

# Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

Edited by DAVID GOW.

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# Light

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## NOTES BY THE WAY

"WHAT is Mind?" "No matter." "What is Matter?" "Never mind." That old jest of half a century ago recurs with fresh significance to-day, now that the problem of Mind and Matter has had some new light thrown upon it. Not many thinking people to-day deny the reality of mind, or seek to explain it as the mere functioning of the brain. There is more than a suspicion that wherever the mind may exist, its abode is not in the brain. It certainly uses the brain, but probably only as an instrument of communication with the physical world. Nothing has so strongly supported this view as the facts of Spiritualism, although doubtless the greatest thinkers would have reached the conclusion unaided by psychic evidences. We have known of cases in which the mental resources seemed illimitable. There was a Medium (now passed on) who, even in an apparently normal state, showed an amazing knowledge of many subjects, and could discourse with scientists, medical men, and the learned in general, on their special subjects, as though he were himself a past-master in each. And yet he was what is called an uneducated man. From whence did he get all this learning? Evidently not from his brain. It was not a mere matter of memory, for those prodigies who can memorise an immense number of facts cannot discourse about them with experts and show a complete understanding of the various subjects involved. Lately, we heard the phrase "floating mind" applied to such instances. It is a suggestive description.

\* \* \*

WE once heard from the lips of the lady who had been the subject of the experience, the story of her mysterious journey in a ferry-boat in the Scottish Highlands. She was taken across a loch by a ferryman who

(as she learned a day or so afterwards) had been dead for many years. It was the old ferryman's grandson who pointed out that she could not have crossed the loch on that particular day as the only boat available was locked up in the boat-house. But when she described the man who had ferried her over, the lad merely remarked: "Oh, that was grandfather"—and treated it as something quite intelligible, although his grandfather had long before passed into the world beyond. The story was well authenticated, so we printed it, reflecting that there were other instances known to us of a similar kind. We were reminded of this case when we read Mrs. Dorothy Reeve's account of her ride on what the newspaper, which printed the story, called a "ghostly racing motor cycle." As many readers will remember, Mrs. Reeve's husband was killed while motor-cycling at the Super Speedway, Leicester. Three days afterwards, she says, she visited the scene of the tragedy and found her husband waiting for her with his own racing model. She mounted behind him, as though he were still living, and rode round the course in the presence of her husband's chum and two mechanics. We have already given the story. We admit the difficulty of understanding such happenings—supposing them to be cold facts—even though Science now tells us that matter is not the simple thing we once supposed it to be; that it is an appearance rather than a reality. But that a "phantom" ferry-boat or a "phantom" motor cycle can be materialised to the extent of carrying a person in the flesh presents a mystery, even if it be proved to be true. But it is a problem which psychic science may be trusted in due time to clear up.

\* \* \*

"HAVE spirits a language of their own?" is an inquiry put by a correspondent. It is not an easy question, for obviously the spiritual world is so unthinkably vast that the methods adopted, whether in the matter of language or aught else, must be infinitely various. We have been told that spirits do not necessarily use words at all in conversing with each other. It is usually a process of thought-transference, although, as some communicators have said, they may reduce their speech to verbal forms if they so desire. Presumably, this would apply only to cases in which they spoke the same language while on earth, and have retained recollection of it. Still, there seems to be some ground for the view that spirit beings may speak in a tongue peculiar to themselves. We recall allusions in one of the books of Andrew Jackson Davis to forms of spirit speech, of which he gives some examples, mentioning ancient Greek as one of the tongues which, by reason of its spiritual quality, has been carried on to form part of the vocabulary of at least one region of the world beyond. That a language which was the vehicle of so much of grace and beauty in ancient days should be selected for this purpose is both pleasing and appropriate. Perhaps some of our readers with special sources of knowledge on this question of spirit modes of speech may care to send us some information.



## THE PROBLEM OF REALITY

BY STANLEY DE BRATH.

THERE is nowadays a great craving on the part of intelligent people for Reality. They are apt to seek it in the Higher Physics, and to talk rather unguardedly of electrons and protons as if these were tangible entities in our universe. Convinced as I am of their reality I shall not touch on them here. We average people do not get nearer to reality by going behind our senses. My thesis is for the plain man, and it is this:—

The chemical atom is the starting point of ordinary science which avowedly deals with Matter and Energy as if Mind did not exist. All Matter is composed of atoms, which combine with other atoms in the proportions of the atomic weights. This is a *fact* which nothing can invalidate.

The leading characteristic of Matter is that it has Mass, which is inert till some force acts upon it or in it. On the surface of the earth Mass is practically synonymous with Weight.

In masses on the earth there are a variety of potentialities which are known as Energy. Besides its mass, form, and colour, matter has thermal, electric, magnetic and other "properties." It can produce these or some of them, under suitable treatment, and it reacts to these influences proceeding from what we call "empty space," which is nevertheless full of invisible, impalpable Energy. Colour, for instance, is the reaction of solid matter to light, and its weight to gravitation. Energy is for the most part imperceptible to our senses, though light, heat, and electricity are perceptible, the last only at certain tension and under certain conditions; but all energy is measurable by appropriate instruments. That is, its effects are measurable.

Every material entity has three dimensions in space—length, breadth, and thickness—and (to quote Sir Oliver), it also has "what is termed a 'world-line.' This is not a point in space. It is a line in Time; and an event is typified by the crossing point of two world-lines, the event being the interaction of one entity with another." (*Proc. S.P.R.*, June, 1929, p. 511.) It has what Professor Bergson calls Duration. If a man were photographed every day for his lifetime and the prints were placed one above another, that would give his world-line in the dimension of Time.

The man has also Intellect and Emotion. He can act, can learn, can choose, can love, and can hate. He has Mind; and in view of the effect of mind on himself and his fellows, it would be more accurate to say he *is* mind.

If we now go to fundamentals and have some elementary knowledge of the geologic evolution of living species, and have followed the purely scientific teaching of Dr. A. R. Wallace which shows the Infinite Creative Power as perfect in the development of a feather or the scales on the wing of a butterfly as in the astronomical universe, we shall realise that in all bodies, animate or inanimate, we can observe the action of a directing Mind, impersonal, omnipresent, creative, and eternal, acting incessantly by evolutionary forces from good to better. I would venture to advise anyone who does not see this, to go to the South Kensington Museum and spend an hour before the cases of humming birds. He will see hundreds of species, all different in forms and colours, brilliant with tints of sapphire, ruby, emerald, and topaz, all from the same tropical climates and all feeding on the same food—nectar of flowers and small insects. Were all these evolved by adaptation and selection? Or are they the direct work of Life? And what is life? "The popular name for the activity peculiar to protoplasm" says Professor Peter Chalmers Mitchell, M.A., F.R.S., D.Sc., LL.D., Examiner in Biology to the Royal College of Physicians. And, according to normal science, this is as good a "definition" as can be obtained. But if there is discarnate life, it is without protoplasm, and our "definition" is found to be no definition at all.

Secondly, if we have the most sketchy ideas on Science—which is but orderly knowledge—we shall see that all the phenomena of Nature are brought about by the transference or transformation of Energy. It is the universal intermediary between the Directive Power and the physical result. This Energy, in its thermal, electric, magnetic, and *living* forms is the basis of all action in all bodies, animate and inanimate, on the surface of the earth and in the whole universe as we perceive it. It is mostly invisible and intangible in its ordinary manifestations (except as lightning) apart from matter. Even light is invisible in dustless air. But energy is very easily measurable and transformable in exact mathematical equivalents.

Heat, for instance, is readily transformable into magnetic and electrical energy, into motion, or into chemical change. It turns ice into water, water into steam, and steam into gas; or *vice versa* by deprivation. But it has no creative power. Applied to a seed, germination ensues, with root, stem and leaves. Applied to an egg, a bird hatches with all its organs, feathers, heredity, and power of reproducing its kind. Why? Because the seed and the egg have latent Life. Life can and does, produce an endless variety of structures, each of which has some purpose to fulfil. It is creative, and presents some analogy with the Cosmic Creative Power. It is Directed Energy.

It produces the material bodies with which we are all familiar. There are, therefore, in the human being three leading factors—the Directing (unconscious) Mind, the Intermediary Energy, and the material representation which we know as Spirit, Soul, and Body.

But, *pace* the bulk of sceptical scientists, there has recently been discovered a new substance emanating from the body of certain "mediums"—Ectoplasm or Teleplasm. It has been Photographed by Dr. Geley in Paris, and by Dr. Glen Hamilton in Winnipeg. This may be visible or invisible, but can be felt as a clammy penetrable substance. Its most remarkable feature is its facility of organisation. It can present the features of deceased persons. It can make three-dimensional moulds of members like the hand and foot, which show all the skin-marks as of living members, and it can "de-materialise" the members to free them from the mould. It has subjective *personal* features. The moulds of hands have been produced by Dr. Geley and Dr. Crandon; and Mr. Campbell Holms, in his Chapter xxvii has given a number of cases, some of them very complete, of materialisations. How do these occur?

Some of these forms can speak. They claim to be surviving personalities. Is this credible? Many experiments, notably those by Messrs. Muldoon and Carrington (*Projection of the Astral Body*, reviewed in *PSYCHIC SCIENCE*, of July, 1929), and the series noted by F. W. H. Myers in his *Human Personality* especially the case of Dr. Wiltse (Myers, ii, p. 315; *S.P.R. Proc.* Vol. viii,\* and *Psy. Sci.*, Jan., 1929) show that this "astral" or "subtle" body is more properly called the soul, for when it leaves the physical body it takes with it all the phenomena of Consciousness. Moreover, it reproduces in many cases in exact facsimile, the material form.

We suggest, therefore, that this "subtle body," which seems to be at least partially composed of ectoplasm, is visible when the ectoplasmic form is produced as the "double" of a living person; and when it is formed from a Medium, that it takes up the ectoplasm from the Medium and thus becomes visible and tangible. This is a crude, but, I think, a fairly correct working hypothesis in ordinary language. It should be experimentally verified.

\*The form of this case is of course "dream-like," but the observation of persons in the room precludes this explanation. The same Vol. viii. of the *S.P.R. Proceedings*, contains other similar cases.

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What actually takes place is highly complex. The Medium in trance does not externalise his or her soul, but a formless mass of ectoplasm that has been photographed by several scientists. This formless mass is organised by spirit-influence into the form of the person to be represented. F. W. H. Myers in one of his communications has given the leading idea:

On January 7th, 1904, Mrs. Holland's hand wrote:—

"I want to make it thoroughly clear to you all that the *eidolon* is not the spirit—only the simulacrum . . . If any one of you became conscious of my semblance standing near my chair, that would not be me. My spirit would be there invisible, but perceptive, but the appearance grows weaker. . . . Remember once again that the phantasm, the so-called ghost, is a counterfeit presentment projected by the spirit." (*Comrades on the Homeward Way*, p. 82.) This ectoplasm is partly produced by the conversion of parts of the Medium's body, and when photographed from the back is sometimes shown to be a mere mask of the person. There are several varieties of more or less partial materialisation, and we do not yet know for certain the mechanism in all cases.

The whole evidence, now very large, has shown that mind, emotion and memory are carried by the surviving soul through the change called "death," into the Unseen; and this is true, not only of the conscious mind, but also of the subconscious. It shows that survival is of the whole personality—Soul *plus* Spirit.

Dr. Geley in *From the Unconscious to the Conscious* (pp. 120-136, and 211-263) has shown conclusively that the subconscious is by far the larger part of the whole personality. It forms the infant in the womb of the mother, maintains it during a definite life-cycle, actuates the involuntary muscles on which breathing, digestion, and circulation depend, and is also the source of Genius and Intuition. There are many experiences which show that this large portion of the whole mentality can radiate thought and emotion. It can when developed, penetrate into the distant past and may even in a few cases, anticipate the near future. The predictions of the event of the late war, published by the Athens newspapers in Aug., 1914, of which 20 out of 23 predictions came about as prophesied five years later (*LIGHT* of February 27th, 1926) is an instance. Criticism should be the discovery of truth. It has degenerated into carping ineptitude. Prophecy is an incontrovertible fact; but the critics pass it by because it proves that spiritual world which they are determined to deny.

Myers, in his classical book, has traced the development of the supernormal through Sleep, Hypnotism, Sensory Automatism, Phantasms of the Dead, Motor Automatism, Trance, up to the Epilogue, in which he says:—

I venture now on a bold saying; for I predict that, in consequence of the new evidence, all reasonable men, a century hence, will believe in the Resurrection of Christ; whereas in default of that evidence, no reasonable men, a century hence, would have believed it. The ground of this forecast is plain enough. Our ever-growing recognition of the continuity and the uniformity of cosmic law has gradually made of the alleged *uniqueness* of any incident its almost inevitable refutation. Ever more clearly must our age of science realise that any relation between a material and a spiritual world cannot be an ethical or emotional relation alone; that it must needs be a great structural fact of the Universe, involving laws at least as persistent, as identical from age to age, as our known laws of Energy or of Motion. . . . I confess, indeed that I have often felt as though the present age were even unduly favoured; as though no future revelation and calm could equal the joy of this great struggle from doubt into certainty; from the materialism or agnosticism which accompany the first advance of Science into the deeper scientific conviction that there is a deathless soul in man.

And in face of this declaration; in face of the enormous spread of Spiritualism (some of it very crude); in face of the results in Russia of a most cruel campaign against all Religion; in face, I say, of these world-problems and the general doubt of the only reality which can change, and in many cases has changed, the hearts of men, that the most trusted of all the Societies in Britain should print mere sceptical criticism is trying to the patience of many. No wonder that some have lost forbearance, but it is scarcely fair to estimate the position of a body like the S.P.R. by the attitude of its junior members, while such men as Sir Oliver Lodge and Mr. J. A. Hill, are convinced upholders of the spirit-hypothesis and Professor Schiller asks for its fair treatment. After all, no review, however ill-judged, pledges the Society in any way.

The sketch given above is in conformity with normal science except in the matter of dematerialisation. For the explanation of that, and for "apports" and "asports," a reference to the Higher Physics of the Ether is necessary. Such explanation is not easy to give at the present time, but when it can be given it will not invalidate the simpler reasoning which can satisfy us for the present. The charge of "fraud," so easily and lightly made, is no explanation of phenomena witnessed to by responsible persons.

Physical phenomena are the inexpugnable foundation of Reality in this world of Matter, Energy, Mind, Time and Space. The ultra-atomic science shows us another mode of reality, but the physical realities assure us of survival where "beyond all these voices there is Peace."

\* \* \*

## THE ROAD TO HIGHER TRUTH

A VALUED contributor to *LIGHT*, Mr. B. M. Godsall, has sent an arresting letter to the Editor of the *San Diego Union*, which is printed in that journal of March 16th. He comments on an article in *Harper's* on "God Without Religion," written by Mr. Elmer Davis, and remarks that "At a time when light from the spirit world is shining through so many rents in the veil it is hard to believe but that the days are few in which a dissertation upon religion, with or without God, can exclude all reference to modern spiritual evidences and yet be considered up to date."

Mr. Godsall goes on: "Any inquiry into the nature of life, or of God, which leaves direct spiritual intercourse out of account leads inevitably to a profound pessimism. Ever since physical science assumed the role of prophet, and declared that after a short span on earth life is extinguished, like the flame of a burnt-out candle, it has become a commonplace to say that on such terms life is not worth the pain and labour of living. Unless it can be shown that life rises triumphant over material entanglements and death, to live on this earth may reasonably be considered a misfortune, and the life of man a tragedy. . . . A remedy for the world's ills should be sought through direct contact with the spirit world. This road towards the attainment of higher truth is so wide open to everyone that it is spurned by pride of intellect. Nevertheless from such heavenly contact mankind may gain many rich possessions; among them, a spirituality derived from intimate relations with the spirit world rather than from ancient records in which human errors abound; a religion, whose sanctuary is the home, whose creed is experience, whose evidences are personal and constantly renewed; a philosophy, not too lofty for the humblest of mortals, nor too simple for the wisest of immortals; and a science that deals with the ultimate reality which underlies all phenomena and is beyond the reach of the physical sciences—hence a science of sciences."



## FORETELLING AND FATE SOME MODERN INSTANCES AND A QUESTION

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

PROFESSOR Charles Richet, the famous physiologist, once said that mediumship involves a new physiology, a new chemistry and a new physics. He might also have added "and a new psychology."

It is difficult to conceive any part of human life and thought that Spiritualism does not affect. To know that human survival is a fact, that there is another world to which at death man passes, and to realise that the other world is continuous in every way with this world, must profoundly alter one's notion of what earth-life means.

Not the least interesting of the questions to which the phenomena of mediumship give rise is that of foretelling. This is one of the most important discoveries so far as the Western world is concerned, and in due course it will leave its mark upon Western religion and philosophy.

No Western philosopher has been able to evolve a generally satisfying theory of the relationship of life, particularly of human life, to the universe. Philosophical "systems" have usually failed lamentably in the face of this problem, and even the new idea that philosophers should seek rather to establish philosophical "methods" bids fair to be no more successful. There is always some tremendous hiatus in these systems and methods which leaves the student unconvinced.

No doubt the reason is that Western philosophers have not seriously considered the subject of foretelling. Their vigorous sense of independence has revolted against the idea that human experience is determined; there has been little in their own feelings to warrant such a belief. It seems as if the Western mind instinctively eschews any such notion as that indicated by prognostication. To believe in Fate seems to invite mental and moral indolence, and the Easterner is often referred to as an example of the evil consequences that follow on such a belief.

This is, of course, no argument against Fate being a fact, although it is an argument against good coming of belief in it. The fatalist has merely to retort that the evil consequences are part of the very scheme of things, and may then proceed to dispute the question of Fate being evil.

The popular Western idea of good and evil is certainly open to disputation. The belief that life is ever-growing action is no more reasonable than the belief that life seeks satisfaction and may as easily find it in a passivity as in an activity. Great wealth, the result of Western activity, has not brought much happiness, but it has brought an unhealthy restlessness which threatens to become a disease.

During the recent great American Stock Market slump I came across several examples of this. One well-known financier who had spent the major part of his life at the telephone "playing the market," was driven almost to distraction by seeing the results of years of careful speculation disappear overnight. With true Western practicality, as soon as a large part of his fortune had vanished, he placed himself under a physical instructor to brace his body and nerves, in his firm determination to win back all he had lost. I suppose he will go on using the telephone until he dies and so loses all his investments! The usual crop of suicides followed this financial crash. A lady whom I know lies seriously ill owing, not to the loss of her entire fortune, but to

some of it. American business men pathetically complain about the restless rush that characterises their lives, but regard it as inevitable. To slacken means defeat and that means poverty in an almost complete sense, as there is practically nothing to fill in the gap caused by loss of business activity. The lot of such a person, even when he has retired wealthy, is unenviable. I spent a few days in the home of a successful financier whose wife had persuaded him to leave business, erroneously thinking that because *she* had artistic and religious tastes he could cultivate them also. When he could not play golf he sulked about the house, bored to distraction.

"I wish to Heaven I had developed other interests!" he complained to me one day. "Now that I am out of business I don't know what to do with myself. I never had time to cultivate anything but business in my early days, and now it is too late for me to change my tastes."

In what contrast this stands to the quiet life of the Eastern fatalist who accepts his lot with resignation, but who is by no means hopeless or unhappy! The fact is that the fatalist has much to support his belief, and if sufficient attention were paid to prognostications we should have good reason for respecting his point of view.

I have heard some extraordinary accounts from Westerners regarding the accuracy of the prognostications of Hindu fortune-tellers, while I have myself been the recipient of one forecast which proved correct in every detail. In 1923, when in Bombay, a native asked me, while walking through the city, whether I would like my fortune told, and straightway informed me that when I arrived back in England certain misfortune would have befallen members of my family whom he particularised. The prognostication came true. A well-known business man in London (England) told me that his keen interest in Spiritualism was first aroused by the forecast of an old Buddhist monk in India. For a handful of rice this remarkable man told the Englishman that what appeared to be the impossible would occur; and occur it did in every detail. This prognostication involved even the character of the recipient, who evidently never suspected that he could stoop so low that he would have to flee from Indian justice; but flee from it he did. Then, from the position of a mechanic he rose unexpectedly and suddenly to a sphere of great responsibility and affluence in a totally different walk of life. The circumstances were closely connected with his health. He was told that his life would be despaired of, that he would recover when all hope had been abandoned, and thereafter he would be rich, healthy and happy. All these blessings were his when he told me the story.

Critics mostly reject fortune-telling on the grounds that it is not always right; but few things are always right. Medical men are more often incorrect than correct in their diagnoses; perhaps fifty per cent. of lawyers err in their judgment of the outcome of the cases they defend; physicists and biologists, and professors of nearly every other branch of science, propound theories which the next decade proves to be untenable. Failures in prognostications prove little more than their inconvenience; truth stands solidly on success. Obtain a sufficient number of cases to rule out coincidence and there is good reason for believing in the validity of prognostication, and it can be done easily.

A Mexico City business man assured me that a mediumistic control, during one sitting, voluntarily told him of every important incident that would befall him during the next sixty days, even naming cities he would be called upon to visit and the times of the trains he would catch. The forecast was right in every particular. This is the best case I have come across. It ruled out any kind of "natural" explanation, and was a complete triumph for Fate!

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None of the instances I have mentioned admits of the explanation of deduction from present events, but must have been derived from some other and more interesting source; what that source is I do not pretend to know; to call it the Akashic Records or anything else amounts to little more than re-stating the case. The chief objection to it is the one usually used by literary censors: that it may demoralise the people. But that does not prove it is wrong.

It is disturbing to think that a belief will weaken the race, and one instinctively resists any such tendency. In this case such conduct is paradoxical and admits of no logical excuse. The fact remains that if prognostication, by other means than that of logical deduction, is possible, then we are in the grip of Fate. This does not hand the palm of logic to the Determinist, because his philosophy does not extend beyond materialism, and we do feel that whatever may be the laws which hedge us around, we nevertheless are not without moral responsibility.

Exactly how that works in the face of Fate I cannot pretend to know; it involves a paradox. There is, however, nothing to be scared at about this, as life is full of paradoxes. Perhaps we can do no more than interpret events from a character standpoint, our responsibility beginning and ending in the attitude of mind with which we apply ourselves to experiences. A man can fall off a greasy-pole with a smile or a curse, but fall from the pole he must. It is much like that, I think, with life: forced upon us, we must accept it willy-nilly. Nor is life merely an environment; it is a psychology, for we are born with an equipment of tendencies, capacities and powers which determine to a great extent, if not entirely, the manner in which we view existence and the way in which we will work in it.

Temperament seldom changes throughout life. I had an excellent example of that recently. I visited two of my brothers whom I had not seen for well over twenty years; I found they had changed in no way temperamentally. Experience had enlarged their outlook, they had the more staid manner which inevitably comes with years, but their adjustments to life were no whit different from those that characterised them when they first left me.

If belief in prognostications is a doctrine of despair for the man-in-the-street it certainly ought not to be so for the philosopher. He, at least, is a lover of Truth, and should be glad to welcome it in any form. If Fate is a fact, then no philosophy and no religion can be true without considering it.

\* \* \*

## THE HEALING FOUNT

'Tis only by the aid of what is known  
We understand a thing we have not seen;  
Experience itself must needs have shown  
That some effect has cause in what has been.  
It serves me not what others see, or saw,  
Of God's love in the present or the past,  
If where another bows I find a flaw,  
And cannot bend myself and hold truth fast.  
'Tis by the noblest human love I've felt  
That God's great love has been made known to me;  
There is a shrine where in true faith I've knelt  
And worshipped Christ with real sincerity.  
Such love can heal; it stimulates the will—  
By inspiration superseding force,  
And mitigating every sense of ill—  
For in Omnipotence it has its source,  
And functions through the spirit of a man.  
Proximity of body need not count,  
Nor adverse circumstances prove a ban  
Which spiritual poise may not surmount.

—OLIVE LINNELL.

## LIGHT FROM THE SUBCONSCIOUS

By H. ERNEST HUNT.

THE very name of the Subconscious Mind acts, in the case of some spiritualists, as a red rag to a bull, so prejudiced are they against it, and yet no subject is more important, or more directly touches the work of Spiritualism. To rail at it is superfluous, to ignore it is foolish; the only true wisdom is to study it and see where it can lead us.

The subconscious mind acts as a foil and contrast to the conscious, following the cosmic plan of a duality in unity which reveals itself to us in our little human relationship of sex. The two ways of mental working—conscious and subconscious—are mutually dependent and complementary, each in a wonderful manner filling up the gaps for the other. By the study of the one we learn about the other, just as by the study of disease we learn much about the conditions of health, and by the light of knowledge we are able to plumb some of the depths of ignorance.

To take but one of these contrasts, these points of difference: we see that the conscious mind is primarily adapted to deal with one thing at a time. It is not possible, normally, to do justice to any task unless we concentrate upon it exclusively, so for efficient brain-work we are compelled to focus upon one thing. But the subconscious, even if we take no other evidence than is provided by the workings of the human body, is able to run the heart, lungs, circulation, temperature, digestion, glandular secretions, balance, co-ordination of movements and so on, simultaneously. Here then is the primary contrast of the conscious "this one thing I do," and the subconscious "here am I doing a dozen, a hundred, who knows how many things at once—and doing them well!"

The conscious mind deals with the evidence of the material world as brought in to us by the various senses. Now these concrete things of the outer world—animate and inanimate—cannot occupy the same space at the same time, therefore, they must follow one another in sequence, just as one actor holds the centre of the stage and then yields place to another. So it is that the conscious mind paints pictures from material happenings, for time-space reasons one after the other, and then hangs the pictures in the Art Gallery of the subconscious. Thereafter, in the halls of memory we may be in the presence of all these at once, if we have but the eye to see them.

Now here, perhaps, lies the explanation of those queer cases of "flashing," where a lifetime's experiences may be reviewed in a moment of time, as in the case of the apparently drowned. The most explicit I know is that recorded by Admiral Beaufort, who was seemingly drowned in Portsmouth Harbour, but was rescued unconscious and resuscitated. He has left on record a long and detailed account of his experience. He tells us that not only did the whole of his life "flash" in front of him, but he also saw all the causes which led up to particular events, and all the consequences arising from them. This is, of course, to gain the true, balanced and ethical view of things beyond gain-saying or argument. He indeed suggests that he was to all intents and purposes dead, and if he had not been resuscitated would have remained dead; and, furthermore, he believes that this subconscious record may be the veritable



"judgment book" of self, compiled by the Recording Angel of Memory, which, one day, we shall all be compelled to study.

There are many similar cases recorded, occurring in moments of crisis, ecstasy, trance (D. D. Home), also under the influence of anæsthetics, and in the case of accidents. I know of one where a man "crashed" in an aeroplane, and another where the individual was knocked down by a motor, and still another, a curious one, in which a flier lost control of his plane when at a considerable height. In this incident there was a dual simultaneous activity, his conscious mind doing all it could to restore the balance of his machine, while the subconscious was unrolling the panorama of his life's experience. This rather recalls the way in which Muldoon in *The Projection of the Astral Body*, suggests that consciousness may at times function in the two bodies at once. But, ordinarily, these cases indicate that the central activity passes from the conscious one-thing-at-a-time mind, to the subconscious everything-at-once mind. We lose consciousness only to find subconsciousness, and the latter is infinitely the richer of the two, as we find when we pass from the sequential to the simultaneous.

It has been suggested that this same contrast of conscious and subconscious, of objective and subjective, holds the key to the riddle of the next world. We live, at present, in the main, an objective existence (probably too much so under modern Western conditions), but some day we shall pursue a subjective life, indescribable in terms of the objective, and we shall possess characteristics widely contrasting with those of to-day. For example, to drop out of the time-space conscious realm means that we pass from time to what we designate eternity; from out of the one-thing-at-a-time measure which must involve past, present and future, into the simultaneous which means the eternal *now*. Hence the difficulty of reckoning time as we count it in messages from the beyond. We also pass from the "place-where" idea into a "state" of mind or consciousness, from a world of concrete things and happenings to a world of reactions arising from such, from a realm of experiences into one of experience.

This does not, for a moment, imply that we are going to lose anything, but it means that "we shall be changed, in the twinkling of an eye." We drop the physical world, and with it all the object and purport of our complex sense-machinery, but we enter into the heritage of the subconscious. We drop the objective and we take on the subjective with all its engaging possibilities, its wonderful powers of intuition, inspiration, telepathy ("beam" system and ordinary, according to desire), clairvoyance, "sensing" and so on. We have only to step off the narrow band of wave-length, which represents physical consciousness, and we are in the realm of subconsciousness, in the midst of which we live and move and have our being, so that truly "in the midst of life we are in death"; only we must interpret "death" as meaning another state of consciousness, rather than as cessation of consciousness, or extinction. It would be a truer phrase to say that "in the midst of our narrow physical life we are in an ocean of transcendent life." It is only our forgetting or ignoring of the subconscious super-sense life, and our shackling ourselves with spurious ideas derived from sense observation, that cause us to lose our heritage. Yet knowledge is power, and as we begin to learn and develop this conscious mind of ours to finer control, proportion and balance, so does it become safe for us to call intelligently upon some of the subconscious resources. These will then commence to unfold with perfect naturalness in due season.

## "TO SPEAK OR NOT TO SPEAK"

By MRS. JOHN MENZIES.

WITH reference to the interesting Leader "To Speak or to be Silent?" in *LIGHT* dated April 12th, may I quote from a series of questions and answers which appeared in the same journal in the issue June 22nd, 1929. The following question was put at a circle, and the answer purported to come from the late Stainton Moses, in control of the Medium.

Q. *Is it intended we should pass on the information we receive?*

A. What else? What is it given you for? To keep bottled up for your own selfish consumption? How else can spirit influence and spirit manifestation be made known to all who will listen, except by you, and such as you, who know the truth? We would have you give it out to all and sundry, even though by so doing you should lose all that you value most. Friends, position, money, what are they, compared with the truths of the life beyond, to which a man can take nothing with him except his character.

There is no uncertain sound about this, and many of us are acting on it, putting all we have and all we are into the work. Why else have Hannen Swaffer and Maurice Barbanell spoken, within the last few months to thirty thousand people? And is not the principle the same, whether speaking to a large audience, or to a group in the drawing room, or to the business girl who happens to be lunching at one's table?

We know that judgment and common sense must be ever at the wheel—that there is a time to speak and a time to be silent—but what joy when one finds, as often happens, that the tentative word had led to eager questions and growing interest.

Of course temperament has something to say, on the one hand there will always be the advocates of caution, and on the other the outspoken enthusiast, his heart sometimes outstripping his head. As Mrs. de Crespigny says in her novel *The Mark*, through the mouth of her heroine, "Heaven was never reached through the intellect"—a profound saying.

We shall, if we are wise, in this matter as in all others, follow the guidance of the Inner Light. But some of us would gladly go into the highways and hedges, and into the city crowds, proclaiming our good news, and our "proofs" from the housetops till the time comes to hand on our torches to those who come after.

And some of us, with joy, welcome a touch of passion; not, as has been so wisely said, in dealing with adversaries, but a consuming passion for the truth.

\* \* \*

## PRIERE SIMPLE

COPIED FROM AN OLD FRENCH BOOK OF PRAYER

LORD make me an instrument of Thy Peace. Where there is Hate—that I may bring Love; where there is Offence—that I may bring Pardon; where there is Discord—that I may bring Union; where there is Error—that I may bring Truth; where there is Doubt—that I may bring Faith; where there is Despair—that I may bring Hope; where there is Darkness—that I may bring Light; where there is Sadness—that I may bring Joy. O Master, make me not so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that one receives; it is in self-forgetfulness that one finds; it is in pardoning that one is pardoned; it is in dying that one wakes to Eternal Life.

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## ON BECOMING A MEDIUM

BY W. H. EVANS.

THE ideal place for the development of one's mediumistic powers is the home circle, where one is usually free from suspicion or mistrust. But it is not always convenient to sit at home. The family may not be sympathetic, or there may not be time for circle sitting. In that case development should be attempted in some friendly circle outside the home, possibly in a well-conducted developing class held in some spiritualist church. Sitting in *promiscuous* circles should be avoided; the clash of influences can be very harmful. It is also unwise to run from circle to circle in the hope of hastening development. Mixed psychic influences are more detrimental than mixed drinks; they act upon the finer psychic body and may cause serious derangements of psychic faculty.

The difficulty with most would-be Mediums is to induce them to employ the same common-sense in the development and exercise of mediumship as they do in the ordinary affairs of life. Some people on entering a seance room leave their common-sense on the wrong side of the door. It is not sufficiently recognised that whatever comes through one's own consciousness has an authoritative note. To the undeveloped and inexperienced type of Medium it may appear as if stamped as a revelation from the divine, for it is sometimes difficult to dissociate the message from its emotional accompaniments. (Editors of psychic journals are only too familiar with the hysterical outpourings which are sent to them in manuscript as being Heaven-inspired revelations.) The subliminal self is a great romancer and can impress the normal mind with its own authority in ways we little dream of.

Spirits are human beings. Treat them as such. Unless of an undeveloped type they do not ask for adoration. A spirit may know more than you do—or less! Not all spirits who pass to the "other side" are wise, cultured or even, necessarily, intelligent. Quite a number of fools enter spirit-life; dying does not confer immediate wisdom. There are, too, a number who belong to the order of "leg-pullers"; they enjoy a practical joke as much as ever. We know how to deal with these people when they are in the flesh.

Spirit intercourse is no more sacred than ordinary conversation with people in this life. The religious atmosphere frequently associated with seances does not rob spirits of their humanity, nor exalt them above their fellow spirits on earth. An exaggerated religious atmosphere is sometimes misleading to the inexperienced sitter as it leads him to think that only the high and holy ones of spirit life communicate. The number of spirit-people who crowd around a seance is a motley assortment, and usually the guides of the circle have a busy time sorting them out.

Death does not make those who pass through it omniscient. Some people—through wrong religious teaching—think that whatever statement comes from a spirit must be true. They know nothing of the distortions that a message is subject to in passing through the mind of a Medium. To paraphrase a saying of St. Paul: "the controls of the Mediums are subject to the Mediums"; that is, the Mediums' limitations impose a barrier to clear and definite communication, and whatever comes to us from the "other side" is in some measure coloured by the channel through which it flows. Let us therefore use common-sense and reason about *all* the messages received through mediumship—either one's own mediumship or another's.

The development of mediumship is a matter of co-operation, not of domination. It is important to remember this. Having gained entry into a circle what must one do? First, see that one's attitude of mind is prayerful and aspiring. Do not expect anything; learn to wait.

Keep a quiet, alert mind. Much will depend upon the nature of your mediumship as to the manner in which you may be influenced. Sometimes the psychic nature has to be "broken up" and remoulded—if I may thus describe it.

Some forms of mediumship commence in wild and spasmodic movements. During this stage a certain type of control takes possession. There will be violent agitations of the limbs which may seem alarming but there is no need to fear; this manifestation can be modified if the sensitive does not resist too strongly. Much of this violent movement is due to resistance, conscious or sub-conscious. Learn to co-operate with the power, and these movements will speedily give place to more calm and placid influences. Do not rest in the wonder of it. Some never get any further than this initial stage, and think this crude manifestation of power is in itself sufficient evidence of spirit presence. Nothing of the kind. They may be merely a physical reaction to the psychic stimuli of the circle.

If the mediumship is worth anything the "great trembling," which comes upon the Medium, speedily gives way to more intelligent action, and the Medium becomes aware of another personality fusing with his own. In this secondary stage he will experience an enlargement of consciousness, and become aware of "conditions"—that is, of the mental and spiritual states of those assembled. It is not always a pleasing revelation, but is of value in guiding the aspirant for mediumistic honours, teaching him what and whom to avoid.

The Medium may now be impressed to speak. It may be that a single word will keep repeating itself in his mind. Naturally he hesitates to utter it, for it often seems silly to utter just one word. He should overcome this diffidence and speak the word; then he may find it is followed by other words, and he will presently find himself speaking.

(To be continued.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

## MATERIALISATION EXPERIMENTS

Sir,—The following may be of interest to your readers. My wife and I, with a few friends, have for the last two years been sitting frequently at our home with a certain well known Medium. At the time of writing I do not propose to relate our experiences, which may, perhaps, become the subject of a later report. Here, however, is one incident. I always bring in the seance room a powerful electric portable lamp, which projects a white beam, but having two adjustable slides, enabling either a red or green light to be used as desired. At a recent seance this lamp was, as usual, brought into the seance room, and was the last light to be switched off before the seance started, showing its white beam. During the seance we heard a slight noise, which I recognised as the familiar sound of one of the coloured slides being slipped into position; then the lamp was switched on and glowed, a red light, for a few moments. My wife and I sat one on each side of the cabinet; by the red light we could see the Medium in his cabinet; we also saw two hands holding the lamp with wrists and part of the arms attached. So far as we could see these arms were cut off short near the elbow. Our circle is held regularly every week with the same sitters in my own home and at these materialisation seances our regular sitters always attend and we add to them a few other personal friends.—Yours, etc.,

ALEX. L. DRIBBEL.

Carshalton, Surrey.

"WHAT IS LIFE?" Owing to pressure of space Dr. Lindsay Johnson's third article has been held over until our next issue.



## Light.

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## THE ENLARGING VISION

**E**VEN before the dawn of Modern Spiritualism in the year 1848, with the Fox sisters and the Hydesville knockings, the history of the world, as regards its relations with its spiritual neighbour, was very far from being a blank, but the question was confused and indefinite, for no scientific investigation had been made. It was all "uncanny" and "mysterious," and interpositions from the Unseen were regarded, when they were accepted at all, as "supernatural."

The two great forerunners of Modern Spiritualism were undoubtedly Swedenborg and Andrew Jackson Davis. The latter lived to see the coming of the revelation he had prophesied, and, indeed, he lived many years after Spiritualism had become widely known as a result of the Hydesville phenomena, to watch its career and, as far as possible, to guide its progress.

The fifty years (taking the period roughly) before the outbreak of psychic manifestations which came with Spiritualism, were marked by strong scepticism, very often a complacent scepticism which flattered itself that "the idea of fetches and fairies, witches and wizards, is not merely ridiculous but it is mischievous." We quote from the *Times* review of a play "The Death Fetch," produced at the English Opera House in July, 1826. Science was coming on the scene and the "supernatural" was banished to limbo. In those days books appeared exposing the superstitions concerning ghosts and goblins, and parents were exhorted to guard the tender minds of their children

against these pernicious fancies. Instances were given of the way in which weak-minded people were deceived by effects of light and shadow, by scarecrows seen in the dusk, and other deceptive appearances, into supposing they had seen ghosts. Many of the cases cited were doubtless rightly explained, but when they were thrown overboard, of course, a good many real examples of psychic experience went with them. The "spirit of the age" in those days was a very sceptical spirit indeed; and very naturally so—so strong was the reaction fostered by Science against what was then regarded as pure delusion and imposture. It was a blind protest of the reasoning mind against the idea that anything could be outside of Nature. To that extent it was a healthy one, but the conception of Nature was kept within far too rigid limits. To-day the conception has had to be tremendously expanded. In the long run Truth is always coercive—compelling attention to itself when the pleading of its advocates has proved ineffectual. Eventually it will be found that Nature in the widest meaning of that term, is comprehensive enough to cover all manifestations of whatever kind and that the term "supernatural" merely marks the current ignorance concerning natural resources and the operation of Universal laws.

When we look back we are confronted with a remarkable fact. It was Science which was the pioneer in breaking down the ignorance and superstition of the past. To-day Spiritualism is the great pioneering force in extending a knowledge of the Unseen World and the evidences of its reality. It is now the part of Science to act as the rearguard and slowly to consolidate the gains which the pioneers have won during the last fifty years. In itself Spiritualism comprehends both Religion and Science; it deals with the subject matter of each. Those who realise this are desirous that Religion and Science shall work hand in hand. The time is not yet, but we can be patient knowing what we know, and having faith in the Divinity which is at work in the world to-day to make all things new, and giving us an ever clearer vision of "the increasing purpose."

## DIVINITY

I thought of that most ancient Mystery,  
The Heart of Being, Which is Deity;  
That which our minds can never comprehend,  
That which hath no beginning and no end!  
Great Spirit of the awful Universe,  
At thought of Thee, all thoughts, confused, disperse!  
Yet known Unknown, before Thee I can kneel,  
And in Thy radiant Presence even feel  
An effluence shed from Love's own Source in Thee,  
And thank Thee for that sweet Epiphany,  
Seeing that Cross of flaming love appear,  
Which is Love's Sign to prove that Thou art near.

A. K. SMITH.



## SIDELIGHTS

Addressing an audience of about a thousand persons in the Central Hall, Edinburgh, the Rev. A. Gordon James, of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission enumerated the points of agreement between Spiritualism and religion. They both protested against materialism, and asserted the existence of a universe not subject to the limitations of the material world; they were in agreement as to the reality of the future life, and as to the use of psychic force—"the New Testament was full of it, and in the early Christian Church, manifestations of this power were commonly associated with Christian worship," said the speaker, adding, "In the light of these facts it is difficult to understand why there should be so much prejudice on the part of many Christian believers against psychic research."

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Mr. Gordon James, a report of whose address is given in *The Scotsman* of April 14, continued "They were bound to admit—he did not think anybody could deny it—that certain remarkable things in the psychic realm had taken place. What they must concern themselves with was the right interpretation. There were four possible explanations of psychic phenomena. The first was that all psychic phenomena were the result of deliberate fraud. It was only fair to state that Spiritualists themselves were the first to expose fraudulent mediums; but there was a large body of evidence which scientific investigation had put beyond all possible question of fraud. There might have been fraud, but the whole thing was not fraud. The second possible explanation was that of sub-conscious fraud or delusion through telepathy or dual personality. That was extremely difficult to prove. Experiments had been made by a well-known Wesleyan minister who was a friend of his to test that very theory, and it had been found that telepathy did not cover all the aspects of psychic phenomena."

\* \* \*

"The third explanation which was the official explanation of the Roman Catholic Church, was that this was the work of evil spirits. He found that a very difficult explanation to accept. There remained the fourth explanation, the Spiritualistic one, which was that we actually could come, under certain conditions, into contact with disincarnate spirits. Whether this explanation was right or not, he would ask whether there was anything in the Christian religion to deny that possibility. So far as he knew, there was nothing. He did not think this explanation conflicted with any fundamental Christian doctrine."

\* \* \*

Writing in *Everyman* (April 17th) Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan, in the course of an article entitled "Can we be logical about Immortality?" says "Why do we assume that a life after death would be better than this life? What logical reason is there to suppose that it would not be very much worse? If we do not allow our desires to affect our judgement, we must admit that the chances are equal. And yet we cannot possibly accept this conclusion. We cannot possibly believe that the universe is so constructed that man is doomed to an eternity of misery. But we do not reject that conclusion on logical grounds. It would seem, therefore, that our attitude towards this question is not, and *cannot be*, determined by purely logical considerations. A man can sincerely believe that the universe is governed by a benevolent God, and that it is much better than it appears to be, but I doubt whether a man can seriously believe that it is governed by a malignant devil and is much worse than it appears to be. Yet, logically speaking, there is not a farthing to choose between the hypotheses. . . . I do not believe that a man can sincerely be purely logical about the matter. We cannot admit that alternatives are equally probable although they are equally justified logically."

## BY THE STYGIAN WAVE

By E. HARVEY.

THE morose son of Erebus and Night seemed quite talkative and cheerful—so much so that all in the boat noticed it. "Please stop me, Charon," said one of the passengers, "if I am too personal, but we have had such deplorable tales of your grimness that it is quite nice to find you in this pleasant vein—no doubt you have been misrepresented."

"Well, no," replied the ferryman, "I do get cantankerous at times, but it depends on the crowd I have. They come shivering and moaning down to the brink and have to be hauled into the boat—no one would believe they were merely being taken from one side of a stream to the other. You all seem a happy lot."

"The more shame," interjected a clerical passenger speaking from the best place in the stern, "if they only realised the years of misery in front of them before they get to a good place they would change their tune. For myself, I am all right as I am of the Inner Circle, so to speak."

Charon looked as though he would say something but he only swallowed hastily and went on rowing. "The very river does not seem so black and misty to-day," he resumed, "and, of course, as it is generally a mixed sample that I carry we do get an occasional bright patch. Some say they were 'selected' from birth so are sure of their destination; others are deeply conscious of their great moral worth and others again have friends left behind who are hunting up their last shilling for chants and services to hasten the transit through the Debateable Country."

"Have you noticed any change in these later years?" asked another passenger.

"Yes," said the boatman, "a few hundred years ago people were in such terror that they left all their property away from their relatives in favour of influential characters who promised to put the matter through and see them right. But about eighty or ninety years ago, as you reckon time, some really authentic news about the place I am taking you to came to hand and they are getting perceptibly less nervous."

By now the boat had touched the shore and some of the crowd, including the cleric, rushed off. "Why, they will be in and comfortable before we start," said some of the Inferiority Complexes. Charon's lips tightened grimly and then he smiled at those behind and said "Perhaps! A generous guardian called Peter might pass them in, but his private secretary, one Zacchaeus, may hold them a bit. He used to be a Tax Collector, and so is not only good at figures but was accustomed in his official capacity to having people pitch a plausible tale. Well, I must be off again."

Just then I awoke, so, to my regret, I cannot say what happened next.

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*So great is the number of readers who have written us expressing their gratification at the proposed enlargement and improvement of LIGHT that it has been impossible for us to reply to them individually, but we desire to acknowledge these expressions of interest and goodwill and to thank those many correspondents who have made useful criticisms and suggestions, with most of which we are in agreement.*



## SCOTLAND &amp; SPIRITUALISM

By J W HERRIES

"SCOTLAND is stiff soil for Spiritualism," observed a well known Scotsman who is an authority on psychic matters, to an equally well known figure in the world of psychic enquiry, in connection with the latter's departure for a lecturing tour in Scotland. There is some truth in the remark, but not so much as would be supposed by those whose knowledge of Scotland is from the outside. The position of Scotland in regard to the subject is at present peculiarly interesting.

The Scot has a reputation for being "hard-headed." He shapes his views on most things, particularly politics and religion, by the head and not by the heart. He has an innate love of truth, disguised sometimes as love of "facts"—which in the popular meaning of the term may not be the whole truth. Ever since, some few years ago, a special committee of the Church of Scotland appointed to investigate psychic phenomena gave the surprising deliverance that in their view "investigation is lawful," and mentioned as established by direct observation a few instances of phenomena of a kind previously scouted by most of the orthodox as fairy tales, there has been a new and widespread spirit of enquiry into the matter. The Scottish Churches were described in a recent address as "no longer hostile" but in a condition of "sympathetic expectancy." There are some ministers of the Church of Scotland (which now includes the United Free Church) who are convinced of the facts of psychic phenomena. These admittedly are few. There are a great many who are interested and have a leaning towards acceptance based on reading. I have found several ministers, (and these amongst the most enlightened and influential in the Church,) who have an eagerness for being put in touch with the latest and most authoritative works on the subject.

The late Lord Dewar is understood to have done much to interest his legal brethren of the Court of Session in the subject. There is throughout Scotland a spirit of sympathetic enquiry amongst all classes—professional men, business men and workmen contributing in proportionate measure to a large public who would like to know more, and who specially would like something direct and personal on the question of human survival. The actuality and significance of psychic phenomena come up in debating societies. The matter was discussed a few weeks ago by one of the best known students' societies of Edinburgh University, when there was revealed an almost equal division of opinion. One of the largest literary societies of a well known Glasgow church invited a lecturer from Edinburgh to open their current season with an address on psychic phenomena.

There is equal indication of widespread interest revealed by the Press. Scarcely a week passes but Scottish newspapers have some incident or other relative to the great enquiry reported in their columns. In Edinburgh from time to time interesting letters for and against have appeared in *The Evening Dispatch*. The case for survival and for the actuality of psychic phenomena generally has been put with remarkable ability and cogency by a number of writers who are always ready to deal with the old objections which crop automatically up. The biased and uninformed sceptics in recent months seem to be growing less and less numerous. Public opinion on the matter is steadily growing more enlightened, and the old self-contradictory and wholly imaginary arguments do not now cut much ice.

The Scottish temperament with its caution, its insistence on facts, and its distrust of emotion, is peculiarly suited to a process of enquiry likely to produce the best and most convincing results. There is in Scotland, however, the same lack of material to work upon, the difficulty of

procuring exponents who can deal with the matter freshly and personally, which is experienced elsewhere. But one hears of private experiment and the obtaining of extensive phenomena which do not come to the general public knowledge. Quite a number of people in Scotland have got "direct voice" results. A diffidence on the part of those who are the Mediums prevents in many cases these results being broadcast. It is perhaps well that this should be so. It should be rigidly understood that the subject is not an alternative for the pictures, the concert hall or the sports field. It should be approached reverently and with a certain preparation of mind and character. While there should be no attempt to form an exclusive cult, to claim the prestige of an inner circle, or set up a suggestion of mysticism, there is no need to thrust evidence on the pragmatic minds of Tom, Dick and Harry.

Perhaps the greatest need that exists is some system of bringing earnestly enquiring minds into touch with an organisation through which they can receive enlightenment and guidance. For some years such an organisation, known as the Scottish Psychical Society, has been carrying on useful work in Edinburgh. The headquarters of the Society are at 22, Stafford Street, and there every week through the winter season lectures and demonstrations are given. A feature this year has been discussions on such subjects as "That psychic messages go to prove that human life is subject to a fixed destiny." The subjects of lectures in recent months have included—"Highland Mystics and Mysteries," "Dreams" and "Experiences After Death." At one of the lectures on "automatic writing and controls" a remarkable statement of communications of evidential value was presented by Mr. G. L. N. Hadden. He traced the beginning of a series of successful experiments to the opening of the Society's premises at 22, Stafford Street by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who gave some suggestions to members for simple private investigation. The experiments, entered upon through that direction, have resulted in remarkable development, and have furnished what may be regarded as positive proof of the activity of discarnate intelligence.

Religion, or rather theology, has always appealed strongly to the temperament of the Scot. It is the doctrinal aspect of religion which has held sway in Scotland from the time of John Knox until recently. It may be, as has been alleged, that the hold of theology in Scotland is partly due to the Scotsman's love of dialectics and to the opportunity which the subtleties of Presbyterian theology affords for discussion. It may also be that the Scotsman's passion for truth and "facts" may find very soon a suitable field for expansion in the new science of psychic phenomena. It is a little difficult, it must be admitted, to reconcile this theory of the Scotsman's passion for truth with the attitude of a generation ago to scientific knowledge. There are still literalists in Scotland who stand on the verbal authority of the Bible. The traditional attitude to the Bible was so strong a generation ago that where a Bible statement seemed to be qualified by truth as revealed by science the Bible statement was preferred. Thus, Dr. Chambers, one of the famous figures in literature and publishing of the 19th century, had to conceal for many years the fact that he was the author of what would now be regarded as almost a simple textbook on Natural History, *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*. Robert Chambers devoted much time and effort to the collection of psychic material, which he left in a manuscript volume. The public attitude of his countrymen at the time of his death in 1871, inspired largely by the attitude of the Church, was so strong against anything of this nature that his executors burned the volume. Such a volume certainly would not be burned by any literary man's executors in Scotland to-day. The Church has moved forward; it is being permeated by an interest in evidence for survival. It may be that in the near future the leaders of religious thought in Scotland

May 3, 1930  
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will be driven into the field of psychic investigation in order to keep pace with their flocks.

Probably the intuitive opposition to the acceptance of psychic facts, which is exhibited by many, is due to the same underlying motive which opposes religion becoming a really vital factor in life. Religion, for example, is held by many to be something that should be kept apart from "business." It might interfere with ordered existence as it appeals to the individual, if taken too seriously. So Religion is toned down. Similarly acceptance of proofs of survival might be upsetting—for the present at least. But after all, truth is truth; and neither genuine religion, nor proof of survival, rightly apprehended, should interfere with the fullest and highest development of ordinary life on this planet. The hard-headed Scot should be the first to apprehend that fact.

## FEELING AND THOUGHT

By F. C. CONSTABLE (Author of *I Am*.)

THOUGHT is definitely correlated to molecular motions of the brain, so in the absence of brain the correlation is lost and the thought associated with brain comes to an end. But we are all of us conscious of the limitation of our thought. Let us see how Kant treats this question of survival after death.

In *A Study of Kant* by James Ward he shows that "Feeling, though never a complete state of consciousness, is the most central one, as Kant came at long last to recognise."

What does this mean? It means that our consciousness of pure feeling transcends our thought. We *feel* the limitations of our thought which is correlated to the motion of the (material) brain.

Kant pursues the question thus: he says that if we could intuit ourselves and other things as they really are we might find ourselves spirits in a spiritual world, and in such case we should recognise the brain as an *impeder of full thought*. For thought is latent in feeling, and we are conscious of the limitations of thought correlated to the motion of the brain.

Thus, when the brain is dissolved our thought correlated to the motion of the brain comes to an end, but *feeling* remains, and feeling gives us what Kant terms *full thought*.

We *feel* from the cradle to the grave; we *feel* in a *continuity*, and science (as Bergson points out) cannot measure a continuity. It must admit the fact but must ignore it as immeasurable. Feeling, a continuity, remains after the dissolution of the brain. Our thought, however, is mutational. It changes not only from youth to age, but changes with humanity in its evolution.

Feeling is the centrality of our consciousness, it exists in continuity, it outlasts the existence of the physical brain with its limited form of correlated thought. But Science cannot measure the continuity of feeling nor accept the concept of a spiritual brain within the physical one, which it survives. Beware, however, of trying to explain spiritual feeling by scientific (or extensional) thought; that is, by thought impeded through its correlation to motion of the brain.

### TESTIMONIAL TO W. H. EVANS.

Mr. R. A. Bush acknowledges with best thanks the following donations:—

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Mr. R. A. Bush, 8, Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W.19, will gladly acknowledge in *LIGHT* further donations to this Testimonial, which it is hoped will receive the generous support of all friends.

## RAY'S AND REFLECTIONS

IT is being discovered to-day that you cannot build up either a religion or a philosophy on negative statements. You must affirm something: you cannot live on an "anti" attitude. The man who stands for human survival—even if he has nothing else to affirm—has something positive to live by. The man who denies a future life, and makes that denial his main objective, soon gets to the end of his tether. He has no gospel. And those who hear him might ask, somewhat in the words of the old epitaph: "If in such short time we're done for, we wonder what we were begun for!"

\* \* \* \* \*

One must have patience with those who hold that certain forms of Spiritualism—as in physical manifestations—vulgarise and degrade the spiritual ideal. It is odd that they do not see the essential spirit cannot be debased by anything with which it may come into contact. It has been plunged into matter for a purpose, and the most angelical and idealistic men and women do not regard themselves as disgraced by the unsavoury associations and necessities which turn on the possession of a body. Surely there is a line of continuity between the highest archangel and the lowest earth-born creature. There is such a thing as being too superfine and sensitive. The robust type of saint is never finicking and mealy-mouthed. There is something unhealthy about the niminy-piminy kind of purity.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the course of the first F. W. H. Myers Memorial address last year (now published under the title *Conviction of Survival*) Sir Oliver Lodge referred to Huxley's remark that, from our observation-point on earth, we probably knew as much about the entire universe and the full complexity of existence as a worm in a flower-pot on a London balcony knows about the life of the great city. That is a saying which admirably illustrates the attitude of the great scientist as compared with those smaller scientific minds whose tendency is to dogmatism and finality. "The Worm in the Flower-pot" would make an excellent parable for the exercise of Professor Richet's poetic talent. He has already given us an excellent one dealing with the outlook of the carp in the pond.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have been reading a pamphlet privately circulated by an old medical friend. He commences with a quotation from Dr. Davidson (the then Archbishop of Canterbury), who, at the Convocation in May, 1914, thus admonished his hearers: "Follow the Truth; do your utmost to find it wherever it may lead you." Our medical friend claims that he followed this advice and it led him away from all revealed religion. Indeed, his pamphlet analyses Christianity out of existence, and he now has no belief in any future life, and is content, for he has "found the truth!" Such a result must be rather disconcerting to those who, when they say "Seek the truth," utter the remark with the idea that the only truth to be found is that which they have themselves espoused. But in these matters we have always the element of Time to contend with. No man can say that he has found the truth until he has arrived at a state in which it is no longer necessary to change his views of it. And I imagine that the author of the pamphlet has still some changes and surprises in front of him. For truth is not simply an intellectual matter—it is an interior conviction, an "inward light," always simple, always consistent with itself, and entirely independent of creeds, doctrines and points of view, which are generally at variance with each other, for they only represent different ways of looking at the same unchanging thing.

D.G.



## NOTES ON NEW BOOKS

"REINCARNATION." By Gustave Geley. (Riders. 1s. net.).

With an introduction by Gabriel Gobron, and translated from the French by Ethel Archer, this forceful booklet will command attention. Dr. Geley was formerly director of the Institut Métapsychique International of Paris, and his works are in the front rank of Spiritualistic literature. His personal contribution to the question of Reincarnation was elicited by a Questionnaire on the subject, distributed widely by his friend Dr. Innocenzo Calderone, director and founder of the review *Filosofia della Scienza*. Opinions on the hypothesis of Reincarnation by many eminent modern thinkers are quoted in this small volume, but the readers of LIGHT will mostly be interested particularly in Dr. Geley's views. He is a reincarnationist for three reasons: because from the moral point of view the doctrine is fully satisfying, from the philosophic standpoint it is "absolutely rational," and in the scientific aspect it is "probably true!" "For reincarnation, the soul is not immortal, it is eternal and destined to an endless evolution," Geley declares. In brief, he contends that on the sole condition of being accepted in full, the theory of the subconscious self applied to the reincarnation conception "explains all the obscure phenomena of normal, abnormal, supernormal, and even of pathological psychology." Nevertheless, while Geley affirms that reincarnation is probable, he adds: "I do not say certain." B.P.

\* \* \*

"THE POEMS OF CHARLES RICHARD CAMMELL, 1911-1929." (Grant Richards. 10s. 6d.)

In this volume Mr. Cammell has collected all those of his poetical productions which he regards as worthy of preservation. He is not only a poet, but a satirist, and in both characters he reveals high qualities of insight and sympathy; that "hate of hate" and "scorn of scorn" with which Tennyson said that a poet is dowered. Here is an extract from "Ecrasez l'Infame," a satire on war, which Mr. Ronald A. L. Armstrong, in an Introduction, considers worthy of Pope or Dryden:

Pause, Madmen! Pause ere it shall be too late;  
Ere Gold shall sever Earth's last thread of Fate:  
Already is your race wellnigh destroyed!  
When will your appetite for blood be cloyed?  
Soon shall ye pause perforce! The world doth  
sicken  
Of its insanity! The dark clouds thicken  
Above your tyrannies, and soon shall burst;  
For Freedom's eagles, hovering, athirst  
For vengeance, long have looked on you askance,  
And now 'neath darkened clouds more menacing  
their glance,  
Thou soul of Freedom, thou fierce tameless Wrath,  
That ever in thy fetters smouldereth  
Like some volcano deemed by all to be  
Extinct and lifeless, groaning to be free  
Within its rocky prison, soon thy bands  
Shall burst like flax from off thy vengeful hands.  
Tyrants, to-day is yours! To-morrow ours!  
Already do ye quake, Infernal Powers!  
The fools who still applaud, while suffering still,  
At last shall flood the dam, an angry rill  
That waxes to a torrent, as it roars  
Wasting the world, yet purging it of wars.

LUCIUS.

"THE TRAINING AND WORK OF AN INITIATE." By DION FORTUNE. (Riders. 3s. 6d. net).

This is a supplementary volume to the author's work *The Esoteric Orders and Their Work*. Dion Fortune brings to her task an enlightened understanding and comprehension of the difficulties which beset the seeker for "The Path." There are no secret signs, or signals or quack nostrums presented to the reader, but clear common-sense advice. Its authority lies in the author's practical experience of occult matters. It is first-hand experience and not mere hearsay, therefore it can be cordially recommended as a safe guide to all who seek light upon those matters of the soul that is essential for all who seek the way to the masters. Even those whose feet are set in the way will derive much help from these pages. The comprehensive grasp of the esoteric philosophy and the high vision of the Soul's Powers here presented should be a stimulus to all who are yet in the valley and have not raised their eyes to the hills of God.

E.

\* \* \*

"THE OCCULT CAUSES OF DISEASE." Being a compendium of the Teachings laid down in his *Volumen Paramirum* by Bombastus von Hohenheim, better known as Paracelsus. By E. WOLFRAM Translated by Agnes Blake. (Riders, 6s. net.)

There are as many theories of disease as there are diseases, and each theorist presents a cure which he is confident will remove all our ills. The sick are confounded with a multitude of voices, and get lost in this modern Tower of Babel. The wise man, while noting much that he hears around him will study his own body and seek to discover for himself the mode of life, diet, etc., best suited for his machine; for in matters of health it is true that what is one man's meat is another man's poison.

Here, in this volume, the author directs attention to the man himself, the Ego, as the source of weakness in the body. The teaching is in line with the ancient mystery Religion which holds man responsible for all that happens to him. There is a great deal to be said for this view, and the methods of medical science to seek for the causes of disease in the phenomena thereof is not altogether sound. Medical science is still too mechanistic and takes too little note of man as a spiritual being. This work is a correction of that view. Although there is a sprinkling of alchemistical terms such as arsenic, salt, sulphur, etc., their meanings are given, so the reader is instructed and helped. Emphasis is laid upon the spiritual nature of man, and the causes of disease are traced to this source. This view harmonises with that of Dr. A. J. Davis, who held, there is only one disease, a disturbance of the flow of the spiritual principle in man.

Mr. Wolfram has rendered a service both to the memory of Paracelsus and the reader in presenting this study in such a readable style. It can be warmly recommended both to the professional and the lay reader. The translation is ably done.

E.

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MR. FLORIZEL VON REUTER.—We learn that owing to an injury to one of his fingers, Mr. von Reuter, the well-known violinist, will be unable to play for about a month. The injury will not be of a lasting nature, and Mr. von Reuter desires to contradict the rumours that he will be unable to play the violin again. He anticipates being able to fulfil his English engagements in June, or if not then, at the latest in October.



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#### WEEKLY MEETINGS.

Wednesday, May 7th, at 8.15 p.m. .. Mrs. DE CRESPIGNY  
will speak on Prof. Millikan's book, "Science and the New Civilisation."  
NON-MEMBERS 1/-

#### GROUP CLAIRVOYANCE.

(Limited to 10. Bookings must be made).  
Friday, May 2nd, at 5 p.m. .. MRS. BRITTAINE  
Friday, May 9th, at 5 p.m. .. MRS. BROWNJOHN

VOL. IX. No. 1.

April, 1930.

## "PSYCHIC SCIENCE"

Frontispiece. Portrait of J. Arthur Hill,  
author of "Psychical Science and Religious Belief"

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MISS CAMPBELL  
Ouija Board and Automatic Writing .. MRS. HESTER DOWDEN

#### CLASSES AND CIRCLES.

Tuesdays, 3 p.m., Class for Psychical Development .. MRS. SHARPLIN  
Wednesdays, 3 p.m., Circle for Clairvoyance (May 7th) .. MRS. KINGSTONE  
Thursdays, 3 p.m., Class for Development  
MISS ERNLE AND MRS. LIVINGSTONE  
Thursdays, 5.30 p.m., Devotional Groups (Absent Healing) .. MISS STEAD  
Fridays, 3 p.m., Class for Psychical Development (first class May 9th)  
MRS. CAMPBELL

#### SPECIAL NOTICE.

During this Session, instead of the usual "At Home," on Friday, "At  
Homes" will be held on alternate Fridays at 3.30. Friday, May 16th, Mrs.  
Mabel Beatty will give a short address on one of the chapters in the book  
"Man Made Perfect," followed by a discussion. (Fee 9d.).

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(Accepting the Leadership of Jesus Christ.)

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Sunday, May 4th, 11 a.m., Holy Communion. .. Mr. R. A. BUSH

An invitation is given to all who love the Lord Jesus.

Sunday, May 4th, 8.30. .. Mr. RICHARD A. BUSH

"The Birth of Sampson and Spiritualism."

Wednesday, May 7th, 7.30 p.m. .. Mrs. FLORENCE STEPHENS

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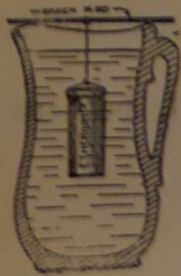
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Sunday, May 4th, at 11. .. Mr. GEORGE PRIOR

Sunday, May 4th, at 6.30 .. Dr. W. J. VANSTONE

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The enquirer who becomes familiar to some extent with the nature and scope of mediumship is better able to appraise the results of a sitting than one who comes with preconceived notions, all of which may be influenced by mistaken ideas. The experimenter needs to be capable of sympathetic and intelligent response to what may be given him. He must use common-sense in this, as in all things; he must be content to accept and examine carefully in the light of his reason whatever is given to him. He will court failure if he demands particular results. It should be remembered that in every psychic experiment the initiative and constructive work is from the spirit world. The Medium is in effect a passive recording instrument and the sitter an observer. The sitter should also endeavour to be passive and sympathetic, merely recording all impressions and statements. The critical analysis should be made after, not during a seance.

The extreme delicacy of the psychic states should never be overlooked. The mediumistic gift is subject to constant variations in power and sensitivity. A variety of factors go to make either good or bad conditions. The gift itself varies in power. The psychic state of a Medium may harmonise with the psychic state of the sitter, or it may not. The experiment is influenced not only by the state of mind of the sitter at the time of the experiment, but by his general mental condition and character. As in ordinary human society, some people mix with their fellows more easily than others, so in psychic experiments some combinations are favourable and others unfavourable. Every sitting is thus in the nature of an experiment. The sincere enquirer with an open mind will receive experiences of a supernatural nature, and usually, when he has the co-operation of an interested spirit friend he will sooner or later obtain evidence of the identity of his friend.

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A critical analysis should be made after, but not during the sitting.

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MAY 3, 1930

## LIGHT

iii.

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