

# Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

Edited by DAVID GOW

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## "Light"—Its Scope and Purpose.

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**A DRAMATIC RETURN.**

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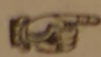
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*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research*

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

### THE LAST OF THE LAUGHING.

What is it that is missing in those people who deride things because they appear trivial and ridiculous—not seeing in them the possible germs of great discoveries? The missing quality is evidently imagination, in which respect the British race is said to be very deficient. But it was not Britons who scoffed at Galvani's experiments with the frog's legs—the beginning of electrical discovery. Indeed the charge of dullness of imagination would hold good against all civilised peoples at some time or other. It is hardly possible to think of any great discovery which, in its early beginnings, was not a subject of ridicule—even sometimes of bitter hostility. But if the germ of the new idea is a true one, all the derision and opposition in the world will never suffice to kill it. There are several things in Spiritualism which people still laugh at, until they have seriously examined them and then, like the guests at the feast when the bill was presented, "they laugh no more". It is well for us that nowadays we have (as a rule) nothing more unpleasant to face than a little ridicule. And the best thing when you are laughed at in this matter is to take it quite good-humouredly, remembering that those laugh longest who laugh last.

### WALBURGA LADY PAGET.

The tragic death of Walburga Lady Paget, in October last, was widely noticed in the Press, by reason of her remarkable personality and long and distinguished career. But little reference was made, however, to her interest in psychic matters, although her book, *Colloquies with an Unseen Friend*, attracted considerable attention when first published. We lately learned from one of her friends that Lady Paget was a convinced Spiritualist with strong leanings to the mystical side of things, and gifted with an occasional power of reading the future. Born in the early Victorian period, that is to say over ninety years ago, and moving in royal circles, she possessed an aristocracy of soul that carried her high above the merely social level of aristocratic life. She was a humanist, working incessantly for her fellow-creatures, and making many sacrifices to help the

afflicted. On the day of her death she is said to have confided to a clergyman, who visited her, that she felt her end was near at hand, although she did not know how or when it would come. Later in the day came the tragedy of her death, her dress catching fire while she sat reading in her room. For her the spiritual realm was vastly more real and more important than the world of matter. It was a realm with which she felt continually in touch, living and working under its inspiration. But her strong shrewd judgment and independence of mind and method brought her into line with those whom we call "practical mystics". She radiated vitality, keeping always the spirit of youth, and there was something glorious as well as tragic and terrible in the fiery passage of her spirit from earth.

### AN ECHO FROM THE PAST.

In the year 1880, Mr. Albert J. Edmunds, now of Philadelphia, was known to a small circle as a poet and a Spiritualist. He did a good deal of literary work, but not until after he had gone to reside in America did he gain any wide reputation as a scholar, the author of several valuable books on religious questions, the most notable being *Buddhist and Christian Gospels now First Compared—from the Originals*. He has made some startling discoveries regarding the psychic element in early Christian records. We gave one of them in LIGHT some months ago. Lately we came across the following poem written by Mr. Edmunds in 1883, when he was about twenty-six:

#### SPIRITUALISM.

Only a rising billow,  
Only a deep sigh drawn  
By the great sea of chaos  
Before Creation's dawn.

Only a little princess  
Spelling the words of Kings;  
Only the Godhead's prattle  
In Sinai mutterings!

The crowd mistakes and fears it,  
And Aaron has ignored,  
But Moses far above them  
Is talking with the Lord!

Simple lines; but they carry a message and a meaning from the days when Spiritualism was a voice crying in the wilderness, everywhere misunderstood and misrepresented.

I HAVE read several newspaper discussions on Spiritualism and have been astonished by the obtuseness and prejudice of most of those who opposed the Spiritualist faith. If the Spiritualists cannot prove survival, neither can the materialists disprove it. If the Christians believe in immortality, I cannot understand their resentment of survival.

—ROBERT BLATCHFORD.



## MODERN EVIDENCES FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL.

BY H. A. DALLAS.

(Continued from page 603)

### THE MENTAL PHENOMENA.

It should be clearly understood that the physical phenomena have been entirely subsidiary to the most important phases of experience, i.e., to the mental phenomena. These have always been the most important feature in the movement, the physical occurrences being organised in order to attract attention as means to an end, not at all as an end in themselves. It is the communications which have accompanied these occurrences that have led investigators to the conviction that they are the work of intelligent agents, and to the recognition of these agents as *human*—in some cases they have identified them as persons who once lived on earth.

The implications involved in this fact are tremendous, and it is, of course, only right that the evidence for its genuineness should be thoroughly examined and sifted. It is those who have devoted the most earnest care to doing so who have become absolutely convinced both that survival is proven and that in certain circumstances communication after death actually occurs.

To this general statement there are some exceptions. Professor Charles Richet says he is still unconvinced as to human survival; he cannot believe in human existence without a physical brain; and yet he has said (I quote his printed words): "However improbable it may appear at first sight, it is possible, without plunging into absurdities, to conceive of an intelligence which has not a brain as a substratum. . . . The material substratum is the habitual phenomenon, it is not the necessary phenomenon, and there is nothing to indicate that it is so. When the time comes for the reverse to be proved true—and why should it not come?—it will be regarded as surprising that we should ever have denied the existence of an order of things different from the common order, not contradicting it, but in juxtaposition with it." (*Should Spiritism be seriously studied?*, pp. 9-10.)

Dr. Gustave Geley deduced from his prolonged and careful scientific study of psychical phenomena that a human being consists of:

1st. Immanent intelligence in close contact with the infinite Immanent Intelligence in Nature.

2nd. A soul-energy with both physical and mental aspects.

3rd. A representation of these in material form. As the pioneers in this Research have passed one by one to the great majority, manifestations have occurred, not only in greater abundance, but with *novel characteristics*; they seem to indicate intelligent devices with the purpose of eliminating the various hypotheses with which investigators have tried to explain the phenomena by interpretations that might exclude discarnate agency. Cross-correspondence is one of these devices; the book-test is another.

I said at the outset that we might have to return to the personal point of view. The personal factor can never be quite left out of count, and it is one of immense importance.

It often happens that very little attention is paid to the mass of evidence which has accumulated during the last seventy years, until some personal event occurs which arouses interest. Those who have an unbroken home circle, and find the joys and the work of life

engrossing, are apt to put aside a study which forces upon the mind the consideration of death and what comes after death. But when the angel of death breaks in upon the security of the home-life, then the subject gains new importance.

### EXAMINING THE EVIDENCE.

The question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" clamours for an answer. According to the earnestness and the honesty of the questioner will be his care in examining the evidence; he will not be content to trust it because it meets his desires, rather will the keenness of his desire make him the more inclined to sift the evidence so that he may know the truth at all costs.

When we encounter startling and unusual facts we must meditate on them until their relation to history past and present becomes manifest to us, and they are seen as part of the whole unfolding will of God in relation to the Race. Unless they are understood in connection with life as a whole, they will seem meaningless and purposeless. In order to understand thus, "not merely the intellect but also the will has to come into play in the process of knowledge." So says Professor Ramsay, and he adds: "The moral quality is at least as important as the intellectual in the making of the true scholar. He must struggle from stage to stage. . . . At every step in the path of knowledge one eliminates and does away with the old and remakes one's vision of the world. . . . one sees facts in a new relation: something of what had been dark in the world around becomes illuminated and clear." (*Teachings of St. Paul in terms of the present day*, pp. 234-244.)

In order thus to understand the evolutionary process we need intuition (what Professor Ramsay calls "sympathetic insight") and "the operation of the Divine element in man grasping the Divine unity and plan that rules in the world."

My aim here (very inadequately fulfilled, I know) has been not only to suggest that psychical phenomena enable us to find an answer to the question: If a man die, shall he live again? but also that these phenomena are in line with evolution, and that they indicate effort towards the carrying out of a Purpose. The undermining of materialism as a philosophy seems to be part of that Purpose, and another very important part seems to be the enlargement of the scope of human capacity for fellowship and Co-operation.

The struggle for individual survival has been only one factor in the scheme, but not the principal factor. The other factor is Co-operation; without which the higher forms of living creatures could not have existed. It is a conspicuous feature in the development of both floral and animal life. It is entirely in line with the evolutionary process that the event of death should widen the capacity for such fellowship, and afford further scope for Co-operation.

It seems unthinkable that in a rational Universe the inevitable experience of death should stultify for every single individual the obvious trend and apparent purpose of the whole process of becoming.

We are therefore led to anticipate that when we enter upon the next stage we shall have interaction with our fellows and increased faculties for responding to our environment. As many of us know from messages which reach us from the other side of death, there is ample warrant for this hope.

(Concluded).



## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BY W. H. EVANS.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE EXACT MEANING OF THE TEXT, "THOUGH I MAKE MY BED IN HELL THOU ART THERE"?

ANSWER: My questioner is particular; he wants the exact meaning, and that presumably could only be given by the writer of the words quoted. But we can see pretty clearly what is meant. The Psalmist believed in God; he believed intensely, as is the way of the mystic to whom God is the one omnipresent reality, and whatever states of life and being men may experience, God is in and with them. *In* them, because man is part of God, and *with* them because man's sense of separateness makes him feel apart from God. Therefore, if man makes his bed in hell he cannot escape from the ever-present reality of God's presence. But God is not with man in hell for the purpose of inflicting upon him useless torture, but for remedial suffering. The pains of hell are for our well-being: for the purpose of helping us to realise the futility of evil. When we perceive that, we turn homeward and are helped onward by Him whose everlasting arms are ever beneath us.

QUESTION: IN A RECENT ARTICLE PROF. HALDANE SAID, "I DO NOT KNOW, BUT I THINK THERE MAY BE A MIND BEHIND THE WORKING OF NATURE, AND WHEN I ACT IN HARMONY WITH THIS MIND I FEEL I AM RIGHT." IS NOT THIS AN ADMISSION OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD?

ANSWER: The word God has been and still is used in such a narrow sense that probably Prof. Haldane would demur and say no—at least not according to the usual conceptions of God current in the world of "religion". The statement made certainly corresponds to the idea of God, and it indicates the difficulties many thinkers experience. The narrow idea of a personal God has so many restrictive implications that many thinkers cannot accept it. None the less, we cannot throw over the conception because we may not be able to grasp it in its fullness. After all, it is largely a question of terms. What the scientist speaks of as a mind behind Nature is simply what the religious thinker means when he speaks of God. If there be a mind behind Nature it must be conscious and directive, and in some manner, which we may be unable to grasp at present, personal. Haeckel felt the same difficulty. He ruled out God, but to fill the gap in his mind caused by discarding the idea formulated a substitute which he called "The Law of Substance". Many of our difficulties arise because we fall into the error of supposing that the intellect is the whole man. The matter is largely one of the intuition, and we are beginning to realise that this is even more important in our spiritual relationships than intellect. As the Mind spoken of by Professor Haldane is presumably infinite, God being so conceived, the expression of either in an intellectual formula that shall be entirely satisfying is at present impossible. To define God is to dethrone Him.

QUESTION: IS SCEPTICISM A VIRTUE?

ANSWER: This is a strange query, but I think I know what is in the mind of my interrogator. I am frequently amused to hear people proclaim, "I am very sceptical," as if it were a virtue to be proud of. No one can object to a reasonable scepticism, but if carried to undue lengths it is as harmful to the mind as over-credulity, and of the two the former is more corrosive and truth-obstructing than the latter. I am puzzled to know what there is to be proud of in being sceptical. People speak of it as if being so were evidence of superior intelligence, when too often it is simply proof of mental blindness. Scepticism is often nothing more than doubt run to seed; seed from

which springs a crop of uncertainty that is often destructive of faith. One meets people who through fostering a sceptical habit of mind can never arrive at certitude. They imagine all sorts of things and accept the most absurd explanations rather than the true ones, owing to their fear of being deceived. So they put on the whole armour of scepticism and thus protect themselves not only from error but truth as well.

There is a difference between being sceptical and being critical, but criticism should not degenerate into mere fault-finding. The object of criticism is to arrive at truth. It is the mental surgeons' scalpel which lays bare error and reveals to us the better way. At its best it is eminently reasonable. At its worst it is as bad as an unreasoning scepticism, producing a "Paul Pry" sort of mind; a kind of "Peeping Tom" soul always on the look out for flaws in arguments, and for weaknesses in human nature. It is mean and ungenerous, and small minds who pride themselves upon their superior endowment as critics are nothing but tattling busybodies delighting to hold up to the light their neighbours' foibles and mistakes in both speech and conduct. Such minds listen to an address not to get the truth but to see what mistakes the speaker makes. One slip in grammar or pronunciation is enough to condemn the whole sermon. The mistakes are remembered, picked out and held up to derision. The message that was delivered is forgotten.

## THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS.

From a book lately under review, entitled *Eneres*, by J. William Lloyd (George Allen & Unwin), we take, as supplementary to our notice, the following passage, being a conversation between the boy Reksa and the old sage Eneres. The sage is speaking:—

There is a knowledge, which is greatest of all, a knowledge that is behind all, above all, which cannot be had from books, or study, like other knowledge; which may for ever elude determination and effort to get it, but which comes of itself to the sweet, effortless soul when it is ripe and ready, open to receive, but demanding nothing.

Man has no words to describe it, nor can any man fully understand it, but when you have it you know it and you are calm and infinitely content.

I cannot name it. Men call it Faith, sometimes, or Serenity, or Peace, but names only cut off a piece of it and leave the rest—there is always more than any name can cover or tell. It lifts man above names, or definitions; it lifts man above himself; it expands him till he loses himself, so that he looks down at himself, and apart at himself, as not himself, and yet seems strangely, for the first time, to get a glimpse of a Real Self within self. It is Mystery with a strange clearness; it is ignorance and knowledge at once and together. It is Largeness, it is Oneness, it is Consciousness, it is Mystery, it is Beauty, it is Being—yet those, too, are names. One who has it *knows*, but he cannot tell you what he knows or how he knows. But if you continue to watch him you will feel that he knows and it may help you to apprehend.

ERRATUM: We are asked to correct the statement in LIGHT of December 14th (p. 597) in which Mr. G. H. Lethem is described as the editor of the *Yorkshire Post*. He is a member of the editorial staff.



## THE QUESTION OF SPIRIT LOCATION.

In experience of spirit communication by means of electric pulsations, or raps, there is frequently a feeling that the communicator is quite near. Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis relates an example of this and explains it. A lady who in this manner had heard from her brother in the world invisible was persuaded by her sensations that he was then actually in the room where she heard from him—as many others in like circumstances have concluded, in spite of spiritually unfavourable conditions. Dr. Davis says:—

It was doubtless pleasant for her to think him so near, all unattractive as was the locality of their meeting—there, in a heated, close, and crowded room, in the midst of all the bustle and confusion of a large hotel, situated in a discordant and noisy city, and impregnated with the unwholesome atmosphere of many human breaths—it was not a place where we should wish to invite a spirit from heavenly spheres. But I find that almost every person whose mind has been deeply impressed with the truth of spiritual intercourse is more or less imbued with the conviction that spirits are always in our immediate presence when communicating; and by our misunderstanding of them, the spirits are sometimes supposed to affirm it themselves, as in those instances where it is so often asked of them, "Do you visit me sometimes?" or, "Will you visit me in my room to-night?" or, "Are you near me?" and the sounds will, by the letters of the alphabet, spell out in reply, "We are always with you!" or, "Yes, I will come to your room!" or, "I stand by your side!"

Now it is well for the reader to understand that, notwithstanding the apparent annihilation of time and space to the immortal soul, there is still time to be consumed, and space to be traversed in the spirit-land. Time passes into eternity, and space into infinity, just as the dew-drop is apparently lost in the ocean; but as the drop of water is not destroyed in the sea, so is there no annihilation of either time or space. Hence the Spirit-World has a fixed locality; has magnitudes and proportions; has qualities and properties; has system and arrangement; has axis, diameters and revolutions; has a sun and a firmament; has evenings and mornings, or periods of repose and action among its inhabitants; has its position fixed in the mighty multitude of solar systems or universes which roll in the depths of immensity! . . . Here I desire distinctly to impress each mind with the truth of this direction, that *Heaven is a Condition*, but the *Spirit-land is a Locality*. You may be harmoniously situated, you may be happy (or in heaven), in the lowliest cottage, or in the fields of Nature; but you cannot be in the spirit-land (or in spheres beyond this) unless you undergo a partial or complete change in the relations which now subsist between your soul and body. Therefore, when a spirit-brother, or any spirit, desires to visit some dear one on earth over whom it lovingly watches, it is permitted the gratification of doing so, on condition that harmony be established between it and the principle of spiritual gravitation. But there is time consumed and space traversed in the process of accomplishing such a visit. . . . At the conversation already referred to, of the lady with her brother, it is well to remark that he did not come, as she supposed, locally and physically, within the atmospheric envelope of our planet; but he sought a position, upon the plane of his present existence, which would harmonise with the current of terrestrial magnetism and electricity, and also with the vital

electrical atmosphere which emanated from the "Mediums" and the circle in which the lady, his sister, was located; and, from his elevated position, he conversed with her almost, as it were, "face to face", and it seemed to her mind that his spirit was really in the room. In a spiritual sense he was, indeed, even by her side! and the distance between them was, as it were, annihilated. Let me not be misunderstood in this: I do not mean to say that there are not many, very many beautiful *exceptions* to this statement: but the rule, the principle, is, that spirits *do not come within* our terrestrial atmosphere when they communicate their thoughts to man. Moreover, I have observed that the current of thought which a spirit sends to earth, generally comes from an oblique direction, and scarcely ever at right-angles, with the location of the friend, or the circle of friends, with whom it is communicating. This truth is susceptible of a very rational and philosophical explanation. But I leave, for the present, all scientific considerations of this branch of the subject, as they could benefit only those who are already far advanced in spiritual philosophy and experience; and of this class the number is, as yet, too limited to demand a minute solution of this beautiful problem.

## A DRAMATIC RETURN.

BY IVAN COOKE.

The seance room is the place to see the raw stuff of human nature; to realise how much tenderness hides behind the hardest exterior; to know the great loneliness death leaves in its trail. I have seen many weep in that silent room—but always tears of joy. I have seen not only the revelation of the spirit incarnate in its continued life and love, but also the revealing of the spirit *incarnate* in my brother man. This is a beautiful and holy thing. I have seen lives changed, renewed, re-inspired by some whispered tidings, some infinitely tender message from a loved one on the other side of life, so homely perhaps that to me it seemed to mean little: to the recipient everything.

Let me tell of one such incident, which, although short in time (for it did not occupy five minutes) was, I think, the most dramatic I have yet experienced (save for a "ghost-laying" episode too long for these columns).

At one of our seances an expected sitter arrived late, and obviously in some deep trouble. He stated briefly that he had just attended the funeral of his brother, who had passed away suddenly while in the prime of life. No further details were given before the seance.

The sitting began. "White Eagle", the guide of our Medium ("Brighteyes") addressed us. Then suddenly, in the middle of a sentence, he broke off and asked for the love and sympathy of the circle for an experiment which those on the other side were attempting. Then sounds broke from the Medium's lips, whispered utterances, which strove to force themselves into words. Her hands reached out towards our bereaved sitter.

"Take them," I whispered to him. He rose and stood before the Medium, holding both her hands.

I realised at once that this spirit, trying so desperately to force his way through, was one we had never heard here before. Every action of the Medium revealed the forcefulness and indomitable purpose of the new personality. Then the confused sounds formed one word—"Fred!" (our sitter's name), and again "Fred!—Fred!—It's Harry!"

Without a doubt this was a man's personality here; tone and gesture proclaimed it; not a *timbre* of a woman's voice remained in those hurrying words

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now pouring forth. Here spoke a man's voice with purposeful tones.

We saw his brother's head bow in uncontrollable emotion. He ejaculated: "My God! It's Harry's very voice! His very voice! Oh, you've knocked me right over, Harry!" and then broke down. (The sitter told me afterwards that what staggered him was not only the voice but the fact that Harry, even before he had spoken, had gripped the sitter's right hand in a peculiarly characteristic way.) So poignant was this re-union that few of us remained unshaken. And through the Medium's lips that voice came crying, with a ring of triumph and wonder in every word: "I'm alive! I'm alive! It's still the old Harry, Fred! Do you understand? *I'm still alive!* Thank God. . . . Still alive!" Then followed messages to the "dead" man's wife, mentioning her by name, and to his brothers, their names also being given. And he said that he had been met by his father (the name also came), who had taken him to the home which was prepared. And again came the expression of supreme joy and wonder at the new life of love and bright happiness which he had found.

The passion, delight, and awe of those words were felt by every heart present.

### PIONEERS IN SPIRIT.

BY V. MAY COTTRELL (Napier, New Zealand).

(From the Zonia Scripts.)

The more fully individualised people in all ages and all climes have ever striven for freedom of thought and action. Countless numbers suffer martyrdom, in varying degrees, even unto this day, rather than yield to the crude dictates of their less enlightened fellows. They prefer ignominy, abuse and even death itself at the hands of others, rather than allow themselves to be compressed into the narrow mould wherein the great bulk of the people are content to dwell.

New thoughts, new ideas and inspiring beliefs come to those whose minds are open to receive them. Once having taken possession of the human consciousness this spiritual enrichment means more to the fortunate individuals who possess it than even life itself. Hence their utter refusal to bear the galling yoke of mental slavery, which the great bulk of their fellows carry so lightly.

These sturdy pioneers, in the realm of thought, feeling and emotion, are the advance-guard of civilisation. To them belong the honour of breaking fresh trails and marking out new paths in the dense, dark jungle of a materialistic conception of life. Thus does the consciousness of mankind gradually evolve through the influence of those valiant souls, who, venturing out alone upon voyages of discovery into the realm of spirit, return with new knowledge in their minds and fresh hope in their hearts. These folk are the leaven, the recreating, renewing power which gradually permeates the whole lump of human consciousness, raising it to higher and higher levels of understanding and enlightenment.

Not by a prolonged study of old and tried methods of living and working is new and valuable knowledge acquired, but by a constant pressing on towards new view-points. Fresh vistas open up before those whose minds are freed from preconceived ideas and false assumptions. There is an inner guide in each individual soul who cannot err and in whom all knowledge is centred. It is the first duty of every individual to seek diligently for this hidden source of wisdom and power within his own nature.

Not far off in dim, remote regions does God dwell. The innermost being of each one of us is His constant refuge and chosen abiding-place. It is just because the great bulk of humanity persists in visualising God as a Being quite apart from them-

selves that they fail to find Him to any great extent. He is the marvellous in-dwelling spirit of Good, whom wonderful and highly-evolved personalities have ever recognised, in part at least—and claimed kinship with, to the utter mystification of their fellows. A joyous union with the good that dwells within each one of us is all that is necessary to salvation. For salvation simply means a happy release from the fears, sorrows and dangers attendant upon the blind gropings and grovelling of an ignorance of spiritual verities.

The light of truth filters slowly but surely into the minds of the people, however, seal them as carefully and painstakingly as they may. This is because the knowledge that lies hidden within their own inner natures, is so constantly seeking recognition by their conscious minds. Delve deep into the larger consciousness of human beings and you must ever find spiritual riches in plenty, despite the crudities and ignorance of their everyday thought-lives.

It is through constant contact with this larger self, and a growing realisation of all that it implies, that great personalities are evolved. It is conscious union with the self which sees and recognises truth, the being who acts in perfect accordance with Law under all circumstances, that brings to the individual power and dominion over evil.

Outside influences affect character to a certain extent, but it is the response to the inner urge, or the denial of it, that really makes or mars each one of us as we journey through life. The widely-varying degrees of spiritual unfoldment, so apparent amongst human beings, are due, not to the number or quality of past lives, but to the strength or weakness of the materialistic armour in which their mentalities are encased. This would seem to indicate an almost entire absence of free-will in the matter. It is not so, however, for every rational human being, whatever his antecedents, station or upbringing, is provided with the means of contact with his inner self and must of necessity use it repeatedly.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

#### "A NEGLECTED SIDE OF SPIRITUALISM."

Sir,—Would that every paper connected with our subject would reprint Mr. Tudor A. Morgan's letter (in LIGHT of December 7th). It goes absolutely to the root of the matter.

Some time ago I heard Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in the Grotrian Hall say that survival is now proved up to the hilt to all who will seriously investigate, and that in his opinion it was waste of time to continue teaching survival alone. (I write from memory.)

Surely the thing that is going to hamper this movement more than any other is this loitering on "the doorstep" of phenomena alone (fascinating and necessary as this branch of the subject undoubtedly is). Thinking men and women want to explore the vast implications of the truth we are receiving.

The race, after all, is composed of the individual; and if the knowledge that we are living in a spiritual world now does not make us better men and women, better-tempered, jollier — yes jollier — straighter, Heaven help us!

Until we do link up our knowledge "with every branch of human activity and learning . . . and thence unto the all-important routine of daily life", whether we are duchesses or dustmen, we will never move in the "spiral"—unless perhaps downwards!—Yours, etc.,

ANNA E. MENZIES.

22, St. Luke's Road, W.II.



## LIGHT.

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## AT THE YEAR'S END.

On each first day of January the year is supposed to come in as a smiling and cherubic child, just as on each thirty-first day of December he is pictured as departing in the likeness of a weary old man, struggling under a burden of troubles. That is the sentimental side of things. The disciples of cold scientific practicalism frown on the idea. The divisions we make between an old year and a new one, they say, are purely arbitrary. There is nothing in the matter but the dates on the calendar. Yet it may be doubted whether these iconoclasts would accept the poetic conclusion, as expressed in Bailey's *Festus*:

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts not  
breaths;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.

However this may be, we are again at the year's end, and its story is about to fall into the "dark backward and abysm of Time". It can never come again; but all the same we have not done with it. It has woven something into the fabric of our lives, for the essential element in it belongs not to Time but to Eternity. All its evils and follies and failures will fade and perish in the long run; only its gains for humanity will be conserved, and that at least is a matter for hope and consolation, to all but the veriest pessimist who, although he is given to scoff at Faith, suffers more than he imagines from the want of it.

We have been delivered, as someone wrote lately, from a world of war to a world of tumult; and these things also are not mere matters of the almanack. They belong to another order of things outside the region of Time and Space, although they have to come into it to make themselves physically manifest. Their effect upon us depends very much on the extent to which we identify ourselves with the outward and visible things, or are in touch with the inward side which preserves itself remote from and inaccessible to the clamour, the hurly-burly and all the distressing and uncomfortable things which make up so much of what we know as everyday life.

Yet even those without these sunny convictions that come of a recognition of the spiritual realities and the shining presences which stand behind the strange pageantry of the world—even these can show something of the unquenchable soul of man. They will face the worst evils in the sporting spirit, and are always ready to greet the unknown with a cheer,

and to meet calamity with a cheerful grin of defiance. They may not believe in ghosts, but neither are they afraid of them. The Spirit of Life works in these folk, although they are unconscious of it. And the Spirit of Life is all that counts. That Spirit is never "gravelled for lack of matter". It can get along very well without it, as we know.

We have been many times exhorted to dismiss the Old Year as though he had been a troublesome guest who had outstayed his welcome—to kick him out, bundle him out, in short to hoot him off the stage. On the other hand, we welcome in the New Year as the bringer of all sorts of good things and a general deliverance from all the iniquities of his predecessor. But it is probably better to treat them both with quiet courtesy, even from the sentimental point of view.

So we will say Good-bye to the Old Year with the reflection that he might very easily have been worse; that he did the best we permitted him to do in the short space of twelve months. For the rest, we can continue tranquil and unafraid, and even—some of us—be rather thankful that another milestone has been passed, that we are "a day's march nearer home" in every sense of the word. For there is a Home, even though it lies beyond the years and the spaces which seem so much more real than they actually are.

## DIFFICULTIES OF COMMUNICATION.

Inquirers into Spiritualism should bear in mind that a Medium is the meeting-place of two planes of being—the spiritual and the material—and that the disappointments and perplexities of spirit-communication are mainly due to the difficulty of establishing a harmonious relationship between the two. With the most favourable conditions there must be a transformation of energy—a damping-down of vibrations—before the brain of the sensitive can be influenced or material objects acted upon. This reduction leads necessarily to a restriction of the field of activity and a corresponding modification of loss of spiritual qualities. This absorption of the higher by the lower is common in physics. Steam suddenly chilled is condensed into water and in the change loses many of its properties; and water congealed into ice no longer retains the characteristics of a liquid. The transition is always at the expense of the finer and freer conditions. Similarly, spiritual impulses in their passage into matter are deprived of some of their initial force and scope; they are often hampered and enfeebled, and the resulting manifestation is either imperfect and unsatisfactory or not distinguishable from everyday happenings. We who are incarnate find it difficult sometimes to express ourselves clearly through a brain with which we are familiar—our own. Need we be surprised, then, if intelligences external to ourselves should experience difficulty in communicating with us when they have to make use of alien organisms in another and grosser state of existence?

## THE QUICK AND THE DEAD.

At noon of night, and at the night's pale end,  
Such things have chanced to me  
As one by day would scarcely tell a friend  
For fear of mockery.  
Shadows you say, mirages of the brain!  
I know not, faith, not I.  
Is it more strange the dead should walk again  
Than that the quick should die?

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.



SIDELIGHTS.

A seasonable ghost-story appears in the *Philadelphia Record*, as recounted by Captain William MacDonald, of the American Legion. An American officer was billeted in a French castle during the War, but finding himself disturbed at night by unaccountable noises, as of someone moving about his bedroom, he gave up his billet and obtained lodging elsewhere. He gave, as an excuse for changing his quarters, the reason that the castle was too cold for comfort, but another soldier, who had also slept in the castle, replied: "Oh, no, it wasn't that at all—you thought someone was walking about your room. No one can stand it."

Some time after, the officer received from his mother in America a letter in which she said: "I had a strange dream last night. I dreamed you were living in a fine castle that was owned by a Prince Sinnott." On receipt of this he made enquiries and discovered that the castle had been the residence of a nobleman named Sinno some two centuries ago. The officer's mother, it is stated, could have had no knowledge as to what part of Europe her son was in when she wrote the letter.

A budget of "Real Life Ghost Experiences", recounted by eye-witnesses, appears in the *Sunday Chronicle*, of December 8th. Some of these are of remarkable interest. Here is one contributed by S. Coapes, 16, Bloomfield Road, Darlington. The writer was working in an empty house in which there was no electric light and consequently the work had to be carried on by the feeble glimmer of a candle. Then "time and again I heard the cry of a baby. I went from room to room but still that cry followed me. I looked up towards the stairs that led to the attic and I received the shock of my life. I saw a white face. I followed it and it vanished into a cupboard. I could still hear the baby crying." The writer adds that on forcing the door of the cupboard, in the empty house, he discovered, amongst some old clothes, the decomposed body of a baby girl.

Mrs. E. Adlington, 41, Strathcona Road, Wallasey, gives her personal psychic experience in the *Sunday Chronicle*, of December 8th, in these words: "During the night I was awakened suddenly and saw the figure of a sweet lady, whom I had never seen before in my life, standing at the foot of my bed. Strange to say I was not in the least frightened. Next day I was told that my father had died."

M. Harris, of 42, Albert Road, Cross Hill, Glasgow, describes a somewhat eerie manifestation. The writer was the last guest to leave a house at which a party had taken place. Suddenly the hostess screamed, "Here's someone in the lobby!" Says the writer, "I glanced up and to my horror saw an unearthly looking face with a fiendish grin; a long menacing arm was also visible. That was all." Lights were obtained and nothing found to account for this apparition. Then suddenly the hostess cried out, "My arm! My arm!" Five finger-marks had bitten cruelly into her flesh. On enquiry it was found later that a murder had taken place in the lobby wherein the unpleasant manifestation had occurred.

Here is an experience of another *Sunday Chronicle* contributor, John Sewell, of Cleator Moor, Cumberland, who states that one dark night he and a game-keeper friend were strolling together in the woods. They reached a reservoir and both saw an apparition standing on the landing-stage. The game-keeper took careful aim and fired both barrels of his gun into the phantom, which then disappeared. Next day, close to the spot, there was discovered the body of a young girl who had committed suicide after a disappointing love affair.

One of the most interesting of the *Sunday Chronicle* "Real Life Ghost Experiences" is contributed by Mr. James Quinn, of 43, Portland Street, Norwich, who was one of a party of stretcher-bearers on duty in a section of the line near Paschendale Ridge, in November 1917. A wounded soldier was brought in to a "pill-box" which was being used as a temporary shelter for casualties. He was a young boy of nineteen or so whose left foot was hanging by the skin only. Says Mr. Quinn: "While I was assisting the M.O. [Medical Officer] to remove the foot the youth prattled like an excited school-boy to the Sergeant. He did not know the state of his wound nor that the surgeon had removed the foot." During that night Mr. Quinn rose from his sleep, groped his way past slumbering soldiers towards where the wounded boy was lying; his object was to find out how the patient was progressing, and if he might be in need of attention. "I was suddenly brought to a halt," he says. "A diffused light seemed to make invisible things visible. I saw in the queer light a woman bending over the stretcher-bed of the boy who had lost his foot. . . . Her hand caressed his hair. Presently I saw her bend lower as though to take him in her arms. Then a shell-burst outside broke the spell and somehow I seemed to stumble and fall forward." On coming to himself Mr. Quinn found that the lad who had lost his foot had "passed out" during the night. There was a sequel to this. Next day a telegram arrived for the dead man, who was then lying outside the "pill-box" awaiting burial. The Medical Officer opened it. It read as follows: "Mother passed away yesterday. Try and get leave. Father."

SAYINGS OF THE WISE.

Compiled by E. W. DUXBURY.

All death in Nature is birth, and at the moment of death appears visibly the rising of life. There is no dying principle in Nature, for Nature throughout is unmingled life which, concealed behind the old, begins again and develops itself. Death, as well as birth, is simply in order to present itself ever more brightly and more like to itself.

FICHTE.

Death is a commingling of eternity with time; in the death of a good man eternity is seen looking through time.

GOETHE.

A man after death is not a natural but a spiritual man; nevertheless he still appears in all respects like himself.

SWEDENBORG.

Outside of a little luminous circle, lies a large ring of twilight, and beyond this an infinite night; but the events of this twilight and this night are as real as those within the luminous circle.

TAINÉ.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY



## THE TRUE RELATION OF MATTER AND SPIRIT.

In an address delivered some years ago, at Birmingham, Sir Oliver Lodge made the following striking remarks:—

There is a truth in materialism, but it is not a truth to be readily appreciated and formulated. Matter may become imbued with life, and full of vital associations. Something of the personality of a departed owner seems to cling sometimes about an old garment; its curves and folds can suggest him vividly to our recollection. I would not hold that even a doll, on which much affection had been lavished, was wholly inert and material in the organic sense. The tattered colours of a regiment are sometimes thought worthy to be hung in a church. They are a symbol truly, but they may be something more. I have reason to believe that a trace of individuality can cling about terrestrial objects in a vague and almost imperceptible fashion, but to a degree to enable those traces to be detected by persons with suitable faculties.

There is a deep truth in materialism and it is the foundation of the material parts of worship, sacraments and the like. It is possible to exaggerate their efficacy, but it is also possible to ignore it too completely. The whole universe is metrical; everything is a question of degree. A property like radio-activity or magnetism discovered conspicuously in one form of matter, turns out to be possessed by matter of every kind, though to a very varying extent.

So it would appear to be with the power possessed by matter to incarnate and display mind. There are grades of incarnation. The most thorough kind is that illustrated by our bodies, in them we are incarnate; but probably not even in that case is the incarnation complete. It is quite possible that our whole entire personality is never terrestrially manifest.

Perhaps Science, when she has enlarged her borders instead of defying matter will re-consecrate it, and will justify the beliefs of those who, guided by an instinctive intuition, have used material things as sacraments and tokens of spiritual realities. If it is discovered that material objects can become impregnated with subtle emanations which connect them in a semi-physical way with the persons who have handled them, we shall have in this fact a remarkable justification for customs that have been scoffed at as foolish superstitions. And we shall also have fresh motives for putting into the labour of our hands the highest aspirations and purest thoughts and affections which we can command. The mother who makes or mends the garments for her children may, in a sense hitherto unrecognised, be doing spiritual work. For she may weave into the texture she handles thoughts and emotions which, if the individual she clothes be sensitive and receptive, might re-act upon it, and enable her to influence it for good or evil. We venture to think of these possibilities as something more than mere fancy. Sir Oliver Lodge's words sanction these speculations. By reminding us that there may be "grades of incarnation", he puts before us a suggestion pregnant with stimulating possibilities and also with serious warnings. The Christmas Festival commemorates an incarnation—the incarnation of One who took upon Him matter, in form like our own, and permeated it with His thoughts, His emotions, and His will in such wise that contact with His incarnate life became life-giving, healing, and inspiring. Diseased bodies were healed by touching the hem of His garment; dark minds were enlightened, cold hearts were melted, sin-sick souls were thus cleansed; the men and women who came into touch with Him were lifted to a purer, higher life, and those who

saw them felt a super-terrestrial influence, and wondering "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus".

This was an incarnation of Spirit in a superlative degree. It was an ideal incarnation; but was it intended to be regarded as an isolated instance? Was it not rather a type of that which should be universal, a manifestation of the eternal relation of the Super-sensible to the sensible, of Spirit to matter, of man as the priest of creation, consecrating the phenomenal to the use of the noumenal, the external to the internal, the created to the Creator?

"It has been always easy," wrote Sir Oliver Lodge on another occasion, "to deride or condemn the bodily side of our nature, but by the highest seers this has not been done. The glorification and transfiguration, not the reprobation, of the body has been the theme of the highest prophets and poets."

If the inorganic matter which a person handles may be so permeated by subtle emanations as to become the vehicle for emotional or mental forces (and the facts of psychometry suggest this possibility), this must be true in greater measure in relation to the substance of human bodies. The human organism must, in that case, be saturated with influences, the quality of which will depend on the character of the thoughts, desires, and aims of the individual to whom these organisms belong.

Along these lines the mystery of heredity may, perhaps, some day find a partial solution. Young has said: "Guard well thy thoughts! Our thoughts are heard in Heaven," but there is, perhaps, an even more serious consideration involved in the remembrance that inevitably and constantly our thoughts, and *more effectually our emotions*, are registering influences on the substances we handle, on the garments we wear, and yet more potently on the bodies in which we are incarnate, and that the effects of those influences will be operative long after we have passed out of the material conditions we have helped to mould.

To quote once more from Sir Oliver Lodge:—

He who is able to strike a high note in this most difficult problem (in the relation of spirit to matter)—a problem in which each individual has to work out his own destiny almost unaided—will find that, by self-control, by avoidance of injury to others, and by filling his mind with worthy thoughts, he can attain higher regions of emotion and imagination than are open to the mass of mankind . . . and those who are able to grasp the idea while still young, and to act on it throughout their lives, not only raise their own souls in the scale of existence, but constitute the hope of a progressive human race.

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SPIRITUAL HEALING.—The Church has in principle accepted spiritual healing. Will it, in practice, dare to investigate all expressions of divine power by way of healing irrespective of whether or not they take place under the auspices of its own organisation? For the time seems here when the spiritual forces are to break all the bounds of our denominational differences, and the call is to men of spiritual vision the world over to welcome their advent and wholeheartedly to study their nature.

—VICTOR E. CROMER.

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If we do not understand our fellow-creatures, we shall never love them. And it is equally true that if we do not love them, we shall never understand them. Want of love, want of sympathy, want of good feeling and fellow-feeling—what does it, what can it, breed but endless mistakes and ignorance, both of man's character and man's circumstances?—

CHARLES KINGSLEY.



## A DIRECT VOICE SEANCE IN NEW YORK.

BY WALDO MAAS.

A short while ago I attended a seance in New York that is interesting on account of the different phenomena which occurred. The sitting was given in the newly created Bureau of the Spiritual and Ethical Society of New York. Seventeen people were present, including the Medium, Mr. Frank Decker, who told me he had been a Medium since his twelfth year. In the centre of the room stood several vases of flowers, three trumpets, a musical box, a mouth-organ, a child's toy trumpet, and a bowl of water, etc.

The lights were extinguished and a gramophone record started; at its conclusion a catchy little song called "Jingle Bells" was sung. Shortly afterwards I heard a voice whispering through a trumpet; several different voices then manifested, all of which were warmly welcomed. Then Cornelius Jansen, the presiding spirit of the circle, came. I was told that he had lived on earth two or three hundred years ago.

He said that as the Medium was not quite well and the room was rather stuffy—it was badly ventilated—conditions were not sufficiently good to enable him to speak clearly for any length of time.

A few moments later we heard a childish voice say: "I'm Patsy"—one of Mr. Decker's controls. He spoke in the direct voice, not through a trumpet, and was quickly followed by a charming little voice saying: "I'm Sunshine, Maina Tafe's Sunshine." (Miss Maina Tafe, a well-known Trumpet Medium, was among the sitters.)

Patsy—who, by the way, is a boy and very much resents being taken for a girl—was in evidence more or less all the evening, and Sunshine came through several times. Once, at least, and I believe twice, I heard them both talking at the same time. Their voices are quite dissimilar, one being that of a boy of about twelve to fourteen years old, who was said to have been a newsboy in Chicago before he passed on; the other was that of a sweet little girl between the age of eight and ten.

During the evening a drum was beaten high up in the room above our heads; a whistle was blown; bangs and noises of various characters were made; a musical box was wound up and played; the child's trumpet was blown, and a record was changed on the gramophone but it was not played. Mrs. Wells also reported that a record had been placed in her lap, and it was still there when the lights were turned up.

I continually heard sitters saying, "Thank you, dear", "You're welcome", etc., as they were touched. The lady sitting next to my sister-in-law called to Patsy and said: "There is a new lady and gentleman here that you have not greeted yet." Immediately I felt the touch of three soft fingers on my left hand which I acknowledged. My sister-in-law also reported that her hand had been stroked.

Several times I heard two voices speaking at once, and once I heard voices speaking through *all three trumpets together*. My sister-in-law also says she heard this. On one occasion I heard the Medium speaking at the same time that two other voices were coming through trumpets. This was most impressive.

Several other sitters spoke with their loved ones, and then Patsy came back and asked a young woman: "Would you like to stand on the table, Miss C.?" She replied: "Yes, I don't mind Patsy, anything you like me to do." A voice in front of me then said: "Mister, take the Victrola off and put it on the other table." This was right outside the circle, so I asked if I should put it on the floor, and I was rising for that purpose when I heard the booming voice of White Eagle say: "I will do it," and the next minute it was lifted off and placed almost at my feet, so that I could touch it with my hand.

Miss C. was then told to fold her arms and the next minute we heard her voice saying that she was standing on the table. She reported that she was lifted.

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

Pessimist as he was, the late Thomas Hardy had an interior sense which led him to true conclusions. Here is a sentence from one of his novels: "Persons of any weight of character carry, like the planet, their atmosphere along with them." That allusion to the aura, which is so powerful in the strong soul, is more than a mere figure of speech.

"Life," said Canon Knox-Little, many years ago, "is as deep as well as an awful mystery". Doubtless, but as we are all part of it, we need find nothing to frighten us in the fact. It will be its own interpreter. But the good Canon went on to say that death was even more awful and mysterious. Times have changed indeed since those days. To-day we find nothing more solemn and mysterious in death than in life.

Some years ago a Rationalist paper complimented Dennis Bradley on the courage and commonsense he showed when, during the war, he stood for peace and defied the authorities; but it warned him against the dangers of his championship of the idea of spirits. Would it rather have had him play a spiritless part (in a double sense)? On the whole I think it calls for less courage to recognise a Spirit-world, even amid a host of Sadducees, than to proclaim war as murder in the midst of a world in arms.

It is a good many years ago now since the spirit of the late Mr. Gladstone was brought under public attention by a Medium and some very ill-advised Spiritualists. A newspaper of the time thus parodied the message: "My name is Gladstone. I am the G. O. M., and the only genuine. I wish to expressly state that I consider the Budget simply rotten, which it is a thing would have made my hair stand on end if brought forward in my time. . . . This 'contacting' is painful and I feel my grammar beginning to go." Now this was a mere malicious parody. The real message was a good deal more dignified than that, but the Medium's defective education resulted in the appearance of a number of grammatical errors in the supposed Gladstonian message; that, of course, gave the enemy his chance. It was all very painful. Spiritualism has never suffered so severely from its enemies as from its foolish friends.

St. Andrew's Day has come, and gone, and Scotland has had its festival. But it is a little curious to reflect on the dedication of countries to the care of saints, and the frequent want of appropriateness. St. Andrew was the Apostle, of course, and a Jew. His connection with Scotland is rather mythical. St. George was a Roman, and St. Patrick was either a Scot, a Breton or a Cornishman—the authorities are at variance on the point. He certainly visited Ireland and worked there as a missionary in the fifth century. The Welsh are more national in this respect, for their patron Saint, David, was actually a Welshman; the son of a Welsh Prince, it is said. No doubt, as the nations concerned have looked up for ages each to its saint for guidance and protection, the appeal has not been without avail in the heavens. But these matters of saintly patronage are more easily studied in personal instances, of which there are many, especially amongst the devoutly religious of the Christian Churches. St. Francis d'Assisi is sometimes mentioned as giving clear token of his active interest in his spiritual children on earth. Thus, that remarkable woman, the late Walburga Lady Paget, firmly believed in the influence of this Saint on her life.

D. G.



## LIFE AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

BY F. C. CONSTABLE, M.A.

The continuance of the life of man after death will not give us what we term "survival". What we must have for survival is self-consciousness, which we all feel as I AM. Our life-form is no more than a manifestation in our objective universe of ourselves as self-conscious subjects. Personally, I think that Science may discover that life is no more than a form of matter. But this leaves self-consciousness still existing. Huxley himself held that besides matter and force, self-consciousness exists *in itself*.

All living organisms from the amoeba to man exist under the same principle of life. If we consider a jelly-fish, cat, dog or man, we find all inspired by the same one principle of life, whatever life may be. The bodily form of man differs from the bodily forms of other living organisms only in *degree*, not in *kind*.

Now, when we talk of "survival", no one, I think, speaks of it as survival of man in the same bodily form. Sir Oliver Lodge, for instance, recognizes the dissipation of our material form on death and believes that we survive in an etheric body. But he holds we do not survive *only* as etheric bodies. He holds, I think, that we, as real proper *selves*, survive and are manifest hereafter in etheric bodies.

How then does man differ from an amoeba? He differs thus: Man has self-consciousness which, on earth, is manifest in living bodily form. When this living bodily form is dissipated this self-consciousness still persists; we cannot, generally, imagine ourselves existing as self-conscious subjects without some form which manifests our existence as self-conscious subjects. So, if we follow Sir Oliver we hold that we survive in *etheric* form. But this form is no more than a means for our manifestation as self-conscious subjects. Raymond, for instance, is always the same self-conscious subject which manifested when on earth in material form and now manifests in etheric form. If you question Sir Oliver I think he will reply that he simply holds that Raymond survives in etheric form, as a self-conscious subject. When, then, we talk about survival, what are we talking about? The survival of any bodily or etheric form? We are not. We are really talking about our survival as self-conscious subjects manifest in form. For we, normally, think that form is necessary for the manifestation of ourselves as self-conscious subjects.

Before man existed in the form of a living organism, innumerable other living organisms existed, and since man was manifest as a living organism these forms still exist, all of the same kind (including man) but differing in degree. Not one of these living organisms is permanent; all come into existence in time and go out of existence in time. At first thought we may hold that it is only man's intolerable conceit that leads him to pick out from all those differing forms of life his own form as alone involving the possibility of survival. Of course, this on the face of it is absurd, for we know that our own form is dissipated on death. But we know something—something that Huxley agreed with. We know that we are self-conscious subjects; we realize the fact in feeling I AM. And this self-consciousness exists in itself quite as surely as matter and force. It is not to our life-form that we give survival, it is to ourselves as self-conscious selves that we give survival.

Man is manifest as a living organism, but he differs from other living organisms in that he is self-conscious of his own existence. All that man can do as a creator must be referred back *not* to his form as a living organism but to his consciousness that, as a living organism, there is no more than a partial manifestation of *himself* as a self-conscious subject which he feels as I AM.

When we talk about survival we are not talking about life, we are talking about the survival of the

self with self-consciousness. Sir Oliver, as before said, offers us strong evidence that when no longer manifest in material form we are manifest in etheric form. But I think he does not give permanence to this etheric form. What he gives permanence to is the self with self-consciousness.

## NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"Sound and Number." By Mabel L. Ahmid. (Rider. 7/6d. net.)

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E. K. G.

"The Mysteries of Egypt." By Lewis Spence. (Rider. 15s. net.)

The sub-title, "The Secret Rites and Traditions of the Nile", indicates the scope of this interesting volume. The subject is a fascinating and complex one. It is clear enough that the inhabitants of ancient Egypt had some shrewd notions of the realities of the unseen world, and it is natural that in their stream of knowledge there should have floated the inevitable cloudy currents of superstition. The knowledgeable student finds pleasure in contemplating the glittering incrustations that collected around what, no doubt, was a central core of simple reality; and so we get the sacred bulls, the winged Isis, and much romantic symbolism—highly-coloured, poetic, and picturesque. Mr. Spence has, in this volume, endeavoured (after nearly forty years of study, he tells us) to get below these bright-hued externals, and to present a synthetic portrayal of the Egyptian "religious idea" on new and complete lines. He has given us an interesting and thoughtful book, containing much that is significant and suggestive. There are sixteen illustrations.

W. H. C.

"Some Unpublished Letters of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky." By Eugene Rollin Corson, B.S., M.D. (Rider. 10s. 6d. net.)

These interesting letters have clearly been selected with a definite purpose. Dr. Corson, who contributes an introduction and commentary, has apparently chosen them as illustrating certain facts and features in the life of Madame Blavatsky, vindicating her against her calumniators and throwing sidelights upon the character and mentality of that remarkable lady.

Here is a quotation from one of the letters; it speaks for itself:

Whenever I am *told* to write, I sit down and obey, and then I can write easily upon almost anything—metaphysics, psychology, philosophy, ancient religions, natural sciences, or what not. I never put myself the question: "Can I write on this subject?" . . . Why? *Because somebody who knows all dictates to me.* Please do not imagine that I have lost my senses. Whenever I write upon a subject I know little of, I address myself to *Them*, and one of them inspires me, i.e., he allows me to simply copy what I write from manuscripts and even printed matter that pass before my eyes, in the air, during which process I have never been *unconscious* one single instant.

Here is another quotation from a letter written by H. P. B. to Dr. Corson's father from Philadelphia:

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