

Light:

24 Linnell

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATSOEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!"—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Most of us, as railway travellers, are familiar with a little ceremony which takes place on a long journey at some station at which the train halts. A man walks along the side of the train "tapping the wheels" to see that they are sound. Now and again, perhaps to the surprise of some of our readers, we admit to these columns, questions, objections, or, it may even be, reasoned articles challenging the Spiritualistic position in some of its essentials. This is our method of "tapping the wheels" to see that our train is in no danger of an accident. Incidentally, of course, there are other good purposes to be served. We aspire that LIGHT shall be utterly fearless, shirking no criticism, burking no "disagreeable fact," but always sure of its ground. To occupy such a position as this means that we must be continually on the alert, so that it is as well that we shall thus be put on our mettle from time to time. So far, however, we have never been troubled with criticisms or challenges that struck us as really formidable. Mostly the objections, when they were worth considering at all, came from persons who had studied some part of the subject, and were either ignorant or neglectful of other sections. Their imperfect knowledge caused them to blunder. One conclusion we rarely fail to draw from the discussions that arise on these occasions is that the man who only knows the facts is usually a safer guide than the man who, however superior intellectually, is better acquainted with the theories. Many an unlettered Spiritualist has observed his facts with a care and accuracy that would make his learned critics blush—if they only knew! There is a wide difference between knowing a thing and only knowing *about* it.

* * *

For years we have had to reject and condemn much matter put forward as spirit communications on the ground that, aside from the question of its genuineness, it was wordy and more or less meaningless. A perfectly sensible idea, perhaps, had got itself clothed in clumsy and inappropriate words. We observe, in a recent issue of the "Illustrated London News," that Mr. G. K. Chesterton rather cruelly gibbets a case of this kind. He selects for analysis some spirit messages quoted in Mr. Basil King's article, "The Abolishing of Death" in "Nash's Magazine," where the spirit is reported as saying:—

You make death an impenetrable fog, while it is a mere golden mist, torn easily aside by the shafts of faith, and revealing life as not only continuous but as not cut in two by a great change. I cannot express myself as I wish. . . . It is more like leaving prison for freedom and happiness. Not that your present life lacks joy; it is all joy, but you have to fight with imperfections. Here we have to struggle only with lack of development. There is no evil—only different degrees of spirit.

G.K.C. takes also the following statement by Mr. King's spirit communicator, when asked about sin and its effect on the sinners who pass over:—

They come over with the evil, as it were, cut out, and leaving blanks in their souls. These have by degrees to be filled with good.

* * *

Concerning the above passages, Mr. Chesterton expresses himself in caustic terms. He says:—

I will waive the point whether death is a mist, or a fog, or a front door, or a fire-escape, or any other physical metaphor; being satisfied with the fact that it is there, and not to be removed by metaphors. But what amuses me about the spirit is that for him it is both there and not there. Death is non-existent in one sentence, and of the most startling importance six sentences afterwards. The spirit is positive that our existence is *not* cut in two by a great change at the moment of death. But the spirit is equally positive, a little lower down, that the whole of our human evil is instantly and utterly cut out of us, and all at the moment of death.

There is much more of this bright and satiric criticism, and, as far as it goes, it is legitimate—but it goes very little beyond externals and literary values, and these are not everything. Some of us can see clearly what the spirit is trying to say in this case. We cheerfully admit that, with certain exceptions, we should not care to print a spirit communication as a literary contribution, without careful revision. Yet some of us who are fastidious critics of language may perchance learn a salutary lesson when from the other side of the way we try to convey to our friends here some hints of almost incommunicable experiences in the clear and incisive words we used so fluently while in the flesh—and fail miserably. "I cannot express myself as I wish," wrote the spirit at whose message G.K.C. is so much amused. We remember F.W.H. Myers' plaint that for him communication with the earth was like dictating from behind a partition to an amanuensis who was partly blind, partly deaf and very stupid. We have to take some account of the difficulties. A critic can be very smart when he knows a little of the subject of spirit communication. When he knows a great deal, the smartness somehow evaporates. He becomes understanding and sympathetic. In some matters the heart may be more important than the head.

DECEASE OF DR. MERCIER.

The death of Dr. Mercier, which took place at Bournemouth on the 2nd inst., from pleurisy, leaves a notable gap in the ranks of medical science. He was an able psychiatrist and a man of versatile gifts as a writer and speaker. The "Times," we note, gives a full account of his career, with special reference to his brilliant work as an alienist, and we fully recognise that he served his day and generation well in all those departments of thought which his natural genius and great learning enabled him to follow. Needless to say, these did not include the arena of psychical research. His disquisitions on this subject, although marked by humour and pungency, revealed notable defects of knowledge and sympathy. In fact they often struck us as the very coxcombry of criticism. As the "Times" remarks, logic was not always his strong point, and "in his miscellaneous writings, outside his own special subjects, there were occasional faults of reasoning." However, it would be ungracious to pursue that aspect of his work. We may leave it with the classical reflection that no man is wise at all hours, and that in a relatively short life he did a vast amount of valuable work and made his mark as an authority on his own special subjects. We salute the passing of a valiant opponent.

THAT which ends in exhaustion is death, but the perfect ending is the endless.—TAGORE.

GEORGE BORROW AND THE OCCULT.

By HORACE LEAF.

When reading the works of George Borrow, it is difficult not to feel that he was deeply "sensitive" in the particular sense in which that term is used in connection with psychical research.

The many references in his books to occult powers, and the incidents that he relates, show an awareness and an appreciation of the "hidden side" of things, attributable only to a natural sympathy lying deep within his own nature. It is as rational to suppose that a person of psychic temperament will respond to psychic facts, as that an artist will respond to art. And as in the latter case it happens irrespective of any special training, but by virtue of the inherent disposition of the artist, so it may be with the psychic. The effect is usually apparent when the person is brought into contact with the thing he is pre-disposed towards. This was the case with "good George Borrow."

There is, perhaps, one important difference between the attitude of a natural psychic and a natural artist. Whereas the artist readily admits his love of art, the psychic may deny his love of the occult. Nor need he, in doing this, be false to himself. He may actually believe he despises the thing that most strongly appeals to him. He may even demonstrate his sincerity by making it an "Aunt Sally" at which to hurl his jests and ridicule. The cause of the contradiction is to be found in public opinion. It may be popular to be artistic, but otherwise to be psychic. This was certainly the state of affairs during the first half of the eighteenth century, the period in which George Borrow published his engrossing experiences. Hence the reason why he frequently declared his disbelief in psychic forces.

But an innate quality will manifest itself, especially when it is one of the dominating characteristics of a personality so pronounced as Borrow's. Consequently, often when he has denied elsewhere the possibility of such strange events as "sorcery" and "second sight," he unconsciously registers his conviction that such mysterious forces and faculties exist, enabling some people to influence in strange ways their own destiny and the destiny of others, or to advance into futurity and describe what shall yet issue from its womb.

With George Borrow this paradoxical condition was bound to be unusually marked. He was so decisive in his views, so thorough in his nature, that he could hardly be doubtful on any point capable of clear expression. For the same reasons he could only be half convinced or wholly uncertain on that which was obscure. Therefore he was a most uncompromising Protestant, but a very doubtful occultist.

Here, then, lies the reason why he should, when writing of the Gypsies, among whom he had lived almost as a member of the order, and for whom he felt a genuine affection, declare their claims to sorcery to be preposterous, whilst, nevertheless, he records instances of their apparent ability to exercise it. In "The Zincali," we read of Chaléco Valdepena, the Gypsy soldier, who, being ignominiously disarmed by Borrow's Basque servant, said after a while, looking steadfastly into the servant's face: "My good fellow, I am a Gypsy and can read *hain* (fortune). Do you know where you will be this time to-morrow." "Then, laughing like a hyena, he departed, and I never saw him again. On the morrow, at the time stated, Francisco was on his death-bed."

Events of this kind frequently perplexed Borrow, who had quite a number of them happen to him. Nor does he appear to have doubted them, even when their accuracy rested upon the testimony of others. Antonio, his remarkable Greek servant, to whom he was indebted for much assistance in his wanderings and distribution of the Bible in Spain, more than once proved his ability to foresee things. Thus, he foretold the sad fate of the strange Swiss, Benedict Moll, obsessed with the desire to unearth a hidden treasure.

"A strange man is this Benedict!" said Antonio to his master one morning; "'a strange man, mon maitre, is this same Benedict. A strange life has he led, and a strange death he will die—it is written on his countenance.'"

Benedict Moll, as he once assured Borrow he would, sprang from the direst poverty to comparative riches and power, in the effort to appease his passion for the "hidden treasure." For a brief moment he became the cynosure of an important town in Spain; the next he was flung into a terrible prison, amidst the execration of thousands who would have gladly torn him limb from limb. Removed from that prison, "he disappeared on the road," to use the ominous words of Borrow's friend, who informed him of the old man's fate.

No wonder Borrow accepted the assertion of Antonio that he had in a dream been informed of Borrow's entry into Madrid. Regarding this, Borrow says:—

"A singular incident befell me immediately after my arrival. On entering the arch of the posado, called La Reyna, where I intended to put up, I found myself encircled in a person's arms, and, on turning round in amazement, beheld my Greek servant, Antonio. He was haggard and ill-dressed, and his eyes seemed starting from their sockets. As soon as we were alone he informed me that since my departure he had undergone great misery and destitution, having, during the whole period, been unable to find a master in need of his services, so that he was

brought nearly to the verge of desperation; but that on the night preceding my arrival he had a dream, in which he saw me, mounted on a black horse, ride up to the gate of the posado, and that on that account he had been waiting there during the greater part of the day. I do not pretend to offer an opinion concerning this narrative, which is beyond the reach of my philosophy, and shall content myself with observing that only two individuals in Madrid were aware of my arrival in Spain."

After the tragic departure for America of Isopel Berners from Mumpers Dingle, Borrow's lacerated affections were somewhat appeased by the assurance of his Gypsy friend, Mr. Pentulengro, that they two were never ordained for each other, because Borrow was destined to be a great traveller in another direction to that taken by Isopel. This prophecy was literally fulfilled.

Borrow's personal sensitiveness was frequently apparent. On one occasion he had a presentiment of the return of Isopel unexpectedly to the Dingle, and prepared everything for her comfort, although she arrived at a most unusual hour of the night. A still more impressive instance was when he was standing "on the castle hill," watching a fair of horses. There was no reason for him to expect to meet there anyone he knew, whilst his whole attention appears to have been riveted upon the interesting incidents taking place. He writes:—

Now all this time I had a kind of consciousness that I had been the object of some person's observation, that eyes were fastened on me from somewhere in the crowd. Sometimes I thought myself watched from before, sometimes from behind; and occasionally methought that, if I just turned my head to the right or left, I should meet a peering and inquiring glance; and indeed, once or twice, I did turn, expecting to see somebody whom I knew, yet always without success; though it appeared to me that I was but a moment too late, and that someone had just slipped away from the direction to which I turned, like the figure in a magic lantern. Once I was quite sure of a pair of eyes glaring over my right shoulder; my attention, however, was so fully occupied with objects which I have attempted to describe, that I thought very little of this coming and going, this fitting and dodging of I knew not whom or what.

About this time three Gypsies on horses rode through the crowd and gave an exhibition of their remarkable horsemanship; a fourth, starting forward from close beside Borrow, went up and whispered to the most notable of the riders as they were about to gallop away, evidently drawing his attention to Borrow. After they had ridden away the figure who had whispered to the rider, went towards Borrow with a cry of recognition. He was a Gypsy whom Borrow had met in a country lane under singular circumstances several years before, when both were mere boys. Borrow remarked how strange it was that the Gypsy should have known him, and that but for the peculiar nature of his greeting he would not have recognised him.

"Not so strange as you think, brother," said the Gypsy, "there is something in your face which would prevent people from forgetting you, even though you might wish it; and your face is not much altered since the time you wot of, though you have so much grown. I thought it was you, but to make sure I dodged about inspecting you. I believe you felt me, though I never touched you; a sign, brother, that we are akin, that we are *dui palor*, two relations. Your blood beat when mine was near, as mine does at the coming of a brother; we became brothers in that lane."

Owing, apparently, to the swarthy nature of Borrow's countenance, the Gypsies were in the habit of claiming him as one of themselves. It was obvious that Jasper Pentulengro—for this was the same gypsy who later told Borrow of his future travels—believed that he could trace Borrow's relationship to himself and his race in a much more subtle way.

(To be continued.)

PRAYER AND COMMUNION.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox continues with earnest persistence to keep before her readers the possibility of soul communion between the two spheres of being and to enforce it with the expression of her own firm assurance. In a poem on "Prayer" in the August "Nash's," she writes:—

Like incense from a censor, prayer must rise
Up from your heart and penetrate the skies;
But fervent love and unremitting prayer
Will build ascending pathways, stair on stair,
From earth to God's fair regions. And the door
Between you and your dead shall stand ajar
To close no more.
No more shall they seem distant and afar.

To be unable to have done with an experience, to be continually opening old wounds and wallowing in self-depreciation—these are the signs of decadence,—NIETZSCHE,

THE TRUE PLACE OF TELEPATHY.

A REPLY TO DR. HYSLOP.

Edyth Hinkley writes:—

May I be allowed a few lines to clear up what seems from a quotation in *LIGHT* (p. 273) to be a misunderstanding by Dr. Hyslop of an article of mine in the "Nineteenth Century" for May.

"It is evident," he says, that I have "no patience with Telepathy." That this is a mistake I think the following extract from the article in question will show:—

"The same psychic faculty which we now recognise beyond doubt to be the medium of most amazing telepathic feats between the living, may also, on the assumption of an actually existent spiritual universe, be the channel of communication between the discarnate and the incarnate; the Unconscious may, in short, be the organ of telepathic faculty between unseens of both orders, spirits in both worlds."

With regard to what follows in the quotation from Dr. Hyslop, surely, if as he says, "we know consciousness with the living as a cause," it is no far cry to consider *transference of consciousness*, or telepathy, also as a cause; neither, from one point of view, is a real cause, but a phenomenon; from another point of view both are causes.

I think the higher Spiritualism will not be advanced in the most permanent and satisfactory way until the difficulties raised in the article by "An Unconventional Sitter" (p. 280) are allowed their real weight, and it was largely to meet such a position that the article of last May was written. There are thousands of desolate hearts who would joyfully give all they possess, or ever could possess on earth, over and over again to be quite certain that the communications received thorough sensitives are in truth messages from the son or husband beyond the Veil and not the reading by the psychic of their own undying memories and unquenchable hopes. These people must not be confounded with ignorant, prejudiced or captious critics, for they are profoundly different from those. Many of them, who have been for years the most ardent and thorough students of the subject, can still do no more than "speak to each other softly of a hope."

I do not think that those who have seriously studied the strange intricacies of modern psychology—till recently an infant science—and the baffling and mysterious phenomena which meet us in the investigation of psychometry will deny that both of these greatly complicate the issue, and I am sure Dr. Hyslop will agree with me here. Hence my effort to show that "in human experience apparently identical phenomena are often found to have different and even contrasted causes." It certainly did not occur to me that I could be supposed to "have no patience with Telepathy."

REALITY OF SPIRIT CONTROL.

G. D. writes anent the article on this subject on p. 280:—

The conclusions of "An Unconventional Sitter" are clearly the result of a good deal of theory combined with very little practice. He should know that though utterances may sometimes be assumed to be of spirit origin which are really due to auto-suggestion, yet the reality of spirit control has been demonstrated over and over again in the presence of persons familiar with the phenomena of hypnotism. Therefore it is very necessary "to go outside the medium for an explanation of spirit control."

"An Unconventional Sitter" says it is difficult in the case of spirit control to determine what belongs to the ordinary or everyday mind, and what to the spirit mind or intelligence. Of course it is difficult. But it is not impossible, and those of us who have made a practical study of the matter have been able to determine the point many times. Why, our whole literature, including *LIGHT*, teems with cases in which the reality of spirit control has been determined beyond all peradventure. Where has "Unconventional Sitter" been living all the time? It is to be presumed, although it seems doubtful, that he knows sufficient of the subject of which he writes to be aware that the process of control from the spirit side is precisely that of hypnotism and suggestion. "Unconventional Sitter's" argument reminds one of the attempt of the very stupid sceptic to dispose of spirit communication by the theory of telepathy, the very process by which the communications are received. If someone inquires whether spirit control is not really hypnotism, our reply must be, "Yes, of course it is," adding, perhaps, the proverbial counter-question, "What about it?" Doubtless the fertile source of much of this perplexity and muddled reasoning arises from the average inquirer regarding spirits as (if existent at all) a different order of beings, instead of men and women, differing from us in little except that they are living without our outer integuments.

It is a mistake to argue with the people you love. Right or wrong, they annoy you equally.—SYBIL CAMPBELL LETHBRIDGE.

"PASSING THE 'FLUENCE' OVER A BOXER.

HOW CARPENTIER TRAINS ON HYPNOTISM.

We know that brute strength is not enough to make a champion pugilist. He must, in addition, possess that sense of ring-craft which is termed "science." Few, however, supposed that agencies strangely akin to the occult could be brought into play. Yet such seems to be the case if we are to take seriously the vivid story of his training methods, contributed to the August number of "Pearson's Magazine" by Georges Carpentier, the present champion boxer of Europe. It may well be that Carpentier himself does not realise how he is, apparently, employing, if not Nature's finer forces, at least some of her potent but less understood powers. Here is a significant statement:—

"The moment I agree to fight this or that man," he writes, "I endeavour as far as possible to take hold of my prospective opponent, and from the first day I enter into training I have him always in front of me."

Of course these words can bear quite a simple, ordinary meaning, but taken in conjunction with the rest of Carpentier's account they are capable of a deeper sense. It is worth noting, in this connection, that one of his closest friends, with whom he often spars, is the Belgian mystic, Maurice Maeterlinck.

Here epitomised, is Carpentier's very curious story:—

THE SOUL OF A BOXER.

"When I am training, I give myself up wholly and completely to Descamps, who is my manager. My independence, my very being I surrender; my soul is not my own.

"It is a fact, that when I get into the ring I feel no excitability, and so far as I remember no apprehension. May I tell you why?

"The very first day I go into training, Descamps, who, in less prosperous days was, among other things, a dabbler in hypnotism, will come to me, and though he laughs his laugh of outrageous whimsicality, he is at the bottom intensely serious, and he will say,

"Georges, *mon ami*, I take from you all save your fighting spirit, all but that I now cause to pass into me, the Professor Descamps of your childhood. I have all your cares, your troubles. I mesmerise you. So —"

"And with an uncanny wave of his arms, he 'passes the 'fluence' over me just as he did in the lean times of my childhood when he put me in a 'trance,' and I did thought-reading for the amusement and edification of countryside yokels at little cafés for a few sous in the hat.

"The house of François Descamps stands in its own grounds. On the lawn that skirts the side of it is my gymnasium, a structure made so that I am always in the open. Here I box and skip, and every afternoon with my manager as referee and timekeeper I conjure up before me the man I am to fight.

"And I fight him with all my might, and in every conceivable way."

Evidently Beckett, the English champion, will have to meet an opponent who fights with far more than his fists.

L. C.

DR. INGRAM ON THE AFTER-LIFE.

[A paragraph in our "Lighthouse" columns explains the publication of the following extract.]

The Bishop of London, preaching at St. Lawrence, Jewry, E.C., on January 28th, 1911, to the Commercial Travellers' Christian Association said:—

"There was no subject on which Christians were so much mistaken as on that of death. Death was mistaken for the pain which preceded it. Being born into another world was probably like being born into this. The supposed horror of death was founded on nothing more than a delusion. Death was an incident, which took place in a continuous life, and the idea that the spirit slept after death was a complete delusion. There were six things revealed to us about the life after death:—

"That the man was the same man five minutes after death as five minutes before it, except that he had passed through one more experience in life;

"That his character would grow;

"That he had memory;

"That he would be with Christ in Paradise;

"That there would be a mutual recognition, and

"That he would still have a great interest in the world he had left."

WILL Mrs. (or Miss?) Mary Moore who sends an article for our columns kindly furnish us with her address?

"Job was uttering a profound truth when he remarked that 'the thing I feared is come upon me,' and over and over again his experience is being duplicated to-day. We fear the infection, the fear lowers the body-tone and resisting power, and lo! the thing that we feared is come upon us."—"Self Training," by H. ERNEST HUNT.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C. 1.

The Alliance possesses the largest Library in existence of occult, mystical, and psychical books. Members' annual subscription £1 is. For prospectus, syllabus of meetings, classes, &c., apply to the Secretary.

CONCERNING SEVERAL THINGS.

In a leading article entitled "The Why and the Wherefore," we dealt some considerable time ago with a few of the simpler problems which beset the mind of the average inquirer. This time we propose to take a few of the difficulties which trouble minds rather more advanced in their studies, and which are more or less "questions in the air." There is only space to touch the fringes of them, but we may hope to treat suggestively things to which it is impossible to give exhaustive treatment.

First, then, let us take the telepathic theory in one of its many forms. Here is a seasoned inquirer (we have met examples in point) who, having consulted a medium, is told a number of perfectly true things of which the medium could not have obtained knowledge by any normal means. "But," says our inquirer, "I knew these things; therefore the medium read my mind." Now we do not deny for a moment the possibility of thought-transference. We even admit that the inferior types of medium appear to give as spirit communications a good deal of thought-transference from the sitter mixed with psychometrically-derived information. But this theory that all the facts known to a sitter and recited to him by a medium are necessarily thought-transference breaks down the moment we start seriously thinking about it. A spirit communicator who wishes to identify himself to a friend must needs recall facts known to that friend, but unknown to the medium. If every time he does this, his efforts are put down to telepathy on the part of the medium, an avenue that might lead to valuable knowledge is closed by a misleading word. "But," says the inquirer, "he should give me information not in my mind." Then there would be no question of telepathy. Would there not, indeed? Our inquirer knows little of the resources of that wonderful word. The root-and-branch telepathic theorist would claim that all the information in the human mind anywhere in the world has first to be exhausted before his theory can be set aside. Nay, if a fact is disclosed and afterwards verified, all those who knew the fact being dead, the telepathic theorist has still some cards in hand. It is "deferred telepathy," he will tell you. The thought has remained somewhere (in the air presumably!) and the medium has "picked it up." Drive him from that position (if you can) and he falls back triumphantly on a large and shining hypothesis—the world-soul, a cosmic reservoir of human memories, from which the gifted psychic may pick sufficient material to create the impression that he is actually in touch with some departed human being who in life made his contribution to the memory-fund.

At this point the argument becomes in its way amusing. We have met it in several forms; we are always meeting it. Of some people it has been said that they cannot see the wood for the trees. Of others we might say that they cannot see the trees for the wood. In short, we are confronted with our old friends, the Universal and the Particular. If the theorist thought a little more deeply he would see that the existence of a cosmic reservoir of memories, which we do not dispute, does not in any way invalidate the idea of individual minds and memories; ante-mortem and post-mortem. Some of our transcendental thinkers are impatient of the idea of individual spirit existence because it savours of "egotism." And, to put it vulgarly, they "plump" for the Universal. We plead for a balanced view, the golden mean between two extremes of idea.

As to the telepathic theory in itself, we cannot do better at this point than quote the words of one of the ablest of practical psychic investigators, Professor Hyslop:—

The evidence for telepathy is very small compared with that for the existence of spirits and of communication with them, and the evidence of telekinesis [movement of objects without contact] is not one thousandth as good or as strong as that for spirit communication. But it is perfectly respectable to believe in such things . . . because it is surmised that they either do away with spirits or do not involve any credulity to believe in them.

One is inclined at times to get a little impatient with the theorists because, not to put too fine a point on it, it is so obvious that their fine-spun and erudite theories are not so much the offspring of philosophy as of fear, plain, blank intellectual cowardice. On this question of spirit existence many an unlettered man and woman could teach the learned psychic theorist—first, because it is a human and not simply a scientific question; and, second, because the unlearned are often quicker to recognise a fact than are those whose minds have become blurred with abstract ideas. When Sir Walter Scott, noticing that the sheep lay on the windy side of the hill, observed that if he were a sheep he would choose the sheltered side, the shepherd replied, "Eh, Sir Walter, if you were a sheep you'd have mair sense." On some matters of fact in daily life and living we would rather trust the judgment of the man in the street than the professor in the study. He would have "mair sense."

In conclusion, a word on some problems in spirit communication which involve our prejudices of class, caste and colour. The higher we rise in spiritual evolution the clearer it becomes that the only true law of association is *sympathy*. It is stronger than all the codes and customs of rank and race. And although we hear much absurd talk concerning the visits of the great and wise minds of the next world to circles with whom they were not likely to fraternise on earth, it is as well not to forget that there are other bonds besides those which on earth appear to form the only laws of association. An American visitor to our shores, some years before the war, expressed his amusement at the meeting between a village squire and a labourer—there was so much patronage on the one hand and so much servility on the other. "In my country," said the American, "it would have been 'Hullo, George!' on one side, and 'Mornin', Jim' on the other." We have reason to believe that the world beyond is even larger than America, and, in the best sense of the word, still more democratic.

THE DANGERS OF CREDULITY.

Spiritualism and Christian Science, and in a lesser degree, Theosophy, are no negligible or despicable phenomena. But those whose belief in one or other of them is most firm have all the more reason to pray to be saved from their friends. For no cause suffers from anything more than it does from its own well-meaning but ill-disciplined supporters. These acclaim anything and everything that appears to be supernatural as being the direct product of the working of super-human powers. A ghost story is to them evidence of survival, beside which the *consensus gentium* and the conclusions of religion or philosophy sink into insignificance. The God who can be found neither in the Bible, nor the Church, nor in the social order, nor the slow evolution of the ages, nor in the mind of man, is rediscovered in the planchette and the trance medium. In this way disservice is done to a whole range of phenomena which covers some of the most important problems of psychology and the nature of man in general. . . . What comes as a revelation must be continuous with the whole system of our knowledge which is founded on the experience gained by normal means.—"Visions," a sermon by Dr. W. F. Cobb.

A BUREAU FOR INQUIRERS.

To meet the present great demand for information on matters relating to Spiritualism, there has been established in connection with the London Spiritualist Alliance an Inquiry Bureau, of which Mr. Percy R. Street has kindly consented to take charge as Honorary Director. Mr. Street attends at the offices of the Alliance, 6, Queen Square, on Tuesday afternoons from three to four, and on Friday evenings from five to seven, to meet inquirers and give them information and advice.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Mrs. Etta Wriedt, the wonderful Direct Voice medium, arrived in England in the early part of this week. The present is Mrs. Wriedt's fourth visit to this country.

Mr. W. T. Stead was responsible for Mrs. Wriedt's first visit. Early in 1911 he wrote to Admiral Osborne Moore in America asking him to recommend a suitable psychic for "Julia's Bureau." Admiral Moore mentioned Mrs. Wriedt, of Detroit, as the very person of all others for the purpose Mr. Stead desired to achieve, and at Mr. Stead's invitation she came to England, staying for two and a half months. Her subsequent visits were in 1912 and 1913.

We are asked to state that Mrs. Wriedt has not yet been able to obtain suitable quarters, and until this is done she will be unable to see friends.

So the mystery of the oil showers at the Rectory at Swanton Novers has been "solved"—and by a conjuror. The young girl, it is stated, was discovered throwing a cup of water on the ceiling, and confessed the whole matter.

The disciples of sturdy common sense will now smile more blandly than ever at those deluded folk who were inclined to suspect some poltergeist agency. But the latter might retort that on one occasion of stone-throwing phenomena a boy was discovered throwing the stones, and yet during the manifestations rocks were hurled that no boy or man could lift. In the case at Norfolk the Rector is reported to have said that "the stuff came from the ceilings in gallons," and to have added, "we were practically flooded out." However, we know nothing of the facts, and can therefore offer no opinion.

Sir Sydney Olivier, we note, wrote to "The Times" offering the suggestion that the manifestations had all the characteristics of poltergeist phenomena. This theory was supported by the following letter to "The Times" from the Rev. H. P. Bryan, who wrote from Askerswell Rectory, Dorchester. He said: "The 'mystery' house at Swanton Novers is my old home, which I well remember being built nearly 60 years ago. Similar phenomena occurred in this parish, but with this difference, that the showers were not of oil but of stones, and they came not in the day but in the night. People came from a distance to witness these mysteries, attributed to supernatural forces, immense pieces of rock being hurled from one room to another, and all supposed to come from the ceiling. They ceased altogether, however, when an hysterical girl left the house for another, which was soon found to be on fire."

Commenting on Mr. Whately Smith's paper on Dr. Crawford's experiments, already noticed by us (p. 265), the "Westminster Gazette" remarks, "We appear now to be within measurable distance of establishing the existence of some force, hitherto unrecognised by science, by which a quasi-material substance, capable of acting upon matter, is projected at will from a human body, and again at will withdrawn."

"Our opinions concerning the nature both of the physical and of the mental world in which we live," the "Westminster" continues, "have undergone profound modifications in recent years. It may be that a further modification will be necessary to cover such phenomena as Dr. Crawford sets before us. If the result should be that further light is thrown on the relations of mind and matter an important advance will have been made."

The innocent tambourine has excited the ire of many commentators on spirit phenomena. Now we find the "Westminster" having a tilt at the table. It says: "In reading Mr. Whately Smith's report one asks oneself whether observation would not be facilitated by more exact and more specially contrived scientific apparatus. Why, for example should the levitating force be directed upon a table? Is not this a relic of the old, unscientific tradition in which tables played a part chiefly because they were a convenient article of furniture, which every potentially 'spirit-rapping' household possessed? From the laboratory standpoint the table has obvious defects, not the least of which is the heavy shadow it casts below."

But why is not a table as satisfactory an object for levitation as any other? The fact of its casting a shadow has no relevance, because Dr. Crawford's experiments have been carried out in full light. Sir William Crookes devised a delicate, scientific instrument with which he successfully tested the powers of D. D. Home. With what result? Those who were ready to be convinced were convinced; those who doubted, continued to doubt. At the same time we note with pleasure the same tone of the comments in the "Westminster Gazette." It is not the first time that this journal has published enlightened views on psychic subjects.

"God make the world one State" was the anthem with which the International Conference on Labour and Religion, at Browning Hall, Walworth, on September 5th brought its labours to a close.

In the course of a statement drawn up by the Conference, for issue to friends and adherents of the Labour movement throughout the world, was this very striking pronouncement: "An unquenchable faith in the future, a certainty (derived not from experience) of the coming of a higher and better social order, a conviction rooted in a sphere above and beyond the material sphere."

The Bishop of London, it will be remembered, in an address in Hyde Park on Sunday, July 27th, said that those who had passed over were the same five minutes after death as they were before. Dr. Ingram is evidently consistent, because, speaking in London in 1911, he expressed the same view at greater length, and in almost identical words. Looking through Mrs. Mary Davies' interesting book, "My Psychic Recollections" (published 1912), we found the Bishop of London's remarks quoted on pp. 169-170. We reproduce them elsewhere in this issue.

A correspondent in "Common Sense," who objects to Mr. Jerome K. Jerome taking Spiritualism seriously, holds that it is impossible to persuade a convinced Spiritualist of his error. To this complimentary testimony from an opponent Mr. Jerome K. Jerome adds: "There I agree with him. I am thinking of the still doubtful."

The reason for the firm faith of the convinced Spiritualist is splendidly expressed in those brave words of Gerald Massey: "My faith in our future life is founded upon realities of my own personal experience. These facts have given me the proof palpable that our very own human identity and intelligence do persist after the blind of darkness has been drawn down in death. *The Spiritualist who has plumbed the void of death, as I have, has established a faith that can neither be undermined nor overthrown.*"

The italics are ours. The words quoted are from the Preface to "My Lyrical Life," the last edition of Gerald Massey's poetical works. Those who have not read his golden little book, "Concerning Spiritualism," written more than forty years ago, should do so. It is out of print, but is in the Alliance library.

The Rev. Harold Anson, in an address at St. Martin-in-the-Fields on September 5th, spoke on the power of religion in the restoration of bodily health. He referred to healing results achieved by means of Christian Science, and stated that he saw no reason why similar results should not be obtained in the Church of England.

The Vicar of St. Martin's, Mr. Anson added, would allow him to speak on Fridays during September on the subject, and in October to hold a special service at which the congregation, on behalf of themselves or others, could make special supplication for the healing of the body.

"Last Letters from the Living Dead Man" has been published in America by Elsa Barker, whose former volumes, "Letters from a Living Dead Man," and "War Letters from a Living Dead Man," will be remembered. The present book consists of a series of communications from Judge Hatch, received between February, 1917, and February, 1918.

There are thirty-one letters, forming (says the "Progressive Thinker," of Chicago) an organic discussion of the problems confronting the world, and, particularly America. Speaking of "The Aquarian Age," Judge Hatch says: "There will be much rebellion in the beginning. Things are not as stable as they seemed four years ago." (The letter is dated February 2nd, 1918.) "The war has proved that they were not really stable. The wave of psychic research that is now sweeping across the world will wear thin the veil between the visible and the invisible. More and more men and women will live in two worlds at the same time; for the two worlds occupy the same space, and their differences are differences of consciousness, of vibration, the latter including a difference in states of matter."

The Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society at Kobe reports (says "The Times") that another new doctrine of life has arisen in Japan. It calls itself the "Great Spirit Way Belief," and has obtained considerable notice in the

Press. It is philosophical and mystical, and claims unlimited beneficent influence over mind and body. It professes to unite, contain, and be superior to all other religions and systems of philosophy.

Eighteen volumes give in detail the principles of the system. The entrance fee for membership is three yen (6s.), and the association fee is 12 yen (£1 4s.). For a week's spiritual treatment—which is considered a sufficient period of time to cure any disease—the fee is five yen (10s.). Correspondence courses are given; and, when certain examinations have been successfully passed and theses written, diplomas from headquarters are granted. An evangelistic band of 12 members has been founded. Headquarters for the cult has been established in Tokyo, where daily lectures are given and spiritual healing is practised. World evangelization is aimed at.

"SIGNS AND WONDERS" AND THE INMOST LIGHT.

SOME MORE HINTS TO INQUIRERS.

In the excellent "Hints to Inquirers" in *LIGHT* (p. 188), it is written, "We must see for ourselves the conclusions to which our facts point. No one can see them for us. If we weakly surrender our own judgment to that of others we shall be led 'to confusion and to doubt.'"

While we may, and to a great extent must, go to others for facts, still our conclusions should be our own. But many Spiritualists prefer to reverse this order, and while perpetually seeking new phenomena never pause to think of the significance of those they have already received. It is to such persons that A. J. Davis refers in his "Penetration," page 240, "How many insincere persons there are who bring merely their *perceptive* faculties to bear upon the sublimest questions!" recalling the text "Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged."

As a type of what a Spiritualist séance should aim to become, we may with advantage study the original Pentecostal circle held by the apostles, "together with certain women," in an upper chamber, free from disturbance. The essential difference between this first gathering and the average circle of to-day lies, no doubt, in the mental attitude of the members. In the former case they assembled with a purely spiritual intent, and "with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer"; whereas to-day, although a séance may open with prayer, still the main object in view is to procure convincing phenomena. Seeking the highest, they not only achieved what they sought, but received also many objective evidences of spirit power; whereas to-day our search after "tests" and for something striking, to re-convince ourselves, leads too often "to confusion and to doubt." Not that objective evidence, rightly considered, is to be condemned—when it is regarded as a lure to catch the attention of the material intellect and draw it into contemplation of spiritual truths. In fact, it is not long before we find Peter and John, and "their own company," praying "that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus." But the apostles did not seek phenomena in order to bolster their own faith, rather it was their faith that produced the phenomena; and perhaps the prayer itself may be regarded more as an acknowledgment than as a request, seeing that signs and wonders had already been showered upon them unsought.

It is interesting to observe that the effects produced upon a mixed audience by the signs and wonders were very much the same in kind as those with which we are familiar, while "Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven," were amazed and marvelled, "others mocking said, 'They are filled with new wine.'" So to-day, while men devoted to the study of truth in any form take notice and are amazed, the others mock with easy and ribald jest. There are those among the orthodox of various churches who assert that our spiritualistic gifts are none other than the magical gifts of Simon Magus, whom Peter rebuked because he "thought to obtain the gift of God with money"—doubtless because of the higher phenomena which come with the Holy Spirit. It is true that the term "Spiritualism" is applied to phenomena of both kinds, and it behoves us to distinguish between them, and ever to seek contact with the highest spirits, who dispense help and healing to mankind, rather than be satisfied with the lower and more material spirits who pander to man's curiosity.

It would be well for us to learn from Peter's rebuke the true way of obtaining "the gift of God," even though we may not be tempted, by the spiritual gifts of any of St. Peter's successors, to repeat the sin of Simon. And in these days of physical science even the wonders of genuine magic serve a useful purpose, in combating the crudest form of materialism, and in forcing closed minds to entertain the idea of spirit influence—if only as an open question. The Pentecostal outpouring of spirit forces, confined to a few people "of one heart and soul," and to one place, came with extraordinary intensity; to-day our spirit influence, extensive as humanity

itself, is correspondingly weaker. If Peter could cite the prophecy of Joel as in course of fulfilment, even before he had been taught in a dream that the Gentiles also were to receive the Spirit, assuredly we to-day may, with as much reason, take the same message as indicative of "the last days"—not of the world perhaps, but, as before, of a Dispensation.

We seem on very familiar ground when we read of the arrest of Peter and John, because they had used the post-mortem appearances of Jesus to prove the resurrection of the dead; but on this occasion they were released after a night's detention "because of the people." Let us indulge a hope that even so, to-day, the people will demand better treatment for our mediums. While it is hardly to be expected that our judges, to whom even the common man is little more than a "deposition," could have any personal acquaintance with the characteristics of a medium, still a knowledge of the fundamental law of spirit life—that "like attracts like"—is essential to the right judging of mediumship. When a fool with a lie on his lips goes to consult a medium, if the medium be genuine, the seeker will, in all probability, get folly and deception. Whereas, if a so-called medium were really a cunning rogue robbing the public under the guise of mediumship, he, or she, would be more likely to detect the detective, and tell him that the "spirits" were not working in his case. In short, the medium, because he is genuine, may be condemned for a fraud practised by the detective.

For a good illustration of this possibility let us turn to that instructive and palpably honest book, "The Seven Purposes," by Margaret Cameron, where, on page 269, she relates how confusion arose when a friend "asked a question relating to an entirely imaginary situation—just to see—as he afterward explained." This led the informing spirit, Mary K., to lay down a rule that "The integrity of the seeker is the messenger's only protection from disintegrating force . . . absolute sincerity and candour are essential to the maintenance of a connection with constructive forces, in these interviews." It is noticeable that when a little innocent deception, "upon misprision growing, comes home again"—it seems somehow to have lost its innocence!

Thus we see that Spiritualism is pretty much what we make it. It pays us back in kind and with interest, adding evidence to faith, suspicion to doubt, and lies to deception; and yet we often think that we are treated unworthily. Even when it reflects our soul, we do not always admire the image. Just as, in everyday life, when we see our own imperfections exteriorised to us in another person, we are very ready to declaim against them. Beware the man much given to invective—whether against mankind or merely against mediums! Perhaps in the spirit world the tie of affinity will bring us punishment and correction, by holding us to the people who display before our eyes the faults which to-day lie behind the fields of our direct vision—people who turn toward us the points of our fretful quills.

B. M. GODSAL.

Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

August 7th, 1919.

FORMS SEEN IN A HOME CIRCLE.

A lady, whose contributions to our columns have been many and welcome, sends us part of a letter she has received from her brother in New Zealand who, she states, is entirely reliable and a keen critic. He describes the wonderful experiences of himself and his wife in their quiet sittings at home:—

Meg and I sit regularly twice a week, and we can now distinctly see etherial spirit forms. The room is sometimes full of them, so many that though we both see the same forms frequently, still, as one cannot look everywhere at once we each often see forms that the other does not notice. They come and go quickly, as a rule, but sometimes remain stationary in front of us for a while. They are getting more and more distinct, and I expect that if we can keep on sitting here long enough (I mean if we do not have to go to another town and break up the conditions before they become established) they may become solid materialisations. We cannot yet distinguish features, but the figures are becoming distinctive. Emmie's petite figure both Meg and I are sure we have seen, and one evening Meg felt a hand touching her forehead.

It is a most beautiful experience. The figures seem so lovely, containing in themselves, as it were (it is difficult to describe), a soft etherial light. They are attired in flowing white drapery which seems as if secured at the top of the head and falling in showers of soft light on each side of the face and over the shoulders, fading away below the waist.

No one ever sits with us, nor will be permitted to do so until we get into communication with our visitors and get their consent. It is to us a deeply solemn thing. We commence with the Lord's Prayer, and I pray to God as best I can from my heart. We then sing a few Spiritualist hymns. At the close Meg says a prayer and I say what may be in my mind to the spirit people present, though by that time we cannot see any. We close by singing the Spiritualists' Doxology, and then I light the gas. I wish you and L— could be with us at these sittings. You would not have another doubt.

HOW THE "THOUGHT-READING" THEORY BREAKS DOWN.

AN AMERICAN BUSINESS MAN'S EXPERIENCES.

The issue of *LIGHT* of July 5th threw illuminating rays on the qualifications of some prominent people to express their convictions on the genuineness of psychic phenomena.

It appears that Lord Haldane (page 215) after but one séance felt qualified to say that there was "a good deal of fraud and imposture" in Spiritualism, and to add something about "a deficiency in quality," and that the experiences of another "authority," Mr. E. F. Benson, who is quoted (page 214) as expressing an adverse opinion, have been so limited as to be entirely covered by mere "thought reading."

In other columns we read that Sir Wm. Crookes' trained mind was not justified in coming to a positive opinion in the case of Miss Cook till between thirty and forty séances had been under study, and that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in his Queen's Hall address stated that it was no less than twenty-five years before he made up his mind.

It seems to be me it would call for no little temerity to assume that Lord Haldane and Mr. Benson have such unusual mentalities that they can decide, without investigation, questions on which Sir Wm. Crookes and Sir A. Conan Doyle only felt qualified to express opinions after years of study.

The late Thomson J. Hudson, author of the "Law of Psychic Phenomena," says people who do not know that these things are true (I quote from memory) are not entitled to be called prejudiced—they are simply ignorant. That seems harsh, and I would soften asperities by quoting one who has aptly said that what is frequently referred to as "thinking" is too often but a re-arrangement of our prejudices.

Like Mr. Benson, I, too, at one time was positive that what was told to the sitters at séances was "mind reading." If I had known anything about telepathy I should have seen the difficulties in the way of such an explanation and would have known that as a blanket theory to cover all the facts it was untenable. But at that time I was, as Hudson would say, simply ignorant.

Among my first experiences was the following: My business has required me to make advertising contracts with a large number of papers. The late Dr. Slesinger, editor of a monthly devoted to Spiritualism, asked for a contract. I was "positive" that the phenomena on which his beliefs were based were covered by "thought reading," and told him so, and that I was not interested.

To my great surprise he said he was a medium, and if I would give him a contract he would prove to me then and there that I was wrong. I was to be the sole judge. He stepped into the outer office while I prepared twenty ballots, each one inch by three inches, nineteen of them containing fictitious names and one the name of a dead friend. These I carefully rolled up into little pellets and placed in my hat.

The doctor then returned. He already knew the full name I had written, where the person had died, and the nature of the last illness. But it might be covered by "thought reading," although it was so sudden and definite that it almost stunned me, for this was in my own office without paraphernalia. But even telepathy would have to be stretched beyond the facts, for while I had the name (E. L. W.—) in my mind I had no thought of his last sickness or the city where he passed away.

While I had read of telepathy I had never met with it before, and was profoundly impressed. But he soon left me no room for doubt or equivocation. Said he, "Does anybody on earth know which one of the pellets contains the name?" I replied that no living being knew—not even myself. Then said he, "My guide knows. He gave me the name, last illness and place of death, and will tell me, from the next world, which pellet to open."

I picked them up one by one. When about two-thirds of them had been passed, as I held one in my hand he became considerably agitated and almost shouted at me to hold it. It was the right one. I gave him his contract, but could not overcome my beliefs and prejudices so quickly, and to satisfy myself that it was not an accident or coincidence I later went through the same test with him three times more, on one of which occasions I had with me a Member of Congress* of the United States and on another the foreman of my type-foundry, a German mechanic of fine qualifications who, being an agnostic, was greatly astonished. His experience, too long to relate here, was so impressive that I may refer to it later.

The doctor did not fail in a single instance. It is obvious in such cases as these, in which no human mind has knowledge of the desired fact, that "thought reading" as an explanation utterly fails.

It is such experiences as these that give serious investigators pause, but the pseudo-investigator, innocent of knowledge of the real subtleties, finds the commonest and

most superficial explanation covers his limitations and is prodigal with ink in the restatement of his prejudices. Was it Emerson who said "beliefs are deadly things"?

EWING.

San Francisco.

August 1st, 1919.

THE GHOST OF MARPLE HALL.

A very good ghost story appeared recently in "Country Life" concerning one of the ancestral portraits hanging on the walls of the principal staircase of Marple Hall, Cheshire, the seat of Mr. J. H. Bradshaw Isherwood. The portrait is of Moll of Brabhyns, who married into the family about the middle of the eighteenth century, and it represents an evil-looking woman holding a small spaniel in her arms. She is said to haunt the house, looking for her wedding-ring. No ring is to be seen on the wedding finger of her left hand. Of the ghostly incidents narrated below we are told that they happened only a dozen years ago, and that the facts were all noted and written down at the time and are corroborated by several witnesses:—

"In the summer of 1907 the four-year-old grandson of the present owner paid a visit to Marple, his parents being abroad. He was put with his nurses into the old nursery, a large room at the top of the house. The first night of his arrival he awoke between the hours of twelve and two, complaining to his nurse of the 'muzzy old woman' who was sitting at the foot of his bed. He described exactly the appearance of the woman in the portrait, and he also spoke of the dog she carried. The child did not seem at all alarmed, only annoyed, complaining that he did not like the old woman, and imitating her sour face. The nurse soothed the child, and after a time he went to sleep. Every night during the week of his stay the same thing happened between the same hours. The nurse saw nothing. In October of the same year, 1907, the boy again paid a visit to his grandparents and, as before, occupied the same room with his nurse. The first night of their arrival the nurse put the boy to bed in his little cot, which had high sides, impossible for a child so young to get out of, and went down to her supper, leaving a night-light burning, and with instructions to a maid next door to go at once to the child if she heard him call. The maid presently joined the nurse at supper, reporting that all was quiet. Shortly after this the child's voice was heard outside the servants' hall, and he was found by his horrified nurse standing with bare feet and only his little nightshirt on, quite warm and not at all frightened. Asked who brought him downstairs, he replied, 'Daddy came and put the light on and carried me down.' That night the child's father was at Segovia. The maids, all greatly alarmed, rushed upstairs to find, when they reached the room, that it was impossible to open the door—the only one into the room—although it was not locked. After great efforts, the door was forced open and a large armchair was found jammed between it and a chest of drawers. The electric light was full on, and one side of the child's crib was down—an impossible thing for him to have accomplished himself.

"Seven years later, the story having been forgotten, the child's younger brother, also aged four, was given the same room. He had no disagreeable experience, but he was continually speaking of an old woman with a dog, who told him that he must go away.

"The theory is that Moll of Brabhyns, having had none of her own, resents the appearance of children in the house at all, and that—in the case of the elder child—his guardian angel must have assumed the shape of his father in order to remove the child from the harmful influence in the room without unduly alarming him. Needless to say, the room is no longer used as a nursery."

THE Editor, who has been confined to his house for some days with an attack of gastritis, asks the indulgence of correspondents for any delay or omissions consequent on his absence.

MRS. F. M. FINLAY, now recovering from a serious operation, desires to thank the many friends whose affection and sympathy have helped, by their sustaining power, to carry her safely through the crisis.

In its September issue, "The Young Man and Woman," edited by the Rev. Walter Wynn, reprints with some commendatory remarks the leading article, "Spirit Ministry and Spirit Direction," which appeared in *LIGHT* of July 5th, 1919.

THE MYSTIC'S RAPTURE.—In the highest rapture I ever was in, my soul passed into a fearful extremity of experience: she was burned with so terrible an excess of bliss that she was in great fear and anguish because of this excess. Indeed she was so overcome by this too great realisation of the strength of God that she was in terror of both God and joy. I am not able to think that even in Heaven the soul could endure such heights for more than a period. These heights are incomparably, unutterably beyond vision and union. They are the uttermost extremity of that which can be endured by the soul, at least until she has re-risen to greater altitudes of holiness in ages to come. —"THE GOLDEN FOUNTAIN."

* The Member of Congress referred to, the Hon. B—H—, since deceased, was so impressed that he returned with friends and had the experience repeated.

WATCHES REPAIRED BY A SPIRIT.

Miss Kathleen Hicks sends the following narrative:—

From 1915 until July, 1919, I was head cook at a hospital near where I live. I went from home each day to my work, so you will understand that the question of time was an important one to me. I used a very good silver lever watch, which kept excellent time, but unfortunately one day I dropped it, with the result that it would not go. I sent it to a watch-maker in Liverpool, who failed to repair it. I then sent it to a man near where I live, who also failed to make it go.

I then put the watch away in a locked jewellery cabinet in my own room where we sit each week in circle. I then took to using a little gun-metal watch I had in a purse-bag, a watch at least twelve years old; this went for a time and then refused to go any more. I did not bother to take this to be mended; it was old and could not be worth much. Now comes the point of my story.

About three months back we had the privilege of having Mrs. Roberts Johnson at our house for a trumpet séance. During her visit she happened to tell me of a watch which some gentleman could not get repaired and of how her son, Billy, in the spirit world for the past twenty years, mended this watch at a séance of hers at which this man was present.

At our own séance that evening I said to Billy, who nearly always speaks through the trumpet at Mrs. Roberts Johnson's séances, "I wish you could mend my watch for me." I cannot say that I thought about it afterwards till my work at the hospital was finished and I was going over to Ireland. It then occurred to me that I must take my watch with me and see if I could get it mended. I unlocked my cabinet, got out the watch and wound it up, and I am glad to say it has gone ever since without having to be sent for any repairs. I then wondered whether it could be possible that Billy had mended my other watch which was so old and worn. Well, that watch also I found was repaired and both have gone ever since, a matter of over six weeks.

A PSYCHIC BOOK IN ICELANDIC.

The psychic photograph obtained by E. N. was the result of a visit made on my advice, and was a triumphant success. Recently E. N. paid me a visit for the purpose of exhibiting the really remarkable photos she has obtained, and I can confirm all that Miss Dallas says about it. Anyone who cannot see the identity between the spirit photo and recent photos of the young man taken shortly before he was killed must be totally incapable of accurate observation.

I now possess a fine collection of the work of the Crewe Circle, sufficient to place the genuineness of the powers of Mr. Hope and his colleagues beyond all possible doubt, and to establish the truth of spirit photography and identity. This evidence will be fully set forth in the second edition of my work, "Man's Survival after Death," which is now in the Press, and is expected to appear at the beginning of October.

I have just heard that the first edition has been published in Icelandic by Professor Neilsson of the Reykjavik University, who informs me that it is the only book on psychic subjects in the language.

C. L. TWEEDALE.

"NO PRODUCT OF A MEDIUM'S BRAIN."

Dorothy Grenside, discussing in the September number of "Vision" the subject of Automatic Writing, holds that very little matter of importance has been gained through this source. She has, however, a good word to say for the "unusually interesting series of automatic writings published under the title of 'Letters from the Other Side'"—a book already favourably reviewed in our columns. "The communications," Mrs. Grenside remarks, "are curiously similar in style to the writings of a well-known clergyman who was much before the public eye until he laid aside his garment of physical flesh a brief while ago. . . [They] follow in the main those of similar writings, but they have a certain charm of style and sincerity of feeling that drive the reader irresistibly to the conclusion that here is no product of a medium's brain, but rather a contact with a living personality, as sure 'a focus of will, intelligence and feeling' as when with us in the flesh. . . To read the book is to realise the possibility that these messages may be from one whose congregation loved him as a father, and whose church was packed Sunday after Sunday by crowds drawn not only by his eloquence, but by the love he breathed for God and fellow men."

"It is the art of mankind to polish the earth, and everyone who works is scrubbing in some part."—THOREAU.

THERE is some connection . . . between a perception of light and these veridical psychic experiences, for the two are associated in accounts from people who know nothing of others' experiences. . . It may be that the spirit, in manifesting, is acting on the ether as we act on matter when we communicate with each other by speech, and that the first thing produced by such action is light, which is, of course, an ethereal pulsation.—J. ARTHUR HILL, in "Man is a Spirit."

A WOMAN MYSTIC.

No author's name is appended to "The Golden Fountain or The Soul's Love for God" (3/- net, John M. Watkins, Cecil Court, W.C.2). It is simply described as "being some thoughts and confessions of one of His lovers," but, whoever the writer, we feel that she is in the true succession of the mystics. The book is thrilled through with a passion of spiritual devotion which few of us can either enter into or understand. Early in its pages the author tells us that she experienced three conversions: the first two of terrible suffering, "an unbearable, inexplicable pain of remorse;" the third of a great and marvellous joy "in which it is no exaggeration to say that for a few moments I seemed to receive God and all the freedom of the Heavens into my soul."

"How can a contact with God be in any way described? It is not seeing, but meeting and fusion with awareness. The soul retaining her own individuality and consciousness to an intense degree, but imbued with and fused into a life of incredible intensity, which passes through the soul vitalities and emotions of a life so new, so vivid, so amazing, that she knows not whether she has been embraced by love or by fire, by joy or by anguish: for so fearful is her joy that she is almost unable to endure the might of it."

So might some saintly nun of olden days have described her experiences, but no cloistered celibate, mortifying a sickly frame with harsh austerities, could have written the following passage:—

"To the lover of God all affections go up and become enclosed, as it were, into one affection, which is Himself; so that we have no love for anyone or anything apart from Him. In this is included, in a most deep and mysterious fashion, marriage-love in all its aspects. In every way it can become a sacrament: there is nothing in it which is not holy. In no way does the marriage bond of the body separate the spirit from acceptableness to God. But I was some time before I could arrive at this, and could see marriage as the physical prototype in this physical world of the spiritual union with Himself in the spiritual world. And this was arrived at, not by prudish questionings and criticisms, but by remembering that this relationship between men and women is His thought, His plan, not ours. . . It is our opposition to the passage of the Holy Will which causes all the distress and uneasiness of life. This bond of earthly marriage is of the flesh and can be kept by the body, and yet the heart, mind and soul remain in lovely, perfect chastity; and I found that this exquisite freedom—after prolonged endeavours on the part of the soul and the creature—was at length given them as a gift by act of grace, and remained in permanence without variation."

Her only grief is that others do not share her experience. But they can do so if they will.

"The soul has six wings: love, obedience, humility, simplicity, perseverance and courage. With these she can attain God."

THE CALL.

Enemies cornered and red with rage,
A hungering world with a strange new need—
Time to be stirring, time to engage,
Time for men of the Viking breed.

Men that matter, men that can do,
Women fearless and kind and wise,
Come, for the new Life breaking through
Calls its children to wake and rise.

Leave the witling who stares and gapes,
Or, moonstruck, mumbles some ancient dream,
The morbid seeker for vampire shapes—
Out from the shadows, follow the Gleam!

Come, for the Old House totters and bows;
Crazy with age, its rafters fall;
Leave the laggards to drift and drowse;
Up and ready, answer the call!

Bring sword and trowel, like those of old
Who fought and builded with head and hand—
The Veil is rending, our eyes behold,
Through dim cloud curtains with sheen of gold,
The Hills of Vision, the Promised Land!

D.G.

G. B. N., a lady residing not far from this office, narrates a strange premonitory dream. On the 2nd ult. she dreamt that her fiancé had died, that she was kneeling by his grave, that among those present at his funeral were two friends of his, Mr. L. and Mr. V., and that as the mourners moved away Mr. L. came up, put his arm through hers and led her away. At the time of her dream her fiancé was apparently quite well, but five days later he suddenly dropped dead. Among the mourners at the funeral were the two friends she had seen in her dream. All was over, and she was stumbling away from the grave when someone hurried after her and took her arm. On turning round she found that it was Mr. L.

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.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1.—6.30, Mrs. Mary Inkpen. September 21st, Mr. T. Olman Todd.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, W.2.—11, Mr. Ernest Meads; 6.30, Mr. P. E. Beard. Wednesday, September 17th, 7.30, Mr. Thomas Ella.

Walthamstow.—342, Hoe-street.—7, Mr. Punter, address and clairvoyance.

Shepherd's Bush.—78, Becklow-road.—11, public circle; 7, Mrs. Bloodworth. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Stenson.

Croydon.—117b, High-street.—11, Mrs. Julie Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. Annie Boddington.

Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.—6.30, Mrs. Alice Jamrach.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.—11, Mrs. E. Marriott; 6.30, Mr. H. E. Hunt; Wednesday, Mrs. Butterworth, of Barrow.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway.—6.30, Mr. Ernest Meads. Wednesday, 7.30, meeting for members and associates only.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—7, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Mary Crowder, address and clairvoyance.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.—7, Mrs. Harvey, address and clairvoyance. Wednesday, 8, Mr. Wright, address and clairvoyance.

Brighton.—Athenæum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mr. Blake, President, S.C.U., addresses and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mr. R. Gurd.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—11.30 and 7, addresses and clairvoyance, Mrs. Mary Gordon; also Monday, 7.15, Tuesday, 3 p.m., and Thursday, 7.15, public meeting for inquirers, questions and clairvoyance. Lyceum every Sunday, 3 p.m. Next week-end, Mrs. Marriott.

Holloway.—Grove-dale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).—11, Mr. H. M. Thompson; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. P. Scholey. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Alice Harper, of Australia. 21st, Harvest Festival; 11, Mrs. Mary Gordon; 7, Mr. T. O. Todd. Gifts of flowers, plants, vegetables, etc., thankfully received. Send in, if possible, on the Saturday evening, to assist in the decoration. Take notice: "Whist drive," Saturday, 28th, 7.30; silver collection at door; in aid of Building Fund.

LITTLE ILFORD SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISTS.—Mrs. Alice Jamrach, as financial secretary of the New Church Fund connected with this Society, desires to acknowledge with sincere thanks the receipt of £2 2s. from Mrs. Fugeman, of Bishops Stortford.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction ...	11-30	6-30
Brixton, 143a, Stockwell Park Road ...		7-0
Camdenwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill ...	11-0	6-30
Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road ...	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Gymnasium Hall, High Street ...	11-0	6-30
Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ...		7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earlham Hall, Earlham Grove ...		7-0
Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road ...	11-15	7-0
Hackney, 240a, Amhurst Road ...		7-0
Harrow, Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone ...		6.30
Kingston, Assembly Rooms, Bishop's Hall, Thames Street ...		6-30
Lewisham, The Priory, 410, High Street ...		6-30
Little Ilford, Third Avenue Corner, Church Road ...		6-30
London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W. ...	11-0	6-30
Manor Park Spiritual Church, Shrewsbury Road ...	11-0	6-30
Marylebone, Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. ...		6-30
Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road ...	11-30	7-0
Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Bramar Road ...		6.30
Plumstead, Perseverance Hall, Villas Road ...		7-0
Richmond, Castle Assembly Rooms ...		7-0
Stratford, Idmiston Road, Forest Lane ...		7-0
Tottenham, "The Chestnuts," 684, High Road ...		7-0
Upper Holloway, Grove-dale Hall, Grove-dale Road ...	11-15	7-0
Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway ...		6.30
*Lyceum (Spiritualists' Sunday School) at 3 p.m.		

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (Oxon.)'

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful sance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrap the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

STANDARD BOOKS SUPPLIED TO ORDER FOR CASH ONLY.

Post free from the Office of "LIGHT," 6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C. 1, at the prices quoted. Remittances must accompany orders, otherwise they cannot be sent.

Spirit Teachings. Through the Mediumship of Wm. Stainton Moses (M.A. Oxon.). By Automatic or Passive Writing. With a Biography by Charlton T. Speer and two full-page portraits; eighth edition. Cloth, 324 pages, 6s. 8d.

On the Threshold of the Unseen. An Examination of the Phenomena of Spiritualism and of the Evidence for Survival after Death. By Sir William Barrett, F.R.S. Cloth, 336 pages, 8s.

Man is a Spirit. A Collection of spontaneous cases of Dream, Vision and Ecstasy, By J. Arthur Hill. Cloth, 199 pages, 5s. 5d.

Spiritualism: Its History, Phenomena and Doctrine. By J. Arthur Hill. Introduction by Sir A. Conan Doyle. Cloth, 270 pages, 8s.

The Harmonial Philosophy. A Compendium and Digest of the Works of Andrew Jackson Davis, the American Seer. Cloth, 424 pages, 11s.

The Religion of To-Morrow. By W. J. Colville. Cloth, 320 pages, 4s. 11d.

Human Magnetism; or, How to Hypnotise. A Practical Handbook for Students of Mesmerism. By Professor James Coates. With Ten Plates, showing induction of phenomena, Experimental and Curative. Third Edition. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

Seeing the Invisible. Practical Studies in Psychometry, Thought Transference, Telepathy, and Allied Phenomena. By James Coates, Ph.D., F.A.S. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

Photographing the Invisible. Practical Studies in Spirit Photography, Spirit Portraiture and other Rare, but Allied Phenomena. By James Coates, Ph.D., F.A.S. With 90 photographs. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

The Gift of the Spirit. Essays by Prentice Mulford. Edited by A. E. Waite. 4s. 11d.

Reminiscences. By Alfred Smedley. Including an account of Marvellous Spirit Manifestations. 1s. 3d.

The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen. By Mrs. Oliphant. Cloth, 2s. 3d.

After Death. New Enlarged Edition of Letters from Julia. Given through W. T. Stead. Cloth, 3s. 11d.

Practical Psychometry: Its Value and How it is Mastered. By O Hashnu Hara. 1s. 8d.

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