

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

"Whatsoever doth make Manifest is Light!"—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

CONCERNING THE AURA.

The aura, or personal atmosphere, cannot at present be recognised by Science, for its effects are not detectable by any instrument. That it is visible to the eye of the clairvoyant counts for little with scientists who, officially at least, have no knowledge of it. We who study it do so chiefly by observation of its effects. We recognise it just as scientists recognise the Ether as something without which certain effects could not conceivably be produced. The aura is an effluence from the soul or the spiritual (etheric) body, and carries the emanation of the interior life of the man, his virtues and vices, to a minute degree. When two people meet, the auras naturally come into contact, and generally speaking there are three possible results. The auras are friendly and mingle and there is mutual attraction, the auras are uncongenial to each other, and there is repulsion or they are quite neutral, neither repelling nor blending, and the two people feel each indifferent to the presence of the other. Naturally, there are infinite shades of feeling thus engendered. The attraction may be powerful or quite mild, the repulsion may be violent or just a quiet dislike. And so we get all the social phenomena of love or hate, of friendship and enmity.

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SPIRIT MINISTRY AND MONETARY AID.

We always listen respectfully to the objection that something, the reality of which is in dispute, cannot be true because it is opposed to some particular idea of morality or right-living. We respect the sentiment, but, of course, the reasoning is all wrong. So many things exist which offend some people's notion of what is right. From time to time we have given accounts of persons who were helped in time of need by supernatural gifts of money, brought, it was supposed, by spirit-agency in the form of *apports*. In one instance it was a case of contributions of money brought to a convent which was in need of funds, and which, if we remember rightly, was governed by an Abbess renowned for her beauty of character. This story, by the way, gave offence to some of our friends who did not like miraculous gifts of money being mixed up with religion. And in regard to the article on

"Coincidences and Spirit Agency," in LIGHT of April 14th, in which there is an account of little mysterious gifts of money, it is urged that people should only receive spiritual aid from the spiritual world. But surely the first question is whether these things actually happen. In our view, based on some experience, they do. And if they serve a good end and help deserving people we see no earthly objection to them. It is possible to carry idealism too far. If "those on the other side" can give us practical aid, as well as spiritual encouragement, why not? Direct examples of the kind are naturally rare, of course, but we are continually seeing indirect instances where moneyed people are influenced to help some deserving cause, or rescue those in pecuniary distress. Why should practical help be "unspiritual"?

* * * * *

THE MASK OF THE FLESH.

While it is true that our physical bodies were given us so that we might exist in physical conditions, for the purpose of growth and education, it is also true that one purpose of the body is to shut us off from a knowledge of things which are not proper to our condition. We are, as a poet put it, "blindfolded by the flesh." Even the psychic senses give us only faint gleams of the realities that surround us. Heaven lies about us not only in our infancy but all through our lives. It is only that, as we get more worldly-wise, we become more and more unconscious of it. We are all disguised by the body—we never see ourselves or each other exactly as we are. That body once gone, we immediately assume another, variously known as the etheric body, the spirit body, the "body of light." It is of finer texture, much more plastic than the present one, much more obedient to the will and capable of allowing us fuller and freer expression. Moreover, as a correspondent remarks, it has a greater transparency, enabling it more clearly to reflect the interior life. We shall then know each other better—indeed all possibility of disguise will be at an end. Perhaps that is what the old Greeks meant when they said that no god could ever effectually disguise himself from another god. For a "god" amongst the ancients simply meant a spirit, preferably an advanced spirit.

SPIRITUALISTS TO ANSWER SIR ARTHUR KEITH.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association.—Mr. F. W. Hawken, Hon. Secretary of the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., writes: "The Marylebone Association have decided that something ought to be done by the Spiritualists to confute Sir Arthur Keith's dictum that 'life is snuffed out like a candle at death.' We have therefore taken the Queen's Hall on Wednesday evening, June 13th, at 8 o'clock, when a meeting will be held giving the Spiritualists' replies to this statement. The speakers will be Mr. Hannen Swaffer and Mr. H. Ernest Hunt, followed by a demonstration of clairvoyance by Mrs. Roberts."

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MARGERY.

A VISIT TO THE CRANDON CIRCLE.

By BARBARA MCKENZIE.

During March last I spent an interesting ten days in the city of Boston, Massachusetts, and renewed my acquaintance with Dr. and Mrs. Crandon, the latter better known as Margery and also as "the New England witch." Plymouth, Salem, Concord, and Andover were all within close range, and brought reminders of the old days of persecution under the "Blue Laws," when, to differ from the powers-that-be was to put oneself in danger of prison and death. Yet a twentieth-century persecution, such as our friends have endured during four strenuous years, can be equally harassing. As day by day during my visit I perused the records of the Margery mediumship, so carefully kept in volumes now running well into a score, I realised that, while consistently supported by a group of loyal and brave friends who still stand by and share in every advance, there were also those who seemed from the beginning to find a cause of offence in the mediumship, and who arrived at a different conclusion. We can account for such disparity by reason of the inability of some to recognise that physical phenomena, particularly during the early stages, are necessarily closely bound up with the body of the medium, often taking place in her immediate vicinity, and that the closer the probing the more definitely do the manifestations retreat within her very body, until at times the only phenomena are automatic reactions of the limbs under the influence of the psychic force. Close scrutiny, unless accompanied by infinite patience and kindness, is useless in the investigation of such mediumship.

Some sitters I found went away doubting, but returned and were convinced; others doubted, condemned, and took no more trouble; still others, I gathered, made a concerted attempt to discredit the mediumship, and still worse, attack the personal character of Dr. and Mrs. Crandon. Happily, this later phase, not unknown in other cases where rare mediumship has become a centre of acrimonious discussion, has been stayed. I had the pleasure of speaking to a gathering of eighty persons at 10, Lime Street, the world-famous address, and found a group stimulated largely by Margery's work, intelligently interested in the modern aspects of psychic science. I found, too, on every hand the warmest personal admiration for both Dr. and Mrs. Crandon.

The family life is a strenuous one. Dr. Crandon is a surgeon in great demand; his day begins at 7 a.m. and often runs the round of the clock. He is in constant consultation with other doctors who value his advice; he gives time daily to a great clinic in the City, and is ever ready to interest himself in what makes for the welfare of the community. Margery is a Canadian with Scotch blood in her veins; perhaps it is this that has kept her sticking to the job as few would have done under such adverse pressure. She conserves her energies, while pursuing many activities, and combines with the nicest care of her household, in which she has only limited help, a loving attention to her invalid mother. She carefully mothers her son, the child of a previous marriage, who is at one of the big public schools, and was at home for the Easter vacation.

Mrs. Stinson, the mother of Walter, the "control," and of Margery, is a very keen lady, and in spite of her invalidism, keeps in the closest touch with all that is going on regarding the mediumship. Out of his very few spare moments Dr. Crandon manages to read to her the latest letters, remarks, and articles on Margery. The household was also augmented, during my visit, by Miss Laura Crandon (on holiday from her teaching in a New York School), who is deeply devoted to her brother and her sister-in-law. I go into these details in an endeavour to show to sympathetic readers of *LIGHT*, which has so consistently upheld the mediumship, how foolish it is to think

that people so fully engaged with public and private duties could have the time to "play about." Life is too serious, and when we remember the five years' fight, the continuous seance work, the heavy correspondence, the strain of visitors always courteously received and often entertained, and the public controversy, especially during the Houdini period, I can but marvel how our friends have weathered the gale. Surely they have been guarded and guided! Margery, charming and active as she is, has felt the strain, and Dr. Crandon, who so patiently at the end of each day's work, makes his psychic notes, enters his records and keeps a full-time secretary going on the work involved, and a close eye on every aspect of recorded psychic activity in the world, has also felt the brunt of the conflict. Happily there has been joy in achievement and in recognition by many, and the last word has not yet been said. It pleased me when Dr. Crandon pointed with pleasure to the "Loving Cup," sent to them two years ago by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and a few members of the British College, and said, "You know that came to cheer us up just at a crucial moment when we felt we could go on no longer."

MARGERY'S PHYSICAL MEDIUMSHIP

On March 28th, I had the good fortune to be present at a demonstration of Margery's physical mediumship when telekinetic phenomena of a high order were produced, with the medium in trance, and in darkness except for luminosity on the articles used. Some scholastic visitors from Chicago and Boston shared in the circle. Margery asks for rigid bodily examination—nothing is left to chance—and I retained full control of her movements until she was seated in the chair in the famous glass cabinet, hands and feet lashed and bolted with rubbered wire, neck held in a locked dog-collar to prevent movement, and hands also controlled by a naval expert and myself. The former added special knots of his own, after the lashings were fixed. Dr. Crandon was controlled throughout by two sitters who were strangers to the circle. I noticed only a slight twitch of the hand I held during some of the phenomena, very similar to the tremor I noticed in the hand of Franek Kluski, of Warsaw, during a materialisation seance. I need not go over the ground; the phenomena of the glass cabinet has so often been excellently reported, and is now largely stereotyped for observational purposes.

The "Richardson Voice Cut-Out Machine" was also tried out. It is said 1,500 people have used this and been unable to utter a sound. The sitters on this occasion had tried it previously, and it was tested again by me immediately before putting the mouthpiece into Margery's mouth in red light, and a full mouthful it is. The medium was now out of trance but still controlled by lashings and hands, but the collar had been removed. Immediately upon the insertion of the mouthpiece and the extinguishing of the red light, Walter rallied us gaily, using a variety of words and offered to whistle anything for me. I asked for "Auld Lang Syne," and a whole verse was whistled excellently. Then the light was put on and the mouthpiece taken out. I noticed that it was very dry. Margery complains of great thirst after these experiments. The experiment with the balances, previously examined, was also undertaken and the results seemed difficult to account for, unless we accept the evidence of a photograph taken on one occasion by a quartz lens, which shows in one of the pans a small cylinder not apparent to the naked eye, which is presumed to be an ectoplasmic formation which makes this manifestation of equal balancing possible, though the pans are loaded *unequally*.

I should feel very happy if all the physical mediums, who are often the subject of such severe criticism, could offer anything like the conditions supplied by Margery, and submit to the same remarkable mechanical control on occasions when it is necessary to convince the sceptic.

[We hope to give later a further article by Mrs. McKenzie dealing with some remarkable experiments in thought-transmission carried on by the Crandon circle.—Ed.]

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PARADISE AND THE HEAVEN WORLDS.

BY DR. MONTAGUE RUST.

[Following is an extract from the recent address by Dr. Rust, a summary of which appeared in LIGHT of the 19th ult.]

Some people object to such a heaven as that depicted in the mass of spirit messages, saying it is too material, too much like the earth to be true. I presume they are thinking of the Heaven of Perfection around the throne of God. We do not know *that* heaven, and have no idea what it is like. Our revelation refers to Paradise, or the natural heavens on the way to it, and I cannot think what could be better, or more suited to our natural tastes and desires. You cannot improve upon it, however much you try.

Relativity reigns there just as it does on earth, and spirit-senses are related to their environment just as ours are here, and their heaven to them is just as substantial as the earth is to us.

It is not a place of wraiths and gossamer existences, but an objective world where each of the inhabitants is substantial to every other, but with powers of sense and locomotion surpassing those of earth.

What a wonderful world it is, and how much there is to learn! Many spirits are at first interested in our earth, which they had never before properly seen. They are free to explore it in every part, to see all nations, to enter all assemblies, to behold all that is taking place, to hear all that is said, and to travel hither and thither as on the wings of the wind.

When they have seen all that they want to see on earth they seek to know more of the spirit-side, and to receive higher instruction. When the spirits are ready, the teachers also are ready, and their Halls of Learning are open to receive them.

But head-learning is not complete in itself without the development of love, and works of love must be undertaken in the helping of others; and the slums of spirit-life are the field of such work.

The more one undertakes works of love both on earth and in spirit the faster does one progress in the soul.

It is not generally known that the New Testament tells us of "three heavens"* as well as "many mansions," and I speak only of the first. What transcendent glory awaits us when we attain to the perfection of the third I know not; the first is sufficient to exhaust our highest flights of imagination. We are only at the beginning yet, but we shall get there in time.

You know not what you miss by getting us doctors to prolong your lives, or by saving the weaklings of the race to spin out their weary lives here, when they might be enjoying the beauties and the glories of heaven! But let no one hearing this presume to take a premature trip there by his own hand, or his last state shall be worse than his first!

If the mind of anyone should be harking back to those expressions in the New Testament which have come down to us translated as "everlasting punishment" and "passing to destruction," let me add that the Christian doctrine does not deal with the material but with the spiritual.

It does not deal with the physical death of the body, but with the mystical death of the "lower self," the "Adam" who was said to have been born of the "fall" of the soul into matter through eating of the fruit of this world wherewith he became clothed.

Identification with that lower self is called "original sin," which all her children inherit through procreation until redeemed by the Divine consciousness, when that lower self, "which shall surely die," shall pass away.

The Christian doctrine does not deal with immediate life after death, but with the Heaven of Perfection in which the soul realizes its union with God in the full stature of Christhood.

* "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago . . . caught up to the third heaven." 2 Corinthians, xii. 2.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(The Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by Correspondents.)

SPIRITUALISM IN GERMANY.

Sir,—I am glad to see from LIGHT of the 19th May, that the Rev. Arthur Ford of New York has been so successful in his psychic work in Berlin and to observe that at last the police have not stopped public Spiritualistic demonstrations which were forbidden in Prussia before the War. When I worked in Germany (which I did for a period of some ten years) in Berlin, only private seances could be held in Prussia.

It is not quite correct, however, to say that previous to Mr. Ford's meeting, platform clairvoyance was "hitherto unknown in Germany", although this would apply to the State of Prussia, for in 1910 and 1911 I was giving public platform clairvoyance in Karlsruhe, Mannheim and Vienna, in which city a police representative was always in attendance during my lecture (the poor fellow usually went to sleep, but at the close of the meeting always shook hands punctiliously with my chairman). Public meetings, too, were held in Stuttgart, Hamburg, and Cologne.

I have often wondered if the brothers Feilgenhauer are still alive. These were two noblemen who worked for the cause of spiritual truth in Cologne; I was associated with them from 1903 to 1909.

Spiritualism is solving many international problems; may Mr. Ford be blessed in his international work; he has a far easier time now than we older workers had before the war, which has broken down many barriers of prejudice.

Yours, etc.,

A. VOUT PETERS.

THOUGHTLESS WOMEN.

Sir,—The cantankerous old Major in "Thunder in the Air" is certainly guilty of a libel in asserting that women are incapable of thinking. Is he a wee bit jealous? Personally, I know a family in which the mother does *all* the thinking, while her lord daily airs *her* opinions and poses as a very clever man; doubtless he is, if cleverness and cunning are synonymous. Of course, there are thoughtless men who marry dolls and find sawdust, the absence of right thinking before marriage warping their judgment.

Yours, etc.,

E. P. PRENTICE.

Sutton.

PYRAMID PROPHECIES.

Sir,—The reference on p. 235 of your issue of the 19th May to Sir John Fraser's "Prophecy and Piffle from the Pyramids," naturally interests me. I will not refer to my own studies and books on the subject, but I would point out that specimens of the supposed "piffle" are appearing daily in the *Morning Post*. They commenced on the 16th May. Sir John is wrong in one small item: he should have said Pyramid, not Pyramids. His use of the plural noun reveals the extent of his knowledge of the subject. After many years' study of and a personal visit to the Great Pyramid, it never occurred to my mind when I was writing *The Sphinx Unveiled* that I was writing "piffle." Sir John Fraser wishes to know whether we hope the prognostication of the Pyramid for 1928 is wrong. I do, indeed. The problem is: Are Biblical and Pyramid Prophecies (for both agree) indisputable proofs of the foreknowledge of God as to the results of Man's Displacement of Christ in the government of the world? My answer is in the affirmative. Further, do they prove the reality of psychic communications from another world? Again, I answer—yes.

Yours, etc.,

Mortimer House, Chesham, Bucks.

WALTER WYNN.

THE SURE WAY to grow stronger is to use energy freely and gladly, but never strainfully; those who are afraid of losing strength by exertion are always feeble, and they waste more force by worry and anxiety than they use in all their legitimate employments. To conserve one's aura rightfully it is necessary to practise concentration of thought, attention and action rigorously and regularly. A truly successful individual does everything thoroughly and enjoys doing whatever he does at all.

W. J. COLVILLE.

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THE EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL.

The echoes of the controversy aroused by Sir Arthur Keith's statement on this question, at Manchester, have almost died away. If we refer to it again it is only by way of offering some observations of a general character.

We noted that the statement which questioned, if indeed it did not deny, the idea of human survival excited in some quarters strong indignation. But why? We ought to be grateful to those who in the discussion of a question of a cloudy and confused nature can make a straightforward, definite statement. We have little patience with that tedious and time-wasting procedure known as beating about the bush. A man may either affirm or deny a proposition. If he does not know on which side he stands, let him hold his peace. He can only darken counsel by entering on the discussion. In the present case we hear the old argument that a disputant is not bound to prove a negative. It all depends. A man, for example, denies the reality of a life after death. He must be asked whether he maintains that human life ends with the death of the body. That being the case, he has then made a *positive* statement which he may be required to prove. He must give his reasons, and they must go rather beyond the physiological side of the question, for there is an immense amount of evidence to-day that the life of man is not entirely bound up with his physical conditions, even while he is in the flesh. Are the records of the S.P.R. (to mention but one collection of evidences) to go for nothing?

We admit that the question is a large and complicated one. It is a tangled skein, by reason of the fact that in the course of ages it has become mixed up with theology, science, metaphysics, mysticism, psychology, philosophy, folk-lore and Heaven knows what else. The reason is clear enough. The subject of life after death, like the subject of life here and now, has to do with all these things and many more. But the question "If a man die, shall he live again?" is a quite simple one. We answer it here, as we have been doing for the last forty years and more, by saying emphatically *yes*. If we added anything it might be to suggest that man, the essential man—not the body of man—does not die and consequently he goes on living and does not merely "live again." That would be merely for the sake of greater exactitude. But our "yes" would stand without going into refinements of meaning. The question once answered in this brief monosyllable, there at once starts up a multitude of questions. How does he live,

where does he live, and how do you know? Such are some of the typical questions. We are gradually solving them as we go along, being quite aware that we are never likely to reach the end of this matter, whether in this world or any other. Nor should we wish to do so, otherwise immortality would be a rather tedious experience. We look ever for new heights and new depths, new adventures, new sensations. The vista thus opened up is not to be compassed by Science alone. It is a matter for Religion, Philosophy, Poetry, Art, and every form of human aspiration and endeavour.

The scientific materialist may tell us that he cannot see it. That is quite possible, but the world does not consist entirely of scientific materialists. There are others. On this question of the survival of the soul after the death of the body we can speak positively and emphatically. But we are not bigoted. We are content to have the proposition denied and debated *pro* and *con*. For only thus can the truth be made clear and firmly established.

SENTIMENT, SENSATION AND TRUTH.

Every now and then some hot and bothered journalist, working under the lash of a demand for anything and everything of a relatively trivial nature, which may yet provide a sensation, comes upon some instance of the reality of psychic powers and sets it down, as something having a "news value." Privately he talks and thinks over it, although rarely has he any time to pursue the subject. But he generally knows the truth when he sees it, like an experienced cashier who detects almost instinctively the bad coin or the forged notes which come under his attention. If he is an old hand he usually knows more about the various subjects he has to handle than the bulk of the correspondents whose "Letters to the Editor" discuss, without ability, the question raised. But very rarely is it possible for him to say all that he knows. The truth has to be "edited," or, if necessary, suppressed out of regard to the sentiment of the readers. But this sentiment is always changing, and as its changes are closely watched by intelligent directors of public opinion, little by little, the truth becomes known. That is a process which, especially in regard to Spiritualism, has been going on for years, and to-day in the increased attention given to the subject by the Press we find a notable example of how the process works.

OLD TIME.

I know, oh Time, thou hast us in a net,
That ever pulls us onward to the shore,
Nor lets us stay for just one moment yet,
However much our longing hearts regret
The fleeting visions that we would explore.

Thou carest not that, in thy ceaseless haul,
The smaller fish are buried by the great,
A struggling mass to higher powers prostrate,
Who though afire with aspiration, sprawl
For ever dumb and inarticulate.

But fool! Art thou so blind thou canst not see
Thy power is spent when we have reached the coast?
That none of all thy netted countless host
But will escape and be for ever free?
For Time is not, in Love's Eternity.

E. HALL HAINS.

JUNE 2, 1928

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

In the *Newcastle Daily Journal and North Star* (May 16th) appeared an exceptionally fine leader on "Man's Survival of Death." Towards the end of the article its author remarks that Life presents two arresting facts to those who seek to evaluate it. The first fact is that the span of individual life is not long enough for such a being as man:—

If this life is all the life that he has to live, he is of all created beings the most wretched and the most futile. His dog fulfils the purpose of his being in living from day to day. Himself has two fatal gifts—freedom and self-consciousness—which for ever make it impossible for him to live for the day. He must "look before and after" and project himself into an unborn future, whether he will or not. If death ends his career, man is the misfit of the universe.

The second of the two striking facts above referred to is that this world does not suffice to meet man's needs. "The best things that have been revealed to him are for ever being defeated here":—

He is condemned to an everlasting quest of illusions. And yet these illusions—goodness and truth and beauty—are, he cannot but believe, the only permanently real things, the things that alone abide amid the universal flux. If there is no sphere in which the rough places are made plain, and the intolerable tangles unravelled, the world is a mean and contemptible farce. This he cannot believe. His nature absolutely forbids the conclusion.

The Two Worlds has an interesting account of an interview with Dr. Hereward Carrington, on the Future of Psychical Research. Asked whether he thought the scientist would eventually prove for us the soul's tangibility, Dr. Carrington, a philosopher and one of the foremost leaders of scientific research in America, answered affirmatively:—

In the future we will turn our eyes toward the laboratory to determine the soul's reality. For generations past we have quieted man's supplication with promises of a life everlasting, but has he ever fully been answered the question: "What is my soul? Does it persist after it no longer inhabits the body?"

Science to-day places its hope of getting into touch with departed souls through "instrumental communication," and if, as we believe, it is possible to establish this communication by means of some intermediary, or some instrument, it will revolutionise our science, our philosophy, our religion, our ethics, our outlook upon life as a whole, in a way nothing else possibly could.

Beginning an article in *The Progressive Thinker*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle refers to the mail bag of one

who indulges in religious speculation as always interesting and occasionally amusing. He writes:—

I have before me a postcard addressed to "The Chief Devil, Spirit Church, London, Eng." The intelligent postman made a bee-line for me.

I have an interesting collection of love messages of the kind. The writers are usually too modest to sign their names. It is remarkable also that though they are able to form the most positive opinions upon abstruse theological questions, many of them are quite unable to spell the king's English.

Regarding the prediction about Weymouth being "wiped out," the *Weekly Dispatch* publishes a statement by Alderman Bartle Pye, who declares:—

I have not heard of one single concrete case of people cancelling rooms. The people we should like to see submerged are those who are spreading these ridiculous canards!

The *Dispatch* (May 20th) adds:—

Inquiries to-day showed that the hotels are fully booked up and are doing normal business.

In a report of an address by the Rev. Arthur Ford (minister of the First Spiritualist Church, New York) to the Edinburgh Psychic Study Circle, the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* says:—

Spiritualism, said Mr. Ford, was the most rapidly growing, the most interesting, and the most tremendously worth while movement in the world to-day. Anyone who spoke for Spiritualism had to be very careful about his statements. When, for instance, a leader like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle spoke, thousands of people took it as a statement of truth which they incorporated into their philosophy. Spiritualists had to be more definite in their statements, more sure of their ground than any other group in the world. He himself did not speak of anything which he had not verified.

A contributor to the *Daily Telegraph* correspondence columns on the subject of Life After Death discusses the nature of matter, and writes:—

Mind we know as a fact; matter we can only surmise.

"Matter" is but the Latin "materies" (wood, or timber) slightly transformed, and the worshippers of this deity are to the full as wooden as the object of their worship. I leave the emotional, ethical, and higher spiritual aspects of the question to worthier pens.

Another correspondent of the above newspaper contributes the following, touching Science and Survival:—

The question is whether or not man really possesses qualities which differentiate him from the rest of organic life. In his love of truth, beauty and goodness, do we see something new and emergent? Every process should be interpreted, as Aristotle has reminded us, not in terms of its origin, but of its end. By their fruits, not by their roots, shall ye know them.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

THE SURVIVAL OF PERSONALITY.

Address by VICE-ADMIRAL J. C. ARMSTRONG.

We gave a brief account last week of the meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday, May 17th, at which Admiral Armstrong delivered an address on the above subject. We now present a short summary of his remarks.

He commenced by referring to the fact that he was not a practised speaker. In coming before them he was responding to an invitation to relate some of his experiences, which experiences he had been urged by spirit-communicators to relate publicly. Three and a half years ago he knew nothing of the subject, and he recounted the circumstances in which he had been led by a friend to look into it. He had not then felt attracted to the matter, but his friend pointed out that he might get "a new experience," so he went to a seance. He had taken every care that his name should not be known to the lady whom he visited, and who told him on his arrival that she was unable to gather from the letter she received whether she was to expect a man or a woman. He went with an absolutely open mind, and the medium on going into trance was influenced by some intelligence who spoke to him in a way he could not understand. "I could not make head or tail of what she was talking about," said the Admiral. Subsequently some allusion was made by the medium to somebody who was ill. It appeared to refer to the Admiral's son who was ill at the time. He did not find himself much impressed, however. But after half-an-hour he was told there was someone there who wished to speak with him, and about five minutes later a different "voice" came through the medium and spoke. It talked to the speaker for twenty minutes, and he was as sure as he was sure of his own existence that the person who spoke to him was his deceased wife. "I was perfectly sure of that. She talked to me about our family affairs, about herself and other people, and although it was not her voice, it was she. There was her personality, her point of view, her concern for the family. She told me many things about what she was doing."

Proceeding, the Admiral mentioned that he had been speaking on a public platform at Cheltenham about two months before this seance. He had been horribly nervous about it, although he was to speak on a subject he knew pretty well. Before giving that address he had sat down at his desk and tried in vain to compose some notes of what he was to say, but in the end he had to give it up as hopeless, and to speak extempore. Now one of the first things his wife said to him, on coming through the medium, was: "You were speaking on a public platform the other day." He answered, "How did you know that?" She replied, "I was there." She then proceeded to explain to him why he had not been able to prepare his address in advance. She said, "You were not allowed to do so; you were to say what you were told to say." He had several times visited that same medium since and gained an immense amount of knowledge, consolation and pleasure. His wife's personality stood fully revealed; she was the same woman as she had been on earth, and the Admiral added in a jocular aside that after many years of married life a man would indeed be a fool if he did not know his own wife!

Another spirit who came through the medium gave the name of Sarah, but the Admiral replied that he could not identify anybody of that name. The spirit replied by reminding him that when he was a boy he used to stay with her and mend her pots and pans. He then remembered that, when he was a midshipman at Portsmouth, many years ago, he used to stay with a lady whose Christian name was Sarah and who was a distant relative of his, so that he had no difficulty in identifying that spirit. Another communicator gave the name "Harry" and recalled the

memory of himself to the Admiral by mentioning that they had met together at a Club two months before. This man used to drink rather to excess, and was rather strongly inclined to the material side of life. "I said, 'Is that you, Harry? How are you getting on over there?' And he replied, 'D—d bad. I did think I should have done better than this.' " I did mention the matter to the spirit-guide, he replied that the man must pray for himself. On mentioning his unhappy state by his own efforts; the man was greatly annoyed that he should not have occupied a better position in the spirit world.

The lecturer had, in addition to conversations with his wife and various friends, talks with his grandfather and his son. With regard to the last-named, the medium said on one occasion, "Somebody is building up behind you. He won't show his face. He shows that he has something the matter with his chest. It is gradually clearing, and all getting perfectly well." After she had described the appearance, which enabled the Admiral to recognise his son, the son himself spoke and explained that not wishing the medium to recognise him he had covered his face so that the father should be able to recognise him from his bodily appearance. The demonstration was in the nature of a test.

Amongst the other stories told by the speaker was a remarkable one concerning the return of a Scottish Presbyterian minister. On dying, he had duly arrived on the "other side," but could not understand where he was, and indeed remained in a state of perplexity for some time. "This is not heaven," said the Presbyterian; "there are no angels; and it cannot be hell, for there is no fire. I do hope that I have not strayed into the purgatory of the R.C.'s!"

A woman who on earth had been a laundress said that she was provided with a nice little cottage with a parlour and a horse-hair sofa which afforded her great satisfaction. Another woman, a "charlady," on passing over (from cancer) found herself in a hospital bed with a kindly spirit nurse in attendance on her. The nurse had asked her if she would get up, but the patient replied that she was too ill. "Oh, no!" said the nurse, and the woman arose to find herself perfectly well. The next thing was the question of dress, and the nurse provided silk garments which the woman insisted were not hers for she remembered that her clothes had been taken away. However, she was induced to clothe herself in the new raiment and became quite a different woman, holding herself erect and having a new sense of self-respect, being no longer down-at-heel and bedraggled. The Admiral observed at this point on the moral effect of such treatment. It showed that as soon as people were put into good conditions it made all the difference in their mentality. This woman who had worked in a hospital during her life on earth and was experienced in taking charge of children, was now put in charge of the poor children who came over from the earth at night on those nocturnal visits to the spiritual world which many people on earth were accustomed to pay during their slumbers.

Then followed the story of a City man who while in the body had been accustomed to indulge in sharp practice and who thought he was justified in doing so because the money he earned went to the education of his children. But in the other world he realised how wrong had been his point of view. He found that it was not justifiable to do evil that good might come; we must do good at any cost whatever.

Another story related to the return of a missionary who had been engaged on mission work in China. He had evidently been of a strongly Calvinistic mind, for on arriving and finding himself amongst all sorts and conditions of men he was greatly astonished. It seemed to him that a good many of his companions ought to be in hell, and that he who had been a good missionary and spent his life in doing Christian work ought not to be mixed up with such people. He was

RAY'S AND REFLECTIONS

It must be sixty years ago now that two young men, who afterwards became eminent scientists, published (under *noms de plume*) an apologetic little book suggesting, with the utmost deference to religious opinion, that the next world was in the Ether and that the spiritual body was possibly etheric in its nature. They had their reward. The scientific reviewers denounced them as spiritualists, the religious Press said they were atheists! We have moved on a little since those days.

* * * * *

Counsel for the defence in a recent criminal case is reported as saying: "The law is not 'a ass.' Shakespeare never said so. 'He put it into the mouth of someone who is not worth too much attention.' The lawyer is also represented as saying that one of the prisoners had "made this Frankenstein" and "was afraid of the devil he had created." As most people know, the saying, "the law is a ass," has nothing to do with Shakespeare, but was the statement of Mr. Bumble in *Oliver Twist*. And as for the other reference, the learned counsel was, of course, confusing Frankenstein with the monster he created.

* * * * *

These literary "howlers" remind me of a barrister friend who was a singularly clear-headed lawyer but had only the slightest acquaintance with literature. For years he had been receiving messages from a departed legal friend who was celebrated in days on earth as a brilliant wit. These messages were full of sparkling and apt quotations from poetry and the classics, and various other literary allusions. These things being unknown to my friend and the medium, I was sometimes asked to say whether some quotation was correct, who was the author and what it meant. This was not the least part of the evidence afforded by the messages regarding the identity of the communicator. Ignorance of literature, by the way, cannot be regarded as any particular slur on the general intelligence of particular persons; they may be highly capable in their own departments, as was the case with my friend who was a very able lawyer indeed.

* * * * *

That was a pregnant saying of the ancient Egyptian priest who, according to the legend, was consulted about the mystical words spoken by the priests in their ceremonial magic. He is said to have replied, "We speak not words, we speak sounds fulfilled with deed." This is a very good description of those words which, being charged with emotion, seem to possess a strong psychic power in affecting the lives and circumstances of those towards whom they are directed.

* * * * *

Now, although we cannot but admit that much which is labelled "occult mystery" is mere flubdub, the "power of the word" is a very real thing. Probably the power resides not so much in the particular word as the way in which it is uttered. It is a matter of sound, and sound is a form of energy. We hear, for example, of vocalists who are able to shatter a wine-glass by rendering a musical note in a particular way. One of my friends—a man well known to readers of *LIGHT*—has been undergoing a training in ju-jitsu. There are some high grades in this Japanese art, which does not simply consist of wrestling, but takes in certain forms of psychic faculty. Thus a Japanese expert knows how, by uttering a peculiar cry, to paralyse his opponent, depriving him suddenly of all power of resistance. My friend had a personal experience of this, so that he no longer has any doubt on the point!

D. G.

told that he had been trying to help people into heaven, so that his disappointment when he found, on the other side, that many of them were not so bad as they were supposed to be, was certainly inconsistent!

A remarkable account was that of a sailor whose ship had been blown up in the Great War. For a long time afterwards neither he nor his companions were aware of what had happened. They found the ship proceeding as usual and themselves engaged in their usual work. But after a time they became conscious that things were not as they seemed; they noticed a gradual disappearance of their officers, and one after the other of the sailors mysteriously disappeared until the sailor in question found himself quite alone. The explanation was that he had been a man of very material life, so that he was the last to become awakened to the new conditions. But in due time he was made to realise the great change that had come upon him, the ship gradually disappeared and he found himself in the care of spirits who instructed him in the realities of his new life.

In his concluding remarks the Admiral said he would like to utter a word of warning. Spiritualism was not all plain sailing; the investigator might get quite a lot of set-backs, receiving at times messages which were of a misleading nature. It seemed to him that about one-third of the communications we gained were trustworthy, the remainder were rather mixed because the personality of the sitter and the medium were closely involved in what came, but there was no danger for anyone who went into the subject with a pure mind and good motives. "We shall sail through life all right if our Pilot is Love and our chart Unselfishness."

MEDIUMSHIP AND SERVICE.

BY A MEDIUM.

The only way by which mediumship can bring true gain is by willing service. Mediumship exercised in a spirit of service should bring the gain that is necessary for the medium: if he needs money, that should be forthcoming, providing his desire is, first of all, to give service. But mediumship also comes to those who do not need money, and on these a greater responsibility falls, for they can help their less fortunate brethren, who, otherwise would often be unable to obtain the comfort and teaching which Spiritualism offers.

I care not where you turn, you will always find that a Spiritualist, particularly if he also happens to be a medium, who is out only for self eventually comes to grief—his Spiritualism is only a "Magic Lantern Show."

Modern Spiritualism, I firmly believe, first received its impetus from the Spirit world. Is it therefore reasonable to think that mediumship—the bulwark of Spiritualism—subordinated to selfish ends, is going to prove a blessing? Is that what the powers on the other side of life are working for? No, a thousand times No! If we seek to answer these questions in any equivocal way, "we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

L.H.

THERE ARE VARIETIES OF MEDIUMSHIP, as you know, and there are divers modes in which spirit influence is exercised. Some are selected for the mere physical peculiarities which make them the ready vehicles of spirit power. Their bodily organisation is adapted for the purpose of manifesting external spiritual influence in its simplest form. They are not influenced mentally, and information given by the spirits who use them would be of a trifling or even foolish nature, and untrustworthy. These are known to you as the instruments through whom the elementary phenomena are manifested. Their work is not less significant than that which is wrought through others. They are concerned with the foundation of belief. Others, again, are intellectually trained and prepared to give to man extended knowledge and wider views of truth. Advanced spirits influence the thoughts, suggest ideas, furnish means of acquiring knowledge and of communicating it to mankind. The ways by which spirits so influence men are manifold.

"IMPERATOR."

Joe's mother then came and spoke in the same

(To be continued.)

F. E. L.

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