

# Light:



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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!'—Paul.

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## CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .....	169	The Time of Day, Retrospect and Prospect. By Ralph Shirley .	175
London Spiritualist Alliance ..	170	The Human Soul: Its Nature and Attributes .....	177
Two Remarkable Séances. By "Paul" .....	171	Miss Lillian Whiting .....	178
The London Spiritualist Alliance—Annual Meeting .....	171	Day Dawn on the Hills .....	178
Jeanne d'Arc: Her Visions and Voices. By L. V. H. Witley .....	173	Sidelights .....	178
Easter-Tide .....	174	"All Men are Ghosts" .....	179

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

In Notes by the Way (p. 145) we gave an explanation of the symbol of the cross, as furnished by an old reader of this paper. "H. E. G.," another correspondent, in a letter expressing disagreement with the interpretation, writes:—

He speaks regretfully of the Latin cross as the lowest of the three forms of the symbol. He says, "The Latin cross is not a holy sign, it is the sign of Adam—the animal principle." True, it is the sign of Adam, but of the second Adam, and therefore it is the holiest of symbols. The animal principle, commonly known as "Adam," had failed utterly. On the Cross the second Adam, the spiritual principle enclosed in the material, "to the fight and to the rescue came." Because the Cross symbolizes failure and defeat, therefore it is the sign, not of the animal, but of the victory and triumph of the spiritual, the surrender of the lower will to the Higher, which alone means real victory.

We trust that "H. E. G." quite realises that it is not the cross itself which is in question, but only a form of it. But the subject of symbolism is never firm ground. Some symbols, like words themselves, are capable of quite opposite interpretations, each, in its way, accurate.

\* \* \* \* \*

"A Disturbed House, and Its Relief," by Ada M. Sharpe (Parker and Co., Oxford, and Simpkin, Marshall and Co., London, 1s. 6d. *net*), is a remarkable little work. It deals with the "haunting" of a house in Oxfordshire, the locality being more particularly described in the book which, indeed, gives a picture of the house and a plan of the rooms. The disturbances covered a period of three years and included raps, footfalls and other noises, the opening and shutting of doors, the appearance of lights, the movement of furniture, molestation of persons in the house, apparitions and other phenomena generally associated with hauntings. We referred in Notes by the Way (p. 133) to the possibility that many physical manifestations are produced by spirit agencies who are quite unconscious of the effects they are producing in the physical world, and a letter quoted by the author bears closely on this point. It was addressed to her by a clergyman who took a keen interest in the matter:—

With reference to the appearances you describe in your letter of this morning, as you mention a woman's form, may it not possibly be that the poor soul you were so kind to is trying to communicate and attract attention by producing these noises? As I daresay you know, it is just as difficult for them to communicate with us as it is for us to communicate with them, and often the noises produced are not vindictive or intentional. It is like a child touching the keys of an organ. It knows nothing of them and may pull out a stop which will produce a terrific noise. The force employed is known to scientists as *odillic* or

*odilic* force, and is a species of magnetism which can be used where the surroundings are sympathetic.

\* \* \* \* \*

The cause of the haunting is more than hinted at by the statement that, some thirty years before the author's tenancy of the house, a man, whose name is given, had in a fit of delirium-tremens fallen over the banisters and broken his neck. For the means whereby the house was finally freed from its afflicting conditions we must refer our readers to the book itself, but from the chapter headed "Reflections" it is impossible to refrain from quoting one or two pointed passages:—

The would-be sceptical are trying, inasmuch as they blame you with poignant darts when you specially need the balm of sympathy; but also jarring, painfully jarring are those who come out of sheer curiosity to hear and discuss, and pass on with all possible alacrity, what they mainly regard as a "Christmas Number" in real life. . . . It is astonishing how very few people one converses with without finding, on gradually leading up to the subject, that they or their friends have had personal experiences, and in this way one is always learning fresh phases of phenomena, and enlarging one's mind on the subject.

In the chapter under citation the author not only gives some pertinent reflections on hauntings, but adds two interesting examples of visions verified by subsequent events, relating her experiences in a way which leads to the conclusion that she is the possessor of psychic gifts allied to sympathy and a devotional spirit. It is worth noting that for the excellent plan of the house the author acknowledges her indebtedness to Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor.

\* \* \* \* \*

Three new books by Mr. W. J. Colville invite attention—"The Rationale of Heredity," "The Rationale of Mental Science Healing" and "The Higher Psychoscopy" (The Power-Book Co., paper covers, 1s. each *net*). They are all distinguished by that high quality of thought and clearness of diction which we always associate with Mr. Colville's work. They have, too, a merit which is always grateful to the reviewer—that is to say, they are eminently quotable. Indeed, there is an embarrassment of riches in this direction. At the risk of seeming invidious we take from the first-named book a passage not from the author himself but one which he quotes from Rabbi Fleischer. It consorts so well with the tone and temper of the work that it may fairly be regarded as an example of it:—

I, for one, am conscious of no exemption from privilege. Someone may be excluding me somewhere. So much the worse for him—he pays the penalty of hatred, while I am serenely unconscious of it. If ever I meet the man who hates me, he shall have my sympathy; he needs it.

This, as Mr. Colville well remarks, "gives expression to the very highest and purest metaphysical ethics, as related to those interior mental conditions that make health possible to all who live up to them."

\* \* \* \* \*

From the chapter on "Tuition and Intuition" in "The Higher Psychoscopy" we take the following:—

Whenever we are quite decided as to the object of our spiritual research it is well to close our eyes and rest for a few

moments completely before embarking on any undertaking. When it is important that we should decide a matter concerning which we externally know nothing, a wise course to pursue is to take to sleep with us a fervent desire, coupled with serenely confident anticipation, that our difficulty will be settled before we wake. The higher, or inner, self sees far more widely than does the calculating intellect, and though the latter can be made a useful vehicle for external work, illumination received intuitively is always the fount whence wisdom originally flows.

That teaching we place without hesitation amongst the essential truths of existence. In "The Rationale of Mental Science Healing" we find the same richness of material and strong, clear thinking. It sets out many ideas with which the author in his lectures had already familiarised us, but the variousness of his expression gives them new forms.

\* \* \* \*

The desire for quotation being still strong upon us we select the following passage from the last-mentioned book. It is that which at the end worthily rounds off the teaching given:—

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you," is an embodiment of clear reason as well as a statement of a magnificent ideal. Solomon's choice of wisdom, the most precious of all possessions, followed by his reception of all worldly honours, furnishes us with an excellent text for many a needed homily. When we seek the fullest possible expression of life we shall find desirable accessories all trooping into line, whereas if we blindly concentrate our hopes on lesser goals and strive for meaner prizes, we may experience chagrin and discontent, because we have not employed the true method in our quest for blessedness. Let us aim at harmony in the full meaning of the word, and success will eventually crown our efforts.

#### MYSTICISM: ITS ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS.

In the course of one of a series of thoughtful papers on "Mysticism," contributed to "The Christian Commonwealth," Dr. W. E. Orchard emphasises the importance of distinguishing clearly between the elements essential to mystical experience and those which merely accompany it. The following passages will convey some idea of his attitude towards the subject:—

Perhaps the most common and mischievous error arises from the close connection sometimes observed between mysticism and occultism. Because the awakening of the mystic consciousness naturally begets new powers of concentration, control, endurance, insight, and because such powers are in themselves desirable, mysticism is sometimes identified with such powers and frequently studied in order to obtain them. . . .

Mysticism is acutely conscious that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," and all along its path freedom from sin is coveted more than discovered powers, righteousness is counted its own reward. It makes no attempt to know religious truth, peace or power *without being religious*.

"Mystic experience is very frequently accompanied by psychic disturbance, and both by pathologists and desperate seekers after signs this is taken to be essential," but Dr. Orchard points out "that many persons who have all the marks of the mystical consciousness have never had anything approaching a vision, and are as cool and balanced as any ultra-rationalist." The mystics themselves insist "that until the soul can do without external visions, internal images or affections, the point of certainty and safety has not been passed, the contact of God upon the human spirit has not been immediately felt."

The danger which threatens special misunderstanding at the present time is the failure to distinguish between the essentials and the non-essentials in the relation of mysticism to dogma, ritual, organisation, and the whole external apparatus of religion. . . . The mystical experience is strongly individualistic and necessarily inward, but that it has a social instinct and is not above using outward forms is shown in the fact that mystics are produced much more plentifully in community life and in "catholic" churches than elsewhere.

GOD HAS A fatherly mind towards good men, and loves them stoutly; and, saith He, let them be harassed with toils, with pains, with losses, that they may gather true strength.—SENECA.

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 23RD,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MR. W. B. YEATS,

ON  
"GHOSTS AND DREAMS."

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the meeting will commence punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate. Other friends desiring to attend can obtain tickets by applying to Mr. F. W. South, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., accompanying the application by a remittance of 1s. for each ticket.

The concluding meeting of the session will be held on Thursday evening, May 7th, when Mr. Reginald B. Span will give an address on "My Psychological Experiences."

MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—No meeting on Tuesday *next*. On Tuesday, April 21st, Mrs. Place-Veary will give clairvoyant descriptions at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee, 1s. each to Associates; Members *free*; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

PSYCHIC CLASS.—No meeting on Thursday *next*. On Thursday, April 23rd, at 5 p.m., Mrs. Jamrach will give an address on "Spiritualism: Is it a Religion?"

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALK WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday *next*, April 17th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to life here and on "the other side," mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission, 1s.; Members and Associates *free*. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing *one* friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of *general interest* to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control and magnetic healing. Application should be made to the Secretary.

#### THE "WESTMINSTER GAZETTE" AND AUTOMATIC WRITING.

The "Saturday Westminster Gazette" of the 4th inst. publishes an article, "Recent Experiments in Automatic Writing," by a Member of the Society for Psychical Research. Miss H. A. Dallas, in her contributions to LIGHT, has familiarised us with some of the most striking of the cross-correspondences, and the criteria by which they are judged, and the opening article in the "Westminster" is much on the same lines. As will be gathered from the following quotation, the article is to be followed by another, for the appearance of which we shall look with interest:—

In the opinion of recent investigators there is evidence that this [*i.e.*, manifestation of external influence] actually occurs, that we find in the scripts a deliberate selection of topics designed to show the agency of an intelligence distinct from the minds of the automatists. To prove such a thesis could not be a simple task, and involves the sifting and weighing of a confused mass of psychological factors. It is also inevitable that conclusions should sometimes rest on a narrow margin of probability, which to some will appear insufficient. Nevertheless, the upholders of the theory of cross-correspondences maintain that, although on some points interpretation may be doubtful, the evidence as a whole points to one conclusion. In the sequel to this article I will try to show as clearly as can be done in a short space the kind of evidence upon which this conclusion is based.

## TWO REMARKABLE SEANCES.

LEVITATION AND MATERIALISATION PHENOMENA.

By "PAUL."

["Paul" is a gentleman of high position in Canada, who for sufficient reasons does not wish his identity to be disclosed. He has frequently contributed to our columns, his last contribution taking the form of a series of articles, entitled "Comforting Spiritual Communion," which commenced in LIGHT, of June 24th, 1911, and finished in the issue for January 13th, 1912.]

In "Glimpses of the Next State" will be found allusions to Mr. and Mrs. Z., of Toledo, Ohio, and also accounts of sittings with Miss Ada Besinett, the famous young medium. On November 19th, 1913, my brother and I arranged to meet the Z's at the house of Mrs. Moore (Miss Besinett's adopted mother), and a séance was held at eight o'clock p.m. in a room measuring about twelve feet by seventeen feet. We soon found that Ada's former manifestations of spirit singing, whistling, automatic writing, &c., described by Admiral Osborne Moore and Professor Hyslop (who calls her "Miss Burton") had given place to etherealizations, the direct voice and touches by materialised hands. At times innumerable small spirit lights played above the table and in and out of the branches of the electrolier. It was pitch dark: the faces of the spirit forms could not be distinguished.

The most astounding phenomenon occurred at the close of the séance at a quarter past ten. My brother's left hand, at the request of Mrs. Moore, had controlled the right hand of the medium all the evening. There had been a few minutes of absolute stillness in the room, when suddenly he announced that he could not feel her hand any more, and, a moment later, that her chair was empty. Mrs. Moore exclaimed, "Then the séance is ended! 'Black Cloud' [Ada's Indian control] must have carried her to the next room; he sometimes does so." The lights were immediately switched on. Miss Besinett had certainly vanished; not a sound had been heard; the doors were found tightly closed as they were when the séance began; they were, moreover, covered with heavy portières, running on noisy metal rings, which rattled when drawn back to open the doors.

We passed into the next room and found Ada lying at full length on a sofa still deeply entranced; her hands were crossed on her chest and her features pallid and lifeless. "Black Cloud" had performed his task in the most complete manner. In fifteen minutes the medium awoke and was standing among us chatting and, apparently, in a normal condition.

On November 20th Mr. J. B. Jonson, the celebrated materialisation medium of Toledo, with whom we had often sat before, arranged that we should join a private séance with five others that evening. At eight o'clock p.m. we all assembled in the séance room described in Admiral Moore's "Glimpses of the Next State." The medium sat outside of and in front of the cabinet; the lights were turned down, but there was enough illumination to enable us to see each other's features. Fifteen or sixteen spirit forms manifested. I will describe one. There had been a lull in the sequence of phenomena, when suddenly the strange figure of an Oriental seemed to be pushed out of the cabinet. He advanced a few steps rapidly, stood in the centre of the semi-circle and appeared to gaze on us with astonishment and intense interest, which we fully reciprocated. In stature he was rather above middle height, spare in figure; he had regular features, a shortish beard and very keen eyes and expression generally. He wore a white tunic reaching below the knee, his naked legs below the knee being thin and dark. The arms and hands, also thin and dark, were bare below the elbow and crossed over each other at the wrist—about the level of the stomach. Over his shoulders hung a long white mantle, and on his head was a piece of whitish material falling over the brow and neck, bound by a coil of twisted cloth. I could not say whether he wore shoes or not. After standing in this attitude for a minute or more he quickly moved to the right-hand end of our circle and then walked along in front of us, gazing into each face as if endeavouring to identify someone in particular. After this he returned to his former

position and faced us again. It was then I inquired, "For whom are you looking?" He immediately pointed to me with his right hand. I walked up to him and said, "Who are you, friend?" He muttered some words, probably his name in Arabic. I replied, "I do not understand," and, turning to the sitters, added: "I think he is a Soudanese." He assented to this by rapid inclinations of the head, followed by the words "El Mèhdi! el Mèhdi!" I said aloud to the circle: "I understand him to say he is the 'Mahdi'" (pronouncing the name as I had always heard it and seen it written). I then suggested in an inquiring tone: "Khertoum—Omdurman?" He once again assented by rapid head movements. "Where is Gordon?" I asked. He jerked his right hand over his shoulder with his thumb pointed towards the cabinet, and repeated this action three times as a silent reply to my question. As further conversation was out of the question, I said: "Friend, we are all pleased to see you here, and we hope you may visit us again on a future occasion." Whether or not this was interpreted to him by some entities present I cannot say, but he seemed to understand; a much more friendly expression came over his face; he bowed profoundly and disappeared within the folds of the cabinet curtains.

I retired to my seat astonished, a feeling shared by the other members of the circle. Why did it happen that the Mahdi should come to me? It is true that I was with the British army in the Soudan some years ago; also that I possess, and habitually use, a Malacca cane with which General Gordon led his ever-victorious army in China. I did not know Gordon, nor did I ever see him, but at one time I was on friendly terms with some of his near relations. He has since his death frequently manifested to me by direct voice, by clairvoyance, clairaudience, and through automatic writing. Can it be that this spirit from what we must believe to be a high sphere brought his one-time enemy to a friendly, sympathetic circle to learn that he had passed out, and thus to realise the truth of eternal progress to higher states of being?

## THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Thirtieth Annual General Meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance was held on Thursday, March 26th, at 4 p.m., at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., Mr. H. Withall, Vice-President, in the chair.

The Chairman, having stated that it was his turn for retiring from the Council, was unanimously re-elected.

In commenting on the balance-sheet, Mr. Withall said that there had been some loss in subscriptions during the past year owing to a falling off in the number of Associates. The number of Members was one less than in 1912, but the number of Associates had dropped by thirty-six. It had been suggested that loss of subscriptions must be balanced by a reduction in the society's programme, but he did not see how this could be done. The fortnightly lectures at the Salon were an expensive item, but they were a feature of the Alliance, and, through the columns of LIGHT, were read in all parts of the world. The rather heavy cost of the Tuesday séances was due to the fact that Members were allowed to attend free, but this privilege was an inducement to persons to join as Members rather than as Associates. He thought that the change made in sending library books to Members carriage free had answered. During the year an element of attractiveness had been added to the Friday afternoon meetings by the provision of tea, Mrs. Mathieson, one of the Members, kindly acting as hostess. The Alliance could not begrudge the outlay on this innovation as it had had the effect of increasing the attendance from ten or twelve to thirty or forty. He (Mr. Withall) thought, moreover, that the increased harmony of conditions which it had created had enabled Mrs. Wallis's control, "Morambo," to do better work.

Mr. Bush thought it probable that most of those who joined the Alliance were inquirers. After a time if they were disappointed with the result of their investigation they gave it up; while if they became satisfied they felt that they did not need to attend any longer and therefore

retired. Could they not be induced to recognise the fact that the Alliance was a pioneer society requiring funds to carry on its work, and to feel that as a matter of principle they were called upon to support it as a pioneering movement?

The adoption of the annual report and balance-sheet was moved by Mr. D. Gow, seconded by Mrs. Mary Gordon, and carried unanimously.

The proceedings closed with votes of thanks to the spirit helpers of the Alliance, and to the Chairman and staff for their valuable services.

The following is a copy of the report:—

The Council, while unable to record an increase in the membership of the Alliance during the year 1913, is yet able to point with satisfaction to a growing interest in matters psychical on the part of the general public, and to the fact that during the year under review the fortnightly meetings in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, were marked by large attendances of Members, Associates and friends, while the smaller meetings at the offices of the Alliance showed that the interest in the various subjects presented was fully maintained.

At the fortnightly meetings at the Salon in Suffolk-street, the following lectures and addresses were delivered:—

"Psychic Development: Its Relation to Body and Mind," by Mr. Percy R. Street; "The Spiritual Life as Expressed in Greek Art," by the Rev. Lucking Tavener; "A Theosophic Conception of the Invisible Worlds," by Mr. J. I. Wedgwood; "The Spiritual Aspect of the Woman's Movement," by Mrs. Despard; "What Spiritualism Means to Me and Some Messages Received," by Miss Estelle W. Stead; "Spiritual Emancipation by the Elimination of Fear," by Mr. E. W. Wallis; "The Psychic Element in Folk-Lore," by Mr. Angus McArthur; "Hands of Famous People," by "Cheiro"; "Psychophasms and Skotographs," by Miss Felicia Scatterd; "The Early Experiences of the Ordinary Man in the After Life" (trance address), by Mr. J. J. Morse; "Psychic Evolution from the Point of View of the Scientist and the Spiritualist," by Miss Lind-af-Hageby; "Science and Mysticism," by the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis; and "W. T. Stead and His Work for Spiritualism," by Miss Edith K. Harper.

The *Conversazione* held on October 23rd last was conspicuous both by reason of the large and representative gathering which it attracted—including friends from many other countries—and also by the highly successful clairvoyant demonstrations of Mr. A. V. Peters. Mr. Karl Kaps' band was a feature of the evening, the musical portion of the programme giving especial gratification to the younger members of the audience.

Mr. Percy R. Street continued his work of healing under spirit control throughout the year, effecting many cures as well as giving marked relief in the more obstinate maladies.

The various meetings and classes held in the Rooms of the Alliance for clairvoyance, psychic development, and kindred subjects, over which Mrs. M. H. Wallis, Mr. Percy R. Street, Mr. J. A. Wilkins and Mrs. H. A. Bell presided, either as mediums or conductors, were well attended and appear to have given general satisfaction. The thanks of the Alliance are due to the friends mentioned and to others for invaluable services in these directions.

The Council has to deplore the loss of many friends and adherents—some of them eminent in the movement of Spiritualism, or in their own particular walk of life. There passed away during the year under review Alfred Russel Wallace, O.M., distinguished alike as Spiritualist, scientist and humanist. Another veteran, more closely associated with us, was Mr. James Robertson, of Glasgow, whose transition occurred in October last after a record of long and valuable services to the movement. Mr. Robertson was one of the stalwarts of our cause. Well read in its literature, he was a forcible speaker and voluminous writer, outspoken in the expression of his convictions and beliefs. In July we had to record the transition of another deservedly honoured veteran, Mr. Arthur Holden, and the following month the Alliance was deprived of a staunch supporter and friend by the passing

of Mr. W. P. Browne. Earlier in the year the journalism of the movement lost one of its most active and earnest workers by the sudden death, in June, of Mrs. Annie Bright, Editor of "The Harbinger of Light." Amongst others of those who departed during the year and whose names appeal to us were the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, Mrs. Carr Shaw, Mr. B. B. Hill, the Rev. G. W. Allen, Dr. Forbes Winslow, Mr. J. H. Mitchener, and Mrs. Z. Adams Willard (Lizzie Doten). The list would be a dolorous one, but for our conviction that new friends will be raised up to take the places of the old ones we have lost.

One of the events of the year was the visit of Professor Hyslop, the well-known Secretary of the American Society for Psychical Research, who was given a cordial reception at 110, St. Martin's-lane on October 1st. His visit to this country was a notable instance of the activity in psychical interest to which reference has already been made. Other receptions given by the Alliance at its rooms during the year were the following: To Mrs. Minnie Nordica (farewell on her departure to South Africa), to Mrs. Gillespie, to Dr. Peebles, and to the American visitors after the Geneva Congress. There was also a Social Gathering at the opening of the new Session in January.

The séances for production of the direct voice given by Mrs. Etta Wriedt in Rothesay and elsewhere, and, later, those of the Rev. Susanna Harris were also notable events in the history of our Movement during the year.

The year 1913 will stand out in the history of the movement by reason of the momentous statement by Sir Oliver Lodge at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science held at Birmingham in September last. Sir Oliver, as will be remembered, sent a thrill throughout the educated world by his declaration that evidence had been attained of the existence of discarnate intelligence and the possibility of its interaction with us on the material side, or in plain and simple terms that the existence of spirits and the reality of spirit-communion were proven. The pronouncement was received with satisfaction, with astonishment or with hostility, according to the class of minds to which it was addressed, but, generally, the Press and the Pulpit were sympathetic or at least respectful, and the impact of the suggestion on the thought of the time gave our subject an impetus that is very far from exhausted, and is still awakening activities in many quarters which are likely to provide us with some pleasant surprises in days to come.

Although not an event occurring in the year under review, the Council cannot forbear an allusion here to the heavy loss sustained by the Alliance and by the movement at large in the transition of Mr. E. W. Wallis, the Secretary, who was also Editor of *LIGHT*. Their condolences with the family of our departed friend and tributes to his life and work have found expression elsewhere, and need not, therefore, be repeated here.

The Council, while grateful for the support of both Members and Associates, ventures to express the hope that those in the latter class, when satisfied of the reality of the subject and its immense importance to the world, will become Members and thus further strengthen the hands of the Council.

They ask that both Members and Associates will make known the objects of the Alliance and the nature of its work, feeling sure that those like-minded will welcome the opportunity to join hands with them and help forward a movement which belongs to the spiritual evolution of humanity.

Signed on behalf of the Council,

HENRY WITHALL,

FEBRUARY 24TH, 1914.

Acting President.

**SYMBOLISM AND ITS MEANINGS.**—Some persons object to the symbolic method on the ground that everybody gets different meanings from the same phenomena. Would it not be as reasonable to object to the blood in our bodies from which each gland derives a different secretion? Are we to complain of the emptiness of a storehouse on the ground that its contents are so numerous and so varied?—C. E. BENHAM.

## JEANNE D'ARC: HER VISIONS AND VOICES.

By L. V. H. WITLEY.

An Address delivered to the Members, Associates and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, March 19th, 1914, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Mr. Henry Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

*(Continued from page 164)*

To me an important argument for the belief in the reality of Joan's visions and voices is the fact that they came to her, not in some cloistered cell, after a long course of asceticism and retirement from the cares and allurements of the world, but in the open air in the summer sunshine. I have no word to utter against visions in cloistered cells or darkened rooms; all I say at the moment is that in Joan's case the evidence is so much the stronger and the probability of hallucination so much the less. Thus, her very first vision came on a summer afternoon when she was sitting, as she was accustomed to do, in the garden within sight of the village church. Again and again the vision reappeared, chiefly out of doors, in the silence and freedom of the fields or wood or garden. The Church which delivered Joan to death as a heretic and an invoker of demons is now glad enough to recognise her as a heroine and a saint of God. On the walls of the Roman Catholic Cathedral at Westminster is a fresco or mosaic of the Maid, and in many churches in France there are statues of her, but there always seems to me to be something incongruous in Joan being thought of as immured even in a church. She belongs out of doors, free, unhampered, unhindered, breathing the free air, and with the open and unimpeded sky above her. The statues of her at Rouen, Compiègne, and the other towns intimately associated with her glorious story, placed in the open air, seem to be so much more in accord with her genius and her life. She belongs primarily and most of all, not to the Church, certainly not to the ecclesiastics, who were her greatest traducers and enemies, but to the nation, to the people, to humankind in general.

Another point of interest may be noted, viz., that, although she loved her saints with all a woman's passion and gratitude, her chief and central devotion was given, not to them, but to her Master. Devotion to Jesus was the deep foundation of her belief before she undertook her great adventure; and in this faith she chose to live and die. The last word on her lips was "Jesus!" Yet of her Master she never beheld any vision. I have said this is a point of interest; it is also a point of importance. If there had been any tendency to hallucination on the part of the Maid, we should naturally have thought that the vision to come to her would have been that of Jesus Himself: the fact that her chief devotion was given to Him, while it was the saints of Jesus who appeared to her, goes to uphold the reality of the presence and guidance of those saints.

One final remark only can be made upon this aspect of my subject, viz., the significance and value to herself of Joan's experiences. The point I now draw attention to is perhaps most important of all. It is this: Joan's faith was abundantly justified by its outcome. Evelyn Underhill suggests that it is particularly true of Christian mysticism that it

regenerates, enriches, lifts to new heights of vision, will, and love the whole man, not some isolated spiritual part of him; and sends him back to give, according to his capability as teacher, artist, or man of action, "more abundant life" to the surrounding world. The real achievements of Christian mysticism are more clearly seen in Catherine of Siena regenerating her native city, Joan of Arc leading the armies of France, Ignatius creating the Society of Jesus, Fox giving life to the Society of Friends, than in all the ecstasies and austerities of the Egyptian "fathers in the desert."

Whether or not we agree with Miss Underhill in granting that this is the special prerogative of Christian mysticism, we can rejoice, at any rate, that in so many cases the Christian mystics have been noted as much for practical ministry to their fellows as for their personal devotion to their Master. In Joan's case certainly the mystical experiences and the deeds done were so associated and so combined that, especially when we

remember that the subsequent deeds were the outcome of the prior experiences, we seem almost bound to admit that not only was Joan's testimony to her experiences sincere, but her experiences themselves, which gave rise to deeds and feats patent to the world, were as real as the facts to which they gave rise.

Turning now to the meaning and the message of Joan to the life and thought of our own day, the most obvious lesson, perhaps, is the one I have just hinted at—viz., that spirituality is not a hindrance but a help to the true and noble living of life. I shall refer to this point again, but meantime we may recall that the recognition of a spiritual order of things and of the survival of the soul after physical dissolution makes, or should make, a tremendous difference, not only to the outlook of life, but to its depth and value. True, Joan had such assurance and evidence and certitude of the existence of that other and greater and higher world as is granted to but few; yet, in face of the points which I have just adduced in regard to her own experience, her testimony and her life, taken together, are, perhaps, one of the most convincing evidences in human history of the existence of a spiritual world, and of the reality and the value of communion with, and ministry from, those living in that world.

We shall get the most and the best help from the great saints and heroes of mankind, not by emphasising the difference in altitude and in attainment as compared with ourselves, but by realising that we are one with them and they are one with us. To quote Evelyn Underhill once more:—

We are, one and all, the kindred of the mystics, and it is by dwelling upon this kinship, by interpreting—so far as we may—their great declarations in the light of our own little experience, that we shall learn to understand them best. Strange and far away though they seem, they are not cut off from us by some impassable abyss. They belong to us. . . . The mystics are heroic examples of the life of the spirit, just as the great artists and the great discoverers are our heroic examples of the life of beauty and the life of truth.

Do not think that I am about to point or to paint the moral of the life and work of Joan. If Joan's personality does not make its own impression upon you, as you ponder over her story, and as you tender to her the reverent homage due to one of the sweetest and best of humankind, nothing that I can say will be effective. But I cannot forbear referring to one lesson, doubtless needed in her days, but needed as much or more to-day; I mean the duty of personal testimony to personal experience, and the privilege of suffering, if need be, in the carrying out of that duty. If a personal reference of my own may be pardoned here, I may say that only a few months ago I was in conversation with an American doctor of divinity who said to me: "My friend, if you had lived a few hundred years back, you would have been burned at the stake." More recently, a correspondent wrote to another friend of mine protesting against one of my books (which, by-the-by, I doubt if he had ever read), and pointing out that in the days of Saul the penalty for "seeking unto the dead" was death. One shudders to think what accumulation of punishment this critic might deem to be an appropriate penalty for infliction to-day!

I could devote a whole lecture to the recital of experiences which have been confided to me by readers of my books, but what I desire to emphasise just now is the necessity, and the duty, of personal testimony being borne, at suitable times and in suitable places, to personal experiences as to contact with and ministry from the spirit-world. Everywhere sad hearts are craving for just the comfort and the inspiration which nothing but this personal testimony can afford. I give a sentence or two from one of the latest letters received by me—a letter, by the way, from India, written by the widow of a missionary:—

I feel I must write and thank you for the comfort your books have been to me. I am connected with a Bengalee Mission in Calcutta; how often I wish we could have books like yours translated into the vernacular! It is heartrending to see and hear all the poor Hindu widows have to go through and nothing to give them the comfort they need. I try to explain things as simply as possible, but it is difficult. Pray for us and the millions of sorrowing hearts in India.

*(To be continued.)*

OFFICE OF LIGHT, 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, APRIL 11TH, 1914.

## Light :

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

### EASTER-TIDE.

To the popular mind the idea of Easter as a Church festival has presented itself in varied aspects. One may be typically represented by the old legend of the dance of the sun in joyful celebration of the Resurrection, another is expressed in the lines of a poet of the Church who sings lugubriously enough of the winter wind soughing over churchyard knolls, and proceeds to a note of mild cheerfulness concerning the message of Easter for "sinful souls." But on a general view of the festival and its associations, one is forced to the conclusion that the story of Easter is but another illustration of a blind devotion to the letter that kills, and an equally blind disregard of the Spirit that gives life.

Let us briefly trace the history of Easter by way of throwing light on the festival, and its true significance in the life of mankind. Its origin is quite joyous enough to justify the fabled dance of the sun. The name Easter comes down to us from the old Teutonic mythology, being derived from Eostre or Ostara, the Anglo-Saxon Goddess of Spring, to whom the month of April was dedicated. Latin, Greek, and other synonyms come from the Chaldee or Aramaic form of the Hebrew name of the Passover. Neither in the New Testament nor in the writings of the apostolic Fathers is there any indication of the observance of Easter. The early Christians continued to observe the established Jewish festivals, though in a new spirit, as commemorative of events those festivals had foreshadowed. Thus into the Passover came the conception of Christ as the true Pascal Lamb and the first fruits of the dead. The new spirit, instead of being left free to create forms of its own nature, was forced into moulds of thought already existing and accepted.

The tyranny of the letter that followed this subversion of things would to our modern minds be amusing were the results of it not so serious. Discords, for many centuries unresolved, were soon jarring throughout Christendom. At first there was discussion on the point of date, between the Christian and the Jewish elements of the Church, the latter holding to the fifteenth day of the moon, and the former to the first day of the week. The Western and the Eastern Churches differed so obstinately that a settlement of their quarrel was one of the objects leading Constantine to summon the famous Council of Nicæa, in the year 325. At that time it was decided to have Easter kept on Sunday, and on the same Sunday throughout the world. Then a new trouble arose in fixing the period of the paschal moon. Easter falls upon the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox. Attempts were made to fix the correct time by taking cycles of years—8, 84, 532, and 19 years respectively. The Gregorian correction of the Calendar in 1582 led to further dissension, and not until

1752 was the Gregorian Calendar adopted in Great Britain and Ireland.

As regards the properly Christian meaning of the Easter festival, the historic differences of view are more familiar to many of us. Heresy upon the doctrine of the Resurrection in its orthodox form is perhaps as common to-day as upon any other point of theology—is, in fact, so general that the heretical attitude is little remarked. Unable to withstand the destructive action of modern science, this dogma is crumbling away even amongst the orthodox, while to the multitude it appears mere mythology.

In its unworldly wisdom the Church has seen fit to repudiate the only live belief that might have saved the Easter tenet (in essence so precious and potent) by a rational interpretation. For in the transcendental psychology of modern Spiritualism there is the alchemy of concept to change the old theological form into one grounded not upon irrational faith but on reason and knowledge. To the theologically unsophisticated mind the problem of life after death as put by Spiritualism is quite simple and easy, in comparison with the form of it that insists upon an imaginary resurrection of the disintegrated body at an unknown time infinitely remote.

The manner of observance of Easter by the crowd, chiefly or wholly as a welcome season of secular holiday, is less a reproach to its sentiment of veneration than a tribute to the common healthy instincts of humanity. Hampstead Heath or Hampton Court on a sunny Easter Monday is perhaps a spectacle no more irreverent at heart than many cloistered places on Easter Sunday. Be that as it may, we have no sort of right to expect from the masses, any more than from the classes, a religious expression of reverence in matters that have not been made intelligible to them. The first fruits of the dead were reaped ages before Adam was created, taking the chronology of that mythological event upon any interpretation ever accepted. The difficulty in regard to this doctrine that the Church has to deal with to-day is not defence of it as a question of first fruits of the dead two thousand years ago, but of whether at any time there are any such fruits at all. For although materialism as a dogma is technically dead, it is a living ferment still in the general mind; not without good reason, too, because a Spiritualism that excludes the essence of materialism is no more true than a materialism that excludes essential Spiritualism. The materialistic thinker who could only smile indulgently at the belief in a resurrection of the body, after it had during millions of years been reduced to molecular particles and scattered thousands upon thousands of times from form to form, had reason enough and to spare for his scepticism; and he is in danger of concluding that any body of thought in which such a conception finds a prominent place is unworthy of serious attention. He may, however, be grievously wrong in his deduction, right as his criticism is.

In the resurrection as the philosophy of Spiritualism presents it there is nothing really incongruous to the concepts of the latest science, iconoclastic as at first sight it may seem. Between Easter as a Pagan festival celebrating the return of the Spring, the renewal of life in Nature, and Easter as a movable feast of the Church to signalise the rising of Christ from the dead, there may seem to be a wide difference. But the difference is more apparent than real, when we have regard to the symbolical side of things. Spiritualism reconciles the two views, giving to the dead letter of forms and rites a living meaning. And from this point of view it is clear that there is no vital antagonism between Spiritualism and the Church. Each has a common origin and aim, and the story of Easter illustrates the fact.

## THE TIME OF DAY, RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

BY RALPH SHIRLEY.

An Address delivered to the Members, Associates and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, April 2nd, 1914, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Mr. Henry Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

MR. WITHALL, in opening the meeting, said: I wish, first of all, to report to you that the money you gave me for the Wallis memorial has been disbursed in the way proposed. The mortgage on Mr. Wallis's house has been discharged, the creditor to whom a good deal was owing on account of the bungalows has also been paid; and there was a balance over which I have paid to Mrs. Wallis. In this week's LIGHT she returns her thanks to you. Personally I believe the raising of that money has saved her life. She was in a very poor state of health and the call from the other side was sufficiently strong to make her quit her mortal form; but when she found her responsibilities were much reduced and people were so sympathetic she took courage and began to get well, and I think now that her health is very satisfactory.

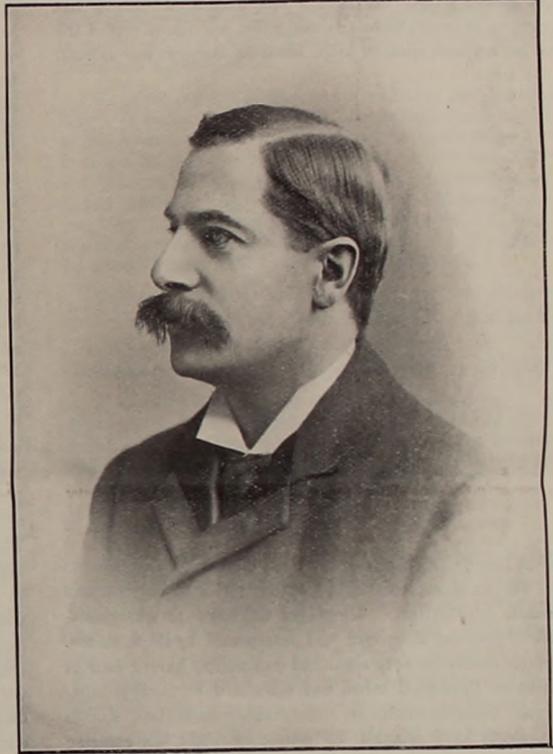
We Spiritualists, I think, have a deeper insight into Nature and its wonderful workings than the majority of mankind, and through that insight I believe we shall realise the fact that this is a God-governed world. We do not all agree as to what God is. To some it is necessary to think of Him as a personal God—an anthropomorphic deity, who, having evolved the universe, directs it from outside. There are others who feel that a God in the shape of a man is a limited God and that God must be the sum total of everything that is. Whichever view you have, you must feel that whatever is going on in this world there must be eternal progress, but there are times when we look around and get a little disheartened. We feel that things are not going as they should. But our view is so very partial, and therefore we must endeavour to realise that, however contrary in appearance, things must be going on as well as they can under the circumstances. We must recollect, however, that man has the power of either retarding progress or helping it. It is at times when we are disheartened that we need to review the past and present and thereby predicate the future. I rather think that that is the ideal of our speaker—that he wishes to forecast the future in the light of the past.

Mr. Ralph Shirley is not what we call a Spiritualist, although he knows as much as we do on the subject, but it is the people who stand a little aloof who generally are the most careful observers, and observe most correctly. The title is a little vague, but that is, perhaps, to be expected from the Editor of "The Occult Review." And, as all things in the past which have been hidden have either been or are being revealed, so we may expect Mr. Shirley to reveal to us the full meaning of the title he has chosen.

I can only say we are very pleased to have him, and I have no doubt we shall profit by his address.

MR. SHIRLEY said: We seem to-day to have left the Nineteenth Century very far behind, and in an age when the main object of life appears to be a desperate endeavour to be up to date, one finds oneself wondering what the standpoint of the next generation will be, and whether the leaders of thought of that day will look back upon our views and opinions with something of the same tolerant contempt for their narrow-mindedness with which we now regard the once much-lauded dogmas of Nineteenth Century Materialism. One point is very noticeable with regard to recent changes in the scientific and religious outlook, and this is that to a great extent they have followed on scientific invention and discovery. The interest in Psychical Research, and in Telepathy in particular, received an enormous impetus from the discovery

of the practical utility of wireless telegraphy. Theories are constantly pooh-poohed by the multitude until they are confronted with actual facts of everyday life which appear to them to be these theories translated into practice. The average man acts but does not think. If he found himself in a position to walk through a brick wall, he would at once believe in the Fourth Dimension. Thus wireless telegraphy has made him believe in telepathy. This explains how it is that newspapers which never ceased to deride the conclusions of the most eminent scientists on matters psychical, at once began to adopt a different tone as soon as the discoveries of Marconi became public property. The same argument applies to the discovery of radium and kindred elements, opening out a limitless vista of practical possibilities, among them the probable truth of the basic facts of the teaching of the once derided alchemists. Other



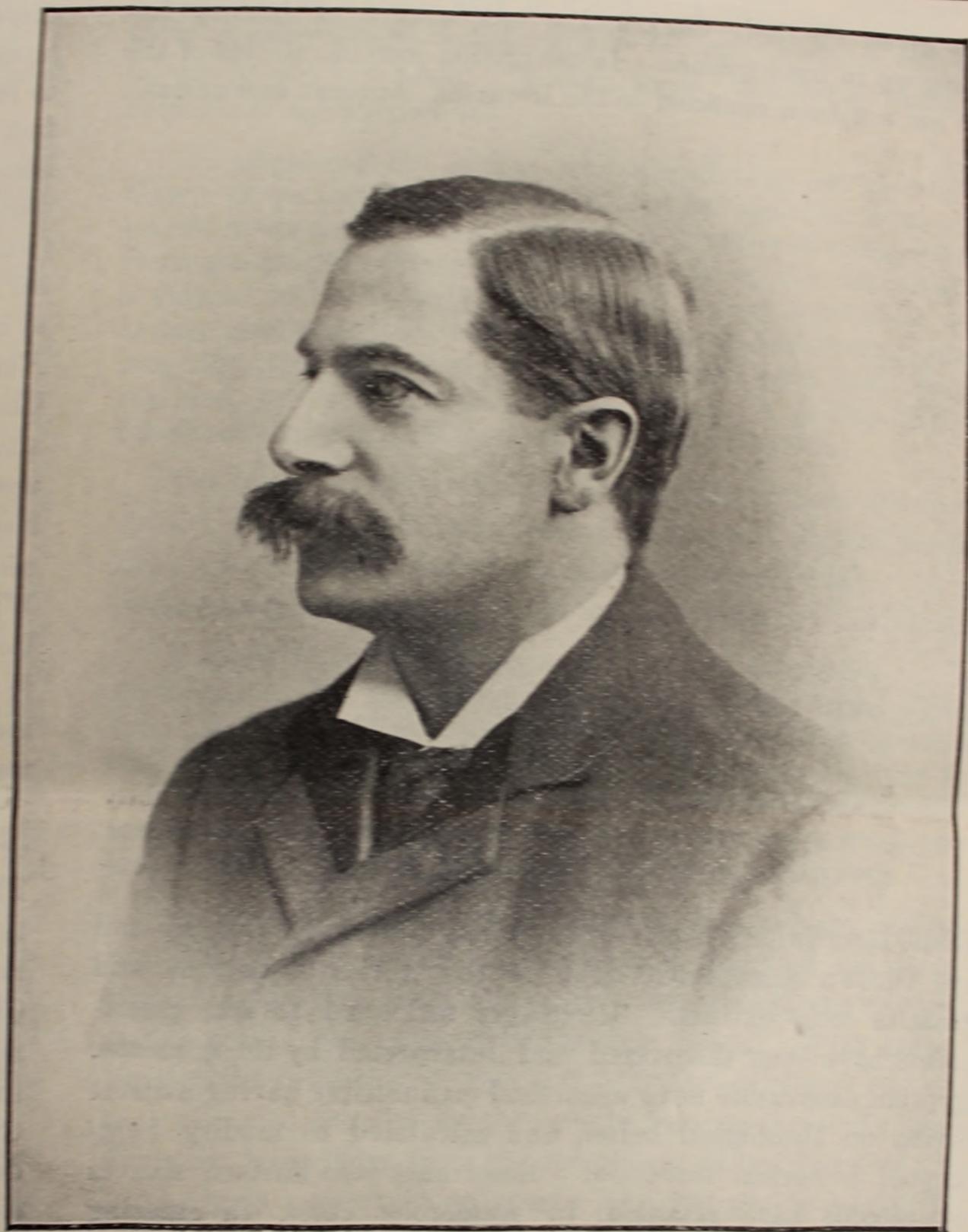
MR. RALPH SHIRLEY.

Mr. Ralph Shirley, who is probably best known to our readers as Editor of "The Occult Review" (which he started in 1905), was born in December, 1865, at Oxford, where his father was Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History. It was in the autumn of 1892 that Mr. Shirley became connected with the house of Wm. Rider and Son, then carried on in Bartholomew-close, E.C. The firm's publishing business was at that time entirely concerned with trade journalism, but after several years the main control passed into Mr. Shirley's hands, since when enormous strides have been made; the firm had to move into larger premises and is now recognised as the pioneer house in the publication of works on occult subjects. Mr. Shirley's own interest in things occult dates back to when he was twenty-five, but it was then merely an interest in astrology. Later he took up other branches of occult study, though he regretfully owns that, as a business man, he has not so much time to devote to the subject as he would like.

discoveries, such as the possibilities inherent in aviation, and the storing up of impressions of light and sound in the various forms to which this knowledge has been practically applied, though not affecting the psychic standpoint so directly or so intimately, have still produced a very marked effect on the public mind by continuously lessening the tendency to regard with incredulity unfamiliar and unrecognised hypotheses. Mr. Vanderbilt, on meeting George Westinghouse as a young man, after having had explained to him the principle of his vacuum brake, exclaimed in annoyance at the waste of his time, "What, do you mean to tell me that you can stop trains with air? I have no time to talk with fools." The attitude of Huxley towards the defenders of Spiritualism was all of a piece with the attitude of

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practical possibilities, among them the probable truth of the  
basic facts of the teaching of the once derided alchemists. Other



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Vanderbilt to George Westinghouse. He had not time to talk with fools. And this attitude was the secret of the failure of Nineteenth Century Science to come to grips with facts and to formulate a coherent and intelligible philosophy in agreement with observed phenomena.

While scientific discovery and invention have been at work upsetting and remodelling the old-established dogmas of science, other factors have been in operation which have played havoc with orthodox religion and torn to tatters the outworn creeds, while they have failed to invade the innermost sanctuary of religious truth. Hand in hand with the development of more accurate scientific methods has grown up a surer and more painstaking investigation of historical documentary evidence. History during the last fifty years has been, I might almost say, rewritten, in the light of contemporary evidence which had remained unread for centuries. The archives of the great libraries of the world have given up their dead, and a new science of history has sprung up in consequence. Investigation into the secrets of the past has not been confined to the libraries. Ancient monuments,

ancient inscriptions, even ancient cities have been dug up and have thrown unexpected light on the stories of nations and dynasties long extinct. Languages unknown to our grandparents have been discovered and interpreted by these means. Egyptian excavators have unearthed manuscripts having a direct bearing on theological belief, and calculated to modify long-accepted historical tradition. Researches into Eastern sources and records have revealed, in numerous cases, an amazing parallelism with Biblical records of a later date. Bible stories, in the light of such discoveries, have come to wear the appearance of older traditions in a new dress, adapted as a setting for later historical fact. And these Biblical records themselves have been subjected to a critical analysis which has shown them to be in many cases composite records cleverly dovetailed together so as to bear the appearance of the narrative of a single authority who, in reality, was only responsible for the editorial work. The names of the alleged authors have been called in question and in many cases chronological evidence has proved them to be unreliable. Interpolations have been detected and portions of the supposed original documents have been found to bear unquestionable indications of their addition by a later hand. Worse than this, from the orthodox standpoint, the essential doctrines of Christianity have been identified as the teachings of pre-Christian communities, while careful reading of the Scripture records of the Founder of Christianity has failed to show justification for the position taken up by the exponents of the orthodox faith as regards some of the most salient dogmas of their creed. We search in vain in the words of the Founder, who was popularly supposed to have offered himself as the final sacrificial atonement for the sins of the human race, for any indication of such a purpose in his life and death. Nor, indeed, are we able to detect in his teaching or in his practice any recognition of the elaborate temple ceremonial of sacrifice of which his crucifixion has been held to be the consummation. Rather, as the last of the prophets, has he appeared to adopt the spiritual attitude of his predecessors, ever opposed to the priestly caste,

and to echo the prophetic warning against those who thought their God delighted in offerings of blood. "Burnt offering and sin offering thou wouldst not, but that I should come to do Thy will." "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a lowly and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." It has appeared, then, on investigation, that as the teaching of the prophets and the priests had been in earlier days diametrically opposed, so the teaching of the Apostle Paul failed to find substantiation in that of his Master, while evidence is steadily accumulating to show that the two apostles who were traditionally held to have jointly founded the edifice of Gentile Christianity were throughout their actual lives open enemies of each other's Gospel.

While documentary evidence has thus established the grave discrepancies of the ordinarily accepted interpretation of the Gospel narrative, the biologist and geologist have been at work on a task which has had, as one of its incidental results, the disproving of the entire Biblical account of the origin of the human race. The fact that this is now almost universally regarded as legendary even in theological circles, must not blind us to the fact that fifty years ago it was accepted by the Church as unhesitatingly as are now the birth and crucifixion of Jesus. The discovery of the utterly unscientific character of the book of Genesis led directly to the first great revolution in the ecclesiastical standpoint. The books of the Bible could no longer be regarded as in any intelligible sense divinely inspired, but as long as the New Testament record remained essentially unimpaired, the Church could continue its old teaching modified to suit the altered scientific standpoint. A new movement set in when much of the story of Jesus and the credentials of Christianity itself were proved to be built on shifting sand. This movement is with us still, and at the moment in process of evolution. Whither will it lead? A book which will, I think, one day be looked back upon as marking an era in religious thought seems to show what will be the eventual outcome of this new development. According to the system here taught, the Christ is no mere historical personage, but above and beyond this a spiritual ideal, and an eternal verity. Religion is not a thing of the past or of any one age, but an ever present, ever recurring actuality. The Gospel narrative in so far as it is a narrative of fact is typical of an eternal truth. The Christ is potentially immanent in every man as the oak in the acorn, and the evolution of the Christ is the be-all and end-all of true Christianity. In this manner, the authors of "The Perfect Way" claim as their divine mission the interpretation of the temporal in terms of the eternal. Critical analysis has no terrors for such a religion. It is only destructive to that which "being untrue has not in it the element of perpetuity." As our authors truly say:—

The science of biblical exegesis has made it obvious to every perceptive mind that the sacred books, so far from being infallible records of actual events, abound with inaccuracies, contradictions and interpolations; that sacred persons, if they existed at all, had histories differing widely from those narrated of them; that sacred events could not have occurred in the manner stated; and that sacred doctrines are, for the most part, either intrinsically absurd, or common to systems yet more ancient, whose claims to sanctity are denied.

Thus, to take the leading items of Christian belief, the whole story of the Incarnation, the expectation of the Messiah, the announcement by the angel, the conception by the Virgin, the birth at midnight in a cave, the name of the immaculate mother, the appearance to shepherds of the celestial host, the visit of the Magi, the flight from the persecuting Herod, the slaughter of the Innocents, the finding of the divine boy in the temple, the baptism, the fasting and trial in the wilderness, the conversion of the water into wine, and other like marvels, the triumphal entry into the holy city, the passion, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the ascension, and much of the teaching ascribed to the Saviour—all these are variously attributed also to Osiris, Mithras, Iacchos, Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, and others, at dates long antecedent to the Christian era. And monuments and sculptures still exist, showing that the entire story of the Divine Man of the Gospels was, long before Moses, taught to communicants and celebrated in sacraments in numberless colleges of sacred mysteries.

Adopting this position, Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland maintained that "To be a student of religion, to be a theologian in the true sense, it is necessary to have knowledge not of one religion only, but of all religions; not of one sacred

book only, but of all sacred books; and to deal with all as with the one and with the one as with all, to handle the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita, the Lalita Vistara, the Zend Avesta, and the Kabbala with the same reverence as the Old and New Testaments." In this way the Creation, the Fall, the Redemption, and the Ascension, rescued from the tomb of the past, became living and eternal verities enacted by every child of God in his own soul.

Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,  
But not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn;  
The cross of Golgotha thou lookest to in vain,  
Unless within thyself it be set up again.

Not only does this new interpretation adopt the essentials of Christianity in their cosmic aspect as eternal truths under all and every condition of life, but it also interprets ancient mythology in terms of cosmic symbolism.

There is no mode of matter in which the potentiality of personality, and therein of man, does not subsist. For every molecule is a mode of the universal consciousness. Without consciousness is no being. For consciousness *is* being.

The earliest manifestation of consciousness appears in the obedience paid to the laws of gravitation and chemical affinity, which constitute the basis of the later evolved organs of assimilation. And the perception, memory, and experience represented in man are the accumulation of long ages of toil and thought, gradually advancing, through the development of the consciousness, from inorganic combinations upward to God. Such is the secret meaning of the old mystery-story which relates how Deucalion and Pyrrha, under the direction of Themis (Law), produced men and women from stones, and so peopled the renewed earth. The words of John the Baptist bear a similar signification: "Verily I say unto you, that even of these stones God is able to raise up children unto Abraham." And by children of Abraham are denoted that "spiritual Israel," the pure seekers after God, who finally attain and become one with the object of their quest.

A similar interpretation is applied to the story of the fall of man. By descending into matter, the soul takes upon herself the limitations and defects of matter; but such limitation is the only possible condition of the birth and evolution of the individual. The denser the matter, the greater its power of resistance. Universal consciousness may subsist unconditioned, immaterial, and timeless. The birth of the phenomenal world is conditioned and limited, and therefore by its very nature material, on whatever plane of consciousness we consider it.

Now this religion, although it is neither Christian nor Catholic in the accepted sense of these terms, is claimed by the authors of "The Perfect Way" to be both Christian and Catholic in their original and true sense. The root conception is the gradual evolution, through various forms and conditions, of the divine spark which, in itself, contains all the potentialities of its original divine source, however deeply submerged in matter, and which, through its origin, is of necessity immortal, though this immortality need not, therefore, imply the indefinite persistence of the Ego. A life or lives of materiality and the choice of the lower in place of the higher must inevitably force back the divine embryonic seed to its Divine Source, with the final result of death for the individual. For, apart from this divine spark, life in any true sense cannot subsist. This seed, sometimes symbolised as the Christ within us, contains, if nurtured and developed, the possibilities of infinite perfectibility. In the words of the poet, "Each soul holds all the oracles," and the aim of every Christian, if he be a true Christian, is to become a Christ. In this sense the Star of Bethlehem, whether it actually appeared or not to the wise men in the Bible story, typifies the divine guiding light without which the human Ego must make shipwreck on the rocks of materiality.

The curse of modern life is the curse of low aims, and this is why the ideal of Christhood is the one saving corrective, the one antidote to the worldly ambitions and material desires which, like the syrens of old, are ever seeking to drag us down to the lower material plane in which the light which is the one token of our divine origin must inevitably be swallowed and eclipsed.

(To be continued).

## THE HUMAN SOUL : ITS NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES.

### A THEOLOGICAL VIEW.

"The Human Soul and its Relations with other Spirits," by Dom Auscar Vonier, O.S.B., Abbot of Buckfast, issued with the approbation of the Archbishops of Westminster and Freiburg (cloth, 5s. net, B. Herder, 68, Great Russell-street, W.C.), sets out in simple language the views of the great Catholic philosophers and theologians on the subject. Leaving on one side the more contentious points, our chief interest in the work is in its opening definitions. Catholic philosophy apparently does not regard the immaterial part of a man's nature as divisible but as a unity. Consequently we do not have the familiar division of human personality into body, soul, and spirit. The human soul, we are told, is a spirit. A soul may be a spirit; and, *vice versa*, a spirit may be a soul. A vast class of souls (the souls of animals are instanced) are not spirits, and a vast class of spirits are not souls. Of man as an immaterial being two definitions are possible:—

We might call the human soul a soul that has spirit-functions; or we might call it a spirit that has soul-functions. The second definition is truer. . . . But in order of time, the soul-functions precede the spirit-functions; what the soul does first is this, to be to the body the source of higher sensations, and it is only gradually that it rises to pure spirit-functions. Human language, that speaks of the human spirit as a soul, is fully justified, precisely because in this life it is chiefly the soul-functions that force themselves upon our attention.

The term "spirit" implies total freedom from the laws of space; absence of all that is called matter; of all that is organic life; and complete lack of sensation or sensitive life. In their positive aspect the attributes of spirit include the following:—

A spirit is incorruptible, and therefore immortal. . . . A spirit has all his knowledge inborn or infused from above; a spirit sees everything by direct intuition; a spirit never goes back from a decision once taken; a spirit, by his very spirit nature, knows all those things that are inferior to him, with the exception of the free acts of rational creatures; a spirit always acts to the full extent of his knowledge and will-power.

To the objection that there does not seem to be in the human soul any of these attributes, the reply is that they belong to the state of separation from the body—the eternal, the permanent state—not to the state of transitory union. With regard to the mutual influence of soul and body the scholastic doctrine is that the soul benefits by the union, because the soul's intellect draws its knowledge from the storehouse of bodily senses; while to the body a spiritual substance like the soul is a principle of elevation, raising bodily senses to a higher plane—a teaching which recalls that fine verse in Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra":—

Let us not always say,  
"Spite of this flesh to-day,  
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"  
As the bird wings and sings,  
Let us cry, "All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"

D. R.

### THE LEAGUE OF DEFENCE.

Mr. James Lawrence sends us the following list of additional nominations for officers of the League:—

Mr. Percy Beard, London,  
" W. H. Elder, Aberdeen,  
" A. W. Orr, Kingston Hill, Surrey,  
" W. H. Robinson, Newcastle-on-Tyne,  
" Percy Street, Reading,  
" Henry Walker, Crewe,  
" William Walker, Buxton.

Mr. Lawrence sends us a copy of a letter received by him from Mr. A. W. Orr, cordially supporting the League and enclosing a cheque in aid of its objects.

Friends are asked to meet at Manchester between the afternoon and evening meetings of the Good Friday celebrations.

## MISS LILIAN WHITING.

During her recent stay in London Miss Lilian Whiting paid a visit to the office of *LIGHT*, and gave us an interesting account of impressions and experiences gathered on her latest trip to Europe. Her next book, we learn, will deal with the great Metropolis in some of its less familiar aspects. Though she does not hold, with Johnson, that when a man is tired of London he is tired of life, she is disposed to assent to Emerson's proposition, that London is the epitome of our times. From the standpoint of its psychic activities she naturally finds it of abounding interest, and this phase of the life of our modern Babylon will occupy a prominent place in her new work. She gave us some deeply interesting reminiscences of Oliver Wendell Holmes, and we learned of his leaning towards psychical subjects, which indeed found expression in some of the Autocrat's books, although the multitude of his other interests did not permit of his giving the subject any great degree of attention. Regarding the late Dr. Corson, Professor of Literature at Cornell University, she was able to give us much information gathered at first hand. Of Mrs. Minnie M. Soule, the medium through whom Dr. Corson gained so many of the remarkable experiences given in his posthumous book, Miss Whiting expressed the opinion that she was "the most delicate diviner of spiritual states" to be found to-day in the whole of America. Miss Whiting left England on Tuesday last on her return to her home in Boston, kindly promising that she would contribute an article to our pages so soon as opportunity permitted.

## DAY DAWN ON THE HILLS.

## A PARABLE OF COLOUR.

The light of dawn lies cold on the marshes, where the clear pools, ruffled ever and anon by the waking winds, shine with a wistful beauty. The birches and the rowans, swaying and shivering in the breeze, stand like phantoms on the hillside. Far off rise the peaks of the distant hills mantled in cloud. Even under the breaking light the scene has a lonely and desolate look. But as the grey moments creep past, and the radiance of the dawn deepens, there comes, with the falling of the wind, a feeling of expectancy. The waters of the marsh catch a faint gleam of crimson, and the rays from the eastern skies, falling upon the mists, pierce them with arrowy lights. The wreathing clouds which lie around the mountain tops deepen in colour till they become like masses of purple bloom. The light steals on apace, and the red hues reflected in the fern-pools thicken into lustrous scarlet. With its coming the sense of sadness passes; it is as though a clarion had sounded. The trees flash back the colour note from their trembling leaves. The heather flames with its message, and the white mist flushes into fiery radiance. Now comes the gold, at first in delicate pencils, and later in long sweeping shafts that shoot upwards from behind the distant hills and transfigure the whole face of the dawning day.

It was all a great parable in colour. The grey mystery that followed the dimming of the stars was succeeded by the vision of purple, the promise and prophecy of the yet "unrevealed light." Later came the warlike scarlet, full of the force of expanding life, martial and dominant, banishing the pallors and piercing the glooms with shafts of flame. And then came on the time of gold—achievement, the rayed crown of victory over the night, the shining mantle of the risen day. G.

## MEMORIAL TO MR. E. W. WALLIS.

The total subscriptions up to the 28th ult. amounted to £355 Os. 1d. We have since received the following:—

	£	s.	d.
G. T. G. ... ..	...	...	...
Dr. J. H. Pugh ... ..	0	10	6
Mr. D. Bannatyne (Johannesburg) ... ..	0	3	0

MISS MACCREADIE desires to notify her friends that she will be out of town until the 24th instant.

## SIDELIGHTS.

"Sepharial," in "Old Moore's Monthly Messenger" for April, quotes from the Paris correspondent of "The Express" the experience of Madame Raynaud, a nurse in a private hospital at Passy, who told the doctor there that she knew that she had died in 1840, at the age of nineteen, of consumption, and described the town and the house in which she had lived. It was a foreign town, although she had never been out of France. In some photographs of Siena in Italy the doctor recognised a house and a church exactly like those Mme. Raynaud had described. Without telling her where she was going, he took her to Siena. On the day of her arrival, she walked straight to the house she had described, and from there to the church. There she went to the tomb of a girl who had died of consumption in 1840 at the age of nineteen, and fell on it in a fainting fit. "Sympathetic clairvoyance" is the explanation to which "Sepharial" inclines, but to us it seems to point even more strongly to spirit influence.

A correspondent, "N. G. S.," regards the experience of Dr. Jessopp, related on page 137, as bearing out the theory that spirits, to be visible, must be materialised. He says: "Dr. Jessopp moves his arm and the figure vanishes, to reappear after an interval. Evidently Dr. Jessopp's power of seeing could not have been altered by his movement. The change then must have been in the spirit. I imagine the sudden motion to have disturbed the delicate arrangement of molecules and caused a dematerialisation, the previous arrangement being restored after an interval of rest. Do we know anything of the physical process of dematerialisation?" It must be admitted that we know very little, but it seems difficult to conceive of such instantaneous dematerialisation and rebuilding as this sudden vanishing and reappearance would demand; whereas, if the vision was subjective—a waking dream made possible by a certain condition of the doctor's brain at the time—that condition, with its attendant experience, might be disturbed by the slightest movement, to return again a little later. Of course this would not imply that the spiritual visitant had no real existence—only that he was not perceived by any outward sense any more than are the persons and scenes of our dreams, and that, consequently, there was no need for any materialisation. If man has a spiritual body, with spiritual organs of sight fitted to perceive hereafter the denizens and scenery of another plane of being, why should not those organs under certain conditions (when, for instance, the physical organs are suffering from prolonged strain) come even now into occasional use?

"N.G.S." goes on to raise another point: "This spirit had been executed, and in the case of the haunting of the coal mine (p. 142) the woman had been murdered; so that in both cases death had been violent and accompanied no, doubt by, very strong emotions. The question arises whether these haunting spirits are of the same nature as those of the séances, or whether they are, as I believe the Theosophists hold, mere etheric shells, or thought-forms created at the moment of death. A spirit might very well haunt a library and share his studies with Dr. Jessopp, but why a woman who has been brutally murdered should choose (or be compelled) to haunt the scene of the crime and utter blood-curdling shrieks is not easy to understand." There is much that we do not yet understand. We can only make a suggestion. As psychometrists, by handling various objects, can read something of the scenes and incidents which have been associated with them, it is clear that those objects retain the impression of such scenes and incidents. May we not conceive that where an event occurs which is attended by great emotion or passionate excitement, the impression on surrounding objects may be so strong as to be conveyed even without contact to the minds of sensitive persons in the neighbourhood?

A correspondent who was present at the anniversary service of the Marylebone Association, reported in our columns last week, sends us the following remarks to which, as being offered in a fraternal spirit, we give space here. "May I offer one criticism?" he writes. "It is not of the speaker or speakers, but of the congregation. We (my friend and I) noted that the meeting was called a 'service,' but we missed what that word usually implies—the withdrawal from worldly distractions and cares in what the Quaker poet describes as—

'... that deep hush subduing all  
Our words and works that drown  
The tender whisper of Thy call.'

The 'still dews of quietness' that we find so refreshing in our usual place of worship on Sunday evenings were painfully absent. Will our friends take the hint?"

The greater part of "Notes of the Month" in the April "Occult Review" is devoted to an appreciation of "Letters from a Living Dead Man," the remarkable work which we noticed on p. 157. Mr. Shirley regards it as obvious that the writer took over with him to the other side the keen intelligence of an investigator as well as the impartiality of the judicial mind, and questions whether the same can be said of any previous communication from the other world. It is this fact which renders the book "so original and so supremely absorbing." Compared with it, in Mr. Shirley's opinion, all previous records seem trivial and commonplace. Lily Nightingale, in "Occultist and Mystic: A Study in Differentiation," finds in occultism the trilogy of endurance, courage, and obedience, while for mysticism the requisite qualities appear to be self-sacrifice, patience, and sympathy. Phil Campbell's "Some more French Stories" have a touch of poetic beauty and charm. "Regulus" presents the results of a careful study of some eighteen theatrical horoscopes. Mrs. Randle Feilden contributes "A Psychic Experience" of a very unusual if not a unique character. Mr. H. Stanley Redgrove reviews Hereward Carrington's book, "The Problems of Psychical Research," and Mr. Reginald Hodder writes on that uncanny and unpleasant subject, "Vampires."

In LIGHT of January 20th, 1912, appeared a letter from Mr. W. Harradence enquiring whether the ability to read character is a form of mediumship. Our correspondent now writes that the question has been finally solved for him by the letter from "F. V. H." appearing in our issue of 28th ult., in which the terms "psychic" and "medium" are discussed. Mr. Harradence deserves commendation as a careful student of our columns, and we are glad that his question of more than two years ago has been decided in this unpremeditated way.

To many minds a fulfilled prophecy is welcome, as it redeems a dozen failures and encourages the sense of wonder. There are predictions and predictions: some are concerned with trifling and immediate happenings, while others refer to sinister events to occur at a remote period. We have recently met with a very striking one, and as it is of historic interest we do not hesitate to bring it to the notice of our readers. It is known as "The Curse of Mar," was made prior to 1571, and is as follows: "Thy lands shall be given to the stranger and thy titles shall lie among the dead. The branch that springs from thee shall see his dwelling burnt in which a king was nursed—his wife a sacrifice to that same flame, his children numerous, but of little honour, and three born and grown who shall never see the light. Horses shall be stabled in thy hall and a weaver shall throw his shuttle in the chamber of state. Thine ancient tower shall be a ruin and a beacon until an ash sapling shall spring from its topmost stone. Then shall thine honours be restored; the kiss of peace shall be given to the countess though she seek it not, and the days of peace shall return to thy line." In the course of three hundred years every part of the curse was fulfilled. Then in 1820 the ash sapling duly appeared. Two years later George IV. restored the earldom, and later Queen Victoria kissed the countess.

Another interesting prediction is that in connection with the Tichborne dole which stated: "That if ever the dole were discontinued, the family name would become extinct from failure of male issue." The extinction was to be foretold by a generation of seven sons being followed by a generation of seven daughters and no son. The dole was discontinued six hundred years after the prediction was made. The baronet of that day had seven sons. His son who succeeded him had seven daughters and no son.

It is a novelty for LIGHT to be called upon to review a play, but evidently Messrs. Denison and Co., of Chicago, suppose that the theme of "As a Woman Thinketh," a three-act drama by Edith F. A. U. Painton (price 25 cents), will specially commend it to our favour. At the outset we found the American slang which is introduced in such profusion in the opening scene both unfamiliar and distasteful to our English palate, but the humour and cleverness with which the central idea is worked out are undeniable, and the story, as it develops, conveys a hint which is well worth acting upon. It deals with the troubles of an overworked and much worried wife and mother, every member of whose household is untidy (leaving her to clear up), and, in addition, has developed some objectionable habit or trait. Her husband is irritable, her married daughter extravagant, and her son-in-law lazy; the second girl is addicted to bad company, the third to slang, and the small boy to secret indulgence in cigarettes; while the man-servant is incredibly stupid and the maid dishonest. A friend introduces to the distracted woman a certain Professor Majarajah, a Hindu lecturer on psychology newly arrived in town, who dilates on the marvellous powers of

the subconscious mind, and tells her that everything depends upon her own mental attitude. She takes the lesson to heart, and at once proceeds to put it into practice by treating all the members of the family, to their great amazement and confusion, as models of the particular virtues in which they are apparently most deficient, with the result that in the last scene the home and its inmates have been alike transformed. To the current report that some miracle has taken place and made them over anew, the girls reply that there has been no miracle "unless it was mamma's resolute belief in us and our real goodness of heart," and that nothing had made them over: "Our better selves just began to come to the surface—that's all." Near the close the happy heroine learns from her friend that the supposed Hindu professor has turned out to have been an impostor, but that makes no difference to her. "Even if his whole beautiful philosophy should have been a mass of pretty lies, concocted by his own fancy, it would still be true to me because I believed it all so thoroughly that I made it come true. According to my faith, it was done unto me."

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### "ALL MEN ARE GHOSTS."

ANDREW LANG AND CLAIRVOYANCE.

From the "Glasgow Evening Citizen" of 1st inst. we take the following:—

The members of Glasgow Literary Club heard their concluding lecture of the season last night. Miss Georgie Fyfe dealt with the subject "All Men are Ghosts," which, she said, was perhaps the most baffling in the world, as when we began to formulate our views they seemed to become ghosts themselves, and to elude expression in any way. In the spirit world they laughed at our idea of them, as they did not take us seriously at all. Man to them was but a ghostly phenomenon, and, with rare exceptions, not a race whose acquaintance was worth cultivating.

Going on to describe some remarkable psychic experiences, the lecturer told how at St. Andrews she assisted the late Andrew Lang in certain investigations. On one occasion she described, down to the minutest detail of costume, the mistress of Cardinal Beaton as she appeared the night before his murder. The apparition wore a farthingale, but no ruff. This seemed strange to Andrew Lang, but he subsequently ascertained that ruffs in Scotland had not "come in" until three months after Beaton's death. This fact was unknown to Miss Fyfe, so was the fact that Beaton's body was hung out in a sheet from a window of the Castle—from a window which in the present building is replaced by an escutcheon. To the lecturer's second sight it was from this escutcheon—and not from a window—that the body depended.

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### IN LIGHTER VEIN.

We have no clue to the origin of the following. It appears to be taken from an article on ghosts, and is perhaps not so flippant as it seems. It is certainly amusing:—

This chronic state of fear in which the mouse keeps the feminine mind, thereby exercising its heroism, reminds me of another part which the mouse plays in social life, that of ghost. A remarkably good understanding has been established between mice and ghosts, by virtue of which they are constantly exchanging rôles. The running about of mice is considered by the weak-minded to be good evidence of the presence of ghosts; while, on the other hand, the running about of ghosts is put down by the strong-minded to mice. People have gone to such extremes in the matter of mice and ghosts that they have lost all sense of balance. When a nervous person retires to rest, and hears a mouse gnawing at the wall, he or she will shiver in the belief that a ghost is nigh; on the other hand, if a person is scientific he will contemptuously put down any noise to mice, whereas all the time it may really be his dead and repentant uncle trying to reveal a secret hoard of money. At present it depends entirely on a person's nerves which cause a sound is attributed to, and you are as likely to be in error on the one side as on the other. This is a thousand pities, and the cause of the loss, not only of secret hoards, but of many timely warnings and openings of the future.

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### THE REVEREND SUSANNA HARRIS AT THE HAGUE,

As we go to press we learn that this celebrated medium is meeting with great success in Holland, her séances being attended by many persons of social eminence, University professors and others.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

*The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion. In every case the letter must be accompanied by the writer's name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.*

Jeanne D'Arc.

SIR,—Apropos of Mr. Witley's fascinating address on "Jeanne D'Arc," the following remarks by Mr. W. T. Stead regarding the "Matchless Maid"—one of the earliest martyrs to our cause—may be of interest to your readers. They are from an old number of the "Review of Reviews":—

"As a means of grace the story of the trial and the rehabilitation of the sainted maid of Orleans should be told from every pulpit. Excepting the Crucifixion, there is no narrative which appeals so forcibly to all that is most divine in the heart of youth as the piteous tragedy of Jeanne d'Arc."—Yours, &c.,

EDITH K. HARPER

March 30th, 1914.

## A Shadow on the Snow.

SIR,—The following experience may be of interest to your readers. A few years ago, in the month of March, I was travelling in Switzerland with a party of tourists. We had mounted in the funicular railway to a station on the mountain—and were then making our way onwards and upwards. It had been a tremendously cold season, and the snow lay four and five feet deep in great drifts. It was in the middle of the afternoon—a cold, grey day, without a gleam of sunshine. The sky overhead was black, suggestive of more snow. After walking a considerable time, the leader of the party informed us that we had lost the track and he had no idea where we were. We tried several paths—as far as we could notice them in the snow—but with no success. I had walked a few paces on from the others, when suddenly my attention was attracted to the snow-covered ground in front of me. There was no sun to throw my shadow, and no house or sign of habitation was visible. Yet there on the snow, which was undisturbed by any footprint, was the distinct outline of a chalet, with a broom against the window-sill and the usual little seat outside. There was even the faint shadow of smoke rising from the little chimney. Noticing my downward gaze, a gentleman came up to me and asked what I was looking at, but the next moment he exclaimed, "Good gracious! what an extraordinary thing! There is no light to throw that shadow." As we both looked at it it disappeared. We walked on for another hour or more and suddenly came to a ravine. There, lonely and desolate, with its back against the mountains, stood the identical chalet of the shadow—one chimney, little seat, a broom outside. The light from a log fire shone through the windows. We went inside, and it so happened that the tenants were able—though their accommodation was small—to provide for us. The next day a guide—their son—led us safely to the place from which we had started. The chalet was at least four miles from the spot where the shadow was seen. I have had several curious experiences with shadows.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN CHANT.

[May this not have been a case of mirage?—EDITOR.]

## The Fairies.

SIR,—In your editorial of March 28th, you say "The folklorist has done much in this field, and now it should be the turn of the psychologist. What will he find?"

There may possibly be a mental basis for the idea of fairies, that is, it may have arisen from a purely mental conception, in some imaginative minds. There may also be a psychical, or, rather, clairvoyant basis. The latter I incline to think the more probable, especially as second-sighted folk seem to have been numerically greater in by-gone times than in the immediate present.

Now, if we take the following from "A Wanderer in Spirit Lands" (pp. 104, 105) does it not seem quite possible that "fairy folk-lore" may have had its origin in these natural but soul-less emanations, seen frequently by clairvoyants who were not aware of their gift of second sight, and that the frolicsome gestures of these little "imps," their quaint appearances and disappearances, may have suggested the fanciful and often beautiful doings that have been attributed to them: they also being the spirit or astral duplicates of all the "brownies," "gnomes," "fays," "sprites," "elves," &c.:—

"Now look," he added, pointing to a strange little group of beings like elves which were approaching us hand in hand,

gambolling like children, 'look at those, they are the mental and bodily emanations cast off from the minds and bodies of children which consolidate into these quiet, harmless little elementals when brought into contact with any of the great life-currents that circle around the earth, and which bear upon their waves the living emanations cast off from men, women and children. These curious little beings have no real separate intelligent life, such as a soul would give, and they are so evanescent and ethereal that they take their shapes and change them, as you will observe, like the clouds in a summer sky. See how they are all dissolving and forming again afresh.'

"As I waked I saw the whole little cloud of figures shift into a new form of grotesque likeness, and whereas they had looked like tiny fairies in caps and gowns, made from flowers, they now took wings, becoming like a species of half-butterflies, half-imps, with human bodies, animals' heads and butterflies' wings. Then as a fresh strong wave of magnetism swept over them, lo! they were all broken up and carried away to form fresh groups elsewhere with other particles."—Yours, &c.,

F. V. H.

## A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF APRIL 12TH, 1884)

MRS. MAKDOUGALL GREGORY'S SEANCES.—The usual weekly séance took place on the evening of April 4th, at the residence of the above lady, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, when there were present General Wolseley, the Hon. Mrs. Forbes, Miss Spencer, Mr. Edward Maitland, Dr. Anna Kingsford, the Hon. Justice Paul, Mr. Morgan, and Mr. W. Eglinton. Satisfactory phenomena attended the séance, but they were not so strong as usual.

CARDINAL MANNING has been sitting in judgment on Spiritualism. Plainly stated, his opinion is that the belief in Spiritualism is one of the signs of the "intellectual aberration" of the times, the other being scientific materialism. The "Spiritual Record" for April has an able editorial, dealing with the points raised by Cardinal Manning, and asks whether that prelate cannot see that the "intellectual aberration" he has most reason to dread—Materialism—is utterly destroyed by spiritual manifestations.

## "LIGHT" "TRIAL" SUBSCRIPTION.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

"The Quest" for April. 2s. 6d. *net.* J. M. Watkins, 21, Cecil-court, Charing Cross-road, W.C.

"Ghosts in Solid Form: An Experimental Investigation." By GAMBIEB BOLTON. Stiff cover, 1s. *net.* William Rider and Son, Limited, 8-11, Paternoster-row, E.C.

"Where Two Worlds Meet." By SIR WILLIAM EARNSHAW COOPER, C.I.E. Cloth, 3s. 10d., *post free.* L. N. Fowler, 7, Imperial Arcade, Ludgate Circus, E.C.

SELF-EXPRESSION.—Whoever hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth, lest it should be too much in advance of the time, may reassure himself by looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view. Let him duly realise the fact that opinion is the agency through which character adapts external arrangements to itself—that his opinion rightly forms part of this agency—is a unit of force, constituting, with other such units, the general power which works out social changes, and he will perceive that he may properly give full utterance to his innermost conviction, leaving it to produce what effect it may. It is not for nothing that he has in him these sympathies with some principles and repugnance to others.—HERBERT SPENCER.

## THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (OXON.)'

### ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held *over*, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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