

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—*Goethe.*

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

No. 1,896.—VOL. XXXVII. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1917.

[a Newspaper.]

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have more than once in these pages drawn distinctions which some of our readers may have found a little puzzling, as, for instance, between intellect and intelligence, claiming that a person might be highly intellectual without being intelligent in the true sense of the word. And yet illustrations abound, especially at this period of world crisis, when we find great intellectual powers allied with an almost miraculous stupidity. The colossal blunders of that race which is now justly regarded as the enemy of human kind have written the lesson large for all to read. An intelligent man cannot, by the same fact, be guilty of a cruel or rascally deed, but a merely intellectual man can be, and sometimes is, a moral pervert. Lately we had something to say on the question of facts as compared with truths. And in a recent issue of the "Star" we find that distinguished writer, Mr. A. G. Gardiner ("Alpha of the Plough") discoursing on the same theme. He observes that there are few people so unreliable as those whose heads bulge with facts. They seem to have no room in their minds for ideas. The man of facts can tell you the date of the Declaration of Rights and the name of the author of the "Marseillaise," but the idea of Liberty stirs him no more than it would stir a tortoise.

* * * *

Of infinitely greater importance than the array of facts of which psychic science and psychic philosophy can boast are the ideas behind them. Intellect is compatible with the crassest stupidity, and is quite capable of denying a fact when the fact is outside its particular province. Hence the phenomenon of a certain class of minds which, confronted with overwhelming evidences of supernormal faculty and even demonstrations of it, goes on for years obstinately and blindly denying their existence. The obstinacy is quite intelligible, for obstinacy is the special and peculiar badge of stupidity. It is a singularly hopeless type of mind, it has failed to awaken in that particular which belongs everywhere to intelligence—the power of sympathy. Fortunately it is a rare type. We doubt not old readers of *LIGHT* can recall one or two notable examples of it. That is why we make so insistent an appeal for the application of intelligence to both the truths and the facts associated with the subject of Spiritualism, and we ask for intelligent opposition as well as intelligent support. An intelligent opponent may render truer service to a movement than an unintelligent friend. Indeed, the hostility of the stupid is less to be dreaded than their friendship. Life responds everywhere to life, as deep answers to deep. It is the prolific parent not only of living organisms but of ideas, the most living things in the whole realm of Nature.

Against a live mind with a live idea the dull hordes of ignorance contend in vain. If this idea for which we stand is a falsity, then let an intelligent opposition arise and extinguish it. And let it attack the idea and not the facts, for on the latter it will merely waste its energies—"Facts are chieftains that winna ding."

* * * *

In "Evolution Proving Immortality" (National Magazine Association, Omaha, Neb., U.S.A.), the author, Mr. J. O. Yeiser, an American lawyer, contends that it is mind rather than environment that determines development. The true significance of evolution, he maintains, will never be realised by the scientist until he can satisfactorily explain the tendency observable in all living things to transcend present conditions and pass into something higher. If man has reached his present stage of development through "the push" of his desires, is it not reasonable to suppose that his aspirations for spiritual survival will also ultimately be achieved? Exploring the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms in his search for evidence, Mr. Yeiser brings together a number of examples of what, in his opinion, are the results of mind working through a long chain of ancestors in modifying or transforming an organism. "If," he pertinently asks, "an eye can be evolved from a speck of protoplasm, why not a soul from a spark of intelligence?" The theory of re-incarnation is discussed and rejected in favour of a belief in the continuity of a mighty mind continually manifesting and progressing. The book is crowded with scientific facts and details, but they are so rapidly surveyed that the average reader will probably find it difficult to estimate their evidential value in the arguments presented. Despite this drawback there is much that is sound and suggestive in the work, and one closes it with the feeling that if the author is not always convincing his efforts to indicate a scientific basis for immortality have not been altogether unsuccessful. The volume is profusely illustrated with entomological, biological and geological plates.

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We are proud and glad of the generous response which has so far been made to the appeal, but we are not yet in a position to announce that our needs are satisfied. We put the appeal on the basis of compensation for surrender of a considerable portion of our advertisement revenue, but, of course, that is only part of the problem. As everyone knows, the cost of paper, labour, and other items of expenditure has doubled, and in some cases trebled. We wish to avoid raising the price of *LIGHT* for the sake of many readers, to whom such an increase might be prohibitive. A donation to our fund may thus effect a double service.

THE WORLD-CRISIS.

By MISS FELICIA R. SCATCHERD.

An Address delivered to the Members, Associates and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening, April 26th, 1917, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, Mr. H. Withall, acting President, in the chair.

In opening the meeting the Chairman expressed his regret that the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis could not be with them to deliver the lecture advertised in the syllabus, but when Mr. Davis last autumn accepted an engagement to address the Alliance that evening he did so conditionally on the maturing of certain other engagements in London, which had not come about. On learning that Mr. Davis would be compelled to disappoint them he asked Miss Scatcherd to take his place and she had kindly consented to do so. She had chosen as her topic "The World-Crisis," a most interesting subject because it meant more than the war crisis. It was one, too, which their speaker had made peculiarly her own and on which she possessed an immense amount of information. We knew that the war—precipitated by certain actions in Servia—had been the result of wrong thinking, principally on the part of the Germans. But while there had been much wrong thinking, there had also been a great deal of right thinking, and that right thinking had set up forces which would work for the reorganisation of the world. There never was a time when great reforms stood a better chance of being brought about than now. The bias which had hindered everything would be a minor quantity. The new right thinking would bring in new forms of government and righten most of the wrongs which had so long been with us. There were few things which would not, with right thinking, be rectified. Miss Scatcherd would no doubt remind them of their responsibilities, individual and collective, for they had all a certain amount of power. He entertained no doubt that when all the present trouble had passed it would be a different world—a world in which there would be greater freedom, and in which, in spite of all the prejudices that had hitherto stood in the way, right actions would meet with their due reward.

MISS SCATCHERD began with the expression of a fear lest the chairman's remarks should lead to some disappointment. She was not going to deal with the political side of the world-crisis. Were she to do so she might get her hearers and herself into serious trouble. She had, it was true, been behind the scenes, but only half behind them, and it would be foolish, in view of the proverbial danger attending reliance on circumstantial evidence, to deal with the world-crisis from a political point of view with her half knowledge. She could, if she so chose, launch a terrible indictment against certain sections and individuals, but with only a portion of the facts at her command it would not be right for her to do so. She would therefore leave that side severely alone and only approach the subject from the spiritual side. The lecturer proceeded:—

The fundamental fact revealed by the persistent search for truth is the existence of mind, intelligence, nay, of Supreme Wisdom behind all the manifestations of the phenomenal Universe.

"Some call it Evolution and others call it God" (as the American poet put it), and there are those who think it does not matter much which view one holds. But it does matter very vitally as to whether we think clearly or the reverse. To confuse processes with persons, or opinions with principles, is to perpetuate the state of chaos which has resulted in the present catastrophic upheaval.

Light in the physical world becomes truth in the mental realm. Life in the organic kingdom passes through various degrees of consciousness to the attainment of self-consciousness; self-consciousness, in its turn, expanding into the awareness of states of consciousness belonging to other centres of consciousness, finally attaining the degree vaguely comprehended in the term "cosmic consciousness." It was the lack of sympathy and imagination, resulting in deadness to the conditions in which other sentient creatures were living, which was another cause of the upheaval,

Materialists ascribe the phenomena pertaining to life and consciousness to the interaction of matter with matter. Rationalists admit the existence of mind or intelligence, but postulate its total dependence upon matter. The spiritual philosopher regards God or Spirit as the ultimate reality. Light, life, truth, love, wisdom, all these appertain to Spirit; they are varying aspects of Spirit which includes and transcends them all. Spirit embraces and enfolds all conceivable outpourings of life, physical, mental, moral, psychical, spiritual, celestial. Spirit permeates the All and is synonymous with life. It has been said that where life is, there God is.

The late Professor Royce, of Harvard University, conceived of God as Universal Thought, "not heart nor love, though these also are in it and of it." But Professor Royce attributes personality to this Being, and so by rendering it self-conscious, he rescues his Deity from being another name for Evolution.

Matter may be regarded as the Alpha, and Spirit as the Omega of Divine manifestation. In this sense, St. John rightly puts into the mouth of Deity the assertion: "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end"—each end but a fresh beginning, each effect a new cause.

It may sound a strange statement, but I am convinced that it was the inherent goodness of the spirit in man which led to this terrific world-cataclysm.

It is the heat within the egg, not the cold without, that causes it to burst when frozen, and it is the good in mankind that rises in revolt against seeming or actual injustice.

Most reformers have everything to lose and nothing to gain by their actions. They suffer that others may enjoy. They die that generations yet unborn may be able to live a life more worthy of the sons and daughters of the Living God. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." This tremendous truth had been lost sight of by the majority of those who were in high places.

All who know anything of the condition of affairs on the Continent know that the Central Powers had to force a war to save internal revolution. At Milan I found that the rulers were welcoming the conflict between Italy and Turkey for no better reason than the purpose of solving the crushing industrial problem. In the great square there I saw thousands of unemployed, all on the border-line of starvation, and under the surface this state of things was practically existing in almost all the large centres of population all over the world.

Truths had degenerated into truisms, religions had dwindled into effete and decaying superstitions, science had become pitiless in its search after knowledge, sought often with the sole object of averting the inevitable pain and death and decay which man invited by his deeds while he loathed and feared their oncoming, sacrificing innocent beings, human and sub-human, in his mad search for life and health in the torture-chambers and charnel-houses of materialistic science, striving to gain by serums and drugs and nostrums that which can only be won and kept by obedience to the true laws of our being.

In Germany and Austria and Italy the scientists, with few exceptions, were materialists. Not the kind of materialists that we are. We are philosophic materialists merely: at heart we still believe in the beautiful and the good. But some of the leading men I met were materialists in the grossest sense of the word. They utterly denied the existence of anything outside matter. Especially did I find this to be the case in Vienna. The few people who had any religion were superstitious and unhappy and were generally women. The men encouraged this religiosity because it kept their female relatives submissive and obedient. (Laughter.)

I once had the honour of dining with a number of medical representatives from Germany.* I had just read "Also Sprach Zarathustra." This caused them to regard me as one of themselves. My ignorance of German slang prevented me following them in all their outpourings, but I understood that their term for the poor people in hospitals was *Versuchungsstoff* (experimental material), and that they regarded the most

* At the frequent dinners given in connection with numerous International Congresses, my knowledge of German, slight as it was, would cause me to be relegated to the company of those speaking that language.—F. R. S.

hideous crimes perpetrated against their defenceless patients as justifiable in the pursuit of "useful" knowledge. Recent revelations as to the utilisation of dead bodies, &c., are but the logical outcome of such fiendish ideas.

I need hardly say that all were not of the same low grade of morality and ethical development.

I had, as many of you probably have, dear friends in various parts of those countries now at war with us, men and women who still cherished the ideals of that older Germany we learned to admire in our youth.

One of my most interesting psychic experiences was the one that led to my first prolonged stay in Germany, when planchette wrote a letter in the handwriting of the dead mother of a young German friend, whom I met that day for the first time on the South Coast of England. He took this letter back to Germany with him. The family and neighbours recognised the writing as that of the deceased woman, and gave me no peace until I visited them two years later. I stayed in his aunt's house, and always experienced the greatest kindness at their hands down to the actual date of the war.

To return to my more immediate theme. In the preface to "The Science of Peace" Captain Stanley De Brath tells us that we need a loftier conception of God than that of a mere Artificer of the Universe:—

To "make" is to fashion from without; to create is to cause growth by the action of internal principles . . . man makes, God creates. . . . To the concept of the Divine Intelligence as superior to the world, we must add that of a Directing Power internal to it which irresistibly "makes for righteousness." . . . The "New way of Life" . . . is the unformulated Christianity of Christ, which knows God as the Father of all mankind, not of any section.

Captain De Brath holds this to be the only permanent basis for morality. The Being of God and the Survival of death are fundamental truths, not hypotheses, proved, says the author, by the fact that Right, the same Right, leads in all lands to peace and well being, and that everywhere

human endeavour and aspiration invariably work out to the perception of Spirit as the Source of Life, so that the men who recognise Spirit as the Source of Life are in all essentials agreed. Mystics are at one the world over.

Man's survival he deems to have been demonstrated by the facts of psychical science and of occultism.

(To be continued.)

WEALTH, POVERTY, AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

Pain and suffering in relation to spiritual development having been considered at the previous meeting it was fitting that the discourse given through Mrs. Wallis's mediumship in the Rooms of the Alliance on the 20th ult. should deal with the allied subject of the influence on such development of those external conditions known as wealth and poverty. The speaker started with the statement that every man received from his forebears a special mental inheritance and that the great purpose of life was the arousing of consciousness, the increasing of the measure of perception so that he should become aware of, and be able to judge, existing conditions, and, as a result of his experience, make fuller and better application of the knowledge he had gained. People were, however, very slow to learn. Life's lessons had to be repeated in various forms till they were recognised and apprehended. There were also Divine forces working in and through man, so that he was often compelled to walk in ways wiser than he knew. Man was, indeed, a harp of many strings, each of which might be touched and played upon to produce either discord or harmony. The terms "riches" and "poverty" were largely relative. So far as they were applied merely to material possessions or the lack of them, it might be said that true possession depended upon the thought associated with the object. A man who held the title deeds of beautiful grounds but had little power of appreciating the loveliness of Nature could hardly be said to possess them in any true sense. There must be the recognition, too, of the possibilities of use and abuse. If the ownership of wealth tempted a man to undue and harmful self-indulgence the result was seen in serious

deterioration of character. On the other hand, riches were of great value when the man who owned them learned how to use them aright. If, recognising that he was really a steward, he employed his wealth for the good of his fellows, its possession became an aid to his spiritual development instead of being, as was often the case, a drag on it. Over against the burden of a plethora of this world's goods might be set the soul-deadening effect of grinding poverty—the ceaseless round of toil in which every nerve was strained and which left the worker at the end of the day utterly exhausted. While excess of physical pain brought on a blessed physical unconsciousness, here the result was an unconsciousness of the soul, shutting it off from the beauty, sympathy, and sweetness of life. One could hardly claim that such poverty was likely to ensure spiritual development. Yet there had been true and lofty souls who, though they had trodden the hard ways of life and borne many burdens, had triumphed over the force of evil circumstance and achieved great things. There were few conditions in which a man might not, if he would, gain experience of the great realities of life till he was able to make something of the glories of the universe his own and attain some degree of union with the Divine—his consciousness merging in the Divine consciousness—with the result that he would be enabled to put the powers he possessed to increasingly better service.

THE MYSTERIES OF EGYPT.

The last of Dr. W. J. Vanstone's interesting series of lectures to the Psychic Class on ancient Egypt was given on the afternoon of the 3rd inst., and dealt with Egyptian Psychology. The word "psychology" was usually employed solely in relation to the powers of the mind, but in the present connection the lecturer asked his hearers to enlarge its meaning to include contact with the spirit world. For Egyptian psychology really introduced us to Spiritualism. It was a training not only of the mind but of the spirit that it might become conscious of the spirit world, or, as the Egyptians themselves expressed it, that they might know the gods, and know themselves as gods and as one with the Infinite. It was not to be wondered at that the Egyptian priests and priestesses were overwhelmed with the greatness of their task, and in its pursuit subjected body, mind and spirit alike to the most rigid discipline. Cleanliness was with them a religious ordinance, and the chastity of their lives was so marked that all writers on Egyptology bore testimony to it. The initiates of the priesthood gave themselves to the study of wisdom in every possible form—natural science, philosophy, theology. Having mastered the principles of knowledge they laid themselves out to go through a lifetime of progressive attainment. Their lives were a series of initiations, but not such initiations as we associate with our secret societies. With the Egyptians a man could not become an initiate by mastering ritual. He had to become a master before he was initiated. Only when the initiation had taken place in his inner life could he be allowed to receive its outward sign. So we found that these men and women were highly developed both psychically and spiritually. Dr. Vanstone went on to describe the use of the divining cup, the observation of omens, and divination by means of oracles. In this connection he referred to the vocal statue of Memnon. The Egyptian idea was that a man's thoughts during his life had gone out into space, but when a statue of him was erected it formed a focal point to which the aggregate of the thoughts associated with him in life would, according to their intensity, be drawn and would form a kind of etheric body round the statue by which the man himself could manifest on the earth. Then there was the prophesying of future events, the reception of revelations through dream and vision and trance, and the use of charms and talismans. Thought-transference, the magnetic sleep and the exercise of mesmeric power were well known, as also was telekinesis—the movement of objects. Such phenomena as that testified to by Dr. Crawford were familiar to the Egyptians. At the close Mr. Withall gave expression to the warm appreciation of the audience of the series of excellent lectures to which they had listened.

THE MAY MEETINGS.—The attention of readers is directed to the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the Union of London Spiritualists, to be held at South Place Institute on Thursday next, the 17th inst. Amongst the speakers will be Mr. Ernest Meads, Mr. Richard Boddington, Mrs. M. H. Wallis and Mr. Percy R. Street. The meetings will be held at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 7 p.m. Admission will be free.

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"ROGUES AND VAGABONDS."

Dr. Powell's address at the Mass Meeting at South Place Institute, a report of which appears on another page, puts the question at issue as between Spiritualism and its enemies on very high ground. It lifts the matter completely out of the arena of petty bickerings and conflicts of detail. It is the strong affirmation of simple human right. Whether that right be one of religious or of scientific freedom, it is inalienable. Those who sought to deny it in the past failed miserably and failed always; those who in the twentieth century set themselves the sorry task of suppressing freedom with the rusty weapons of the dark ages will fail even more signally. Any attempt to arrest the growth of the human mind is an attempt to interfere with the operation of a natural law, and there is nothing more certain than that those who are guilty of it are foredoomed to an ignominious defeat.

We claim that psychic powers are facts, for which there is overwhelming evidence. Let us, however, for the sake of argument, admit the possibility of doubt, and assume that our claim may be wrong. Even then the human right of belief, experiment and investigation remains indefeasible. When Oliver Wendell Holmes, writing of Spiritualism, said that it had reacted on the whole conception of a future life, he expressed a view that is shared by thousands of intelligent observers. It has liberalised theology; it has immensely broadened and enriched the world's thought; it has acted as a solvent, a stimulus, an energiser. In short, it has aided life. That would remain none the less true even if Psychic Science were found to-morrow to be a delusion—we will not say a complete delusion, for there is no error unmixed with truth. And even error has its merits, as the French philosopher observed.

But in this matter we know that we do not stand for an error. The foundations of our science and philosophy are true and sound. As to the scientific side of the matter, the carefully verified experiments of Dr. W. J. Crawford, even if they stood alone, unfortified as they are by thousands of kindred facts, would settle the question. Against the truths of Science the forces of reaction must always thunder in vain. Facts are proof against laws, legislatures, armies, presbyteries and the police. And the facts are winning their way, so that at last the offending enactments, even if they are not amended, will inevitably

become a dead letter. But practical good sense demands that they shall be amended, that the shackles on freedom shall be struck off and not merely allowed to rust off. To adopt the latter position would argue cowardice on the part of those who suffer and the last resort of ignorant and obstinate tyranny in those who frame the laws of a people whose boast is in its free institutions.

Both at the meetings held in the Parish Room of St. Ethelburga's Church on the 26th ult., when the Rev. Dr. Cobb presided, and at the Mass Meeting at South Place Institute not only was a demand made for the amendment of these obnoxious laws, but it was proposed that measures should be taken for the protection of mediums, that their gifts might be exercised under careful and humane conditions. That proposition is one which calls for earnest thought and vigorous action at the earliest opportunity.

In the meanwhile even in these tragic days one can hardly observe without amusement the cross-purposes at which the followers of an effete Theology and an almost equally stale Science have arrived in their opposition to a subject which appears to threaten the interests of both. While one shrieks aloud at it as a devilish Reality, the other sneers that it is a contemptible Imposture. There can be no strength and unity in these divided counsels. They are mutually exclusive; they cancel each other. But although they cannot both be right, yet neither is *absolutely* wrong; thus much we may concede. For we remember that we are dealing with something human, a human institution, just like science and theology, and therefore not utterly free from taint. When we find perfection in the pulpit and infallibility in the laboratory, then and only then shall we admit that its admixture of human weakness is a valid argument against Spiritualism. The genuine medium is just as much a rogue and vagabond as the priest, the scientist, the lawyer and the actor—and just as little. Amongst our friends and adherents, by the way, are many members of the theatrical profession, and the position touches a responsive chord in their minds, for they also were once, as Dr. Powell reminded us, "rogues and vagabonds" in the eyes of the law. But it appeals also in different ways to those amongst us who are clergymen, scientists, lawyers or journalists, since all these professions are implicated in the attempt to burke the truth. It appeals also to the disciples of Freedom outside our ranks. The discovery that we are the subjects of persecution has led them to a certain conclusion. Jupiter, they noticed, was using his thunderbolts instead of his intelligence. And that admitted of only one interpretation.

A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF MAY 14TH, 1887.)

Lady Caithness is writing a series of papers on Semitic philosophy. But we cannot help feeling in reading the productions of Lady Caithness, as well as those of Dr. Anna Kingsford, how great the danger is of assuming that any system of thought contains the key of all knowledge. . . . It is assuredly to carry the esoteric explanation a little too far to say, as Lady Caithness does, in speaking of the Mosaic wars, that "the tribes which he (Moses) destroyed symbolically represented the bad inclinations and the bad thoughts of his own people, their incredulity and idolatry."

In that remarkable address by Mr. Crookes* [at the Royal Institution], one of the most important results arrived at was the probable existence of the atom of negative weight. As the atom of positive weight would represent one state of things, so the atom of negative weight would represent a state of things exactly the opposite. . . . Mr. Crookes speaks of "ample room and verge enough" for a series of *shadowy unsubstantialities* if the atom of negative energy be admitted.

* Now Sir William Crookes.

TO AMEND THE WITCHCRAFT AND VAGRANCY ACTS.

MASS MEETING AT SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE.

As mentioned last week, the protest meeting at South Place Institute was both large and enthusiastic, and the resolution demanding the amendment of the Witchcraft and Vagrancy Acts was carried without a single dissident.

Mr. J. J. MORSE occupied the chair, and the proceedings were opened with an impressive invocation delivered by Mr. E. W. Oaten.

The Chairman then briefly explained the objects of the meeting. Referring to the distinguished names which they were permitted to use in support of the agitation, he said that such sympathy and approval were always very important when an appeal had to be made to the public conscience. Although the recent outburst against Spiritualism had been very severe, he thought that the worst of the storm was now passed, but it had taught them the necessity of considering their position under the law and obtaining the removal of the antiquated and stupid enactments which restricted their freedom. Needless to say, he held no brief for the charlatan or impostor, for men or women who would degrade psychic faculties to vain or vicious purposes, but he did hold a brief for mediumistic faculty exercised by honest and clean-minded men and women. It was fitting that such a gathering as that over which he presided should be held in that building dedicated to freedom of thought and progress. "Mediumship," continued the chairman, "is a faculty of human nature, and when legitimately and rightly used by mediums it should not lead to their being cited as criminals before the law. We preach angel ministry, and Spiritualists, if they can get these laws amended, will do a spiritual service to humanity."

DR. POWELL'S ADDRESS.

The Chairman then called upon Dr. ELLIS T. POWELL, who began his address by briefly sketching the present legislative position, the result of centuries of legislation. In Tudor times our ancestors accepted the reality of psychic phenomena and legislated to prohibit such manifestations. Then, early in the eighteenth century they executed a complete right-about-face. Instead of accepting the fact of the phenomena and prohibiting them, the legislature adopted the attitude that no such phenomena ever took place, and that any person pretending that they did should be subjected to the severest possible penalties. This was substantially the position at the present time. The genuineness of the phenomena constituted no answer to a charge under the Witchcraft Act. To put it very plainly, but at the same time with all reverence, if Socrates, or Jesus Christ, or St. Paul were nowadays to reappear among us and invoke the marvellous manifestations of psychic power associated with their great names, they were liable to be convicted before the nearest police magistrate as "rogues and vagabonds." Possibly the position might be more vividly illustrated by supposing a legislative declaration that the planet Jupiter had no satellites, and a prohibition, coupled with penalties, against affirming that it had. An individual is charged with this offence. He replies by inviting the magistrate to look through the telescope and see the satellites for himself. To this the magistrate replies that the existence of the satellites, however positively demonstrated, is no answer to the charge since Parliament has affirmed that they do not exist.

The issue of the meeting that evening was much wider than they supposed. It was not a question merely of the right to demonstrate the existence of discarnate intelligences around us or the survival of the dead. There was at stake an infinitely wider principle which had been operative over the whole field of human evolution since first the process had begun. Continuing, Dr. Powell said:—

One of the most vital distinctions between the animal and vegetable lies in the fact that the former possesses the power of locomotion, which the latter lacks. The animals, within a limited range, and their master, man, within a range practically unlimited, have the power to change from one environment

to another, and in that way to come into contact with new conditions, tending to foster and facilitate the process of development. Man, for instance, in our own natural history, has extended his associations from the isolated farm to the neighbouring town and thence to an acquaintance with the country as a whole. The Kentish man was once a "foreigner" in Devonshire, regarded there with jealousy and almost aversion. The law as administered in Kent was not that known and accepted in Devonshire. Hence there was a narrow, local spirit, and nothing in the nature of a real national sentiment became discernible until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Then it was that we first began to wear down our insular prejudices by systematic contact with foreign peoples. Then we threw off the yoke of the foolish legislation which had sought to pin a man down to one village for his life, and prohibited his migration to the scene of wider opportunity. That process has gone on with ever accelerated pace in the three centuries that separate us from Elizabeth. Even before the war international relationship, hindered and hampered as little as possible by fiscal and physical frontiers, was beginning to be recognised as the idea of an enlightened humanity. In the narrower circle of domestic intimacy we know that "as iron sharpeneth iron even so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." The fact is equally true in the field of international relations. Contact with new minds and new conditions brings with it a freshness and vitality of outlook combined with a deeper sympathy and a truer because vaster conception of the basic principles that underlie all human advance. Of those principles this power of extended contact with a new environment is at once the most peremptory and the most potent. To-day we have reached the point at which we are in contact with practically everything terrestrial that is within our reach. We have become able at all events to scan, if not at the moment to visit, the myriads of worlds that gem the midnight sky. Most wonderful of all, we have discovered non-material psychic worlds, whose mysteries are open to our adventurous exploring, and whose laws are of transcendent interest to us. We desire contact and communion with the intelligences which inhabit these realms of discarnate life, whither, as we believe, we must all one day depart. And just as the prospect of successful and prolific research is opened before our eager eyes, we are faced with the spectacle of a couple of Hanoverian debauchees, George II. and George IV., rising from the tomb, where they have hitherto been lying in oblivion, to block our pathway with a menacing hand and a "Thus far and no farther." From the dead eighteenth century, the century when our national life as a whole fathomed its utmost profundities of cynicism and materialism, comes the mandate which seeks to bar the aspiring twentieth century from entering the promised land of psychic research, now discerned in all its promise and brilliance. Two hundred centuries of physical science have revolutionised society and its conditions from top to bottom. Efforts to stop its advance succeeded for a time, but at length the clumsy dams of mediaevalism were swept away by the advancing flood of human knowledge. But now that man peers beyond the physical into the psychic, the old obstacles and prohibitions are being re-erected in his path. That in plain English is the meaning of the practical prohibition of psychical research by the re-invocation of barbaric enactments dating from the days of George II. and George IV. And yet in the words of Professor Bury:—

"If the history of civilisation has any lesson to teach it is this: There is one supreme condition of mental and moral progress which it is completely within the power of man himself to secure, and that is perfect liberty of thought and discussion. The establishment of this liberty may be considered the most valuable achievement of modern civilisation, and as a condition of social progress it should be deemed fundamental. The consideration of permanent utility on which it rests must outweigh any calculation of present advantage which from time to time might be thought to demand its violation."

We desire simply the right to investigate, to scrutinise, to experiment with, to observe phenomena, which, as we affirm, suggest the possibility, and more than possibility, of establishing both the existence of discarnate and non-terrestrial spheres of existence and also the capacity of intelligible communication with them. We have no purpose to serve save that which energises all science, the belief, that is to say, that the more man can learn of the environment around him the happier and the better he will be. We are told that it is an increasingly controllable future that lies before us—that in ever-widening and deepening knowledge of the laws of Nature and of life and in the resulting enhanced control of all the gifts and forces known and unknown which are within our cognisance, we are to find the means of greater happiness and a higher standard of physical, intellectual and spiritual existence for the whole human race. (Applause.)

We have seen science achieve immeasurable conquests in the domain of medicine, surgery, industry and finance, with benefits to humanity which are measured in the contrast between the opportunities of modern life in comparison with the prevalent squalor, ignorance and disease of a couple of centuries ago. We protest against psychic investigation being in effect prohibited, as if it were the outcast sister of the family of the sciences. On the contrary, we suspect that to some extent the origin, and to a greater extent the maintenance, of the bigoted denial of the reality of psychic phenomena have had their origin in a deliberate desire to rivet political fetters upon the human race. The politician is above all things desirous to prevent vigorous minds from propagating the harvest of their own independence. Some of you may remember the old story of the countryman who was once walking in affable conversation with the god Jupiter. They argued pleasantly for some time until at length the countryman began to press his points with some insistence upon the god, whereupon Jupiter threatened him with a thunderbolt. The countryman then said, "Now, Jupiter, I know you are in the wrong. Whenever you begin to threaten people with thunderbolts it is a sure sign not only that you are in the wrong but that you know it." (Laughter.) In the same way the politicians and the reactionaries threatened the psychic investigator with their thunderbolts, because they knew that the free development of thought was utterly contrary to their own private interests. All the persecutions of the last four centuries have had for their object the suppression of opinions which were supposed to menace the political exploiters of the people. The game has always been to prohibit investigation and to maintain superstition so as to keep men contented and submissive, and to prevent too close an inspection of the devious and corrupt trickeries of the politicians who had exploited them by means of rates and taxes. The spirit of the Witchcraft Acts resembles that of the workhouse master who, as Mr. Frederic Harrison tells us, was suddenly called to console a dying pauper. The poor soul faintly murmured some faint hopes of heaven. The master cut him short, and urged him to think of hell, "and thankful you ought to be that you've got a hell to go to." Even so do the lawyer and politician strive to exclude mankind from the realms of loftier research lest, with his soul inspired and quickened in those higher regions, he should begin to pry too closely into the things of which they desire to keep him in ignorance. "Think of the earth," says the politician, aping the callous workhouse master, "and thankful you ought to be that you are allowed to live and breathe and pay taxes on it." (Laughter.)

Christianity, at all events, does not need to be buttressed in that fashion. I am convinced that psychic investigation is going to consolidate Christianity, to give it a grip upon the intellectual allegiance of mankind such as it has never yet attained. If I thought that Christianity could only maintain its hold upon mankind by means of a protective suppression of all inquiry into psychical phenomena, I should despair of the Christian religion altogether. (Applause.) But the fact is just the contrary. The more deeply the psychic factors of Christianity are probed, the more solid and impregnable are its foundations discovered to be. The Witchcraft Acts and the persecutions based upon them involve a denial of the psychic factor in Christianity. They make out Socrates to be a crazy lunatic, Christ a demented impostor, and St. Paul a mere juggler with words. People are entitled to hold those views, but, as Montaigne said, "It is setting a high value on one's opinions to roast men on account of them," and it is claiming something like Papal infallibility for legislators and politicians to declare that because they do not believe in the things which are spiritual, therefore those who do and who have scientific evidence for their faith should be exposed to the tender mercies of the ignorant policeman and the blundering jurisdiction of the ordinary police magistrate.

All that psychic students ask is a repeal of these obsolete and bigoted statutes, with due safeguards against the abuses arising from fraud and imposture. Practical anatomy was once forbidden. The absence of the prohibition does not act as a licence for indiscriminate body-snatching. The original objection to anaesthetics in childbirth (within the lifetime of some veterans still amongst us) was that, utilised thus, they were a defiance and an evasion of the divine penalty once inflicted upon Eve. (Laughter.) All those foolish ideas have gone, and the use of anaesthetics, under proper regulation, is of immeasurable beneficence. Actors were once rogues and vagabonds; now they are made knights. (Laughter.) There is no general prohibition against the practice of law or medicine. We only insist that a certain standard of knowledge and capacity shall be attained before we license the practitioner. We cannot offer to guarantee the accuracy of any psychic statement or diagnosis. But then neither does Law or Medicine. Those who call a barrister to the Bar do not guarantee

that his advice will infallibly be correct, nor do those who place a man on the Medical Register guarantee that he will always cure his patients. Let us do the same with the psychic, examine and test his qualifications, at the hands of a competent body, and then leave him alone as long as he uses them honestly. For centuries we have been trying to stamp the psychic faculties out. Thank God we have not succeeded. Now that we recognise what they are, let us foster their proper and reverent use as keys to the exploration of glorious regions of knowledge, whither as yet only a few adventurous explorers have penetrated. (Great applause.)

(To be continued.)

THE EXPECTED WORLD-TEACHER.

HOW THE WORLD IS REALLY TAUGHT.

By E. WAKE COOK.

The remarks on "The Coming of the World-Teacher," on p. 136 of *LIGHT*, have raised anew the endless train of questioning which all references by Theosophists to such an advent have raised in my mind for years past. I have not read the work in question, and my remarks apply only to the attitude of mind which hungers for such a teacher.

Would not the coming of such a Mahatma, or World-Teacher, one speaking with super-normal authority, cramp us back into mental childhood, and arrest the growth of those investigative faculties which are man's chief glory, and which should be trained and used to the utmost? Is there not infinitely more of exalted teaching in the world than man has yet the power of assimilating and acting upon? Is not scientific and other knowledge pouring in upon us in such overwhelming abundance that we cannot keep pace with it? Is it not part of our own work, our mental discipline, to condense and to organise this knowledge into a living *organon* that shall satisfy all man's needs for knowledge, and give him all he can assimilate and act upon? If this work of re-stating old truths in new terms be done for us by an authoritative teacher, then they would crystallise into a hampering strait-jacket kind of orthodoxy, while the living flood of incoming knowledge would leave it stranded out of the vital stream of life!

Was not the Father of Modern Spiritualism such a world teacher, but one who avoided all the perils of a hampering authority by appealing always to the authority of reason, and a man's inner sense of, and affinity with truth. Should not we assimilate and act on such "Divine Revelations" before seeking for more? What does the world know of him or his teaching? Mankind is moving in his direction, but it will be fifty years before it can come abreast of him. And is this not true of the great body of our teaching? It is the self-teacher which is most needed; the virtue is in *getting* the knowledge. The supreme need is for wisdom, insight, and appreciation. We should learn to appreciate what has been given before we are worthy of receiving more. The most amazing case of lack of appreciation of heaven's own gifts, a case similar to and as amazing as that of A. J. Davis himself, is that of the most truly inspired of poets, the Colossus of Poetry, who stands head and shoulders above Milton and Dante in the magnificence of the starry splendours of his conceptions; of whom Tennyson said that he dared not say how much he admired him for fear of being thought guilty of extravagance; that he himself was as a robin twittering among the hedgerows, while this poet was an eagle soaring to the sun! A youth who wrote the sublimest Epic of the Soul, who advanced Theology by a century, who condensed the wisdom of the ages into epigrams whose thought moved with cosmic sweep through the immensities, who pictured with flashing splendours all realms of existence, from Heaven to Hades. This youth, another poet said of him, "had poetry enough to set fifty poets," and his work, as our best modern critic says, is a quarry from which generations of poets may help themselves and yet leave inexhaustible riches. I refer to Philip James Bailey, the author of "Festus." This work at first produced a perfect *furor*, and what I am saying of it was better said half a hundred critics at the time. But after the amazement

at a youth producing such a stupendous work had passed, and it had to depend for its appreciation on kindred genius, or the necessary largeness of soul, then it fell into oblivion. To-day no one reads it, no one quotes it; it is absent from anthologies, and that no mention is made of Bailey in our "Dictionary of National Biography" is the most damning fact in our whole literary history. Now it will take another Goethe to "discover" this supreme spiritual poet, and two or three centuries will be needed for us to grow big enough to measure him!

Here we have two "world-teachers" whom we are too small to appreciate, and until we are bigger no Mahatma could teach us much. No, the real world-teacher we needed is here and has come, as Christ did, bringing a sword. Nothing less than this scourging, educative world-war could stir our sluggish souls to their germinative depths, could tear the scales from our blinded eyes, or still the demoralising party strife which had plunged us into a sex war and threatened a fratricidal one. Through this world-teaching war, as Lloyd George said with pardonable hyperbole, we have grown a thousand years older and wiser; "the experience of generations has been crowded into just a few winters, and we should indeed be unworthy of the great destiny to which Providence has called this generation of men if we throw all that away for the sake of formulas that were framed before the flood." World-Teachers have come before, offering truth, mercy and peace; we have stoned and crucified them, as we are now doing in another way. This last Apocalyptic world-teacher has come to crucify us in our turn, and we must learn its lessons well lest a worse thing befall us.

THE STRANGE STORY OF "PATIENCE WORTH."

NOVELS, PLAYS AND POEMS FROM A OUIJA BOARD.

Most people know the meaning of the term "ghost" in connection with literature and art. The "ghost" is usually a skilful hack-worker who is employed by an author or artist of repute to produce work which the latter puts forth as his own. On the morality of the proceeding we pass no judgment—we are not at the moment considering that question. But the story of "Patience Worth" lends a new meaning to the phrase, for here it is a question of a spirit communicator producing through the agency of a medium using a Ouija board, writings so far removed from the average output of that little instrument that they have made quite a sensation in American literary circles.

But for the war no doubt the affair would be well and widely known to the British public, but, as it is, although the case has been heard of here, not much is known of it.

Mr. Malcolm Walters Davis, an American writer who has fully inquired into the matter, has given an excellent account in the New York "Evening Post," from which, with acknowledgments, we take the following:—

For persons who may not have heard of "Patience Worth," it is necessary to explain that the manifestations of this extraordinary individuality, purporting to be the spiritual personality of a woman who lived in time long past, began in the casual operation of that entertaining contrivance known as the "Ouija board," under the hands of Mrs. John H. Curran, wife of the former Commissioner of Immigration of St. Louis, at their home in that city, and have continued ever since.

Mrs. Curran, through whom exclusively the productions of "Patience Worth" are transmitted, seems to be a perfectly normal, cheerful, everyday sort of person; she never had been concerned in Spiritistic performances or experiments or associated with Spiritualists, and so far as I can learn had never shown any indications of abnormal psychology. She had not been inclined to attribute importance or significance to the antics of "Ouija boards" up to the time when suddenly began the remarkable communications of "Patience Worth."

Even on the night when this business began, I am told, Mrs. Curran was using the board in the usual lighthearted way, as a form of entertainment for a party gathered in the Currans' drawing-room in St. Louis, under the cheery light of the electric table lamp. There was no thought of a séance . . . simply a group of normal, good-humoured, ordinary folks, amusing themselves in commonplace fashion with this well-known plaything.

In circumstances such as these suddenly began the writings which have gone on at intervals ever since in enormous volume, exhibiting really extraordinary literary quality, and with striking unity and coherence in the display of a personality as distinct and different from that of Mrs. Curran herself as it would be possible to imagine. The writings include not only conversations with persons in the room at the time and answers to an elaborate series of questions which I sent myself by mail to Mrs. Curran after my own meeting with "Patience Worth," but poems, parables, short stories, plays and novels, in varying Old English dialects, involving the use of unfamiliar words in meanings most recondite.

TWO NOVELS AT ONCE.

The novels are impressive not only for length, but for an originality of conception and a charm and vigour of artistic execution which has made literary critics rank them high among works of creative fiction. In addition to literally hundreds of poems and shorter compositions, there is a play, "Redwing"; a long dialogue narrative, "Telka," and now two more long novels are being written simultaneously in alternate sections.

The first, called "A Merry Tale," is an uproarious Old English story of a broad humour and vital characterisation which would have done credit to Chaucer. It is being written admittedly as an offset to the second, called "A Sorry Tale," a narrative of the time of Christ. This deals with the life of the son of a Roman dancing girl cast off by Tiberius, whose child is born in the spirit of bitterness and revenge and named "Hate." He comes into the world in a leper's hut outside the walls of Bethlehem on the same night that Christ is born in a manger inside the walls. The two lives of opposite spirit develop side by side, therefore, through the period of the story, each playing an important part, although that of Christ is kept back toward the end.

The composition is accomplished with astonishing speed, Mrs. Curran reading off the words as the flat, triangular wooden pointer on its three short legs slides from letter to letter around the semi-circular alphabet; Mr. Curran writing them down in a self-invented system of abbreviations. Indeed, under the custom of having two people sit at the board, passages of both the "Merry Tale" and the "Sorry Tale" came under my own hand, placed with Mrs. Curran's on the pointer—at the rate of about 2,000 words an hour!

Some three thousand words of the "Sorry Tale" were taken down while I watched in about an hour and a half, and it was all good narrative, picked up with certainty at the point where it had been dropped a week or so before, and continued in a lucid, easy style, full of fine imagery, of wit, and of perception of human values and character.

Impressed by the apparently untiring flow of creative imagination, I asked if there was never a decided pause, such as ordinary authors make when they set the end to a chapter and lay down their pens for a little mental recuperation. Thereupon the board broke off to spell out:—

"Ye see, man setteth up his cup and filleth it; but I be as the stream."

Then it went ahead with the story.

DISCONCERTING SENSE OF PERSONALITY.

This incident was only one of many to give a curious and somewhat disconcerting sense of a personality quite conscious of one's own, and responsive to it, which has impressed every one who has had any first-hand experience of "Patience Worth." It happened that I chanced on a night when the tale came to the point of a meeting, after years of separation, between the mother and son in the "Sorry Tale." The incident was described with fine restraint and with a truth of emotion which avoided the obvious sentimentalities that most authors would have introduced. At a point where the laugh of an idiot character in the story was used to heighten the tragic intensity of the situation, I made some complimentary comment upon the use of contrast. Again the board interrupted the narrative to spell:—

"Lor', he eateth breads and knoweth breads."

From this point on I shall speak of Patience Worth—whoever or whatever she may be—without quotation marks. And I should explain that the *punctuation*, including the apostrophe, indicating elision of letters, is my own, inserted merely for convenience of the reader. Patience does not punctuate; her spelling is literally transcribed.

In the first six months, from June 13, 1913, to January 22, 1914, there were transmitted 15,000 words. In the second and third periods of six months the amount was the same—20,000 words. In the fourth six months it jumped to 100,000 words, as the transcribers gained facility. In the next six months it was 241,000 words, and from January 22 of 1916 up to June

18, when I visited the Currans in St. Louis, it was 266,000 words. In the first eighteen months the total was 55,000 words; in the last eighteen months it has been 607,000 words.

Mrs. Curran asserts that the work imposes no strain upon her, because there is no conscious mental effort, and that she is in better health and weighs more than when she started. Certainly she shows few signs of strain during a sitting at the board. . . .

"COME UP AND MEET PATIENCE."

I went into the office of Mr. Casper S. Yost, editorial director of the St. Louis "Globe-Democrat," one day last June, without warning, and found him writing an editorial. He showed me some of the volumes of typewritten manuscript which make up the record of the Patience Worth writings, and we had some talk about the book "Telka," in the editing of which he is now engaged. Then he said, quite casually:—

"Wouldn't you like to come up and meet Patience?"

Needless to say, I accepted with alacrity.

Shortly afterward we went out to lunch. We had hardly sat down at the table when Mr. Yost exclaimed:—

"Well, this is a surprise! Mr. Davis, this is Mr. and Mrs. Curran. Mr. Davis wants to come out and meet Patience."

The Currans seemed delighted to face any tests of verification, and it was arranged that we should go out the next night. As they went away, Mr. Curran laid on the table an envelope, remarking:—

"There is your copy of Patience's last record, when Miss — and Mr. — were there. There's a delightful poem in it."

Next night I boarded a perfectly ordinary trolley-car and jolted out to the pleasant street in which the Currans live. Two friends of the Currans had just arrived, and with Mrs. Curran's mother we made up the party for the evening. We sat for a while talking, as Mrs. Curran told a little of the way in which the first communications had come and of her own consciousness of Patience—such a consciousness, she said, as *one would have of the personality of an individual in an adjoining room, with whom one talked frequently and familiarly, but whom one never saw*—a peculiarly apt statement of the sense one has in these conversations. Then, without more ado, she brought out the Ouija board from its place behind the piano, and we sat down to it. The pointer started immediately, spelling out this:—

"Set ye at the puttin' o' the tale; yea, set thee so that the younged one [the term by which Patience referred to me from then on] shall for to see the weave o' the cloth o' me. Then shall thy handmaid set a fitting song and a word to the heart o' him, and tell much that hath pith and tickle athin it."

It should be noted that Patience habitually invents terms for the people in the room, exhibiting in this much of the spirit of fun that distinguishes her. For instance, she almost always addresses William Marion Reedy, of the St. Louis "Mirror," whose physical weight and breadth are in accord with the intellectual weight and breadth for which his writings in his weekly are familiar, as "the Fat-awide"—a term which he himself has recorded with enjoyment in his own editorials upon Patience Worth.

(To be continued.)

IN A LETTER lately received from Miss Lilian Whiting she mentions that she is engaged on a new book of the type pleasantly familiar to readers of "The World Beautiful," "The Life Radiant" and others of her works. Miss Whiting also mentions that Sir Oliver Lodge's "Raymond" is having a great sale in the United States and has excited tremendous popular interest.

TRANSITION OF MR. JAMES WATSON, OF DUNDEE.—We learn with regret of the transition of Mr. James Watson, of Dundee, on the 28th ult., at the ripe age of eighty-seven. Mr. Watson was regarded as the grand old man of Spiritualism in that city. He was one of the originators of the Dundee Society in 1896, and held, till within a year or two ago, the office of minute secretary of the society. Mr. Watson's position and record as a citizen elicited obituary notices in the Dundee Press, but references to his connection with Spiritualism were omitted. This, however, was amended by Mr. James M. Stevenson, president of the Dundee Society, who, in a letter which appeared both in the "Dundee Advertiser" and the "Dundee Courier," called attention to Mr. Watson's connection with the movement.

KING SOLOMON'S SEAL.

BY PAMELA GLENCONNER.

I thought I was in a great garden, filled with flowers, in which there were groups of high, leaf-laden trees. The lawns were smooth, with never a daisy to break the green of them, and the shadows of moonlight lay darkly upon the ground. For it was night in my dream, and there seemed to me many others, dream-people, with me, whom I could not see. I was aware of them, and I knew we were all gathered there together to be put to some test. This is a feature common to my dreams. An ordeal is to be undergone. Either it is an act demanding courage, or a problem is set the solution of which I must draw from wells of wisdom till that moment unknown to me. In this dream I thought that I and those unseen had to count and give a right rendering of the flowers of that well-known plant, "Solomon's Seal."

The flowers of the "Solomon's Seal" hang in little bunches from the arched green stem, making a rainbow span. I remember seeing the white flowers and bending eagerly to examine them. I counted ten of these, as they hung there, and all the time I was counting there were small voices about me like thin breaths of air. "Count us, count us," they were saying; "we are separate, and yet the same. Count us."

I thought these voices came from some flowers hidden perhaps among the leaves; and I turned the leaves back and about with my two hands, seeking. I can feel the coolness and firmness of those leaves now, but I could find no more flowers among them. Yet the thin voices were whispering: "Count us, count us."

Then, in the great clearness of the moonlight, I saw that everything in that garden had its shadow, the counterpart of itself. Every flower I had counted was shadowed black upon the ground, and together I counted twenty, and the clamouring of the little voices in my ears ceased. And in my dream I thought the time had come when we must give our answer. We must have been standing in a long line, for I heard the answers of the many who were there, coming nearer and nearer to me, like a soft wind blowing through a wood.

"Ten—ten—ten" sounded each separate answer in an infinitely long approach, and then the one who seemed nearest to me said "ten," and I knew it was now my turn to answer. I was filled with the strength of a mighty spirit, and my voice cried out so that it filled all the hollow of the sky. "Twenty I make it, I make it twenty, although substance is shadow, and shadow is substance; for what is, seems; and what seems, is."

And I dreamed I was given King Solomon's Seal for my wisdom.

Now both my dream task and its answer may seem empty and trivial, full of the greatly sounding anti-climax of a dream, the fairy gold that fades on waking; but it has not been so to me since I came, unexpectedly, upon the picture of a symbol in that most interesting book by Mr. Samuel Hopgood Hart, lately published under the name of the "Credo of Christendom." From the illuminations of Anna Kingsford he gives the design and the manifold meaning of King Solomon's Seal, a device made by the combination of two triangles.

If this symbol was indeed given me, even if it was only in foreshadowing of something to which I may some day attain, some striven-for strength that may help a mere human heart to bear its sorrows, then I can only say—with George Herbert—

My God, what is a heart?

Silver, or gold, or precious stone?

A star, a rainbow, or a part

Of all these things? or all these things in one?

At the Hall of the Art-Workers' Guild in Queen-street on April 30th Mr. Ernest Hunt delivered a lecture on "Nerve Control," in which he emphasised the importance of the subject. The lecturer pointed out that by training and developing both the conscious and subconscious faculties and ensuring a proper balance and co-ordination between the two, there lay great possibilities in front of the individual, not merely as touching the question of the control of "nerves," but in increasing the standard of achievement in practically every direction.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MAY 6th, &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.*—Striking address by Mr. E. Haviland on "Lest we Forget," with special reference to the pioneers of Modern Spiritualism. A loyal tribute. For Sunday next, see front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, *Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.*—Mrs. Mary Gordon spoke on "The Communion of Saints." Mr. Ernest Meads on "Inspiration and Spirit Control." For Sunday next, see front page.—I. R.

CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM: 22, *Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.*—Morning, service for our fallen heroes: evening, Mrs. Fairclough-Smith, address on "Colours." Sunday next, Mrs. Fairclough-Smith: morning, "Christ Within"; evening, "Spiritual Gifts."

CROYDON.—**GYMNASIUM HALL, HIGH-STREET.**—Eloquent address by Mr. Percy Scholey, "What is Spiritualism?" Sunday next, at 11, service and circle; 6.30, Mr. Robert King.

WIMBLEDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION.—Interesting address by Mrs. Mary Davies. For prospective announcements see front page.—R. A. B.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—**PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD, PLUMSTEAD.**—Address by Mr. Fuller; clairvoyance by Mr. George. Sunday next, address by Alderman D. J. Davis.

BRIGHTON SPIRITUAL MISSION.—1, *UPPER NORTH-STREET* (close to Clock Tower).—Sunday next, 3 p.m., Lyceum; 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Boddington, addresses and clairvoyance; also Monday, Wednesday and Friday, at 8 p.m.—R. G.

RICHMOND.—14, *PARKSHOT (OPPOSITE PUBLIC BATHS).*—Mr. Maskell's control answered questions, followed by psychometry. Sunday next, Mr. E. Hunt. Wednesday, Mrs. Gordon.—B. S.

CLAPHAM.—**HOWARD-STREET, WANDSWORTH-ROAD, S.W.**—Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., public circle; 6.30 p.m., Mrs. B. Moore, address and clairvoyance. Friday, at 8, public meeting. May 20th, Mrs. Neville.—M. C.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—**SURREY MASONIC HALL.**—Morning, Miss V. Burton, address; evening, Mrs. A. Boddington, address and clairvoyance. Sunday next, 11 a.m., Mrs. Thomson; 6.30 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington.

HACKNEY.—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD, N.E.*—Mrs. A. de Beaupaire gave an impressive address on "The Soul's Awakening" and descriptions. Sunday next, Mrs. Podmore. Monday, 6.30, Mrs. Sutton. Tuesday and Thursday, Mrs. Brichard.—N. R.

MANOR PARK, E.—**THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.**—Uplifting address by Mr. Todd. Sunday next, 6.30, Mrs. Marriott, address and clairvoyance. 14th, 3 p.m. (ladies), address and clairvoyance. 16th, 7.30, Rev. Biggs, address.

TOTTENHAM.—684, *HIGH-ROAD.*—Mr. H. Gillespie gave an interesting address on "Does Death End All?" Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address and clairvoyance by Mrs. E. Marriott; Lyceum at 3 p.m.—D. H.

BATTERSEA.—45, *ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.*—Morning, circle; evening, Mrs. Beaumont-Sigall, address and clairvoyance. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., circle; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. Olman Todd. Thursday, 8.15, clairvoyance. Doors closed 8.30.—N. B.

READING.—**SPIRITUAL MISSION, 16, BLAGRAVE-STREET.**—Mr. Howard Mundy gave addresses, morning and evening.

EXETER.—In connection with the Exeter Centre of the Order of the Star in the East a meeting was held on the afternoon of the 4th inst. at 31, Longbrook-street, when Mrs. Richards, of Silvertown, gave an interesting address on "Psychic Experiences." The chair was taken by Mrs. Goss, Group Secretary of the Order. Mrs. Richards spoke of her first introduction to Spiritualism through Vice-Admiral Osborne Moore twelve years ago, and of the help he had ever been ready to give her in her search for truth. After giving many details of personal experiences in her early life abroad she went on to refer to her sittings with various well-known mediums, particularly Mr. Cecil Husk and Mrs. Wriedt, the trumpet medium, and said that in all her experience of sittings she had never come in contact with evil or lying spirits. Friends long passed over had come with messages of love and help, and others who had passed away more recently had sent through her words of comfort to dear ones left behind. She felt sure that all who approached Spiritualism with an unselfish mind and a real desire to know the truth and to be of help to others need have no fear of encountering those difficulties which might otherwise lurk in their path.

HOW LONG?

We have received the following letter from "Bidston":—

How long will the world tolerate the present un-Christian, barbaric and insane manner of settling national disputes? How long will it be before the human race awakens to the realisation that it has a *right* to live out its earthly course; that the Creator intended it to do so; and that the earth life is a useful preliminary experience in man's progress from ape to angel, which ought not to be prematurely cut short in order to gratify the ambition of rulers? But instead of avowing the iniquity of war, some are labouring to justify it, and even endeavouring to see in it great good.

Miss Bates is quoted in *LIGHT* (p. 136) as saying: "May it not mean that special souls . . . have reached a point in their evolution when this physical sacrifice alone was necessary as a testing-time before such spirits could gain access to the next step in their evolution?"

Truly, God's ways are not our ways, but I cannot believe they are *worse* than ours, or that any spiritual advance is to be gained by rousing the devil in man and bidding him do his worst. Presumably man is still too uncivilised to abolish war, but we need not seek to justify it, although we may well be humiliated and ashamed of its continuance in the year of our Lord 1917.

AMULETS AND TALISMANS.

Meeting recently Mr. W. T. Pavitt, the joint author with Mrs. Kate Pavitt of the book "Talismans, Amulets, and Zodiacal Gems"—perhaps the best work on the subject ever produced—the writer asked him whether the public taste for amulets was as strong as ever. He replied that there was no diminution of the demand for articles of personal jewellery having an occult or symbolical meaning. He pointed out, however, that this taste was not to be confused with the more popular rage for mascots of the "golliwog" order. The people who attached importance to jewels having a symbolical meaning were mainly those who took a serious interest in the subject, who were impressed with the classical and philosophical side of the study of gems, their powers and meaning. It is hardly necessary to refer to the many examples of this in ancient writings—as, for instance, the jewelled breastplate of the Israelitish high priest. A more modern illustration is found in Mr. David Wilson's experiments in connection with psychic telegraphy. Mr. Pavitt produced some exquisite pieces of jewellery engraved with astrological and sacred devices, or worked into symbolical forms. Amongst these were seals cunningly fashioned as lilies, the lily being represented by a tiny crystal. Some of them were superb reproductions of antique work of the hammered variety. Those who read Mr. Percy Street's address at the Suffolk-street Salon on "Precious Stones: their Therapeutic Value," or have listened to Dr. W. J. Vanstone, will have learned that there is a solid foundation for some of the beliefs, ignorantly classed as superstitions, concerning the powers of gems, and Mr. Pavitt pointed out that amulets designed with careful application to the characteristics of the wearer seemed to possess distinct influence on the life. Possibly some students may be inclined to attribute this purely to the power of suggestion, although any device which has the effect of calling latent psychic powers into action is worthy of serious consideration. Certainly the cultivation of the "occult" in connection with pieces of jewelled work of rare and delicate craftsmanship is deserving of respect. "A thing of beauty," as the poet tells us, "is a joy for ever," and the influence of beauty is a very real one. It has doubtless a subtle action upon the deeper side of the nature, so that it is of little importance whether it is described by such labels as "psychic," "occult," or merely "aesthetic."

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