

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 1,895.—VOL. XXXVII. [Registered as] SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1917. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.
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SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1917.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have been asked to reply to some diatribes by a Roman Catholic priest who, from his pulpit, described our subject as Satanic, and added some pleasant statements that all spirit communications came from devils, with much else to the same purpose. For the most part, it seems better to receive these rabid criticisms with a polite silence, and allow the attackers to go on until, blinded by frenzy and made valiant by apparent impunity, they proceed at last to extremes which disconcert and disgust even their own followers—a result which is being quite frequently attained nowadays. We have reason to believe that some recent onslaughts from Press and pulpit have had precisely the contrary effect to that which the writers and preachers intended. It is too often forgotten that public intelligence has grown and is growing. It has, in many cases, so far outstripped its leaders and educators that it turns impatiently from the cant and claptrap with which it was the custom aforesaid to beguile popular ignorance. The recent Press campaign was marked by so much spite, stupidity and lack of scruple that we received many manifestations of sympathy from people outside the ranks of Spiritualism, while others, observing the methods of our enemies, concluded that a subject against which it was felt necessary to employ such tactics might very possibly be true, and they accordingly began to inquire into it.

* * * *

These people had observed, in common with intelligent observers generally, that those who attack a truth are instinctively aware that they have a very formidable opponent. It is considered necessary when fighting against it to suborn evidence, to appeal to prejudice, to use (we speak, of course, metaphorically) knuckle-dusters, poison gas, kicks, foul blows, and the methods of Kultur generally. And even these devices fail. Their failure commences to be apparent in the manifestations of disgust shown by the impartial onlooker, which pass subsequently into signs of disquiet on the part of those on whose behalf the campaign is conducted. In the case of the priest to whom we have referred, we were amused by a letter sent to us by a lady enclosing a cutting containing a brief report of his sermon. Our correspondent tells us that, although she is a Roman Catholic and not a Spiritualist, she deplores such attacks, and she goes on to lament that the priests of her Church are forbidden to marry. We quite appreciate the point, especially in these feminist days, when men and women alike have begun to realise how many modern abuses are

the result of masculine domination uncorrected by the finer perceptions of woman, her good judgment, and her genius for social management. The capacity of a wife for "knocking sense" into the head of a husband, who without her would be an insufferable boor, is notorious. The archaic theology which put a slur on womankind, associating her with the influence of Satan, is bound for the same fate as the militarism which, whether in peace or war, has trampled woman under its jackboots. Even in such small affairs as sermons a woman's influence would be for the good. We might hear less concerning devils with whom some of our modern theologians seem to have an intimacy of acquaintance that almost excites suspicion.

* * * *

"To-day," writes a correspondent, "huge cumulus clouds rear themselves against the blue of the sky and bursts of spring sunshine travel over the bare fields and flood the waiting woods. One watches the play of light and shade and wonders if there is any connection between the abnormal weather of the past few months and the devastating conflict that is raging in the world. Science teaches that a law of continuity binds the universe, and that every atom is sympathetically responsive to every other atom. The boundary between matter and spirit—if it exists—is lost in an infinity of graduations, and the coarser forces of the one tend to become the finer forces of the other. Is it, then, unreasonable to suppose that the mental and spiritual unrest incidental to a great war has its reflection in realms purely physical? If the vibrations of the human voice can shatter a resonant glass why should not the anger and hatred of belligerent nations pass in some obscure way into the atmosphere, and give rise to gloomy skies and icy winds?" Our correspondent's suggestion is a plausible one, but we are reluctant to go to psychology for an explanation of meteorological abnormalities while we have sun-spots, the Gulf Stream and artillery-fire to fall back upon. All the same, we do not forget that Ruskin, writing of "the storm-cloud of the nineteenth century," seemed to trace a correspondence between it and the materialism of the time.

* * * *

A correspondent sends the following narrative:—

I know of many cases in which Sir Oliver Lodge's book, "Raymond," has wonderfully lightened the pain of bereavement and saved a parent or widow from despair; but I also know of one case in which it saved a man's life! The man is a friend of mine. A month ago he was down with pneumonia, and his condition became very grave. One night his temperature was 104'5, and the doctor said to the patient's wife: "I fear he is not going to pull through." This was said not far from the sick-room door, and my friend heard it. He is a nervous and impressionable man, easily upset about his health even when well; and an overheard remark of a pessimistic character might well have been expected to kill him. But it did not. He remained perfectly calm, and made a good recovery, which the doctor attributed to the placidity of his mind. The medico was evidently surprised at this, for, knowing his patient well—though not aware of the overhearing—he

expected anxiety and fear. Last week my friend called and told me all about it: "I felt that I didn't care. I had been reading 'Raymond' just before I was ill, and my mind was full of it. I knew that if I died it would just be promotion—a going into a better room. My wife and child are provided for, and I didn't worry a bit. That book saved my life." My friend is not a Spiritualist in the ordinary sense. He is a rather orthodox Nonconformist. But his orthodox religion would not have saved him from worry and its consequences. "Raymond" did.

THE PROGRESS OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

AN APPRECIATION OF MR. J. ARTHUR HILL'S "PSYCHICAL INVESTIGATIONS."

BY SIR WILLIAM BARRETT, F.R.S.

This new work by Mr. J. A. Hill is the largest and most important of the many contributions he has made to psychical research. It will be heartily welcomed by all students of this subject; for the transparent honesty and open-mindedness shown throughout the book add to its value, and enhance the reputation of the author. The evidence which Mr. Hill here presents of survival after death, and which he has personally obtained mainly through the clairvoyance of Mr. Wilkinson, is a fitting supplement to Sir Oliver Lodge's recent book.

For many years Mr. Hill was doubtful of the validity of the experimental evidence on behalf of survival, but he is now convinced that the spirit theory is the most satisfactory explanation of much of the evidence he and others have obtained. Albeit he recognises "that the proof is not coercive and that some alternative explanation may turn out to be the right one." What that alternative may be Mr. Hill does not suggest. As regards the telepathic theory, which he discusses with great fairness, he points out that

Telepathy from the living or the dead is a doubtfully admissible supposition unless it is reasonable to infer that the communication is *willed* by some mind. In experimental cases it is so willed; in many mediumistic phenomena no willing of the kind on the part of living people is known of or reasonably to be inferred. The willing, if any, is on the part of some discarnate mind, human or non-human. And in many cases I believe this to be a fact.

One of the most interesting points in connection with Mr. Wilkinson's clairvoyance and clairaudience is the facility with which he correctly gives the names of the deceased persons, whom he sees clairvoyantly. Mr. Hill states that he has not the slightest doubt of Mr. Wilkinson's genuineness. This is satisfactory, as most of the descriptions given are of persons not long deceased, who lived within a radius of some twenty miles from Mr. Wilkinson's home. I was at first disposed to think that the results might be attributed to cryptomnesia (a hidden memory) on the part of a perfectly honest medium. But the details of some of the evidence cited by Mr. Hill show that this explanation is highly improbable. In a letter to me Mr. Hill says:—

I hung on to the fraud theory for a few years; but I have had evidence about private family matters of various sorts, which Mr. Wilkinson could not have learnt about by any amount of inquiry; and they were referred to in such a skilful way that he himself could not tell exactly what was meant, while it was all clear enough to me.

Moreover, the incidents cited by Mr. Hill on pp. 191-4 of his book, where the medium correctly gives some, at that time, unpublished facts connected with the Myers message to Sir Oliver Lodge—relative to one of the odes of Horace—also disprove the possibility of fraud. Further, Mr. Hill tells us that the answers to his question could not have been due to any telepathy from himself, for he was ignorant of their meaning until he subsequently looked up the passage in Horace.

In Chapter XI. Mr. Hill discusses the influence of objects given to the medium to handle, so-called *psychometry*. This is one of the most curious and puzzling questions; for my own part, I have never had any convincing evidence of psychometry.

Mr. Hill has been more fortunate, and he tells us that on this question he has "no hesitation whatever" in expressing his belief. He says:—

Experiences extending over many years and with many mediums have convinced me that some peculiarly-constituted people—by handling an article which has been in close contact with some person living or dead, and which has not been handled much by anyone else—can somehow tell things about that person's appearance or state of health, or about things that have occurred in his life; and that the correctness of these statements excludes chance coincidence by guessing,

and he adds that information has been given which was not within the knowledge of the sitter and was only verified afterwards.

Mr. Hill is so cautious and critical an observer that this statement is of great interest. Dr. Hodgson was also a firm believer in psychometry. One of the last letters I had from him was to ask me to enclose in an oiled-silk wrapper a glove or other object worn by some deceased friend of mine and send it to him to Boston, U.S.A., for the purpose of putting it into Mrs. Piper's hands. Dr. Hodgson's death prevented my knowing the result of this experiment.

That some curious and inconceivable kind of mental impression is made on inanimate objects by their contiguity to human beings seems to be the case, extravagant as such a supposition may appear to be. The older mesmerists again and again noticed it as regards living persons. In a bundle of letters I possess from Miss Harriet Martineau's friend, Mr. Atkinson, he cites cases of this kind, and tells me that Miss Martineau was absolutely convinced of the fact. Many well-attested cases of hauntings, where particular places and objects create a vision of former events in certain susceptible minds, would also appear to support this theory of a *rapport* between inanimate things and human beings. It would be well if the research officer of the Society for Psychical Research were to devote time and attention to this subject, and present the Society with all the historical evidence available, and also any fresh experimental evidence made with this definite object in view.

I am glad Mr. Hill draws attention, on page 252, to the debt we owe to "the early Spiritualists who laid the foundations, found the facts, bore the obloquy, but forced the phenomena on the attention of the 'leaders.'" I have referred to this in my forthcoming book (sadly delayed by the printers), and heartily agree with Mr. Hill when he says that to those early Spiritualists "we cannot refuse our admiration and our thanks."

In conclusion let me add my thanks and congratulations to Mr. Hill for this and all his other valuable work on behalf of psychical research.

At the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, on Thursday, the 26th ult., Miss Felicia R. Scatcherd delivered an interesting address on "The World Crisis," which was marked by her characteristic penetration and clear and cogent reasoning. We hope to give a report in our next issue.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—Meetings for clairvoyance for members only will continue to be held at the rooms of the Alliance every Tuesday at three o'clock (admission 1s.). These meetings have been arranged to supply the demand for psychic evidences and will continue so long as they appear to be needed. The Friday meetings of Mrs. M. H. Wallis will be continued until the 18th inst. inclusive (see advt.).

"Is the outcome of this latest tragedy to be loss or gain?" asks Mr. John Oxenham in the foreword to his new book of verse, "The Vision Splendid" (Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1s. net). His own reply is that, under God, it rests with ourselves. "If this fierce flame free us from the ruinous wastage of drink, from the cancer of immorality, from the shame of our housing-system, both in town and country, and bring about a fairer apportionment of the necessities of life, a living wage to all workers, leisure to enjoy and opportunities to possess and progress, it will have done much. If it level the dividing walls, and result in a pact of nations which will ensure peace for all time, it will have done very much. If it bring the world back to God, it will have done everything. This, our great sacrifice, will then be turned to everlasting gain. . . So—to the Vision Splendid of a world in which God and Right shall reign supreme, and may we all live to see it realised!" Mr. Oxenham's poems are worthy of the introduction,

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALISM.

CONFERENCES IN ST. ETHELBURGA'S PARISH ROOM.

An eloquent sign of the general interest which our subject is now arousing was afforded by two crowded conferences on "Religion and Spiritualism," held on the afternoon and evening of the 26th ult. in the large parish-room of the Church of St. Ethelburga, Bishopsgate Within. The evening meeting especially was packed to overflowing. In opening the afternoon conference, the rector, Dr. Cobb, expressed his sense of the gratitude due to such men as Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes and Sir William Barrett—men of lifelong scientific training and practice in suspending their judgment—who had devoted years of careful investigation to the study of the phenomena of Spiritualism and had published their conclusions. For newspapers of the sensational type to treat a man of Sir Oliver's eminence in science in the insulting manner which had characterised one journal was a brilliant example of what ought not to be done. With regard to the recent police prosecutions, Dr. Cobb remarked that the official mind never learned by experience. It had persecuted "witches" and "wizards" two or three centuries ago, and the same spirit was persecuting mediums now. He was not saying that proper precautions should not be taken against fraud; but, at the same time, he held that the less interference on the part of the law the better. He could not for the life of him see why, if he chose to spend half a crown on a medium, he should not do so. He hoped a strong protest would go forth from that meeting against the action of the police in hauling up for judgment and treating with brutal severity a number of people who had done no great harm. He had investigated the case of a poor woman who had been trapped in an unworthy way by an *agent provocateur* and fined £25, and who had to borrow the money to pay the fine. He would be pleased to receive any contributions on her behalf, and would see they were usefully applied. Among the speakers who took part in the discussion that ensued were Mr. Percy Beard, Mr. R. A. Bush, Mr. W. Hendry and Dr. Hector Munro.

At the evening meeting Dr. Cobb, who again presided, expressed the conviction that Spiritualism contained truths which would be in every way a benefit to mankind. It was certainly in no sense antagonistic to Religion, but rather confirmatory of it—it afforded scientific support to the reality of the supposed miraculous element in the Scriptures. At the close of his observations he invited questions, and a general discussion followed.

SIR OLIVER LODGE, who took part, offered some remarks in support of the chairman's position. Dr. Cobb had spoken of "Raymond," and Sir Oliver dwelt on the actuality of his experiences as recorded therein. As to the main question under discussion, he agreed with Myers that Spiritualism was not a religion, but was the preamble of all religions. Theology had in the past stubbornly opposed many of the sciences, but the result had always been the same—the science won its way against all obstruction, and the story as regards Spiritualism, in its aspect of Psychical Science, would undoubtedly be the same.

Amongst other speakers who took part in the discussion, Mr. E. Haviland attracted great attention by recounting his experiences in connection with the phenomenal side of the subject, which had covered many years and included some of the happenings recorded in the early days of investigation—phenomena that are rarely discoverable to-day owing to the atmosphere of hostility and scepticism.

At both meetings the rector's suggested protest against police persecution was adopted, together with an expression of opinion in favour of the establishment of a register of reputable mediums under a committee which would enjoy the confidence of the public.

SPIRITS announce to man secret things and foretell the future.—PYTHAGORAS.

HUSK FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwell, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges, with thanks, the following contribution: "Direct Evidence," £2 2s.

A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF MAY 7TH, 1887.)

The "Christian Register" (Boston, U.S.A.) is publishing a very remarkable symposium on "Science and Immortality," somewhat after the manner of those which were printed in the "Contemporary Review" and "Nineteenth Century" some years ago.

THEOSOPHY IN FRANCE.—Theosophy is not failing as to its mission in France. Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World" has just been translated, with the author's sanction, into French, by F. K. Gaboriau, a name pleasantly suggestive of romance. At the same time there appears the first number of "Le Lotus," a monthly magazine or "review of lofty Theosophical studies, tending to bring about closer relations between the East and the West, under the inspiration of Madame Blavatsky."

THE WITCHCRAFT AND VAGRANCY ACTS.

MASS MEETING AT SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE.

South Place Institute was filled to its utmost capacity by the meeting, convened by the Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd., on Monday evening last, to demand the amendment of the Witchcraft and Vagrancy Acts. Mr. J. J. Morse, the editor of "The Two Worlds," occupied the chair, and the speakers were Dr. Ellis T. Powell, Miss Lind-af-Hageby, Mr. Ernest Oaten, Mr. Robert H. Yates, and Mr. A. P. Sinnett. Letters of sympathy with the objects of the meeting and regretting inability to attend, from Sir William Crookes, O.M., Lady Mosley, Lady Paget, Lady Muir MacKenzie, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Mr. H. G. Chancellor, M.P., and Captain Bennett, were read to the meeting. The powerful and eloquent speeches which followed excited the highest enthusiasm, and the resolution protesting against the retention on the Statute Book of the offending Acts and calling for their amendment, as proposed by Dr. Powell, and seconded by Miss Lind-af-Hageby, was passed unanimously.

The meeting throughout was of an animated character, and a full report of the proceedings will be published in succeeding issues.

The contributions to the S.N.U. Parliamentary Fund amounted to nearly £40.

SPIRITUALITY is not living in dreams, or living in the clouds, or having a pale face and languid air, as if the things of this earth were beneath one's serious consideration, and were rather endured than enjoyed. Spirituality means the greatest acuteness of intellect, the greatest foresight, the greatest amount of spirit or power gathered in a person, and the wisest expenditure of that power. It means the greatest governmental ability, be that ability exercised in the small empire of a household, or the larger empire of a nation. Spiritual gifts mean all talents, all powers, and all methods of using those powers.—PRENTICE MULFORD.

THE MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION.—We have received a copy of the annual report and accounts of the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., for the year ending March 31st, and are glad to find that, considering the many difficulties that have had to be overcome, the results achieved afford ground for congratulation. The year has closed with a balance in hand of over £90, only a little less than that with which it began. The attendance, in spite of darkened streets, bad weather and difficulty of transit, has been well maintained, and the membership shows an increase which it is fully anticipated will be still more marked as the high spiritual aspect of the association's work becomes increasingly known.

THE NEW MESSAGE.—On Saturday and Sunday, the 21st and 22nd ult., Mrs. Barbara McKenzie gave three lectures on Psychic Science at a week-end school arranged by a men's adult school in a Leicestershire village. Representatives attended from seven other schools in neighbouring towns and villages and a spirit of keen interest was manifested by the men and women present, to many of whom the evidence for the Science had never before been presented. Many of them had parted from church and chapel attendance, and become practically agnostic for lack of the very knowledge which psychic science can give. On the Sunday evening over one hundred were present, and the fine atmosphere of the meeting, free from carping criticism or frivolity, gave one an earnest hope that the people of England are hungry and ready as they never were for "more light and truth to break forth."—COR.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT," 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C. 2.
SATURDAY, MAY 5TH, 1917.

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of LIGHT, 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. 2. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. F. W. South, Office of LIGHT, to whom Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable.

Subscription Rates.—LIGHT may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments must be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c. To France, Italy, &c., 13 francs 86 centimes.

Wholesale Agents: Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Co., Ltd., 31, Paternoster-row, London, E.C. 4, and LIGHT can be ordered through all Newsagents and Booksellers.

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SCIENCE AND THE SUPERNORMAL.

The attempt to degrade spiritual forces to purely selfish ends results always in confusion and defeat; and this is true as much in the affairs of daily life as in intercourse or attempted intercourse with the unseen world. There are those who, filled with aspiration for the higher aspects of Spiritualism, are inclined to condemn the scientific method of exploring the subject. It seems to them a kind of sacrilege, but this attitude is not justified. The sanctuaries which they fear may be invaded are secure against all unlawful intrusion. The province of the scientist lies elsewhere, but his work, none the less, may be immensely valuable, more especially when, as nearly always is the case, it is pursued in a disinterested spirit. There is no degradation in it; it has a nobility of its own. It brings in the keen, searching influences of examination and cold precision, and, if we may say so, they are often highly necessary as a corrective to the excesses of emotionalism and imagination. Anything which cannot abide its scrutiny is of little value to us. "Break everything to pieces," said one of the pioneers of Spiritualism once to a young inquirer; "unless it can undergo the ordeal and survive, it is worthless." That is the true spirit of the investigator. Keats dreaded scientific investigation of the rainbow; he thought the poetry would be driven out of it as a consequence. We know that the contrary happened. New realms of beauty and mystery were opened up by the process. The things which belong to the Eternal Order can endure all the analysis to which we are capable of subjecting them, and can suffer no jot of harm. It may, indeed, be taken for granted that whatever Science can destroy is only that which is legitimately destructible, or something the loss of which is but temporary, since the powers which produced it can recreate it in finer forms.

Science has of late been interesting itself deeply in psychical research, although its work has in only a few instances been brought to public notice. Some of the investigators prefer to wait until their records are complete and their results entirely satisfactory to them. It is very impressive to observe the care and pains bestowed on the researches; they bear the stamp of the mind which is seeking truth for its own sake quite indifferent to personal ends or petty triumphs. It is a spirit that augurs well

for us, since we are sure of our ground, and are quite content that all which cumbers it as alien growths shall be detected and destroyed. Anything which from the world of causes comes into existence as a visible fact is legitimate material for the scientist; indeed, until it thus comes into manifestation he can do nothing with it, it is outside his purview. Sometimes in his zeal he has overlooked that necessity to his own discomfiture; it is unwise to pronounce on that which has yet to be examined.

It seems that the function of Science is not so much to discover as to verify and record. Always before the scientist must go the seer to proclaim in his own fashion a vision of a world not yet revealed to the man whose vocation it is to deal in facts. But the facts of the unseen world are coming in to-day at a great rate to confirm the vision. When they were few and scattered they might be ignored, but now they challenge and demand attention on every hand. It is useless for the savant of the old order to ignore or denounce the newcomers in order to save some cherished system of thought from destruction. In such cases it would seem that the whirligig of time is bringing in its revenges in new forms. The tables are being turned in a double sense. Of old it was the scientist who twitted his religious brother with panic at the encroachments of that Science which was to destroy all his visionary fabrics. Now the followers of old crystallised doctrines of matter are quaking at the arrival of a new revelation. Many times had they proclaimed their disbelief in things which could not be weighed and handled, or tested by logical processes. And now the things have arrived, ready for examination by all those methods. They are as yet strange and a trifle uncouth, decidedly repellent to minds prejudiced in favour of convention.

"I do not see you, Mr. Blank," said a punctilious judge to an advocate who appeared before him without wig and gown. The advocate protested. "And I will not hear you either," added his lordship.

That has too often been the scientific attitude towards facts of unconventional appearance, but it is not the attitude of the true scientist, who, as Professor James once remarked, will not be above seeking his facts in a dunghill if the search leads him thither.

The evidences of a life beyond are abroad to-day, and if they are ignored by bigots their uses will be none the less extracted by those who have no prejudices to serve. For it is in the uses to which the facts are put that their real importance lies. Our hope is that they will be employed to the highest ends—the service of life. Those who pervert them to base purposes will degrade not the facts but themselves, and insomuch as the psychic side of life is a region of power and intensity its judgments are swift and terrible.

AFTER THE WAR.—We will not forget; nor will we throw away the fruit of blood and tears at the dictation of cosmopolitan theories and a spurious Christianity which uses the letter which kills to deaden the heroic indignation with evil that scorns commercial profit from blood-stained hands. We rightly despise the temper which produces Hymns of Hate, but we shall be thrice fools if we neglect the preventive measures which will make the British Empire self-supporting and assume a change of heart in our enemies for which there is no evidence whatever. If we do our motives will not be the love of Christian ideals but love of cheapness and ease. Let us not hate the German, but by all means let us hate the materialism which has bred the doctrines of German statecraft and will breed them again in all who take brute competition as the basis of their philosophy of life.—From "The Science of Peace," by STANLEY DE BRATH.

IS SPIRITUALISM OF THE DEVIL?

ADDRESS BY THE REV. F. FIELDING-OULD, M.A.

(Continued from page 134.)

There are some who find it impossible to reconcile the thought of high spiritual control with the *apparent triviality* of a moving table and such like phenomena. They are accustomed to have their religious emotions kindled amid the beautiful symbolism of well-appointed churches,

Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault, The pealing anthem swells the note of praise, and are suspicious of this hole-and-corner business of the back room. The world-famous temple seems more worthy of the gods than "the school of one Tyrannus." They are conscious of the profound importance, even solemnity, of the issues, and are offended because the means employed seem so unworthy of the occasion. So Naaman was offended on being told to go away and wash in the river, the miserable Jordan at that! People will still be calling "common and unclean" what God may please to use for a high purpose. The glorification of the small and common-place is one of the lessons of Christianity, and we are often profoundly mistaken in our estimation of what is really great and truly small. Is a speck of dust a small thing? Not when it is under the eyelid. Is a million of money a great thing? Not to the owner if he is at the point of death. Is a table a contemptible thing? Not when it is used as an altar, nor yet when it raps out a message from a higher world.

After all, is there anything inherently *incredible* or wildly unreasonable in the idea that Christ should view with concern the misinterpretation of His Gospel and the consequent loosening of its hold on man's allegiance, and that He should take steps to renew and re-vitalise the saving Truth? Or that He should use for the purpose exactly the same means which He employed in the ancient days of the prophets? What wonder if once more Jesus should turn to the modern Thomas and offer him, in Spiritualism, direct evidence within the range of his bodily senses—"Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless but believing."

St. Peter did not need it, and you and I may not need it, but be strong in faith and assurance—"Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed"—but many are *doubting* and many *totally sceptical*. To such Spiritualism may be a holy thing, the very voice of God to their souls. I do not think it is realised how very many people have *no religion whatever*. If there is a future life, the evidence for it certainly does not warrant the smallest effort of self-sacrifice or self-control. As for God (if there is such a Being), He is utterly unknowable, and His name is merely useful in the form of profane oaths. I think Spiritualism may be the means of saving many such from wasting the wonderful opportunity of earth life.

Let us bear in mind that much of the Hebrew prophets' teaching was *confused and misdelivered* on account of the prophets' own imperfection, that Balaam, Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah and others, though doubtless good enough psychics, through want of moral uprightness were led astray by lying spirits. Let us remember that if the instrument is out of tune the Great Musician cannot breathe His message through it. A medium must not be content to be a person of peculiar physical constitution, but must be a man of holy life. His eyes are open to the wonders of the borderland, let him be spiritually awakened and aware of the rushing splendours of the higher spheres of being; standing in the gap, a link between the worlds, known and blessed on many planes of life, a servant of the servants of God!

There is a story told of Father Walter, a Roman priest at Washington, which seems to take the entrenched position of his Church by storm. The clergyman was going to bed one winter's night when he heard the violent ringing of his doorbell. He looked out of the window and saw a boy and girl on his doorstep. "Our father is dying," they cried, "and wants you to come and see him at once; we will show you the way." The priest went down and accompanied the children to a poor

house in the lower portion of the town. "Our father's room is at the top of the house," said the boy; "you will see a light shining through the keyhole." Father Walter left the children below and groped his way up the rickety stair. There in the room indicated was a dying man, covered with rags, and lighted feebly by a candle stuck in a bottle.

"Who are you?" whispered the sick man. The priest told him. "I did not send for you," said the man; "I had no one to send, I am alone and dying." "That is strange," said the priest, "for two children, a boy and a girl, came to my house and told me their father was dying, and then showed me the way here." "Two children!" gasped the man. "What were they like?" The priest described them, and the man covered his face with his hands and wept. "My poor, dear children," he said, "they died two years ago!" (Bennet's "Visions of the Unseen").

To say, as the Roman Church would, that those children were angels of a super-human order who personated the boy and girl, seems to me to go out of the way to find a far-fetched explanation, when there is a simple and beautiful one already to hand.

It is no unusual thing for struggling and distressed souls to be *helped through Spiritualism*. Do we not all know people who had given up all religion and who have been brought back by its means? Agnostics who had lost all hope of God and immortality, to whom religion seemed mere formality and dry bones, and who at last turned upon it and reviled it in all its manifestations. Then Spiritualism came to them, like the dawn to a man who has tossed all night fevered and sleepless. At first they were astonished and incredulous, but their attention was arrested, and presently they were touched to the heart. God had come back into their lives, and nothing could express their joy and gratitude.

Is this the work of devils? There are some, *mirabile dictu*, who would say it is; for these awakened souls are often unorthodox, they are made after no recognised pattern and bear none of the time-honoured labels, and as such they come under human ban and condemnation: "We rebuked him because he followeth not with us." But one seems to see the Good Shepherd leading His sheep over tracks invisible from the more frequented roads, and I have no doubt they will arrive safely at the Great Fold, perhaps far on before their critics.

I received this letter some time ago:—

DEAR SIR,—After my long silence I hardly like to address you, but a feeling of great joy and gratitude compels me to do so. You will, perhaps, be glad to hear that owing to the seed so kindly and generously set by yourself in me, a perfect stranger to you, the same has brought forth an abundance of fruit, and I am now in the happiest condition of my life, and have already commenced spreading the good news abroad. The holy delights of Spiritualism have made me a changed man, and I shall ever be grateful to you. I have joined the Spiritualist Alliance, and am daily learning fresh wonders and receiving fresh comforts from our Infinite and all-loving Creator. . . .

Allow me to quote once more from Stead's friend, Julia:—

When I saw the splendour of the lovelight that flooded the (spiritual) world, I was beside myself with joy; all the many loves which I had known on your side faded into insignificance beside the great glowing radiance of that love which swathed me about as with a garment and enabled me to see what marvellous possibilities, what undreamed-of powers, were all the while in the heart of each of us. . . . God is love, and love is God, and the mystic power of God is love. We may become as God so far as we enter into His Divine Nature, which is *love*. We remove ourselves from God as we do not love. When you feel as if you were unable to sympathise with any person, by so much as you are unable to sympathise even with his sins, you are out of God. He is all in all, and all His all is love, and you cannot work out His purposes in hate and unkindness. Oh, if I could make you see as we see it here, how true it is that they only *live* who *love*, that all that is not of love is as death, that the soul that does not love is without God in outer darkness, and the only way to save the world is to drench it with love, to flood it with love—yes, love even for the worst. It is not by disliking men even for their sins, that you will save them from their sins ("After Death," p. 49).

I would ask you, are these words (which might be from an epistle of St. John)—are these the words of one that hath a

devil? If so, then I can only say I like that devil, that is the kind of devil I want to be.

I will conclude by recording my opinion that Spiritualism is a thing of *immense importance* fraught with the issues of life and death, and I am wondering how soon the Bishops of the Church of England will consider it worth while to examine the thing and make themselves competent to advise their children about it. To some people, Spiritualism is merely an opportunity of having a little talk with a deceased "Uncle George" or "Aunt Jane," a little sentimental dabbling with the unseen, without intellectual purpose or spiritual aspiration; but if I am not greatly mistaken, the end the nobler spirits have in view is much higher than that. The real end and *raison d'être* of the movement is *religious*. If Spiritualism fails to rise above the level of a mere *branch of science*, it will have fallen short of its true mission and glory. As the intellectual is greater than the physical, so is the spiritual above the psychical, and investigators who attend séances and acquire knowledge about higher grades of existence without a growing hunger to make themselves *worthy of and capable of* promotion to such states, are like men who cultivate a vineyard but never eat of the grapes. The mission of Spiritualism is to enlighten man's difficult path, to make him distinguish between the permanent and the transitory, the real and the apparent. It is to drive home, as never before, the lesson which has so long been on the lips of the Church, that this life finds its real importance in the fact that it is the preparation for another, and that religion—*i.e.*, the progressive approach to God—is the supreme duty and privilege of man.

But as you may so partake of the Eucharist as to eat and drink to your own condemnation, so may a rash or evil-minded investigator of Spiritualism find in it his ruin. Is it diabolic? That depends upon yourself—if you want to raise a devil, you may do so easily enough; if you seek God and Truth, it can mightily bless your search.

The thing itself is neither divine nor diabolic; it is an instrument, a means, an open door through which in the past have come both good and evil, but there is some evidence that beyond that door are now assembled a great company of enlightened spirits who are bound together by a noble and unselfish resolve to raise and bless mankind.

Let us approach, then, with the utmost caution and the most careful scrutiny of our motives. Let us not be dazzled by the thought that we are listening to a being from another world and drink in his every saying as "the Word of the Lord." Let us not imagine that all the mysteries of being are unfolded before his wondering eyes just because a year or two before ourselves he has stepped across the little ditch of death. But let us also beware of that attitude which before all others Christ condemned, *viz.*, the inert and unteachable, the unresponsive and unimpressionable, the self-satisfied and self-sufficient, that which in its haste and hostility calls good evil, and evil good, and will not believe though one rose from the dead. (Great applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN having proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer,

DR. ELLIS T. POWELL seconded the resolution, and in doing so expressed a strong doubt whether some of the critics of Spiritualism really believed in the soundness of their own criticisms. Alluding to a recent sermon by the Master of the Temple from the text (quoted by Mr. Fielding-Ould) "There shall not be found with thee . . . a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard or a necromancer" (Deut. xviii. 10, 11), Dr. Powell thought it probable that the Master of the Temple had bacon at breakfast, that part of his clothing was woven of linen and woollen united, and that in his journeyings he had at some time ridden on the back of a mule, though all these things were against the Mosaic law. If there was one emphatic prohibition it was that "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth"; yet anyone taking a stroll through the Temple might see the images of the lamb and flag, and of the horse, the lamb over the

Middle Temple being no doubt emblematic of the innocence of lawyers, and the horse of the expedition with which they transacted business—(laughter)—while within the Temple Church were full-length figures of recumbent knights—all again in direct defiance of the Mosaic law. If the preacher held that the injunctions addressed to a primitive people were still incumbent upon us, he was inconsistent. As Master of the Temple he ought to have sufficient acquaintance with the law to know that you cannot enforce obedience to one portion of a statute and ignore the rest. The lecturer had pointed out that during many centuries there had been a vast incrustation of alien element on Christianity. All down the ages Christianity had been employed by Kings as part of the machinery by which they deceived the world. Since the war began we had been looking rather closely into the gigantic system of humbug under which we lived. How dangerous to politicians was a doctrine which taught men and women to think for themselves!

The resolution having been carried with acclamation the meeting closed.

THE DEAD WHO ARE ALIVE.

AN APPRECIATION OF MISS E. KATHARINE BATES' NEW BOOK.

BY F. W. PERCIVAL.

In that unpretentious but most illuminating book, "Our Living Dead," by Miss E. Katharine Bates, the gifted author has dealt with the problem of survival after death and with many of the questions with which it is associated. The war, with all its tragic realities, has forced men to think of the here and the hereafter, and Miss Bates has seized the opportunity thus afforded to address a message of hope and consolation to those who have loved and *think* they have lost. She urges them in bold and forcible language to lay aside the prejudices against spirit communion which are the results of a traditional theology, and she uses the wealth of her personal experiences to prove that "all that we really know through our bodily senses and brain development shows *continuity* and orderly progression" (page 48).

"Both Life and Death with God are one;
He breaks no thread His hand has spun."

It is the want of imagination which makes the realisation of this truth so difficult. Well might the writer of the Book of Proverbs exclaim, "Where there is no vision the people perish." But, as Miss Bates points out, we cannot reach the higher planes of spiritual perception without making some definite sacrifices:—

We must throw away a good deal of mental rubbish. We must leave off talking about what God does or does not *intend us to know*, and thankfully receive what He has mercifully given us in these latter days. He demands from us trust in His love, and *co-operation*, and this latter is what we must learn to give Him, if we are to receive the consolations that He has prepared for us in these world-shattering times (p. 43).

It is impossible to read this book without recognising its value as a guide and comforter to those who are yearning for knowledge of the life beyond the grave. They will learn from it that their loved ones, as Sir Oliver Lodge has lately told us, "are still active and useful, and interested, and happy," active in ministering to those who need their help, and interested in all that they cared for on earth, for the poet had vision when he wrote—

"No work begun shall ever pause for death."

I BELIEVE that we survive death, that we are met by friends when we go over, and that progress continues on the other side; and, for me, this is enough at present. As to the exact nature of the progress and of the life there—whether we shall live in houses, go to concerts, wear clothes, &c.—I simply do not know. As Plato says, "Something of the kind may be true," and it is certainly desirable to link up the next stage with this as closely as possible.—"Psychical Investigations," by J. ARTHUR HILL.

WAR AND DEATH, AND THE LIFE THEREAFTER.

A LAWYER'S VIEWS ON PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

[Those who have any intimate acquaintance with the *personnel* of our movement will be aware that the legal profession is well represented. The lawyer's point of view is always interesting, and we have pleasure in reproducing (slightly abridged) an article sent to us by the Hon. George W. Underwood, the principal partner in an American law firm of high repute. The article originally appeared in "The Hamiltonian," a Chicago magazine.]

The following thoughts were inspired by a recent editorial in one of Chicago's daily papers entitled "Fear of Death," which editorial contained the following language:—

Force rules the world and the end of the world is extinction. Death is the rule of progress. It is not the worst thing in life, although it be the end of it.

Assuming that the present object of such an editorial is to encourage the spirit of patriotism among the people, these words fall short of their purpose. They do not inspire. Coldly material as they are, they invite the reply that if death of the body ends all individual life, then it were better to keep the body free from jeopardy by avoiding conflict and danger.

Let us consider whether patriotism may not be better aroused by treating death as not the end of life, but only as an event in life.

To illustrate: at the time of the Russo-Japanese war it was said that the Japanese were patriotically inspired by their belief that in dying for their country they at once passed to a state of perpetual happiness. Materialists may differ from them in their conclusion, but they cannot deny the value of such faith as a patriotic impulse.

It would now appear that our countrymen have a more certain assurance as a foundation for their faith in a life hereafter. This foundation comes with a scientific study of phenomena along lines of psychical research, in which subject great progress has been made in the last fifty years.

Men of high-standing in the world of science and business now submit evidence most convincing, of the continuity of the individual personality after the change called death. Evidence so plain, indeed, that he who runs may read.

SIR OLIVER LODGE'S VIEWS.

Sir Oliver Lodge, Vice-President of the English Society for Psychical Research, eminent Professor of Physics and head of the Birmingham University of England, tells us in his book "Raymond" that he is in communication with, and receives messages from, his dead son, constantly, since he was killed in battle in Flanders in September, 1915; that these communications are received regularly in the household and in the presence of his family, all of whom are cognisant of them. Sir Oliver and his family, no doubt, have reason to think of the words expressed in the beautiful song:—

I hear you calling me
And oh! the ringing gladness of your voice!
The words that make my longing heart rejoice
You spoke—do you remember?—and my heart
Still hears the distant music of your voice.

I hear you calling me
Though years have stretched their weary length between,
And on your grave the mossy grass is green:
I stand—do you behold me?—listening here,
Hearing your voice through all the years between.

W. T. STEAD AGREES.

The late William T. Stead, former editor of the "Review of Reviews," a man certainly capable of forming intelligent conclusions, wrote most interestingly of his like experiences in his little book entitled "How I Know that the Dead Return." Mr. Stead, who, as we remember, went down with the "Titanic," had great hopes for the future of his son whom he had intended as the one to continue his most useful work and whose death was a great disappointment. We are informed by Mr. Stead that he was in frequent communication with his son after his son's death, indeed they communicated with each

other more frequently than during his son's lifetime, due to the father's absence from home. Is it not reasonable that in instances of parent and child, the recognition of the personality after death would be more likely? On this point Mr. Stead says, "The tie between us was of the closest. No one could deceive me by fabricated spurious messages from my beloved son." On the question of the kind of evidence necessary to convince the human mind of these facts, Mr. Stead says, "What is wanted is that those who profess to disbelieve in the existence of life after death should honestly attempt to define the kind of evidence which they would consider convincing. I have narrated in this paper what seems to me conclusive evidence of the continuance of personality after death. All of these incidents occurred in my own personal experience. Their credibility to my readers depends upon their estimate of my veracity. These things actually occurred as I have written them down. Supposing that they had happened to you, my reader, could you refuse to admit that there is at least a *prima facie* case for a careful exhaustive scientific examination into the subject? What more evidence, what kind of evidence, under what conditions is evidence wanted, before conviction is established?" As to the means of communication Mr. Stead very interestingly likens it to a system of wireless telegraphy and code signals not yet perfected. Mr. Stead cites several instances—including instances of prevision—in which neither telepathy nor action of the subconscious mind was possible.

A writer called "An Enquirer," quoted in the "Literary Digest" of March 10th, scoffs at these facts and challenges Sir Oliver Lodge's conclusions and judgment on the subject, as set forth in his book "Raymond," though with what equipment of experience or means of information, possessed by the enquirer, it is unknown. "Enquirer" finds fault that the information comes from a medium or by signals upon a table, and one is prompted to ask what sort of signal "Enquirer" would use should he desire to communicate with mortals after leaving his material body. Is it not presumptuous to assume that Sir Oliver with his experience would not be a competent judge of the personality of his own son?

DR. FUNK, A KEEN OBSERVER.

The late Isaac K. Funk, D.D., LL.D., Editor-in-Chief of the "Standard Dictionary," and late head of Funk and Wagnalls Co., publishers of the "Literary Digest," himself a keen observer and close investigator, in a book written by him called "The Psychic Riddle," states his belief as follows:—

I have no hesitancy in accepting the proposition that intelligences who are foreign to us, that is, who reside beyond our five senses, can and do communicate through the physical sense organs with those—or some of those—who are living in the flesh. (Page 201.)

DR. HUDSON OPPOSED.

Thomas Jay Hudson, Ph.D., LL.D., author of a work entitled "A Scientific Demonstration of the Future Life," was one of the most able of those thinkers opposed to the Spiritistic theory. In his work, written twenty-five years ago, entitled "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," he says:—

Be it remembered I shall not undertake to prove that the souls of men do not live after the death of the body, neither will I undertake to say that the spirits of the dead do not and cannot communicate with the living. I do not know. No attempt will be made to deny the phenomena of Spiritism. . . I will not waste time by attempting to prove by experiments of my own or of others that such phenomena do occur. It is too late for that. The facts are too well known to the civilised world to require proofs at this time. The man who denies the phenomena of Spiritism to-day is not entitled to be called a sceptic, he is simply ignorant, and it would be a hopeless task to attempt to enlighten him.

Some "modern scientists have an easy way of treating such phenomena which consists in denying their acceptance and refusing to investigate. Such men would plug their own ears and deny the phenomena of thunder if they could not account for it by reference to laws with which they are familiar."

Dr. Hudson expressly concedes the movement of ponderable objects without contact, but attributes all the phenomena to

telepathy and the subjective mind of the living. In some respects his theory is quite as difficult to accept as the Spiritistic, and the late Professor William James, of Harvard, expressed the thought that "The spirit hypothesis is the easiest all around explanation."

The American Society for Psychical Research at Columbia College, New York, is pursuing this investigation under the direction of Professor James H. Hyslop, who for many years occupied the chairs of ethics and logic in that college. In his book "Science and a Future Life," Professor Hyslop says:—

There was a time when it was necessary to apologise for the work of psychical research. It is no longer necessary before intelligent people. The steady influence of time and progress has brought a certain type of facts in human experience into respectable recognition. The interest of the average human mind in the immortality of the soul, taken with the influence of scepticism and materialism to discredit the belief, and the allegations that there were numerous facts proving the future life against belief, offered an opportunity to investigate the matter scientifically. Apparently the movement has opened a mine, which, if it does not supply all that human nature hopes, will certainly extend the boundaries of knowledge.

Gladstone, the great statesman and thinker, called psychical research the most important work being done in the world, and Bishop Fallows, of Chicago, has given a name to those who hold the Spiritistic theory. He calls them Immortalists.

In these days of carnage and death in Europe, together with clouds in our own sky—added to the vacant places about us caused by deaths in the ordinary course—we are justified in stopping a moment to consider what is to come, renewing our faith and inspiring our patriotism by such evidences of the future life as are at hand, to the end that we may feel and know that "The grave itself is but a covered bridge leading from light to light through a brief darkness."

FORESHADOWINGS OF THE WORLD CRISIS.

EXAMPLES ON WHICH OPINIONS MAY DIFFER.

Some time ago a correspondent wrote inquiring whether we could tell him if any predictions of the present war could be found in a book entitled "Essays from the Unseen," published in 1885. Before we had leisure to go through the book, which is a collection of trance utterances through a medium described as "A Working Man," and recorded by "A. T. T. P." (Mr. A. T. T. Petersen, an Anglo-Indian judge), a letter reached us from another reader calling attention to some remarkable passages in pages 330-331 of the book. We find that there is an impression amongst those who have read them that these passages relate to the present war. If they do, it is in so confused a fashion that it would be paying the deliverance a high compliment to call it a prophecy. It commences, as will be seen, with an allusion to the Crimean War, and then predicts another great war in which Russia appears to be the general enemy. We quote some of the passages, which will be of interest to those unfamiliar with Mr. Petersen's book. We should imagine the medium's mind was considerably psychologised by the political ideas of his period.

War! War! Rumours of War! Yes, they were commencing. The spirit utterances of old are finding their full measure in the present passing time. The haughty Autocrat, the Czar of all the Russias, recognising the opposition to his wishes by France, resolved to carry out his wishes, and go beyond anything he had ever demanded. He proclaimed his seigniorship over all the Christian inhabitants of Turkey, both in Europe and Asia, demanding for them the same civil rights as the followers of the Prophet Mahomed enjoyed. But at this time another nation had come to join this vortex, another to swell the list of nations that are yet to meet; yes, yet to meet—they have wrestled together, but the real battle has not yet been fought; it has yet to come. It has been but an allied war of nations, not an universal Armageddon. Their blood-stained and wounded bodies, on the very site whereon the battle must take place, only prove that the struggle has been, that the wrestling has passed, and that the battle site has been found—has been found, I say, "Armageddon."

Of what language is the word? Do you know? I will tell you. It is a Hebrew word:—*Ar*, a great height, or lofty plain: *Mageddon*, a city—in conjunction, a *lofty city*, or a *great and famous city*. Let us now refer to the wrestling match between allied nations, the trial of strength, ere the great battle takes place! How many thousands of this country's bravest fell upon the heights of this sternly defended Armageddon! It was but the allies against the autocrat, the despot. It was not the universal battle of the future, when consolidated Germany's voice shall be heard; when the dash of enthusiastic France shall be felt; when proud Austria's banner shall be seen, and England's glorious standard be unfurled; when haughty Spain's legions shall be drawn up in stern array, and liberated Italy shall join the universal issue; even the newly-formed United States of America shall send her sons of liberty to join the bloody chorus, and the same site of the former struggle shall be the site proclaimed by the prophetic voices of the past, there in the lofty city or the city on the heights, which the allied armies have before stormed, that city which to you is known by its Greek name, meaning the same in Greek as in the Hebrew—I am referring to Sebastopol, which literally means the same, "a lofty or illustrious city."

These are the despairing efforts of a passing era. These are results that must be, ere universality can be obtained, ere men's pride can be conquered, ere undue power can be abandoned, ere superstition and blasphemy can be defeated, ere the midway of change can be reached. I ask you—Are these ambitions dead in the breast of this barbarous nation? Are not her hands stretched over the fair face of Europe, which her rule would make a desert? Then, indeed, must be the realisation of the saying that "darkness covered the earth, even as with a mantle." Already are millions preparing for the universal battle of nations.

It is possible to read into this a foreshadowing of the present war, but only in a dubious way, for it now turns out that Germany and not Russia is the great enemy.

The following passage from page 226 of the same book, a message purporting to come from "Lucius Junius Brutus" (a claim for which we can see very little evidence of a scientific kind) is more to the point. "Brutus" prophesies a great change of which he says:—

This coming change, this grand era, this spiritual wave, greater by far than any that has swept across the habitable globe, the Infinite Father, the Living God, directing it, and embracing in its work the conversion of all mankind, will soon arrive. There are many, strong in their intellectual pride, who will try to ridicule its first working, and will say it proves but this, that charlatans and impostors have arrived at a deeper knowledge and power of imposture, outstripping science. But time shall bring them all humbly on their knees. . . .

Some of us are confident that this great spiritual wave is already sweeping over the face of the earth.

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ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

P. L. CHAMBERS (British Columbia).—Thanks for your letter. It was necessary that the persons immediately concerned should be consulted, and they were not anxious for the publicity involved by a continuance of the feature. Things will adjust themselves as usual. Nothing is final.

It is not what a nation gains but what it gives that makes it great,—D. LLOYD GEORGE.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, APRIL 29, &c.

Reports and prospective announcements are charged at the rate of twenty-four words for 1s.; and 3d. for every additional ten words.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—*Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W. 1.*—Mr. H. Ernest Hunt on "Some Practical Applications of Spiritualism"; eloquent and educational discourse. Treble solos, &c., also greatly appreciated.—At 77, *New Oxford-street, W.C. 1.*—23rd ult., Mrs. Podmore; successful meeting. Sunday next, see front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, *Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.*—Mr. J. J. Morse spoke morning and evening; subjects, "Under What Power?" and "The Invisible Church." For Sunday next, see front page.—I. R.

CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM: 22, *Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.*—Mrs. Fairclough-Smith delivered inspirational addresses, which were greatly enjoyed. Sunday next, morning, service for our fallen heroes; evening, address on "Colours."

TOTTENHAM.—684, *HIGH-ROAD.*—Address and clairvoyance by Mrs. Mary Gordon. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address by Mr. Gillespie; Lyceum at 3 p.m.—D. H.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—**PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD, PLUMSTEAD.**—Address by Mr. Robert King. Sunday next, address by Mr. G. F. Tilby.

RICHMOND.—14, *PARKSHOT (OPPOSITE PUBLIC BATHS).*—Mr. R. Boddington, address; Mrs. Stair, clairvoyance; large audience. Sunday next, Mrs. Maunder.

CROYDON.—**GYMNASIUM HALL, HIGH-STREET.**—The president, Mr. Percy O. Scholey, gave an address. Sunday next, at 11, service and circle; 6.30, the president.

FOREST GATE, E.—**EARLHAM HALL, EARLHAM GROVE.**—Service conducted by Mr. Geo. T. Gwinn; address by Mrs. Jamrach on "The Resurrection; Past and Present Records." Sunday next, Mr. Sewell, room 13, 6.30 p.m.—F. S.

WIMBLEDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION.—Interesting address through Miss Violet Burton. Good psychometry by Mrs. Clara Irwin on Wednesday. For prospective announcement see front page.—R. A. B.

CLAPHAM.—**HOWARD-STREET, WANDSWORTH-ROAD, S.W.**—Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., questions; 6.30 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Connor. Friday, at 8, public meeting. May 13th, Mrs. M. Moore.—M. C.

BATTERSEA.—45, *ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.*—Address and clairvoyance by Mrs. Sutton. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., circle; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 6.30, Mrs. Beaumont-Sigall. Thursday, 8.15, Mr. E. A. Meadwell. Doors closed 8.30.

MANOR PARK, E.—**THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.**—Uplifting address by Alderman D. J. Davis. Sunday next, 6.30, Mr. Todd, address. 7th, 3 p.m., ladies, address and clairvoyance. 9th, 7.30, Mr. Hayward, address and clairvoyance.

BRIGHTON SPIRITUAL MISSION.—1, *UPPER NORTH-STREET (close to Clock Tower).*—Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. E. A. Cannock, addresses and descriptions; also Monday, 8 p.m. Friday, 8 p.m., public meeting for inquirers.—R. G.

HACKNEY.—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD, N.E.*—Mr. Dougall, excellent address; Mrs. Brookman, well-recognised descriptions. Sunday next, 6.30, Mrs. Beaurepaire, address and descriptions. Monday, Mrs. Brookman. Tuesday and Thursday, Mrs. Birchard.—N. R.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—**SURREY MASONIC HALL.**—Addresses: Messrs. Oaten and Wright, Hanson Hey and D. Todd. Sunday next, 11 a.m., Miss Violet Burton, address and questions; 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Annie Boddington, address and clairvoyance.

READING.—**SPIRITUAL MISSION, 16, BLAGRAVE-STREET.**—Morning, address by Mr. William Ford on I. Cor. ii. 12; evening, address by Mr. George Woodward Saunders on "The World We Live In."—T. W. L.

SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL MEETING.—On Saturday, the 28th ult., the Little Ilford Society of Christian Spiritualists held a "social" and dance in the hall of the Public Library, in aid of their New Church Fund. The excellent programme of songs, &c., was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. Miss Stella Thompson's humorous ditties caused much laughter. The songs by Miss D. Goode, Miss Louie Watson and Mr. Arthur Belling were greatly appreciated. Miss Donnie Gieve (gold medallist) recited with much feeling and expression. Pianoforte solo by Master Leslie Fray, and fancy dances by Miss Eileen Willis and Miss Winnie Gibbons. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mrs. Jamrach for organising the social and acting as M.C., and to the artistes, the helpers at refreshment stall, and Mrs. Grace Wheeler, pianist.—A. J.

A SLANDER REFUTED.

An American correspondent tells us that in attacks upon Spiritualism in America, a German emissary of Roman Catholicism supports his assertion that mediumship invariably leads to the asylum or the sanitarium by affirming that Sir William Barrett has stated that he had "observed the steady downward course of all mediums who sit regularly in séances." On our referring the matter to Sir William, he informs us that the statement is quite untrue. On the contrary, he has declared in his book "On the Threshold of a New World of Thought"—and reaffirms the declaration in his new work—that no reliable evidence has ever been adduced in support of the charges against Spiritualism of creating insanity and fostering immorality. Sir William adds:—

It is true I have uttered warnings against the abuse of Spiritualism by the silly and the credulous; or by those who try to make use of it for objectionable purposes. I remark, "It is the weakening of the sense of personal responsibility that constitutes, in my opinion, the chief peril of Spiritualism"—that is to say, it is a danger to those who seek to be guided in the affairs of this life by the utterances of an entranced medium rather than by their own reason and moral sense.

Anyone at all familiar with mediumship is well aware that mediums include a large number of thoroughly healthy, sane and intelligent people who have practised their gifts for many years—in some cases for the best part of a lifetime—and who testify that their mediumship has not injured them in any way. The enemies of mediumship will not advance their cause by reckless and untrue statements.

"THE REVIEW OF REVIEWS" for April contains articles on "The Meaning of the Russian Revolution," by Charles Sarolea, "Democracy and the Commonwealth," by Joseph Thorp, and "The Criminal Law Amendment Bill," by E. M. Goodman—three subjects of paramount interest. In the notes on "The Progress of the World," Miss Estelle Stead makes a pathetic allusion to her father and his keen interest in Russia, expressing a wish that he "were here wielding his pen as of yore." The intensity of the problems of the time is reflected in the "Review's" notices of current magazine literature.

FROM THE BORDERLAND.—Mr. E. H. Sothern, second son of Edward Askew Sothern, of "Dundreary fame," relates in his entertaining book, "My Remembrances: the Melancholy Tale of 'Me,'" a remarkable psychic experience which happened to him when he was studying art in London. He was anxious to speak French well, and a certain M. La Tappy came regularly to his rooms for conversation. They used to talk of many things and became great friends. One wet afternoon Sothern was expecting La Tappy, and, sitting by the fire, fancied he must have slept, for there was the old Frenchman, with his back to Sothern, looking out of the window. They chatted in customary fashion, but La Tappy was not, as usual, trying to be gay. He left in a strange fashion, and whilst Sothern was wondering what had become of him, a man came to the door. "I am M. La Tappy's son," he said. "My father had an appointment with you at four, but I have come to tell you he can't be here; he died at three o'clock."

"THE MYSTERIES OF LIFE," by Stanley De Brath (Geo. Allen and Unwin, 4s. 6d. net), is the product of high thinking on a variety of vital subjects, prepared for the use of young people. It covers such branches of science and philosophy as "The Mystery of the Body," "The Mystery of the Heavens," "The History of the Earth," "Human Evolution," "The Mystery of Sex," "The Mystery of Pain," "The Revelation of God," and "The Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven." All these themes are handled with the great ability which might be expected from the writer better known to us as "V. C. Deseritis." Mr. De Brath was formerly a head master and his book reveals the profound interest which he takes in education. He is also known as a man of science, a fact indicated by his handling of scientific questions in the book under notice. We hope "The Mysteries of Life" is destined to fill an important place in the educational literature of the rising generation.

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