

Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

Edited by DAVID GOW

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NOTES BY THE WAY

SOME recent inquiries concerning Anna Blackwell who was well-known in psychic circles some forty or fifty years ago seem to indicate that her name and work are now little known. In her day she was the most prominent exponent of the philosophy of the French mystic, Allen Kardec (Denizard Rivail) the French spiritualist leader whose doctrine of reincarnation has so greatly tintured Continental Spiritualism. It was at the Society for Spiritualist Studies of which Allen Kardec was President that M. Camille Flammarion made his first acquaintance with Spiritualism in 1869. Allen Kardec died in 1869 and Miss Anna Blackwell taught his doctrines in England where, however, they made little progress. Miss Blackwell, who had many supernormal experiences and was interested in psychic photography, was associated with the publication of *The Four Gospels*, a work in three volumes published in London in 1881. It was an interpretation of the esoteric side of the Gospels, purporting to have been received from the spiritual world by J. B. Roustaing. It is described as a "further development of the religious philosophy of which the first principles are laid down in the works of Allen Kardec."

* * *

IN some recent theories the factor of time is being given an importance to which, as some assert, it is not entitled. We can best illustrate the point by the following dialogue, more or less faithfully reported, between two persons, one of whom may be called the "Idealist" and the other the "Realist," which we give without comment:—

THE IDEALIST: So you see how important this Time question is. Take for instance, the case of an athlete who springs into the air. He remains aloft for a few seconds at most, before falling back to earth. But suppose he remained in the air for five minutes, then it would be a psychic phenomenon, an instance of levitation; it all turns on the question of Time.

THE REALIST: I fail to see it. To me it all turns on the question of gravitation. The athlete cannot remain in the air because of the strength of the Earth's gravitational pull. If that were sufficiently reduced he would be able to remain in mid-air for so long as he chose. Time is only a small ingredient in the question. Give me an

instance in which you can trace the effect of Time in the physical world as being equal to that of natural forces.

THE IDEALIST: What about the changes wrought by Time—the decay of buildings and monuments, of the human form, and animals and vegetables?

THE REALIST: It is not Time that does these things. The works of man suffer from the weather, chemical changes, the disintegration due to gravitational forces. Time does not cause them. That is merely incidental to the process.

THE IDEALIST: Then you mean to say that Time is of no account.

THE REALIST: I would never make so rash an assertion. Time matters very much indeed, especially if you have to catch a train or keep an appointment. That is a practical test of the question whether Time is a mere figment or illusion. Only we must not, on the other hand, treat Time as an actual existence, and attribute to it powers which belong only to the realm of universal forces, like light, heat, electricity, magnetism, and gravitation.

* * *

A LETTER in a recent issue of *The New Statesman and Nation* contains some curiously mystical ideas. The correspondent, Mr. Michael E. Sadler, claims that some artists and geniuses in prophetic moods have the power to read the future, and he tells how before the war Kandinsky painted a picture foreshadowing aerial warfare. Asked whether he knew whether war was coming the artist replied in the negative. He said that he knew that there was a great struggle going on in the spiritual sphere. That observation has an appropriate bearing upon statements made in LIGHT some weeks ago from spirit communicators who claimed that much which was interpreted by clairvoyants as signifying material catastrophes was really due to the impression made by the conflict of spiritual forces. Mr. Sadler refers also to the latest works of Vigeland, the sculptor, at Oslo, as signifying that the world is entering upon a period of privation, in which the "simple life" will rule. He adds, with a fine discrimination, that he does not say that the forebodings of great artists are always fulfilled on the scene of human life; "they spring from realities veiled from our common eyes."

"LIGHT" JUBILEE SUSTENTATION FUND

In appealing for donations we feel confident that well-wishers of LIGHT will support this fund, which, much to our regret, is made necessary by the stress of those circumstances which just now afflict newspapers as well as other enterprises.

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Subscriptions, however small, sent to the office of LIGHT will be gladly received and acknowledged in our pages.

OUR ITALIAN EXPERIENCES

By E. A. S. HAYWARD, O.B.E.

(Concluded from page 147.)

The Centurione seance was eventually fixed for 6 p.m. 25th April, and on our arrival at the Palace in the heart of the city of Genoa, we found that the Marquis had only just returned from a series of long journeys, which had necessitated his spending three nights in trains, and that he had to fulfil an important engagement after the seance. Notwithstanding his fatigue, and the fact of his not having held any seance for many months, so that possibly poor results might be expected, he consented to sit so that we should not be disappointed.

The seance room was on the fifth floor. It has two windows and no verandahs, so that they were completely inaccessible from without. The windows were closed by heavy wooden shutters extending to their full length, and bolted by bars. There were no curtains or draperies. There were two doors, one of which was locked, and as the key of the second had been mislaid, it was shut, and we blocked it by pressing a heavy table against it. My wife and I carefully examined the condition of the windows and doors before the sitting. We went on our knees to look under the large divan, and generally scrutinised the furniture before the light was extinguished. My wife examined the ladies by passing her hands over them, with a view to ascertaining that nothing of any size was concealed in their clothing. It has been suggested by Mr. Besterman that Signora Rossi had secreted the lance, sword, and other large apports of the Millesimo sittings on her person, but one had only to look at her small figure, and at the abbreviated evening dress, which was then the fashion, to realise the foolishness of the suggestion. I was seated next to Signora Rossi and my wife next to the Marquis, so that we could note any unusual movements or suspicious sounds made by the Mediums.

The position of the sitters from left to right was as follows: the Marquis, my wife, Professor Bozzano, Signor Rossi (who worked the gramophone), Mrs. Kelley Hack, the Marchesa, myself and Signora Rossi. The Marquis was seated in a large low armchair. After the lights were extinguished, the Lord's Prayer was recited, and a record was started. After a short interval cool winds (which Mr. Besterman had facetiously suggested had been produced by the deflation of rubber balloons) were noticed by the sitters. I do not propose to give here in detail the various touches felt by the sitters, the levitations of the trumpet, repetitions of the cool winds, etc., which are contained in the signed *provis verbal* of the sitting, which I have in my possession. I will relate only the most important phenomena.

The first voice to speak was that of the guide, Cristo d'Angelo. All speeches, except where otherwise indicated, were in Italian. Just prior to his speaking, the trumpet was in the centre of the circle, larger end upwards. He said "Good evening all." Signor Rossi asked that he would say something in English, as the sitting was in our honour. A hoarse voice then said in English, "Good evening, souls," an expression usually uttered by Bert Everett, another control. We were informed that the voice was not so high pitched, nor so loud, nor with the usual accent of the latter. My wife, who had been touched by the trumpet on cheek, nose and hand, asked Cristo d'Angelo if he would not say something to her, whereupon he said, "Good evening, dear lady," continuing as follows: "The Medium is tired—you must take into consideration his condition, but on account of the reason for the sitting we will do everything in our power to gather all the force." The trumpet then moved to Signor Rossi as if about to speak to him, but apparently lacking power, fell to the floor. Signor Rossi asked Cristo d'Angelo if he recognised the record that was being played. The reply came, "I know it very well,"

and several genial laughs followed. Shortly afterwards the voice continued, "Now there begins to be force—I will send the Master to talk." The question was asked, "Do you mean the Master of the house?" to which the reply came, "You must have patience. Listen carefully. I will send a teacher. Good evening all. I am going." The trumpet then flew very high in the air, striking the chandelier above the middle of the circle, very forcefully, and was then thrown right outside, landing on the floor with a crash. Signor Rossi remarked, "That means it is not wanted." It was therefore decided to leave it where it had fallen, and to await events. A faint whisper was then noted developing into a voice which was stated to be that of Rabelais. He spoke in deep tones in the direct voice, very slowly from near the floor, which was stated to be the usual position from which that entity spoke. He said in French, "I am very pleased to speak to the English. I need to say very important things to them. Pay close attention. The Medium is still in a very difficult condition. I must gather force to speak to the English." He then gave a long message of a private nature mainly concerning the sittings of Valantine with the Marquis, and referred to a communication made by him in 1927, during the first sittings attended by the Marquis and the Rossis.

Later Rabelais continued, "Have patience. I told you that the Medium is in a very difficult condition, have patience, but wait." He again reverted to the communications previously referred to, and gave a long discourse of a somewhat disputatious nature, saying in conclusion, "Be patient. We are making a big effort to speak this evening. He has not held a seance for some time, but because of the purpose of the sitting we have exerted ourselves to talk on this occasion."

The trumpet which had been lying outside the circle during Rabelais' speeches was now lifted right over the heads of the sitters and dropped on the ground at the opposite side near Signor Rossi. It then rose and made loops in the air as it passed round touching everyone in turn, finally falling to the ground. After a pause it approached Signor Rossi, and Cristo d'Angelo spoke to him in Sicilian, in a bantering tone, saying, "I have returned to tell thee that thou art a persistent one." Signor Rossi explained that this referred to an experiment which he had tried by placing, unknown to all, two rings on the floor, one of ivory and one of bone, with the mental request that they might be united. Cristo d'Angelo evidently read his thoughts, and returned to prove that he was aware of them.

The sitting ended at 7.15 p.m. and when the lights were turned on all was found as at the commencement.

It is to be noted that the trumpet was illuminated, and collapsible, and was re-extended several times during the sitting by power exerted by other than that of the sitters; also, that at least twice during Rabelais' speeches the Marquis was heard speaking at the same time. The voice of Rabelais appeared to come all the time from the middle of the circle, and was independent of the trumpet, and apparently at least three feet from any of the sitters.

Our considered opinion is that the voices produced were supernormal, and did not proceed from the Medium: nor from any of the sitters.

The Marquis was very exhausted at the close and accepted my offer to give him magnetic treatment, and in a short time he became quite normal.

From Nervi we went to Florence where we met the young Italian Medium of Count Bon's circle at Venice. She had recently come to settle in Florence, and although she had only just moved into a new flat, consented to give us two sittings.

She had only become aware of her gifts when she had joined that circle the previous winter, and had been controlled frequently by the spirit of the Count's grandmother, a very gracious old lady known as "The Nonna." Signorina Valle is a Trance Medium, and many evidential

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messages from "The Nonna" and other ancestors of the Count were obtained through her mediumship.

The fact of her being very fatigued by the worry and labour of removal were prejudicial to obtaining good results, but the sittings were quite interesting, and both our children, also Dr. Kelley Hack and "The Nonna" manifested through her.

On each occasion she went into deep trance but it was evident that she is not yet fully developed. If, however, she could be taken in hand by someone well acquainted with the development of mental mediumship she would become first class. The difficulty is for her to obtain such guidance, as there is no one in Florence with the requisite knowledge and experience.

On the second occasion she had invited another Italian lady with mediumistic faculty and she gave us a display of her powers. She sat at a table with a pencil and paper, and whilst tracing on the paper a series of figures and designs which seemed to form a point of concentration, gave us an exhibition of considerable interest.

Signora Raimondo visited Florence whilst we were there and introduced us to a very charming old gentleman, Commendatore Literio Butti, one of the pioneers of Spiritualism in Italy. He is a composer, and a very fine musician. One of his operas has been performed in public, and he has composed a number of beautiful songs under inspiration. He gave us great pleasure by singing and playing some of them for us, and afterwards we had a very interesting conversation with him, his son and a friend.

Notwithstanding the importance of Florence there is no organised spiritualistic society there. We, however, met several English residents who were glad to have the opportunity of meeting those from whom they could learn something at first hand of the subject in which they were interested. One was a very charming old lady, over eighty years of age, to whom we were introduced by Miss MacGregor and Miss Underhill. Originally a journalist, she had been a friend of Browning and Schopenhauer, a "life" of whom she had written over fifty years ago. She has recently been invited to publish a new Edition of this biography, a circumstance which is probably unique. She is still a woman of keen intellect, keeping in touch with many phases of modern thought.

Our last psychic experience was in Venice where we met Count Bon and his circle. Unfortunately, since the departure of Signorina Valle, they were without the services of a Medium but whilst we were there they recommenced sitting for development and we were present on one occasion when the Count's daughter showed signs of becoming a Trance Medium and several others gave signs of clairvoyance.

The Count gained his first experience only a few years ago during a visit to New York where he sat with Valiantine, who, at his invitation, paid him a visit in 1929, and had given some impressive sittings. The Count was very enthusiastic about the results obtained and was convinced of the genuineness of his phenomena, which shortly after were so adversely criticised by the Marquis Centurione Scotto.

The Count is a lawyer and scientist, who has been working for some time in perfecting a remarkable invention for colour photography, which he is now busily engaged in placing on the market. Since he became convinced of the truth of spirit survival he has studied the subject quite deeply in diametric contradistinction to the attitude of the Marquis, who has done little to study the science underlying the phenomena.

The Count was present on several occasions at the Millesimo circle and with Professor Castellani discovered the Marquis in deep sleep on a bundle of hay in the granary on the historic occasion when his body was asported from the locked room of the Castle in which the sitting took place. He was only discovered some two and a half hours after his disappearance. The door of the granary was locked and the key in the lock on the outside of the door.

"POWER'S" ADDRESS AS A GRAMOPHONE RECORD

AS the address delivered by "Power" through the mediumship of Mrs. Meurig Morris and recorded by the Columbia Graphophone Co. is presumably copyright, we cannot do more than briefly describe it here.

It was impressive in its diction, touching very directly on the experiment being made, as when, venturing in the region of prophecy, "Power" said that the inventive minds of men would ultimately discover a method of communication with the spirit world by means of a mechanical instrument. He said that there were several grades of ether and those minds which vibrated at a high rate of speed operated through an ether of a corresponding grade. He referred to the great amount of scepticism which prevailed concerning the possibility of communication, but emphatically affirmed that it was a truth, and alluded to the tremendous implications of that truth as regards the betterment of human kind. Those who disbelieved should not cast aside these things, but keep them in mind.

The address, which, with the invocation, it was understood occupied two sides of a record, was preceded by a short explanatory speech by Mr. Ernest Oaten who dealt with the matter in an extremely lucid and discriminating way.

THE SURVIVAL LEAGUE

THE stage of the Royalty Theatre on Sunday evening 22nd ulto. presented a picturesque spectacle when, at the invitation of the Survival League, representatives of various religious communities, including the Anglican, the Buddhist, the Confucian, Hindu and Mohammedan, met to discuss survival, the Oriental speakers being attired in their various national costumes. Major Colley presided and both he and Mr. Hannen Swaffer presented the spiritualist point of view. All the speakers seemed to be in unison regarding the central principle, but there was some variation on details. The Buddhist, the Bhikku Vajiranana (in a yellow robe) gave an outline of the Buddhistic idea; the Confucian, Mr. Gonnoske Komai, explained that Confucianism was rather a code of ethics than a religion, but while not denying a future life it did not encourage enquiry into the matter; the Hindu, Mr. A. P. Sinha, described the faith of Hinduism in relation to survival; the Rev. D. W. Whincup, (Anglican) spoke on the subject from the Christian standpoint, and Abdul Majid (Imam of the Woking Mosque) and Soofee A. Q. Abdullah (London Mosque) described the attitude of Islam, which, while it taught a life hereafter, held that there was no return to earth on the part of spirits.

Mr. Glover Botham gave some clairvoyant descriptions but evidently laboured under difficulties due to the conditions.

MR. EDMUND DAWSON ROGERS AND THE "EASTERN DAILY PRESS."—A correspondent who knew the late Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers and was acquainted with the early history of the *Eastern Daily Press* points out in reference to a recent "Note by the Way" that it is not correct to say that Mr. Rogers was the founder of the *Eastern Daily Press*. Our statement was based upon a paragraph in Mr. Dawson Rogers' "Life," but it would undoubtedly be more accurate to say that the newspaper in question was started at his suggestion (on October 10th, 1870) and that he was its first editor.

THE BRITISH COLLEGE BANQUET

THE Sixth Annual Dinner of the British College of Psychic Science was held at the Café Royal on March 25th. Mrs. Champion de Crespigny presided, and a large company, including many distinguished guests, was present.

"Since our Bill has failed to get through Parliament I might almost address you as 'fellow rogues and vagabonds,'" said MRS DE CRESPIGNY, a remark that was greeted with loud laughter. She thought that the College should no longer be content with furnishing demonstrations of physical phenomena to satisfy the curious; the time had come to make a serious study of the causes that lie behind the phenomena, and a close investigation of the "habits and customs" of ectoplasm should yield fruitful results. Perhaps the investigator was inclined to take too many precautions against fraud; this undoubtedly inhibited the phenomena, and, to use a popular metaphor, "spiked his own guns."

SIR WILLIAM BRAGG, who led off by saying, "I don't know that I believe anything that you do," went on to discuss the methods of Faraday, whose diary was a model of how an investigator should think and work. He suggested that psychic workers should observe and record in the same manner as Faraday, but he offered the suggestion in a tentative manner, and in no spirit of criticism.

DR. FIELDING-OULD said there could be no doubt but that the psychic movement was going forward by leaps and bounds. He had studied the subject for nearly forty years, and had marked the change from a period when there were few Mediums, little enthusiasm and, perhaps, little intelligence, until the present time when interest in the subject was flowing like a rising tide. He spoke of the difficulty of trying to get the men of scientific reputation to examine the matter; even when they had examined, under their own conditions, they so often declined to express an opinion. As to the theological side of the matter, Dr. Fielding-Ould remarked that whenever the Dean of St. Paul's wrote a new article in the Press, he only repeated what he had said thirty years ago. Theology made no progress, whereas Spiritualism and psychical research were advancing at a great rate. He felt assured that the subject was coming into its own, notwithstanding opposition and prejudice.

MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE, who received an enthusiastic welcome, remarked that it was the first time she had been to a British College dinner as a guest. After having stood aside, it was a great joy to her to find the institution progressing so well under Mrs. de Crespigny's able guidance. She had recently read the writings of a scientist who spoke of ghosts that "gibbered and squeaked," but she herself had never encountered gibbering and squeaking in any of the hundreds of seances she had attended. (Laughter). She had been struck by a certain harmony between Spiritualism and some of the beliefs of ancient Egypt, which accepted two principles, the *Ka*, which was concerned with earth memories, and the *Ba* principle, which addressed itself more to the spiritual aspects of life. She looked forward to co-operation with the churches, and with Science. There must be a common meeting ground, and it was the duty of spiritualists to prepare the way.

MR. HANNEN SWAFFER made a humorous reply to the suggestion of Sir William Bragg, that careful notes should be taken of everything. It was almost impossible as far as he himself was concerned—so much took place during the day. He gave instances of multiple activities in his own life, connected with Spiritualism. Recently

a daily newspaper had suggested holding a Press inquisition into Spiritualism, but he had vetoed the idea; it had been done so many times, and led to no conclusive results. He had offered, however, an opportunity for an enquiry into the mediumship of Mrs. Estelle Roberts, and related again the dramatic episode in which Mrs. Roberts, by means of her psychic gift, had saved a man from suicide. She had seen him at a public meeting, and taking him aside had said "Give me that poison!" The man denied, at first, that he was carrying any poison, but finally admitted the Medium was right—unemployment and poverty had reduced him to a state of mind in which he contemplated going straight to Hyde Park and committing suicide. Mrs. Roberts had averted that tragedy.

MR. W. KELLY, M.P., spoke of the parliamentary effort now being made to carry the Bill—the measure for removing unfair restrictions on mediumship and psychic investigation, under obsolete Acts. He considered those restrictions unfair. People should be allowed to exercise the dictates of their own consciences. (Applause). The measure had been on the order paper many times. Much of the opposition to the Bill came from those who really had no real knowledge of its purpose. He had hopes that it would yet be carried. N.

1848-1931

EIGHTY-THREE years is a period covered by the life of people now living; there are spiritualists amongst them, indeed we have a few nonogenarians amongst us. It is curious to reflect that Modern Spiritualism, as dated from the time of the Rochester phenomena, began and grew to its present world-wide development in the life-time of these people.

We have never been enamoured of the habit of looking backwards and brooding on the past and its happenings; far too much time has been wasted in this historical retrospect with which are frequently associated acrimonious discussions regarding some particular Medium or some particular phenomenon of other days. If we look back at all it is chiefly to recognise the toils and the sufferings of those missionary Mediums and workers to whom we are indebted for so much of the progress shewn to-day. Those who have studied the history of Spiritualism will know that it has its glorious company of prophets, its noble army of martyrs.

If the past may in any sense be called dead it is because it has parted with its life to the present, which is surging with vitality and activity. In seventeen years Spiritualism will celebrate its centenary and then we shall have a period rounded and complete in which to judge it fairly. But if it has gone so far and done so much within the space of a human life, what advance may not be marked in another seventeen years! By then it may well have found its true place in the world's life, the link between two worlds, the reconciler of religion and science. It will be a great day. Most of us, perhaps, will not be here in the flesh to see it but we shall be conscious of it in the spirit and shall know that the end has crowned the work.

JEWISH SPIRITUALISM

Mr. Max Gittleston of 36, Brick Lane, E.1. writes: "We have opened our new society at No. 8, Hanbury Street, corner Commercial Street, E.1., only two minutes' walk from Woolworth's corner, Aldgate. Meetings are held every Monday and Wednesday evening at 8.30 p.m. A free healing circle, with voluntary contributions to defray expenses, will be held an hour before the meeting starts. Monday, March 16th, was our opening night. Everyone of our supporters turned up and contributed to the success of the meeting."

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(The views and statements of correspondents are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, who occasionally prints, in the interests of free discussion, letters with which he does not agree.)

THE VALE OWEN FUND

Sir,—May I through your columns take the opportunity on behalf of myself and co-Trustees of thanking the very loyal body of subscribers to this Fund whose generosity since 1922 made it possible for our dear friend, the Rev. G. Vale Owen to devote himself exclusively to the work of our Cause until his death. This generosity I know was deeply appreciated by him.

The terms of the Trust Deed provide that the Fund shall continue to be utilised for the maintenance of the widow and dependent members of the family. We have therefore arranged to make the widow and her daughter small allowances, but it will not be possible to continue without further assistance to the Fund. Some of our subscribers have already promised to continue their support and there will doubtless be others who will do so; but we should be most grateful for any contributions from those who appreciate the sacrifice which Mr. Vale Owen and his family made in renouncing an assured living at Orford for the risks and uncertainties of spiritualistic propaganda. May I add that the moderate annual allowance made to Mr. Vale Owen from this Fund did not enable him to make provision for the future needs of his family.

H. H. HITCHCOCK.

The Vale Owen Fund,
4, London Wall Buildings,
London, E.C.2.

TIME, SPACE AND MOVEMENT

Sir,—Relativists treat the velocity of light as an important fact in the structure of the Universe. Velocity implies motion with a rate of speed; that is, that an ascertainable thing is first in one place and then in another, and that the rate of its movement between the two can be calculated. But, as Schopenhauer pointed out, "Change is only possible in time," and consequently "the power of movement" is only possible in Time; that is Time in the old familiar sense, Time which passes. This, indeed, is obvious. Time, in this sense, can yield duration but it has no unity with Space; it is not extended as Space is nor capable of such extension.

According to the doctrine of relativity Time is amalgamated with Space in a space-time continuum. Space cannot be in a continuum which is not extended and Time, assimilated to Space, must be extended also. It is not an expression of *becoming* but of *being*, like Space. That is what Professor Eddington means when he says that "events" in the continuum "are there and we come across them." We, as percipients, move in a track along the continuum. This would be quite unnecessary for the purposes of our perception if we had not to move into what appears to us to be the future instead of Time bringing the future to us, as we are prompted by our mode of perception to suppose that Time does. It is worth noting that as percipients we not only imagine Time that passes but are in Time that passes, for we move in a track, and movement implies such Time. So the doctrine of relativity has not in any case absorbed Time in Space completely.

But if we hold that Time which passes results from a three-dimensional misinterpretation of four-dimensional reality and is a figment of our mode of perception, we must

suppose that in that reality light has no velocity; for velocity implies movement, and movement implies Time that passes.

Again and again communicating spirits treat Time that passes as part of their experience in post-mundane life. Are they also limited to a mode of perception that is fallacious?

GODFREY BURCHETT.

Brookside,
Wraybury.

THE ETHICS OF SUICIDE

Sir,—I once crossed swords with Dr. Lindsay Johnson in your columns, and I regret to say that I am afraid he rather got the better of it, for I made the mistake of venturing on technical ground in ignorance of the fact that he happened to be an authority on that particular subject. Naturally I have been hungrily waiting ever since to have it out with him on more neutral terrain and get my own back!

His article in your issue of January 24th is just what the doctor ordered (my doctor, I mean, not my esteemed antagonist!).

I suggest that Dr. Johnson the oculist should endeavour to correct his own mental vision in respect of the Occult, and that the Doctor's views need his medicine.

For instance, after several observations to like effect, Dr. Johnson says—"But after all there is no difference, if one regards the matter from a man-in-the-street point of view, between a murderer who kills another man in cold blood and a soldier who shoots another soldier in cold blood." Good Heavens! *What street?*

Really, Dr. Johnson! Surely there is a whole world of difference. I suppose that practically all cold-blooded murders committed by sane people are from one of the motives following: gain; jealousy; revenge; fear of discovery of some other crime by the victim; desire to be freed of an unwanted wife or husband in order to live with some other mate. The motive of a soldier in killing another soldier is in certain cases, self-defence—"his life or mine"—in other cases, defence of his comrade or comrades, section, platoon, company, what not; in other cases the desire to carry out faithfully the recognised and legally compulsory duty of a soldier to fight for the safety of his country, his wife and children; more probably all these motives together. Does Dr. Johnson seriously ask us to believe that these motives are of the same moral quality as those of the murderer? The whole question depends on motive.

I killed a man in the war with my revolver. Does Dr. Johnson pretend that I am to regard myself as being guilty of a crime, and not only of a crime, but of a similar crime to that of a man convicted recently of murdering another in order to stage a false disappearance and start life afresh under more agreeable circumstances? If so, all I can say to him is that I have not so far walked about in my sleep wringing my hands and crying, "Out, damned spot!" and what's more, I am not going to. Regret need not include remorse or self-reproach.

Dr. Johnson then goes on to praise a man who deliberately insured his life against accident in favour of his wife and children and then killed himself in order to swindle the Insurance Company; only that is not the way the doctor puts it. And not only that, but goes on virtually to liken him with Father Damien, who did not, by any possible stretch of dialectics, commit suicide, but who risked and eventually lost his life in the most noble cause of ministering to the lepers on Robben Island.

No, no, doctor! You really must think again on this subject.

ALAN HOWGRAVE-GRAHAM
("Tertium Quid.")

Transvaal, Feb. 12th.

Light

All communications for the EDITOR should be addressed "The Editor of LIGHT, 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7." 'Phone: Kensington 3751. (Editorial only.)

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

ADVERTISEMENTS—For rates apply The Advertisement Manager, LIGHT, 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7. ('Phone: Kensington 3758). Telegrams: "Survival, London."

AN EASTER-TIDE REFLECTION

WRITING on the subject of Eastertide in LIGHT some ten years ago the late Dr. Ellis T. Powell said that "the last twenty or thirty years have completely transformed the relations of Religion and Science." The years which have passed since that was written have added confirmation of the truth of the statement. Science has advanced into regions so far outside the world of the senses that its observations have now to be registered in mathematical symbols.

The change is wonderful, indeed, but it still lacks completeness. Biology stands dumb before the mystery of life. Perhaps it is because Life is only to be interpreted in the terms of Life—terms which lie outside the vocabulary of Science, as relating more closely to feeling than to thinking, to intuition rather than to intellect.

But it is a great thing that Science should have pushed its researches so far that, instead of the old complacency of Victorian days when it appeared that everything was at last discovered and all the mysteries cleared up, we find an attitude of modesty, sometimes almost of mysticism on the part of the great scientific thinkers of the day.

Science may not have penetrated all the mysteries, but it has greatly illumined them. It has approached at times nearly to the vision of the poet and seer. It has given form and substance to what those have dimly perceived. This observation applies especially to Psychic Science, which to-day is making progress of which the world is little aware. It has provided a solution to the greatest mystery of all—that which of

old was called the Great Secret: the reality of a Life Beyond. We are well aware that this solution is in some quarters regarded as something tentative and provisional—something concerning which full scientific assurance has yet to be gained. We do not feel at all impatient, however, perceiving that it is in the nature of the greatest and best things that they should develop slowly. And moreover there is so much in the matter that relates to the region of feeling, of vision and intuition rather than to purely intellectual achievement. The outlook upon the Universe needs to be ennobled as well as enlarged. The "cold poetry" of Science has yet to be transfused with the fire of the emotions. In any case Science is exploring the approaches to the Unseen World, and so discovering its limitations. Life, the true nature of which remains still for us a problem, will in due time itself supply the key, as being its own interpreter.

We are once more at the time of the reawakening of Nature after its winter rest. Once again the latent life is surging upwards in the process of its annual renewal. Easter as a type and a symbol of Resurrection has been dealt with countless times. We would not labour the parable here as it is applied to death and the life hereafter, although it applies very closely when viewed by a mind in tune with Universal Principles whether expressed in the life of Nature or the life of Man. We do not expect the scientist to look at the matter with the eyes of the poet or the mystic. We only know that the Universe is coherent, working always towards integration, that nothing can remain permanently detached from anything else. By consequence the truth of survival, the truth of an Unseen World of life, must in the end be recognised and established by Science working on externals, as well as by Religion concerned only with interior things. So far as each is based on truth so far must each in the end meet and merge, and the two hemispheres united make "the perfect round." Eastertide has always had a significance for Religion. It may hereafter carry a meaning for Science also, as relating to something more deeply interfused than the "process of the suns" in the physical order.

THE SHINING PRESENCES

In all earth's sacred records we are told
How heavenly beings walked with men of old;
So too our bards—for one his message sends,
How man's "one world" another world attends.
And one in song describes the angel's face
That brought the sunshine in a shadowy place.
And yet another tells of spirit aid
Filling with fire the verse that he essayed.
So we to-day on troublous paths who go
Are doubly fortified—'tis ours to know
That still they walk, beside us or above,
Ringed round with radiance, luminous with love.

D.G.

APRIL 4, 1931

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SIDELIGHTS

Miss Helen Alex. Dallas, a valued contributor to LIGHT, has a letter in *The Spectator* of March 21st concerning a visit to a Medium, the late Mr. Otto von Bourg, who described an elderly gentleman whom Miss Dallas recognised as an uncle and guardian who had helped to draw up her will. "I get the word 'incorrect' so strongly," said the Medium. Asked whether the visitor wanted the will to be altered, Mr. von Bourg replied, "No, the basis of it is all right; but there is something *incorrect*."

* * *

Miss Dallas then goes on to say: "After this interview I wrote to my solicitor to send me my will, which I had not looked at for some time; and as I could detect no error I forwarded it to a legal friend, a retired judge, and asked him if he could find any error in it. He replied: 'The will as drawn appears to me to contain a bad blunder, which would defeat your intentions to some extent.' He added that it was a blunder he had before known solicitors to make: it was of a technical kind; and I could not have discovered it. It was obviously due to an unintentional mistake, which would not have benefited the solicitor. My guardian had been my adviser in money matters in my youth, and it seemed to me very characteristic of him that, if he discovered after his death that he had blundered over the drafting of my will, he should try to correct the error."

* * *

"Dying is really not such a terrifying experience. I speak as one who has died and come back, and who found Death one of the easiest things in life—but not the returning. That was difficult and full of fear." Thus writes Leslie Grant Scott in the March number of *Psychic Research*, the organ of the American S.P.R. Says the author: "The will to live had left me and so I died. I had been ill for some time but not seriously so. I was in a run-down condition, aggravated by the tropical climate in which I was then living. I was in bed, a large old-fashioned bed, in which I seemed lost. I lay there quietly, thinking and feeling more at peace than I had felt for some time. Suddenly my whole life began to unroll before me and I saw the purpose of it. All bitterness was wiped out for I knew the meaning of every event and I saw its place in the pattern. I seemed to view it all impersonally, but yet with intense interest and, although much that was crystal clear to me then has again become somewhat veiled in shadow, I have never forgotten or lost the sense of essential justice and rightness of things."

* * *

The writer then tells of the doctor's visit (it was Sir Aldo Castellani) and his attempts to revive the patient by hypodermic injection. Then: "My consciousness was growing more and more acute. It seemed to have expanded beyond the limits of my physical brain. I was aware of things I had never contacted. My vision also was extended so that I could see what was going on behind my back, in the next room, even in distant places. . . . I wondered if I should close my eyes or leave them open. I thought that it would be less gruesome for those around me if they were closed, and so I tried to shut them—but found that I could not. I no longer had any control over my body. I was dead. Yet I could think, hear and see more widely than ever before. . . . From the next room came great engulfing waves of emotion, the sadness of a childhood companion. My increased sensitiveness made me feel and understand these things with an intensity hitherto unknown to me. . . . The effort to return to my body was accompanied by an almost unimaginable sensation of horror and terror. I had left without the slightest struggle. I returned by an almost superhuman effort of will."

Here is an extract from the *Daily Mail* of the 17th ult. It occurs in the report of Sir Oliver Lodge's recent address at the Imperial College of Science and Technology:—"It was found that in electricity, in magnetism, and in light, the really effective medium, whatever it was, existed in space-time, and that the movements of the particles of matter were only an index, a demonstration, a phenomenon which could be observed, and it was found that the perceptible motions of matter were consequent upon the real phenomenon, which was operative in that which appealed to our senses as empty space. The moral of it all is that when we seek the real causes of things we must concentrate on that which cannot be directly observed but which can only be inferred by the action of the mind. Animated matter, like all matter, is inert, but is acted on by an unknown something called Life and Mind."

MODERN MIRACLES

By TUDOR A. MORGAN

BOUND up in Mr. Ivan Cooke's excellent article, "A Modern Miracle," in the issue of LIGHT for January 10th, are the questions of guidance from above, prevision and freewill. See, in the one simple story of the unfortunate "Mr. Smith," the wide field of operations of our unseen helpers, the tremendous avenues of thought explored, the grandeur of love displayed!

Did I say "the unfortunate 'Mr. Smith'?" Then I am wrong. He is well blessed, surely, who has counsellors with such depth of love that they can patiently watch their charge sink lower and lower into the slough of despond, well-knowing that this reverse in fortune is a precious gift! Every life is its own problem, and although every case of reversed fortune may not be laid to the beneficent action of the spirit-world, there are many more of such instances than is usually thought. How much is due to cause and effect is a problem, but even if the effect is caused by "circumstances," we are not guided out of the slough until we have learned the lesson.

I recall the instance of a man who experienced lean days following upon a conglomeration of circumstances, some under his control, some not. During the whole of the lean period, even at the blackest, reassuring messages were given from the spirit-world and definite promises of good things to come at a given time.

The slough was cleared at the time stated, the better days coming unaccountably, and upsetting pet theories of economics. Most of these messages were received through his wife, and one day when she was thinking matters over, it was borne in upon her that the lean days would never recur. "Of what use," said a voice from the spirit-world, "Of what use is it, once the lesson has been learned, to teach it a second time?"

Do not such instances play havoc with our conceptions of free-will? I am of the opinion that our egotistical idea that free-will is represented in our ability to choose some of the things we do, is swamped in the larger conception that complete freedom of will is obtained only by complete subservience to God's will. I am here reminded of a passage in *The Book of Truth, or the Voice of Osiris*, by "El Eros," which states that by the original method of procreation each soul was called into being only as the task to be done rendered its creation essential.

One of the outstanding points of Mr. Cooke's story, and the one I have cited, is that all the details of the future were known to the Guides. To account for this we are prone to fly to the creation of unknown and unnecessary "dimensions." As an antidote, in his leading article, the Editor of LIGHT quotes an apt sentence by Sir Oliver Lodge: "You always find that things have taken place in a reasonable way." It seems to me that the road to prophecy is quite a clear and straight one in the hands of those capable of placing an accurate, descriptive con-

struction on what they "see"; and I submit that our future may be regarded as the past by some people, and as the present by others.

I was recently asked to give a logical definition of Matter. My answer was that Matter is a species of the genus "substance," the differentia being "that portion apprehended by the physical senses." No physical senses have yet been discovered which can intercept emanations of Thought and Love.

Each human action is fostered by desire, planned in thought, and executed in the motion of matter. A thought cannot thrive in a void any more than a spirit can function without organs. The conclusion is that substances exist for the manifestation of Thought and Love. One is called the Astral, or Thought World, and the other the Spiritual World.

Man, during his physical life, functions simultaneously in all three. His play of emotions in the Spiritual World results in the creation of corresponding forms in the Thought World, where they may be seen, assessed, described and predicted, either by our Guides or by Mediums sufficiently developed.

An objection may be raised to the idea that Thought takes substantial form, but this objection fades when it is realised that we actually see the objects of our imagination created in the same degree of substance as the objects of legitimate thought. The only difference between imagination and constructive thought is that the former has no purposive force activating it, so that it fades, whereas constructive as well as destructive thoughts are carried through to matter as action and "circumstances" by the force of the desire activating them.

A further problem arises with the question, "Are these thoughts and subsequent actions and circumstances the results of our sole efforts, or are they altered, modified, or even suspended entirely by the higher power of the Spirit of Love?"

WORLD RELIGIONS AND SPIRITUALISM

By EDWIN FELSTEAD

STATISTICS are always interesting, and the beliefs of others form an engrossing panorama when viewed from the numerical standpoint. Below is a table shewing the numerical strengths of the great religions of the world, and the percentage which each represents of the total world-population.

In reading the first table, it must be remembered that the numbers of followers are only approximate, for people of each faith are either apathetic, or no longer believe in the religions to which they were born.

Religion	No. of Followers	Percentage of Total
CHRISTIANS		
Roman Catholics	331,500,000	17.9
Orthodox Catholics	144,000,000	7.7
Protestants	206,900,000	11.2
Total Christians	682,400,000	36.8
NON-CHRISTIANS.		
Jews	16,130,000	.9
Mohammedans	209,020,000	11.3
Buddhists	150,180,000	8.0
Confucians and Taoists	350,600,000	19.0
Shintoists	25,000,000	1.3
Hindoos	230,150,000	12.4
Animists	135,650,000	7.3
Unclassified	50,870,000	2.8
Total "Heathens"	1,167,600,000	63.0
Total World-Population	1,850,000,000	

A more accurate table would be as follows :

Buddhists, Confucians and Taoists	370,000,000
Hindoos, Animists and Unclassified	416,670,000
Jews	16,000,000
Mohammedans	200,000,000
Of no religious conviction	209,020,000
Total "Heathens"	1,211,690,000
Indifferent Christians	100,000,000
Protestant Christians	106,900,000
Indifferent Orthodox Catholics	100,000,000 (Russian Union)
Orthodox Catholics	44,000,000 (Russian Union)
Indifferent Roman Catholics	20,000,000 (S. America, Mexico, etc.)
Roman Catholics	311,500,000
Spiritualists	30,000,000
Total "Christians"	712,400,000
Total World Population	1,924,090,000

It will thus be seen that there are at least 30,000,000 spiritualists alone; whilst there are throughout the world about 429,000,000 of people who do not know in what to put their faith. Perhaps these people will one day gladly turn with open arms to Spiritualism.

Again, among the Eastern communities we have the allied followers of Buddha, Confucius and the Tao religion, who are friendly towards Spiritualism, seeing that in China, Japan, and other Far Eastern lands, "circles" are held regularly in monasteries. Spirit-communication has been known to the Chinese and others for centuries. It is clear then, that there are in the world to-day about 565,900,000 people, including those Protestants friendly towards Spiritualism, who ought in time to be converted to belief in psychic truths. There are probably 20,000,000 in this country alone who are at least interested in Spiritualism.

Of course we cannot expect the whole world to swing round to our side at once, although it is almost certain that as time goes on, millions more will investigate Spiritualism for themselves.

It is argued by the opponents of Spiritualism that "Faith is more noble than Certainty!" This is true, but every person who has entered Spiritualism knows only too well that without Faith, the best phenomena or other psychic results cannot be obtained. So that it is clear that Spiritualism does not do away with Faith. On the other hand, it strengthens our Faith, which would gradually go if we continued to depend upon dogmas and superstitions, which are not supported by Modern Science, which is itself, in a sense, becoming the ally of Spiritualism.

[We print the above as a matter of general interest, without, however, accepting responsibility for the statistics quoted by our contributor.—ED.]

THE PSYCHO-THERAPEUTIC SOCIETY

Mr. R. A. Bush, F.C.S., President of the Society, will deliver three lectures on healing, with practical demonstrations, for the instruction of beginners. The first lecture will be delivered at 136, Hartfield Road, Wimbledon, on Thursday, April 16th at 8.30 p.m. and weekly thereafter. Admission 1/- or, for the course of three, 2/6, except to members of the Society who will be admitted without payment.

APRIL 4, 1931
UNSPIRIT

MR. L. W. KEN
S.W. writes :-
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UNSPIRITUAL SPIRITUALISM A PROTEST

MR. L. W. KEMPSON of 58, Trafalgar Square, Chelsea, S.W. writes:—

We often hear that critics of Spiritualism are, for the most part, people who are ignorant of the subject. This is not true of my own case, for I have long been familiar with the best in spiritualist literature, and have for some years lived in close friendship with a highly-gifted clairvoyante.

Recently I have been attending spiritualist services on Sunday evenings; I say "services" but to me the chief element of a religious service, Worship, was conspicuous by its absence.

On four consecutive evenings the effect of the very good addresses was spoiled by the four speakers trying to strengthen their position by cheap jibes at "organised religion" or "orthodox Christianity." This seems a great pity, as it not only betrays shallow thinking on the part of some leading spiritualist propagandists, but it tends to antagonise people ready and willing to be convinced of the truth of spirit-communication.

Has organised religion necessarily "failed" because it has not secured the public allegiance of the "man in the street," or because some professing Jews, Christians, or Mohammedans do not live up to their faiths, or are perhaps bigoted? In order to succeed, Spiritualism will have to become organised, and even orthodox, and if it be, as it claims to be, a religion it will inevitably develop dogmas and even prejudices.

Surely a great popular following has never been a proof of any great doctrinal system. That there are many people now who hold extreme hedonistic opinions and live hedonistic lives is no proof that they have discovered the true religion of humanity.

The meetings referred to were all followed by the usual clairvoyance—in every case evidential or apparently evidential messages were given; I myself received a message of which I could not doubt the truth, but it did not make me feel that I had thereby been raised to meet the communicating spirit on any high spiritual plane, or that it strengthened my own conviction of survival. I realise that these intimate family messages must be useful and comforting to those who either have not reached faith in personal survival of death, or have never experienced that higher spiritual communion known to Christians as the Communion of Saints—not necessarily the Saints in the restricted sense, but the spirits of men and women of good will. The ultimate effect of these meetings was saddening; they showed a pathetic reliance on material evidence, a tendency to rest on the psychic, or may be even the astral plane, thereby losing that far closer union of spirit with spirit which is attained by oneness with the spiritual realms as felt in any true Worship. The Astral is after all—the world of illusion.

Spiritualism, wisely presented, is such a strong bulwark to the structure of religious knowledge, a great help to religions, but try as I may, I cannot discover that it is itself a religion.

There is plenty for the propagandist to do in weaning the world from materialistic conceptions of the present life, and in proving that the next stage of being is conditioned by the life led here, and it seems sad that so much time should be spent in belittling the faiths and forms of faith, which, however imperfectly manifested by their professing followers, are at least working "on the side of the Angels."

In order that no confusion should arise, members of the London Spiritualist Alliance are notified that the Research Branch of the Alliance, The London Psychical Laboratory, is located at 16 Queensberry Place and has no connection whatever with The National Laboratory of Psychical Research which has terminated its tenancy on the above premises.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS

It was said lately that Sir Oliver Lodge had made belief in spirits fashionable, so that it was no longer regarded as a sign of intelligence to confess that one does not believe in ghosts. However this may be, I have observed that many religious people speak with great respect of Sir Oliver as a scientist who upholds one of the cardinal doctrines of the Church, as a matter of proved reality and not an idea resting wholly on faith.

* * *

One thing which has greatly impressed me in connection with the working of some of our societies is the number of people who shew not only a quiet zeal but a self-effacing character. They are not anxious to be noticed or to be praised for their work. They make sacrifices for its sake, of which they say nothing. Doubtless they will gain a rich reward somewhere, and at some time, although they are so little concerned about it here and now.

* * *

When the Pressman at the Salvation Army meeting was asked by a Hallelujah lass whether he was saved, he replied in some dismay: "I? Why I'm a reporter!" Equally, it is a little embarrassing to face the question, "Are you a spiritualist?" The simple "Yes" seems occasionally to call for qualification, because to some of us Spiritualism is not in itself a religion or a philosophy, but a body of facts authenticating the belief in a life after death, without which the life on earth would have neither meaning nor purpose. In this aspect, then, Spiritualism is quite as much the affair of Science as of Religion.

* * *

In his address at the meeting of the Survival League at the Royalty Theatre the other Sunday, Hannen Swaffer made special allusion to the finger-prints obtained at the Margery Circle—those of Walter Stinson and Judge Hill. He claimed that these prints conclusively proved the case for survival. They would do so, of course, in any reasonable mind instructed in the facts. But we have always with us the descendants of those of old of whom it is said they would not believe though one rose from the dead. It is a god-like task to contend against such a state of mind, but it is one against which even the gods strive in vain.

* * *

Many years ago I came into touch with some persons interested in alchemy, and learned that one of them had spent many years and a great deal of money in experiments on the lines of the ancient alchemists, but his efforts at acquiring the secret of making gold were not a success. I thought of this case on reading Mr. Frederic Thurstan's article in the *March Occult Review*, in which he writes of "The Secret of the Fortune made by Nicholas Flamel," an alchemist who flourished in the fourteenth century. Now, Flamel and his wife were so lavish in their expenditure in the founding and endowing of hospitals, chapels, churches and other pious institutions that Mr. Thurstan maintains that although Flamel only confesses he made one and a half pounds of gold by his alchemy, he probably made much more. He did not disclose his secret, but "a perusal of Flamel's other writings proves that he was an accomplished mystic." Quite so. Many of the alchemists were mystics, but just how their mysticism led to, or from, material forms of transmutation—converting, for instance mercury into gold—I have never been able to discover. Perhaps modern science which has found out so much will one day surprise this secret also.

D.G.

SOME EXAMPLES OF PSYCHIC SENSITIVENESS

By LEIGH HUNT

THAT "a Medium's lot is not a happy one" has become, amongst spiritualists, a saying almost as frequently used as is the famous Gilbertian quotation of which it is a paraphrase. It is all very well to be told that "one should make oneself positive against adverse psychic conditions," but although I know this can be done—and have often done it myself—there will, at times, remain effects which demonstrate the truth of the saying.

From many psychic experiences illustrating the point, I select the following:—

Some years ago whenever I passed a certain house in a London street, I was conscious of a feeling of great repugnance. It was inconvenient to have to avoid this street, since it was a short cut to a place I had frequently to visit; nevertheless, I could never rid myself of the unpleasant sensation if I went that way. On making inquiries I learned that, some years before, a man had committed suicide by throwing himself from the top balcony of the house.

At one time I lived in a house in South Western London. While there I was always conscious of mental uneasiness on passing along a certain landing. It was a sensation akin to intense excitement not to be accounted for in any normal way. I did not mention the fact to anyone, but one day a well-known Medium who visited me said, "I like this house, but what is the peculiar influence on the top landing?" I answered that I also had noticed it but could not discover the cause. Nor have I since been able to ascertain it, although I have lately heard that the house had borne an unsavoury reputation in times past.

I am glad to be able to record that, in my own experience, the pleasant side of mediumship has far outweighed the unpleasant one. One such example I venture to set down here.

We live near a well-known aerodrome and our experiences during the Great War were naturally affected by the fact. Little damage, however, was done by aircraft in our immediate vicinity, but on many occasions I was greatly comforted by the appearance of a little old lady whom I clairvoyantly saw as I was closing my house at night. She would shew herself to me, seated in an armchair, busily knitting. I tried to get her to speak to me, but she would only look up from her knitting and smile; it was, however, such a reassuring smile that I went to bed greatly comforted. My wife was always reassured when I told her of the vision, for on such occasions we found we were never disturbed by aerial attacks.

THE EARTHQUAKE AT NAPIER

IN a letter we have just received from Mrs. May Cottrell, so well-known for her mediumistic gifts, she writes:

Just a short note to let you know I am safe and sound after the terrible earthquake that left our beautiful Napier in ruins. My husband had a thrilling escape from falling masonry, and received only slight wounds and some bruises. The children were in the school playground. So we are all safe and sound.

I have been asked by friends who know of my psychic gifts if I had any warning of the coming disaster. No definite or precise information was given to me, but for some days I had an all-pervading and almost constant premonition of some coming catastrophe.

Here is a little item of interest. A framed post-card portrait (signed) of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle stood on the mantelpiece in the living room. When the 'quake was over this picture was the only one that stood in its original position, even though the chimney was shaken and the outside portion fell on the roof.

BOOK NOTES AND REVIEWS

"Shining Wings," by D. M. MacIntyre (Cecil Palmer, 7/6 net).

A very readable novel, in which Spiritualism is dealt with, but not obtrusively. The scene of the story is the Isle of Seile, off the Western Highlands of Scotland, which the author appears to know intimately—the descriptions are convincing. "The major motive of this tale is to excite the interest of those who are students of the philosophy of life," we are told in a brief foreword. That end should be attained, for the author writes with knowledge and art.

J.A.N.C.

THE BOOKS OF R. J. LEES

By HELGI PJETURSS, Ph.D., (Reykjavik, Iceland)

SOME years ago, the late R. J. Lees wrote me that he was preparing a book to be called *The Gate of Heaven*. So far as I am aware the book has not appeared; but if there is a MS left and did it but contain a fragment of the intended work, it is much to be hoped that it will not be withheld from the public. The books of R. J. Lees, *Through the Mists* and *The Life Elysian*, containing the description of the after-life of a good man, are of extraordinary interest and have hardly received the attention they deserve. It seems that spiritualists in general are by no means eager to learn about after-life conditions; and yet in people who have won through to the conviction that there really is a life after death, such a lack of interest is difficult to understand. Highly instructive it is to compare the description of the after-life of a good man, as recorded by R. J. Lees, with that of a bad man, as given in J. S. M. Ward's wonderful *Gone West*, in several respects the summit of metabiographical work, as far as known to me. In fact, such books contain what must be considered a sufficient evidence for the existence of a life after death.

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