
"Fools deride. Philosophers investigate."

Life and Action

The Great Work in America

Name and contents copyrighted. All rights reserved.

Vol. I

January-February 1910

No. IV

Why Does *The Great School* Withhold Public Demonstrations of Psychic Phenomena?



THE QUESTION BOX in your Journal attracts my attention. Some questions are in my mind that seem to me much more important than the purely personal ones you have disposed of in the September issue of *Life and Action*. Will you not, in some future issue, respond as fully and unequivocally as you have there done, to such problems as I shall here present?

Permit me to introduce the first by three statements which I suppose you will accept.

1. You are a member of the Great School,—A Master of the Law.

2. A Master "is able to converse with the inhabitants of the Spiritual World as freely and as naturally as he does with those of the physical."

3. You decline to make any verification of this wonderful power, to or for any person whomsoever.

Now, in view of the fact that anything so out of the ordinary can never be widely accepted without verification, and of the immeasurable importance of the knowledge you are

[Page 1]

LIFE AND ACTION

presumably able to impart, and which the world is agonizing to receive, how can such refusal be justified?

It would seem that there must be some inhibition which you deem of transcendent importance; for the ordinary impulses of human kindness, of which I am sure you have a full share, would prompt you to give comfort to people in general, who simply cannot be your disciples.

The Great Teacher of Nazareth had compassion on the multitude and fed them, and showed his peculiar powers in many ways. Did not the Teacher from India prove to you in his introduction of himself that he possessed supernormal power,—or knowledge?

My next inquiry pertains to the S. P. R.

The outcome of Psychical Research thus far can hardly be better stated than is done by Prof. James in the October number of *The American Magazine*. He admits that after twenty-five years of effort in that line he is still baffled; but he says with much emphasis that the research should be continued and is "persuaded" that along this line "the greatest conquest of the coming generation will be achieved".

Although "in full sympathy with its purposes" your attitude towards this Society is not one of sympathy or approval. The advances of Dr. Buck were not "in accord with your own personal wishes". You disapprove of their methods; and utterly condemn [in the Great Psychological Crime] the sort of phenomena they investigate.

Now, what, in your judgment, ought the S. P. R. to do? Would you have them discontinue their work and disband? If they should do this would not the world be the poorer by so much as is signified by an earnest quest for the truth on the part of some of the most intellectually and spiritually advanced persons of our time?

Whether disbanded or otherwise, if they should turn to
[Page 2]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

you for light it would seem that they must come uninvited; and if they came what could you consistently say to them other than that you could render no assistance in the solution of their great problem, except to an infinitesimal number whom you might find "worthy and well qualified" to make the "Personal Demonstration"?

In conclusion permit me to essay an answer to your questions on page 31 of the September magazine.

The "definite and specific kind of other and different phenomena" that "would meet the demands of science", and also of aching but skeptical hearts, is this: *bring, for public use, some unmistakable messages,—even one,—from the world of spirits.*

Please do not condemn this by saying it would be "a purely physical demonstration of an exclusively spiritual problem". It would be in line with the way we here make known our spiritual natures to each other; and the only available sort of way when persons are not in the immediate presence of each other.

You might urge the difficulty of bringing a message that would be "unmistakable". This is a real difficulty, but certainly not an insurmountable one, under the hypothesis herein assumed. If it is possible "to converse with the inhabitants of the Spiritual World as freely and as naturally as with those of the physical" it is inconceivable that the identity of a spiritual inhabitant could not be established, and an authentic message transmitted.

But suppose that after the best had been done there were still doubters; suppose the believers were only a small fraction of the whole; would not the delight of the few and the pleasure of inaugurating a beneficent influence that would tend to permeate an ever widening circle be ample reward for any trouble that might or could be taken in the matter?

Imagine if you can the ameliorating effect if Professor

LIFE AND ACTION

James, or some other of these "baffled Researchers who has the public ear, should declare, even without giving name, place or circumstance, "I have found a man who convinced me that he can and does hold converse with disembodied human beings,—the so-called Dead".

Cordially yours,

October 16, 1909.

G. D. B.

Answer.

My dear Friend:—

Let me relieve my conscience by confessing at the outset that you have set me a most difficult task. This, however, is not because of my inability to answer each and every question you have asked. It is only because you unintentionally, and I am sure unwittingly, have woven into your several questions, as well as into the premises from which some of them proceed, certain suggestions, assumptions and data, some of which are not strictly true, and are therefore misleading.

This lays upon me the burden of separating the true from the false. In order thus to establish a clear and unqualified basis of fact from which to proceed, it would seem necessary for me to review your statements with the utmost care and point out wherein you have thus introduced error into the record.

It is my earnest desire to cover every point clearly and respond to each of your questions without equivocation and in such manner as to remove from your mind the notion that I have at any time sought to evade you. It is in this "clearing of the ground" that you have set me a difficult task, and for this reason I trust you will follow me patiently to the end, with an open mind, free from prejudice.

Let us begin, then, at the beginning. You introduce your questions with three statements which you assume to be correct, and which you therefore suppose I will accept. It so

[Page 4]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

happens, however, that your third statement is not true. Doubtless you thought it was, but this does not alter the fact that you therein have introduced error into the record at the very outset.

For, you are simply mistaken when you assume, and assert, that I "decline to make any verification" of my spiritual powers "to or for any person whomsoever".

On the contrary, there are several intelligent people right here in Chicago, who know that your statement is not correct. There are others in Cincinnati, New York City, Seattle, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, and a number of other places, who know the same thing. All of these would gladly testify to the truthfulness of my assertion, if they believed the best interests of the Cause would be conserved thereby.

For it is a fact that among the Students and Friends of this School and Work [solely for the purposes of instruction and elucidation, and for testing their own spiritual development and powers], I have made a number of "verifications", and likewise have made it possible for some of them to do the same thing.

If I am not mistaken, you have heard some of the testimony of at least one or two of these Students and Friends to whom I refer. I am also fully persuaded in my own mind that, down deep in your inner consciousness, you regard them as not only sane but as honest and intelligent people who are worthy of your confidence.

And yet, judging from the nature of your questions and statements, you do not accept either their word or mine. It just occurs to me to ask why it is that you cannot trust the word of such people as Florence Huntley, Dr. E. M. Webster, Dr. J. D. Buck and myself. I do not believe you question either the honesty, the sanity, the intelligence or the general character and standing of any one of us. And yet, you doubt

LIFE AND ACTION

the verity of our statements, just the same. Why is this? Is it not because the order of your mind is such that nothing short of the actual *personal experience* would ever satisfy you concerning the problem of another life? I am entirely sure that this analysis of your position and attitude is correct.

I am equally convinced that if Prof. James should come to you and say the very words you put into his hypothetical mouth, namely: "I have found a man who convinced me that he can and does hold converse with ex-carnate persons, the so-called dead", you would either think, "Poor man, I fear he is over-credulous", or you would say, "Take me to that same man and let me see if he can convince ME". You would not take his word for it, any more than you do that of Mrs. Huntley, Dr. Webster and Dr. Buck. You would simply put his statement down in the general category of "evidence" and go right on doubting, until you could prove the truth for yourself by a *personal experience*.

Why do I say this? Because I have met you personally and believe I know the character of your skepticism. Is it not a fact that such eminent scientists as Prof. Crooks, Lombroso, Flammarion, Prof. Lodge, Alfred Russel Wallace, Wm. T. Stead [and many other men of equal standing with Prof. James] have announced to the world that they have satisfied *themselves* upon the great problem — "If a man die, shall he live again?" You do not question their honesty, sincerity, intelligence or sanity. The scientific status of Crooks, Lodge, Lombroso and Wallace is in every respect equal to that of James; but you do not accept their findings as conclusive. Why? Because *their* experiences are not *yours*. Nothing they could do would ever make them yours. And you are so constituted that nothing short of the *personal experience* will ever satisfy *you*. And I do not condemn you in the least for this. You cannot help it. It is your nature.

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

Answering your first question directly and unequivocally, it is not true that I have "declined to make any verification to or for any person whomsoever."

It is true, however, that I have assumed to exercise what I believe to be a wise discretion and a just discrimination as to the particular individuals "to and for" whom I have made "verifications."

It is also true that I have "declined" to make such verification for quite a number of people. This has been for various reasons which in every instance have appeared to me good and sufficient. In some cases I have known that the individuals were moved by nothing more worthy or exalted than mere curiosity. In others I have known that the individuals were deliberately dishonest, and were seeking only for an opportunity to exploit themselves at my expense, if possible. In other instances I have known that the individuals were both hostile and bitterly prejudiced, and in no attitude of mind to receive any benefit therefrom. In others still, I have been convinced that the skepticism of the individual was of so exaggerated and unreasonable a character that he would not trust the evidences of his own senses. Of these latter it has been wisely said: "Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

In other words, I have had a heavy burden of responsibility upon me, and to the best of my ability I have discriminated wisely and justly as to the individuals I have taken into confidence concerning my inner life and experiences. In doing so I am conscious that I have disappointed a number of people. But this fact does not convince me that I have been in error. I am as firmly convinced today as at any time in the past that I have exercised a wise discretion and a just discrimination in every instance wherein I have failed to respond to the demand for a "sign".

LIFE AND ACTION

I wish I could say the same thing with equal certainty concerning all those to whom I have opened the door of my confidence. Experience has taught me, however, that in a number of instances I have been far too eager to serve those who have come asking for a "demonstration".

I can readily believe that [in the exercise of a fallible judgment] I am more than likely to disappoint other individuals in the times to come. If so, however, let me assure you that it will not be because of any desire on my part to be unkind or ungracious, nor because it gives me any pleasure to see my fellows suffer. Neither do I seek their enmity.

Just here let me call your attention to another point wherein I am convinced that you are in equal error. In your first question you make use of the expression, "The knowledge you could impart and the *world is agonizing to receive*". [The italics are mine.]

After twenty-six years of intense and unremitting effort to "impart" that very knowledge to the world, in any and every way that has appeared to me judicious, wise and effective, I am sure that the evidence is far more than ample to justify me in the firm conviction that "the world", in general, is not "agonizing" over the subject. If my own efforts to give this knowledge to the world may be taken as a legitimate basis for estimating the attitude of the world on the subject, then I am entirely safe in assuming that, even among the most intelligent people on earth, it is the rarest exception to find one who is sufficiently "agonized" to give the subject more than passing consideration.

I was sixteen years in finding just two students who were sufficiently "agonized" over the great problem of another life to enter upon the work of verification. These were my first two regular students. And during all that time my search was earnest and unremitting. Since then the work has not

[Page 8]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

been so extremely difficult, and I am deeply gratified to note what appears to be a somewhat general awakening of interest in the subject at present, more especially in this country.

If I remember correctly, the way was opened at one time for you to enter upon the work, and you respectfully declined to do so. This was your perfect right, and I do not blame you in the least. It is not the purpose of the School to proselyte. Experience has taught the members of the Great School that no man is ready for knowledge of this nature until he is willing to seek it, and to comply with whatever conditions may be necessary to obtain it. It is worse than folly to attempt to thrust such knowledge upon those who do not want it bad enough to make an honest effort commensurate with its importance.

Two of my students who possess the right degree and quality of interest in the subject, with the willingness to make the necessary effort, have just finished a week of the most intense labor along the lines of the Technical Work, and both have made the "verification". They both feel that there is no treasure of earth of sufficient value to compensate them for that which they have accomplished, for they have seen the glories of the world beyond the physical, and they *know* that there is another life. It is not necessary for them to depend upon the opinion or the belief or the judgment of Prof. James, or any other man; for they have made the demonstration *through a personal experience*, and they KNOW. But they cannot make *you* know, nor would they if they could unless you complied with all the necessary conditions.

As evidence that my own treatment of the subject of "phenomena" is open to criticism, you point to the fact that "The Great Teacher of Nazareth had compassion on the multitude and fed them"; and that he also "showed his peculiar power in many ways."

LIFE AND ACTION

That was his particular method. I am willing also to concede that he knew what he was doing. That does not convince me, however, that I am in the wrong; nor that if Jesus were among us at this time he would employ the same methods today among the people of this enlightened western world which he employed 1900 years ago among the Jews of Palestine.

You might also have told me that he went barefoot. I do not believe he would do so now, especially in this colder climate, nor among our people who are accustomed to wearing shoes.

You may remember that he also "spoke in parables". Do you think he would do so if he were among us today? I am free to confess that I do not believe he would. Why? Because of my confidence in his wisdom and discretion. I believe that he would recognize as clearly as you and I do, that the day of "parables" and "allegories" is past, so far as the people of this western world are concerned. If he were here now, I am convinced that his appeal would be to the rational intelligence and scientific demands of our people,—“to the progressive intelligence of the age”.

Indeed, I am fully convinced that "Jesus the Nazarene" did many things in the days of 1900 years ago among the Jews, which "Jesus the Chicago-ene" would never today do if he were out here among the people who abide on the shores of Lake Michigan, in the state of Illinois, U. S. A.

At the same time, I concede that the methods he employed among the Jewish people 1900 years ago were those best adapted to the needs of that time and people. But if any man were to come among us today, as he came among his people then, and should employ the same methods [and those only] which he employed, I should feel that he was 1900 years behind the times. And I believe you and every other intelligent student and thinker among us would feel the same way.

For these reasons, together with others which might be
[Page 10]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

mentioned if space would permit, I cannot bring myself to feel that your point is well taken.

In like manner, you also remind me that the Great Master who came from far-off India to induct me into a knowledge of the Great School and its Work, proved to me that he possessed "supernormal powers", and most unusual knowledge.

Without stopping to cavil over the use you make of the term "supernormal", but accepting it in the sense of "above the ordinary", you are entirely correct. He did give me evidence of what appeared to me transcendent knowledge and power.

Again let me say, that was his particular method, at that particular time and under the peculiar conditions which then obtained. But if you will recall the full recital of that particular experience, you will remember that I was the only individual to whom he made such a demonstration of his wonderful powers. He was with me for thirteen months. During that time it would have been possible for him, had he been so inclined, to make a similar demonstration in the presence of every one of the 20,000 residents of the town wherein I was then located. Did he do so? No. Why? Because he did not believe that method of procedure would accomplish the largest measure of good results, all things duly considered.

I give him credit for both the transcendent knowledge and the equally transcendent wisdom and discretion to make a just and proper use of it. I am not vain enough nor foolish enough to think for one instant that I was the only individual in all this country, at that time, capable of receiving such an instruction. But I am convinced that in limiting his gift to me, at that time, the Great Master was doing what *HE* believed was for the best interests of the Work he had in charge. Who will dispute his wisdom or good faith? Who can disprove either?

In other words, he was exercising what he believed to be

[Page 11]

LIFE AND ACTION

a wise discretion at the time, and in making such an unusual discrimination he was endeavoring to discharge the responsibility which his greater knowledge imposed upon him. He had been commissioned by the Great School and Friends to do a certain definite Work. By virtue of its character and purposes it was a Work which fixed upon him a heavy burden of personal responsibility. I believe with all my heart that he understood and appreciated the nature, gravity and meaning of that responsibility far more deeply and justly than it is possible for you or me or any other man to do, until we have been commissioned by an equally Great School to do an equally vital and responsible Work. And I believe that in following his own best judgment in the light of his own profound knowledge and great wisdom, he discharged his personal responsibility far better than he would have done had he followed your advice or mine or that of any other man of far less knowledge and ability than himself, or of one who was unfamiliar with the scope, method and purpose of the Work to be accomplished. Do you not agree with me in this conclusion?

Furthermore, since you have noted what appears to you a difference between his methods and my own, it may be of interest to you to know that during all these years he has been and is today one of my counselors and advisers; and that the course I have followed concerning the subject of "phenomena" has his unqualified commendation and approval.

The foregoing observations lead me to the consideration of another phase of the entire subject which it appears to me you have overlooked. This has reference to the right *use* of unusual knowledge and the proper discharge of personal responsibilities.

Do you not believe, as a general proposition, that any body of men [such as the Great School, for instance] who, through long and continued personal effort, have acquired an unusual

[Page 12]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

scientific knowledge, are better qualified to understand, appreciate and discharge the responsibilities which such knowledge imposes upon them than anybody else of inferior knowledge could be? Do you think they would be justified in permitting you or any other unschooled individual to direct them as to the particular method they should employ to discharge their own personal responsibilities? If so, on what grounds?

If you possessed such knowledge, and had spent an average lifetime in trying to learn how best to use it for the good of humanity, do you think you would graciously entrust some school-boy, or some individual virtually unacquainted with the subject, with the responsibility of telling you what you should do with it, and how you should do it? Do you not think it would involve an element of presumption on his part, if some man who confessed his ignorance of the subject should insistently and persistently find fault with you because you could not see your way clear to conform your work to his particular ideas?

Among all the men I know, I do not recall one whose intelligence and intellectual pride I believe would be more deeply offended than yours, under the conditions above suggested. And yet, my dear Friend, that is precisely the proposition you present to the Great School, through one of its representatives.

If you give the Great School credit for possessing the knowledge it claims to have acquired, then it would appear to me that you should give its members credit for the intelligence to discharge the responsibilities which that knowledge imposes upon them. Does not consistency demand this of you? It would appear so to me. If, however, you doubt its knowledge, then of course, it is but natural that you should seek to expose its fallacies and pretensions to public condemnation.

Passing now to the consideration of your question concerning the Society for Psychical Research, let me see if I can make my position entirely clear to you.

LIFE AND ACTION

I have not seen the report of Prof. James to which you refer, but I gather from your own statement of the matter that after twenty-five years of effort in that line he is still baffled. But you tell me that with much emphasis he says the research should be continued, and that he is "persuaded" that along that line "the greatest conquest of the coming generation will be achieved".

You then ask me what, in my judgment, the S. P. R. ought to do. Without the least equivocation or mental reservation let me reply: Just so long as Prof. James and other officers and members of that Society honestly believe that their work is along right lines, and that they are moving toward the splendid goal he has prophesied, there is but one thing possible for them to do, and that is, GO RIGHT ON. I would not think of having them disband. Is that clear?

I have said on more than one occasion that I am in full sympathy and accord with the *purposes* of that Society. Let me say it once more. And this tells you that I believe those *purposes* to be honest and worthy.

But I am *not* in sympathy with the *methods* employed by the Society. Neither do I believe that Society will achieve "the greatest conquest of the coming generation" so long as it follows its *present* methods.

I am not in sympathy with the methods of that School, for two reasons:

1. Because they involve the operation of a destructive process [psychic subjection].
2. Because I do not believe they will ever achieve the desired results along that line of scientific investigation, [the purely phenomenal].

Are not these good and sufficient reasons for my attitude? So long as I see the matter in this light do you not think I am entirely justified in following the methods of the Great School [Page 14]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

which I believe to be scientifically correct, and in which I have perfect confidence? Will you tell me how I could do otherwise and at the same time be honest with myself?

The fact, however, that the two Schools employ radically different methods of demonstration, and approach the great problem from opposite directions, does not appear to me a sufficient reason why either should disband. Neither does it appear to me just ground for enmity between them. I am sure there is none on the part of the Great School or its members.

You say that I "utterly condemn [in the Great Psychological Crime] the sort of phenomena they [the Society for Psychical Research] investigate." In this again you are mistaken. I do not condemn the *phenomena*. I do condemn the *process* by which the phenomena are produced. That is all. Do you see the difference?

And now can you understand why it was that Dr. Buck's efforts to bring Profs. James and Hyslop and myself together were not in accord with my own personal wishes? It was because the methods of their Society and those of this School are so widely at variance as to furnish us no basis for cooperative effort. It was because I knew in advance that they would not adopt the methods of this School, and that I could not adopt theirs. I felt then, and I feel now, that it would have been a waste of time and effort on both their part and mine. I felt then, and I feel now, that nothing of value could result from such a meeting, so long as these conditions exist. If you were in my position I am sure you would feel the same way about it.

Suppose the Vivisection Society should ask me to submit myself to a surgical operation for the purpose of giving them an opportunity to see if they could find a "Soul" in me. And suppose I were fully convinced in advance that such an operation would be wholly ineffectual for the purpose intended, and at

LIFE AND ACTION

the same time that it involved considerable danger to my life and health. Do you think I would be justified in submitting myself to the methods of that Society? Do you think it would be right for you or for them to insist upon my submission to such an operation?

So long as the members of the S. P. R. continue to employ their present methods, I see no basis for active cooperation between the two Schools. Just so long I am convinced that the S. P. R. will not discover that for which they are in search. But that is their business and not mine. I do not intend to ask them to change their methods nor to disband. I trust they will be equally considerate of the Great School and myself. There is no reason why we should be enemies. I give them full credit for entire honesty of motives and purposes, and perfect good faith in the methods they employ.

At the same time, if the phenomena they already have examined are not sufficient to constitute a scientific demonstration of another life which will satisfy the world, I do not believe they ever will make the demonstration along purely phenomenal lines of inquiry. By this I mean the kind of demonstration that will meet the demands of that great world of "agonized" humanity to which you have referred, and of which you seem to be a part.

Regardless of what they may say for publication, I am convinced that deep down within their inmost souls both Hyslop and James are entirely satisfied that members of their Society have witnessed phenomena that establish the existence of another life. Lodge, Crooks, Wallace, Flammarion, Stead, Lombroso, and many other equally brilliant men of science and letters have done the same thing. And I am entirely convinced that they are all correct in that conclusion.

At the same time, if all these able and brilliant men, and a hundred others of the same character and standing, should
[Page 16]

publish to the world over their own signatures the results of their findings, that fact would not satisfy YOU. Neither would it satisfy the great skeptical world. It might give you a broader ground for Faith but you would still demand the *personal experience* before you would be content, or before you would be able to go before the world and say "I know".

This completes my reply to that part of your letter covering the specific questions you desired me to answer. I trust I have made myself entirely clear, and that you will now somewhat better understand my position on the subjects considered. I trust you will also understand and appreciate the spirit of fraternal good will which has prompted me thus to respond at such length. I do not want to be misunderstood. Neither do I want to be placed in a false position. By fair means only do I want to earn the confidence of those who have honored me by a careful and unbiased reading and consideration of the published records I have given to the world. If those records do not impress the reader with confidence in the integrity, sincerity, sanity and intelligence of the writer, then it would seem to me that there is nothing I can say or do that would have the desired effect.

And now, lest you and our readers may have cause to feel that I have tried to evade or avoid the latter part of your letter wherein you reply to my questions on page 31 of our September magazine, please follow me with patience a little further:

On the page noted, referring to the position and work of the S. P. R., I asked these questions:

1. "If phenomena were ever sufficient to satisfy the demands of physical science, what more do they want, or need?"
2. "If the phenomena they already have verified are not sufficient to enable them to write 'Q. E. D.' what definite and specific kinds of other and different phenomena would meet the demands of 'science'?"

LIFE AND ACTION

Your answer is: "*Bring, for public use, some unmistakable message,—even one,—from the world of spirits.*"

My dear Friend, if I did not have your own definite assurance that you are a member of the Society for Psychical Research, your answer would convince me that you were virtually unacquainted with the work of psychological research during the last twenty years.

If "one unmistakable message" were sufficient, then the thing has been accomplished long ago, and many times over—in so far as such a thing is possible through any intermediary. For, not only one such message has come from the world of spirits, but many messages have come under the most rigidly exacting test conditions which the minds of intelligent men can devise. And yet, such messages do not satisfy men of your type. Neither do they satisfy those who are pursuing the subject from the viewpoint of, and according to the methods employed by, the school of physical science.

Why do I say this? Because the evidence is overwhelming and conclusive. For instance:

1. Here is Mr. William T. Stead, a member of the S.P.R. with yourself [the English branch, however], and one of the most widely known men of letters and affairs in the whole world; a man whose intelligence and integrity are acknowledged. He has established a "Bureau" of communication between the two worlds, with his former friend and acquaintance, "Julia" [Ames], in charge of the spiritual side of the Bureau, and himself in charge of the physical side.

He claims to have established such test conditions as should make fraud impossible. Under these conditions he asks "Julia" to bring his former acquaintance William E. Gladstone, the great statesman, to him for an interview. She does so, and the interview is published by Mr. Stead. Do you accept it as "unmistakable"? Does the world so accept it?

2. Max Nordau looked to Lombroso as his "Master". Lombroso claimed to have received many "unmistakable messages" from the spirit world, through the now famous medium Euſapia Palladino. And yet, Nordau would not trust the judgment of his own beloved Master. Do you? Does the world? Do these "unmistakable messages" mean anything to anybody outside the few who have been in position to verify the possibility of such things? No. For if they did you would not be writing me for "even one" such message with which to satisfy yourself and an "agonized" world.

More than this, just so long as any intermediary whatsoever is employed, just that long will the same condition remain. By this I mean that just so long as the scientific gentlemen who are making the investigations for the S. P. R. cannot open their own spiritual eyes and look into their spiritual environment and see for themselves — in other words, just so long as they must depend upon some third party as an intermediary through whom the messages come to them, so long the element of uncertainty will forever remain, to the minds of these so-called scientists, and to such men as yourself.

And therefore, just so long as they must depend thus upon any intermediary, however perfect it may be, there is absolutely no message that can come to them from the spirit world which they will accept as "unmistakable".

For, no matter what "test conditions" may be made, these great scientists will be able to find or invent some alleged "hypothesis" upon which to explain that the message could have been received without the necessity for spiritual intervention at all. In other words, it may have been communicated to the "subjective mind" of the medium, or intermediary, from the "subjective mind" of some individual on the physical plane. Indeed, this seems to be the established method of disposing of such messages as are communicated through mediums to

LIFE AND ACTION

those in the physical body.

If you have made a careful study of Hudson's "Law of Psychic Phenomena", you will have in mind the method by which he accounts, to his own seeming satisfaction, for every message that could possibly come to a physically embodied individual through any intermediary, without the necessity of referring it to spiritual sources at all.

On the basis of his "hypothesis" of the "double mind" he shows, with great cleverness, that it may be possible for the "subjective mind" of one individual to receive a suggestion from the "subjective mind" of another individual on the physical plane. If I remember correctly, he claims that this might be done without even the transmitter being aware of having transmitted such a thought or suggestion to the mind of any other individual at all. And he goes still further and makes it appear that such "subconscious" messages or suggestions may travel any distance, and that they are therefore not at all limited to the sitters in any given seance or experiment.

On this basis you can readily see that if a group of S. P. R. members were in session with a medium, under all the "test conditions" that could be suggested, the medium would still be open to suggestions from the "subjective minds" of physically embodied intelligences anywhere and everywhere; and on the basis of such an "hypothesis" an "unmistakable" message becomes an utter impossibility.

Under this "hypothesis" let us suppose that Profs. James and Hyslop, in the dead of night, at the bottom of a shaft 4000 feet deep, with no living physically embodied person in 1000 miles of them, should agree that the one of them who should die first would come back, and through some medium whom neither of them knew or ever had heard of, deliver a message to the survivor, the exact wording of which message was agreed upon by the two Professors down at the bottom of that shaft
[Page 20]

and never communicated consciously to any living person.

Now let us suppose that Prof. James died, and that through some medium which neither of them ever knew or heard of, that identical message should come to Prof. Hyslop. Would you consider and accept such a test as a "scientific demonstration", or as an "unmistakable message"? Would Prof. Hyslop accept it as sufficient and exclaim "It is accomplished"? Would the "agonized" world cease its "agonizing" and accept the demonstration as conclusive? Let us see.

On the basis of Hudson's "hypothesis", the medium might have received the message direct from the "subjective mind" of Prof. Hyslop himself. Or, the "subjective mind" of Prof. Hyslop might have conveyed it unconsciously to the "subjective mind" of some other member of the group from whom the medium might have gotten it. Or, if nobody were present but Hyslop and the medium, then at some time previously the "subjective mind" of Hyslop might have conveyed the message to the "subjective mind" of some entire stranger on the opposite side of the earth, without knowing it, and that individual unconsciously may have transmitted the message to the mind of the medium - and so on *ad infinitum*.

Thus it appears that if Hudson's "hypothesis" is to be given any weight or consideration, it is possible for such a message to find its way to the mind of the medium through the "subjective minds" of any number of individuals still in the physical body, thus throwing doubt and uncertainty upon the spiritual significance of the proceeding.

It is just because of such inane, ridiculous and unscientific "hypotheses" as this that men who choose to call themselves "scientists" make it impossible under any circumstances whatsoever to receive an "unmistakable message from the world of spirits".

¶ It has been shown conclusively that Hudson's "hypothesis"

LIFE AND ACTION

upon which he formulated his now famous work, "The Law of Psychic Phenomena", is self-contradictory, illogical and unscientific. Nevertheless, it has become the basis from which much, if not all, of the investigations of physical science are conducted today.

Possibly this may give you a clearer idea of why I am convinced that the methods of investigation generally employed by those who are associated with the school of physical materialism will never accomplish scientific results. Until they are able to develop and formulate some intelligent "hypothesis" which is at least as simple, rational and satisfying as that of "spirit communication", they will never make a "demonstration" that will satisfy the demands of sanely and intelligently skeptical people.

Just so long as those who are charged with the responsibility of investigating these great and vital problems refuse to accept the evidences of their own senses, or the testimony of sane, intelligent and honest people, just so long will the "agonized" public, for whom we all sympathize so deeply, remain in spiritual darkness.

Let me repeat that "unmistakable messages from the world of spirits" are being received by men and women in the physical body every day. Some of these, I am convinced are known to and have been received by members of the S. P. R. The trouble seems to be that the members of that august body do not recognize such a message when they receive it. By the time they have tried all their imaginary "hypotheses" upon it, they leave the "agonized" public with the impression that something is wrong with the message; whereas the only thing wrong, I am convinced, is with the investigators and their methods of investigation.

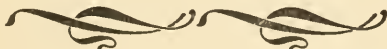
Let me repeat in conclusion, that just so long as the S. P. R. finds it necessary to employ, or depend upon, an intermediary

[Page 22]

[medium, hypnotic subject, or psychic] the demonstrations of that Society will never reach the dignity of true Science. There will always remain that element of uncertainty which they will never be able to overcome, so far as the general public may be concerned.

Furthermore, if the members of that Society were to adopt the methods of this School, take the technical instruction, complete the work, and make the demonstration through a *personal experience*, they would still find themselves unable to convey their knowledge to the world in such manner as to carry unqualified conviction to the masses. They still would find, as I have found, that the work of demonstration, difficult though it be, is nothing to compare with the difficulty of overcoming the ignorance, superstition, prejudice, indifference, stupidity, selfishness, intellectual vanity and general hostility of the public, sufficiently to gain for them a thoughtful and unbiased hearing.

TK



A PROMISE.

*"If only we strive to be pure and true
To each of us all there will come an hour
When the tree of life shall burst into flower
And rain at our feet the wonderful dower
Of something grander than ever we knew."*

Wordsworth.

Corroborations

By J. D. Buck, M. D.



T can scarcely be too often repeated, or too strongly insisted, that the evidence of Truth is intrinsic, that is - in itself. Truth is its own warrant and its own interpreter. This is not dogma, but its exact opposite. I might say Truth is truth, *because it is*: not because anybody "says so".

Truth is consistency; coordination; completeness. It is like the diameter line of a perfect circle in relation to the circle itself, and we call it "Pi". It is intrinsic in every circle. It is like the canon of proportion in architecture, or the proportion of a perfect pyramid where - "the height is to twice the base-line; as diameter to circumference of a circle."

In art - painting and sculpture - it is not only the fixed lines of proportion, but in a single figure or object, the motive or sentiment embodied, and, in painting, the "ordinance" or selection and grouping of individual objects to make a consistent and complete whole. So also in poetry, which Ruskin defined as - "an effort of the imagination to produce noble grounds for noble emotions."

In the "living-room" of a clergyman I once saw over the mantel as the only picture in the room, a cheap three by four foot chromo of Holbein's "Dance of Death". In one of the early Expositions in Cincinnati were two immense and costly paintings: one, of the imprisonment of Charlotte Corday, and the other, of prisoners being torn by wild beasts.

The finer the execution of such "Art Work" the worse the pictures, preserving things better forgotten, and that could arouse nothing higher in the observer than anger and resentment.

So we must add to truth in art, the idea of beauty and inspiration.

It is even so in music; coordinate harmony and proportion, that is, - completeness in itself, is basic in construction; but the theme, the motif, determines the sphere or realm in the human soul to which the whole appeals, elevating or depressing the individual.

In art these things are well known, but they equally apply to all processes and results in the building of character, determining the well-rounded and complete individual.

In poetry and literary composition the same criterion exists, and the same principles prevail.

So it is in Ethics or Morals. Every book has its motif, whether the author knows and designs it or not; and the test of the book, in the last analysis, is - "does it depress or uplift? Does it encourage or discourage the reader? How does he feel when he lays it down? It may be true and historic as to facts, and yet, perhaps, never should have been written.

These ideas and criteria obtain in every department of human life, and at every stage of man's higher evolution. They imply an upward trend, and an intrinsic impulse toward man's complete evolution.

It is this that Plato discerns and seeks to portray in his - "World of Divine Ideas". The "imperfect" suggests the "more perfect", until "completeness" is attained.

The Artist is an interpreter of Nature; but again, his art interprets him, and reveals his ideas, if not his ideals; his concepts, if not his whole character.

It is true here, as in the art of dramatic expression, and in "freeing the channels of expression", according to Delsarte. The perfect artist "loses himself" for the time being, in his work, only to regain a "larger self" after it is accomplished.

In the Louvre I once saw a large number of paintings

LIFE AND ACTION

of the nude female form. Some of them were merely "naked women", conscious of their nakedness, and not ashamed, and disgusting! There was one, however, *unconscious* of her nakedness, and as chaste and beautiful as the others were vulgar. They all revealed the concept in the mind and soul of the painter; the *ideal* he had of woman, since he was free to choose his subject.

And so we come back to the "criterion of truth" with which we started, and find how consistency, coordination and completeness, are a test of validity, and are all intrinsic; the man, his work, and his character are one and inseparable.

Palmistry is by no means a fad nor a fancy with those who observe closely and differentiate accurately. It may come very near to the truth in revealing *events* past, present and future. But physiognomy reveals character, the life impulses, that which the individual *is* at any stage of his evolution. The picture is composite and is a moving picture. The pose of the body, the tone and inflection of the voice, the motive and the will that are revealed in the expression of the eye, the emotions and impulses that cluster around the mouth, and the "dominant chord" in the whole life of the individual, are thus revealed to him who feels and perceives and senses - with his soul. To the Adept, the real Master, the soul is thus revealed, as he *reveals himself* in his own life and work; and the "Book of Life", the record of the Soul, thus becomes an open book.

The key to all this is kinship; sympathy. It is the power of the individual to put himself in another's place, just as shown in the philosophy of dramatic expression by Delsarte. The larger life includes and comprehends the lesser life, not through arrogance, conceit, pride and self-righteousness. These belong to the lowlands and the dark valleys, obscured by mists.

It is "on mountain heights where dwells repose" and
[Page 26]

where the vision sweeps the valleys far and near, and so gains a *perspective* including the valleys, and the constellations swung in space, that the soul of man is in tune with the Infinite.

The harsh and uncharitable critic reveals his own bias and imperfections as literally and as truly as the Master reveals his knowledge and power.

Nearly seven years ago I read, for the first time, "The Great Psychological Crime". I knew nothing of the author, not even his name. Years ago I had worked up to his position regarding Mediumship and Hypnotism, and agreed perfectly with his conclusions. He left the hypnotist not a foot of ground on which to stand. He exposed the folly, the contradictions, and the immorality of the two greatest crimes known to man. But he had not a word of condemnation for the *Man*, the hypnotist, and only pity for the Medium. He left them to the "Good Law".

It was the *spirit* that ran back of the text, and between the lines, that made me seek an interview at once. There followed an eight hour interview covering every phase of his life and work which, in *every particular*, confirmed my first impressions and from that day to this there has not occurred one discordant note. In motive, in method, and in scientific theorem, I could follow him. In experience, and in range and depth of knowledge, I could not.

I applied the criterion of Truth, herein outlined, and found "consistency, coordination, completeness, and - Harmony", and I regard the discovery as the most valuable and satisfactory of any, in all my seventy years of seeking to find, and to know, the truth. To me, no "corroboration" can equal this.

"But", - some one will cry - "Expectancy! credulity!" Very well; after the criteria herein set forth, I care not to debate nor to argue the case at all.

That I had been previously *convinced* that Mastership

LIFE AND ACTION

was possible for man, and that such men had existed all through the ages, is true. It is equally true that the tests herein defined could alone determine the fact in any individual case.

There must be an absence of ambition, greed, selfishness, pride, or any ulterior motive. The man and his work must agree, thus revealing "consistency, coordination, completeness and harmony".

The evidence of the truthfulness of the "Great Work" is thus *intrinsic*. It is *in the work itself*, and each must judge for himself. Several hundred of interested and intelligent readers and students have applied the test, and become satisfied, as I have done. It is not the laudation or the glorification of one man that is important. If that were all, he would repudiate it, if he did not resent it. It is the intrinsic importance of the Great Work to mankind, that is of value and comes first.

Nothing could so *kill* this work as intellectual pride, and glorification of the individual. It is just this that has killed it through almost countless millenniums in the past.

Here are the criteria as set forth by another Master.

"Behold the Truth before you; a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of Truth, once we have placed our confidence in and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked, a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science depicts - these are the golden stairs, up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.

Can anyone imagine a more noble and elevating declaration of principles?

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

The ancient Vedic literature and the later commentaries contain many such clear and concise statements. The student who has learned to "give the right knock" has also learned to distinguish "the right answer".

This principle of giving and receiving lies at the foundation of the whole of man's experience. The different forms of activity, the different kinds of knowledge, have all their *Shibboleths*. In all arts and crafts and in all professions, each speaks to his fellow in a language that none other quite understands.

The old saying - "Nothing can be concealed from him who knows" has not a trite, but a very deep meaning. "Occultism" has become a fad and the very name raises curiosity to the highest pitch. People flock together like a lot of old gossips at a "quilting" just bursting to hear the latest lingo or the most astonishing secrets, and they are told to "Take a Mantram" as they would be told to "help themselves to the preserves." These people are deceived, exploited, robbed and finally discouraged.

It is just here that wise discrimination comes in; and it is for this reason that I have tried to outline, at least, the signs and the "ancient landmarks".

These never change, because they are intrinsic in the Great Work and ingrained in every real Master through all time. They constitute and determine also the "Right Knock" in every student or seeker for real knowledge.

With Master and Student alike the question is, not "*who* are you" but "*what* are you?" Not how much you may have acquired or may know, but what are your character, your motives, aims and ideals? This criterion determines the *Spirit of the Great Work*, as defined by the School of Natural Science and by the Masters of all ages and times. It is the basis of all real Fraternity; again, because it is *intrinsic*.

LIFE AND ACTION

These are the Principles that underlie, not only the Great Work, but the whole of man's spiritual, higher and normal evolution, and determine the building of character and the growth of the soul.

The important thing with the student is not how much he knows; but has he discovered within, and for himself, the Right Path and has he placed his feet therein with no desire, temptation or determination, ever to forsake it or to lose it?

Herein lies his satisfaction. Thence arises courage, fortitude, faith and hope.

Thence springs kinship of the student with the Master.

These are the "Golden Stairs" up which the learner may climb toward the light of eternal day.

Herein lies the Master's credentials, and the student's, equally.

Corroborations may be found in every age of which we have any knowledge, in the existence of reputed Masters and Adepts; but in few instances are the records complete, or specific enough to enable us to judge of the degree of Mastership. We can only measure and judge by the character of the work as a whole, as to its general intent and its effect on mankind.

We seldom know enough of the Spirit of the age and the conditions present at the time. Besides, there are the invariable tendency and custom among the ignorant masses to deify, and with the Church, to Canonize the individual; and in both instances popular enthusiasm and fanaticism come in.

Many undoubtedly noble individuals have been canonized by the church, and also many brutes, cut-throats and murderers. The criteria here was not the man, nor his work, but the power and influence of "Mother Church", under all conditions and at any cost to mankind.

With the real Master and the Great Work, all such motives, aims and enactments are repudiated.

If a man seeks, instead of avoiding, adulation and notoriety, we go no further. It would be a waste of time, and could lead only to delusion and disappointment.

And this is precisely what the "average citizen" cannot understand. He looks for an ulterior motive, and when he fails to find it he cries - "enthusiasm! self-deception! or fanaticism!" He cannot see beyond the common ambition or the average motive in life. He cannot even imagine that the reward is *in the work itself*; after which - the worker being identified with the work - the reward is eternal, in the *capacity for more and better work*.

"He who would save his soul shall lose it; but he who would lose his soul, for the 'work's sake', shall surely save it".[Paraphrased].

And what greater reward can man desire than to be able to do good work for a noble cause? Surely, Jesus identified himself with his work. One with the Father and one with the Work. This is at-one-ment.

The range, character and extent of corroborations are like the falling leaves in October; they cover the ground, and they are portents of the coming Spring with its new verdure.

Again; the real evidence and the final test are *intrinsic*. It *may* be read like an open book, and when correctly interpreted, it can never deceive anyone.

All other evidence is empirical, circumstantial. This is direct, because it is intrinsic; the speaking of soul to soul, in the language of Truth.

[To be continued]



If you knew that of all your prayers just one - of your own choosing - could and would be answered fully and unqualifiedly, what would it be?

Editorial

Is the "Fra" a Literary Pirate ?



IN the first issue of this magazine we called attention to the fact that Elbert Hubbard had made liberal quotation from "The Great Work", without giving credit to the source from which he had quoted, nor in any manner whatsoever indicating that he was not the author of the matter used. We closed our reference to the matter with the question: "*Is Elbert Hubbard a 'Literary Pirate'?*"

In due time we received a reproachful letter from a representative of the "Fra", in which he seemed deeply hurt that we should even suggest such a thing. The tone of injured innocence in which this voluntary champion chided us came near convincing us that the whole matter was a mistake, and that the omission of quotation marks and all reference to the source from which the matter had been taken were the fault of the office boy.

But what shall we say of this? At page xviii of "The Fra" for November, appears the same paragraph. Again it is published without quotation marks. Again it is published without reference to the source from which it was taken. Here is the quotation, and it is taken from page 370 of "The Great Work."

"The history of all dogmatic and 'revealed' religions is, in truth, but a history of man's endeavors to discover or invent some plan, or scheme, or method whereby he may shirk his personal responsibility, or shift it to other shoulders than his own, or in some manner escape the natural consequences of its conscious and intentional evasion or violation."

The manner and form in which the matter appears in the November "Fra" would carry the plain inference that Elbert Hubbard is its author.

Again we ask, and this time in a tone and with an emphasis that should convey a sense of reproachful conviction,— *Is ELBERT HUBBARD a LITERARY PIRATE?*]

The office boy will please keep quiet this time and give Elbertus a chance.

An Appreciation Which We Appreciate

The writer of the letter from which the following extracts are taken, is one of the "fighting men" of the nation. He is a Commander of many brave men who are ready to lay down their lives whenever the welfare of this "Land of the Free and Home of the Brave" may require the sacrifice. It brings to us a sense of the most profound gratification to know that men of this type and profession catch the Spirit and Purpose of the Work and find an inspiration of helpfulness and joy in the definite knowledge of the Great School. We are deeply grateful that our little magazine has been the bearer of the message which inspired the Commander to open his heart to us in the following manner:

"Dear Friends;—I cannot forbear speaking of one Truth that the last copy of *Life and Action* has brought home to me.

In the opening pages it speaks of the "Great Father" addressed in the School's prayer, as being the one who is head of the Brotherhood and Ruler of the planet; an actual, tangible Father whom we can love, and who loves us and is ever ready and anxious to help us.

I had always supposed the prayer, and in fact all prayers, to be addressed to the Great Intelligence of the universe; and

LIFE AND ACTION

as much as I reverence his name, I have never felt that I could get really near to him or that he was very near to me.

But to feel that there actually exists, and to all intents and purposes close at hand, a loving Father, who not only rules, but loves and leads us, gives me inexpressible joy. I cannot refrain from singing in heart, for never before in this life has anything given me such uplifting pleasure and happiness. I seem now capable of any effort, however great.

I had not gleaned this fact before in my reading, and now I tell you, feeling that an accentuation of this theme in a future issue of the magazine might afford great comfort to Friends of the Work who have not yet fully grasped the idea."

Whilst it is true that the subject is one not dwelt upon directly in the books of the Harmonic Series, the elucidation comes out much more fully and clearly in the course of the personal instruction. And I am gratified that our friend has expressed his deep interest and suggested that the subject be given further consideration and exposition in future numbers of this magazine.

It will afford me great pleasure to comply with his suggestion. And in order that I may cover the largest number of items and points of interest to readers of the magazine, I shall esteem it a personal favor if those who are interested in the subject will indicate to me by written questions or suggestions the particular phases of the subject they would like to have me elucidate. The theme is one of profound importance, and my purpose will be to give the definite facts demonstrated and verified by the Great School, as far as these are known to me.

TK.

What is Love ? - Scientifically Defined

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

Echoes From "Heroes", etc.

During the first week following the issuance of the last number of this magazine, 109 letters came to me from students and friends of the Work, and from interested readers of the magazine, expressing their appreciation of the statement of my own position and that of the School, on the subject of "Hero Worship" etc. Since then many more than that number have been received.

Every one of the letters commends the article above referred to. Not a single criticism has been received from any source whatsoever.

The following quotation, taken almost at random from the letters received, will convey a fair idea as to the general attitude of mind on the part of those who have read the article and noted its purpose and intent:

"I had been thinking along these lines myself for some time. I had noted, not among your students, but among certain friendly readers of the books of the Harmonic Series, that same 'tendency' to exalt you in a manner which I felt sure you would reprehend. I found myself wondering if the Great School was going to permit the same mistake to occur again which has resulted in so many failures, or comparative failures, throughout the past. When I had finished reading your article, involuntarily I exclaimed - 'Thank God!' I felt that this present effort of the School was spared from at least one of the greatest dangers which could beset a movement of such a nature. I want to congratulate you for your wisdom in dealing with so difficult a subject. Your article was timely."

The results thus far impress me profoundly as follows:

1. The stranger friend who called my attention to the subject has done me personally a most valuable and valued service, in thus giving me the opportunity and excuse for mak-

LIFE AND ACTION

ing a public statement of my own position, as well as that of the School.

2. Being now fully awake to the possibility of danger to the cause from that direction, and on guard lest, through negligence or inadvertence on my own part, the students and friends of the Work may fall into the usual error, I am deeply impressed that a heavy responsibility rests upon me to avail myself of every fair opportunity to impress the importance of the subject upon all who may ever come to stand as "Accredited Representatives" of the School.

3. I believe it is most fortunate that the subject has come up for consideration thus early, and that my statement has been both timely and of vital import.



DEFINITIONS

SCIENCE is exact knowledge of the facts of nature, classified and systematized.

TRUTH is the established relation which the facts of nature sustain to each other and to the Individual Intelligence or Soul of man.

PHILOSOPHY is the conclusions which men, in their search for a knowledge of truth, have drawn from the facts of Science.

RELIGION is the application of the facts of Science and the conclusions of Philosophy to individual life and conduct.

—"The Great Work" pp. 184-5.

The Critics' Corner

TK.

Dear Sir:—

In a recent issue of your magazine I notice, as usual, you take a fling - a false and malicious fling - at Theosophy. Only to a malicious person, particularly if the person is one of your enlightenment and acquirements, can such a statement be made as "Theosophy seems to be another excellent example of", etc., etc., and the "*obtrusive* personality" etc.

"*Obtrusive* personalities!!! Mrs. Besant is the only leader that is very prominently before the public as a teacher now.

As you are so fond of definitions, I give you the definition of "obtrusive", from Webster: "To enter without right; to thrust one's self forward with boldness or impertinence; to enter uninvited".

How can *you*, above all men in this land, make such a lying statement about Mrs. Besant, or any other teacher of Theosophy? Are you so worldly that you are jealous of Mrs. Besant?

"If a woman may be believed"! What is the matter with you? Theosophy is from the same fountain head as the School of Natural Science. It is a foul bird that befouls its own nest, TK.

You seem to be very afraid that your followers will fall to worshipping you!! Rest in peace. No one is going to worship a man so lacking in decent respect for justice as to speak of Theosophy and its teachers as you have done and will continue to do in the future.

If Mrs. Besant acted as you do, hide under TK, or some other mark, for fear of what may happen if some Catholic should seek to whack you over the head, perhaps you would not think her or others "*obtrusive*."

LIFE AND ACTION

Spend a little time getting the oath to espouse the cause of a brother Mason out of his difficulty, whether in the right or the wrong, out of Masonry - and you will be doing better work than lying about Theosophy and its teachers.

I believe every word you say about your experiences and powers attained and respect you, but I won't be silent when you vilely slander Theosophy.

J. H. Jackson, M. D.

January 5, 1910.

407 S. Adams Street,

Peoria, Ill.

My words, to which this courteous and gentlemanly physician refers, may be found in the November number of this Magazine, at page 27, beginning with the fourth paragraph, and page 41, next to the last paragraph. If I have "slandered" either Theosophy or any of its teachers, it seems but fair that I should give their champion an opportunity to humiliate me by proving me to be a liar. My sense of justice prompts me to permit this gracious Theosophical Spirit to get his message before every individual who has read my words to which he takes such courteous exception.

I have to confess that I cannot bring myself to believe that this critic represents the real Spirit of Theosophy. It would require much more than his letter to convince me that Theosophists are all blackguards, or that Theosophy stands for blackguardism. I have met a good many members of the T. S. and have many correspondents and warm personal friends among them. With but one exception I have found them to be gentlemen and ladies, uniformly courteous, considerate and kind; and in a personal sense they have commanded my confidence and respect.

I shall be glad to hear from those of my readers who may be interested.

TK.

The November Critic is Criticised

Dear Friends:—

I am in receipt of the November number of *Life and Action*, for which I thank you.

I was both interested and amused on reading not only the article on "Heroes", etc., [which I at first thought might be a Carlylian dissertation], but also the extracts from the letter of our captious critic and abortive "Gay Gnani", V.P., whose future communications I trust you will not be tempted to exclude on account of this first immature effort.

He suggests a new name for the little elucidator, such as "The Scholar's Work", "The Life Teacher", "Vox causa", etc., He objects so strongly to the "vapid, immature and pedantic" contents of the magazine, that I long to see something really "scholarly", some "life teaching" principle from his masterly pen for the good of the "Work", of which he assumes an omniscient knowledge. [Unfortunately, he is not a pioneer in this line, as many egotistical non-entities have preceded him.]

Or, is it possible that he is of like calibre to a friend I used to know who, in his prayers, no matter how they might be made to vary in other respects, never failed to wind up with: "For thou, O Lord, hast said that whosoever giveth even a cup of cold water, SHALL NOT LOSE HIS REWARD." Kind actions, born of unselfishness, ennoble the character, but similar actions when begotten of selfishness, corrupt the character. I wonder if our captious critic realizes this.

After all, such instances as these are instructive, if but to prove that the mills of God, in very deed, grind slowly, and illustrate the immensely slow process of evolution; since similar types were known in the times of Jesus, called the Christ, as we read in Matthew vii, 6. Indeed, I have a vague idea that

LIFE AND ACTION

they were known even earlier - or, can this be but an hallucination of a vapid brain?

It is always safe to learn, even from our enemies, but it is often unwise to try to impart wisdom even to our friends. Affectation and vulgarity are often closely allied, but by learning, the sons of common people become public ministers; while without learning, the sons of public ministers become only common people. He who improves the public taste and removes the illusion of false ideals is a public benefactor. Sown thoughts grow to things and fill that field known as the world. Reputation is what people think of us, character what we really are.

I trust the "tendency" spoken of in "Heroes" etc., that some of the students of the School are said, according to your correspondent, to have developed, will disappear, rather than continue to develop into some stronger feeling than a mere "tendency"; else we may be called upon to contribute to some fund to send you out to Africa to shoot lions,—which, in this present instance, would be greatly to be deplored. J. J. H.



"As you may have heard, I am under orders for Gnani-ship. To accomplish this I must soon go from the sophomore grade of Illinois to the senior course in far off Hindustan. In the line of my profession, I come to know pretty much everything. I am as familiar with the IS as with the APPARENT. The NOTHINGNESS of the IS NOT I have demonstrated several times. The ONENESS of UNITY and the ISNESS of BEING I have already mastered. And by a patient pursuit of the WHITHER and WHENCE, I have anticipated my contemporaries by thousands of years. I have distanced posterity by many a lap." —"The Gay Gnani of Gingalee."



QuestionBox



What is Sleep? What are Dreams?

Question: What is Sleep ?

Dr. E. C.

Answer: Sleep is a State and Condition of the Individual Intelligence.

That sounds easy doesn't it?

Yes, but what is that particular "State and Condition" of the Individual Intelligence we designate as Sleep?

That is a different proposition. It would seem that the Creative Intelligence ought to know what it is. Maybe he does. But I do not know. Neither do I know anyone who does know with absolute certainty all that is involved in the state and condition we call "Sleep".

We all know something about it. Some of us know more than others. This is because some of us have made a study of the subject. The Great School has made a special study of the subject for more than a hundred centuries. During that time it has learned some things; but it does not profess to have learned all there is to be known on that subject.

Among the things definitely known are:

1. The physically embodied individual, in the sleeping state or condition, is for the time being unconscious of the physical channels of sense.

2. But he is not entirely unconscious. This is proven by the fact that he is still intensely susceptible to the power of intelligent suggestion.

3. He is, for the time being, conscious of impressions which reach him through the channels of the spiritual senses.

LIFE AND ACTION

4. In perfect physical sleep the physical body is generating magnetic energy rapidly, but expends none whatever.

5. If my questioner will turn to page 444 of "The Great Work" he will there find an analytical exposition of the elements which make up the composite man in the physical body. If he will first make a careful and critical study of that exposition and of the elements involved, in their relation to each other, he will the better understand what here follows:

6. In physical sleep the soul withdraws, as it were, away from its direct and immediate touch with and relation to the exclusively physical elements of its organism. This does not mean that the soul gets outside the physical body, nor entirely independent of it, during physical sleep. The withdrawing is rather a drawing within, until the consciousness is out of touch with the purely physical texture of the body. For the time being it has taken refuge in the purely spiritual texture and elements of the composite body. Its channels of communication with the physical world are, for the time being, closed, or suspended.

7. During this condition the soul is in immediate touch with and relation to the purely spiritual elements of the composite body. In its receding from and letting go, as it were, of the physical elements of the composite body, it has merely laid down temporarily its physical instrument, and for the time is identified with and operating through the spiritual only. This letting go of the physical has reference not only to the physical brain but equally to all other parts and particles of the physical organism. But bear in mind that it does not mean the separation of the *two bodies*. These sustain virtually the same relation to each other they do when the individual is physically awake. They still interpenetrate and interblend.

8. The last three sentences are especially important, in
[Page 42]

that they directly contradict an idea which seems to be gaining popularity, namely, that in ordinary physical sleep the two bodies [physical and spiritual] separate, and that the Soul during that time inhabits the spiritual body and travels at will throughout the spiritual realms, independently of the physical body. This is not true, in natural sleep. It is seldom true even in hypnotic sleep. It is only under the most extreme conditions of subjectivity that it is possible to force a separation of the two organisms and whenever it does occur through the subjective process it is accompanied with the gravest danger.

9. Recapitulating, in terms of the elements of the composite man as set forth at page 444 of "The Great Work", above referred to, —in natural and complete physical sleep the soul recedes into the spiritual body, relinquishing for the time its hold upon and use of both the physical body and physical magnetism, and retaining its direct touch with, hold upon and use of the spiritual body and spiritual magnetism in its conscious operations.

This brings us naturally to another question by the same inquirer:

Question: What are Dreams?

Answer: Dreams are the results of the soul's activities and experiences during partial or imperfect physical sleep.

It is suggested that this sentence be studied critically in order that no phase of its meaning or significance may be overlooked.

In perfect physical sleep there are no dreams at all. This is because the consciousness is registering wholly through the spiritual channels of sense upon the exclusively spiritual plane.

Something occurs to disturb that state of complete withdrawal from the plane of physical consciousness. The soul begins to operate imperfectly through the physical channels

LIFE AND ACTION

of sense. In that state of transit between perfect physical sleep and perfect physical wakefulness, the two sets of sense channels are working independently of each other. As a result the impressions received by the consciousness through the spiritual channels of sense are confused with the activities of the physical channels of sense. It is this confusion that gives rise to the grotesque impressions that come in dreams.

It is seldom that there is any logic or sequence in real dreams. This is because of the confusion which arises by reason of the effort of consciousness to coordinate the spiritual with the physical channels of sense perception.

The question naturally arises as to why it is, if in perfect physical sleep the soul is awake on the spiritual plane, we do not carry back into the waking physical state a remembrance of all that has occurred in that spiritual state. It is not only an interesting question, but a most difficult one to answer in such manner as to convey a definite understanding of the exact reasons. Possibly nothing short of a number of psychological experiments will ever make the matter clear to any one who has not already worked it out.

Did you ever see a man walking along the street in the midst of many people, all the while intently talking to himself? He takes no conscious note of anything about him. In this condition of intense introspection I once saw a man travel four miles without knowing that he had gone any distance at all. He was unable to recall a single thing he had seen or heard throughout the entire journey, and yet, he was wide awake all the while. More than this, he was physically wide awake, according to our general understanding of that term. But why was he unconscious of his physical surroundings?

This was because he was, for the time being, so intensely preoccupied and absorbed with the mental world upon which his consciousness was fixed, that whatever impressions were

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

made by and through his physical channels of sense [other than those employed in thinking] were relatively so negative as to leave no result whatever. He could not recall them.

During physical wakefulness while the consciousness is absorbed upon the plane of physical experiences, we live so intently in the world of impressions which come to us through the channels of physical consciousness that we have no power to recall any experiences but those which have come to us through the then active channels.

It requires long and patient effort, under intelligent guidance, to cultivate the ability to receive impressions through both channels of sense in such manner as to differentiate them and remember both distinctly. But it can be done. This I know from actual experience. For more than twenty years I have been able to do this.

And in this connection, as having some bearing on the subject of sleep and dreams, many other questions could be asked. A volume could be written without covering the subject. I am painfully aware that what I have said on the two subjects propounded is wholly inadequate; but I hope my questioner will realize that his questions cannot be answered within the limited space at my command.

If there is any particular phase of either subject upon which my readers would like to have me concentrate my efforts, I will be glad to do so if they will indicate to me the particular phase to which they would limit me.



FACTS DEMONSTRATED

"There is no death."

"Life after death is a fact scientifically demonstrable."

"Life here and hereafter has a common development and a common purpose." — "Harmonics of Evolution."

LIFE AND ACTION

Col. B. and Mr. H.

Question. Although I have not yet finished reading "The Great Psychological Crime", I have read sufficient to make me heartily disapprove of hypnotism and mediumship in all their varied phases. On page 240 of the "Crime" is stated the case of Col. B. and Mr. H. I would like this made plainer. I suppose I do not understand it, as it seems to me a most unjust thing that Col. B. *could* influence [especially in an evil way] Mr. H. who is in sympathy with him, and has had nothing whatever to do with mediumship. L. C. O.

Answer. It is not quite clear to me just what phase of this experience my questioner desires to have me make "plain-er". The facts are stated exactly as they occurred. The incident is stated for the express purpose of illustrating, among other things, the fact that the innocent and the inoffensive are often taken advantage of by evil and designing spiritual intelligences, and led on to their ruin.

I believe a complete and careful reading and study of the entire book will make clear every point which my questioner desires elucidated. If the fact that injustice can be practiced, by clever and vicious spiritual men and women upon the innocent and inoffensive yet in the physical body, is inconsistent with her preconceived ideas of what the spiritual life *ought* to be, I can understand and appreciate her perplexity.

But is it not also inconsistent with our ideas of justice, that a vicious and designing young man in the physical body can exercise his psychological powers upon an innocent and inoffensive young girl, and lead her on to ruin in this physical life? Is it not one of the great and unsolved problems why it is that dishonesty, injustice, viciousness and crime exist at all? We know that, from our human viewpoints, these things do exist here upon the earth plane. We witness evi-
[Page 46]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

dences of them at almost every step of the journey of this life.

When it is known as a fact of nature that men and women enter the spiritual life from the exact level of morality they leave this, does it not seem as natural that injustice should obtain in that life as in this?

It is true that evolution upon the planes of spiritual life is a movement and a development which slowly but surely lead the individual upward and away from evil tendencies and vicious practices. But the same thing is equally true in this physical life.

We know that we have those in this physical life who have evolved to planes of individual unfoldment and spiritual growth above and beyond the power and the influence of internal evil and crime. But we know also that there are many who have not yet attained to that point in their evolutionary unfoldment.

We do not know positively just why it is that the Great Universal Intelligence permits these seeming inequities to exist in this life. Neither do we know just why they are permitted to continue their existence upon the spiritual planes of life. But they do, just the same. And undoubtedly they have a consistent place in the greater plan of Nature and of Universal Intelligence. Possibly if we go on faithfully striving for mastery of the evil tendencies of our individual natures, some day, somewhere, we shall know more of the ultimate mysteries of life and destiny. I believe we shall.

I know that the Great School and the Great Friends have already learned many truths that are beyond the range of the average individual experience. I know that this superior knowledge has come to them as the direct results of their efforts to conform their lives to the Constructive Principle of nature. On the basis of scientific Morality they are moving on and on up the spiral of evolutionary unfoldment.

LIFE AND ACTION

What the ultimate goal may be they do not yet know; but because they have proved that compliance with the law of evolution leads always to beneficent results, they are content to believe that the final goal, whatever and wherever it may be, will be one of transcendent good and transcendent happiness. Is not this consistent with the known facts of nature?
TK.

Movements of the Great School in Other Times

Questions. 1. Was the Druid movement an effort of the Great School?

2. Were not all of the following named movements so many efforts of the Great School to promulgate its tenets and influence, namely, "The Illuminati" [under different names], The "Rosicrucians", the "Mystics" of Belgium, etc.?

3. Has the alleged Rosicrucian Society of today any connection or authority from or with this Great School, represented by you?
E. C.

Answers. 1. I understand that the ancient order of Druids, in its inception, was directly related to this School. But the Order of Druids which became known to the world was only a perversion of the original Order, and was in no way related to nor inspired by the Great School of the Masters.

2. The "Order of the Illuminati", in its inception, was one of the direct efforts of the Great School. Under all its different names and forms, so far as they are referable to ancient India, the "Order of Light" represents the efforts of the Great School to reach the world and plant its spiritual knowledge among the people.

But in so far as the name has been appropriated by the Egyptian School of Magic, it represents Egypt and not India.

A reading of Chapter IV of "The Great Work" will give you the full significance of this distinction.

3. The ancient order of the Rosicrucians was one of the direct movements of the Great School. But the present movement of that name is a modern institution, and has no relation to nor authority from the Great School.

Much might be said concerning each of these several movements, but the foregoing is sufficient to answer your questions in such manner as to give you the general key to the relationships.

Psychic Help and Obsession

Question. What is the difference between Obsession [in its lighter phases] and Constructive psychic help? How can the subject tell the difference? Geo. T.

Answer. Obsession, in the strict sense in which the term is employed by this School, has no "lighter phases". This is because in its strict sense the term means the complete possession and domination of a physically embodied individual by an outside spiritual intelligence.

In other words, Obsession, as we use the term, involves complete trance control, wherein:

1. The obsessing intelligence deliberately refuses to relinquish his control;

2. Or, the obsessing intelligence is unable to relinquish his control.

In either case the obsessed individual is under complete trance control, and is wholly unconscious of what he says or does. It sometimes occurs that both intelligences, after they have been released from the obsession, are unable to recall anything that occurred during the period of obsession.

The proper term to express those "lighter phases" of

LIFE AND ACTION

control to which you refer, is "Psychic Subjection", or "Psychic Control", and not "Obsession".

You mention instances where "Students of the Work sometimes maintain that such and such an answer they gave, 'was not their own', but that they were 'inspired' to answer as they did". In such cases you ask where the line is to be drawn between Constructive and Destructive.

To the beginner the subject is one of real difficulty, but there is a line which can be definitely located in course of time and repeated experiences, if the individual has the matter in mind and is earnestly seeking for it.

Any process which suspends the power of reason, to any extent, is destructive, if it comes from an outside spiritual intelligence. Suppose you have received an answer to some problem from outside spiritual sources. How can you tell whether the process is subjective or not?

By going back over the experience and analyzing it from every viewpoint, until you know whether at any point your own rational powers were interfered with. If you were at all times entirely in possession of your power to reason upon the subject under consideration, you are safe in concluding that the process is independent and not subjective.

Until one has grown accustomed thus to analyzing his own mental processes there are many degrees and shades of psychic subjection he would never discover. But in due course of time he will arrive at a point of experience from which he will be able to determine with sufficient accuracy to guard against psychic subjection in all its phases.

The real key is "the power to exercise the rational intelligence."

Notes From *The Bookery*

By J. Lloyd Hammond, M. D.



BOOKS are the annihilators of time and space. By means of them you and I can traverse instantly seas and continents, can project ourselves back many centuries to walk and talk with Socrates, Plato and Pythagoras, can view the scenes so familiar to Seneca and Epictetus, can scale the mountain heights and explore the temples of India, and can unite ourselves to the culture, the thought, and the faith of all times. They bind within their shining covers the golden Universal Thought and Mind and make it common to all ages and all peoples.

TOWARDS THE LIGHT

By Princess Karadja.

One of the most remarkable and valuable books brought to our notice recently is the little volume entitled "Towards the Light". It is a message from the spiritual world and although the manner of its transmission has been subjective, or at least partially so, that fact in no wise detracts from the inherent value of the message itself.

The author, Princess Karadja, paradoxically admits that she is not the author but states that she involuntarily wrote the message down at the dictation of some spirit intelligence. The identity of this person is not disclosed but his purpose is plainly evidenced in the lines

*"I will to thee my earthly life unfold;
Then shalt thou comprehend thy future fate
For I shall show thee all the path I trod
From earthly darkness to the spheres of light."*

LIFE AND ACTION

The work is a chapter from the life experiences of a soul. It is well written, blank verse being the literary form used, which adds to its attractiveness.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing in the poem is the faithfulness with which it reflects the soul attitude of the spirit author. Dignified serenity, faith, hope, charity and love are everywhere so evident in the lines that each word is seemingly freighted with altruistic spirit. It is at once a beautiful poem, a lesson, a warning, and a message of love.

The book is short — can be read through in an hour — is very moderate in price, and we recommend it to the thoughtful consideration of all Friends and Students.

Published by Dodd, Mead & Co. Price 50 cents.

ETIDORHPA

By John Uri Lloyd.

Etidorhpa — which is Aphrodite spelled backwards — is the title of a very peculiar book. It is peculiar not only in subject matter but also in the form in which the subject matter is told, yet withal it is worth reading. The author has chosen the form of romance in which to set forth his thoughts concerning certain scientific theories and while many, in fact, most of his theories may be correct, yet the setting which they are given in the book gives to them a strange atmosphere of improbability.

The central figure or person in the book is a gentleman of recalcitrant tendencies who, because he attempted to betray to the world the secrets of the Masonic Fraternity, was compelled to undergo a severe penalty. By certain occult means known only to some of the more advanced brethren the would-be traitor was prematurely aged in outward appearance becoming thereby so completely disguised that his most intimate

[Page 52]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

friends failed to recognize him. In this condition he was torn from family, friends, and all that was dear to him, taken to the mouth of a certain cave in Kentucky and there compelled to begin a journey to the center of the earth. The experiences of this journey, the people he meets, the peculiarities of the fauna and flora of the regions he explores, the various conditions of heat, light, force of gravity, power of thought transmission without speech, power of moving through space instantly by the power of the will, all these form the substance of the various chapters of the book.

The author's style is facile and pleasing. The story is told in a way that is interesting in spite of its improbability. And not the least in interest are the author's theories concerning matter and materialistic conditions. At times he leaves the domain of physical manifestation and enters far into the realm of the spiritual but not from the standpoint of Spiritualism. Nothing savoring of Subjection is apparent in the book. Moreover, due and special emphasis is made to the freedom and independence of Will in the choice and action of the various characters.

The author is to be commended for writing such a book, for he has clothed much dry scientific data in a pleasing romantic dress and made it interesting as well as popularly instructive. He is a close student of natural phenomena and has delved deeply into occult literature. From certain remarks made in various portions of the book we are of the opinion that in writing it the author was influenced greatly by a study of Rosicrucianism and the Hermetic Philosophy.

It is our opinion that the Friends and Students will find Etidorhpa well worth reading. We think they will find it surprisingly interesting in certain portions and more or less instructive.

Published by Dodd, Mead & Co. Price \$1.50

[Page 53]

Beside the New Made Grave

By F. H. Turner.

Under the above rather odd title the author has published a series of short discourses in which he attempts to prove or at least to justify his belief in the Immortality of the Soul. A series of personal letters are exchanged between a gentleman, retired from active business life to the peace and quiet of the country, who is a contemplative student of Nature and a devout believer in the Soul's Immortality, and another gentleman active in the business life of the city, a materialist rather than a speculative thinker and an avowed skeptic as to a life beyond the grave.

The second gentleman has recently lost, through death, a much beloved son. The former gentleman writes a letter of condolence to his bereaved friend in which he speaks of the son as still living in another world differing materially from this physical world.

In answer to this letter the skeptic thanks his venerable friend for the words of condolence but makes it plain that he cannot accept the belief that his son still lives, taking the position that, since thought is a mere function of the brain, then the destruction of the brain puts an end to thought and likewise to the Soul.

The venerable believer then attempts, in a series of some six or eight letters, to set forth the facts and arguments upon which he bases his firm belief in a future existence and endeavors to convert his skeptical friend to the same firm faith and belief.

The book is well written, is in good and pleasing style, and is clear and concise in subject matter. The arguments as to a future existence, however, are entirely from analogy. No actual fact, no actual demonstration is cited or even suggested, and if the author is aware that the fact of a life beyond

the grave can be actually demonstrated he has not even hinted at such knowledge. The volume is well worth reading, however, because its theme is of universal interest, because it is short and therefore not tedious, and because of the clearness and conciseness with which the author defines his position.

Published by James H. West Co. Price \$1.00.

Modern Miracles

*From "Dictionnaire Critique des Reliques et des Images
Miraculeuses."*

By COLLIN DE PLANCY.

English translation by JOS. J. HENDERSON.

AARON. "Brother of Moses. His rod, which puts forth leaves and flowers, according as it is said in the bible, is the only relic we are let have of him. It was at the same time in the church of Saint Jean de Latran at Rome; in the cathedral at Florence; in the Sainte Chapelle at Paris; at Saint Salvador in Spain; and in the cathedral of Bordeaux. They still show it at Rome, at Florence, and at Saint Salvador. It is a stick 3300 years old. However, more sober theologians claim that the rod of Aaron is in the ark of the covenant that Jeremiah buried under mount Nebo, on the other side of the Jordan."

ANNE. "Wife of Saint Joachim and mother of the holy Virgin. Saint Anne possessed, to our knowledge, two bodies and eight heads. The bodies complete with their heads were in the town of Apt in Provence, and at Notre Dame de l'Île sur Lyon. Third head at Treves. The fourth at Duren, in the diocese of Cologne. Fifth head at saint Anne in Thuringia. Sixth head at Bologne in Italy. Seventh head at the abbey of Orcamp, near Noyon. Eighth head at Chartres. It is

[Page 55]

LIFE AND ACTION

on the last head that the canons of Chartres swear, at the moment of their reception, that they were born of legitimate marriage.

"Saint Anne had yet a fifth arm at Rome, in the church of Saint Paul on the road to Ostia. She had a sixth at Nuremberg, and various bones at Rouen, at Cologne and at Annaberg in Upper Saxony.

"It was demonstrated in the seventeenth century that all these relics, without a single exception, were false. But the demonstrators were treated as heretics and as visionaries; although they knew so little pertaining to the mother of the holy Virgin, that the evangelist does not even mention her name. They have given her that of Anne, which suits as well as any other."

Even the Western world has been blessed by the holy bones of Saint Anne. We read in the New York Times July 12, 1909:

"Among the thousands who thronged the Church of St. Baptiste, 159 West 76th Street, yesterday, to attend the Novena of Saint Anne, there was much talk of an alleged miracle performed the day before. The altar boys and others who had been present, declared that a Mrs. Purcell of Amsterdam Ave., a widow who was blind and had lost her twelve children, had groped her way to the altar, had kissed the case that holds the relics of Saint Anne, and had walked out with her sight restored.

"For nine days before St. Anne's day, women, men, and children, the lame, the blind, the deaf, flock from all over the city, and from the adjacent towns and country districts, to kiss the relics of St. Anne, in the hope that thus their afflictions may be taken away.

"Only in three other places in this continent, are there relics of St. Anne, and so, in those nine days, the priests of St. Jean Baptiste are busy from early morning to ten o'clock
[Page 56]

THE INDO-AMERICAN MAGAZINE

at night, presenting the relics to be kissed, and touching the places that need to be cured with the round silver, glass-topped case that holds the wrist bones, as they say, of Saint Anne.

"Saturday afternoon, at 2:30 o'clock, the witnesses declare, Mrs. Purcell entered the chapel dimly lighted with candles. Two altar boys saw her come in. They say she was a small, slight woman, dressed entirely in black, well beyond middle age, and that she groped her way with her hands, along the pews toward the altar, as though in total blindness.

"Many persons, men on crutches or tottering with sticks, palsied women, children lame or deformed from birth, and many others seemingly not afflicted, were going toward the altar murmuring the responses as the priest intoned the service. The blind woman fell in behind the rest.

"Finally, according to the others who were in the church, she groped her way to the railing before the altar and knelt beside Mrs. Mary Brown of 421 Willis Avenue. It came her turn at last, and the priest touched her eyes with the little case after she had kissed it and passed on, leaving the chapel.

"Suddenly she cried out loud: 'I see you St. Anne'. 'Oh, good St. Anne, I see you!' And then she began to weep. 'Why', she said, 'I see as well as ever. I was blind, stone blind, for eleven years, and now I see like a young girl. I was not thinking of my eyes. I came to take the Novena, and to prepare for confession.' " etc.

ATHANASIUS. "Bishop of Alexandria, friend of Saint Anthony. The body of saint Athanasius is at Venice, invested with a cap [or mitre], in a reliquary of gilded wood. But his mitre is sustained upon a paper-pulp head; for the real head is at Serigny in Touraine, where it was brought from Egypt, at the time of the crusades, by the counts of Anjou.

"The benedictines of Valvanera, in Spain, also boasted

LIFE AND ACTION

of having the head of saint Athanasius. It was very fresh. We were tempted to examine it, and we recognized it as the head of the good father's defunct cook. It might be possible that the head at Serigny in Touraine had about as much authenticity as that at Valvanera.

"They honor at Rome, in the church of Saint Athanasius and Saint Vincent, a miraculous image of the head of saint Athanasius, monk and martyr; which image causes the devils to fly away, heals the sick who are in good health, and makes to walk perfectly straight those who are not lame."

BARNABAS. "The holy Apostle Barnabas has really no cause to complain of the lovers of relics. They have ascribed a very great number of them to him. They say that he was stoned to death at Salamis; his tomb was unknown for nearly 400 years. But the saint, apparently weary of that forgetfulness, showed himself at last to the bishop of Salamis, Antheme, and indicated to him the place where he was buried. The good soul Antheme started to dig, and they discovered the body of the Apostle, with a copy of the gospel of Saint Matthew, that saint Barnabas had written by his own hand. In a century such as ours, the Gospel of Saint Matthew, written by saint Barnabas appeared more curious than all the most miraculous relics. They then thought a little differently. They allowed the book to be lost, but they preserved the body of the saint; they even made several copies of it, for that body was at Salamis, at Milan and at Toulouse. The inhabitants of the latter city unfortunately could neither tell from where, when nor how this saint's body came to them.

"A multitude of cities, in Italy and France, possessed some considerable relics of the same saint. He had particularly a dozen heads, scattered in various churches. The best and the largest is still at Genoa."

Five Handsome Prizes

For a long while the Central Group of Students and the "Friends of the Work" have had under consideration the subject of "*Mirth*", as a scientific problem in Psychology. We now desire to share our study with the readers of *Life and Action*.

The Problem to be solved is "*What is Mirth?*"

For the five best definitions of the term - which will disclose the most exact knowledge of the subject as a scientific Problem in Psychology, *Life and Action* offers the following Prizes which we believe are worth the effort.

FIRST PRIZE. One copy *de luxe edition* "*The Great Work*."

SECOND PRIZE. One copy regular edition, any volume of the Harmonic Series.

THIRD PRIZE. One copy "*The Gay Gnani of Gingalee*."

FOURTH PRIZE. One copy "*Constructive Psychology*."

FIFTH PRIZE. One copy "*Who Answers Prayer*."

The *definition* must contain not more than 25 words.

The *elucidation* of the definition must contain not more than 300 words.

The Editors of this Magazine will act as Judges and make the awards.

All manuscripts must be in the hands of the Editor-in-Chief of this Magazine on or before April 1, 1910.

Life's Contrasts



O TRAVESTY a noble theme is easy, for in this great world of ours the sublime and the ridiculous forever march side by side, and oftentimes their relation is one of great intimacy.

Side by side walk the noble and the ignoble, the wise and the foolish, the serious and the mirthful, the fine and the unrefined, the lofty and the trivial, the religious and the sacreligious, the philosophic and the foolish.

The wise man and the fakir hourly cross each other's paths, and their contact and contrast often afford a laugh for the merry and a lesson for the thoughtful."

—From "The Gay Gnani of Gingalee.