

WAG 511

THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS. (Page 378.)



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NOTES BY THE WAY.

PROFESSIONAL MEDIUMSHIP.

In maintaining the essential truth of spirit return we may be quite fearless of the Church, the Law, and Medicine, so far as they may be against it, although as most people to-day are aware, however, many members of all three professions are with us. The rest will follow in due time. There is still a great deal of purging and sifting to be done; and the reckless propagandist is moderating his tone and no longer proclaiming that proof of the reality of survival can be furnished while you wait, just as one buys a pat of butter or a yard of calico. Mediumship cultivated in a home circle may mean long and patient work—only occasionally does it develop quickly. Therefore we have professional mediumship, which claims to supply the thing on demand and quite frequently does so, where the conditions are favourable. We are told that the practice of professional mediumship—which may often involve some statements concerning the future, i.e., "fortune-telling"—ought to be pursued under the head of "Entertainments". It would then presumably be safe from the attentions of the law. We do not know if this is actually so; but when we consider how much frivolity and folly is mixed up with the practice of psychic faculty amongst irresponsible people the suggestion is perhaps not so farcical as it seems. Planchette and the ouija board may be used as toys as well as psychic telegraphs. But the time is near at hand when those who play with spiritual forces will find that the results are not only serious but may be extremely painful.

* * * * *

FACTS AND PHRASES.

It has been said that a man who believes in nothing he cannot understand will have a very short creed. Similarly, it may be observed that the man who aims always at legal exactitude and scientific precision in all he says will have very little to say. There are those who quibble over the words "death" and "immortality". It seems that we ought to speak always of the "transition" or "passing over" of a person instead of his "death", and that we should not refer to human "immortality", because that cannot be proved, but only to "human survival". Well, in the first place,

we are willing to subscribe to the maxim that "there is no death", and even—as we have done in the past—to point out that death is not the opposite term to life, but only an incident in the evolution of life. But why be afraid of the word "death" when we know what it really means? We may even (in spite of the protests of a careful correspondent) go on writing of "the late" John Brown, as a convenient way of indicating to the reader that John Brown is no longer numbered amongst the living on earth. As to "immortality", in current use that may be understood as conveying the idea of something that carries us beyond physical death. That is what most people mean by the term, and not the *infinite* aspect of the question. It is the custom of a certain type of psychical researcher to twit the Spiritualist with carelessness and inaccuracy of method and speech. (We think sometimes that the accusation is levelled *faute de mieux*—for want of something better.) But it is not wise to go to the other extreme and strain after precision in a way that makes one's speech as dry and tedious as a legal document or a scientific treatise.

* * * * *

THE TIME OF DAY.

It was some twenty-three years ago that Dr. A. J. Rivière, an eminent French physician, stated that the phenomena obtained by "so-called Spiritualists" were absolutely true; but they were the result of laws purely physico-biological in their nature. "The living organism," he said, "is not only a generator, a reservoir, but, above all, it is a transformer of energy." It was in the *Matin* of February 18th, 1924, that Dr. Rivière reproduced these statements, as first made by him in 1905. That, it will be observed, is nearly a quarter of a century ago, and the matter has advanced so greatly in the meanwhile that only the crassest ignorance or hardihood would prompt any really scientific person to raise any question as to the reality of the phenomena to-day. Any debate would have to take the form of an inquiry into the truth of Spiritualism itself as a general proposition. That would involve the question of human survival, of the state of the soul after death and all those matters which lie at the core of Religion and for which Spiritualism stands, however much Spiritualists individually may differ. Spiritualism divides naturally into two portions (a) the phenomena, (b) the philosophy, that is to say, the facts, and the conclusions to be drawn from those facts. The first question is settled—the facts are proved and accepted; the second question is in process of being proved, and as it does not rest on the phenomena alone, but on the highest illuminations of the human mind, on intuition and vision, as well as on the testimony of spirit communicators innumerable, we have no doubt about the final result.

We are apt to make so much of the tragedy of death, and think so little of the enduring tragedy of some men's lives that we see more to lament for in a life cut off in the midst of usefulness and love, than in one that miserably survives all love and usefulness, and goes about the world the phantom of itself, without hope or joy or any consolation.—R. L. STEVENSON.

SOME ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

GIVEN THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF MISS FLORENCE MORSE.

The following replies to questions addressed to the guides of Miss Florence Morse, at a public meeting some years ago, are worth reproducing at the present time, in view of the many inquiries now being made.

Dealing first with a question regarding the nature of the next world, the medium said:—

In our own life our surroundings—what you would term the material side of existence—are as objective to us as this room is to you. We do not live in a world of clouds and vapours, a world in which all things are dreamy and unsubstantial, but in one where there are trees and flowers, fair fields and running streams, where the homes in which we dwell are real houses, in the sense in which you understand the term, to a very great extent. They are beautiful, comfortable, and not only in accordance with our particular needs, but also with the character and the amount of spiritual development possessed by those who dwell in them. Some who are not so far advanced along the road of spiritual progress will, in their surroundings, reveal a partial lack of development, and their homes will not be as beautiful or as charming as the home of one who has reached a higher state of spiritual development. When you leave your physical bodies behind, you will be able to say, as we are able to say, that the spirit world and the homes in it are real and substantial. This fact seems to present a stumbling-block to many who are only just becoming interested in the question of Spiritualism and the knowledge it is endeavouring to bring into the world. But if immortality is to mean anything to the individual, is to be a real and lasting benefit, it must afford him opportunities for progress and unfoldment in conditions of life that, in their earliest stages, resemble those he has left behind. Of course, as time passes and there is a greater development of spiritual knowledge and power, and an awakening of the divinity within, these outward surroundings become more and more refined and etherealised in their character; but still even then they present to the individual spirit the same appearance of solidity, and represent his degree of spiritual enfoldment.

TIME.

QUESTION: Is there any way in the spirit world of indicating time such as we have?

ANSWER: There is naturally what is called the sense of duration, the realising that a certain interval elapses between one event and another, but we do not divide our lives by rule of time in the same way that you understand it. In the earlier stages of the spirit's experience in the spirit world there is no night as you know it, but something that bears a resemblance to it, a lessening, as it were of the spiritual light, which seems as night to us. It is merely an indication of a rest time during which the spirit, or soul, must cease for a while its activities, to gain the greater flow of spiritual energy—to regain what you call health and strength. So far as seasons are concerned there is also this correspondence to the natural order on earth, just as there is to night and day; but we do not have the sense of intense cold. The leaves fall from the trees and flowers fade—all that you associate with autumn and winter; and there is the period of growth and fruition. Our world has been truly called the Summerland, for this term expresses, best describes, the glory and sweetness of these higher spiritual conditions.

SURVIVAL.

QUESTION: Can you suggest an argument likely to convince a person who does not believe in the continuation of life after death?

ANSWER: The only argument we can suggest is that which is contained in the facts that are associated with the phenomena of modern Spiritualism: proof that is built up little by little—not by some great and startling fact that leaves the person for the time being almost breathless with astonishment; and when that emotion is past, with the reflection that perhaps it was delusion—not so; but by gathering an accumulation of evidence concerning the continued existence of one special and particular person who is connected by ties either of physical relationship or spiritual friendship. After all, however, do not grieve, do not feel too sorrowful or depressed if you fail to convince others of this truth, for it is only a question of time, because to all who may disbelieve in the possibility of a future life death will come; and the death that closes the eyes on the physical world opens them upon the grand facts of the spiritual universe, and the unbeliever will then know that continued personal life is a fact.

EUTHANASIA.

QUESTION: Supposing a person suffering from an incurable disease is given something to hasten death, would the action be considered pardonable on your side?

ANSWER: A difficult matter to decide, indeed, and one that might be argued at length without coming to a satisfactory conclusion, for it would seem that one who is suffering from some disease for which there is no cure, which must inevitably end in the cessation of physical existence, might in kindness be released from the suffering body. But no matter what the motive may be, no matter how kindly, how sincere may be the mind that entertains the thought, it is murder—an ugly word, we grant, and a word that it may be thought should not be used in this connection, yet you have within your own soul the knowledge that although your motive may have been pure, your sympathy of the deepest and truest, you have no right to quench the physical life of another, to destroy what you are powerless to restore; and it may be that out of the pain and suffering, deep and tender lessons of patience and resignation may be learned which are needed for your friend's spiritual uplifting, and lessons of sympathy and patience and helpfulness which may be requisite for your own spiritual unfolding. We have spoken in this way so that you may see that we on the spirit side are as interested as you are in the question as to whether such an act is justifiable or not. Speaking personally, our own opinion is that under no circumstances is it justifiable to hasten the death of another; under no circumstances should it be allowed, should it ever be thought of. Rather send all your will and thought and energy towards understanding those mighty forces of healing which so many possess, and realise that little by little you can reduce the pain of those who are afflicted with terrible and incurable disorders. We say that no matter how tender and pure may be your motive you would stain your memory with the knowledge that you had taken another's life, and at the same time you would be depriving your friend and yourself of some lessons of patience or peace.

IS THE TERM OF LIFE ON EARTH FIXED?

QUESTION: There is a prevalent idea that man after living a certain time must of necessity die. Is this so?

ANSWER: A man must of necessity die when his physical body is worn out, but we do not believe that the duration of this body is limited to three score and ten years. We should say it should be a longer period than that. The idea that this is a law of Nature is indirectly responsible for many passing out of the body at that limit of time. You know something of the influence of thought and of power of mind over the physical body. You know how ideas absorbed into the mind will so work upon the physical body that they will tend to bring about conditions that make them true. This thought that a man must of necessity pass away at a certain age should give place to the thought, "I will study the laws of health, and the more subtle laws of spiritual force, to keep my body alive as long as it will meet the needs of my spirit." We do not think for one moment that Nature fashioned you like the clock, to run down at a certain time. We think that instead she endowed you with certain powers of gaining knowledge and unfolding your individuality, and of so living that you can make the body your dutiful servant for much longer than three score and ten years, and at last gently and quietly cast it aside and pass into the world beyond.

THE PROBLEM OF FATE.

QUESTION: Can you tell us what is the accepted theory on your side as regards Fate?

ANSWER: Those who have not the knowledge of the powers of their own mind and soul are bound by certain laws which cause them to work upon the line of least resistance, and this gives the appearance of an unalterable Fate; but knowledge is more powerful—the knowledge of your own soul, the knowledge of your own mind and powers and possibilities, and how to strengthen your will so that you may master many conditions that surround you rather than that they should master you. We do not believe that somewhere there is a scroll upon which is inscribed every detail of the life of every child that comes into your world, for such would be a thought that one might associate with the idea of Fate. We believe that every child who comes into the world has certain characteristics of its own, which are the result of the blending of inherited characteristics, and that the life may be disastrous or beneficial according to the power possessed by the individual of making use of those characteristics for the unfoldment and development of consciousness and personal character as a moral and spiritual being.

(To be continued.)

THE "FRASER" CANCER CURE.

The Editor of the *Natal Farmer*, Mr. A. B. Crooks, writing to LIGHT in reference to Mr. Hannen Swaffer's article on the Rees Evans Cancer Cure claims, published in the issue of June 2nd under the title "A Real Job for Spiritualists", draws attention to the case of Mrs. G. H. Fraser, a Natal farmer's wife, who has effected remarkable cures of external cancers. Mr. Crooks encloses a reprint of the *Natal Farmer* for February 3rd, 1928, in which he appeals for a responsible test of the Fraser cure; the document contains some striking affidavits, and photographs, in reference to astonishing cures carried on by Mrs. Fraser, whose address is given as "Solitude", Krantz Kop, Natal. It is stated that Mrs. Fraser's husband journeyed to England in a fruitless attempt to interest the controllers of the Cancer Research Fund.

THE
INQUISITION AND THE WITCHES.

Any authentic 15th century document can scarcely fail to be interesting. This monumental work written in 1484 by two officials of the Holy Inquisition, Henry Krämer and James Sprenger, ably translated for the first time into English by Mr. Montague Summers,* raises a welter of conflicting emotions in the mind of the present-day reader. In its pages are set out with great particularity the case against "witchcraft", together with the methods of detecting and frustrating devilish powers, also detailed procedure for examining, judging and punishing witches.

A grim note of doom runs throughout the book. Its solemn sincerity and obvious intention of high purpose seem to add to the horror of the realisation that is borne in on the reader on perusing page after page, chapter after chapter, that any poor wretch caught in the Inquisitorial clutch must have had as much chance of escaping as a fly caught in a jar of treacle. The powers and practices of incubi, the methods of making "pacts" with the devil, remedies against witch-provoked hail-storms, the formal procedure at witch trials; these and a hundred other matters are carefully and coldly weighed and set forth at great length. The regulations as to the conduct of Inquisitorial courts occupy nearly a quarter of the volume, which, one gathers, was for many years regarded as an authoritative text-book.

Little scraps of contemporary news are given occasionally, producing a stark effect of vivid realism. Here and there one encounters a witty comment which makes one realise that a human note underlay the cruel, warped minds of those mediæval oppressors who racked, tortured and burned their fellow-creatures in the name of the Lord God of Love.

Say the brothers Krämer and Sprenger, "Women have complained to us in our capacity of Inquisitors that when their cows have been injured by being deprived of milk . . . they have consulted with suspected witches, and even been given remedies on condition that they would promise something to some spirit."

Here is an illuminating item. "There was in the diocese of Basel, in a town called Oberweiler situated on the Rhine, an honest parish priest who fondly held the opinion, or rather error, that there was no witchcraft in the world, but that it only existed in the imagination of man, who attributed such things to witches." This misguided man, we are told by the learned scribes, became bewitched himself, below the waist, apparently with a form of paralysis which, in the opinion of the writers, was the divine method of curing his mistaken views.

We are told that in the district of Savoy the Inquisitor of Como caused forty-one witches to be burned "and still continues to labour in the Inquisition".

Underlying the mass of hideous superstition one finds at least one humorous touch. In the chapter devoted to Woman it is recorded that a man whose wife was believed to be drowned persisted in looking for the body up-stream despite the argument that the body must in the ordinary course of nature have been washed down-stream. He gave the reason that during her life his wife was always so contrary that she was bound to have behaved in a contrary manner after her death. We are told of Woman—delightful touch!—that "she stings while she delights us". We learn also the startling news that "certain devils out of some nobility in their natures would shrink from a filthy action".

In the Introduction we are told that "in the prosecutions of Wurzburg we find that there were condemned boys of ten and eleven, two choir boys aged twelve, 'a boy of twelve years old in one of the lower forms of the school', 'the two young sons of the Prince's cook, the eldest fourteen, the younger twelve years old', several pages and seminarists, as well as a number of young girls, among whom 'a child of nine or ten years old and her little sister' were involved".

The wickedness of "calling the dead from hell" is treated at some length. Occult dreams as a form of diabolic trafficking is touched upon.

Say the writers, "Oneiromancy may be practised in two ways. The first is when a person uses dreams so that he may dip into the occult with the help of the revelation of devils invoked by him. . . . The second is when a man uses dreams for knowing the future, in so far as there is such virtue in dreams proceeding from Divine revelation, from a natural, intrinsic or extrinsic cause; and such divination would not be unlawful."

Mr. Summers, in a scholarly foreword, somewhat astonishingly champions the savagery of the mediæval methods of exterminating "witchcraft", although he admits that these methods have been a little extreme! "Who can be surprised," he says, "if, when faced with so vast a conspiracy, the methods employed by the Holy Office may not seem—if the terrible conditions are conveniently forgotten—a little drastic, a little severe?"

N.

*"Malleus Maleficarum." Translated by Montague Summers. (John Rodker. 35s.)

FICTION *versus* TRUTH.

By F. H. HAINES.

"The whole truth and nothing but the truth" is an ideal which our Law sets before every witness; yet, despite all sorts of penalties attached to evasion and perversion of truth, how many witnesses succeed in giving evidence unadorned by imagination? Every trial is a conflict of evidence based, not upon wilful perjury, but upon variation in human personality which leads to difference of vision, imaginative or real. And if this state of things exists in our courts of law there is nothing surprising in the outrageous contradictions of spiritual phenomena. All men are liars, if lying be non-conformity with "the truth" of another man. What I believe you don't believe; and what you see, more likely than not, I am incapable of seeing. Therefore, as ideal truth is something apart from our faculties of observation and we both lack perfection, why squabble about it? Personally I am content to let you disbelieve all I affirm if you will permit me to enjoy the credulity you so heartily condemn.

But—and here I am touching on a matter which is to the forefront of the daily Press—belief is one thing and the financial exploitation of credulity is another. By all means allow poor me to go my way through life with such vision as may be given to me; but if I, poor fool, become the victim of deliberate trickery by some charlatan whose sole object is money-making, well, with all due deference to the leaders of Spiritualism, it is to the good of the community that the Law protects me. And so, personally, I welcome the present outbreak of "witch-hunting" because my short experiences in Spiritualism suffice to discover several instances where I was fooled to the top of my bent by someone after money.

"Fortune-telling," as such, should be abominated by all students of psychic phenomena. When a medium starts telling me "my future" I discount ninety-nine per cent. of his or her forecast. Most predictions of what I should do or be have the merest shadow of substance in them and, so far as time has revealed, prove sheer fiction. Of course, if I am bent on scientific investigation as to the possibility of forecasting the future, and my credulity leads to some record of fact which may help science, then the interpolation of fiction is expected and does not lead to my condemnation of the medium. I know the difficulties of the recording instrument. But when I go hungry for some revelation which shall bring me a fuller realization of the spiritual verities and I am measured by the discerning eye of "the professional" and forthwith "fed" with phrases old as the hills, clap-trap of the crystal-gazer, or clairvoyant as the case may be, then there is danger. The mediumistic faculty is too often prostituted to money-making ends.

The old story that the labourer is worthy of his hire will at once arise in the minds of most readers. But, really, sometimes the question is not "hire" but "a good way of getting money." Mark you, I am not attacking the genuine medium who is content to serve and to receive adequate compensation for service rendered. But I am attacking those who sit hourly, daily, here, there, and everywhere, at a fat fee, giving, more often than not, little of value to their mystified and credulous clients. All types of psychics have in their class black sheep of this sort. Sometimes their extortions and effrontery are such that my faith in the spirit kingdom is shaken by the fact that such have any spiritual gift. Or that having had gifts when "honest" they still possess sufficient to trade on them in hungry pursuit of money.

There are some mediums who, if paid by results, would remain lean. I speak of such types as give tangible evidence; supernormal photographs, for instance. One does not expect to have a sitting with a photographic medium, whose faculty is partly dependent upon the presence of your spirit friend, and to pay nothing if you get nothing. But a guinea—

yes, and more—in such circumstances is "money for nothing." Three or four sittings a day at such a rate seem more than adequate compensation for the strenuous labour of being "present." This, of course, is but an example of where reform is needed if Spiritualism is to win adherents among other than the extremely credulous. One fee for success and another for failure would do something to restore confidence, which at present, in my case, is rudely shaken. The same criticism applies to the Healing medium: one fee for a cure and another for "a try".

I had an experience recently with a "cure-all" who discovered the cream of the money-making game in which the minutes were golden and the whole business "clap-trap" so far as I was concerned. If anyone benefited by such service, well all I can say is, Faith will work miracles. But such a means of making money is even worse than fortune-telling which breaks the Law, as it is trading on the sick and infirm.

I am sure that every Spiritualist of intelligence must be aware that we are open to fraud in a degree which is far greater than any other form of thought or belief. By the very nature of our faith we have to permit the intrusion of much that is non-genuine. We are open to fraud, make-belief, lying, in all our investigations. Even the spirits "blunder" at times and disconcert us. But we needs must go on because underlying all the error and chicanery there is Truth, which is of supreme importance to mankind. We stand to be shot at as fools: but we dare run such risks because in the discovery of one golden grain among the dross there is the promise of future wealth of knowledge which opens the gates of Heaven.

Let us not mince words: the faculty of mediumship is becoming degraded by "too much of a business nature." With the growth of Spiritualism there is a tendency to commercialise what should be sacred. The showman's proneness to exaggeration creeps into our reports and advertisements. With the multiplication of societies and churches and temples competition will tend to "push fees up." In short, before long—if it does not already exist—there will be a sort of medium's agent out for the biggest price; and truth, the spiritual reality which gave birth to the movement, will become subordinate to the cleverest, shrewdest, most mystifying "performance."

We may, therefore, welcome anything in the nature of "witch-hunting" if it but stimulates closer scrutiny of the methods of obtaining "evidence" of spirit-life. No genuine medium will be intimidated from exercising his or her gift by fear of exposure or police proceedings. There was an example of this lately abroad when the medium, in court, demonstrated before her accusers and was vindicated of any charge of imposture. But, surely, the main result of the present ferment can be assisted by Spiritualists if we help to cleanse the avenues of approach of all quackery and charlatanism. Do not be afraid. To hide and conceal trickery for fear of bringing Spiritualism into bad repute, or to encourage the money-making side of this medium business to which I have referred, either by over-working the genuine sensitive or being content with "anything that comes along" in the guise of phenomena, were to injure the cause. Let us have "the whole truth and nothing but the truth" so far as it lies in our power to get or give it.

THE examining magistrates of Mantes, Normandy, are inquiring into the charges of M. Charles Quartier, secretary of the Institut Metapsychique, Paris, and M. Jean Masson, a Parisian journalist, against Madame Alexandre and others, in connection with a materialization seance, says the *Evening News*. LIGHT of June 30th published an account of this seance, during which, it was stated, M. Quartier and M. Masson exposed the gardener-medium, Blaise, in circumstances of fraud and were then ejected from the house with violence by the indignant sitters. Madame Alexandre and her friends strongly deny the charges.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

THE CURE OF CANCER.

Mr. Rees Evans writes: "Will you please allow me to contradict the statement made in your columns of the 21st July by Dr. Hector Munro in which he states that he offered to form a committee of medical men to investigate my work." Mr. Rees Evans goes on to intimate that he has been waiting some considerable time for Dr. Munro's tests of his cure for cancer. He states: "Since Mr. Hannen Swaffer's article in LIGHT for June 2nd no less than ten medical men have come forward and are observing cases under treatment."

In reply to this letter Dr. Hector Munro writes as follows: "There is certainly considerable confusion about this matter. . . . I suggested the obvious and simple plan of getting a certain number of cases examined before, and after, treatment by a group or committee of reliable medical men, who could be depended upon to report honestly on the results. Mr. Rees Evans called on me, and I arranged the medical committee, and have waited for him to produce the cases. I have not heard from him since."

A SIGNIFICANT DREAM.

Sir,—Recently I had a most vivid and remarkable dream, which, alas! came true within a few hours of my awakening."

A lady friend of mine, the wife of a retired sea captain, was stricken with the dread disease of cancer. She underwent a serious operation, and for the first two months progressed well. But a secondary growth then appeared, and the surgeon said that it was quite impossible to operate further.

She was remarkably patient and never uttered a word of complaint. In fact, between spells of intense agony her fortitude and brave smile were an object lesson to all who saw her. I was in the habit of sitting by her bed-side for a few hours every Saturday evening during the last nine months she was upon earth.

On one such occasion she asked me to carry out a last small wish as soon as she had "passed over". I said that I would. She then asked me to prepare a notice for insertion in the local papers stating, "No flowers, by special request". She said that she, herself, would not be in the grave, and a huge number of wreaths (which she certainly would have had) would make her funeral a "show"—which was her one horror.

One can well imagine what my feelings were like at such a sad conversation!

My friend, whose life had been one of unstinted help on behalf of orphanages and hospitals—if ever there was a Christian woman she was one—lingered on, gradually growing weaker, until the week arrived when the nurse said Mrs. N— might pass away at any hour. It was during that last week of my friend's illness that I had my dream.

I dreamt that I was in her kitchen—as though I was there housekeeping for her—when suddenly she appeared in the centre of the room dressed in a white night-dress. Every line of her body was distinct beneath the folds of her robe, and the bright blue colour of her eyes was particularly noticeable.

She started to speak to me, but, try as I might, I could not catch one word she said. Then, just as suddenly as she had appeared, she vanished, and at that moment I woke up feeling absolutely miserable and depressed. At the same time the clock in our hall struck six.

At breakfast I related my dream to my family, and I had hardly finished speaking when the telephone bell rang. I started up exclaiming, "Oh! I know who that is. It is the captain 'phoning to inform us that poor dear Mrs. N. has gone".

I ran to the 'phone. It was not the captain's voice which I heard speaking, but the nurse's, and she told me that my friend had passed away at 5.47 that morning!

Yours, etc.,

M. C. P.

Wanstead.

"TELLING FORTUNES."

Sir,—We are all telling fortunes or having them told to us from infancy to age. When very young we tell ourselves—every girl is going to marry a prince or someone very high, and every boy is going to lead a band of scalphunters. Later we have Samuel Smiles with his "Self-Help" holding out glittering prizes to the time-expired apprentices. If he (the apprentice) be industrious and saving he will be alderman or mayor of his town or be Knighted and perhaps more. This in spite of the concrete fact that distinguished posts are few and that of a thousand aspirants hundreds *must* necessarily fail. If in the glowing spring you cross a person's hand with the indicated amount of silver, he will hand you a ticket for the Calcutta Sweep and put you on the road to fortune. Parsons, Sunday School teachers, and others are all doing the same thing with a perfectly good intention. There is no harm whatever in a man telling another his fortune and being paid for so doing. It is a gross interference with liberty as much as Prohibition or stopping the sale of cigarettes after 8 p.m. Some of these laws—as Sunday trading—were enacted centuries ago and we are still victims of that post mortem tyranny. "Oh Liberty!" said a great writer, "how much longer shall the vulgar outrage thee with their stupid suspicions?" And another (Rousseau J. J.) said, "The most abject form of servitude is that which puts on the appearance of liberty." That is our position now—these restrictions are all for our good had we but sense enough to know it. They don't wish to be harsh—far from it—it is in the interests of our happiness and freedom that you cannot get a smoke if you are late by five minutes or if hot and thirsty you arrive at an inn and cannot get a drink because you failed to notice it was ten minutes past three. The average fortune-telling is somewhat foolish because knowledge of the future is not given to enhance our material well-being—we are here for a higher purpose—but no great harm is done—the shilling or half-crown in my hand or that of the gipsy finds its way into the tradesman's till.

Yours, etc.,

E. HARVEY.

Bromborough, Cheshire.

A HEALER OF BURNS.

"D.E.J.H." writes:—

When staying in a small town in North Devon I became acquainted with a certain Mrs. T., who was well known in the neighbourhood as a healer of burns.

It was quite common to see people who had been burnt in any way go to this healer for treatment. She would just lightly touch the affected part, and the skin in less than two days would appear growing over the burn. In a week it would be completely healed.

Mrs. T. is only able to cure burns. Another singularity with this medium is that only one treatment is necessary, the same burn never having to be treated twice.

Although Mrs. T. is now over eighty years of age she is very healthy and as active as any young person.

The treatments are quite voluntary, the healer never at any time charging her clients.

MR. W. HAROLD SPEER, president of the Temple of Light, writes that the Christian Spiritualist Federation, of which he is president, has elected an examining board to test mediums. "The board sits every Monday when four or five candidates are put through a test. Up to the present seventeen mediums have been before the board and eight have passed as spiritual mediums. Diplomas will be sent to them. The test is a severe one for the material mediums, none of whom have yet passed. But to the spiritual medium the examination is a pleasure. It is the aim and intention of the Federation to clean the Spiritualist movement of the material and fraudulent mediums, and this can only be effectually accomplished by the proper testing of mediums and the co-operation of all Christian Spiritualist Churches and Societies.

LIGHT.

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THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

There is the case. You have doubtless all read it or read of it sufficiently to give you a fair idea of what it means—*Rex versus Mrs. Cantlon and Miss Mercy Phillimore*. It is a thousand pities that the name of the King, which comes into all these cases, should be dragged into anything so squalid and pettifogging as these fortune-telling prosecutions. Our gracious monarch is not well served by the bureaucrats and busybodies who are so constantly engaged in filching the liberties of his subjects by a multitude of vexatious restrictions; and the Press is awakening to the fact and making a powerful protest.

Until recent years only the rubbishy side of Spiritualism was ever allowed to see the light. The Press took care of that; and there are still a few directors of public opinion who see to it that nothing shall appear in their newspapers except what is likely to damage the subject and expose it to ridicule.

Now what does this police court decision amount to in effect? It means that no prediction of the future is legal if associated with any "occult art, craft or device". People must not prophesy, for instance, in trance; whether they prophesy false and absurdly or truly and nobly.

It is not necessary that money should be paid or received in order to establish a case. We knew that already; but we had also observed that the taking of fees was by common legal practice always brought into the question, probably because it supported a prosecution by a suggestion of getting money under false pretences. There would have been an air of absurdity about a prosecution if the question of money were not brought in.

So that if you converse with some departed friend—your father or mother—through a medium, and the communicator foreshadows something for you in the future, that is fortune-telling, equally with the trash about matrimonial complications and plots and legacies and dangerous men and dark women—the kind of flapdoodle which is talked by the gipsy fortune-tellers and others. We have already pointed out that the fortune-telling clause in the Vagrancy Act was directed against gipsies who were a great nuisance in the days when the Act was passed—the days of George II.

Now we have heard it objected that the dangers which threaten all psychic experimentation as a result of this legislation are largely theoretical. They would never be put into practice. That is rather a large

claim. Many absurd and tyrannical laws are being set in operation to-day. We are not to blame the police for this. They have to carry out the orders of their superiors. Some of these superiors are intelligent and humane people, men of good-will, some are foolish and tyrannical, self-seekers and petty despots.

Shall we appeal to the sense of justice of our governors or only to their self-interest? Shall we point out that the feminine vote is strong and will shortly be stronger than ever and the dragging of women into police-courts is not a pleasing spectacle? Shall we point out that the Spiritualists, especially in the Midlands and the North, are a strong political force and their attitude towards the present Government is likely to be very unfavourably influenced by this police-court case?

We prefer to use none of these arguments here. The appeal to the sense of justice may not be so immediate as the appeal to self-interest, but it is better and wiser in the long run.

RED INDIAN SPIRITS.

Some observations by Mrs. F. E. Leaning on Indian controls in the June issue of *Psychic Research*, the journal of the American S.P.R., invite attention. They are very appropriate indeed, in view of the amount of ridicule excited by the mention of "White Chief" in the recent police-court case. Mrs. Leaning notes the case, recorded in LIGHT some time ago, in which Oskenonton, the Indian singer, was brought into touch with the Indian spirit control ("White Wing") of Mr. W. E. Foster, the medium, and after a long interview was able to affirm the genuineness of the control. Oskenonton, it will be remembered, is the famous Mohawk chief who appeared in "Hiawatha" at the Albert Hall. He has a considerable acquaintance with psychic phenomena amongst his own people; but in his dealings with Spiritualism amongst the white races he found himself rather doubtful about the reality of some of the supposed Red Indian spirits at seances. This is natural enough. There is reason to think that some controls are only fanciful creations of the medium, and that even when they are real they may be so handicapped at times by seance-conditions that they are only able to manifest in a feeble and fumbling way, thus opening the door to many blunders and mischances. These things have been the bane of Spiritualism in the past, and they will continue to lay it open to hostile criticism till the whole question of public mediumship is taken seriously in hand, and the realities separated from the spurious imitations which are mainly the result of psychological impressions on the mind of the medium.

LEGALISING PSYCHIC INVESTIGATION.

A QUESTION IN PARLIAMENT.

MR. HARRY DAY, the Labour M.P. for Southwark Central Division, in the House of Parliament on Aug. 1st, asked the Home Secretary whether his attention had been drawn to a recent case heard at the Westminster Police Court, in which Miss Mercy Phillimore, secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and Mrs. Claire Frances Cantlon, a medium, were charged with fortune-telling; and whether the Home Secretary would consider the appointment of a committee for the purpose of investigating the claims of Spiritualism, apart from those of fortune-telling, with the object of legalising investigation in psychical research and Spiritualism. Sir William Joynson-Hicks, Home Secretary: "The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative, and to the second part in the negative." He added, in reply to a further question, that he did not consider that the case would hinder the class of investigation referred to.

SIDELIGHTS.

There is a general unanimity among the Press as to the unnecessary and vexatious nature of the police action in prosecuting Mrs. Cantlon and Miss Mercy Phillimore under a "fortune-telling" charge.

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In a pungent paragraph the *Spectator* for July 28th sums up the situation thus: "We cannot help feeling that the police-women who were instructed to gather evidence for this prosecution could have spent their time very much better. Whatever view we may hold about Spiritualism it is a fact that many sincere people find it either a help to faith or a method of scientific investigation. Much fraud is, of course, attributable to dishonest mediums; Browning could find plenty of new Sludges; but if a Spiritualistic society is to be held responsible for all the errors of a medium, a ban will virtually be placed upon the association of the outside public with psychic investigation. Surely the Home Office has better ways of spending time and money."

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Says the *Saturday Review* (July 28th): "That the police, with so many graver duties, should waste time in luring fortune-tellers into an offence, and that an over-worked magistracy should then give hours to dealing with the offence is preposterous. What is worse is the penalizing, as in the recent test case, of the secretary of a spiritualist body which had employed as a medium a woman who, without its sanction, had told fortunes. It is only by a great stretch of language that the secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance can be held guilty of aiding and abetting the telling of fortunes." The work of the Alliance, says the *Saturday Review*, may be futile work, but nevertheless, numbers of intelligent and reputable people think otherwise, and these should be allowed to follow their own consciences as to whether they engage in such work. "To strike at it because, independently of a serious body of researchers, a medium tells fortunes, is unfair."

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The *Daily Express* (July 26th) in a leading article headed "Why Condemn the Fortune-Tellers?" says: "After all, we are most of us fortune-tellers of sorts. The doctor's art would perish if he never practised a little magic now and then. . . . Even 'The Scout', like all other racing critics and tipsters, is in his way a fortune-teller."

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The *Evening News* leader for July 25th says: "There are, of course, fraudulent mediums, just as there are fraudulent company promoters and vendors of gold bricks. . . . But there is also the case of the genuine medium who, on occasions when her powers fail, nevertheless pretends to go into the usual trance instead of saying 'Nothing doing!' to the assembled spiritualists and going home to her tea. It must be a very upright medium who does not occasionally practise this relatively harmless deception upon those who, in the opinion of the majority, are asking to be deceived." The law, points out the *Evening News*, neither denies nor affirms the ability of a spirit guide to appear in our midst, but nevertheless claims to be quite certain that the spirit could not possibly foresee a thing that had not happened.

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Catherine, Countess of Westmorland, in a letter to the *Daily Express* of July 28th, writes: "Those who have consulted clairvoyants know that real clairvoyance is God-given."

The *Daily Mirror* (July 27th), commenting on this case, says: "Why must the law insist on reforming people against their wills—so long as they don't annoy others? . . . It's queer that so many well-recognized public nuisances go unchecked while the harmless cult of cranks—if you must call them so—are severely visited."

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The *Daily Sketch* for July 27th remarks: "It may reasonably be suggested that the police should be able to find more useful employment than striving for convictions against either possibly high-minded mediums or ordinary money-making fortune-tellers. . . . There are limits to the trouble and expense the State can be expected to go to in looking after fools. . . . The main business of the police should be to protect the respectable citizen against criminals rather than to save stupid people from the consequences (not as a rule very serious so far as visits to fortune-tellers are concerned) of their own stupidity."

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The *Liverpool Post and Mercury* (July 27th) in a leader headed "Why Not Fortune-Tellers?" remarks: "The majority of fortune-tellers, it seems, are harmless enough people unless to the fools or curious investigators, whom no law, probably, can prevent wasting money. Those who hold that all fortune-tellers are obvious quacks should be ready, surely, to admit that little, if any, harm to the community can result, even if professed fortune-telling is freed from the specific law against it."

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The *Dundee Courier and Advertiser* (July 27th) says: "We know little about the spiritualists' cult beyond the fact that it has attracted many people of high standing in the world of intellect." Dealing with the methods of officialdom in connection with this case our contemporary remarks: "Is that the way to restore the shaken confidence in the police? . . . If this form of police activity is inspired by the Home Secretary, all we can say about it is that he would be much better employed looking after his first hate, the alien enemy."

* * * * *

In the course of a long letter to *The Times* of July 26th, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle points out that Spiritualists regard mediums as essential both for study and for the conduct of their churches, and therefore any legal action which forbids or restricts them is to that extent religious persecution. "That the police should be employed upon such a matter is deplorable, especially as their activities take the hateful shape of *agents provocateurs*," says Sir Arthur, who refers to the difficulty in locating the "hidden power" that prompts such action, and makes some delicately scathing references to the present state of the law on this subject. To take a personal instance he refers to his own Psychic Bookshop. "Many people in distress come there asking for advice. We usually send them on to such mediums as we have found to be most helpful in such a case, and the results are gratifying. But, by this extension or interpretation of the law, I am liable to prosecution if that medium should not give satisfaction or should confuse the future with the past." Sir Arthur concludes with the reasonable demand that registered Spiritualist churches and societies for the serious study of psychic matters should be exempt from police prosecution. "We hold no brief for the mere fortune-teller," says Sir Arthur, "but we are very earnest to get what we need. The Home Secretary has informed me officially that there is no hope of a change in the law. That is not a wise resolution. We are a solid body numbering some hundreds of thousands of voters."

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

PLANCHETTE WAS RIGHT.

A spirit who asked that the fences surrounding the cemetery in which his body was buried might be repaired, as cattle were trespassing and trampling over his grave, is the subject of a story in *British Malaya* for May, by Mr. G. Templer Tickell, who vouches for the truth of his statements.

Mr. Tickell and a companion, Mr. C. T. Wight, were discussing ghosts in a little grass hut at Kota Tampan, on the Perak river, one evening in 1885, after a twenty-three miles' tramp from Kuala Kangsar. After supper Mr. Tickell recounted to his friend an experience of his uncle's, who, after a day's shooting over the Hatherley Court estate, had returned home at evening, and was resting for a few minutes in front of his library fire before going up to dress for dinner; seated in an arm-chair before the fireplace, he had stretched out his hands to the blaze, when suddenly he noticed that the opposite armchair was occupied by a boyhood chum, who had departed for Australia many years previously. Something uncanny about the figure startled the observer, who at once went across, and seated himself on the chair in which the apparition was sitting, whereupon the figure vanished.

This visitation coincided, in point of time, with the death of the chum, from a fractured skull, owing to a fall from a horse. Both these men, in their early boyhood, had made a vow that the one who died first would return from the other side of life with a message for the survivor, if such a thing were permitted.

The recital of this incident impressed Mr. C. T. Wight, who remarked to Mr. Tickell: "What do you say if we make a similar vow ourselves?"

"Done with you, Tommy, for auld lang syne!" said his companion.

Four years later, in October, 1889, Mr. Tickell arrived home in England; a few days after, over the luncheon table, an acquaintance remarked that a letter from his son in Perak had contained news of the death of a man named Wight—Charles T. Wight. Mr. Tickell, realising that his friend had passed away, was so upset that he hastily excused himself, left the table, postponed a projected theatre trip, and returned home; extinguishing the light, he sat still in the darkness of his room, mentally calling upon his old friend to manifest his presence.

There was no response. "I begged him," says the writer, "if he could do nothing else, that he would at least come to me in a dream, and give me some message of cheer. I slept soundly through a long night, without dream or vision of any kind whatsoever. I felt keenly disappointed, and a horror seized me—so greatly did I value my pal's pledge—that perhaps Tommy [T. C. Wight] was right, and that annihilation awaits us at the graveside."

Some days later, while buying Christmas presents at the Army and Navy Stores, Mr. Tickell bought a planchette, and carried out an experiment in automatic writing. The first message received ran as follows:—

The fences are broken down and the cattle are running over my grave. Please get repairs made.—C. T. Wight.

"If you are my old pal, tell me—where are you buried?" said Mr. Tickell.

"At Kuala Kangsar," was the answer.

"If it is a spirit, I am sorry to say it isn't my pal's. I know that he was buried at Taiping," said Mr. Tickell, disappointedly.

But a letter to a friend who knew the circumstances of Wight's death brought the reply that the burial-place actually was in Kuala Kangsar, and not Taiping, as wrongly supposed. Says Mr. Tickell:

So planchette was right after all! But another thing puzzled me. I had built a most solid hard wood post fence (and barb-wired it) round the cemetery in 1885 . . . and

couldn't see how it could have tumbled down. I wrote to the D.O. [District Officer], Kuala Kangsar. We were not good friends. . . .

I asked him to let bygones be bygones, and begged him to send me a line.

There was no reply. Apparently the D.O.'s "soul was unforgiving". Anyhow, no information was forthcoming from him as to the state of the cemetery fences.

Thirteen years later, Mr. Tickell returned to Kuala Kangsar, and at once visited Wight's grave. He found the cemetery exactly as he had left it in 1885. Obviously the planchette message concerning the broken fence was a lie!

But there was a sequel. Shortly after, he made the acquaintance of a man who described the receipt of the letter which Mr. Tickell had written in 1889 to the D.O., to which no answer had been received. This gentleman stated that he was assistant to the D.O. and had been present when Mr. Tickell's letter arrived. He also confirmed what the planchette had stated, namely, that the cemetery fences had been broken down at that time, and that cattle were roaming over the graves. Said he:—

I was sitting opposite to him at table when he threw me over a letter from you and said, "Read that rot!"

"It isn't rot," I retorted; "it's perfectly true. The fences are broken down, cattle roaming over it, and the place neglected by the District Engineer, and I'll make it my business to put it in proper repair at once." Which I did, as you saw on your late visit.

MADAME LAGRANGE'S MEDIUMSHIP.

Mr. A. Dribbel, of Carshalton, writes as follows:

"In your 'Sidelights' of July 28th you mention an experiment with Madame Lagrange recorded in the *Bulletin* of the 'Conseil de Recherches Métapsychiques', which reminds me of the following very striking proof of this lady's remarkable psychic powers, which may be of interest to your readers.

"A relative of mine, established in business in Brussels, is interested in psychic research and has had frequent sittings with Madame Lagrange, who, by the way, does not take remuneration for her services, although she is far from being well-off.

"One evening when she was on a friendly visit to my relative's house, he handed her a sealed envelope. Madame Lagrange took it, felt it, and said it contained a letter from a foreign country; further, that she saw a big place with a lot of machines in it. She threw the envelope on the table, but later on, in the midst of conversation about other things, picked it up again and said that the letter came from Germany and that it was written by a Dutchman. Again the envelope was thrown down and appeared to be forgotten for a while. The medium became rather fidgety and seemed to be drawn towards the letter. All of a sudden she picked it up again, fingered it nervously for a few moments, and, throwing the envelope away from her as in disgust, said to my friend: 'Now don't you give that credit'.

"The letter contained in the envelope was an important order which my friend had received from a large firm doing business in Cologne, the head of which was a Dutchman. A certain extended credit was asked for, which my relative refused, guided by Madame Lagrange's advice, and after some correspondence he declined the order. Shortly afterwards the firm in Cologne went bankrupt and but for Madame Lagrange's extraordinary psychometric powers would have involved my friend in serious financial loss.

"I enclose this gentleman's name and address."

A PATHWAY THROUGH MATTER.

BY CAPTAIN Q. C. A. CRAUFURD, R.N.

What is the exact dividing line between Physical and Psychical? We know, of course, in a rough, vague and general way that there is a distinction between purely physical research and purely psychical enquiry; we know, with equal vagueness perhaps, that the two are really different aspects of the one thing which we call life.

My own researches have been in that "no-man's-land" between the physical and the psychic, which many of us are exploring. I have been fortunate enough to have spent many years in studying certain branches of physical science. This is a useful asset; it gives the explorer the assurance of having beneath his feet firm ground, from which he may step cautiously forward along untested surfaces: if he finds himself floundering he has but to step back to his solid base, from which assured position he may make a leisurely reconnaissance of the doubtful area before he again ventures forward.

Every branch of physical enquiry seems to lead us to this same "no-man's-land"; we proceed onward, along paths of ascertained knowledge, building our road slowly in front of us; but always we arrive at a point from which further progress becomes overwhelmingly difficult. We may speculate as to our possible next moves, however. The path, we may conjecture, will probably run in this direction, or that; but the path is not yet built.

We know that matter, when expanded to enormous dimensions, takes upon itself a fourth state; it is permissible to guess that this rarefied state of matter might possibly be allied to the condition under which the astral body manifests itself. Sir William Crookes, who boldly proclaimed the results of his researches into Spiritualism, was one of those who investigated this rarefied form of matter; Faraday visualised its possibility in 1819, and Sir William confirmed it by practical experiment in 1879. Faraday, by the way, was looked on as the arch-enemy of Spiritualism, though we find him in the latter years of his life privately communicating with the "dead"—see any unbiassed account of the life and work of Faraday.

It is probable that further researches into this particular field may disclose facts which will have a psychic bearing.

The mysteries of matter may be faintly understood if we recall one of Crookes's experiments. He produced what we commonly call a vacuum in a glass vessel, reducing the atmospheric pressure within to one-millionth of an atmosphere; this allowed the residue within the glass to expand enormously, nevertheless the residue within the vessel—the number of molecules remaining—was enormous. In his own words: "When exhausted to a millionth of an atmosphere we still have a trillion molecules left in the bulb—a number quite sufficient to justify one in speaking of the residue as matter."

Will a study of the molecule lead us to that door which opens on a new world? Some of us think it may.

MRS. F. E. LEANING, editor of the Journal of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research and a valued contributor of LIGHT, has just published an excellent historical sketch dealing with the story of Tadworth Court. There is in it very little of psychic interest, although that is not entirely absent. But the book covers a very wide historical field, as shown by the index, which includes a multitude of historical names and shows how the story of an ancient manor house may have almost world-wide radiations both in history and geography. This book, "Tadworth Court, Surrey", is published by The Holmes & Lee Press, Ltd., Redhill, price 5s. cloth, with illustrations; 2s. paper covers, without illustrations.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

The sneer is always the weapon of the evil-disposed. It is never used by the enlightened soul. It sits naturally only on the face of Mephistopheles.

* * * * *

Here is a couplet from Shakespeare that is rather appropriate to the present position of Spiritualism. I take it from *Cymbeline*:

Be cheerful; wipe thine eyes;
Some falls are means the happier to arise.

* * * * *

An evening paper commenting humorously on the typical Indian spirit control refers to him as "White Sox"! I am afraid we have rather "asked for" good-natured chaff of this kind. So much goes out to the public as Spiritualism which in the present state of public education cannot fail to excite ridicule. But I am not likely to forget that some of the papers who jibe at us jibed in the same way at the first crude efforts at aerial flight, and have lived to regret it ever since.

* * * * *

The history of "Spiritualism"—I mean the word, not the thing itself—is a curious one. It began as a lofty scholastic term to indicate that philosophy which held by the spiritual view of life. Then it went downhill and became a term almost of contempt, the ignorant supposing it to be concerned with nothing but table-rapping and the like. It is a word of such sprawling comprehensiveness that it almost requires definition in each instance of its use. In high scientific and literary quarters it is (or was) generally used with an air of disdain, and yet Spiritualists include many persons of the highest intellectual distinction as well as persons of the simple and gullible type.

* * * * *

The name Spiritualism, indeed, rather reminds one of the word "wine", which may denote equally the most costly champagne or the cheapest *vin ordinaire*. But I think the younger generation of psychical researchers who are so lofty in their attitude towards Spiritualism might remember that they are heirs to the accumulated knowledge and experience of the Spiritualists of the past, and although they may be permitted to swank a little and feel much superior to the older generation (as is the custom of the young) they should recognise that it is a little weak to yield to prejudices largely founded on snobbishness and misunderstanding.

* * * * *

Here are some schoolboy howlers, although they are not all exactly new.

Shakespeare founded his play *As You Like It* on a story written by Sir Oliver Lodge.

(The jest here may need the explanation that Shakespeare took the material for the play from a tale by Thomas Lodge, the poet, who died in 1625.)

Lord Rayleigh was the first man to see the invisible Armada.

There is here a suggestion of clairvoyance (in which the late Lord Rayleigh was certainly interested) although the schoolboy seems to be thinking of Sir Walter Raleigh and his expeditions against the Spaniards. The third example may go without comment:—

Louise de la Ramée wrote novels, and called herself "Ouida", because she wrote with a ouida board.

D. G.

AMERICAN STATE CHARTERS.

BY HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S.

I have met one of the most charming and interesting public workers in Spiritualism in U.S.A., here in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is the Reverend Cornelia V. Morrow, President of Pennsylvania State Spiritualist Association, and Pastor of the First Church of Spiritualists, Pittsburgh.

Mrs. Morrow is a typical American of the old school. These are not so frequently met as one would wish. America is overflowing with immigrants. In one school in New York there are children of no less than twenty-one different races, their parents speaking as many different languages! The original American citizens born in the country are being swamped out. They are a fine, sturdy, tolerant and kindly people. Mrs. Morrow inherits these qualities.

I spoke at her church, a building that would do credit to any religious organisation. Originally the property of Lutherans, it was purchased a few years ago by Spiritualists.

Pennsylvania is one of the States which grant Charters to religious organisations, and Spiritualism is recognised by the State authorities as a religion. This recognition has been won after much effort in the face of opposition owing partly to the ignorance which prevailed about Spiritualism and because of the number of charlatans trading on its claims. To-day, however, it ranks high among the religions of Pennsylvania.

I have seen both its Charters. The first, granted in June, 1908, is a county Charter lacking the same wide authority as the one of 1925, granted by the State.

The 1908 Charter reads, in part, as follows:—

Second: The purposes for which the said corporation is formed are:—To promulgate the true principles of the spiritualistic religion, with the truth of the continuity of life, of spirit return and spirit helpfulness; to establish intelligent co-operation and insure harmonious action: To provide for the education and protection of worthy mediums and speakers, and to expose and overthrow the counterfeiter who imitates spiritual phenomena for personal gain: To promote the welfare of Spiritualist religion, to secure and maintain the blessing of religious liberty and the protection of the laws in connection therewith, for ourselves and for our posterity.

The more recent State Charter is worded a little differently, but not less pointedly, thus:—

2nd. Said corporation is formed for the purpose of forming a State Organisation of the Spiritualist Churches and Societies in the State of Pennsylvania; for advocating and promoting the Religion, Philosophy and Phenomena of Spiritualism; which said Corporation shall have control and supervision of the local Spiritualist Churches and Societies who may be admitted to membership in the said Corporation, and said Corporation shall establish such By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations for its government of the local Churches and Societies, and the Ministers, Associate Ministers, Licentiates, Spiritual Healers, and Missionaries, as may not be inconsistent with the Rules and Regulations of the National Spiritualist Association.

Both are comprehensive and give excellent controlling powers to the Association. It is, however, necessary for the officers to watch the authorities very closely, as there is always a tendency for these to infringe the rights and powers granted by the Charters. The 1925 Charter is believed to place the Association on a very sound footing, and the future is regarded with greater confidence. A good deal is felt to depend upon the result of the next Presidential election. Should the Roman Catholic nominee be elected it is feared that a period of religious persecution will be entered upon.

The granting of the State Charter was largely owing to the efforts of Mrs. Morrow, who has been a lecturer and demonstrator of Spiritualism for nearly forty years. The result of this achievement is that the First Spiritualist Church ranks as one of the best organised and best conducted throughout America.

As a medium it would be difficult to find Mrs. Morrow's equal in the class of work she does. She has brought conviction to thousands of enquirers, among them being leading citizens of Pittsburgh.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"What do YOU Believe?" By Lloyd Williams. (Riders. 1s.)

This little book gives "a Father's Reply to his Son's Challenge" on the question of religious belief, and to many it will be both startling and stimulating as showing the boldness with which one of the older generation can confront the religious problems of the time. It is the work of a mind which has thrown off effete theologies and old religious sanctions in favour of a larger and more rational philosophy of life, constructive and inclusive. The author takes in comprehensively the essential elements of other religions than Christianity and shows their divinity, but he holds that their founders all gave more or less clearly the Christ message as proclaimed by Jesus of Nazareth. There is strong thinking and clear vision in the little book.

"Your Infinite Possibilities." By Margaret V. Underhill. (Riders. 5s.)

The name of Miss Margaret Underhill is well known in Psychological Research circles, and some of us have heard of the communications said to have been made to her by Professor James. In this book she gives a highly interesting account of how the messages were received, and the corroborative evidence given through various mediums, in especial Mrs. Osborne Leonard. The main body of the messages was given by automatic writing through the hand of Miss Underhill herself, but there were remarkable confirmations through the mediumship of others, extending and verifying the writing itself. The messages are highly instructive, outlining a philosophy of life from what to many readers will be a new angle, full of suggestion and at the same time consistent with much that has been given from spirit sources of late years. The present reviewer, inclined to be critical of such communications, found in it many gleams of strange wisdom, very appropriate to these days when there are signs everywhere of a great spiritual advance, foreshadowed in visions, intuitions and a sense of new life. The spiritual and the physical come into close touch in the book, and there are clearly discernible hints of that Great Design whereby "the stuff of which life is made (spirit) will become master of the stuff of which man is made (flesh)". The superconscious is to free itself from the subconscious—a great lesson for those who can understand.

"Why We Survive." By H. Ernest Hunt. (Riders. 2s. 6d.)

Mr. H. Ernest Hunt is well known both as lecturer and author, and in this, his latest book, he shows those qualities of sound reasoning and clear exposition which have made him an admired teacher. In this instance he has striven with marked ability to set out the argument for human survival without recourse to the results tabulated by the special investigations made by Spiritualists in the way of seance phenomena. His book bears out the claim made by some serious thinkers that human survival can be proved along the lines of a reasoned interpretation of the general phenomena of life at large, and he proves not only that there is a soul which survives but also why it survives. It is a valuable addition to the literature of human survival.

LUCIUS.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"THE DEMON LOVER." By Dion Fortune. (Noel Douglas. 2s. 6d.)

"A BROTHER OF THE SHADOW." By G. Colmore. (Noel Douglas. 2s. 6d.)

"THE SECRETS OF DR. TAVERNER." By Dion Fortune. (Noel Douglas. 2s. 6d.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S. H. WATTS (Stockton-on-Tees).—We have your letter. We should think it would be wiser to test these supposed cures for various diseases before making them public. The communications seem to be rather fantastic and we cannot place any confidence in them.

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The College will be closed from the 4th August; work will be resumed on the 20th August.

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Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—August 12th, 11, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mons. Maresco Marisini, inspirational address; Mrs. Graddon Kent, Clairvoyance. August 15th, 8, Mrs. S. D. Kent.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—August 12th, 11, public; 6.30, Mrs. Podmore. Wednesday, 7.30, public circle at 55, Station Road.

Peckham.—Lausanne Road.—August 12th, 7, Mrs. G. Elliott. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. A. Calway.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—August 12th, 7.30, Brother John, address. August 15th, 7.30, Mr. H. J. Osborn, address and clairvoyance.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—August 12th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. H. J. Osborn, address and clairvoyance.

Fulham.—12, Lettice Street (Nr. Parsons Green Station).—August 12th, 11.30, circle; 3, Lyceum; 7, Thursday, 8.

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The Council express their gratitude to all friends and sympathisers for the donations already sent, and will be pleased to accept and acknowledge all further amounts towards the remaining portion of the costs.

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All donations should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, Captain A. A. Carnell, 16, Queensberry Place, S.W.7, who will acknowledge.

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NOTICES.—No ordinary sessional work is arranged for the summer months. The Autumn Session will commence on October 4th.

During the intervening period Members may arrange sittings with mediums on the staff. The Library and Rooms will be open all the year round.

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INVITATION TO MEMBERS :

On Sunday, September 9th, at 8 p.m., during the period of the 1928 Congress of the International Spiritualists' Federation, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has taken the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, when he will give a Lantern Lecture on Psychic Photography. Admission will be by invitation.

A proportion of seats will be allotted to each Society, and members of the L.S.A. wishing to attend are invited to apply to the Secretary for tickets.

Those at our disposal will be allotted in the order of application.

BOOKS FOR SALE.

Why I Believe in Personal Immortality.—By Sir Oliver Lodge. Sir Oliver Lodge gives in a deeply interesting way his reasons for holding that there is Survival beyond the grave. The chapters on Communication with the Dead are of especial value. Post free, 5/4.

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