

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

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L.S.A. GARDEN MEETING, July 13th.

See page 212.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

One of our militant clerical correspondents writes suggesting that we should give attention to the assumptions calmly made by the Rationalist party. He observes:—

They really are made with such confidence and repeated so often that they positively stagger even intelligent people. Take the first instance to hand. Mr. Clodd writes about "evidence to the contrary," viz, against survival. This is bluff pure and simple and its publication causes the unwary to imagine that there really is some evidence in the possession of scientists which definitely disproves a future existence. Now, how can there be such evidence? Direct evidence is, on the face of it, impossible. It would involve a contradiction in thought. What remains is only presumption, or, at the very utmost, circumstantial evidence, and this must be balanced against a strong and increasing force of direct evidence going the other way.

We quite agree with our correspondent, who is a considerable scholar and an able logician. There is certainly an impression abroad that in some way or other science has actually *disproved* human survival. As our correspondent remarks:—

The impression is very vague but it is current even among people who attend churches and chapels. Subconsciously it is at the root of the prevailing indifference to religion. It is upon this impression that Mr. Clodd and his colleagues really depend. The crass folly of the Church has discredited belief in a future life by associating it with such absurdities as a bodily resurrection.

* * * * *

We have been reading lately a book by Mr. St. George Lane Fox Pitt, whose name is so well known in connection with the philosophical side of psychic research. It is entitled "The Purpose of Education," and contains a preface by Professor Emile Boutroux of the French Academy. We have not space to go into a full description of the work, but as it approaches the problem of education from the spiritual side, the author is able to unify and illuminate large areas of conflicting thought by the aid of great principles. He shows how our civilisation with its thousand discords is the outward expression of the exaggerated sense of separateness and isolation between soul and soul. Hence the devotion to material methods by which egotism may be expressed in the form of property and possessions. We are now, under the stress of calamity, growing out of this crude order towards a unity in which the old antagonisms will be finally resolved. We are passing from the physical and psychical into the spiritual stages of evolution. There is an awakening from the old illusions of sense to the consciousness of a larger Self into

which the little selves shall merge themselves, finding not extinction but true life, liberty and expansion in which each can express itself to the utmost in that harmony which alone is heaven.

* * * * *

We have always held that the most reliable authorities on psychic phenomena and its philosophical interpretation are those who, besides having a natural aptitude for the subject, are wide-minded persons able to take an intelligent interest in other subjects. The defects of the specialist on whatever subject are notorious; he is too apt to get his knowledge out of focus. The views and experiences of the "hard-headed, practical man" have a definite value, but it is quite easy to exaggerate it. Often it takes less to impress this class than to impress the more imaginative types. The latter are keener-witted and more resourceful in devising explanations of what they see, and when they are once convinced they may turn out to be really the more practical of the two classes, since their minds move more quickly in the new region of knowledge, and adapt themselves more easily to its complex conditions. We have known some supposedly dreamy, meditative folk who were far keener observers and gifted with more analytical reasoning powers than the "hard-headed" type whose experience was mainly gathered in the world of commonplace facts. There is, of course, the danger to some of the finer-minded of "being carried off their feet," but this matters little if it is merely the preliminary to flying! But until their wings are grown it is a counsel of safety to trudge the solid earth.

A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF JULY 7TH, 1888.)

"I am one of those" (writes General Gordon in his journal) "who believe in the fore and future existence of what we call animals." He also believed in the fore as well as in the future life of man.

Spiritualism is dead, says the scribe of the "World," yet here it turns up in very high and orthodox places: "At a meeting of the Royal Society of Literature last night, Dr. W. Knighton read a paper 'On the Literature of Spiritualism,' in which he traced the modern development of Spiritualism to the Wesleys. Animal magnetism, mesmerism, hypnotism, and clairvoyance were pressed into the service of Spiritualism, and a literature was gradually developed, with its own periodical papers, magazines, and reviews." We see, though we should like to read the paper in full, that Dr. Knighton does not appear to know that animal magnetism, mesmerism, and hypnotism are various names for the same thing. As to the literature of Spiritualism, we could have enlightened the doctor if he had applied to us.

—From "Jottings."

THE doctrine of immortality is the doctrine of doctrines, a truth compared with which it is indifferent whether anything else be true.—BUCKLE.

To-morrow, at 6 p.m., the Rev. L. W. Fearn (Warden of the Church Mystical Union) will give the first of a series of four Sunday evening addresses on "Reconstruction," at All Saints' Church, Norfolk Square, London, W. (near Paddington Station), the titles being "Thought," "Self," "Religion" and "The World."

THE INVESTIGATION OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

SOME HINTS FOR BEGINNERS.

By T. ALFRED KENNION.

There is a growing tendency on the part of educated men and women to endeavour to find out for themselves as much as they can concerning the continuance of life after death. There is, however, no known short cut whereby this knowledge may be attained. There are two methods, both of which call for the exercise of considerable time, patience and judgment on the part of the would-be investigator. In this article it is not proposed to deal with the direct method, by means of which the student may, it is claimed, qualify him or herself to travel at will and consciously on the astral plane, as this calls for efforts beyond the reach of the average individual. The second method is by the study of sensitives, as they are sometimes termed; and by care and perseverance satisfactory results may be obtained. Let us glance briefly at some of the difficulties that may be encountered, and the best means of overcoming them, as well as the best methods to ensure success.

To begin with, each of us is an incarnate spirit, and as such is capable of communicating under certain favourable conditions with other spirits who may be discarnate.

Although incarnate spirits who wish to communicate with each other generally do so through the physical organs of speech, instances are sufficiently common of telepathy, the unspoken command, ordinary influence of one mind over another, and, finally, the hypnotic influence, which all tend to show that incarnate spirits can communicate with and influence each other without the use of speech. Similarly, discarnate spirits can and do communicate with and influence incarnate spirits.

The vast majority of those who attempt to communicate with us through the average medium would seem to be on much the same plane of intelligence as the majority of mankind. Just as on the physical plane the law of attraction between those of similar rates of vibration holds good, so are discarnate spirits attracted to incarnate spirits of a like speed of vibration, the speed being determined by the degree of development of their spirituality and their freedom from the attractions of earth. This is the attraction of groups or spheres, and has nothing to do with those of opposite polarity within those spheres.

A sensitive or medium is one through whom, owing to some fitness, natural or developed, communications from those on the other side may be received. These communications are heavily "censored" by the controlling spirit or guide; individuals cannot communicate at will with whomsoever they may desire.

It might be well if those who desire to obtain a message from their friends who have passed over would bear in mind that to do this certain conditions are essential. The sender of the message must be in rapport with the medium, and, if possible, the medium should be in similar harmony with the inquirer. In most cases where satisfactory messages have been received there are indications that the sender had used his or her influence on the spiritual plane to bring about the visit of the inquirer to that particular medium. All messages are liable to be distorted and vitiated by the personality of the medium. And, lastly, there is at present no known method of proving the identity of the sender beyond the possibility of a doubt.

The conditions affecting intercourse between ourselves and the other side may be compared to those existing between this country and America in the early days of the discovery of that country. Thousands of people crossed the Atlantic, and in so doing severed themselves from the associations on this side almost as completely as if they had crossed the "Great Divide." Means of communication were slow and uncertain. If one wanted news of a friend or relative one had to find (no easy task) some individual who had received a letter from that far-away land, get permission to hear its contents, and see if it contained any mention of one's friend or relative or of any circumstance which would affect him or her—a most unlikely event. The letter, so full of interest to the recipient, with its details of the new conditions and information as to the writer's own safety, might be quite devoid of interest to the anxious inquirer who longed for news of his own folk. Yet even such a letter would serve to corroborate his belief in the reality of the new country, and to allow him to hope that all was well with his own folk. Once in a while news would come that a message had been received by word of mouth for so and so, but by the time the message reached the person for whom it was intended, it would frequently be slightly abbreviated or unintentionally

altered and necessarily laconic. While its scientific value would not be great, it would be none the less welcome to the recipient as telling of the sender's safety. Those who persevere in their endeavour to find proof of the continuity of life after the change called death will be rewarded abundantly by proof received in their presence even if it is not addressed to them.

The following hints may be of service to such as wish to find out for themselves some proof of the continuity of life:—

When visiting a professional medium, avoid stating what you want, or thinking of any definite person or event. Await developments. Do not be disappointed if you get no results. You should at least have learned something during the interview, either in regard to mediums or in regard to spirit life.

The best results—though, of course, the least heralded—are obtained in private homes, with possibly yourself the only stranger present. An opening can be made by suggesting that a table be "magnetised." To do this, select, if possible by intuition, one of the members of the family to sit opposite you at a small table (it does not matter whether it has three or four legs). Provide yourself with a pencil and block of writing-paper in case of need. Invite your partner to place both hands, palm downwards, on the table, doing the same yourself. Then both of you continue to sit, either in silence or quietly talking, as you feel inclined. In the course of a few minutes, if you and your partner are furnishing the right conditions, some movement may be observed in the table. As soon as this commences, mentally encourage the visitor to continue his efforts until, in reply to your inquiry, three fairly vigorous raps or tilts are given. When this evidence of there being sufficient power is given, you can proceed with such preliminary questions as you may deem advisable—whether, for instance, other members of the family shall be admitted to the table, and if so what places they shall occupy; which of them are mediumistic and what faculties they possess; whether communications shall be by raps, writing, or through trance; the identity of the communicating intelligences, and any other inquiries that the special requirements of the case may make necessary. By making these questions mentally and not audibly, time is saved, and the replies are free from the conscious influence of those present. After these questions have been answered, you will be guided in your next step by the information furnished as to the faculties of those present, and the method of communication selected. Whichever it is, it is liable to be weak and defective at the start, and it will probably be necessary for you to assist by the making of passes over the arm of the writer, or the upper part of the body if the medium is in a trance, or by simply asking for quicker or harder raps or tilts, or that they be repeated until clear, if this method is adopted. Much patience is required, as only after a certain amount of practice can one decide whether or not it is worth while to proceed with the development.

The use of the table will, in most cases, afford a rapid means of entering into communication with the spirit world; but when this has been accomplished it may be discarded for writing or trance methods, which are more satisfactory.

From the standpoint of the investigator there would seem to be many advantages in making use of various sensitives, as against that of working day after day with the same one. No two mediums are alike, and it is well to keep them apart, to avoid possible unconscious imitation of style.

Frequently the investigator, when he has discovered a sensitive capable of giving more or less coherent communications, is satisfied with this, and pins all his faith on the results obtained. He may be fortunate enough to get what is, for him, proof of continued existence from that one medium. As, however, life on the other side is largely, if not entirely, made up of "conditions," and as these vary in each individual, it is obviously impossible for anyone to do more than speak of his own experiences, and even these have perforce to be modified to a greater or less extent by the intelligence of the medium through whom they are given. It is only after a prolonged study of as large a number of sensitives as possible that some slight knowledge may be obtained of a few of the conditions to be met with on the other side. In this way, too, one may come across sensitives possessing divers faculties, such as the gift of healing, the different phases of clairvoyance and clairaudience, the speaking with strange tongues, levitation and other forms of mechanical mediumship, "apports" and materialisations.

Fortunate, indeed, is the individual who, as a result of his studies and investigations, discovers that the nearer he can live in tune with the Infinite here on earth, the better prepared will he be to enter on that endless service of love on the other side where he will have access to the sources of all knowledge, from which he can draw what it is in his power to use for the benefit of mankind.

TELEPATHY, ITS NATURE AND FUTURE POSSIBILITIES.

XI.—A JOURNALIST'S VIEW.

[The following was not sent us officially as a contribution to this discussion, but was contained in a letter recently received from H.W.E., a journalist who, in addition to many notable achievements in the newspaper world, has made a long and painstaking study of psychical science, and, although confining his attention mainly to the literary side of the subject, has obtained conviction of its truth and is doing some valuable work. Hence, though not written with an eye to publication, we give his remarks a place here.]

My mind is just now occupied with an inward study of telepathy. So far I can divide it into three phases, or rather—shall I say?—three coherers, the spiritual, the subconscious, and the lower or mental. Swedenborg is very illuminating on the subject though he does not use the term "telepathy." Our spiritual self, I find, lives in a continual state of communication with the unseen by telepathy. This method of communication can hardly be called communication in the sense as we know it, because the knowledge imparted is the appreciation of the whole of the state in which the spirit lives. May I put it that the term "instantaneous" is not quick enough to express it? Telepathy is not measured by distance or time: it is of the very conditions in which your spirit dwells. A spirit desiring to convey information to the brain of the body in which it dwells, does so by telepathy, carrying the information direct, but does not always get response, for the message may not pass the subconscious mind till some time later, and when the brain receives it the message is often distorted by contact with the subliminal faculty.

Now each human spirit knows all about every other human spirit with which it comes in contact. Camouflage is not possible on spirit planes. For instance, my spirit knows yours: that is why I get flashes of you mentally now and again. But they are only flashes. To live in the spiritual condition in a human body continuously is, as you know, impossible here. Some people can, however—for some reason I have not yet fathomed—keep up this condition of spiritual telepathy for short periods. If I wish to convey a thought, sign or symbol to you, my spirit telepaths that thought to my brain. My physical condition becomes aware of it. But your spirit knows of it at the moment my spirit thinks of it. Then your spirit tries to get the information through to your brain, which may or may not get the idea in its true form or sense, because of the passage through your subliminal mind to the lower mind and brain.

I fear that, as I put it, all this may not seem very clear to you; but my whole point is that the term "mind to mind" is wrong, in the sense that telepathy is really "spirit to spirit" first; "mind to mind" is the lower and physical expression only, and that is where the mistakes occur. Now all living things use spirit to spirit communication, or "telepathy," as we call it—be they moths, ants, dogs, or humans. The "human," being more complex physically, does not respond so quickly to spirit as the lower order. We often hear of the so-called "sixth sense." I cannot help feeling that that is in reality the spirit sense, and the more open we keep our mind and the clearer the brain, the greater opportunity we have of hearing and knowing and seeing by our physical mentality and sight the spiritual world in which we all live, and of which so many of us are yet unaware.

Until the S.P.R. recognise the spirit of man, I fear they will never solve the problem of telepathy, and until Science admits that man is a spirit, and works down to the physical plane instead of using that plane as its basis, I do not think we shall get much forwarder.

HUSK FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges with thanks the following donation: F. W. Bennett, £1.

THE DEATH is announced from Paris of M. Josephin Peladan, who revived the Rosicrucian sect some twenty-five years ago, but who will be best remembered in connection with the famous Prophecy of Johannes, the story of which we shall deal with next week.

WE HAVE received from Mrs. Leigh Hunt Wallace, so well known in connection with food reform and kindred subjects, a copy of a circular in which she acknowledges the many sympathetic letters she has received in connection with the death of her son, Major Joseph Stephen Wallace, M.C., R.A.M.C., and gives extracts from some of the letters and press notices, describing his splendid qualities as a soldier and a man.

OCCULT POWERS AND HEALING.

ADDRESS BY MAJOR HILDER DAW.

On the evening of the 26th ult., at a small private gathering at the London residence of Lord and Lady Glenconner, 34, Queen Anne's Gate, Major Hilder Daw gave an interesting account of some of his occult experiences, especially in regard to the development and exercise of the healing faculty. Healing was, he claimed, the oldest of all professions, for the instinctive desire to alleviate suffering must have always sought some means of expressing itself. So the touch of the healing hand had come down from the remotest age to the present day, when its use was known under the repellent title of "Psychotherapeutics." There was a mass of literature on the subject, but the information which could be obtained from books lacked cohesion: there were "missing links." The study was so complex that it was difficult to speak about it with any certainty, but he felt it to be his duty to ask the co-operation of those present in forming a little circle for the investigation of the question. Major Daw went on to recall those circumstances in his career through which he became acquainted with the fact that human beings possess faculties which are not generally recognised in so-called civilised communities. First he told of his discovery, when stationed at Coomassie, of the power possessed by the natives of telling what was going on at a distance when they had no visible means of communication. They knew the progress of King Edward's illness, and that his coronation would be postponed, when the white people in the country did not know. Then came the Major's visit to Canada, and the serious attack of typhoid fever which prostrated him there and which finally led to that peculiar condition wherein the spirit is able at will to leave the body. He exercised this power, in all, about fifteen times. On these occasions he set himself certain problems to solve. The solution of several of these he had no means of checking, but a few remained which made a great impression on his mind. Here Major Daw narrated instances of the extraordinary way in which he had, independent of the use of any normal faculty, been able to tell what was happening or was about to happen, or, by acting on a sudden and unaccountable prompting, had discovered and thwarted an ingenious endeavour to defeat the ends of justice. Turning the knowledge he had obtained in the direction of healing, he discovered that the channel of the healing power which could be exercised through the human organism resided in the finger-tips. By looking for a little while at a bright light through one of Dr. Kilner's glasses, an alteration was effected in the chromatic focus of the eyes. If after this the light was turned very low so that the outline of objects was only just visible, and the hands were held opposite to each other in front of a black surface, faint rays could be seen streaming from the finger-tips of each hand to those of the other. At the speaker's invitation each member of his audience in turn tried the experiment—with varying success. In conclusion, Major Daw gave a practical illustration of the methods he adopted with several patients. In the course of his address and at its close he replied to questions from Sir Oliver Lodge and others of the company. The usual vote of thanks followed.

SPIRITUALISM IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES.

We cut the following from the "Sunday Herald" of the 23rd ult. If what is stated is correct Spiritualists may welcome it as another indication of the headway their subject is making, and can afford to dismiss with a tolerant smile the writer's air of lofty superiority:—

"Spiritualism, as everybody knows, has been spreading among credulous people during the war, but from what I hear it has recently been making fresh and possibly disastrous inroads into Government circles. I understand that some Government officials of high standing and responsibility are showing undue interest in these undesirable experiments. The latest sensation of the kind is a seance at which early this week a message was alleged to have been received from Lord Roberts reiterating his pre-war warnings about conscription, and predicting that Thursday would be a fateful day in this connection. It was on Thursday last that Lord Curzon announced the abandonment of conscription in Ireland!"

FORTUNE-TELLING.—Jules Audiger Tovey, of Uxbridge-road, was fined, with costs, £57 12s., and his wife, Alexandra Tovey, was bound over, at West London police-court yesterday, for professing to tell fortunes. Defendants carried on business at a "phrenological institute," and it was alleged by the police that numbers of people called for the purpose of having their fortunes told by cards, &c.—"Daily News," June 28th.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

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SEANCES AND SEEKERS.

SOME THOUGHTS ON PSYCHIC INVESTIGATION.

To arrive at the inner realities of Spiritualism means for many people a long and wearisome journey. For some the road lies through the séance-room; and, of course, there are séances and séances. There are experimental circles, too frequently haphazard affairs, where the sitters meet week after week, without much previous study of the subject, gaining but indifferent results, sometimes even none at all. There are others, held in the same chance-medley fashion, which yield proofs in abundance but also a full crop of perplexities. There are séances in which the sitters, proceeding in a careful way and thoroughly understanding what they are about, gain results not only in full measure but all keyed to a pitch of dignity and sweet reasonableness. In short, there is the successful séance, the barren séance and the séance which is neither one thing nor the other. We have known them all, and each in its way has proved to us highly educative, helping to build up a fabric of unassailable conviction for one who had passed from blind faith to rationalism and so on to a position in which faith and reason met and helped each other. We came at last to see that communication with the unseen world was a scientific as well as a religious or social matter. It was as much an experiment in the higher chemistry as a domestic or devotional rite. The man who knows something of the construction of a telephone has a distinct advantage over those who can only use it after it is made, and who when it goes wrong can do nothing to set it right. Séance results are always in exact accordance with the mental, psychic and spiritual elements which make up the circle and its grouping, and with the conditions prevailing at the time. There are circles from which the investigator emerges with indubitable evidence of the reality of a spirit world and also invigorated in body and mind, bearing with him thereafter an influence so strong and gracious that it remains with him to his life's end. It is almost the reverse of the picture to consider the case of the inquirer whose experiences leave him unsatisfied and perplexed by contact with things which seem to belong neither to this world nor the next—hybrids, fantastic compounds of the real and unreal, neither darkness nor daylight—the twilight of the Borderland. This is the investigator who sometimes abandons the inquiry. He tells you confidentially that he has looked into the matter and there is "something in it." What precisely it is he cannot say, but on the whole he regards it as a subject that is, perhaps, better left alone. Of course, if he kept on and at the same time studied the science of the matter, which would involve some little attention to psychology, he would probably achieve success. As it is, the "Faint heart" and the "Ready-to-halt" type of pilgrim has to await the arrival of some representative of "Mr. Great-heart."

Our advice to all inquirers who are bent on gaining practical experience is to make some preliminary study of the subject. This study in some few cases has proved all that is necessary. The inquirer has kept on with his examination of the recorded evidences and at last finds himself content to accept them without personal demonstrations. It is part of the eternal paradox to find, as we have found, persons who have witnessed all the phenomena, and remained dubious, while others who have "seen nothing" but who have intelligently studied our literature, are fully convinced and ready to bear testimony. These have been blessed with the "scientific imagination."

But although we may deprecate chance-medley methods in investigation, they are not always barren. Now and again a happy star prevails over the desultory and un-

systematic, and the fortuitous concourse of atoms is wrought to beauteous shapes. That is how the random and casual revenges itself on the formal and regular. But on the whole the séance of method is the more reliable; the steady flame is preferable to the fitful flash, however brilliant the latter may be. The best of our evidences already on record belong to experiments conducted on systematic lines. We have only to point to the séances in which Dr. Crawford gained his valuable results.

As to that kind of séance, now becoming rare, in which the rogue imposes on the noodle, or foolish persons humbug themselves and each other, we have nothing to say. We leave those who frequent it, and those who (not unjustifiably) satirise it in the Press, to their own devices.

MYSTIC POWER.

BY THE REV. F. FIELDING-OULD, M.A.

We say a "rich man" when we mean a man who has riches; but that is really a very different thing. The art collector may have a house filled with rare porcelain and pictures by master hands, he may have drawers of uncut gems, cameos, and old French watches, but his wealth is really in his mind; it lies in his knowledge and power of appreciation. If he dies and leaves his collection to an uncultured and inappreciative relative, he does not make him rich, he only gives him riches.

Much the same thing is true in religious matters; a man may know, relatively speaking, a great deal about God, but not know Him. There is all the difference imaginable between the theologian and the mystic. The latter is not dependent on "hearsay evidence," he has seen and proved the thing for himself; he "has direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence," a "luminous awareness." "In the mystic," says Herman, "that susceptibility for God which is latent and neglected in the average soul reaches its full development and becomes real apprehension, a vital perception of reality more clear and convincing than the testimony of the senses." No martyr would have given himself to torture and a horrid death in mere obstinacy for a set of opinions; the unseen had gradually become a vital reality to him; something which claimed his loyalty and repaid it even at the stake. It is the service of Spiritualism that it helps to set free what we have of mystic power; it opens the shrine to many who stood and shivered outside, and who fumbled at the elaborate latch of the creed which seemed to hold the door closed instead of opening it. But, having got in, do not let us linger in the porch, but advance into the infinite mysteries which lie beyond. As our mystic power increases we begin to see in the dark, and the ancient dogmas which repelled and filled us with suspicion begin to take form and glow with light. We gain glimpses of the Infinite Being, "incomprehensible" as the Church says, i.e., without bounds or limitations, inexhaustible; of the Eternal, outside time and the succession of events, possessing Universal consciousness, a complete cognisance of all things, not stored in memory but lying open to the perception—amid the rush of ten thousand worlds noting the sparrow's fall and numbering the hairs upon the human head: "Whither shall I go then from Thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" We see in the First Cause of all things the pattern and archetype of every creature. Man is "made in His image" in that there is something in the essential being of God of which humanity is the outward, the externalised expression. Christ was surely the human aspect of God in its perfect manifestation, truly God, but not all there is of God—"My Father is greater than I." Truly "our feet are set in a large room"!

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

SUMMER MEETING.

We repeat last week's announcement that on the afternoon of next Saturday, the 13th inst., a garden meeting will be held, by the kind invitation of Dr. and Mrs. Powell, in the grounds of their residence, "Rosedene," Christchurch-avenue, Brondesbury Park, N.W. Members of the Alliance who desire to be present are asked to send in their names to the secretary as early as possible. Tea (at 4 o'clock) will be provided, but guests are expected to bring their own more solid refreshments, including, of course, sugar. Stations: Brondesbury Park (not Brondesbury) North London from Broad Street; Kilburn Brondesbury, Metro. Bus 8 passing corner of Christchurch Avenue.

THE TELEPATHIC SENSE IN INSECTS.

Over against the marvel of the migratory instinct in birds of which our contributor, Mr. B. M. Godsall, gave such striking examples in his recent article "Spiritual Law in the Natural World" (page 186), may be set the equally marvellous faculty which enables the sexes of certain species of insects to communicate with each other over long distances. Mr. H. Knight Horsfield writes in the "Daily Mail" of the 18th ult.:—

"The story of the Oak Eggar moth has all the qualities of a fairy-tale. When the maiden emerges from the cocoon she may find herself imprisoned in the chip box of the naturalist, it may be, in the heart of a smoky town, many miles from the haunts of her kin. Nevertheless, she at once announces her advent to her possible swains, then hovering over the far-away moorland. How is the communication made? By what manner of wireless telegraphy is the imperious message sent which is responded to instantly by the Eggar gallants, who desert their fragrant habitat, brave every obstacle, ignore adverse winds, shape their course through a strange and dusky wilderness of bricks and mortar, find the identical house, and, at length, laughing at locksmiths, cluster in masses around the tiny prison wherein the young princess is interned?"

Mr. Horsfield asserts that the facts are unquestioned, but the manner of communication remains undiscovered. "Darwin, Wallace, Ray Lankester, all the great ones, indeed, are silent, or at the best inconclusive." Fabre, "the insects' Homer," devoted long periods to devising tests.

"He abandoned, of course, any hypotheses based on the faculties of sight and hearing; the sense of smell appeared to be the only line of correspondence open. . . . He tells us he made his study a very charnel house of horrible stenches; still the Oak Eggars came to gather passionately about their idol's gaol. Nevertheless Fabre himself seems finally to lean to the scent theory, but he plainly does so for want of a better. At the risk of stepping in where the angels of science fear to tread, or, at any rate, tread gingerly, I should like a word here. By what right do we restrict insects to our own five senses, and especially to the obviously limited range in which these act? Five is an arbitrary number: in other realms of nature there may be fifty or fifty thousand.

"Recently I received from an officer on the South American coast the following letter: 'One bright, clear day last week (March of this year) we were lying close inshore and sending out intermittently on the low-power wireless when the air seemed to become full of butterflies and other winged insects. The majority of the butterflies were white with black spots or tortoiseshell. When the wireless stopped they all disappeared. Was this sudden attraction to the ship due to the wireless? There was no wind at the time and the season now corresponds to early autumn at home.'

"It would appear from this that some insects, at any rate, including certain butterflies, possess organs capable of response to the vibrations of the wireless, vibrations to which our own coarser organisations are altogether insensible, and by parity of reasoning it is fair to infer that the male Oak Eggar may own a receiver by which it actually takes in the love message despatched by the imprisoned maiden in the chip box miles away."

THE CRITICAL STAGE.

As a nation we have entered upon the most critical stage of the struggle forced upon us. There are people who say they do not care which side wins as long as peace comes soon. But such peace as we would receive after our defeat is not of a kind to attract most Britishers. Mr. Rudyard Kipling, in his speech at Folkestone, warned us as to what such a peace would mean. "If we fell short of victory, every relation, every understanding, every decency upon which civilisation has been anxiously built, would be washed out, because it would have been proved unable to endure. . . . Under the German dispensation man would become once more the natural prey, body and goods, of his better armed neighbour; women would be the mere instruments of lust and cruelty; and labour would become a thing to be knocked on the head if it dared give trouble, and worked to death if it did not. . . . The struggle against this evil menace will take every ounce in us; but everything we might have to endure now will be a featherweight compared with what we will most certainly have to suffer if for any cause we fail of victory." To all who share that view I would submit the importance not only of active participation in all the material means of achieving success, but in the inward attitude of heart and mind, in the disposition, in the habitual mood, and in the ethical effort maintained from hour to hour.

—From a Sermon by the REV. J. TYSSUL DAVIS, B.A.

DR. JOHNSON AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

One of the most interesting articles which has appeared in the "Journal" of the American S.P.R. of late is from the pen of Dr. Walter F. Prince, who writes of Dr. Johnson as a Psychical Researcher. It is an admirable piece of work, and proves that that master of sturdy English common-sense was a far more critical student of what to him was the "supernatural" than even many of his admirers would suppose. We hope one of the critics of psychical research, a distinguished literary man and Johnson worshipper, will read the article: it will give him some new light.

We present a brief synopsis from Dr. Prince's study of Johnson.

After remarking that such a thing as a Psychical Researcher full-fledged was not possible in the eighteenth century, the author alludes to the aptitude of Samuel Johnson for psychical inquiry, and proves his case by many quotations from records of the sage's career. He takes, for instance, a passage from Boswell's "Life of Samuel Johnson," in which is described a conversation about ghosts.

Johnson has just told Boswell of John Wesley's account of the ghost at Newcastle who "was said to have appeared to a young woman several times, mentioning something about the right to an old house, advising application to be made to an attorney, and, at the same time, saying the attorney would do nothing, which proved to be the fact." John Wesley thought that "this is a proof that a ghost knows our thoughts." Johnson does not agree. Here follows a quotation from the "Life":—

"It is not necessary to know our thoughts to tell that an attorney will sometimes do nothing. Charles Wesley, who is a more stationary man, does not believe the story. I am sorry that John did not take more pains to inquire into the evidence for it.

"Miss Seward (with an incredulous smile): 'What, sir! about a ghost.' Johnson (with solemn vehemence): 'Yes, madam; this is a question which, after five thousand years, is yet undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding.'"

Here (writes Dr. Prince) he is interested in John Wesley's ghost story, but cannot accept it, for—

1. The proof is insufficient; Wesley did not take time to examine the girl who told it.
2. The supposed prediction may easily have been a mere guess with a large chance of fulfilment.
3. Charles Wesley, who is more inclined than John to be ultra-conservative, disbelieves the story.

Yet he regrets that John Wesley did not examine the evidence better. It would have been worth while. For—

- (a) The question is undecided after (at least) five thousand years.
- (b) It is one of the most important, whether of theology or philosophy, which can come before the human understanding.

All this is in perfect harmony with the principles and prevailing practice of our modern Psychical Researchers.

Johnson, never a well man, waxed in physical ills as he grew older, was subject to a nervous malady which showed itself in odd symptoms, and suffered much from insomnia. He was also afraid of death, and took an interest in alleged occult phenomena. If he had professed having veridical dreams, seeing apparitions and the like, how the choir would have chorused that these were fully accounted for by his pathological condition, his apprehensions and his predilections! But he never had an "experience" in his life except that once he seemed to hear his mother, living in another town, saying, "Sam," and then—"nothing ensued." Nor in all the volumes of Boswell's biography, or in his own writings, is any occult experience accredited to any relative of Johnson.

Neither had he any practices, scruples or irrational apprehensions which would warrant his being called superstitious. He himself says in his essay on screech-owls, in the "Rambler" (Essay of October 9th, 1750):—

"Though I have, like the rest of mankind, many feelings and weaknesses, I have not yet, by either friends or enemies, being charged with superstition. I never count the company which I enter, and I look at the new moon indifferently over either shoulder. I have, like most other philosophers, often heard the cuckoo without money in my pocket, and have sometimes been reproached for not turning down my eyes when a raven flew over my head. I never go home abruptly because a snake crosses my path, nor have any particular dread of a climacterical year."

He rather scornfully rebuked Boswell, who had written of a bad dream about him,

"Nothing ailed me at that time; let your superstitions at least have an end."

After some further remarks on the "resolute rationality" which distinguished the bluff old sage, Dr. Prince proceeds:—

"On Monday, the 16th," so he writes to Mrs. Thrale ("Life," VI., pp. 64-65), . . . "I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted, I suppose, about half a minute. I was alarmed, and prayed God that however He might afflict my body, He would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them to be not very good. I made them easily and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties."

"Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytic stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little objection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself, when it should come, would excite less horror than seems now to attend it."

"In order to arouse the vocal organs, I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all in vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I slept."

It is rather a cool and ratiocinatory elderly gentleman who, when terrifying symptoms seize him, proceeds to test his intellect by making Latin verses, and comforts himself by reflecting that, though the verses are bad, he is fully conscious that they are bad.

Let us see further (continues Dr. Prince) how that robust mind which kept itself so remarkably unembarrassed by the easy credulities and the rampant iron-clad scepticisms of his age reacted to some of the topics now embraced in Psychical Research.

At the threshold he reminds us that there are questions to which, if we should never be able, at least on this planet, to answer "Yes," we should in the nature of things be unable to answer "No." "The eyes of the mind are like the eyes of the body: they can see but at such a distance. But because we cannot see beyond this point, is there nothing beyond it?" ("Johnsonian Miscellanies," edited by G. P. Hill, "Harper's," 1897, II., p. 287.)

This reminder has not lost its force.

He was impressed by the scandal of the fact that thousands of years filled with reports of apparitions and the like should have passed, without ingenuity enough on the part of man to settle the question.

"Talking of ghosts," he said, "it is wonderful that five thousand years have now elapsed since the creation of the world, and still it is undecided whether or not there has ever been an instance of the spirit of any person appearing after death. All argument is against it; but all belief is for it." ("Life," IV., p. 231.)

Of course in saying "all argument is against it" he was speaking for his own times; no one would quite affirm that now, more than thirty years after the Societies for Psychical Research were born, partly out of shame at that mental inertia which caused Johnson to wonder.

At this point Dr. Prince refers to Johnson's views on witches and demon possession, on which he had a singularly open mind. He thought them subjects to be examined and neither accepted nor rejected without investigation. And then he quotes again from the "Life":—

"We drank tea with Mrs. Williams, who told us a story of second sight, which happened in Wales where she was born. He listened to it very attentively, and said he would be glad to have some instance of that faculty well authenticated. His elevated wish for more and more evidence for spirit in opposition to the grovelling belief of materialism, led him to a love of such mysterious disquisitions. He again justly observed that we could have no certainty of the truth of supernatural appearances unless something was told us which we could not know by ordinary means, or something done which could not be done but by supernatural power: that, Pharoah, in reason and justice required such evidence from Moses; nay, that our Saviour said, 'If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin.'" ("Life," III., p. 8.)

Truly (proceeds Dr. Prince) this passage indicates a certain preference for evidence in favour of supernatural phenomena and for the survival of the personality after death! And in the name of common-sense why not? Must a man be as emotionless and frigid as a clam, in order to be a competent inves-

tigator? It is not so regarded in any other department of human inquiry. No one objects that Darwin probably hoped that his theory would be proved. We do not ask what he wanted to prove, but whether he proved it. So peculiar a case is Psychical Research, however, that the slightest indication of preference for a solution of the problem in favour of survival is regarded as a disqualification, yet the very man who points his finger at a favourable bias parades his prejudices and scepticisms, even including a personal distaste for survival, as the very things they expressly constituted him a fair and dispassionate judge. And it is evident that the stories told by Mrs. Williams, though interesting, were not satisfactory, that Johnson demanded that they should be well authenticated before he would give them weight. His standard of authentication was unusually advanced for his time. It was not enough that a human form should appear or that it should in addition speak, something must be said or done by it which could not normally be accounted for. Nor would he have had much patience with the foolish-devout protest that the demand for evidence is a derogation of faith. He recognised that the Founder of the Faith constantly appealed to demonstrative evidence.

After further quotations and comments, all admirably to the point, Dr. Prince continues:—

I had almost said that the relation to Johnson to Psychical Research resembled that of Bacon to modern science. That would not be true, for no hand was found to take the torch directly from his. But it is true that though he knew not the tools of Psychical Research as they had not yet been forged, he had adumbrations of its methods, and probably had the clearest vision of its spirit of any man of his age. Walking amid the puzzles of the universe, he neither grovelled in credulity nor bent backwards in prejudice, but kept himself intellectually upright, inquiring and pondering with even balance.

This paper may fitly finish with a few paragraphs from the pen or voice of this mighty thinker, which were not originally directed to the discussion of the questions embraced in what is now known as Psychical Research, but which are peculiarly applicable to these discussions. It would be well if all parties to the great debate laid them to heart.

The first bids us remember that the negative side of question can always manufacture arguments against evidence, however overwhelming.

"It is always easy to be on the negative side. If a man were now to deny that there is salt upon the table, you could not reduce him to an absurdity. Come, let us try this a little further. I deny that Canada is taken, and I can support my denial by pretty good arguments. The French are a much more numerous people than we; and it is not likely that they would allow us to take it. 'But the ministry have assured us, in all the formality of the Gazette, that it is taken.' Very true. But the ministry have put us to an enormous expense by the war in America, and it is their interest to persuade us that we have got something for our money. 'But the fact is confirmed by thousands of men who were at the taking of it.' Ay, but these men have still more interest in deceiving us. They don't want that we should think the French have beat them, but that they have beat the French. Now suppose you should go over and find that it is really taken, that would only satisfy yourself; for when you come home we will not believe you. We will say you have been bribed. Yet, notwithstanding all these plausible objections, we have no doubt that Canada is really ours. Such is the weight of common testimony." ("Life," II., pp. 92-93.)

Objections, he goes on to say, may be raised against anything, even each of opposites, one of which must certainly be true.

"The human mind is so limited that it cannot take in all the parts of a subject, so that there may be objections raised against anything. There are objections against a *plenum* and objections against a *vacuum*; yet one of them must certainly be true."

The professional critic and objector can argue against the most firmly established positions, but by constantly seeking to evade the force of evidence, reason is violated and its machinery gradually thrown out of gear.

FREEDOM.—No man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent. When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism. Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us; our defence is in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men in all lands, every where. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and under a just God cannot long retain it. ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA AND ITS OPPONENTS.

It is noteworthy how opponents of the spiritistic hypothesis have shifted their position and changed their line of attack during the last twenty years or more, and how greatly they differ amongst themselves. Writing in the year 1891 Dr. Weatherly and Mr. J. N. Maskelyne in their book entitled "The Supernatural (?) " poured scorn upon telepathy, as being the conception of visionary theorists. Yet only a few years later we find that hardy sceptic, Frank Podmore, relying upon telepathy as upon a two-edged sword with which to combat the spiritistic theory. So vigorously did he use this weapon that he must have greatly shocked the representatives of official science, who did not acknowledge the existence of such a power. More recently Mr. Edward Clodd has cast doubts upon the honesty and good faith of that celebrated medium, Mrs. Piper. Herein he evidently differs from Frank Podmore, above mentioned. In his work entitled "Modern Spiritualism" (1902) the latter author states:—

"It is more to the point that all those who have made a careful study at first hand of Mrs. Piper's trance utterances, and who are therefore best qualified to judge—Professor W. James, Dr. Hodgson, Sir Oliver Lodge, the late F. W. H. Myers, Mrs. H. Sidgwick, Dr. Walter Leaf, Professor Romaine Newbold, Professor J. H. Hyslop—have put on record their conviction that the results attained cannot be explained by fraud or misrepresentation."

Elsewhere the same writer remarks:—

"There is a superstition of incredulity; and the memory of that discreditable episode in the history of science in these islands, the contemptuous rejection for nearly two generations of the accumulating evidence for hypnotic anaesthesia and kindred phenomena should suffice to teach us that even the extravagances of mysticism may contain a residuum of unacknowledged and serviceable fact. We must not, for the second time, throw away the baby with the water from the bath."

Finally, it would be well for all opponents of the spiritistic theory to bear in mind the words of the great French mathematician and astronomer, Laplace, who said:—

"We are still so far from understanding all the agents in Nature and their different modes of action, that it would display very little of the spirit of philosophy to deny the existence of phenomena only because they are inexplicable in the actual conditions of our knowledge."

E. W. DUXBURY.

WHERE OUR PRAYERS FAIL.

The following are the concluding sentences of a deeply thoughtful article on "Prayers in Time of War," by Mr. E. F. Carritt in the "Hibbert Journal":—

"We have set our prayers, both for ourselves and others, too much on earthly things, and have forgotten that if suffering and imperfection were unknown, there would be no room for the more heavenly things of sacrifice and effective love. I do not think that on reflection we really desire such a fairyland. When we think we do, what we really long for is a world always a little better than this of ours; not an unthinkable void with no resisting medium against which our wings might beat, but a world of clearer and serener air, where our flight would be more swift and steady; or, in truth, our aspiration is for stronger wings and a more constant heart to carry us against the tempest and above the cloud of our own familiar region. We have tried too little to enter into the mind of God in prayer, and so, by love rising above distance and division and triumphing over chance and time, to share in the divine victory of suffering without despondence and death without despair, which merges our vicissitudes in the deeper pity and the wider joy of God."

A REVEALED VICTORY.—The "Daily News" of the 26th ult. has the following in "Under the Clock": "One of the minor points of interest in connection with this Italian victory is that it is a very palpable hit for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In his 'New Revelation' he describes how on April 4th, 1917, he awoke with a feeling that some communication had been made to him of which I had only carried back one word which was ringing in my head. That word was Piave. To the best of my belief I had never heard the word before. After describing how the Italians fell back on the river six months later, he goes on: 'I have still a hope, however, that more was meant, and that some crowning victory of the Allies at this spot may satisfy still further the strange way in which the name was conveyed to my mind.' Really, very intelligent anticipation."

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

These notices are confined to announcements of meetings on the coming Sunday, with the addition only of other engagements in the same week. They are charged at the rate of 1s. for two lines (including the name of the society) and 6d. for every additional line.

Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W. 1.—6.30 p.m., Dr. W. J. Vanstone. July 14th, Rev. Susanna Harris.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke-place, W. 2.—11, Dr. W. J. Vanstone; 6.30, Mrs. Mary Davies. Wednesday, July 10th, at 7.30 p.m., Mr. E. W. Beard.

Spiritualist Church of the New Revealing, 131, West End Lane, Hampstead.—11, Mrs. Mary Davies; 6.30, Mrs. J. Stannard.

Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.—7, Miss McCreadie.

Kingston-on-Thames, Bishop's Hall.—6.30, address by Mr. Kirby.—M. W.

Reading.—Spiritual Mission, 16, Blagrove-street.—11.30 a.m., Miss Felicia Scatterd; 6.45 p.m., Mrs. P. R. Street.—T. W. L.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-road, Plumstead.—3 and 7, Lyceum Flower Services, London L.D.C.

Camberwell.—Masonic Hall.—11, church service; 6.30, Mr. E. Meads. 14th, 6.30, Mrs. Jamrach.—F. J. B.

Holloway.—Grove Dale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).—11.15, Mr. T. Olman Todd; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. Punter. Wednesday, 10th, Mrs. Podmore; Saturday, 13th, United Picnic to Hadley Wood.—R. E.

Brighton.—Windsor Hall, Windsor-street.—11.15 and 7, Miss M. Mills, addresses and descriptions; also Monday, at 3, public meeting; healing circle at 8. Wednesday, 8, public meeting.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—Anniversary Services. 11.30, healing circle, Mr. Macbeth Bain; 3, Lyceum Flower Service; 7, great meeting of praise. Monday, 6, war-time tea; 8, great meeting; local speakers, special music and solo; all meetings visitors invited. Tuesday and Thursday, at 7.45; Lyceum every Sunday at 3.

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WITCHCRAFT ACT AMENDMENT FUND.—The treasurer of the Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd., Mr. T. H. Wright, 10, Victoria-avenue, Sowerby Bridge, sends us the following statements of the above fund to the end of June: Balance brought forward, £921 14s. 1d.; National Spiritual Church, Regent Hall, Rochdale, £2 10s.; Mr. J. Arthur Hill, Bradford, £1; Belfast Association of Spiritualists, 7s. 6d.; Brighthouse (Martin-street) Spiritual Church (second instalment), £1 10s.; per Mrs. Pears, Coventry, 10s.; per Mrs. Rowe, Bedford, £1; Aston Spiritual Society, per Mr. J. G. Wood (books, collection, &c.), £1; per South Wales D.U., per Mr. T. W. Davies, £28 15s. 9d.; Queen-street Progressive Society, Leicester, £1 15s.; Quaker-street Spiritual Church, Mansfield, £5; Bank interest, £12. Total, £977 2s. 4d.

THE MASTER OF THE TEMPLE AND PSYCHIC EVIDENCES.—We have received several communications and cuttings regarding the recent sermon at St. Nicholas Church, Liverpool, by the Rev. Dr. Barnes, Master of the Temple. Dr. Barnes maintained that the immortality of the soul was purely a matter of Divine and apostolic revelation. He further asserted that there was no reliable evidence that communication between the living and the dead was possible. It is suggested that we should reply to these assertions, but the reply is on record in so vast an array of evidence and testimony from the most trustworthy sources in direct conflict with the assertions of the Master of the Temple, that we feel it is quite unnecessary. If he is unaware of all this literature, or will not be at the pains of examining it before venturing on such rash statements, any small addition we might make would be unlikely to affect his attitude. It may be that in the mysterious providence of things his words will not be without their uses in restraining the weak and foolish from experimenting, or in turning the minds of his more intelligent hearers to careful investigation of the other side of the case.

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