

Light:

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.

We refer in the leader this week to Judge Edmonds' experiences in the speaking of foreign tongues by mediums who in their normal state had no acquaintance with the language spoken. Many experienced Spiritualists to-day are acquainted with this phase of psychic phenomena so clearly identical with the speaking in tongues of the early Christian Church. In one of his tracts issued in 1859, the Judge refers to the visit of some Polish gentleman who conversed with his daughter Laura in Polish, a language of which the medium (Miss Edmonds) had no knowledge, and tells how on another occasion a Mr. Evangelides, a Greek, called at the house and had a lengthy conversation with the medium in his own tongue, of which also she had no knowledge. Further, the Judge writes:—

One day my daughter and niece came into my library, and began a conversation with me in Spanish, one speaking a part of a sentence, and the other the residue. They were influenced, as I found, by the spirit of a person I had known when in Central America, and reference was made to many things which had occurred to me there, of which I knew they were as ignorant as they were of Spanish.

After giving many other examples of the kind with the names of the persons concerned, Judge Edmonds pertinently asks:—

Is it not enough for all, except those who would not believe though one rose from the dead?

Readers of Mark Twain will remember his description of the steamboat race on the Mississippi. The engineer on one of the vessels, each of which was being urged to its greatest speed, was told he had not sufficient draught in his furnace, to which he wrathfully replied that it was impossible to increase it, since every time a nigger stoker approached the flames with a fresh supply of fuel he was carried up the chimney with it! We think of this story when we observe the charges and denunciations of some of our opponents. It is not merely that they lose their heads in the intensity of their hate for the subject, but the furnace of discussion burns with such intense heat that everyone who tries to add fuel to the flames is likely to be carried off his feet by the very draught of it. By the way, we have begun to wonder of late what proportion of the attacks are the result of natural and honest conviction, and how many are artificially stimulated behind the scenes. We have noted some significant things about some of the attacks and their writers, but on that subject it is not wise to say too much. Vested interests, whether in property or social influence, will always fight hard for their privileges.

From a Russian correspondent in Korea we receive the following:—

Being a Russian I cannot but send you my gratitude for your mention (p. 246) of Mr. A. N. Aksakof and Prof. A. M. Boutlerof. In these black days, when so many even doubt "if any good could come from Russian Nazareth," your warm mention is especially valuable.

In connection with the transition of Madame D'Esperance, I did not see in *LIGHT* about a very important investigation by Mr. Aksakof after the sitting with Mme. D'Esperance in Helsingfors on December 23rd, 1893 (11th, Russian calendar).

It was the case when a part of the body of the medium dematerialised—and Mme. D'Esperance was not in trance, and sat in front of the screen to the dark study. Such remarkable and testified spiritual phenomena were registered then for the first time.

Mr. Aksakof published his account in the "Psychische Studien," 1894 (edited by him), and in the Russian paper, "Rebus" (still existing, if not suppressed by Bolsheviks, in Moscow)—1896.

We thank our correspondent, whose mastery of our tongue is not the least striking part of his letter. The case of partial dematerialisation of the medium to which he refers was fully dealt with in *LIGHT* many years ago. It was paralleled in the case of the Icelandic medium, as described by Professor Haraldur Nielsson (p. 344).

* * *

Our supply of psychical and occult books for review is rarely without some specimen of the trashy side of the subject. The sensational book for popular consumption—it may be a novel, a "treatise," or a book of short stories—is generally present and we are inclined to rank certain specimens of it with the fake medium and the bogus clairvoyant. Full of crude and rubbishy sensationalism, the spawn of diseased imaginations, some of these books are obviously produced to appeal to a love of the morbid and ghastly side of things. The cheap assumption on the part of some of the writers to be experts and "adepts" can surely deceive no one but the ignorant and thoughtless. For one thing we are thankful; although we always expect to see a certain amount of this kind of "literature" it is by no means so common as in former years. The world is a good deal more serious to-day. It can obtain fearful thrills and shudders without resorting to literary channels—the life around us supplies it. And good, sober sense is on the increase; hence a large demand for psychical literature of a sane and thoughtful character.

ROBERT CHAMBERS AND SPIRITUALISM.

I first became interested in Occultism, not only through my own very early experiences, but through hearing as a mere child that my grandfather, Robert, the younger of the two well-known publishing brothers, W. and R. Chambers, had investigated Spiritualism to his entire satisfaction.

In those days, about 1860, scientific men did not trouble about occult subjects, which were deemed beneath their notice. Science was so strictly orthodox that my grandfather published his "Vestiges of Creation" anonymously. It created an enormous sensation, and upon that book and the writings of Lamarck, Darwin founded his "Origin of Species." Robert Chambers determined to go to America and investigate for himself the reported marvellous happenings there. He had sittings with all the renowned mediums, bringing to bear upon their phenomena the acumen of his scientific mind, and he returned to Europe a convinced believer. He carried on regular sittings with Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall and other intellectuals, and with General Drayson, then a young beginner, who went very far in his investigations before he died.

—From "Ghosts I Have Seen," by Violet Tweeddale,

A MEDIUM ON MEDIUMSHIP.

By A. V. PETERS.

A great deal has been written about mediumship by people who have only been able to study it from outside, but with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Wallis, hardly anyone within the ranks has attempted to express any thoughts upon this most difficult, intricate, and really fascinating subject. What is mediumship and under what heading can we class this elusive faculty? have been questions which have puzzled students of psychic phenomena for the last sixty years. After a close analysis of my own medial powers and those of my brother and sister mediums, I am convinced that mediumship is an extension of the so-called artistic faculty—the faculty with which the musician is able to interpret the mystery of sound; the artist to express in colour the beauties of nature and of the human face and form, and the actor to illustrate the varying aspects of human life as depicted by the dramatist. The medium strikes a higher octave, for whereas the artist cultivates the power of his particular art as contradistinguished from other arts, the medium reaches out to a sphere beyond that of the earth and the emotions that we are familiar with, and by reason of his supersensitiveness is able to interpret those things which belong to the realm of what we know as supernatural, and, what is more important, is helped by and works in co-operation with the inhabitants of that realm.

Mediumship is a faculty that is at once normal and abnormal. This seems a contradiction, but as the whole of life is more or less coloured by our point of view, mediumship must be regarded as normal, and only as abnormal if we consider the artist an eccentric. The faculty of mediumship is latent in seven out of every ten persons. It is active in children until it is smothered by contact with the outer world. We are all acquainted with the feminine method of asserting knowledge without being able to explain how this knowledge has been acquired. But this gift of instinctive knowledge is only a small and not very well understood part of mediumship. Now, mediumship stands apart from all the other faculties with which we are familiar, inasmuch as it depends not alone upon the medium, but upon powers claiming to be spirits of men and women who have left the flesh and who claim to originate the phenomena familiar to us. A certain scientific school of experimenters talks airily of a controlling spirit as merely a personality to be humoured and indulged so that the desired results may be obtained. This is not just either to the medium or to the controlling spirit, and my purpose in writing is to ask for just treatment of mediums, that they may be treated with fairness, neither as plaster saints nor as hysterics and epileptics with no human feeling and no need of the common courtesies of daily life.

EXPERIENCES OF A NOVICE.

And now it may be of interest if I give some of my experiences on the inner side. I was always a curious child, and saw and knew a great deal more than what came through the ordinary sense channels. I used to be visited by remarkable dreams, some of which have been recorded in the pages of *LIGHT*. I was twenty-six before I took part in a séance, although in my home several curious and abnormal things had happened, such as the movement of objects without contact. This first séance I attended was held at the house of my sister-in-law, Mrs. George Peters, and the conductor was one of the old members of the London Spiritualist Alliance. I was an utter novice, knowing nothing of Spiritualism. We sat with our hands on the table—an ordinary old-fashioned round table—and obtained raps and knocks, and the usual answers to questions by means of the alphabet. At length I felt a curious drowsiness creeping over me, and a sensation as if I were looking from the ceiling down on the other sitters. Presently I was aware of being thrown over the back of my chair, my feet being still on the ground, and my hands being held by the sitters on each side, while a voice—not mine—was proceeding from my mouth calling my sister-in-law by a pet name that I found afterwards my brother had used in earth life, but which I had never heard. Then the voice of my mother purported to speak, after which I regained the power of normal control of my body. All the time I was not entirely unconscious, and knew that it was not myself that was speaking.

I have stated that I was always a strange child, and long before being introduced to Spiritualism knew somehow what it was to be clairvoyant and clairaudient; but during the second séance at which I sat at Richmond, I was conscious that I saw the spirits of the so-called dead, much to the amusement of the two young daughters of my host. We were sitting round a table in a thoroughly darkened room. I became very excited and began to move my chair about the room, for the room was full of light to me and I saw that we were not the only people there. As far as I can remember no tests were obtained at that sitting, but I knew that I had seen clairvoyantly. It was then I started on a career which has continued ever since.

My curiosity had been aroused. I knew I had not imagined these experiences, nor had I deceived my friend or myself. I commenced to sit at home, and obtained automatic writing and drawings; but as I could get no satisfactory tests beyond what I gained in my normal studies,

I grew dissatisfied and sought out a circle in London where I could come into touch with someone who knew more of the subject than I did. Such a circle was being held at a house in Kingsgate-street, Holborn. It has since disappeared with the improvement of that part of London. The hostess was a lady who, as I learned afterwards, had herself no power of mediumship, but to whom I owe a debt of gratitude, for when she discovered that I was a medium she left the sittings in my hands. So utterly ignorant was I of mediumship that I thought every Spiritualist saw and heard the spirits. Strangers soon came and I managed to get tests for them, sometimes by clairvoyance and sometimes by spirit guidance. My work came to me; I can hardly say that I sought it. Before many months were over I was sought for by Spiritualists all over London.

THE MEANING AND PROCESS OF CONTROL.

The question is often asked, What is the meaning of control, and how is it induced or brought about? Some people tell us that it is a self-induced hypnotic state and that the alleged control is simply the secondary personality of the medium, or, at the lowest, that we are just acting and deceiving the sitters. Now, to understand the process of control by discarnate beings we must in some measure understand the mesmeric or magnetic control that is produced by a hypnotist in the flesh. We mediums are magnetised by spirit beings, and, as I have seen the process many times, I will try to describe it. The spirit operator commences to make passes down the medium's face and then from the crown of the head down the spine. At first the passes are made slowly, afterwards very quickly, till full control is obtained over the medium, when a hand is gently laid on his head. The sensations during the slow process are very pleasant; a feeling of languor is induced which is very soothing. The eyes close; the hands and feet become insensible; sounds and voices gradually recede as the control becomes stronger, until the medium is in the magnetic state. The spirit then approaches and stands in the "aura," that subtle emanation of which we have heard so much lately, and from that position is able to manipulate the medium's brain and afterwards the whole body. This condition of control or sleep varies; sometimes it is so deep that the normal consciousness is quite absent, sometimes it is as if a voice is speaking in some far-away place which has nothing to do with the medium, and leaves no impression on his memory. Clairvoyant descriptions given during a séance are not retained in the normal state, though it is hard for the outsider to believe that some of the descriptions the medium has given a few minutes before have entirely faded from his mind.

I have endeavoured to consider the question from the standpoint of an observer as well as a medium, and I am convinced of the agency of another personality apart from the medium. I have seen my own controls materialise with Mrs. Corner, Mr. Husk, and Mr. Williams, and one of them has spoken to me in a séance with Mrs. Everitt. But how much of the information we receive is derived from the outside spirit intelligence and how much from the medium must be left to the judgment of the sitter. I once had a curious illustration of the control process. I had been absent from England for some time and on returning went to visit a lady medium, a stranger to me. Her control described my mother and other relations, but failed to perceive that I was a medium. I had not long before started a certain course of occult training which involved great strictness of diet. The controlling spirit described all this and then stated that my own guide, of whom she gave a very good description, had said that I was to stop this and eat flesh meat and take a glass of stout occasionally. I at once told the control not to talk nonsense and not to give opinions that were beyond her. I found out afterwards that the medium was very fond of advising the glass of stout. Now, undoubtedly the information, in coming through the medium's brain, had become distorted by her own ideas.

One curious and yet withal quite natural thing happens after years of control by and close association with a certain spirit, namely, that the medium's personality becomes in some way tinged by the spirit's likes and dislikes. I know this from personal experience, though not in any way to my detriment, but far otherwise.

MEDIUMSHIP AND HEALTH.

A very important question concerning control is that of the conditions by which mediums can best assist spirit people. At the commencement of my work I was told by the spirit people that I was not yet attuned to them and that my brain was too full of poetry and romance. I was recommended to read Carlyle and other writers. I did so with reluctance. I then had to have lessons in voice-training and learn how to use my naturally weak voice without straining it. I was told that the better I was in health and the better my mentality was the better instrument I should become. The idea of some of our critics is that somehow a medium must be a neurotic, negative kind of creature, but I assert that if a medium leads a normal life, taking a healthy interest in all that goes on around him, he will probably be not only a better medium but more alert than the non-medium. When I first encountered Spiritualism I was a delicate, sickly man, always ill, but now I am robust and healthy. Many think that mediums are only mediums, and that they are incapable of any

originality of thought or action; indeed, I have been seriously assured that I should slowly go mad. But let those who entertain such ideas look around and they will find that the evidence points in precisely the contrary direction. No more sane, level-headed, all-round capable men and women can be found anywhere than in the ranks of our best known mediums and spiritual speakers and writers. Here and there among us, it is true, there are those who, instead of living ordinary, healthy lives, shut themselves out from society, and whose minds consequently run to seed, but does not this happen in other professions also?

How can mediumistic capacity be improved? This is a question which I have often been asked. In reply I would emphasise three essentials. First, right diet. I have come to the conclusion that a non-flesh diet, eliminating tobacco and all alcohol, is necessary to obtain the best results. Secondly, exercise. The body needs a certain amount of exercise in the fresh air daily. Thirdly, rest; rest of body and mind. Alas! that is the hardest thing for a medium to obtain and this often from lack of a little consideration and thoughtfulness on the part of those who benefit by his services. Personally, I have known what it is to visit a large meeting where I have had an enthusiastic audience, to not one member of which, however, has it afterwards occurred that I was tired and exhausted after my work; yet I suppose that if I had spoken of being in any need of hospitality or had given way to the temptation of drink, I should have been condemned by those who had been loudest in my praise.

The life of a medium is a hard one, but if I had the choice again given me I would choose the gift I have for the joy it has brought to hundreds of sorrowing hearts. I know that by its means I have saved many from despair and even madness and suicide. The close, beautiful companionship of the spirit friends no money could purchase, while the great love and kindness I have received from friends all over the world is more than I can express. No, I would not be without my gift. I know that it is from God, and He is Love Eternal.

THE LINE OF SPIRITUAL ADVANCE.

Sir A. Conan Doyle, in the course of a letter in the "Daily Mail," last week, makes some interesting reflections on the spiritual evolution from cruder phenomena to finer and more intellectual proofs. He says:—

"In the early days of this movement it was foretold by Mrs. de Morgan and others that the line of advance would be from the crude material phenomena, common in those days, to the finer and more intellectual proofs which the human race would become more fitted to receive. This prophecy has, in the course of the last fifty years, been amply justified. The spirit rap, levitations, and even materialisations have become far less common. The evidence in these directions has been given, and this stage appears to be closing down. On the other hand, we have never before had such an outburst of the finer phases of spirit intervention, of spirit photography, of inspirational addresses, writings, and paintings, and very especially of that clairvoyance or 'discerning of spirits' which Saint Paul counted among the most valuable of spiritual gifts.

"In writing this letter my object was, however, to point out some of the more intellectual proofs of spirit intervention which may appeal to those minds which recoil from grosser manifestations, only justified by the necessities of the material age in which we live. Of written inspiration much might be said, for no philosophy that has appeared has such a literature as has grown round Spiritualism. To those who imagine that the inspirational messages are of small intellectual value I would name only two recent books: 'Claude's Second Book' (Methuen) and 'Letters from the Other Side' (Watkins), which contain the very essence of spiritual knowledge, and, incidentally, a good deal of prophecy, in the case of the latter book, which has been literally fulfilled since the time the messages were taken. If those two books are not indeed inspired, then what are we to think of the transcendent intellectual qualities of those two ladies whose hands were used to produce the script?"

HEAVEN AS EARTH IDEALISED.—One cannot tell, but I think Heaven will just be earth idealised and perfected. The roots of Heaven are here. I like to think that God will give back to me a certain little cottage in a certain little lane where I once dwelt, with the Beloved sewing in our little garden, whose green sods I laid (very amateurishly, I am afraid) with my own hands, and our children playing alongside the hedge where the blackberries grew so deliciously in the autumn. Heaven will give us just the pure things we loved most on earth, give them back to us glorious and transformed, yet, by Divine magic, also just the same as when we knew them. Heaven will give to the poet, the artist, the musician, the inventor, the full realisation of the visions they dreamed. The boys who died in the war will, in Heaven, have their own homes, and mothers, and wives, as on earth, and be as happy as ever they were before the fatal fighting. That's my notion, anyhow. "The Eternal Question," by Allen Clarke.

MATERIAL ILLUSIONS AND SPIRITUAL REALITIES.

ANOTHER NOTE ON THE WHISKY AND CIGAR EPISODE.

There's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.
—SHAKESPEARE.

For the fiftieth time or more we have seen it stated as a proof of the degraded conception which Spiritualists hold of the next world that it is a place which includes whisky and cigars amongst its delights. We regard the continual repetition of these partially false and wholly misleading statements as a proof of the degraded methods to which the enemies of psychic science are now becoming reduced. Sir Oliver Lodge and others have given the true version and interpretation of the matter, which are ignored by the more unscrupulous of newspaper commentators intent only on *ad captandum* arguments. We desire now to cite the views of Professor Hyslop in his "Life After Death" where, in discussing the Raymond communication, he writes:—

"The cigar manufactory incident is more complicated, but still more in favour of the idealistic explanation. It should be noted that it is qualified by allusion to appearances which the ordinary Philistine does not stress in his ridicule. Note, first, that he distinguishes between those who continue to want sensory satisfaction and those who do not placing himself among the latter. Those who continue to desire earthly pleasures are earthbound and have to be cured, so to speak. The indispensable condition of their progress is the eradication of sensory longings or desires. As long as these obsess the mind the clear and true realisation of a spiritual world would not be present, any more than it is with sensuous people among the living. It is clear also from the context that the man who asked for a cigar had had his perplexities about the other world when he got there, and he had some sense of humour in demanding a cigar in thinking that this could not be supplied to him, though other things could.

"Take the case as one in which suggestion is used to cure the subject of his illusions or hallucinations. An earth-bound spirit is haunted with the desire to smoke as a memory of his terrestrial life, and finding others apparently satisfied with the production of thought realities, he ventures to ask for what he thinks is impossible. But those who wish to exorcise his hallucination or sensuous appetite may have tried by suggestion to create the hallucination in him of a cigar with all the machinery that such a suggestion might arouse, and he might find in the effort to get satisfaction that he could not do it and the desire would atrophy or disappear. Readers will find that the whole situation is clearly like what I have indicated, and it is the same with the 'whisky sodas.' The processes are idealistic. The mind creates its own world and transmits the pictures to others and, as the sensory satisfaction does not come, the sensory desire must diminish and disappear."

THE HALLUCINATIONS OF THE UNDEVELOPED SPIRIT.

Professor Hyslop further remarks:—

"An incident of importance also is the fact that the communicator alluded to the cigar as something which only appeared to be such. The casual reader and the newspaper reporter think and speak of it as a real fact, but the record shows that the communicator was debating the reality of the affair in his own mind. There is evidence also that he had a keen sense of humour in the selection of his objects, a cigar and whisky-sodas, making them as paradoxical and amusing as he could, and then tells the matter with a touch of humour that is quite natural. Careful readers will note that there is evidence of debating the question with each other on the spiritual side of life with some realisation of the situation in certain persons there whose hallucinations have to be corrected. The expression, 'That's finished them,' tells a world of meaning. The individual had realised certain impossibilities and believed that he had found something that could not be done in this world of wonders, but he was disappointed and the thing was done, with the acknowledgement that it appeared to be a cigar, and the trial showed that the expected satisfaction did not come. This state of affairs is exactly what comes of suggestion in the living when curing a vicious habit. In a world where thought is more creative than it is with us, suggestion ought to work more effectively than with us, where it may even accomplish wonders."

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PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS.

THE TESTIMONY OF JUDGE EDMONDS.

We have on several occasions in the past referred to that distinguished pioneer of modern Spiritualism, Judge Edmonds, of the New York Supreme Court, and in view of the present interest in the physical side of psychic evidences, it may be useful to quote from a pamphlet issued by him to the American public in the year 1853, setting out some of his experiences.

His pamphlet was issued as an answer to attacks upon him, in his position as a judge, for pursuing practices which one of his critics did not hesitate to describe as allied with devil worship! In the course of his reply, the Judge remarks:—

Inasmuch as I accepted my present position under the implied understanding, at least, that I believed in the Christian religion and would administer our civil laws according to the principles of the Divine law as it has been revealed to us, on which all our institutions were based, so I am bound to certify to those who have intrusted me with the Divine attribute of administering justice among men, that my reverence for that revelation has not been shaken nor my obedience to that moral law impaired.

After this statement, which may be commended to some more recent critics of Spiritualism, the Judge proceeds in a wonderfully temperate spirit to repel some of the more specific accusations against him, remarking, with much discernment, that he is aware that it is not so much himself as the faith which he professes which is the object of attack. It is "the mighty theme and not the inconsiderable advocate" which offends.

He then proceeds to relate the circumstances in which he was led to investigate psychical phenomena, the sceptical attitude in which he approached the investigation; he refers especially to the fact that his incredulity, captiousness and obstinate refusal at first to admit the facts sorely tried the patience of those who had been convinced.

On the subject of physical phenomena he gives the following testimony:—

I have known a pine table with four legs lifted bodily up from the floor, in the centre of a circle of six or eight persons, turned upside down and laid upon its top at our feet, then lifted up over our heads, and put leaning against the back of the sofa on which we sat. I have known that same table to be tilted up on two legs, its top at an angle with the floor of forty-five degrees, when it neither fell over of itself nor could any person present put it back on its four legs. I have seen a mahogany table, having only a centre leg, and with a lamp burning upon it, lifted from the floor at least a foot, in spite of the efforts of those present, and shaken backward and forward as one would shake a goblet in his hand, and the lamp retain its place, though its glass pendants rang again. I have seen the same table tipped up with the lamp upon it, so far that the lamp must have fallen off unless retained there by something else than its own gravity, yet it fell not, moved not. I have known a dinner bell taken from a high shelf in a closet, rung over the heads of four or five persons in that closet, then rung around the room over the heads of twelve or fifteen persons in the back parlour, and then borne through the folding doors to the farther end of the front parlour and there dropped on the floor. I have frequently known persons pulled about with a force which it was impossible for them to resist, and once when all my own strength was added in vain to that of the one thus affected. I have known a mahogany chair thrown on its side and moved swiftly back and forth on the floor, no one touching it, through a room where there were at least a dozen people sitting, yet no one was touched, and it was repeatedly stopped within a few inches of me, when it was coming with a violence which if not arrested must have broken my legs.

This is not a tithe—nay, not a hundredth part of what I have witnessed of the same character, but it is enough to show the general nature of what was before me.

In a series of letters to the "New York Tribune," in the year 1859, Judge Edmonds set out some of the expe-

riences with mediums of various kinds, the cumulative effect of which on any fair-minded reader must have been to establish his case many times over. Take, for example, the "speaking in tongues." He gives many instances, but we select the case of his own daughter, herself a remarkable medium, of whom he writes:—

My daughter, who knows only English and French, has spoken in French, Greek, Latin, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Hungarian, and several dialects of the Indian, and sometimes not understanding what she said, although it was understood by the auditor to whom it was addressed.

But we have taken for special consideration the Judge's testimony to the physical evidences, because to-day these are far rarer than was the case fifty or sixty years ago, and the reader will not fail to observe the consistency of what Judge Edmonds reports with such manifestations as take place to-day, and his attitude towards them as part of the general body of evidences upon which we may safely rest an *intellectual* acceptance of human survival and spirit intercourse.

IF SCEPTICISM WERE TRUTH!

By E. W. DUXBURY.

It is sometimes useful, in the sphere of controversy, to accept, for the sake of argument, your opponent's position, and then consider what consequences will flow therefrom. Let us therefore assume, with the extreme wing of negative criticism, that spirit communication does not, and cannot, occur, and note a few of the difficulties which will then ensue.

In the first place we are confronted by the contrary opinion expressed by certain men of science, who have been not merely distinguished, but have stood head and shoulders above their colleagues in talent and distinction, and have cast a lustre on their age and generation. Certain of them discovered truths not previously suspected by the world, yet, on the assumption, above made, we must hold that they also strenuously asserted the existence of that which has in fact no existence. The argument which would represent them as innocent and simple-minded men who, though eminent in their own sphere, were easily deceived outside it, is clearly superficial. It is true that the physicist or the naturalist is not confronted by human fraud, but the very essence of scientific method lies in the precise adaptation of its means to the problems with which it has to deal. The elimination of fraud must be one of the chief concerns of the scientific investigator of psychic phenomena, and no one can realise this more fully than himself. The argument in question is, therefore, equivalent to an assertion that the most famous men of science of their age were either ignorant of, or neglected, the most elementary principles of scientific method.

We shall next have to consider, on the same assumption, the strange result arising from the foundation of the Society for Psychical Research in the year 1882. The evidential canons of that Society are of a rigorous character, and it is very cautious in making any official pronouncement as an organised body. Membership of the Society does not, it is true, involve the holding of any particular opinions, yet the fact remains that some of its most influential and distinguished members have definitely accepted the Spiritistic hypothesis. On the assumption made, therefore, it would follow that the result of the careful labours and investigation of this Society for over thirty years has been to cause certain of its leading members to assert the existence of that which has in fact no existence. When such a belief is stigmatised as "superstition" it is overlooked that the real superstitions of the past have only been enabled to exist by the absence of scientific investigation, but that the Spiritistic hypothesis has been adopted by such investigators as the result, and in consequence of the searching application of scientific method. In justice to the Society it should be remembered that its aim is not merely to provide material for the formation of individual opinion, but to weld any doctrine it may definitely enunciate into the general body of official science. To do this it must be in a position to meet and refute, by its evidence, every antagonistic explanation.

Finally, we have to notice, on the assumption made, the strange phenomenon presented by the numerous conversions to the Spiritistic hypothesis of former adherents of the "stuff and nonsense" school of thought. These have usually arisen as the result of careful personal investigation, and would seem to entail this singular conclusion that, while ignorance of the subject secures one in the citadel of truth, searching investigation merely causes one to assert the existence of that which has in fact no existence.

It will therefore be seen that acceptance of the views of negative criticism involves intellectual difficulties of a serious character, and tends, in certain respects, to result in a *reductio ad absurdum*.

GIVE every man thine ear, but few thy voice;

Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.

—"Hamlet," Act 1., Scene 3.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

In view of the approaching visit to the United States of Sir Oliver Lodge, the Rev. Joseph MacMahon, one of the leading Catholic clergy of New York, has issued a warning that the Church had placed an absolute prohibition on any dabbling in Spiritualism.

Sir A. Conan Doyle has written to the "Daily Express" on the subject of the girl (mentioned in our columns last week) who "saw" a play rehearsed while she sat in her drawing-room. Sir Arthur dismisses it as a "very simple case of travelling clairvoyance."

Mr. Maskelyne and Mr. Elwin Neame, a professional photographer, have joined the committee appointed to conduct tests with Mr. William Hope in regard to the production of psychic photographs. A representative of the "Daily Express" has been appointed chairman of the committee.

With regard to the head of Christ painted by Mrs. Spencer and exhibited in the Walker Galleries, the "Daily Mail" reproduces it side by side with another picture of Christ by Miss Bertha Valerius, to which it bears a striking resemblance. A copy of the latter, Princess Karadja informs the "Daily Mail," had been sent by her some years ago to Lady Churchill. She writes, "Mrs. Spencer has probably seen it. If it made an impression on her the image may have remained engraved on her subconscious-mind." A copy of Miss Valerius's picture has long hung on the walls of LIGHT office.

Mr. Claude Stanley Leaf, a brother of Mr. Horace Leaf, recently in America broke the world's swimming record over a distance of seven miles in salt water. He beat the previous record by thirty minutes. This fine athlete is interested in Spiritualism, and some years ago sat with his brother for psychic development. This swimming triumph of his was predicted by an American clairvoyant, Mrs. Inez Wagner.

The Dean of Durham (Bishop Welldon), preaching recently at Westminster Abbey, said: "One striking feature of the present day was the facile acceptance of spiritual or Spiritualistic creeds other than Christian. It was not a wish of his to disparage those creeds. So far as they were Spiritualistic—not to say spiritual—they were opposed to materialism, and the enemy of all religion was not Spiritualism in any of its varied forms, but materialism."

Modern Spiritualism (continued Bishop Welldon) deserved a not unsympathetic regard. The votaries of Spiritualism, indeed, were for the most part not orthodox Christians; they were men and women who had been more or less estranged from orthodox Christianity, if not from all Christianity and all religion. They were drawing near; perhaps they were coming back to the faith through Spiritualism.

Answering questions at the close of an address in Nottingham, the Rev. A. J. Waldron was asked why, if there was communication with those who had departed, did they not receive from those who had been murdered the names of their assailants, in order that they might be brought to justice?

The lecturer said that more than one murderer had been brought to book through communication with the dead. A member of the audience desired to know the names and specific occasions, and the speaker said he would reply to any letter on the question.

A correspondent who has no faith in "mediums, séances, or table-turning," writes as follows to the "Daily Mail." He says, "I refused to believe in automatic writing until I was convinced, against my ordinary reasoning powers, by receiving written messages which, by their characteristics and inner knowledge, proved to me beyond a doubt that they were written by my son in the life Beyond. My pen moves and writes automatically, in a most miraculous manner, remarkable descriptions of his experience in the spirit world. At first I was almost afraid of the pen and felt I must throw it away, I was so astounded at its action, but the wonderful, cheering, and kindly messages it wrote soon convinced me it was my dear son, and not some power of evil, who was influencing the pen."

In a recent sermon at St. Paul's Church, Sheffield, on the text, "Stewards of the mysteries of God," the Rev. Spencer Elliott said that one of the most solemn duties of the Christian ministry was to bring people into touch with the realities of the unseen world. Remarkable on certain inexplicable intuitions which one received, and to premonitions of death or trouble, the preacher related an experience of his own on the day of his brother's death in France, and said that supernatural messages were an established fact. The Resurrection appearances narrated in the Gospels could not be set aside as improbable. Some of the most critical minds of to-day had been forced to admit the existence of

phenomena which made every New Testament miracle seem more than possible. At the same time, Mr. Elliott expressed himself as by no means favourable to the methods of modern Spiritualism.

A correspondent in the "Daily Express," who seems to consider Spiritualism should be able to solve all knotty points, asks as a test the solution of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." He is evidently one of those simple folk who hold the belief that any of those who have passed over can be "called up."

Mr. Herbert Vivian, in an article in the "Daily News" (December 17th), describes the psychic paintings executed by Mr. Charles Horsfall. He writes, "Mr. Horsfall does not even choose his own colours when painting automatically. He allows his brush to sweep about the canvas without attempting to direct it in any way. The general impression of the work is that of nebulous moons peering out of clouds of chaos, which whirl about with terrific force and rapidity. Some pictures are in charcoal, others in pastel, and the most striking are in oils, with very tender tones and subtle hues. All have a mystical meaning, and the chief revelations concern divine love and the birth of worlds."

Mr. Horsfall himself says (as quoted by Mr. Herbert Vivian), "My guide is Thephtis, an Egyptian priest of Osiris, who died in the year 1660 B.C. He inspired only one of my spirit-pictures, which looks like an elaborate proposition in Euclid, but is really a map of the New Jerusalem. He handed me over to William Blake, the artist and poet. I soon suspected this through comparing my work with Blake's, and the spirits have since confirmed the idea. My guide tells me that the object of my work is to bring humanity into touch with cosmic forces."

In the list of biographies in the new "Daily Mail" Year Book Sir A. Conan Doyle is described as "much interested in Spiritualism." Sir Oliver Lodge is spoken of as "prominent in psychical research, with a profound faith in the ultimate unity of science and religion. . . . Published a remarkable memoir in 1916 of his son Raymond."

Mrs. Annie Besant writes in the December number of "The Theosophist": "From all parts of the world cables and telegrams have come to me, conveying loving greetings and good wishes on my entry into my seventy-third year of mortal life. I cannot answer them all, and here express my grateful, loving thanks to the senders."

In the same issue of "The Theosophist" there is an interesting article entitled "The Coming of Idealism," by W. D. S. Brown. Idealism is defined as "the path of active response to the highest, whenever and wherever it is recognised." The writer concludes with the statement that, "the tide of idealism is rising, and will carry on its flood many who as yet are only dimly aware of its existence, still less of its source and goal. Who is there to guide and focus this spiritual influx, now beating at its prison doors?"

In answer to this query the writer mentions what has come to be a current belief in Theosophical circles. He says, "Many Theosophists are hoping to witness in the near future the physical presence of a World Teacher. If that hope be realised, surely idealism will find in Him its incomparable Initiator."

Those who wish to understand more of the complex character of mediumship should read carefully the very interesting article from Mr. Vout Peters in this issue. His remarks about a case (in which he was advised to drink stout) where information, in coming through the medium's brain, had become distorted by her own ideas, should be carefully noted. They recall the cautions given in the article by Sir Oliver Lodge, quoted in our last issue.

Mr. Griffith, the producer of the famous films, "The Birth of a Nation" and "Intolerance," is busy on the production of a new film entitled "The Greatest Question." It deals with Spiritualism in relation to the war.

Mr. R. de Holte sends us the following interesting extract from a letter, dated June 14th, 1911, from the late editor of LIGHT, Mr. E. W. Wallis: "Shortly after Mr. J. Page Hopps passed I woke one morning with a feeling that I had been with him during the night and that he was concerned about the review of a book. I could not clearly recollect, but it seemed to me that he regretted that he had not reviewed a work before he went. I could not remember sending him a book and supposed that it must have been one that he had received from the publishers himself. Mrs. Hopps could not tell me anything about it. Two or three weeks later she brought me over some MSS. that his son had taken away for examination and that he found were intended for me. Among them was an article all ready in an envelope, a review of Havelock Ellis's 'World of Dreams.' Then the anxiety that he had displayed about a 'review' was explained. He had written it, but I had not received it."

A WONDERFUL SEANCE.

SIR A CONAN DOYLE'S ACCOUNT.

Sir A. Conan Doyle, it will be remembered, in his recent address at Wimbledon, referred (as already reported by us) to a sitting he had had with Mr. Powell, the Welsh medium, at which he had spoken with his son who had passed over. We are now able to give from the "Two Worlds" Sir Arthur's story of this event in detail:—

Upon the occasion of my lecture at Portsmouth Mr. Powell returned with me to our rooms, and most kindly gave us a sitting. There were present my wife, sitting on my left, Mr. Frank Blake, President of the Southern Counties Spiritualist Union, upon my right; next to him Mr. and Mrs. MacFarlane, leaders of the Portsmouth branch; and on their right Mr. Harry Engholm, once well known upon the London press, and now one of the leading cinema producers in the world. This gentleman was intellectually convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, but had never before been to a séance.

Mr. Powell insisted upon being searched, and was then bound by me to a wooden armchair. Remembering the possibility of getting out of bonds of rope—especially such cable-like rope as is used by Mr. Maskelyne in his absurd bogus performances—I cut six lengths of stout twine, and tied the medium in six places to the arms and legs of the chair. So thoroughly was this done, that at the end of the sitting it was quite impossible to loosen him, and we were compelled to cut him free. A small megaphone belonging to the late Admiral Moore was placed beside him. This was circled with luminous paint so as to be visible in the dark. The lights were then turned out, and the room in total darkness, we sitting in a semi-circle round the medium, but none of us touching him, though we joined hands with each other, so as to intervene between him and the room.

Within a couple of minutes the breathing of the medium became loud and stertorous. A voice then addressed us, which issued from his own lips, but which was quite unlike his normal voice, and remained absolutely consistent throughout. It was deep, strong and virile, while that of Mr. Powell was essentially Welsh, gentle, musical and rather clipped. The voice greeted the company, and announced the presence of Black Hawk, the control. The deep voice spoke with an air of good-humoured railery, addressing us by name. I was christened "Great Chief" and Mr. Engholm "Little Chief," with all good wishes to our respective wigwags. There was an interval of silence while the steady snoring of the medium sounded in the darkness. Then we saw the luminous band of the megaphone rise in the air, and it circled round our heads, sometimes slow, sometimes swift, as smoothly as if it were swung at the end of a string. Then it remained motionless, poised in the air above us. Presently it vanished, and returned with flowers taken from the mantelpiece inserted into its narrow end. These flowers, I may say, were at our backs and quite out of reach of the medium. They were carried round to our noses in the dark with an accuracy which showed that whoever held them could see very plainly where we were. We were then touched by various objects which proved to be taken from the mantelpiece and elsewhere, but lay within the circle when the light was eventually turned on.

Black Hawk had spoken from time to time, and the breathing of the medium continued steadily from the same position. The Indian control now said, "Leely is here. Leely wishes to speak with the lady of the Wigwag." A dear friend of ours named Lily died some years ago, and as she had shared our spiritual experience we had always believed she might be the first to find her way back. We can trace no way by which her name or existence could have been known to the medium. An instant later a quick, excited voice said, "Jean, Jean, I am here." In the darkness I could hear incoherent words of love as the two friends gasped out little messages of affection. My wife assures me that the voice was that of the dead lady, but I could not hear enough to be able to corroborate. Then came silence again, with a brisk current of cold air which played upon our faces. Shortly afterwards we turned up the light, and found to our surprise that a great wooden pedestal, weighing, I should think, from forty to fifty pounds, had been brought from the corner and placed in the centre of our semi-circle. Some people may reasonably ask what is the use of heavy phenomena of that sort in the presence of the finer ones, but at least in its solid materialism it gave a sufficient answer to those who might be rash enough to suppose that our imaginations had produced the other results.

Next evening we sat at the same hour, under the same conditions, save that the medium was weary, having delivered an exhausting address. Physical phenomena and movements of the luminous trumpet were as before, and the huge pedestal was once more lifted into the circle, and was placed upon my head. An examination had shown us that the heavy crown of this pedestal was balanced upon a single loose screw in a wide socket, so that any careless handling would have sent it down with terrific effect upon our skulls. In spite of the darkness it was held so steadily that there was no accident, but the strength which placed

it so gently on my head, and afterwards rubbed the side of it down my cheek, must have been enormous.

Then came what to me was the supreme moment of my spiritual experience. It is almost too sacred for full description, and yet I feel that God sends such gifts that we may share them with others. There came a voice in the darkness, a whispered voice, saying, "Jean, it is I." My wife felt a hand upon her head, and cried, "It is Kingsley." I heard the word "Father." I said, "Dear boy, is that you?" I had the sense of a face very near my own, and of breathing. Then the clear voice came again with an intensity and note very distinctive of my son, "Forgive me!" His life was so admirable that I could only think that he referred to our perfectly good-humoured difference about Spiritualism, concerning which, in the bustle of his medical and military life, he really had no chance of forming an opinion. I told him eagerly that I had no grievance of any kind. A large, strong hand then rested upon my head, it was gently bent forward, and I felt and heard a kiss just above my brow. "Tell me, dear, are you happy?" I cried. There was silence, and I feared he was gone. Then on a sighing note came the words, "Yes, I am so happy." Whilst this was going on I was dimly conscious that another conversation, to which reference is made below, was going on between Mr. Engholm and some voice at the other end of the semi-circle.

A moment afterwards another gentle voice, claiming to be that of my wife's mother, recently deceased, was heard in front of us. We could not have recognised the voice as we could the other. A few loving words were said, and then a small, warm hand patted both our cheeks, with a little gesture which was full of affection.

Such were my own experiences. In a letter which lies before me, Mr. Engholm says: "The séance was conducted under unusually strict test conditions, and I for one was very much awake indeed. All my senses were alert, and whilst Sir Arthur and his boy were carrying on a conversation of a very private and sacred nature, I was suddenly addressed by a very dear old friend, a well-known newspaper correspondent, in terms and on a subject that left no doubt in my mind as to who the unseen personality was. There were as a result two distinctively different voices speaking at the same time, each of which could be recognised by voice characteristic alone. My ears did not deceive me."

"WONDERFUL BOY MEDIUM IN ICELAND."

Professor Haraldur Nielsson, of the University of Reykjavik, Iceland, asks us to make the following corrections in his article under the above heading which appeared in our issues for October 25th and November 1st and 8th:—

Page 344, 1st column, line 26, "some years later" should be "some months later"; 2nd column, line 9, "in a reddish spirit-light" should be "with a reddish spirit-light"; line 16, "We could not" should be "He could not" (i.e., the materialised form).

Page 350, column 1, line 55, "were carried about, some by luminous hands," should be "some with a luminous band" (fastened on them); line 79, "Animismus et Spiritismus" should be "Animismus und Spiritismus."

Page 353, 1st column, lines 4 and 5, "poet and novelist," omit "and novelist"; line 55, "I have still no professional medium" should be "We have still, etc."

Do not drudge like a galley-slave, nor do business in such a laborious manner as if you had a mind to be pitied or wondered at.—MARCUS AURELIUS.

MISS ANNA CHAPIN, the blind medium, to whose illness we referred some time ago, is now very much better, and desires to express her gratitude for the great kindness shown to her by several friends.

THE MAGIC OF SCIENCE.—"It may take a century, but I do not suppose our descendants will be using chemical energy. Instead of burning 1,000 tons of coal they will take the energy out of an ounce or two of matter."—SIR OLIVER LODGE.

"THE WHITE MAGIC BOOK," by Mrs. John Le Breton (C. Arthur Pearson, 2/6 net) is not precisely a contribution to the serious study of thaumaturgy, except perhaps as regards the explanatory essay with which it begins. The rest of the book is made up of questions and answers accompanied by a code of numbers and astrological signs whereby one is able to ask and get an answer to such a question as "Shall I be happy in my love affairs?" A book for a winter evening's entertainment is as good a description as we can find for it, not being able to take the matter very seriously.

MR. THOMAS BLYTON, secretary of the International Home Circle Federation, asks our help in removing a misunderstanding. At the inauguration of the Federation some Spiritualists declined to co-operate because they objected to "indiscriminate home circles." Mr. Blyton is requested to state that all the members of the Council are opposed to indiscriminate home or other circles. The prospectus and rules, which include a brochure on the Conduct of Home Circles, make this quite clear. The Council believe strongly that the home is the best place for the investigation of Spiritualism, and in their propaganda work emphasise this as the chief purpose of the Federation.

"MANY BOOKS."

Mr. Dudley Wright, in his preface to "The Eleusinian Mysteries and Rites" (Theosophical Publishing House, 5/-), points out that the original foundation of the Mysteries has never been established but that there is historical evidence dating these rites of Ancient Greece, and later of Rome, back to the seventh century before the Christian era; also (a point noted by Dr. J. Fort Newton in his foreword to the book) that they bear a very striking resemblance to the rituals of both Operative and Speculative Freemasonry. The author deserves credit for being the first to attempt to give a detailed exposition of the ceremonial and its meaning in the English language. He begins by narrating the legend which formed the basis of the mysteries, and then goes on to describe in succession the ritual, the programme of the Greater Mysteries and the initiatory rites, closing with an endeavour to elucidate from various sources their mystical significance. Some of this deep significance is, indeed, suggested earlier in the book, where we are told that the Greater Mysteries "intimated by gorgeous mystic visions the felicity of the soul, both here and hereafter, when purified from the defilements of a material nature and consequently elevated to the realities of intellectual vision." We are reminded that "in more than one instance Christian ritual bears a very close resemblance to the solemn rites of these Latin and Greek Mysteries." A bibliography is appended. "Woman is not undeveloped man but diverse," says Tennyson, and Dr A. T. Schofield, in his very thoughtful study of "The Mind of a Woman" (Methuen, 5/- net) reaches the same conclusion, but he does not regard the diversity as so great as Mr. Benjamin Kidd imagines. "The altruistic, social emotion of the future ideal is," he says, "by no means, as Mr. Kidd would have us believe, the exclusive property of women. The ideals of good men and women are not so far asunder." But though he cannot believe, with Mr. Kidd, in "a golden future where woman will be everywhere supreme," he has his own vision, and it is akin to the poet's. "If men have . . . more grasp of the abstract, more power of synthesis, more intellectual vigour to reach the highest goal, the stronger emotions, the future outlook, the supreme power of sacrifice of the woman is everywhere needed. There can be no doubt, therefore, that man, in co-operating (late in the day, it is true) with woman, in removing the age-long shackles from her mind, is setting free an immense power for good; a power, indeed, absolutely essential for the true progress of humanity and the attainment of the highest goal."

People who have sufficient time and effort to spare from other tasks to read some two hundred pages of advice as to how to economise time and effort; who are free to devote so many minutes or hours a day—we are not sure which—to self-analysis, checking off on a card file (B for brusqueness, C for courtesy, &c.) the indulgence or suppression of their various natural impulses—to such happy leisured folk as these we can recommend the study of "Everyday Efficiency: A Practical Guide to Efficient Living," by Forbes Lindsay. It is full of excellent counsel, provided one doesn't try to carry it all out at once. Mental efficiency (all the qualities that make for a strong character); physical efficiency (food, exercise, and various phases of hygiene); functional efficiency (especially how to economise time and effort)—all taught in fourteen lessons (New Thought Library, Rider and Son, 4/6 net).

From Mr. Arthur H. Stockwell come three small books of verse—"The Soul of Great Britain," by L. A. Beaumont; "The Ravellings," by Beatrice Gordon; and "Man, the Earth and God; and Verses for the Times," by Percy Russell. None of them rises to the level of real poetry—Miss Gordon's verse comes, in our view, the nearest to that description—but all embody true thoughts, high aspirations, and something of the beauty and the tragedy of life, even if lacking in perfect poetic expression. H. Christian Mellor's drama, "Aboudahur," which accompanies the above, shows greater power of rhythmic diction, but is very amateurish in conception. No reader's pulse is likely to be stirred by the rhapsodising or the ultimate fate of such an invertebrate monarch as the hero of this tragedy. The two first-mentioned books are priced at 1/6 net each, Mr. Russell's at 1/- net, and the drama at 2/- net.

D. R.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND, 1919.

In addition to donations recorded in previous issues we have to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of the following sums:—

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. McSwiney	...	...	...
In Memory of "Berwick"	...	...	...
Col. C. F. Dobbs	...	...	...
Mrs. Fry	...	...	...
	1	0	0
	0	11	0
	0	9	0
	0	8	0

THE doctrine of the eye is for the crowd; the doctrine of the heart for the elect. The first repeat in pride, "Behold, I know"; the last, they who in humbleness have garnered, low confess, "Thus have I heard."—"The Voice of the Silence."

AMERICAN SPIRITUALISTS' CONVENTION.

THE PROTECTION OF MEDIUMS.

At the notable gathering at the American Spiritualists' Convention, held in Pittsburg, in October last, much consideration was devoted to the promotion of legislation for the protection of mediums.

Mr. Mark A. Barwise quoted cases of mediums who were fully accredited by either a State or National Spiritualistic Association being prosecuted under vagrancy laws or fraud Acts. Those laws in most cases antedated the advent of modern Spiritualism. He urged legislation in States which would recognise Spiritualism as a religion, a religion followed by and believed in by hundreds of thousands in the United States alone. If it were so recognised then Spiritualists would have the same civic recognition in courts as the Protestant or Catholic, which was not the case now.

A medium, he said, holding a certificate of endorsement from the National Spiritualists' Association or a State association should not be in a position to be arrested for fraudulently pursuing his or her calling when such was not the case, any more than any other preacher or priest. He dwelt upon unjust legal clauses by means of which duly accredited mediums may be arrested, accused of pretending to find lost articles, or of communicating with departed spirits. All other religious sects were recognised—why not Spiritualism? He urged them against being too ambitious in securing the passage of legislation which would be construed as special privileges. Spiritualists, he said, did not want that, they did not need it, but they did insist upon equal rights with other religions or sects.

Mr. Alonzo M. Griffin agreed with the former speaker that constructive legislation could not be hoped for in the immediate future, but protective legislation must be secured. No laws affecting mediums should exist which would not apply equally to preachers or priests. "Let them insert the word fraudulent in the Acts. We are as anxious to rid our Association of fraud, in fact more so, than are outsiders." It was manifestly unjust to assert that a medium was any more guilty of fraud in claiming to have communication with spirits than the priest who claimed to be able to pray a departed spirit from one abode to the other for money. In either case fraud should be proved—not asserted. On the other hand, anyone using mediumship for fraudulent purposes should be exposed and punished. Spiritualists were united on that point. "We are in the fight," he said, "for equal recognition in the practice of our religion and the enjoyment thereof as are other cults and sects."

STORIES OF THE BEYOND.

In "When the Hurly-Burly's Done," by Allen Clarke (J. N. Dent, 7/6) we have a series of stories, some of them of a psychical character, from the pen of a journalist whose name is almost a household word in the Midlands and Northern counties. For Mr. Clarke is not only the editor of the "Northern Weekly," he is Lancashire's best-known novelist, and his pen names, "Teddy Ashton" and "Ben Adhem," are familiar to many thousands of provincial readers. He is in short a popular writer with the gift (not common) of appealing to the popular heart.

"When the Hurly-Burly's Done," as a title sounds rather rough-hewn and homely, but it is good Shakespeare, as the motto on the title-page from "Macbeth" reminds us.

The first story takes us into the next world at the very outset. The scene opens in a spiritual hospital or sanatorium in which George Rossall, a soldier killed in the trenches, awakens after death to find himself. He is naturally bewildered, but quite convinced that he is not "dead." His adventures and colloquies with the nurse and the German soldier whom he killed and by whom he was killed in turn, are interesting and instructive reading. To many of Allen Clarke's readers they will come as something in the nature of a revelation, but we do not think they will be affronted by the homely natural conditions which he depicts as part of "other world order." These things only offend the æstheticism of those whose tastes and avocations have tended to divorce them from realities that are not alone harsh, but also kindly and human. The other stories include an account of a visit to the "astral plane," the wreck of a world, an astronomical romance and a communication from "William Steadfast Journalist, one of the passengers who went down with the 'Titanic,' given through the hand of 'Ben Adhem.'" This last-mentioned story purports to be an account of the sinking of the "Titanic," and "William Steadfast" is evidently but a thin disguise for William Stead. Of the authenticity of the communication we have no means of judging. But, in any case, it will serve a purpose in making these extra-mundane communications more familiar and acceptable to the conservative British mind. Mr. Clarke, in his preface, gives us a hint. He says, "Most of the psychic phenomena utilised in these tales are based on faithful records of real happenings, principally in the author's own household." We may allow then for a certain amount of literary embellishment, and admit, with the author, that

"all fiction, if not literal fact in its details and incidents, is true in the large essentials and principles of human nature, history, or biography."

We think of Mr. Allen Clarke as a man with a mission—a writer who will help to bring home to an incredulous world the truth that the dead live in a world as natural as this, that spirit communication is, as he himself puts it, no "mocking shadow," but "verity sublime."

PERSON AND PERSONALITY.

BY R. DE HOLTE.

We know as a matter of daily experience what is meant by a person. The word denotes a man, woman or child, one possessed of the ordinary form and endowments of a human being. If we are asked, "Who is that person?" the question presents no difficulty to us, nor does the use of the adjective "personal," as when a reference is made to the personal appearance or personal aims or personal charm of someone. But when we hear it said, "What a remarkable *personality* Mr. Blank has," we become conscious that we have entered the somewhat illusive region of abstractions, and that we are called upon to make that obstinate effort to think clearly which metaphysics demand. Charles Dickens was a person, his pen was his personal property, "Pickwick Papers" was his personal production, his sympathy was a personal quality or characteristic, but there was a something which altogether differentiated Charles Dickens from Charles Lever or Charles Wesley, and that was his particular personality. The same remark would be applicable to everyone else.

The word "personality" as an abstract term indicates a mental conception or idea which is more or less elusive, and which it is impossible accurately to define, or even clearly to describe. But by the help of illustration and analogy we may arrive at a fairly clear idea as to what the term usually implies. In its general use the word seems to denote the relative variation, within each individual, of those essential faculties, qualities, powers, etc., which specially characterise the human race. Thus, for example, if we take the three faculties of intellect, feeling, and will, and take the number nine as a type of a perfectly balanced personality, we should allow three for the intellect, three for feeling, and three for will. But if we met with men in whom the actual relation of intellect, feeling, and will would be better expressed by four, one, four, or two, five, two, or six, one, two, &c., we should at once see how the personality of each one differed from that of the others. The person with a very vigorous intellect but without natural affection, or with a very weak will, must have a decidedly different personality from one in whose life the virtue of love is predominant. In fact, when we think of the variety of emotions which may be arranged under the heading of feeling (to say nothing of the varying ranges of intellect and will power) in different individuals, and even at times in the same individual, it at once becomes apparent what an endless variety of personalities there may be.

If instead of numbers we used three colours to represent the three faculties, say blue, red, and yellow, and blended them in different proportions, the result would be as striking to the eye as the numbers are to the mind, and by such methods we see that what we commonly call "personality" is the result of the variation in the proportion or exercise of our ordinary human faculties.

We often hear the word "personality" used when it would be more correct to say "person." The former as an abstract term is very useful as an aid to thought, but it is very doubtful whether abstracts have any real objective existence. A person can say, "I am I," but it is doubtful whether a personality (except when the word is used to denote a person) could do so. It has been said that self-consciousness is the characteristic of personality; it would seem to be more correct to say it is the characteristic of a person.

If the blending of human faculties in varied proportions in the individual produces such varied personalities what is to be expected when the personality of one individual touches that of another, or, what is more, clashes with that of another? How often a personality not strong in will power, but quiet, gentle, confiding, has been overawed, perhaps crushed, by that of a strong-willed tyrant, and the gentle nature of the one is unable to find expression and to realise itself under the powerful influence of the other. Then again, there are instances when the process is reversed; someone with a feeble will, and so morally weak, comes under the influence of a person with a personality strong and good and is helped and encouraged and "kept straight," until perhaps the weak places in his own personality are strengthened and he is able to stand alone.

When we seriously ponder this subject we are deeply impressed with the way in which one personality will influence or dominate another for weal or woe. But complicated as the subject is when confined to our present state, it becomes infinitely more so when we extend our consideration of it to the state beyond. The faculties which in

their varied blendings produce such varied personalities, are the very ones which survive the dissolution of the body, and in surviving enter a state where considerable development is possible in a good direction or the opposite. Death does not necessarily release us from the influence, agreeable or disagreeable, of the personalities of those known, and even unknown, to us in the earth life, and so the study of psychic problems becomes increasingly abstruse as we proceed, and psychic investigations should not be lightly entered upon by those least qualified to undertake them. Rash ventures by those who least understand their own personality and certainly cannot comprehend those of others, are liable to end in disaster, and to bring discredit on a cause worthy of the highest respect and the most reverent treatment.

OF HIGH AND LOW DEGREE.

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

"For one star differeth from another in glory." I Cor., xv., 41.

The idea, not yet quite extinct, that at death the righteous are ushered into the central Heaven where, like Gabriel, they "stand in the Presence of God," arises from a quite inadequate conception of what perfection implies. It is as though a child newly emancipated from the nursery should expect a seat on the Privy Council. Probably all our virtues in this world are quite rudimentary, and the noblest character but embryonic. We have the words, and prate of love, of purity, and enlightenment (there is one man who is even called "his Holiness"), but in higher worlds these words cover qualities far beyond even our imagination. The love which envelops the Seraph in an aura of flame has been developed far beyond anything for which this life gives scope or opportunity, and a St. Francis, for all the splendour of his pre-eminence, is right in calling himself "Thy little sheep." "If a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself," says St. Paul. "But you have described a perfect character" (loving and earnest, self-denying and receptive of truth—calm, reliant, truthful, forgetful of earthly aims) says Stainton Moses to one of his guides. "Ah, no!" he replies; "you have now no conception of what the perfect spirit is, you cannot even picture it." Take such a case as that of St. Paul himself, refined, learned, devoted to the work of God even to the loss of all things, the instrument of the conversion of uncounted souls in his own day and for many centuries afterwards, and to crown all a martyr. Yet even such an one has to make the age-long pilgrimage through successive states and spheres onwards and upwards towards perfection. What are the qualities and attributes of the perfect spirit who has been at last admitted into the supernal realms of Divine contemplation? By no straining of the mind can we even dimly perceive the shadow of them.

One only example have we for study and analysis, and He was, as the Theologians say, "self-empty" of His glory and conditioned to the earth state to which He was a visitor. He exhibits nothing which is beyond our attainment, no ideal which should crush man's spirit by the hopeless sublimity of its unattainable quality, but he warns arrogant and self-satisfied man that when he has done all he is still but an unprofitable servant. John the Baptist, He tells us, was the greatest of those born of women "yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. xi. 11, R.V.). It is astonishing to read in commentaries how little that plain statement has been understood. Man even at his highest, is in this world a tiny, humble creature. "What is man that Thou so regardest him?" Boasting, pride, complacency, self-satisfaction, if they were not so pitiful, would make the heavens rock with laughter, and, as it is, there is a humorous twinkle in the stars. One thing we have, the power of endless growth and unfoldment; if we can add to it the patience of God Himself we may some day be worthy of respect.

The rarest of all gifts is a truly tolerant, rational spirit. In all our gettings let us strive to get this, for it alone is true wisdom. But we must not imagine that all the dogmatism is on one side, and that the theological—"Evolution and Religious Thought," by JOSEPH LE CONTE. A FIRST EXPERIENCE IN INHIBITING PAIN.—"I went in the Autumn (of 1908) to Hooke Court. Whilst there my butler, George Andrews, who had been unwell for some months, went up to London to undergo an operation near the top of his spine. My footman, who had been to see him, told me that his agony was so great that he could not remain in the room with him. I went off at once to see him, and found him lying in a ward adjoining the theatre. Whilst I was talking with Andrews about a visit he had received the day before from the Duchess of Albany, he suddenly said: 'O my lord, this agony is returning! it is more than I can bear.' The intuition came to me to say that he was not about to have the return of his pain. I began talking to him of his school-days, etc. He remained free from pain, and had no return of it. . . This was my first direct experience of the power I have since been so constantly permitted to exercise."—"Memoirs of Edward, eighth Earl of Sandwich." Edited by Mrs. Stuart Erskine.

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS. 2

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. E. A. Cannock.
The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, W.2.—11, Mr. E. W. Beard; 6.30, Mr. Ernest Hunt. Wednesday, 31st, Mid-night Service.
Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.—6.30, Mr. W. J. Vanstone.

Walthamstow.—342, *Hoe-street.*—7, Mr. George Prior, address and clairvoyance.

Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall, Thames-street.—6.30, address and clairvoyance by Mrs. Neville.

Croydon.—96, *High-street.*—11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mr. H. Leaf.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—7, Mrs. Jennie Walker. January 4th, Mr. R. Boddington.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—1, *Villas-road, Plumstead.*—7, Mr. R. G. Jones, address and clairvoyance; 3, *Lyceum.* 31st, Mrs. Harvey.

Brighton.—Athenæum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mr. A. Punter, of Luton, address and descriptions; 3, *Lyceum.* Wednesday, 8, public meeting.

Battersea.—45, *St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.*—11.15, Mr. Whiter; 6.30, service. New Year's Eve, social and Watchnight Service. January 1st, 8.15, Mrs. Bloodworth, psychometry.

Holloway.—Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).—11, Mr. T. Davis; 7, address by Mr. Campaigne; clairvoyance by Mrs. Budd. 31st, 7.30 till 12 p.m., Special Grand Social.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—11.30, Mr. J. J. Goodwin; 7, Mrs. Mary Gordon, address and clairvoyance. Monday, 7.15, and Tuesday, 3, Mrs. Gordon. Thursday, 7.15, enquirers' questions and clairvoyance. *Lyceum* every Sunday at 3 p.m. Forward Movement see special advertisement.

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LIGHT Office, 6, Queen Square, London, W.C.1.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
*Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Olapham Junction	11-30	6-30
*Brixton, 143a, Stokwell Park Road ... ..	...	7-0
*Camberwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill	11-0	6-30
Church of Higher Mysticism, 22, Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W.	11-30	6-30
*Olapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Harewood Hall, 96, High Street	11-0	6-30
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ... ..	...	7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earham Hall, Earham 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, Bræmar 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, Grovedale Hall, Grovedale Road	11-15	7-0
*Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway	11-0	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 séances, 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 séance.

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 entrance 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.

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