death, I should most expect to hear from and most want to hear. They were: a lady, who died in 1916; a young man, my brother, who was killed on the Somme in 1916; a little child who died in 1909, age 2½; and a fourth person whom I could not recognise at first because I was trying to think of someone else who had died recently."

* * * * *

"It was this fourth person [continued Dr. Brown], an elderly gentleman of letters, whose name actually came through, and who contributed something of scientific interest to my investigations. Suffice to say that, although the sittings disappointed me at the time, analysis afterwards of the verbatim reports revealed some interesting evidence."

* * * * *

Writing in the *Methodist Recorder*, the Rev. E. Owen Lane tells of his early ministry among the fisherfolk in the north of Scotland. It was the custom to telegraph to the minister the names of any of his parishioners who met with fatal accidents at sea, and one morning Mr. Lane received a "wire" saying that one man, a "fine stalwart", had been drowned. It became necessary to break the sad news to the dead man's step-mother, who was ill with heart trouble, and Mr. Lane undertook this task with misgivings.

* * * * *

Her first words, however, were: "I ken what ye've come for. Puir laddie! Ye needn't hide it from me." Then she spoke of a vivid dream of the previous night, in which she had seen her husband's son catch his foot in the nets on deck and fall from his boat into the sea. Other details had been seen; the drowned man's father and brother had both dived fruitlessly in an attempt to rescue the unhappy fisherman, whose body had been caught by some gear and held under water. Then into the sick woman's room came her daughter. She also had had a similar dream, but had not communicated any of the details to her mother. A few days later, says Mr. Lane, the father came home from sea and his story confirmed both dreams.

Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, of Boston, U.S.A., in the course of a letter in the *Evening Standard*, of December 13th last, said: "As a scientific man investigating a difficult problem, I am bound to leave an opening for possible alternatives, but I am bound to say (with the late William James) that the spiritualistic hypothesis does cover the facts arising from the Margery mediumship, and that at present there is no other hypothesis which seems to cover the case."

* * * * *

At a recent meeting of the Southsea Psychical Research Society, reports the *Portsmouth Evening News*, of December 6th last, a lady, Mrs. A., told the following story. One night she had a vision of three men carrying a coffin covered with a Union Jack. This seemed to her to be of slight significance because the only member of her family entitled to such an honour was her brother, a retired Army officer, who was, at that time, in the "very best of health". Then a fortnight later came another strange vision—her brother, pale and white, seated at a table opposite to his wife, who had passed away many years previously. Shortly after this second vision, her soldier brother died.

* * * * *

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, discussing Reincarnation in the *Daily Mail*, of December 13th last, tells of a case that came recently before his notice; a certain gentleman has been distressed from childhood onwards by a disturbing dream in which he finds himself in a soldier's uniform, commanding troops at a walled camp by a wide river. In this dream he has certain military adventures, in the course of which he enters a hut, kills two children and captures a woman whom he drives back to his camp. This woman solemnly curses her captor, saying that the day would come when he "would wear his uniform as a mockery, and that one day he would beg her for food."

* * * * *

This recurring dream, adds Sir Arthur, appears to have had some connection with the dreamer's later life, for, falling upon evil days he was obliged to accept work as a "super" in an American theatrical production, at the New Amsterdam Theatre, New York. The play was "Ben Hur", and the uniform worn by the "super" was exactly the same as he had worn in his dream. Coming to England, he was compelled, by poverty, to tramp the roads; on walking down Frindsbury Hill, near Rochester, he recognised the site of the camp of his dreams, and later, while begging for assistance, he went to a humble house in Frindsbury, where one of the occupants, a young woman, proved to be identical with the woman who, in the dream, had cursed him so vehemently. "If my informant was inventing," says Sir Arthur, "we must suppose that a great imaginative writer has been lost to the world."

A CONJURER'S VERDICT.

FAMOUS ILLUSIONIST'S OPINION OF RUDI SCHNEIDER TEST SEANCE.

"I am convinced that what I saw at the seance was not trickery. No group of my fellow magicians could have produced those effects under such conditions."

WILL GOLDSTON (Founder of the Magicians' Club) in *The Sunday Graphic*, Dec. 22, 1929.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

NATIONAL LABORATORY OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

A WELCOME TO DR. AND MRS. CRANDON AND
DR. EUGENE OSTY

A luncheon party to Dr. and Mrs. Crandon, of Boston, U.S.A., and Dr. Osty, of the Institut Métapsychique, Paris, was given by Mr. Harry Price, Director of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, at the Tudor Room of the Piccadilly Hotel, on Wednesday, December 11th. The guests present included the Duchess of Hamilton and Brandon, Mrs. H. Baggallay, Miss Baggallay, Sir Richard Gregory (editor of *Nature*), Lord Charles Hope, Professor A. F. Pollard, Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, Dr. William Brown, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr. Hannen Swaffer, and other friends of the National Laboratory.

Mr. Price proposed the health of Dr. and Mrs. Crandon and Dr. Osty, which was duly honoured.

Dr. Crandon, in replying, said that he and his wife had been almost overwhelmed with British hospitality. He referred to the value of the work in Psychical Research carried on in London by the National Laboratory, the British College of Psychic Science, and the Society for Psychical Research, which latter he described as the mother of all Psychical Research societies. It represented a necessary brake on the car which carried forward the whole movement. It held a record for strict and careful observation into psychic phenomena. But the business of some of those present had to do with survival and discovering for man what happened to his miserable soul. (Laughter.) He observed that Mr. Price was able to avail himself of his influence with the newspaper Press in the work of the N.L.P.R., and this had its value in the propagation of the ideas for which they stood.

Mr. Hannen Swaffer, in the course of an interesting speech, said that the visit of Dr. Crandon and "Margery" marked a very definite stage in the advance of Psychical Research. He was himself an out and out Spiritualist. He had never known a man with a difficult story to tell that could give it with such effectiveness and such discretion as Dr. Crandon. For one had to be very careful in giving an account of an important and serious matter to people who, in their turn, wanted to re-tell it sensationally. That was a task which called for great judgment and circumspection.

Mr. Hannen Swaffer gave some interesting reminiscences of his earlier experiences in making public his convictions of the reality of Spiritualism arising out of communications he had received from the late Lord Northcliffe. Since those days a great change had come over the journalistic world and it was not uncommon for Press reporters to describe to each other their own psychic experiences, very much as they would tell each other of their experiences in connection with the ordinary news of the day. He did not think that we should be secretive about this knowledge of ours; it was of tremendous importance. He had proved that the Press could find a better "story" in telling the truth about Spiritualism than in making attacks upon it.

As regards the work of the purely scientific researchers, he could only look on and wonder how they did it! It seemed to him such a tedious process of investigating and testing, on the part of those for whose learning he had a great respect. But he could not help feeling it was a matter best carried on as a simple human affair in the atmosphere of the home circle, where the conditions were more favourable to those manifestations which, to him, proved the reality of survival.

Sir Richard Gregory, in the course of some remarks on the attitude of Science towards Psychical Research, said that that attitude had been very much one of indifference, for in their own department

scientists accepted each other's statements regarding new discoveries because they were accustomed to rely on the truth and exactitude with which these accounts were given. Moreover, such scientific experiments as they made could, as a rule, be repeated. But in psychic phenomena there was an element of uncertainty; there was such a thing as conscious or unconscious deception which was very much opposed to the scientists' way of looking at the phenomena with which they ordinarily dealt. The scientist in his own region worked with a definite aim; he had a goal to reach. Another difficulty the scientists found as regards the investigation of psychic phenomena was that they had so much else to do; they were all the time surrounded with their own problems, biological or physical. Yet, as his remarks showed, Sir Richard was not at all unsympathetic to psychic investigation so far as it was concerned with carefully attested facts, capable of such verification as would put it on an assured basis.

Dr. F. C. S. Schiller said that although there was a feeling against giving wholesale publicity to the facts they were discovering, yet he himself had no objection to making known whatever he discovered in the pursuit of what seemed to be a truth. He had had six sittings with "Margery" in Boston and two in London, in the rooms of the S.P.R., and he frankly confessed that he had no explanation of the manifestations which he had witnessed. He could only conclude that they had to be classed as supernormal; he could not explain them in any other way. He recounted some of the phenomena which had taken place in the United States in connection with the "Margery" circle, particulars of which have already been placed on public record. He did not agree to continuing experiments with the object of trying to obtain one perfect case which, in itself, should be absolutely final and conclusive. There must always be some loophole which a perverse ingenuity could discover in the very best cases that could be put forward.

One isolated case might, and frequently did, present certain points of doubt. But if, say, five cases were examined, and each was found to have some imperfect feature, it was wrong to reject the whole series; it would probably be found that each case reinforced the weak places of the others, so that, taken as a group, the five cases might prove to be of great significance.

Some complimentary remarks from Lord Charles Hope brought to a conclusion a very pleasant episode in the career of the National Laboratory.

BRITISH COLLEGE OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE.

On the day preceding the luncheon of the National Laboratory reported above, Mrs. Barbara McKenzie, as representing the British College of Psychic Science, gave a luncheon party to Dr. and Mrs. Crandon at the Criterion Restaurant. The health of the principal guests was proposed by Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny and responded to by Dr. Crandon, but there were no formal speeches.

Amongst the guests were Mrs. Kelway Bamber, Lady Curry, Mr. and Mrs. Ashton Jonson, Mrs. H. Dennis Bradley, Mr. and Mrs. Cox, Miss Bazett, Dr. and Mrs. Neville Whyman, Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, Mr. Shaw Desmond, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, Mr. G. R. S. Mead, Mr. Hannen Swaffer, Mr. Austin Hall, Major Mowbray, Mr. Stanley De Brath, Mr. H. E. Jay and Miss Barbara McKenzie.

Owing to the Christmas holidays the above account which should have appeared in an earlier issue was unavoidably held over.

Dr. and Mrs. Crandon returned home per s.s. Mauretania on December 17th.

A NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE.

"Time," says Thoreau, "is the stream I go a-fishing in." Doubtless many strange fish are caught in that stream, and if we do not imitate Thoreau and fish in it, we at least are conscious of its ebb and flow. At the beginning of the year we stand by this vast stream, and wonder what ripple-marks it will make during the coming year. This sense of detachment, as if we were separate from Time instead of being, as we really are, part of it, is one which gives rise to false judgments. We speak as if Time will bring us something either good or bad, as if these things were external to ourselves. But they are not external, except in the sense that experiences of men and things may be so regarded, but the results of them are personal to us. Viewed in this sense we see that we ourselves make the ripple marks on the sands, and they register our weal or woe.

How rarely do we realise that we are not merely the arbiters of our destiny but that we are, in a sense, destiny; it is not a power external to ourselves which shapes us, but rather that it works in and through us. For the universe is a whole, unified in all its parts, and we, as part of it, may in some measure shape its purpose and share its privileges and responsibilities. This should give us courage to face what lies before us. And if we have no vision, let us develop that faith, and dwell in consciousness in Him who is Maker, Preserver and Transformer, knowing in our souls that we express something of His purpose.

Upon us, Spiritualists who feel we are the custodians of a very precious truth, there is perhaps a special responsibility. The interest in our movement continues to increase. The catch-penny cries will doubtless still be heard, but these will be but the ripples on the surface; the deep current which flows silently beneath will draw in many who will awaken to the new knowledge. There are many strange fish in that sea, and some of them are not easy to classify. If we throw our net wide we bring to the surface all kinds of fishes—and magicians, psychic researchers, theosophists and Spiritualists will all clamour and dispute about their nature and origin. It will afford entertainment to some; and food for deep reflection for others. To whatever genus or species we assign our fish, we shall discern amongst all their diversities of form, a living vital principle which co-ordinates them and reveals their relationship to that vaster sea which is beyond Time, which is indeed the great ocean of spirit from which we have all sprung. We shall, in some measure, I hope, as the days pass, realise more of the beauty of that hidden life, and seek to bring our earthly existence more into harmony with its principles.

For if we go fishing in the sea of Time it is because we can transcend Time; because we are eternal and deathless. And when we pass hence to the hither shore, and become in turn "fish" for the future generations of psychic researchers, we shall, I hope, preserve our sense of humour and quietly smile to hear ourselves spoken of as "entities", "influences", "hallucinations", "trance-personalities", and by other quasi-scientific terms.

So we fare forth to the future. The year is before us, fresh, clean and inviting to further adventure. "The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before us." We shall all write our names somewhere, and if we can write them on the heart of a friend, how much we shall have gained, because we shall have given ourselves!

May the New Year bring us all that will make for renewal of spiritual life. May we have enough of trial to make us strong; enough of pain to make us able to endure, and out of all may there come the joy which never perishes.

W. H. E.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

The sporting man said he did not believe in Spiritualism and was very angry about it. It seemed that he had paid a visit to Professor Hokomoko, the great Egyptian seer, who, operating with a crystal and some "occult numbers", gained for his client the knowledge that "Flying Scud" was a "dead cert" for the 3.30 race. Alas! "Flying Scud" came in at the tail end. It was indeed a sad case, although it did seem that the sporting gentleman was as much astray in his idea of Spiritualism as the "Professor" was over the name of the winning horse.

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A thoughtful correspondent remarks that at the root of the world's troubles is false-thinking rather than any real badness of heart. That seems pretty obvious. But even the ancients knew how much harm was wrought by stupidity. That was the one thing against which, they said, even the gods themselves fought in vain. It was a modern sage who said: "there is nothing more frightful than ignorance in action." Some of us have seen "ignorance in action" in this subject of ours, many times. The only reason it did not destroy us, I suppose, is that our movement is controlled by some higher wisdom behind the scenes.

* * * * *

I read recently, in a daily paper, which speaks pontifically on the subject of Spiritualism, although its ignorance of the subject is laughable, the statement that Eusapia Paladino was never detected in fraud. It is a commonplace, of course, that Eusapia was very "tricky", and was often caught imitating the genuine manifestations which were produced through her powers. But then she knew her weakness and would warn the scientists, who observed her mediumship, that they would have to watch her closely as she was liable to cheat. So there was not much concealment about it. In the end, as we know, the validity of her powers was completely established by trained investigators working with that care and patience with which casual critics so easily dispense.

* * * * *

The death of Mr. Harold Begbie recalls to my mind an episode of the War. He had received some astonishing stories from the Front regarding that supposed interposition of spirit-agencies still remembered as "the Angels of Mons", and was preparing a book on the matter, concerning which he asked me to meet him. Now I had myself heard some strange stories from returning soldiers, and although considerably impressed, it was clear enough to me that some of the tales were very dubious indeed. There was, for instance, a rumour that the archers of Agincourt had returned to help our soldiers and that Germans had been found with arrows sticking in their bodies! That was sufficiently ridiculous, and I found that it arose out of a descriptive sketch in an evening paper by my friend Mr. Arthur Machen—an imaginary episode entitled *The Bowmen*. That story was actually claimed by many to be a true story, and Mr. Machen's explanation indignantly disputed! So it was not easy to deal with the problem which Mr. Begbie placed before me; there was such a mixture of truth and falsity in the stories told. However, he brought out his book, for some, at least, of the evidence seemed sound enough. Unfortunately after its appearance a soldier who had narrated one of the incidents confessed that it was a fabrication, which, of course, created a very bad impression. "The Angels of Mons" is a mystery which is never likely to be quite cleared up. If human testimony is of any value, something very strange happened at a critical juncture in the war—but what?

D. G.

THE PASSING OF A SPIRITUALIST.

BY B. D. MANSFIELD.

I feel it my bounden duty to give these particulars of my dear mother's passing. She was in hospital for six weeks, and before going in, made all final arrangements as if she knew what would happen.

On November 20th she had an operation (the second) and I waited for her coming round; her first words were: "The Supreme Power is working." I said to the doctor: "My mother is going?" and she opened her eyes and said: "Not yet, have patience with Time, darling." Mother spent two nights in agony and on the Saturday night (November 23rd) she said to me: "Promise always to be happy, and loving, one to another, then I can soon get in touch with you, dear." Feeling very distressed I said: "Mother, I can't live without you." She looked at me, saying: "You must be willing to give God back His own; this is your lesson . . . the lesson of Life, darling." And it is, indeed, going to be a big lesson to me. I have never buried anyone before, and my mother was all in all to me. Mother said: "You are carrying this cross for me." (I am sure this has given me strength since.) Just then, knowing she was sinking fast, I said: "Have I been a good daughter?" To my surprise I got the reply: "You have put a scratch on the scroll."

Just before she passed on Sunday, November 24th, she said: "Don't cry, darling, speak to me, say something cheery." I said: "Your roses are keeping well and it is a beautiful day to-day." My heart was too full to say anything cheery.

I could not leave the bedside after she had passed; I laid my head on her pillow and distinctly heard my name spoken; it gave me strength to leave the hospital and go home.

I hold a developing circle on Sunday evenings. Not knowing what had happened, my five sitters turned up for the usual class. We had been sitting nearly half an hour when one of the sitters, Mr. Hart, went under control and said my mother was in her usual place in the circle. . . . Then, loud and distinct, came a voice from the space where she usually sat, saying: "Dora! Dora!" in a tone of reproach. (I had promised her not to cry.) All turned to look where the voice came from and all heard it; this was at 7.30 p.m., on the same day as her passing.

Presently my mother controlled Mr. Hart and, to my surprise, said: "Don't cry, darling, speak to me, say something cheery." It was absolute proof to me, who have given proof to hundreds, being a Medium for twenty years, although I had never had what I call "my proof".

The following Sunday, my mother came through a lady, Miss Green. I saw her face distinctly.

I would like to thank all kind friends for their letters of love and sympathy. Mother is interred at Brompton Road Cemetery.

MUSIC. The many friends of Carlyon de Lyle will welcome the publication of two new pianoforte suites from the pen of that gifted composer. *Moorland Suite* consists of two short contrasted pieces, "Moon Rack", a wistful and strangely haunting melody, and a gaily graceful little composition called "Swallows." *Four English Songs* have something of Old England in each of the four items, which are characterised by the numerous fascinating touches of originality which are so customary in the work of Carlyon de Lyle. John Alleyne (whose name is associated with the Glastonbury Scripts) has written the lyrics for the last named suite, and contributed two attractive pictures for the covers of both. Swan & Co. are the publishers, and the prices are 2/- and 3/- respectively.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Bridged." By A. Symonds. (Anglo-American Publications. 3s. 6d.)

This is a pamphlet of a variegated kind. The author, in his Preface, tells us that he has for many years been in close association with the Unseen World and its great company of ministering spirits, and out of gratitude for the benefits he has received, desires to pass on to others some of the truths he has gained. This is followed by the outlines of addresses delivered by him and containing much of interest and profit. Next comes a series of "Communications From the Unseen"; they are very much of a personal kind, with allusions that would be doubtless much clearer to the recipients than to the general reader. But the teachings and the exhortations to holiness of life at least have a wide application. St. Ursula, St. Asaph and Solon are amongst the names given us of the senders of the messages which, as a rule, are couched in a style very different from the normal utterances of everyday life, yet very typical of a large class of psychic messages—a style the strangeness of which rather baffles any attempt at classification, for the prosaic, the declamatory, the devotional and the mystical are curiously mixed, and the impression left is of some strange mingling of the earth and some region far beyond it.

LUCIUS.

"Modern Psychic Mysteries—Millesimo Castle." By Gwendolyn Kelley Hack. (Rider. 18s. net.)

This large volume will inevitably arouse discussion; some of this will, no doubt, be hostile, and the hyper-critical case-hardened opponent of psychic science will probably seize joyfully upon certain small inaccuracies (which a rigorous checking by the compiler, prior to publication, would have eliminated) as a means of discounting the accuracy of the whole story. But here is no book for the superficial critics; it is a collected mass of facts into which the reader can dig, and go on digging at some length, for it is rich in material. Some of these facts the critical mind will dismiss as of doubtful worth, but the structure as a whole will bring the conviction that in Millesimo Castle, in the Italian province of Savona, there have taken place some of the most remarkable manifestations in psychic annals.

A condensed account of the experiments has already been given in LIGHT, but it is worth recalling here the circumstances leading to them. In 1926 the Marquis Carlo dei Centurione Scotto lost his eldest son, captain of an Italian flying squadron, in a sad aeroplane disaster. A perusal of Mr. Dennis Bradley's book, *Towards the Stars*, stimulated the Marquis to investigate and experiment in psychic matters in the hope of being able to converse with the dead airman. An experimental group was formed in Millesimo Castle, and in the present volume detailed records are given of the numerous seances held there. "Voices" were obtained, apport phenomena, and other manifestations in abundance. It seemed to be an intelligently planned series of demonstrations by some unseen band of operators. On one occasion it would appear that the Marquis was bodily transported away from the seance room, and after more than two hours' search by the anxious sitters, was found in a profound slumber on a heap of oats and straw, in his own stables. Cross-correspondence tests, too, formed an important feature of the experiments, and some of these are of profound interest.

This volume, which should be read and studied by all who are interested in psychic enquiry, is endorsed by Professor Ernesto Bozzano, the weight of whose name adds greatly to its acceptability. Professor Bozzano's Preface is worthy of most careful perusal; he reviews the case with attractive fairness. He admits the validity of certain criticisms put forward by the late Baron von Schrenck-Notzing and Professor Lambert, as to the scientific value of the Millesimo experiments; he points out the differences between "a circle of experimenters, who employ professional mediums, and a group which experiments with private, cultured mediums of a privileged social class". He examines hypotheses of fraud, gives some useful comments on various aspects of psychic research in general, concluding with the expression of his belief in the value of the Centurione Scotto seances. Professor Bozzano does not strive unduly to prove his case, and will convince many doubters by the very moderateness of his claims.

N.

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