

# Light

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research

Edited by DAVID GOW

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## NOTES BY THE WAY

CONTRIBUTOR, who was a personal friend of A. J. Davis, and has for many years made an exhaustive study of his works, mentions his regret at finding rather slighting references to the seer in two books which have appeared recently dealing with Spiritualism. One of these books refers to the "fantastic" character of many of his statements, and another touches upon the question of "marital" complications in Davis's career. Our friend remarks of the first statement that the supposed "fantastic" nature of the statements appears when they are thoroughly examined and understood, and that in regard to the "marital" adventures, these are fully set out in A. J. Davis's autobiography, and are there fully explained. Our friend points out that these, when considered and understood, reflect in not the slightest degree upon Davis's nobility but rather the reverse, and that the strictures made seem to show a lack of understanding on the part of the two critics. He suggests that, as in the case of the whisky-and-soda episode in *Raymond*, there are incidents in Davis's work which can easily be misinterpreted and misrepresented when detached from their context and set down without full consideration of the circumstances. However this may be, for us the main value of Davis's work lies in its magnificent philosophical scheme, and our own reading of the works of the Seer

is sufficient to assure us that if there were any serious blot upon Davis's career (which is not admitted) the value of his teachings would remain unaffected.

\* \* \*

WE sometimes record coincidences that have about them an appearance of providential design. In this matter we are much in agreement with Mr. De Vere Stacpoole, the novelist, who writing in the *Bookman* some time ago expressed the view that "behind coincidence lie all things from telepathy to Fate." He illustrated his point by a remarkable story of a personal experience which should be specially interesting to animal lovers. In 1911, while in Ventnor with his wife, he was prevailed upon by an itinerant photographer to allow a portrait to be taken. When the print was developed Mr. De Vere Stacpoole found that he was depicted as holding a fuzzy representation of his little dog Pearl. What he was really holding in his hands were his gloves, and the photographer said that it *must* be the gloves. "All the same," says Mr. De Vere Stacpoole, "it was a portrait of Pearl the dog"; of whom both he and his wife had been talking just before the portrait was taken. We read this story with especial interest having experience of other photographic coincidences of a similar kind.

\* \* \*

IN a letter which appeared in *Nature* last July, Sir Oliver Lodge observes on the fact that Professor Einstein is virtually in agreement with him in claiming matter as passive and space as active:—"Matter is that which is acted upon; space is that which acts. Matter is inert; space is energetic." In the course of his letter Sir Oliver goes on to point out that this consideration applies to every kind of matter, even the "so-called animated variety." And we learn that in the case where an organism interferes with, or in, the course of Nature, it can only do so because it is actuated by something outside itself—that is by something known as "Life," although "Life" has yet to be reduced to scientific terms. Sir Oliver's statement reminds us of a book which appeared a considerable time ago and which made the apparently audacious claim that space and spirit are practically identical. The investigation of space rather than of matter was not then so much a concern of Science as it is to-day, when the physicists are leading the way in the exploration of the Universe; so that the author of the book was perhaps not so far out after all.

I HAVE observed that great realities have been conserved for posterity in tabloid forms. That is for me the value of creeds—misinterpreted, materialised, becoming unacceptable to what Archdeacon Wilberforce called "winged minds," these statements have yet been a means of *enshrining* truths too big for the ordinary minds to grasp while in an infantine stage. H. A. DALLAS

## TRANCE AND INSPIRATION

By W. H. EVANS

WEBSTER'S New International Dictionary defines trance as a "state in which the soul seems to have passed out of the body or to be rapt in visions; ecstasy; hence, a state likened to this, due to surprise, bewilderment, shock, etc., as 'on meeting, they stood in a *trance*'. . . . *Med.*, a prolonged profound or abnormal sleep, due, ordinarily, to hysteria or hypnotism, from which the patient cannot easily be aroused. Voluntary movement is suspended and the vital functions reduced very low."

This definition covers the field and indicates no very great difference in the understanding of the word "trance" as used by spiritualists. The tendency is to regard it in the medical rather than the psychological sense, and it is assumed that when one is called a trance-medium he is unconscious when under control. The word is used very loosely and we need a term to denote Mediums who while controlled are not unconscious, who know what is being said through them, and who are often more aware of their surroundings than the onlooker is disposed to think. I have heard one friend speak of Mediums who are thus conscious when controlled, as "illuminated,"—but the quality of light which emanates from some is so poor that it is a very dim illuminant. Some use the term "controlled Medium" as indicating that while under the influence consciousness is retained.

The dictionary's definitions of trance indicate a very wide field, and speaking psychologically often mean a greater wakefulness along a certain line: concentration of attention which excludes all extraneous matters. Intense thinking is analogous in its results to trance, which is in some respects true concentrating, as it indicates conscious direction and forgetfulness of one's surroundings. We sometimes speak of it as "a brown study," or reverie, though this latter is allied more to the dream state, which is another aspect of trance. Music, fine scenery, beautiful pictures, good literature, in fact any form of art may induce a condition of trance, which is not a cessation of consciousness, but its quickening in certain directions. Spiritualists rarely consider these aspects, although they are important in their bearing upon what we speak of as trance, which is not an altogether abnormal condition, although usually regarded as such. As will be seen, the normal forms of trance depend upon something which evokes it: art in some form, or shock. It is an induced state, and comes about either from contemplating something, or by intense thinking. It is a perfectly natural and healthy condition of mind, which in many ways can be made very fruitful and helpful. It demands stability and power of continuity. The wavering mind cannot experience the higher forms of trance, and catches but faint glimpses of its higher possibilities.

The induced trance is familiar to all spiritualists and it is a condition which can be very beneficial to those who experience it. I say "can be," because it is not always so. There is nothing in the trance itself which is supernatural or warrants the idea that it confers upon those who experience it a specially easy means of acquiring knowledge. We all unfortunately have heard the trance-medium whose utterances are rarely above his own normal thinking, and sometimes below it. They are the piffle-talkers who mistake their own foolish vapourings for divine wisdom. You will find that this type of Medium never reads, nor troubles to cultivate his mind. On the other hand Mediums of outstanding merit are usually studious and great readers. Just think of Dr. A. J. Davis, Hudson Tuttle, Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, J. J. Morse, Emma Hardinge Britten, and you have a group of students, who did not neglect the development of their own powers. The result we know, though it must be pointed out that in the beginning of their public work

some of them enjoyed very little educational facilities. But they did not fall into the error of imagining the spirits would do their thinking for them, and so they kept pace with their interior development. The Medium who neglects the development of his own powers never breaks through the limited circle of certain ideas.

The states of consciousness which attend the different degrees of entrancement are very interesting to those who experience them. It does not follow that he who experiences them can give a true explanation of their causes, though naturally he is in a stronger position than the onlooker. In conversations with fellow Mediums I find there are certain features in common to all those who experience these conditions. The supernormal state is induced by some spirit, at least that is the general opinion, though some may dispute it. Self-suggestion may play its part in bringing about, through expectancy, a favourable condition for control, but it does not account for the full state of trance. I have never been able to understand why my subconscious self should persist in pretending to be someone else. It is not a very comforting or pleasing thought to a truth-loving mind that he is entertaining and taking around with him a persistent liar! Does the subconscious self tell lies? It may accept suggestion readily enough—it won't always—and pick up to it, but will it of itself initiate a new line of action and pretend to be someone else?

That there is a channel through which the spirit-control approaches his work of influencing his Medium is certain, but this is more likely to be through the supernormal strata of consciousness. Personally, judging from my own experiences I think the whole of one's consciousness is used at times; not always, but in the deeper forms of trance. Sensation begins generally at the solar plexus, a feeling akin to nervousness. It is significant that in inspirational speaking one experiences this sometime before one has to speak, indicating that one undergoes the same preparation for the work as in a state of trance. It is not pleasant, and if leaders or conductors of societies knew more about this they could be of great help. Delay in starting a meeting accentuates this discomfort. One gets "keyed up," and delayed action may result in a spoiled effort as far as the Medium's feelings are concerned, though not necessarily so from the point of view of the audience. The mind is passive, unresisting, and indifferent. Sometimes a sense of falling backwards precedes the sleep. Usually the sense of hearing becomes hypersensitive—small sounds are amplified and can be very disturbing. It is not always that trance deepens to profound sleep; often there is experienced a dual consciousness. One becomes aware of another mind interfused with one's own, yet distinct from it. These alternating states of consciousness are the most disturbing because one swings from the conscious to the unconscious state and back, to and fro like a pendulum. The talk goes on without break, but for the Medium the sequence is broken, and it appears a veritable jumble of words without rhyme or reason.

In these states the stream of thought seems to flow through some particular stratum of consciousness, and is so enclosed that no extraneous thinking on the part of the Medium disturbs it. It is, as it were, in him but not of him. The psychology of it is very obscure even to the sensitive. We may talk of dissociation of consciousness, but its peculiarity is its powerful integration of ideas flowing sequentially and developing logically. There is nothing in it even remotely resembling a condition of insanity. It is upon its own plane quite normal and rational, and so appears to anyone listening. Many of the inhibitions to one's normal thinking are brushed aside, and it is this which tends to make the experience so fruitful; for it opens up new territory and if the Medium is naturally a thinker it affords him plenty of ideas to turn over and explore.

## PSYCHIC ACTIVITIES IN NICE

By FLORIZEL VON REUTER

I HAVE been spending a most enjoyable fortnight here at Nice, which, contrary to what many people think, is an ideal summer resort, owing to the combination of perpetual sun and sea-breeze. The following details concerning psychic conditions here may be of interest to readers of LIGHT. Interest in Spiritualism and Psychic Research is spreading widely. There are two societies, one "Société pour les Etudes Psychologiques," the other, "Fiat Lux" of a purely spiritualistic character. This last society is led by Madame Gal, a remarkable Medium and magnetic healer. I visited Madame Gal, a charming little lady, who showed me some excellent and convincing photographs of psychic pictures and materialisations for which she has been responsible. One photograph was taken before the war-monument, which is seen in the background, and above the monument appear numerous spirit faces, amongst them the head of Léon Denis, the famous French spiritualist. Mme. Gal always sits in front of, or beside, the curtains, which, drawn together, form the materialisation cabinet. She kindly presented me with a photograph of a materialised form which appears floating before the curtains, the head (that of a young girl) and one arm being perfectly materialised. The form was recognised by the parents and brother of the deceased girl who were present. The Medium had never seen a picture of the daughter nor had she known her personally, as the family did not belong to Nice. Upon another occasion a bouquet of roses was placed upon a bracket or ledge high on the wall, far out of reach of any human hand. Each rose had a number pinned to it, corresponding to a person in the circle. At the end of the seance three of the roses were found upon the knees of the sitters, the number being, in each case, the correct one. Mme. Gal is also an accomplished crystal-gazer; she gave us a sitting with the crystal, which bore witness to her genuine power; whether it be telepathy or clairvoyance is uncertain.

Mme. Gal's Society gives a series of psychic lectures each winter. It is worthy of note that the Society also supports the doctrine of reincarnation, without being otherwise philosophic in character. A recently materialised spirit, reporting to be an Egyptian princess, has declared its intention to reincarnate in a child to be born in Milan on a certain date in the coming October.

Another fascinating and remarkable personality in Nice is Monsieur Anglès de Serres, a magnetic healer who has accomplished wonderful cures, among them being many of cancer with patients already abandoned by physicians.

M. de Serres diagnoses with the help of a Medium who, in trance, becomes clairvoyant and is able to observe the organic state of the patient. He also treats patients at a distance, some object belonging to the person being sent to him, from which he receives psychometrically certain impressions.

M. de Serres is so sought after that he is busy from seven o'clock in the morning till ten at night, yet his store of magnetism is so inexhaustible that his power is as strong after a hard day's work as before; indeed he maintains that it grows in the course of the day. There is a story to the effect that one evening, after his patients were all gone, he still felt so fresh, and desirous of making use of the magnetic force still remaining, that his assistant proposed going out into the street and bringing in any chance person to be found, as a possible patient.

He has cured dipsomania by absent treatment, the patient unaware that he was being treated, and only the patient's wife in the secret. His magnetic force is so strong that without touching the subjects, standing several feet away, he is able to draw them either forward or backward. I, myself, had experience of this. According to authentic reports, he has also completely healed a case of total blindness, and is equally successful in all kinds of organic diseases. He is a man of genial and forceful personality, not tall but very sturdy in build, a firm believer in spiritual power and, incidentally, a devout Catholic. He attributes his power to the guiding hand and influence of two saints, one of whom is St. Roseline, whose bounty to the poor was proverbial. He organised last June a pilgrimage to her shrine, in which three hundred of his clients took part. And who shall say that he is wrong in this belief? We all have our spirit guides, and why should not these sometimes be saints?

## PROOF OF SURVIVAL— SOME EXPERIENCES

Mrs. Shirley Eshelby writes:—

I FIND proof of survival in the following personal experiences.

One week after my husband had passed over he appeared to me with a great friend who had also passed on. About a year later he appeared to me again, shortly after I had moved into a new house where he had never lived. On two other occasions he spoke to me when I could not see him, but I could feel his presence. He gave me some advice about financial affairs over which I thought I had made a great mistake, and was therefore worrying considerably. I will not give the details of the financial matters as they are of no interest to other people, but I will quote his words which often still ring in my ears, because they were so distinctly spoken with raised voice so that I could hear him clearly (I am slightly deaf); the words were "Don't worry, dearie, you have done the right thing!"

The second time he spoke to me was about a purely personal matter, and again he gave me good and comforting advice which I needed so much.

On each occasion I was alone, and it was broad daylight. When I could see him, I could not hear him, and when I could hear him I could not see him.

I have also seen other people who have passed over. One man who was interested in Spiritualism appeared to me "by arrangement." He went to France and was killed shortly after arriving there, and he kept his promise by appearing to me and giving me the details of the injuries which caused his death.

It is only at times I have psychic sight and hearing, and I have no control over it. It just comes quite suddenly without warning, and lasts only a few seconds, and when it passes I frequently cannot recall it in detail.

I have never been to a seance or interviewed a Medium because I prefer to develop my psychic powers naturally. In my own case I feel certain that the psychic sight and hearing could not be forced by any outside influence, nor could it be "switched on and off at will."

The only difference these experiences make to me physically is that they always leave me very cold, and sometimes I have a tingling sensation in my hands and arms afterwards, and see, inside the top of my forehead, bright colours which are chiefly in violet shades.

## TESTING THE SPIRITS

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

THE interest displayed in my recent series of articles in *LIGHT* under the title "Experiments of a Medium," induces me to record further instances of spirit activities which "test the spirits" and establish to my satisfaction the independent presence of an unseen friend in my psychic life. The ordinary evidential tests of clairvoyant mediumship, such as the giving of names and incidents not known to the Medium, are infrequent in what is known as inspirational mediumship; consequently, any Medium such as myself, whose work lies in—shall we say—"inspiration," must seek some method of testing whether or not the results may be due to the subconscious mind. However authentic my trance utterance or automatic writings may seem, there is always in my mind an underlying suspicion of "myself." I maintain a proper attitude of self-suspicion all the way along the line, and ponder the mystery of these abnormal activities; I am not too easily persuaded to accept, unreservedly, all subjective phenomena on the hypothesis of spirit-presence. Those who read my writings or hear me speak will, I am sure, appreciate every effort I make to establish the source of my "inspiration"; consequently I offer no further apology for again speaking of myself.

Let me record an incident which arose one recent morning. I was copying out, for publication, certain automatic writings which were recorded on writing-pads during my holidays in 1928. Among these pads was one purchased locally, at Newquay, Cornwall; the sheets of this were insecurely gummed together, with the result I had to keep them intact with a metal clip. When I reached the last page of transcribing this particular pad I realised that something was missing; a page of script had gone astray. I had no means of restoring the missing matter. Some readers may say that there should be nothing easier than to summon the spirit who wrote it (known to me as Ehoima) to invoke his aid. That sounds a simple remedy, but in practise I do not find it works. These inspirational activities do not come at my beck and call. In this case I followed the more ordinary course of searching for the missing page of writing, but without success. I spent some hour or more without any result, and at length in despair abandoned the search and turned my attention to my ordinary correspondence.

When my letters were finished and ready for the post, I went out to despatch them. It was a beautiful morning and in the little village-street were several people known to me. Each person claimed my attention as I passed along and so I was not "brooding" over the matter of this lost writing. But, suddenly, just as though someone was talking within me, something like the following arose in my mind: "Don't you remember, my son, that some time ago a loose sheet of writing dropped out of a pad and that you picked it up and carelessly inserted it among other pages?" I said audibly, "No." The voice went on: "You did: and you will find the missing sheet if you look in such and such a pad." That was sufficient for me. I politely said, "Thank you!" in the middle of the road, regardless of what passers-by might think! I went back home at once, and promptly got out the indicated pad: lo! there was the missing sheet.

You may assert that "memory" was active from the "sub-conscious." I wonder when we shall get a better definition of what we mean by "memory." Is much of it spirit-activity? Are our discarnate friends sometimes present prompting us, as an incarnate friend would do in our need if he knew? When you come to think of it, "memory" is a weird business altogether. I fancy we shall have to disabuse ourselves of many pet theories about mental operations when we have gone a little further along the path of psychical research. Spirit

won't fit in with our ordinary ideas, so ordinary ideas will have to be changed as we learn more and more of the truth about our psychic selves.

Another similar instance, but without "mental conversation," arose recently when I lost sight of two Press reviews of a book recently published. I wanted these for advertising purposes. They should have been cut out of the journal in which they appeared and pasted in a Press-notice book. "Memory," *i.e.*, "reflective me" said this had been done; but when I put this to the test by consulting the Press-notice book, I discovered that the notices were missing. The advertising "copy" I had drafted awaited this matter to complete it, and I felt rather foolish. I decided that as the "reviews" were not cut out of the journals I must find the missing issues in a stack of old papers which I kept downstairs in a lower room. Mark you, I felt convinced of this. But as I got up from my desk and walked to the door, some "force" without any thinking on my part, turned me on my tracks back to a corner where, out-of-sight, stood a week-end suit-case. My hands opened it, and out tumbled the two papers with the reviews therein. Then, and not until then, I remembered that these papers had been sent on to me at Brighton. Evidently I had left them in the suit-case when I had unpacked it some three months previously. The familiar thrill of spirit-presence confirmed the over-shadowing activity responsible for this discovery, and I expressed my lively appreciation of what my spirit friend had done.

Again, the psychologist may shrug his shoulders and express surprise that I should interpret these experiences on a super-normal basis. Such things happen occasionally to others who do not, however, account for them by any spirit-hypothesis. But the intervention of the spirit world in the common happenings of my everyday life is proven to me not only in these hundred-and-one incidents, wherein "subconsciousness" is challenged by the scientist, but in many ways wherein I can find no loophole of escape from the conclusion to which I have come.

Not long since, I was under promise to visit a Church at Slough one Sunday and give an address. May I say here that all my addresses are "controlled," sometimes in trance with my eyes closed and sometimes—a better way I am sure—when I realise a super-imposition of another personality upon my conscious but slightly hypnotic self. I had no knowledge of this Church I was to visit, and consequently my "reason" was somewhat startled when "Cuno" (one of my guides) announced in my home circle that he would speak upon "The Healing Touch" on the following Sabbath "because the chief officers of the Church we were visiting were healers" or interested in healing. When this was told to me afterwards, I thought to myself, "If Cuno has made any mistake it will distress me and my family!" I probably thought it was foolish to risk our reputation for truth in such a manner; I am by no means sure that my strong individual self can become so amenable to "Cuno's" control that he may be certain my subconscious mind will not mar his utterances.

But "Cuno" knew what he was about. Imagine my satisfaction when the announcement of the subject of address an ejaculation of interest because "we are specially interested in healing," as the president put it. At the conclusion of the meeting two of those present who were gifted with healing power made the statement that the discourse was addressed directly to them for their spiritual benefit.

Here is another case which is more particular in its direct application. My daughter brought along one evening to my house someone who was in need of spirit help. "Cuno" spoke to her, giving her practical advice. What startled the visitor and myself was his intimate knowledge of her home affairs, of which I was ignorant. He warned her upon the folly of distressing herself with unfriendly relations, with certain

persons who talked too much and adorned the truth. She was told to be patient with them: she was not to refuse them friendship because of their weakness. As a matter of fact, my visitor was much distressed by "the lies of her neighbours," as she put it. There was much besides that disclosed "Cuno's" intimate knowledge of her life.

Two men sought an evening with my family circle, in a spirit of enquiry. They were friends working together at a certain large factory: although I had seen one I knew nothing about him, while the other was a total stranger to me. Before they arrived, I felt an unusual access of "presence" which made me abnormally quiet and subdued, so much so that I was unable to greet the visitors that evening in any familiar manner, but had to keep myself apart while the others of my family present made them welcome. Almost as soon as we sat down, "Cuno" came. He commenced with a story none had ever heard, directed at the two men, and proceeded to speak to them for three-quarters of an hour. The two visitors were amazed. "How did he know what we had been talking about all the week?" they asked afterwards.

So my personal experiences run on. Time after time it is made clear to me that these workers "on the other side" possess faculties of observation far beyond the range of the normal five senses. Each instance, as I record it, may appear to be trivial in itself, but their force is cumulative. Whether I am in "trance" or whether I am "overshadowed" by the control the miracle of intimacy is there. My intellect, I assure you, makes no guesses in this state; I am conscious of no desire to find out anything about the person or persons to whom the words are spoken. Frequently, at a public meeting where I have taken the platform, someone, nay sometimes several persons, will come up to me afterwards and thank me for the *personal* message which answered their questions. Two ladies told me one evening that "Cuno" must have heard their arguments, as they came there. At another meeting, a visitor announced that my control, by his direct reference to her need, had saved her from committing "something very dreadful." I had no idea what the visitor meant, but it was evident from her demeanour she had received some special warning which had "got home."

I know that these experiences are common to other speakers in this movement, and possibly they are common to speakers outside of the spiritualist movement who do not realize the source of their inspiration, or the power working through and for them. The inexplicable is so common that most men come to regard it as a part of everyday life, and therefore unimportant. But when you have a spiritual outlook, when you believe in spirit presence, you see much that others ignore; you have a clearer vision.

To the average "man of the world" my ideas may seem preposterous. But "the man of the world" is behind the times in many things. Religion is discarding its "swaddling clothes." We are slowly moving into an era when psychic man is beginning to emerge from his prison-house of being, and the science of the soul wins increasing attention from those who once deemed the material world the beginning and the end of all knowledge.

Surely the greatest of all things which immediately concern us is our awakening to a consciousness of spirit presence. We must all "test the spirits," realise their presence, interpret their message, and seek to live more under the rule of those who come with "love and healing in their minds."

*The following inspirational books are from the pen of Mr. F. H. Haines. "A Lamp to the Feet," 6s.; "Thus Saith Celpbra," 5s.; "The Book of Spiritual Wisdom," by Cuno, 6s.; "Spiritual Development," Trance address, 4s.; obtainable from The Pure Thought Press Co., 173, High Street, Watford, Herts.*

## FROM THE UNKNOWN

Mr. J. Cuming Walters, M.A., describes, in the *Manchester Evening News* of July 14th, a psychic experiment which occurred many years ago during the Boxer massacres in China. Mr. Cuming Walters at that time was not a believer in Spiritualism; he tells us that he was then an opponent of the subject. The following incident "made him think"; later investigations, which he pursued (believing that the results would point to delusion and fraud) led him to certain conclusions. "I came up against certain facts [he says] which led me not only to revise my opinions but to become—though at first very reluctantly—a convert. My convictions have been deepened and confirmed after thirty years of experience." He continues:

"An early incident which impressed me goes back to the far-off time of the Boxer rebellion in China. Persons then alive will remember that awful day when a 'last communication from a survivor' was published in the newspapers stating that the British Legations in Peking had been wiped out, that Sir Claude Macdonald (our representative) and his colleagues had perished, and that 'the setting sun had looked down on a scene of blood and silence' (I quote from the original).

Some evenings later a party of six of us met in a merchant's office—one was a spiritualist, three were hostile, two were neutral. Half in amusement we tried to find out if a table would turn. No mention was made of the Boxers. Yet not only did the table turn but it tilted out these words (duly recorded at the time)—'The Legations are safe. Message coming from Macdonald. Only one foreigner killed, a German. Japanese near.'

One of our number had been the secretary of Joseph Chamberlain, and he sent this message to him. Mr. Chamberlain replied that he had shown it to Lord Lansdowne, and they both agreed it must be false and impossible. Yet Macdonald's report duly arrived saying that the Legations were safe, the Japanese forces had arrived, and only one foreigner had been killed, Baron von Keteler, the German Consul.

Where did our message come from? We had no special interest in the subject, and no sub-consciousness, for the facts were entirely opposed to expectations."

Among other examples of supernatural communication Mr. Cuming Walters also gives the following: "A message in French, drifted into Italian, and then seemed to mix the two in a hopeless jargon. We were using the simple contrivance of a board and pointer, the letters being touched and taken down by a recorder. At the end we were baffled. Eventually an Egyptian merchant was found in Manchester who told us the communication was in the Levantine dialect, used by sailors in the East. He translated it, and it proved to be a message for a young man (unknown to me) in a distant town I had never visited, relating to a secret in his life with which a native of Alexandria was connected. By the name and address given I traced the young man; he confessed the truth (which he had concealed for some years), received the message which he said he understood perfectly, and identified the sender as his former companion."

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TESTIMONIAL TO MR. W. H. EVANS.

Mr. R. A. Bush acknowledges with thanks the following donation:

ANONYMOUS ... .. £0 16 3d.

Mr. R. A. Bush, 8, Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W.19. will gladly acknowledge in LIGHT further donations to this Testimonial, which it is hoped will receive the generous support of all friends.

## THE PERFECT SITTER

By MRS. ELIZABETH FORD

**P**ASSIVITY, the dictionary says, means "offering no opposition." It does not, as some imagine, mean "doing nothing"—a state of limp inertia. Some sitters, in an endeavour to obey the behest "Be passive," adopt an attitude of mental emptiness, supplying a kind of vacuum into which something (they hope) may drop. This means that what should come as music to our souls, finding no responding chord on which to vibrate, fades away into the silence. True passivity is an attitude that holds all the qualities of sympathy, intelligence and spirituality in solution. The trained Medium possesses this quality of passivity in a high degree, but must not be alone in this. The sitter must be passive to receive what is given, without contention or criticism during the seance. The instant there is suspicion, distrust thrown on the screen, disturbing vibrations are set up, and the channel of communication becomes muddy; wisps of unreliable matter begin to filter through. I have had definitely three kinds of sitters to deal with in my experience: Those who *try*; those who are *mute*; those who are intelligently *destructive*.

To take the first. I have had sitters come and say, "I don't know what the matter was; I got nothing—just a few names and facts I did not recognise. And I *tried* so hard to be passive." But sometimes the harder and more consciously you try for a thing, the more it eludes you. By straining to wrest something from the other side, vibrations are set up that defeat our efforts, and the efforts of those who may be wanting to come into contact with us. It is a wall that we interpose between ourselves and the Spirit World, through which it is difficult for anything to penetrate. To those I would say, "Sit easily: don't *try*; be natural, as if you had a friend opposite to you in pleasant converse, giving and taking without contest."

Then there is the second type. Those who sit wilfully mute, either because they are timid of interrupting, or for the reason that they don't want to "give themselves away." This stony attitude is not passivity, and defeats itself. Put oil and water in a bottle, and let it stand still; nothing happens—the oil stays on the top; if we shake the bottle, the particles of each separate, and seem to mingle for the time being. This shaking corresponds to the blending of vibrations between sitter, Medium and spirit—the pleasant vibrations of friendly association which promote that harmony of emotion necessary to successful contacts.

The third type of sitter is the most difficult to please—the intelligent obstructionist! He comes to the sitting with mind previously made up, and armed with tricky questions to embarrass the Medium, subconsciously hoping to trap either the Medium or communicator into some contradictory statement. Goodwill is perhaps not wanting but "cleverness" overrides the emotional sympathies, and the subconscious attitude being already one of doubt the results are to be expected—unrecognisable details, or a farrago of nonsense; the sitter goes away never realising perhaps that he got back what he himself put in, and has perhaps missed the most convincing proofs and the finest truths that the Spirit World gives to those who come in the right frame of mind.

Such a sitter can say to himself, in the words of Emerson:

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,  
Muffled and dumb like barefoot Dervishes,  
And marching single in an endless file,  
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.  
To each they offer gifts after his will,

Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.  
I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,  
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily  
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day  
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,  
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

To finish, there is another type—the perfect sitter, And what do we mean by that? The sympathetic, childlike, and trustful? Or the clever, astute? The intellectually critical? All these in one!

The clever—that they may help themselves by a clear knowledge of the subtle laws in spirit communion. The alert and intellectually critical, that they may use that faculty for careful scrutiny of facts given—their probability and sweet reasonableness; considering the evidence and sifting chaff from grain and then, correcting the over-credulity that a highly emotional and too reverential attitude might produce—which takes everything as gospel truth and proceeds literally, without discrimination to act on what is given. And then, the trustful and simply believing, who, while softening the harshness of critical analysis, manage to rob it of that antagonism which shuts all doors.

All these qualities, then, moulded together make the perfect sitter, and that perfect sitter, when coming to a seance need not do anything special with all these virtues, but simply let them melt and harmonise in that passivity, that non-resisting attitude, which opens the door to spiritual forces from the world unseen.

## THE TREES' SALUTE

**I**N a book to which we referred lately, *The Memories of Inayat Khan*, there is an account of Inayat Khan walking with two of his disciples through the New Forest on a still day in autumn. As he passed under a fir-tree, the branches of the fir bent and swayed as though in obeisance to him. Not a breath was stirring at the time, and the movement of the tree was so extraordinary in such circumstances that it is recorded as a wonder, which is not strange since Inayat Khan was remarkable for his mysterious powers. And yet the phenomenon recorded is not unknown in the annals of psychic phenomena, as displayed in the presence of Mediums. We knew the late Mrs. Thomas Everitt, a Medium in private life, and witnessed some of the remarkable manifestations given through her mediumship, sometimes in broad daylight, in the presence of several people both friends and strangers. Mr. Leigh Hunt testifies that on one occasion when he was walking with Mr. and Mrs. Everitt in the spacious garden of their country house, the branches of the rose trees near her rustled and bent, although there was no wind stirring. The effect was produced by one of her unseen friends, by prearrangement. But there are several other instances of the kind. In the case of Inayat Khan, we see an example of the extent to which mystical powers touch the psychic side of things and produce those "signs and wonders" for which some of the prophets have been famous—*too* famous, for they were inclined to lament that their followers looked for these things rather than for spiritual counsel.

IT is through the subconscious self that Shakespeare must have perceived truths which are hidden from the conscious mind of the Student; that Phidias carved marble and bronze; that Raphael painted Madonnas, and Beethoven composed symphonies.

—WALSTEIN.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

## CLAIRVOYANT DIAGNOSIS

Mr. T. W. Duerdoth of Ribblesdale Road, Streatham, S.W.16 writes:

Some thirty years ago I received an injury to the spine caused by a violent blow from the revolving handle of a crane. The injury caused pain, and inconvenience in movement, especially after lifting, but otherwise did not affect the general health. Three years ago when starting motor-car, I suddenly collapsed; every movement caused great pain, and the lower limbs refused to function. The local doctor was called in and diagnosed the trouble as lumbago. I was able to resume work in ten days, but eighteen months ago I had further trouble with the back, caused by strain.

[Mr. Duerdoth tells us that he then underwent treatment and diagnosis at the hands of a Medium, connected with Wimbledon Spiritualist Church, who clairvoyantly described a fracture of the spine, indicating the actual position, and putting the time of occurrence at thirty years previously.]

After two treatments I was free from pain. On June 9th of this year I again collapsed after lifting a heavy box. My lower limbs were paralysed; pain in the back more acute; internal organs refused to function.

My friend again came, and under control of his spirit doctor gave me a series of massage treatments, and I was able to resume business in fourteen days.

In order to test the accuracy of the clairvoyant vision, I have been under X-rays and I claim that the result is identical proof of its correctness.

[By courtesy of Mr. R. A. Bush, of Wimbledon Spiritualist Church, we have seen a large X-Ray photograph which, we are informed, represents a portion of the patient's spine, with the radiologist's remarks printed on the negative, thus: "Old standing fracture of 4th transverse process) lumbar." ED.]

\* \* \*

## THE TREATMENT OF CANCER

Sir,—Of all the diabolical diseases that can afflict mankind, that of cancer is the worst. Its nature is that of a malignant growth of new formation, that is to say that about middle or later life, the cells of the body take on rapid proliferation at some local point, and unless destroyed at once, spread to the local lymphatic glands and from there are disseminated throughout the body with the inevitable result of the death of the physical organism. There seem to be two causes at work: (1) Some peculiar constitutional condition and (2) a local condition.

It is a world-wide problem and one that up to the present almost defies the resources of the eminent medical men who are attacking it from all angles. I say almost defies, but not quite, for experience shows that if the local growth can be destroyed, before its cells have spread to the neighbouring lymphatic glands, *it can be cured*. This can be done by removal of the growth by a surgical operation or by the action of the gamma rays of radium.

These rays are remarkable in that they will destroy cells of *new formation* before they destroy old cells of the body. They are being used in ever increasing quantities in all the countries of the world, and some extraordinary brilliant results have been obtained. The National Radium Commission in a recent statement to the profession concludes as follows: "In radium properly used, humanity possesses the best means at present

available for combating certain forms of cancer. As to its future, no one can prophesy with certainty. It may some day be displaced by other remedies. But at present, with the exception of surgery, there is little else available and it affords more promise than any other form of treatment."

The fact that the remedy causes little if any inconvenience to the unfortunate victim, cannot be too much emphasised and there is no excuse for anyone to waste valuable time by consulting unqualified and too often totally illiterate people who prey on the patients of carcinoma. The supporters of these unqualified people will surely have to give an account of their actions in some future life.

To my intense disappointment I cannot find a tittle of evidence that our spirit friends are any better informed on the subject than we are. I have watched several of these cases (treated by alleged spirit doctors) and they simply go from bad to worse. My own spirit medical men can only say "Rest assured we are also trying to find a cure."

I doubt if this letter will do much good, for, of all the helpless creatures in this world, the pig-headed ignoramus is the most helpless; but at least I feel I have done my duty in giving this information to the readers of LIGHT, which I think must be the best psychic paper in the world at the present time.

2, Aldington Road,  
Streatham, S.W.16.

E. H. WORTH,  
(M.R.C.S., Eng.).

\* \* \*

## "THE BUDDHA'S GOLDEN PATH"

Sir,—In his review in your issue of July 26th of *The Buddha's Golden Path* by Mr. Dwight Goddard, Mr. Stanley De Brath mentions King Theebaw's Palace massacres as an example of "how Buddhism works out practically."

There is, of course, only one real religion, the Truth, which is enshrined in the *esoteric* doctrines of all the Great Faiths, and Mr. De Brath rightly says that the ethics of Christ and Buddha are almost identical.

I have the greatest respect and admiration for Mr. De Brath and his opinions in general but, as one of those who amaze him by finding Buddhism more attractive and inspiring than Christianity, I would point out that it might be said with far more justice "those who wish to see how *Christianity* works out practically may read the records of the Great European War."

No such barbarous negation of its doctrines and ethics is to be found disgracing the practically stainless record of Buddhism.

EMERSON ARNOLD  
London, S.W.1.

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THE M.S.A. MEETINGS AT QUEEN'S HALL.—Mr. H. E. Hunt delivered an address at Queen's Hall last Sunday evening dealing with Spiritualism and what it stands for. In a clear, cogent and closely-reasoned discourse he traced the troubles of our time to the current materialistic ideas which regard the bodily life as the only form of human life, and material possessions as the sum of all things necessary to human happiness. To spiritualists it was given to supply a higher ideal and to point to the spiritual world as the only real world, and the life of the spirit as the only true life. It was one of the best addresses on the subject which Mr. Hunt has ever delivered. After the lecture Mrs. Esta Cassel gave a series of striking clairvoyant descriptions which obtained recognition from people in various parts of the hall. We hope to give a summary of Mr. Hunt's address in our next issue.

## Light

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## THE MYTH-MAKERS

ONE of the industries of newspapers of the baser sort for many years has been what we may call the manufacture of myths for the million—political myths, social myths, myths of every kind. Sometimes they have taken the form of clap-trap phrases—"slogans" as they are called—which came glibly off the tongues of the unthinking, as disposing at once of any question, however serious or complex. Any observer of politics or social movements during the last twenty years will be familiar with the fact.

Spiritualism and Psychic Research have long been a favourite target for the myth-mongers and phrase-makers. We could give a score of instances of the shallow comments and fustian criticism with which these subjects have been pelted during the last thirty years. But it is possible to take these attacks too seriously. It is a false sense of values which leads us to treat as important the mouthings of malicious stupidity, and to set ourselves to reply to a "cat-call" with an indignant protest or a piece of solemn reasoning.

We should never forget that there is a class which caters for the public in the spirit of the late Phineas T. Barnum, who held (with much truth) that the public likes to be humbugged! In all departments of life there is a great market

for shoddy opinions. Just as there is a demand for ready-made clothing, so also there is a demand for ready-made views, which save the empty-headed person the trouble of thinking out any question and so gaining his own point of view.

It is true that of late years the public attitude to Spiritualism has been more serious, an attitude reflected in the Press to a marked degree, for the Press sometimes falls behind public sentiment and has to catch up with it; yet it is none the less true that here and there in the journals of to-day we may see traces of the old and stale objections which belong more to a generation ago than to the year 1930. The only direction in which the critic seems to have advanced is that it is no longer urged, in the words of the late Mr. Edward Clodd, whose passion got the better of his syntax, that all messages from discarnate spirits are "nauseating, frivolous, mischievous, spurious drivel." No; the present-day censor has risen a little above that level, although it represented his attitude in the days when Mr. Clodd wrote. To-day the complaint is that spirit messages are commonplace, coming from Uncle John or Cousin Mary and relating to small domestic matters. Where, it is asked, are the great revelations, the "ennobling" and "high-toned" communications? Our reply is that they are contained in many volumes in the literature of Spiritualism; but to consult these would doubtless be too much trouble for superficial commentators, writing for a public, some portion of which still remains very gullible and very easily satisfied.

Now this question of Uncle John and Cousin Mary in the spirit world, and their petty personal messages which contain no "high teaching," no splendid "revelations," recalled to our mind the case of a certain Anne Simon, a talented musician who died in 1916 and who sent messages to her husband. Some of them were quite domestic, messages of personal affection, and therefore, from the standpoint of the lofty (and uninstructed) observer, rather "trivial." But she said some beautiful things when, as an artist, she described her life in the next world, and the nature of spirit personality. "We are radiance with identity" was one of her phrases. That is one instance out of thousands of flashing thoughts given "from the other side." We have listened to, recorded or read, for many years, acute observations, brilliant epigrams and noble teachings given in language so fine that even literary purists could find no fault with it. Often it came through Mediums of mediocre education. Being aware of these facts, then, those who are instructed in this matter of spirit-communication, can remain undisturbed by the observations of shallow and irresponsible observers, whether in the Press or elsewhere. These

persons are ministering to those like-minded, and will doubtless continue to do so until their dupes discover the true state of affairs and demand more enlightened instruction. Then the industry of myth-making will undergo a "slump," such as, unhappily, many more valuable industries are suffering from to-day.

## CONAN DOYLE—SOME CANADIAN MEMORIES

IN the summer of 1914 Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle visited Canada, and in the course of their tour travelled over the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, the new trans-continental line, which was constructed through the enterprise of the Grand Trunk, the pioneer railway company of Canada. In her book *Canada the Spellbinder*, Miss Lillian Whiting, the American author, whose name is so well-known to our readers, records the visit, and the book contains a picture of Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle with their party taking a meal in the open air outside a log-hut.

It is a noteworthy coincidence that at that time one of the chief officials of the two great Canadian railways, our friend and contributor Mr. George T. Bell, met the Doyles, with a view to facilitating their travels, and at a dinner at Algonquin Park at which some of Mr. Bell's family were present to meet the distinguished visitors, the subject of psychical research cropped up in the course of conversation. Sir Arthur then mentioned that he had been a member of the Society for Psychical Research almost from the time it was founded (1882) and he was naturally pleased to find that Mr. Bell had psychical interests. Sir Arthur remarked that he had himself witnessed some striking phenomena, and was convinced of their reality and meaning, not so much through his own experiences as by the testimony of some of his most valued friends, amongst whom he included General Sir Alfred Turner, who, it may be added, was in those days a contributor to LIGHT and a member of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

Mr. Bell recounted some of his own psychic experiences, his acquaintance with the subject extending over some twenty years previously. Sir Arthur urged on Mr. Bell the necessity of putting those experiences on public record, and Mr. Bell, in turn, pointed out that if Sir Arthur ever became fully convinced, his prestige as an author and the creator of Sherlock Holmes, would win for him the attention of the world. When some four years later Sir Arthur produced his book *The New Revelation*, Mr. Bell cabled his congratulations, for it seemed as if the suggestion he had made had borne fruit.

Meeting Mr. Bell on his last visit to this country in 1927, when he was entertained to lunch by Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle, we learned from him that several Canadian Railway men had become deeply interested in Spiritualism. Mr. Bell's friendship with Dr. Crandon, and his association with the "Margery" mediumship are well known to those who have studied the history of the Crandon circle. And here again Sir Arthur's name comes in, for it was he who drew public attention to "Margery's" mediumship at the time when, with Lady Doyle and their children, he was travelling across Canada in 1923. He afterwards championed her in the American Press against the attacks of hostile critics. Mr. Bell records it as a coincidence that his meeting with Sir Arthur at Algonquin Park took place on that fatal Sunday in August 1914 when, it is said, Germany decided on war.

## SIDELIGHTS

A correspondent of *East Africa* who signs himself "Effendi" gives two cases of telepathy among African natives. Here is the first. One morning in the beginning of August, 1914, "Effendi," (at that period an assistant manager to an important British plantation company in what was then German East Africa) rose at five o'clock, as usual, to take the roll-call of the native employees—about a thousand in number. On leaving his bungalow to go to his task an old and trusted Native overseer stopped him and asked what the *matata* (trouble) was in Europe. Much astonished, for he was ignorant of any European disturbance, "Effendi" demanded to know what the Native overseer meant by this peculiar question, and was met with the query "Why are England and Germany at war?" Says the writer, "Only the previous day we had received a Home mail bringing English papers describing the fraternisation of the British and German fleets at Kiel, and declaring that all danger of an Anglo-German armed conflict was past. With such thoughts in my mind, I told him that he had been misled, whereupon he declared vigorously that he knew definitely that he was right. Pressed for an explanation, he said that he had been awakened in the middle of the night by a message from a friend of his in Dar es Salaam (some forty-five miles away). I asked whether the message had been brought by train or by a runner, and was told that it had been brought in spirit only. He could, or would, add nothing to his declaration that he was awakened by the wish of his friend to communicate something to his spirit.

\* \* \*

"Roll-call over, I was confronted by a perspiring runner, bearing a note from a German assistant on an outlying estate some four miles away, who wrote that he had heard from Natives that war had been declared at midnight between England and Germany. An hour later the Indian station master at the nearest station, sent a messenger over on a bicycle to tell us that he had been telegraphically informed from Dar es Salaam of the outbreak of hostilities. Thus, in this case I had what proved to be perfectly accurate information from a Native servant more quickly than by telegraph, and the German assistant had had a similar experience."

\* \* \*

"Effendi's" second instance occurred some months later. He was by this time a prisoner at Kilimatinde. The local company of native soldiers had left for the Moshi-Arusha front some weeks previously. One evening, he tells us, there arose from the Native cantonment the sound of loud wailing, and this was so loud and long continued that the German commandant became exasperated and sent orders that the noise must cease. The cries and lamentations, which came from the wives of the native warriors, continued, however, and lasted late into the night, and the woman explained that they were grieving for their soldier husbands who were dead in battle. Says "Effendi": "The commandant repeatedly assured them that there was not the slightest reason for their grief, that he would have been informed by telegram of any casualties and, later, that he had telegraphed to headquarters and received a reply that the company had not been in action. The women, however, remained unconvinced, and during the next day or so there were periodical outbreaks of wailing. Not until the third morning was a telegram received at the *boma* stating that the company had been in action, and giving a list of the dead. In this instance also Native information had beaten the white man's telegram."

## MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION AT QUEEN'S HALL

FOLLOWING is a resumé of Mr. Hannen Swaffer's address on Sunday, 10th inst. He began by referring to the fact that it was five and a half years since he made his first public speech on Spiritualism on that platform and declared his conviction that man survived the grave, that the so-called Resurrection was not a matter of faith but was a matter of fact.

For eighty years before then Spiritualism had braved violence, spiritualists had been pelted with stones, driven from their employment, but had gone on proclaiming the truth. The days of the Inquisition had passed or they would have suffered even at the stake. They had faced the mockery of the buffoon, and suffered from the self-advertising conjurers who sought publicity by holding up to ridicule the spiritual truths they knew to be facts. Orthodox religion ran away from science but Spiritualism ran after the scientists, and because of men like Conan Doyle the edifice of truth was built, stone by stone and fact by fact, and to-day the churches had to admit our case; whilst they still try to discount the importance of the messages we received they could not deny the messages.

He had known many strange places since that first speech on that platform five years ago; he had met strange people, spoken to strange audiences, had hundreds of arguments, travelled in foreign countries, and met in England people belonging to half the nations of the earth; but nothing had happened in all that time to make him alter one word which five years ago he used on that platform, or to change one iota of his knowledge that death is only the beginning of life.

Lately he had been overhauling his books, throwing away the worthless ones and retaining those that really mattered. Amongst those he had kept were the writings of Dr. Crandon, who, soon after starting to expose Spiritualism, and trying to prove it false, in his own home circle discovered that his wife had direct voice powers which have been demonstrated to over twelve hundred people. He kept the writings of his friend Upton Sinclair, whose own wife has just developed psychic powers, and from whom he received a letter on the previous day. One by one the famous writers were coming forward with their evidence.

When would the Church begin to understand? All the time psychic healing went on, healing that was not confined to the privileged medical profession. Psychic healing went on in this country almost every day.

Touching on the labours of Conan Doyle, he referred to Sir Arthur as returning from his Scandinavian tour, stricken and ill. The next day, speaking on the platform at the Albert Hall, he had almost collapsed while asking all who knew that Spiritualism was true to stand on their feet. That night he had spoken again on Queen's Hall platform. Then a few weeks later he had stumbled to the Home Office to ask that, as a religious body, we should share the freedom which Roman Catholics and the Jews had won a century before and which the Nonconformists had gained. Mr. Clynes had listened sympathetically to Sir Arthur's words that day while he pleaded. And we were still pleading. "I hold in my hand a copy of the Vagrancy Act. Five years ago a question had to be asked in the House of Commons so that that copy could be printed, because there wasn't one for any person to buy. Estelle Roberts, according to that Act, is breaking the law. I am breaking the law too, by encouraging her, and we are also breaking to-night the Witchcraft Act of James I . . . a copy of which you cannot buy, but which you can see at the Guildhall in the City of London. We

are guilty here to-night. No one knows what it is and no one knows what witches are, but we are breaking the law."

Of all the messages purporting to come from Conan Doyle since his passing he had himself, in a communication lately received, stated that five were genuine, amongst them the message given on the previous Sunday night in the Grotrian Hall, one from Canada and one to his son. Conan Doyle's special message to Mr. Swaffer as the new President of the Spiritualist Community was "Carry On." He meant this message for all of them, not only the well-known but the humble workers who helped to spread the news. They were to "carry on" till war was banished from the earth, until righteousness reigned everywhere and mankind was free.

## A SPIRIT GUIDE'S FIRST TASK

"TO-DAY I want to tell you of my first work as a guide. When I was ready for this, my teacher took me to a house where there were many people living, a boarding house at the seaside. It was a humble establishment where those who were not blessed with means lived together. There was one old lady who was very quarrelsome and cantankerous. She was so self-centred that she expected everyone else to give way to her. She found fault with everything and everybody. She was about 70 years of age and nearing the time of her departure. To save her from a long period of darkness and distress we on this side strove hard to awaken her to love and shew unselfishness to others. This was no easy task. I was asked if I would attach myself to her continuously, concentrating upon this work alone until she passed over to this life. She lived ten years after this. I was ever in her environment and I can assure you, my friend, that it was the hardest task and the most unpleasant that I ever had to do. I felt frozen all the time. My method was to focus my thoughts upon her mind and to fan into flame, if possible, the faintest sparkle of generosity and sympathy. Even in her sleep state the spirit did not travel far from the earth so that it was as difficult to reach her in sleep as awake. The method was to watch her whilst reading, as she was an intellectual person. Whenever I sensed that she was reading of noble and kind and unselfish deeds I gathered up my thoughts and focussed them on those passages as they passed through her mind, and then from her mental body to force them to radiate through the other bodies so that they might reach her innermost spirit. Another way I used was to watch her when she was out of doors, and if she felt the slightest sympathy towards any person or animal she met who seemed in distress to (let me say without being misunderstood) exaggerate their unhappiness so that her soul might respond. Then I would search her memory to discover the better actions and thoughts that once she had, and to bring these forward again, and if possible, to make contrasts in her mind between them and her present outlook on life. These were the chief methods I employed by the direction of my teacher. For at least a year I do not think I made the least progress with her, but by patience and very great effort I managed to make one spark brighter and then I would try to add another spark and so on, until after about three years I did see a little light in her soul body. When once this light begins to shine then progress becomes more rapid. People began to notice a change in her and their recognition of the change helped me in my task, because then I could draw power from them to focus on my charge. She died in that boarding house. When she passed there was some regret at her passing and much love was sent out to her at her funeral. Several of the inmates also used to place flowers on her grave for some time afterwards, and those flowers helped us on this side to continue our work of redemption."

—From *Jesus Christ at Work*, by Richard Arthur Bush.

A GENERATION AGO

(From LIGHT of August 25th, 1900).

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS

The aviator ignorant of psychic terms who comes on that much abused term "earth-plane" for the first time may well be puzzled. He knows the air-plane and the sea-plane but an "earth-plane" would doubtless strike him as a curiosity.

\* \* \*

The bishops have met, but although I have a high respect for bishops, having met several, I could not forbear a laugh at the jest of an irreverent observer, who, quoting the words of the eccentric old gentleman in *Nicholas Nickleby*, described their solemn Conference as all "gas and gaiters."

\* \* \*

We all know how much insistence is placed on some single case of psychic phenomena being proved up to the hilt. Without wishing to depreciate that attitude of mind, I often reflect how much more convincing is the cumulative factor. I recall Kant's remark (as quoted by Dr. Lindsay Johnson) when he said that any single Spiritual phenomenon was by itself insufficient to convince him, but that when all the phenomena were taken together they were irresistible.

\* \* \*

Sensationalism, it is said, is dying out, and I can easily believe it. We have had such a surfeit of it of recent years that the public palate has become jaded through over-stimulation. I notice too that it is no longer the fashion to dress up the knowledge of a world of spirit life in a fantastic way—to "tickle the ears of the groundlings" with bombastic and freakish statements. These things defeat their own end. Sober, reasoned, and sincere descriptions are all that are needed, since Truth unadorned is adorned the most.

\* \* \*

It has been commonly observed that some people "eat up" the vitality of others by sitting near them. I have personally observed several instances, noting that the "vampire" was usually of the greedy and absorbent type and the victim of a negative and impressionable temperament. The process appeared to be quite automatic and unconscious in each case. In one instance it was a full-blooded and rather gross woman who sat next to another much more delicate and refined. At the end of an hour or so they separated, the first lady remarking how well she felt—she always felt better after such a meeting. The second lady was in such a state of exhaustion that she could scarcely stand. To me these things if they cannot be classed as psychic phenomena are very much on the fringe of it. Nor can they be branded as unscientific, for Science recognises *endosmosis*—the absorption by one body of the gases or fluids contained in another. So far as the psychic side of the matter is concerned, some of us have had experience of seances which proved sterile as regards manifestations by reason of the presence of people who absorbed the "power" generated by the rest. It was grimly amusing at times to hear such people remark how much better they felt after the circle was over—full of vitality. I recall one instance in which the sitters out of consideration for the presence of an invalid friend voluntarily gave up the seance to the healing of that friend instead of to the phenomena—a pleasant example of self-sacrifice.

D.G.

In the course of a private letter received from a valued correspondent, the writer informed us of some striking experiences which have recently transpired in his home. . . . We have obtained the consent of our correspondent to the publication of the following excerpts from his letter.

"I had a very good case of pure spirit message about three weeks ago. L., a young natural sensitive (undeveloped so far as regular sittings go), was busy with her work in my house during the afternoon, and went into the kitchen for a minute and sat down, saying she had a tooth-ache—but she immediately went under control. . . . I could not get any word, or sign, or other manifestation from the spirit, so I told *him* (as it turned out to be) that he must leave and come again when he was able to give proof of his identity, etc., and after some trouble he went, first taking my hand and wringing it in quite a friendly manner.

At the next meeting of my "circle," at which Mrs. X. the medium, I asked if any information could be given about the spirit who controlled L., and my wife said she was told that it was an old man of about eighty years of age, a relative of L's, who had died from the effects of a kick from a horse. Subsequently I asked L. if she knew anything of any such relative, and at first she said "no," but afterwards she remembered to have heard her mother speak of such an occurrence, but she had not paid much attention, and therefore could not tell me anything further. But she asked her father when she saw him, and from him she ascertained that the old man was her mother's father, and that his death had been caused in the way my wife had mentioned."

THE PULPIT & PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

At the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great, London, on Sunday morning, August 10th, Dr. Gilbert Scott, recorded last week, delivered a sermon dealing with psychic Research. In the evening Dr. Scott resumed his theme and referred to the experiments of Crawford, Crookes, Osty and Geley. He showed how these experiments formulated a totally new conception of the human make-up, and said that vast fields for investigation opened in the distance for the explorers of the future. Dr. Scott claimed that the Margery-Walter thumb-prints emphatically proved even to the dullest mind the persistence of human life beyond the veil. He had himself commenced his enquiries thirty years ago as a rank materialist. He had stretched the possibilities of the subconscious mind to the utmost limits, and at last had to confess himself beaten on his own ground. He acknowledged a great debt of gratitude to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who had given him much sage advice. He had gained great happiness as a result of his enquiries, and was now resolved to continue the work of investigation. The crude faith and hope in a future life had now been replaced by knowledge.

COMMENDATIONS OF LIGHT

MR. J. H. P. CHITTY writes :—"I must most heartily congratulate you on LIGHT as it now stands—it is full of most interesting and carefully written articles, to which must be added the editorial wit and humour.

Dr. S. L. Taylor writes :—  
I must congratulate you on the improvement in LIGHT—it has quite an exalted tone now.

## BOOK NOTES &amp; REVIEWS

## HANDBOOKS FOR ENQUIRERS.

**"Memories and Adventures"** by Arthur Conan Doyle. (John Murray. 7/6 net).

This is a reprint, at a popular price, of a popular book. Its appearance at the present moment is markedly appropriate. Biographies are frequently "heavy," while autobiographies often suffer because their writers are either egotistical, or, in striving to avoid that fault, too reticent. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in this volume, was self-revealing while felicitously avoiding any stress on the "first person singular." *Memories and Adventures* is more than a biography; it is a first-class adventure story—adventures at school, in medicine, at sea, in battle, literature, religion, sport. In all the major activities of life A.C.D. adventured greatly, and he tells the tale in that happy and easy manner—and it is the whole art of story-telling—which compels the reader to continue, without effort, page by page, until the final conclusion.

N.

\* \* \*

**"La Realta del Mistero"** (The Reality of the Mystery) by Gino Trespioli. (Societe per lo Studio della Biopsichico; 15 Lire.)

Issued under the auspices of the Italian Society for the Study of "Biopsychics"—a scientific hypothesis of the reality of life—this book claims to be the product of intellectual mediumship, and a resumé of a much larger work to be entitled *Life*, not yet published. It has a psychological interest and serves to illustrate the vagaries of mediumship in which romance and reality seem to mingle.

It commences with the tragedy of a friend of the Author, one Piero, the possessor of a beautiful soul, but suffering from a terrible lupus, which had eaten into and made hideous one side of his face. After ten years of mental and physical agony he commits suicide. The author, formerly an Atheist, meets a Medium, a complete stranger, who gives him convincing proof of the survival of Piero, his brother-in-law, Francesco, and other friends who had passed beyond the veil.

The descriptions of the Spirit World set forth in the book are stated to have been obtained through various women Mediums whose mentality, education and position in life would not normally enable them to give messages of the philosophic and scientific nature that were received.

The messages, for the most part, were given in trance, but occasionally by automatic writing.

The author claims to have been instructed by a high spirit called "The Master," who, when not personally conducting him on his mental voyage through the spirit planes, deposes other spirit guides for the purpose and also allows Piero and Francesco to accompany him.

The book fairly bristles with great names, and although one is impressed by the earnestness of the author, and at times the messages rise to a high level of poetic beauty, the credulity of the discriminating reader is often strained to the breaking point, and one is led to the conclusion that there is either a great deal of impersonation, or much has been drawn from the sub-consciousness of the author, or of those who sat with him at the seances.

E.A.S.H.

## NEW BOOKS RECEIVED

**"EVIDENCE OF SURVIVAL"** by S. Lidia Nancarrow. (Stockwell; 3s. net.)

ANOTHER of the series of five booklets in course of publication by the London Spiritualist Alliance has now made its appearance, following the first to be published, viz., *Demonstrated Survival: Its Influence on Science, Philosophy and Religion*, by Sir Oliver Lodge. The present booklet is *Human Survival and Its Implications* by Miss Helen A. Dallas. Those who are acquainted with Miss Dallas's work will know her as a clear and capable writer on psychic subjects, of which she has a thorough mastery. In *Human Survival* she has concentrated much into a small compass. The little book is rich in suggestions, and her citations from other writers are apt and illuminating, especially in the case of the quotations from F. W. H. Myers and Professor William James. The book, while fulfilling its purpose of being a handbook for beginners, should at the same time be of much interest to those who have already made some study of the subject. Miss Dallas confines herself closely to her main theme and makes out a cogent case for survival and all that this implies, without losing sight of the necessity for clearing the ground for the uninitiated. The booklet is published by L.S.A. Publications Ltd., at the same price as the others, one shilling. The five handbooks should make an invaluable addition to that list of works designed for enquirers.

## OBITUARY

We hear with regret of the decease of MISS CLARENA MILES who was well-known in Psychic Research and humanitarian circles. She passed away suddenly on the 13th inst. at her residence in South Kensington.

A letter from Switzerland informs us of the death of MAJOR HILDER DAW of Alassio, Italy, who has passed away quite suddenly from a clot of blood on the brain. He was deeply interested in psychic healing, about which he published a book some years ago, and he carried on healing work after removing from this country to Italy some years ago.

CAPTAIN H. M. WOOD.—We learn from Mr. A. Victor of the passing, on Wednesday Aug. 6th. of Captain Hugh Montague Wood, F.R.S., one of the founders of the St. Albans Society for Psychic Study. Captain Wood, who was in his forty-third year, had a distinguished career in the Merchant Service, and was taken prisoner during the war after the sinking of his ship the "Otaki." He was author of various nautical handbooks. The interment took place at Bexhill-on-Sea on Saturday, Aug. 6th. Mr. A. Victor, hon. sec. of the Jewish Society for Psychic Research, in the course of a communication to *Light*, speaks in high appreciation of the late Captain Wood as "one who was most instrumental in bringing into my life a considerable sense of spiritual value and comfort."

THE mysteriousness of our being is not confined to subtle physiological processes, which we have in common with all animal life. There are higher and more capacious powers wrapped up in our human personality than are expressed even by what we know of Consciousness, Will or Reason. . . . There are supernormal and transcendental powers of which, at present, we only catch occasional glimpses; and behind and beyond the supernormal, there are fathomless abysses, the Divine ground of the Soul, the ultimate reality of which our waking consciousness gives but a faint reflection.

—SIR WILLIAM BARRETT.

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 Psychic Development. Afternoon and evening classes under the leadership  
 MISS FRANCIS and MRS. BARLOW will be resumed in September.  
 Apply to the Secretary.

**AUGUST.**

The College Library will remain open during August, and some-  
 one will be in attendance for the purpose of making appointments.

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 subjects. Fully Classified Catalogue, 2s. 7d.

*The Library will be closed from July 25th  
 until September 1st*

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(Accepting the Leadership of Jesus Christ.)

6, HARTFIELD ROAD, WIMBLEDON S.W.19.

Monday, August 24th, 11 a.m. .. .. MR. HARRY GILLESPIE  
 Monday, August 24th, at 6.30 p.m. .. .. MR. GEORGE PRIOR  
 Wednesday, August 27th, 7.30 p.m. MR. BERNARD L. ELLIOTT  
 Address, Spirit-descriptions and messages.

Admission—no charge; Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to  
 1 p.m., Wednesdays, 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. (Except Bank Holiday.)

**The London Spiritual Mission.**

13, PEMBRIDGE PLACE, BAYSWATER, W.2.

Monday, August 24th, at 11. .. .. Mr. ERNEST BEARD  
 Monday, August 24th, at 6.30 .. .. Mr. ERNEST HUNT  
 Wednesday, August 27th, at 7.30 (Clairvoyance) Mr. STEPHEN FOSTER

**Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd.**

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AT HEADQUARTERS

Tel. Museum 0676.

Marylebone House, 42, Russell Square, W.C.1.

**MEETINGS FOR PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE.**

Monday, August 25th, at 3. Psychometry .. .. MRS. B. HIRST  
 Tuesday, August 26th, at 7.30. Clairvoyance MR. THOMAS WYATT  
 Thursday, August 28th, at 7.30. Clairvoyance .. .. MR. BURNHAM

**GROUP SEANCES.**

Wednesday, August 27th, at 3 .. .. MRS. ESTA CASSEL  
 Thursday, August 28th, at 7.30 .. .. MISS LILY THOMAS

PRIVATE SITTINGS can be arranged with the following Mediums:  
 MRS. ESTELLE ROBERTS, MRS. MORREL, MRS. ESTA CASSEL,  
 MRS. CANNOCK, MR. GLOVER BOTHAM, MISS LILY THOMAS.

**LECTURES.**

Friday, August 29th, at 7.30. .. .. MRS. ESTA CASSEL  
 "A Trance address followed by questions and discussion on  
 subject introduced."

**HEALING.**

Every Wednesday at 2.30 and 7 p.m. "Medicine Man" the control of Mr.  
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SUNDAY, AUGUST 24th, 1930,

11 a.m.—*Speaker*: Mr. D. Bedbrook.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Neville.

6.30 p.m.—*Speaker*: Mr. Percy Scholey.

Clairvoyante: Mdm. Bishop Anderson.

Sunday, August 31st, 11 a.m., Rev. Tyasul Davies.  
 Mrs. Campbell.

6.30, p.m. Mr. E. Meads.  
 Mr. Glover Botham.

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# London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.

Established 1884.

Incorporated 1896.

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## DAILY EXPERIMENTAL WORK.

Arrangements can be made for members to have private sittings with all Mediums approved by the Council, either in the rooms of the Alliance or at the home of the Medium or member, as may be mutually convenient.

Sittings for non-members can be arranged on presentation of satisfactory letter of introduction.

## SUMMER ARRANGEMENTS.

The Alliance, including the Libraries, will be closed during the first three weeks of August (4th—23rd August inclusive.)

During the remainder of the summer there will be no further weekly Meetings, Classes, etc., until the Autumn Session commences; but, with the exception of the holiday period mentioned above, the Alliance will be open as usual for arrangement of sittings with Mediums and use of the Libraries.

## SUBSCRIPTION:

For a membership fee of ONE GUINEA PER ANNUM, which falls due on the first of January, the Alliance provides a centre for enquirers and for convinced spiritualists, where meetings, lectures, and investigations are regularly carried on.

## THE LIBRARIES.

No extra fees are charged for the use of books, except for postage when they are not exchanged personally. *The annual fee of one guinea for Membership includes the use of the Libraries.*

The Library is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, except Saturdays, when it closes at 1 p.m.; and during the Sessions until the commencement of Thursday lectures.

Catalogue, including Supplements, 1/-.

Bibliography 1d. (classified list of books useful for the student.)

THE SECRETARY attends every day, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., except Saturdays and until the conclusion of lectures, and is at all times prepared to meet enquirers.

## The Attitude of the London Spiritualist Alliance towards Spiritualism and Psychical Research.

- (1) There is one belief common to all spiritualists, no matter how widely they may differ concerning the various issues involved, that is, a belief in the Survival of Human Personality after Bodily Death and its demonstration.
- (2) The Alliance regards Human Survival as a fact in Nature.
- (3) It recognises that the inferences arising from this fact are scientific, philosophical and religious.
- (4) It affirms that psychical research should be encouraged, but deprecates unscientific and aimless pursuit of phenomena as an end in itself.
- (5) It looks upon psychic phenomena as the "preamble to all religions" (F. W. H. Myers), and not in themselves the basis for a New Religion.
- (6) It realises that while some psychic phenomena emanate from the discarnate, others do not.
- (7) It recommends that every communication be subjected to critical examination.

*The L.S.A. is an Unsectarian Body.*

## OBSERVATIONS

The Psychic faculties are very delicate, and subject to the influence of definite thoughts of the sitter.

A strong suspicion, without any justification, that the Medium is dishonest, combined with a determination to find deception, would act adversely upon the Medium who, in the supernormal state during the period of the sitting, is highly sensitive to suggestion.

It is to be observed that there is a close parallel between mediumistic states and those of ordinary hypnotised subjects.

An open mind and complete passivity is necessary. Honest criticism in the inquirer is natural, but active criticism causing mental activity during the sitting should be avoided.

A critical analysis should be made after, but not during the sitting.

## NON-SUCCESSFUL SITTINGS

It is unavoidable that some sittings will be failures for several reasons:

Sitter and Medium may prove psychically unsuited to each other.

The psychic power fluctuates independently of the will and often of the knowledge of the Medium. It is not like a telephonic message.

It should be understood that sitters sit at their own risk as to whether results are satisfactory or otherwise. If a Medium is conscious of lack of power, no sitting will be held, and the fee will be refunded on application to the Secretary.