

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe. "WHATSOEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!"—Paul

No. 1,989.—VOL. XXXIX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1919. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.  
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LONDON, W.C. 1.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Now and again LIGHT contains an article critically examining some question on which there is room for doubt. The writers are persons who have thoroughly satisfied themselves of the truth of our central doctrine—the reality of a life after death and the possibility of communication between the two worlds. They have the right to be termed "strong" Spiritualists, for they are strong enough to examine without fear every statement purporting to come from psychic sources in order to determine whether it is worthy to stand beside the main teaching. Mr. Ernest Craven, who has been writing on "The Structure of the Atom" in our pages lately, is a mind of this class. He is a Spiritualist, but he is also a man of science who believes with us in rigorously testing every part of the structure of psychic science and philosophy. Moreover, we doubt not he appreciates the fact that the psychic faculty is designed to supplement knowledge normally gained and not to supersede it. Many things have reached us and are reaching us through the agency of clairvoyance and other spiritual avenues, the truth of which is afterwards demonstrated by discoveries made through the aid of the ordinary faculties. But it is not wise to lose sight of the fact that those ordinary faculties are the natural and legitimate ones for use while we are on the earth. The latent psychical faculties are not sufficiently evolved to take their place, and their main function at present is limited to demonstrating the reality of a spiritual world. They are not yet adapted to the task of carrying out investigations in physical science, hence their results in this direction are usually unreliable. It is a mistake to try and harness Pegasus to the plough.

\* \* \*

There is a real Mysticism which deals with deep states of the spirit, only to be expressed in symbol and parable, and there is also a specious variety which appears to rely for its effects on clothing some simple truth or fact in involved diction and high-sounding words. Its followers seem to be subconsciously aware of the weakness of their pseudo-mysticism, for they are greatly given to an assertive style of speech—and are usually impatient of contradiction. In all matters which are brought into the radius of the reasoning mind we should insist on clearness, simplicity and strict obedience to the laws of thought. There is no profit in taking some simple truth or fact, dressing it up in weird language and proclaiming it as an "occult" or "mystical" truth. In our reading lately we came across an "occult" deliverance on the subject of the dangers of an over-developed "ego-feeling" in its effect on morality. The "ego-feeling," when too feebly developed, on the other hand, caused the soul, surrounded by the "storms of elemental sympathies and antipathies," to be "lacking in inner firmness and stability." And so the writer went on, showing that

the "ego-feeling" should be moderated by emotions of good fellowship, sympathy and love. But it needed no occultist to tell us that excessive *self-esteem* is bad and deficient *self-esteem* equally so, and to explain why. When a thing can be stated simply it is waste of time to clothe it in ungainly forms of speech which merely in many cases serve to disguise a platitude.

\* \* \*

It is one of the benefits of the scientific method that it insists upon clear and definite forms of thought. It drags the pretentious and oracular statement out of the obscurity in which it tries to disguise itself and insists on knowing its true meaning. And when science has done its part in the world of psychical, occult and mystical research, it will rid us of vast quantities of turgid stuff which appears to be very important but really means very little. It will draw very sharp lines of distinction between the nebulous philosophies of the "dream-consciousness," so captivating to the romantic and unthinking, and the products of reasonable and connected thought based on demonstrated facts. "Book philosophies," and systems woven in the study of the thinker, must be carefully checked and tested by life-experience. They must be drawn in the first place from the living world and then prove their validity by working out effectively in practical life. If they are rickety, perishable fabrics, they are not really strengthened by being expressed in Sanscrit or any special form of terminology. Our subject is one that calls for the application of the strongest of strong common sense, the clearest of thinking, the sharpest of penetration. So only will the shams perish and the realities be revealed. The sublimities, the spiritualities, will abide unharmed. Poetry can always dwell serenely in its own sphere; but doggerel is ever liable to be exposed for what it is.

## THE POWER OF THE UNSEEN.

E. M. S. writes:—

Readers of "One Thing I Know" may be interested to hear that I have had further experience of the wonderful help that can be given from the spirit world for the healing of the body. A short time ago my sister became most dangerously ill with pyæmia, and lay at death's door for many weeks. When her life was well-nigh despaired of Dr. Beale took over the case and by his skill and unremitting care, brought about a remarkable recovery. The peculiar treatment given by him was pronounced by the earth doctor to be most foolish. It was certainly an extraordinary one. At the most critical time Dr. Beale kept "Miss Rose" in trance for thirty-two hours on end, and for twenty-four hours no one but himself was allowed to enter the patient's room. As in my own case, much prayer was offered on behalf of the patient, and many other spirit helpers combined (under God) to bring about the wonderful cure.

I have been rather disappointed at receiving no answer to the request I made in LIGHT a short time ago. The editor has kindly given me leave to repeat the same.

I should therefore be greatly interested to receive confirmation of Dr. Beale's work in the spirit world, through a medium unknown to me. Will some reader of LIGHT able to get into touch with an enlightened spirit on the other side, ask him or her to go and visit Dr. Beale's home and to give an account of the work carried on there? If details of the buildings and grounds, as well as the names of some of the workers could be given, it would be most convincing.

I shall be delighted to receive any other information obtained in this way. Dr. Beale has promised to give every facility for viewing the work to any spirit who visits the Home in answer to this request.

## L.S.A. SOCIAL MEETING.

ADDRESS BY MISS LIND-AF-HAGEBY.

Those members and friends of the L.S.A. who were not present at the Social Meeting on Thursday evening, the 13th inst., know not what they lost. It is true that, owing to her regrettable illness, we were denied the privilege and pleasure of welcoming the American poetess, Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox—to the noble message of whose verse, with its denunciation of social wrongs and its sane outlook on life and duty, Mr. Withall in his opening remarks as Chairman paid a coröial tribute—but if any kept away on that account they made a grave mistake. They missed a most pleasant social atmosphere, the witchery of beautiful music, and, lastly, the bright presence and good common-sense talk of Miss Lind-af-Hageby, which went far to atone for the absence of the hoped-for visitor.

Miss Lind commenced her address by a sympathetic reference to the talented lady whom they had expected to see and hear that evening. She herself was more sorry than anybody, since, in the absence of Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, it was left to her (Miss Lind) to attempt to take her place. On that same day, in going over Mrs. Wilcox's works, she had come across two poems which could be applied to Spiritualistic teaching. The first of these was entitled "True Charity" and ran as follows:—

"I gave a beggar from my little store  
Of well-earned gold. He spent the shining ore  
And came again, and yet again, still cold  
And hungry, as before.

"I gave a thought, and through that thought of mine  
He found himself, the man, supreme, divine!  
Fed, clothed, and crowned with blessings manifold.  
And now he begs no more."

"I interpreted that poem" (said Miss Lind) "from the point of view of Spiritualists—Humanity is hungering for the thought of life and power. In Spiritualism they gain a vital thought which changes all life for them and which alone can satisfy their need."

Miss Lind then quoted the poem "Progress," which begins.

"Let there be many windows to your soul  
That all the glory of the universe  
May beautify it,"

and after affirming that as a consequence the heart would "turn to truth and goodness as the plant turns to the sun," adds:—

"A thousand unseen hands  
Reach down to help you to their peace-crowned heights,  
And all the forces of the firmament  
Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid  
To thrust aside half-truths and grasp the whole."

She thought that that poem was very clearly Spiritualistic. It set out definitely some ideas on the question of human advancement.

Turning to the subject of mediumship, she said that its processes in their lower stages at least were not particularly spiritual. It was a question of using a special faculty to penetrate beyond the ordinary stages of human life. In a certain sense everybody and everything was a medium. Everything served for something else to pass through or grow upon. Everyone and everything had to use a medium in the course of their growth and development.

To take an instance from human life, every man, as he advanced in knowledge and mental or spiritual attainment, was absolutely forced to give out to others. He had something to express and he was compelled to express it. And if he had the creative faculty he had to create forms in some medium or another. So long as he confined himself to the things known and understood amongst his fellows no one questioned his action as a "medium" for the expression of ideas. But when he was, as in the case of the psychical medium, a mediator for the thoughts of an unseen humanity, he provoked denial and opposition. Most people, perhaps, would define Spiritualism as being concerned with the power of communion with those who had passed out of the body—the exercise of the so-called psychical powers of trance, clairvoyance, psychometry and other faculties of the soul. To her Spiritualism was simply the opposite to Materialism. Spiritualism pre-supposed that man is a spirit living in a spiritual universe. That was the foundation truth of Spiritualism. The other considerations were quite subsidiary.

The whole address, with its teachings as to the true meaning of mediumship as a means of progress both for the medium and his fellows, and its benefits when wisely pursued for altruistic and not for personal ends, coupled with a remarkable account of her own experiences of spirit communication and spirit guidance, was deeply interesting and impressive. Miss Lind gave examples of monitions from the Unseen which were followed out in the teeth of menacing circumstances and in conditions in which she seemed to be steering straight to disaster, but the counsels were true and events fell out exactly as they were foretold. Perhaps in one of her later books Miss Lind may tell the story of a life which has been led through devious ways to appointed ends, a life guided by the illuminations of those elder brothers of the race who lead the race steadily onward and upward.

Before Miss Lind's address we were treated to one of Mendelssohn's Trios (Miss Walenn, violin; Miss Violet Withall, cello; and Mr. Wiseman, piano), and later in the evening the magic of Miss Walenn's violin swayed our emotions at will with Dvorak's "Humoresque," Ethel Barnes' "Swing Song," and Leclair's "Tambourin." Mr. Wiseman also, at Mr. Withall's invitation, gave an illustration of his powers of improvisation; the subject, suggested by Miss Lind, was "Moonlight on the sea, with a gentle breeze," and the soft ripple of melody which followed called up a perfect mental picture of the scene.

Great interest was manifested, in the early part of the evening, in the spirit photographs exhibited by our contributor, J. I. H., which were obtained by him through the mediumship of Mr. Hope, of Crewe (see *LIGHT* of the 8th inst., page 46). The Chairman alluded to these photographs as the most satisfactory he had yet seen.

At the close a comprehensive vote of thanks, which included Miss Lind, the musicians and the Chairman himself, was moved by Dr. W. J. Vanstone and carried with acclamation.

G. R.

## THE ETHERIC BODY AND OCCULT SCIENCE.

The anonymous writer of "Notes by the Way," who denies the well-known fact of the disintegration of the etheric double shortly after death, is evidently *not* a psychic himself. If he were he would know the comprehensive difference between etheric and astral sight.

In the case of etheric vision, the people sitting in front of you turn somehow into pigmies and their voices almost die away, so muffled and distant do they become no matter how near they may be in the flesh. Nor does this etheric mode of sight spring up altogether without warning and vanish as suddenly, which is invariably the case with normal astral vision. On the contrary, you can go on looking etherically at a whole crowd of people and listen intently in this dim and distant fashion to a lecturer close by for what seems an interminable time.

Occult scientists teach that only a slight heightening of the rate of vibration of the physical body is necessary to induce etheric sight because both these bodies belong to and are composed of the matter of this earth-plane and they therefore cannot possibly survive so-called death and pass on to the astral sphere.

Each of the seven planes concerned with our evolution is made of its own special substance with a body or vehicle of corresponding material from the coarsest physical to the most rarefied ether. Mr. Robert King explained to an audience of Spiritualists in my hearing that not until we reach the fifth plane—the Christ Realm—and the causal body, the vehicle of the immortal re-incarnating Ego, can we truthfully speak of a spiritual body. The physical, etheric, astral or psychic and mental bodies are exactly what their names imply. Of the two highest planes so transcendently beyond our reach, no man can as yet speak. Occultism also teaches that there are four different modes of manifestation in the ether itself just as there are the four well-known elements of earth, air, fire and water in connection with matter. As my books have been warehoused for several years I cannot substantiate my statements with appropriate quotations.

I should like to endorse wholeheartedly Mr. Fielding-Ould's seven axioms on scepticism. We must each of us fit ourselves to receive Truth and, as soon as we are ripe for it, it will flow in upon us from every side. Nobody can plough or till our mental soil for us any more than he can feed our bodies.

Cosmic evolution demonstrates that the agnostic must infallibly become sooner or later the gnostic, and that "Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever."

S. F. SMITH.

[We are the writer of "Notes by the Way," and as such feel our position acutely. Like the man referred to by Sydney Smith who would "speak disrespectfully of the Equator," we have spoken irreverently of the ether. But it was not the ether known to Science and lately described by Sir Oliver Lodge in these pages, but another kind of ether known only to clairvoyants. Without denying the existence of this latter substance, it may well be asked why the term "ether" is applied to it, if it is not identical with the ether known to Science and described by Sir Oliver Lodge as something which, unlike matter, never grew old, decayed or wore out.—ED. *LIGHT*.]

## "LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND, 1919.

In addition to the donations already recorded, we have to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following sums:—

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## "SOME EMOTIONS AND A MORAL."\*

One is familiar enough with books in which intellect not improperly plays the leading part, and with others where its procedure is frequently ridiculous. One is intimate too, with a noble class of books in which, from relative weakness, the part of intellect is sometimes pathetic. Rarely comes a volume that explicitly renounces, deliberately disdains, even contemns the intellectual constituents of mind; but such is this one by Mr. Ashworth, misnamed "A New Gospel"—unless, indeed, it is regarded as an object-lesson of warning against extreme and disorderly reaction from intellectualism, much as in another field Bolshevism is such a reaction from evil autocracy. This is perhaps the chief feature of originality in the work, and of its real use. Certainly it has for the first time in the present writer's life forced upon him the part of protagonist of intellect. Only when misdirected or extreme is this power, like any other in the hierarchy of intelligence, unworthy of reverence; essentially it is divine as love in essence is.

"Intellect is rather a dead sort of spirit intelligence," mistakenly says the author in his Second Book, "Man and his Spirit," with which "it has nothing to do." Had the intellect done its appointed work upon the data of the First Book, "Affinity" (a curious conglomerate of "materialisations," sublimated sexualism and ordinary human experience) this "New Gospel" would have been at least less of a misnomer, a beacon more to guide than to warn.

Throughout the volume it is personal feeling that at all times is insisted upon as criterion and authority: "Feelings are everything." Thus of a time when he was lost in a maze of psychological problems that cannot be mentioned in a short notice like this, although they involved the nature and value of the entire "Gospel," the author writes: "I had no comprehension of the whole business, I was led along by my feelings and knew not whither, but I felt that all would be right." So might robber, seducer, murderer, fanatic of every hue and shade, speak of some of their experiences—in good faith too, mere personal feeling at all times the ultimate criterion and authority. The most glorified individualism, however, is only a half-truth. There is no attempt at differentiation of feeling, sensation, emotion; while the mere intensity of the former is taken as the actual measure of reality. How wildly wide of truth this is may be seen at a glance by its recognition as precisely what occurs in lunacy. Whether a lunatic believes he is Solomon judging between rival maternal claimants, or a male hypnotic subject postures tenderly as a nursing mother, the babe a walking-stick, intellect in them is suppressed, and their spurious feelings are to them the sole measure of reality.

Mr. Ashworth's volume comprises three Books: "Affinity, a Self-Revelation"; "Man and His Spirit, a Simple Exposition of Principles"; and "The Clasp," so named because it is said to "clasp" the three books together.

The volume evidences unquestionable sincerity, simplicity, frankness, honesty of purpose, integrity of belief in the "authority" that is only a personal product.

The author is quite unconscious of taking himself too seriously, as in the Thesis of his Introduction, wherein, with engaging egotism, he figures as "an epitome of humanity," a standard man for measurement of all "deviations or aberrations"; in Addendum I., where he writes:—

"Here, as we are impressed to say, is the most beautiful, the most soul-satisfying—and at the same time the most reasonable gospel ever offered to man, as an individual," &c.; also in Addendum III., when he asks himself as Armageddon raged, "Was my revelation worth all that? Did the soul need to bring about that terrible purifying, that chastening of the nations—in preparation for what I had?"

It is the reviewer's hope, possibly a vain one, that somebody will succeed in convincing Mr. Ashworth that he would push the up-to-date ideal of standardisation too far, well-meaning as indubitably he is. As for the above problems in the interrogative form, an answer by anybody could only be supererogatory.

There is space enough left to add that the "whole appeal of the First Book is based upon the particular phenomena of Materialisation therein described"; and that in the Second Book "the writer rests his claim to consideration on the subjective fact of re-birth," which takes place, as alleged, at middle age. In the Preface it is stated that this "New Religion" has for basis "the ordinary love of the sexes"; and near the end of the Third Book, where the reader's expectation of something real in the way of new gospel follows a will-o'-the-wisp through the remainder of 515 pages to the legendary end, we are given, as "the essential part of these teachings," the *Message*, to wit: "The method of procreation adopted by all creation . . . is *wrong*; and further, the *only* wrong of which man can, at the present stage, have any positive knowledge."

The work is more, however, than a psychological curiosity. As a human document it is of sustained interest

to the psychologist, and affords many glimpses of truth from the viewpoint of childlike feeling. The author is at his best in the essays, where results of his method are most constructively suggestive.

W. B. P.

## INDIAN MAGIC: THE MANGO TRICK AND OTHERS.

Mr. J. J. Meyrick, of Budleigh Salterton, Devon, writes:—

During a residence in India of nearly twelve years, I never saw the rope trick, but witnessed several remarkable conjuring feats for which no theory of sleight of hand is capable of accounting. Of these the following three seem to be quite worth describing:—

A conjurer who came on board a P. & O. ship off Madras, brought a bag of fine mould and asked for some fresh water with which he moistened it. He then planted a mango seed, which several passengers previously examined, in the mould, and covered it with a basket the shape and size of a dish cover.

Over this he placed an old stained cotton cloth, worn through in several places, and then began to show another trick.

Thinking that his object was to divert the passengers' attention and enable his assistant to go to the neap of earth, I drew my chair close to the basket and never looked away from it during the rest of the performance.

In a few minutes the conjurer returned, tilted off the basket with a short rod, and showed the earth apparently untouched. He scratched out the mango seed, on one end of which was a bud and on the other a small bunch of root fibres. He buried this again and covered it as before, after where he did not touch it or the mould.

Returning after showing the other passengers another trick, he tilted off the basket again, and I saw that there were two seed leaves a little above the soil. After another trick he again raised the basket and the plant was about three inches high, with some twigs and leaves on the stem. After a last trick, the plant, when uncovered, was seven or eight inches high, with more, and larger, twigs and leaves. The man then pulled it up and gave it to the passengers to pick in pieces.

I once read of a Frenchman bribing a conjurer to reveal the secret of this trick and being told that it consists in using the earth from anthills, the formic acid in which causes very rapid growth of seeds. I never heard of anyone trying it, and rather doubt if the effect could be so rapid, for one friend who had seen the trick informed me that the plant grew so large as to produce fruit.

While I was detained for a day in Delhi, a conjurer came to my room at the hotel and asked permission to exhibit. Among other feats he produced a pair of handcuffs, and told me to lock them on his wrists, then asked me to tie his thumbs together with string. I did so, drawing it as tightly as possible without causing actual torture. I next, at his request, put a leg of my bedstead inside the chain of the handcuffs. Then his wife held a silk handkerchief over the hands for what seemed no more than two seconds. On taking this away the hands were still locked and tied, but outside the leg of the bedstead, on which I had been sitting all the time. At my request he repeated the trick, but I could form no idea how it was done. When I untied the thumbs I saw that the string had caused deep indentations in the skin behind the knuckles.

Each time that the wife held the handkerchief I noticed that her hands trembled considerably. Is it not possible that the wife was a medium and that the feat was an instance of matter passing through matter?

While sitting on one end of a sheet about the length of those used on beds, a conjurer asked some Englishmen, including myself, to place a rupee at the other end. On its being put down the conjurer told it to come to him. The rupee immediately began to shuffle along the sheet on several occasions rising on its rim and wheeling an inch or two, then falling flat and continuing to shuffle until it reached the man.

Some sceptics have asserted that the feat was accomplished by twitching the sheet, but that could not have made the rupee rise and roll along on its rim, and could not have been done without being seen. The man had no opportunity of going to the rupee, and no native went near it.

We have just received a copy of the fifth edition of the Rev. Charles L. Tweedale's pamphlet, "Primitive Christianity and Modern Psychic Phenomena." This is a trenchant and telling production, peculiarly adapted for propaganda amongst the orthodox, and is an effective reply to Lord Halifax and Father Bernard Vaughan, and incidentally to all other objectors. We are also glad to hear that the second edition of Mr. Tweedale's book, "Man's Survival after Death" (enlarged to 570 pages, double its former proportions) is now in the press, and will shortly appear.

The man who has money might rest if he would,  
And the man who has nothing might rest if he could;  
But never till manhood has gone out of style  
Will the man who's a man want to rest all the while.

AN OLD RHYME.

\* "A New Gospel" By LIVINGSTONE CAREY ASHWORTH (Arthur H. Stockwell, 7s. 6d. net.)



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### SCHRENCK-NOTZING'S "MATERIALIZATION PHENOMENA."

In *LIGHT* of 7th December last (p. 387) we printed some observations by "A Member of the Scots Bar" on an article, in the "Hibbert Journal" for October, 1918, entitled "Ghosts as Physical Facts," by Mr. W. G. Braithwaite. In the current issue of the "Hibbert Journal" appears a criticism of Mr. Braithwaite's article, from the pen of Mr. T. W. Rolleston, whose name is known to many of us as the translator of "Epictetus." Mr. Rolleston finds several flaws in the evidence. In his view, "that cheating did go on in some at least of Dr. von Schrenck's experiments is beyond all reasonable doubt," and he refers to the well-known instance in which the camera reproduced a piece of the French illustrated paper, "Le Miroir," the title being shown together with portraits of Poincaré and Woodrow Wilson "which had been copied or adapted to serve as materialised representations in the dark cabinet." He cites Miss Verrall's criticism of Schrenck-Notzing's book in the Proceedings of the S.P.R., July, 1914 (Vol. XXVII.) to show that Eva C., the medium, was Marthe Béraud, who "was a well-known and (on the evidence of a lawyer, M. Marsault) a confessed impostor." He finds a possible significance in the fact that Mme. Bisson is a sculptor, and although "Mme. Bisson may, to those who know her, be entirely above suspicion," the book "challenges the opinion of scientific students in general and they are bound to take into consideration every possible hypothesis for the production of the phenomena by natural means before they can accept the existence of so remarkable a substance as Dr. von Schrenck's teleplasma." Nevertheless, Mr. Rolleston frankly admits that "a few manifestations are recorded to have taken place at sittings at which Mme. Bisson was not present."

Mr. Rolleston concludes his critical notice, of which we have only given a few excerpts, with the following observations:—

There remain undoubtedly a number of manifestations of "Eva's" powers for which it is impossible at present to suggest any natural explanation. Still, looking at the evidence as a whole, we must vote the case to be, at best, one for further inquiry. I do not offer these criticisms as a disbeliever in the occult, still less with any desire to discourage research. But we must not go further than the facts will carry us, and Mr. Braithwaite in his interesting article goes very far. The performances of Marthe Béraud do not really afford a solid basis for a new theory of the Resurrection.

We have only a few comments to make.

In his allusion to the "production of the phenomena by natural means" Mr. Rolleston presumably denotes their production by *normal* means. We who hold that the phenomena of materialisation have been proved many times in the presence of competent authorities, other than the German physicist, hold that, although rare, they are not less natural than the phenomena of everyday life. The point is more important than at first sight it may seem.

The only really competent authority on materialisations or other psychic phenomena, is the capable investigator who has examined them *at first hand*, and who knows what he is talking about, which we fear many of the critics who investigate from a distance do not. We know what it is to listen wearily to the rapid discussions of the uninformed as to the possibility of things which we and some of our friends are as fully certified of, by the evidence of our several senses, as any one of the disputants could be of any fact in his or her daily life.

We know of no evidence in which holes cannot be picked by those intent on damaging it. A little mental ingenuity is all that is necessary. He would be a poor counsel for the prosecution (or the defence) who could not find something of a suspicious or damaging character in the evidence presented by the other side.

Again, we observe amongst the critics of psychic evidences a curious illusion that all that is necessary is to destroy or undermine some particular piece of evidence or discredit some particular witness as though the whole case rested upon it or him. To the stupid and ignorant opponent Spiritualism and Sir Oliver Lodge are identical; they stand or fall together. Mr. T. W. Rolleston is neither stupid nor ignorant. We cannot think that he really believes that the evidence for materialisation and the testimony of Schrenck-Notzing—who it is to be remembered is really an unwilling witness coerced by facts which threatened his whole philosophy of life—are so closely identified.

### "THE PSYCHIC RESEARCHER IN THE GREEK TESTAMENT."

THE KINGDOM ALL AROUND.

We have received the following from Dr. Ellis Powell:—

In *LIGHT* for February 8th, F. E. R. asks my opinion on whether the end of the 17th verse of St. Matthew iv. ("The kingdom of Heaven is at hand") "refers to space and not time; as, if so, it would render what seems like an unfilled prophecy into a great truth." I think there may well be a double meaning, and that the reference may be both to space and time. That the Greek verb has a spatial significance could easily be demonstrated by quoting some of the passages where it occurs, with their English renderings in italics:—

Matt. xxi. 1: "When they *drew nigh* to Jerusalem"; xxvi. 46: "He is *at hand* that doth betray me."

Luke vii. 12: "When he *came nigh* to the gate of the city"; xv. 1: "Then *drew near* unto him all," etc., xxii. 47: "*Drew near* unto Jesus to kiss him."

Acts ix. 3: "As he journeyed he *came near* Damascus."

These passages give an emphatic pregnancy to the quoted verse, making it into an affirmation of the immanence of the spirit world. They gain in this significance from the opening word of the verse—not "Repent ye," as in our version; but "change your mind, for the kingdom of Heaven is all around you." In fact it would not be going too far to render the passage, "Get yourself a new mind; for the kingdom of Heaven is all around you"; and in that case the implication would be "Get the new mind in order that you may be open to impressions from the new world." F. E. R.'s question opens up a brilliant train of thought, and I for one am very glad to have had my attention directed thereto.

Mr. F. Bligh Bond (Bristol) writes:—

Is it necessary to suppose that either space or time is referred to? Is there not a third interpretation, namely, that neither space nor time but condition is implied? We have it clearly in the Logia, or sayings of Jesus, that "The Kingdom of God is within" us. Surely this would be well interpreted as a state neither temporal nor mutable but to be conceived of in terms of Being rather than Becoming: the opening of a door in the soul, and the entering therein to a mansion prepared, of which the Ark is a type (Matt. xxiv. 33, 39). The Kingdom is *nigh*, even at our doors. We enter while we live. The act of entry is repentance—*metánoia*—(literally: "a turning of the thoughts"). Note the sense of Matt. xxiii. 13: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

### "THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS."

(FROM "LIGHT" OF FEBRUARY 23RD, 1889.)

"WILL O' THE WISP."—How easily natural events may be fitted with supernatural seemings: "Holsworthy, a village in the Midlands, is all excitement over a ghostly light which every night intermittently flashes over a railway cutting. From dusk to midnight the little village station is thronged with people anxious to obtain a glimpse of this *ignis fatuus*. . . Old stories of superstition long dormant in the district are being revived, and the fact that three people have been killed near the spot in the last year or so encourages the belief in the supernatural character of the luminous apparition."

Mr. Morell Theobald is, we understand, about to take a rapid journey round the world, partly on business and partly for the benefit of his health.—(From *LIGHT* as above.)

## THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE WAR.

### II.—“A SOUL OF GOODNESS IN THINGS EVIL.”

By E. WAKE COOK.

There is profound significance in the war when rightly viewed; but I must confess that from the ordinary anthropomorphic view of God and His action in this world I feel little but bewilderment. Looked at in a large general way, as we regard the operations of Nature when trying to determine the character of the moving Spirit of the Universe, we discern, underlying all the outward horrors, a beneficent purpose which at once removes the atheistical doubts raised in so many minds by the Devil's orgy of the war. Viewing Nature as one section, or aspect, of the Divine Will, we discern a plan, purpose, or idea, which is self-evolving, and which over-rides all actions and events, good, bad, and indifferent, to its own great purpose. This justifies the old religious belief in an over-ruling Providence, but in another way. Our “free will” seems limited to the choice as to whether we will discern this purpose and co-operate with it voluntarily; or whether we shall remain blind and be coerced to do our bit by the scorpion whips of Nature's harsher evolutionary methods. The purpose is beneficent, and the suffering, however severe, is strictly educational. Nature is cruel only to be kind; and our dire birlings are justified when we “see life steadily, and see it whole.”

Advanced Spiritualists, viewing our personal existence in the light of the newer revelations, regard this rudimentary life as a mere moment in a sempiternal existence, and all its sufferings as a mere passing pang in an endless career of ever-increasing blessedness, which is enhanced by the point of contrast. Then, again, we mourn most for the brave fellows who have “lost” their lives in the war. This loss is grievous enough for those left behind; but for the young heroes themselves it is merely premature promotion, far grander and more beneficent than to be promoted to Foch-like eminence in this world. The case of the maimed is different; their promotion is delayed, but it will inevitably come, and the joy of casting off the maimed body and revelling in a perfect body, more splendid than the old one at its best, will be some compensation for the pain and discomfort suffered on earth. We may mourn with those left behind, but they will have the joy of reunion; and in every case, in retrospect, this life will seem but a point of dark without which we could not realise the value of light, the point of contrast without which we could have no sense of values.

The significance of the war for Great and Greater Britain is most marked of all. There can be no doubt that we have been entrusted by Providence with a mission of vast importance to mankind, in carrying out the Great World-Plan. This we have done, mainly, by the blind expansive force of the race, in but a semi-conscious way, “in a fit of absence of mind.” We were wearying in well-doing, our grasp of events was slipping from our nerveless hands; we were sinking in a lethargy, we were on the down-grade of decadence. Under the great World-Plan our first task was Organisation, Universal Organisation; in this we were lax and allowed Germany to pass us in giant strides. Organisation gives power, it exerts pressure, and is bound to be aggressive unless checked by counter organisation. In commerce Germany laid systematic siege to all our industries, nothing was too great or too small to be sapped and mined, and finally captured. Plans for our overthrow were ruthlessly pursued with relentless thoroughness, and our destruction by force of arms was only a question of time. This was manifest to all those who had a single gleam of insight; yet in face of it we drifted blindly. With the exception of our incomparable Navy, our organisation was comparatively slipshod and easy-going; we wasted our energies in party strife, under old-world battle cries, and we stoned with ridicule the prophets that were sent unto us. Had we listened to that great and good man and distinguished soldier, Lord Roberts, and pulled ourselves together in time, this war would have been averted. It was the firm belief that we were a doomed and decadent race which tempted the Kaiser-Huns to their great adventure.

The first shot was as the touch of an enchanter's wand causing a seemingly impossible transformation. All the latent virtues of our race sprang into marvellous activity. Blundering into our stride we quickly forged ahead, and finally out-fought, out-generalled, and out-organised the scientific savages. Woman's status was raised to unaccounted heights; our liberty-loving people cheerfully put up with unheard-of privations and restrictions, and all were eager to do their bit. Every good cause has been advanced by decades during the few agonising years of the war.

Perhaps the most momentous and significant fact of all is the bringing together of the two great branches of the English-speaking race; the peace-loving Americans fighting shoulder to shoulder with our own men. The most notable fact in the war was that these men of ours, many of them men of wealth, education, and gently nurtured, should have shown a higher order of moral and physical courage than any soldiers have ever before been called on to show. Never before in the history of the world have men been called to

face such nerve-racking, diabolical, and devastating agencies as men have heroically faced in this war.

Not less significant from the religious standpoint is the providential way in which not only have the plans of the plotters of evil been frustrated, but the exact reverse of their aims has been brought about. The ultimate aim, after the preliminary crushing of France and Russia, was the destruction of the hated Britain and its world-wide Commonwealth of Free Nations. We were to be crushed under heel, and our Empire disintegrated and destroyed. As a result we have been placed on a pinnacle of greatness beyond our wildest dreams; united as never before, and enabled to advance the World-Purpose in ways we could not have hoped for. What could equal in purposeful splendour the freeing of the Holy Land from the age-long deathly blight of Turkish rule?

The League of Nations will be a tremendous stride in the realisation of the World-Plan, only on condition that the Plan is discerned, and Nature's own methods are understood and improved on. Reformers are always in a hurry, are enamoured of “short cuts” which prove the longest way round. “Allah plants His garden slowly, but He plants it very well,” and we must do the same; the attempt to impose Millennial ideals before preparing the ground is like trying to build before laying the foundations, like trying to fix the weathercock before building the steeple!

As the mountains are high, so are the seas deep; in the ratio in which this war has raised men to sublime heights of heroism and self-sacrifice, it has abased others to unimaginable depths of wickedness. The frightfulness of the Huns has been outdone by the Russian Bolsheviks, who are exceeding the Red Terror of the French Revolution. These are the black shadows thrown by excess of light. It is instructive to note how all evil and tyranny in the past ultimately provokes reaction in concentrated form. The moral is obvious.

The subject is too vast, hints and clues are all I can attempt. But through all the tremendous turmoil of events the soul of goodness in things evil is evident to the seeing eye. The world's Gethsemane is the prelude to an Easter morn. The world has been in travail with a new birth. It would seem that the pangs of progress are intensified by quickened motion; and peace, quietness, ease are but the preludes of stagnation and death. From the latter blight, which was creeping over us, we have been saved to carry on our world mission, by the very powers of evil which aimed at our destruction. So we may rest assured that there is plan and purpose underlying all tumultuous happenings; that there is a goodness, a justice greater than our own, enshrined in the very heart of things which will work out its own great purpose in its own great way; and the essence of all wisdom, carrying all the beatitudes, is to discern this purpose and make it our own.

### THE PROBLEM OF REINCARNATION.

The Rev. G. Vale Owen writes:—

Mr. W. H. Evans surmises that reincarnation is not as much a problem as a “guess.” I would not go quite so far as that myself. The subject has been dowered with sufficient thought on the part of those who believe in it as to qualify I think, as a “hypothesis.” Yet, although there are those who do not hesitate to speak of it as of proved fact, the more I turn over the *pros* and *cons* in my mind the more do I incline towards the conviction that it will not eventually attain to that dignity. The subject is referred to in “Speaking Across the Border Line.” I know that the recipient of those messages is eminently painstaking and careful in satisfying herself word by word that she is recording accurately. The communicator also shows himself as a penetrating and level-headed investigator in those wider realms. He says that reincarnation is a complicated subject, that at least he thinks it is “incorrect to state that *all* must come back to a material life on earth,” and he concludes, “I will not say no one has ever reincarnated, but I have never yet met anyone who has.”

One thing which, to my mind, tells against the theory is the fact that those who pass over as babes enter the spirit life as babes and pursue the natural course of growing-up there. Were these adult spirits who had passed through an earthly birth and after a few weeks had re-entered the spirit-spheres, one would expect that they would either arrive back there as adults (as they left those spheres) or would, at least, very quickly shed their brief childhood. But we have sufficient evidence to prove that this is not the case. They all grow up as naturally as children in this earth-life do.

REINCARNATION.—If God is unjust in Time, what guarantee have we that He will not be so for all Eternity? The necessity to right a wrong (eventually) savours of imperfection; yet we are distinctly told that our Father in Heaven is perfect. We must all admit apparent injustices, from our point of view; it is not in the nature of the finite to penetrate the “dark disguises” of heavenly benedictions. Personally, I consider that to charge God with injustice at *any* stage of our pilgrimage is a form of blasphemy.—E. P. PRENTICE.

## FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

The "Scarborough Daily Post" is publishing "Rupert Lives," by the Rev. Waiter Wynn, in serial form. This is a good work, for it will assist the circulation of a record of experiences that cannot fail to carry a message of consolation to the bereaved

\* \* \* \*

Accompanying two books just published by Dr. Rudolf Steiner, of which we shall have more to say later, is a statement by the publishers (G. P. Putnam's Sons, Ltd.) to the effect that although Professor Steiner wrote in German he is a Slav by race and has no connection with recent German policies—"in fact, he has been so much out of sympathy with modern Germany that he has been obliged to live in Switzerland."

\* \* \* \*

"I have often found it difficult to reconcile some of the extracts in LIGHT," writes J. T. M. S. But considering the extraordinary variety of minds for which LIGHT has to cater, it is not really to be wondered at. Apart from which, in any controversy we can only arrive at the truth of a matter by taking note of many views that appear to conflict sharply with our own. An artificial uniformity soon becomes stale and insipid. Even life itself cannot proceed without a certain amount of friction.

\* \* \* \*

The "Hospital" relates a story of a Fijian lunatic, formerly a native preacher, who had the delusion that he had just returned from a visit to heaven. He said it was "Glorious. There were sing-songs every evening and we actually had mutton for dinner every day." Very funny, of course, but it was at least a heaven he could understand, and doubtless even for the best of us Heaven will be something not outside our capacity for happiness. There are people not described as lunatics who pin their faith to a heaven which is not only unintelligible, but also one which they could, as rational beings, find no possibility of enjoying.

\* \* \* \*

Dr. Steiner, as is well known, is a strong supporter of the idea of reincarnation. But he admits, we are told, that "there is no logical argument for or against reincarnation." That has become sufficiently apparent, and is one reason why we are disinclined to devote much space to its discussion; it is so obvious that it can neither be proved nor disproved by argument. All we can do is to examine the so-called proofs and expose their worthlessness. And that we have done too often already. Dr. Steiner claims that by a process of meditative exercises a student can "bring the proof of reincarnation to himself." We are not particularly impressed by the statement; not all meditative folk are free from illusions.

\* \* \* \*

We must not allow to pass without a brief allusion the centenary of the birth of John Ruskin who, as our files show, was no stranger to the subject of Psychological Research, and on at least one occasion heard the Direct Voice through the mediumship of the late Mrs. Everitt. He was a great seer with a true message for his age. That the fires within him burned out in the end, as a contemporary remarks, is not wonderful. It is nearly always so—the physical brain is rarely equally responsive to the end. "He had begun his life with a vision, he ended it with views," says one writer. But the verdict is not so harsh as it sounds, considering how few men rise to the intellectual height of having even "views" of their own.

We have received "The Wonders of the Saints in the Light of Spiritualism," a new book by the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould. It contains an introduction by Lady Glenconner. A further notice of the book will appear later. It is published by Mr. J. M. Watkins, and can be obtained at this office at the price of 4/6; post free 4/9.

RESURRECTION AND EVOLUTION.—"The resurrection process, like all God's processes, is a continuous evolution, a harmonious development by gradual methods, of a higher organism out of a lower. When the Sadducees questioned our Lord concerning His views of the resurrection of the dead, He replied, not by asserting the fact of a future resurrection of now dead bodies, and a future re-union of now severed souls and bodies, but by appealing, in confirmation of His statement that 'the dead are being raised' (this is the literal rendering, the tense is not a future one), to God's declaration, 'I am the God of Abraham,' &c. Now we must either admit that our Lord is not maintaining the doctrine of a bodily resurrection at all, but refers only to the survival of the spirits of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or we must recognise that His words implied that He believed them to be already raised, for He emphatically asserts that 'God is not the God of the dead but of the living.' Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not dead but were raised already, otherwise what did He mean by saying that God's assurance that He was their God was a proof that the dead were 'being raised'?"—"The Victory that Overcometh," by H. A. DALLAS.

## THE ETHERIC BODY: A QUESTION AND A REPLY.

C. B., a Scottish correspondent, has posed a question that has been exercising the minds of several persons who have read Sir Oliver Lodge's recent addresses and writings on this subject. Sir Oliver Lodge (writes C. B.) teaches that every object, animate and inanimate, has a material and an etherial counterpart and that their fundamental joint quality is co-existence and interaction: "Ether is the medium of cohesion," and matter cannot exist without it. Now when the physical body dies does it not follow that its etherial counterpart remains indissolubly connected with it? Even when it disintegrates, the atoms of its particles are still held together by this ether, so how can the etherial body form a distinct entity after physical death?

We submitted the matter to Sir Oliver Lodge, who has kindly responded, and in the course of his letter writes:—

"For *inanimate* bodies I should say that your inquirer's conclusion is correct. But when you come to *animate* bodies the problem has to be faced, What has been the effect of animation? We know that on Matter the interaction of Spirit has endowed it with a number of faculties and potentialities of which otherwise it was quite incapable. My hypothesis is that the etherial part of the body has been animated just as much as the material part; and that it has thereby acquired an element of personality which is persistent, since the properties of Ether are much more perfect and durable than those of Matter; and so it has become possible for the etherial counterpart to continue a coherent existence even when the material portion has dropped away.

"The facts which trend in this direction are those which indicate some sort of temporary separation of soul and body, as in some trance phenomena—travelling clairvoyance and the like.

"It is, however, a large and difficult subject, which requires much more working out."

## THE LATER ÆSOP.

## THE ASTRONOMER AND THE CLAIRVOYANTS.

Some clairvoyants having, as they said, detected a new star by the aid of their inner vision, reported the fact to the astronomers, who received the news with derision.

"Then you will believe in nothing that you cannot see?" said the clairvoyants angrily.

"And not always then," retorted an astronomer scornfully. "Thus, we can all see the 'man in the moon' if we wish to, but we don't believe in him!"

The dispute waxed hot and taunts were freely exchanged by the contending parties. But one old astronomer stood aloof and only smiled at the argument. To him there came a puzzled bystander who asked what position he took up in the matter.

"I am quite neutral," answered the astronomer, "for I can neither affirm nor deny. Until the star reveals itself to the telescope or the photographic plate it is none of the astronomer's business."

"Then why are they arguing about it?" asked the bystander.

"Why, indeed?" said the old astronomer quietly.

D. G.

## THE CHURCH AND PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED.

If we find that the spread of our faith is causing any stirrings of conscience, any deep self-questionings, in theological circles, we can well afford to pass over a few slighting allusions without resentment. We congratulate our brethren of the Established Church on the fact, which we learn from a brief report in the "Daily Chronicle" of the 14th inst., that on the previous day the Lower House of Convocation decided by a very large majority in favour of the insertion of All Souls' Day in the Church Calendar, and especially on the reasons given for the step.

"There was a deep instinct in human nature in favour of it, Canon Baldwin said, and people were thinking a great deal more about their dead than before. Our soldiers in France especially had been struck tremendously by the observance of All Souls' Day. Morbid Spiritualism was now making great headway. So strong was the instinct of human nature that the observance of prayer for the dead could not be stopped, but the Church should regulate it.

"The Dean of Lincoln said that the Church was losing its less theologically educated members to Spiritualism because the Church was not courageous enough to drop a few old Protestant objections and boldly do what all did privately."

"We are much bound to them that do succeed,  
But in a more pathetic sense are bound  
To such as fail."

—JEAN INGELow.



## "AT EVENTIDE IT SHALL BE LIGHT."

BY HELEN MATHERS

(Author of "Comin' thro' the Rye").

In 1910 the Press announced that a new book from my pen would shortly be published, to be followed almost immediately by "Human Religion," the latter the natural result of my getting into touch, through my experiences with my son, with a world where the physical and mental systems are, far more than here, dominated and controlled by the emotional, and where is practised the God-religion of the ages as taught by Christ on earth, the gospel of "Love one another, help one another"; and "Eventide" is on the same theme.

This is 1919, and neither of these books has been published or even finished yet, and indeed many happenings and interruptions have come between the charging of me with my son's message to the world and its delivery, but looking back on the first beginnings of what has become an abiding reality, so that my consciousness of the other side of life and this one fit like hand and glove, I know that I was not fit to write "Eventide" then, nor indeed am I fit to do so now.

Still, I am able to give the cumulative series of proofs, extending over nearly ten years, of my son's continued and happy existence, though there will be found in my book no record of table-turnings and rappings, of séances and materialisations, all such phenomena being held by me in holy horror, nor am I writing for critics or scientific persons but for a public that is probably almost as ignorant as I am.

Even so I am not sure that I would have the courage to give these personal experiences had not the world, in taking "Comin' thro' the Rye" to its heart, taken me also, and so I am able to tell it what I do, knowing that it will not laugh at, but rejoice with me in the great joy which has come into my life, and which I hope to bring into the lives of other poor mothers whose hearts have been bruised as deeply as my own. It is a very simple story that might be told of any boy and any mother who loved each other well enough and unselfishly enough on earth to build a bridge between the seen and the unseen by which to cross to each other when one of them has passed over, but it is different from all other stories on the same subject because it is the first time that the direct influence a soul on the other side can exercise on a soul on earth has even been closely traced, with its enormous power of re-inforcement and help (which the Church absolutely ignores) and a proof supplied as to how, by entering our daily life and becoming a part of it, our beloved bless it, and purify it and thus are able to awaken in us spiritual forces lost or overlaid in a worldly and material life.

But while I have been slowly trying to spell out the message with which my son charged me in 1909, the great war has silently brought humanity to a far greater knowledge of its meaning than anything I could ever tell, and the Light that came to me at Eventide, when I realised that no such thing as death exists, has been merged in a great irradiation that has flooded all the world, chasing away the black shadow that has placed it under eclipse so long.

Our soldiers have taken the incredible leap from which man has from time immemorial shrunk, and spanned with their blood and self-sacrifice the gulf that yawned between the two worlds. Until this great war, centuries of wrong teaching had reduced to the condition of a trembling slave what was born free, intent only on the working out of his glorious destiny. We dressed up a bogey and gave it a human semblance without the life that makes the human form beautiful, treated it as a reality by offering it propitiatory funeral rites of darkness and gloom, by pictures of buryings and punishment, deliberately inculcated in humans an unnatural fear of it, purely physical, and authorised this grinning horror to conduct us to torture, usurping God's place, and right of mercy.

But Tommy and his Master have altered all that, they have kicked the monstrous bogey of straw and loathsomeness into the dust, and trampled on it, and nothing will ever put it together again; they have ruled out, once for all, the hard line of demarcation between the two worlds that we call death, and there comes a tremendous simplification of everything; the bewildering jig-saw bits of the puzzle of life fall into place, and God's meaning for man is at last made clear.

Our soldiers have taught us that the dread of death is founded on nothing more than a delusion; it is a mere incident that takes place in a continuous life, in which there is no break in the personality, with its aspirations, its loves, its hates; that death is no stern accuser, no terrible enemy, but a messenger of God formed after the image of Himself. As Marcus Aurelius says, "As Nature and a part of Nature, man can conceive of dying as no otherwise than as a work of Nature, and he that fears any work of Nature is a very child."

It is comparatively modern, this craven fear of death (our very religion, as taught, is based on fear, not love). It was because the ancient peoples knew so much more about death than we do, that they mourned less and made a strict rule of excluding from sepulchral decorations any image of sadness. Wreaths of flowers, Bacchanalian dances,

hunts or battles, all the exuberance of buoyant pulsing life and its pleasures were there, images of passion and revelry were sculptured round the tomb; some races, like the Scythians, even buried a man's armour and his horses with him that he might hunt in the other world—the same body, you see, the same needs and delights. If we call such an attitude pagan, surely the pagans had a better idea of happiness than the Greeks, when they assumed that it was not transitory, but went on.

The whole trouble has arisen from our regarding as a lump of clay, a nothing, what instead of being dead is more alive than ever it was before, infinitely more alive than we are and just as much in touch with us as when here. Yet the word oftenest in our mouths is "dead," and it is one that the spirit hates, and most bitterly resents. To call our present life "death" is nearer the mark.

Dead! No, our beloved live. Shadows! We dare thus to think and speak of them—they in that blinding light, we in the dark, rummaging in dark cupboards among the refuse and litter of their pasts, refusing to march forward with them, to throw our utmost energies into heartening and keeping pace with them, in that glorious new world where all their activities are in full swing. Our first instinct is the true one, that they have gone to a better billet, a happier existence, that God has forgiven them their sins and let them straight through to the pure in heart,

"Where loyal hearts and true stand ever in the light."

We suffer because we resist; our torture begins when, ceasing to be passive, we agonise as to how our beloved fare and where they are. It is the one supreme disservice we do them, and it is done by most of us every day; it is the ugliest and most self-indulgent phase of human sorrow that we walk in a hell of our own making and force them to walk with us in our selfish retrospect, to retrace every step of the pain and suffering in their lives, dragging them back to chains of tortured flesh, to the earth-life from which they have triumphantly soared, throwing the burden of human faults right down in their path, instead of having the boldness, the courage, to throw them clean away behind them. The closer the tie that binds the soul that has passed to the soul that is left, the greater its anguish.

Surely if we are worth anything, if the unselfishness of a love that set self aside to desire only our happiness is to be approached by us, we must rejoice in their joy—not think of ourselves; it is not a question of what we endure but of how we advance them—no one is a true lover who sets his happiness against that of the one he loves.

What is it but pre-occupation with self, not how *his* soul felt and was, in its relation to his God, but what our jealous absorption of it made it? If I can save other mothers from making the mistake and inflicting on those who are dear to them the anguish which I inflicted on my son, then "Eventide" will not have been written in vain.

We have only to leave everything to God and all will come right; it is when we begin to fear that all is not well with our beloved, to doubt if he is as happy as all our poor love and comradeship made him on earth that our torture begins. Yet fear and doubt are pure illusions caused by ignorance of the true nature of man and the extent of his powers, and to our presumptuous hearts as to the Levites applies Moses' stern rebuke, "Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi!"

Well may the freed spirit stand aghast at our way of taking what would be his supreme happiness but for our complete lack of self control, making of our sorrow a weapon with which to wound him, instead of a star by which to direct the gaze of others.

What right had I with my son's clean record to refuse the message that a while ago he was pouring into me all the time when I was stunned but normal, moving with God's scheme, not against it?

I would not read the lesson of his brief, crowded, unselfish life aright, would not believe in his transfigured look in dying, or remember that in the countless times I had known him happy, I had never seen on his face the joy he showed at the moment of departure, when he saw the vision—my proud radiant white soldier who had never done a mean or a cowardly or cruel thing in his life, but met Christ as his Captain, saluted and passed, passed straight through an open gateway to the dazzling radiance of the Sun that was reflected in his face, and gave me my first glimpse of immortality.

The happier we are, the less we sorrow hopelessly, the less they suffer; the greater the tie between them and us the more our unhappiness makes theirs, the more we retard their development, for even as they help us, so do we help them, by our love, our prayers, our kind words and deeds, doing the things for them that they would do were they here, and above all by our cheeriness, our refusal to admit that there is any real separation between us, since no such thing as death exists, so there can be no occasion for real sorrow.

But that was before the war, when youth cut short seemed a tragedy, and my own stood out stark and cruel, now it would be as an unnumbered drop in the vast sea of woman's tears and anguish. Yet all the while my son stood close beside me, as when we stood together in the flesh. He could see me and touch me, but he had not power to get through the message that between his passing over in 1907 and his getting into touch with me in 1909 he had been

agonising to deliver, and of which I had rigorously denied him every opportunity.

"May the day never come when you need an interpreter between you and the other world," Sir Edward Inglesfield had said to me sadly years before. Well, I had never needed one so badly as now, and I shunned every opportunity of meeting one. My horror of Spiritualism was so great that it amounted almost to a physical disgust, as if I had seen a coarse hand laid on something sacred, profaning its mysteries, its reticences.

I would not move one step to put myself in communication with my son. I looked at all outside interference between the two worlds coldly, fastidiously. Even as I had never wanted anything to come between God and me, not even His prophets, so now I sought no intermediary between Phil's love and mine.

"When he is ready, he will give me a sign," I said to myself. "God will permit him to come to me in my sleep"—that significant "Why disturbest thou me?" of Samuel rang in my ears, and to call my son seemed to me an insult, an outrage on his peace, that I would die rather than commit, for we had always respected each other's rights.

Meanwhile the friend who was to me in my sorrow what David was to Jonathan lent me S.P.R. reports and many books on the subject that, while interesting her deeply, had only antagonised me, but as my one burning desire was to prove Phil's continued existence, I read them eagerly, but soon wearied of veridical proofs, telepathic experiments, and the like. It just narrowed itself down to the plain issue whether I could, out of my own personal knowledge and experience, obtain knowledge of how he fared without help from anybody but God and him.

At times I was vividly aware that he was near me, it was as if I stood before a telegraph apparatus that is clicking out a code of signals intelligible only to the absent operator, but to the uninstructed ear is only a series of "clicks" entirely devoid of meaning.

Yet curiously enough my first gleam of comfort came to me when one day in my restless wanderings I found myself in Park Lane with an old friend who was the sole link between me and a world that, as I scornfully put it, trafficked in spirits, and as if to confirm me in my attitude she told me of a woman who had recently lost her only son very suddenly, and her one frantic longing being to see him, he had been materialised and actually stood before her. I cried out in horror at this—I had supposed when I met Phil face to face it meant my death; it had been a terrible thought that in life I would never see his face again, but now I shrank aghast at the selfishness of the mother who had snatched at a chance of gratifying her intense physical longing, and I was glad to know he had sternly rebuked her, though for a different reason than Samuel's.

"You weep, you wail," he said, "you create a dense mist between us when all you can do to help me is to pray for and to love me."

When I heard that, the tears so rare with me rained down; God knows I had loved Phil enough, but perhaps I had not prayed enough. I had rested too completely on the thought that, God willing, he could guide and help me, I had not realised at all how much more I could help him, that if our love looks forward, prays and hopes, it will strengthen our beloved; if it looks back with tears for what might have been, and with longing for what can never be, it hinders him.

And so the battle swung to and fro in my mind for two hideous years, in which I added up the marks for and against my son's welfare, as if he were entering for some earthly competition before an unmerciful earthly judge, and then one day, unsought, unexpected, it all came to an end, the fear, the doubt, the anguish. I got the answer to the question God has been thundering into our ears from the beginning of time, only we would not listen. "O Death, where is thy sting, O grave thy Victory?" and to the atheist's shrilling cry, "Show me a soul—demonstrate!" God demonstrated from the other side through the soul of my son.

THE philosopher is he to whom the highest has descended and the lowest has mounted up; who is the equal and kindly brother of all.—CARLYLE.

THE leading feature in the "Review of Reviews" for February is a symposium on "The Basis of Reconstruction," in which we have the voice of the clergy (represented by the Deans of Durham and St. Paul's, the Rev. B. G. Bouchier, of Hampstead Garden Suburb, and Dr. Clifford), and the views of a professional man and of a soldier. The Dean of Durham, who is given the leading place, looks for reconstruction wholly or mainly to two principles—co-partnership and arbitration.

"THE WATERS OF STRIFE," by Brian M. Angel (Gay and Hancock, 3s. 6d.) is a collection of verse by a lady who, we understand, has spent many years in helping to clear away the slums and brighten the lives of the poor. Some of the most striking and effective of her poems picture the disheartening conditions under which so many of the submerged tenth pass their existence and which frequently make the gaily lit public-house the "one bright place in the street" to the adult, and the opportunity of dancing to the organ-grinder's music the child's "only bit o' pleasure."

## THE POSITION OF "LIGHT."

### AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

We have received many congratulations on the enlargement of *LIGHT*, coupled with some flattering testimonies to the quality of its contents, which we pass on to those gifted writers who have so loyally supported us during the tribulations of the last four or five years—the heaviest ordeal through which any newspaper could pass and survive. We have also gratefully to acknowledge the generosity of those friends who have provided us with funds, and thereby enabled us to avoid the usual resort of raising the price of our journal, in imitation of so many of our contemporaries. We felt it would be a hardship on our poorer readers to increase the price, and therefore decided against this step, although it was several times urged upon us as a necessity of the situation. The stress of high prices, however, is still heavy on us, and many difficulties have yet to be faced. But we are confident that having been sustained so far we shall be enabled to go on until the return of happier times, when we shall be able to enlarge our sphere of usefulness. We want to grow not merely in service but in strength to meet the new conditions and the increasing demands made upon us.

### A TESTIMONY.

In the course of an article, "Free Will," in the "Leader," the Edinburgh magazine, for December last, Mr. Walter Jones, J.P., the well-known engineer of Stourbridge, writes:

"I personally have a profound conviction that Life is continuous; that when we discard the trammels of earth life, the soul, spirit, ego, or intelligence—call it what you will—continues its onward and upward path, that our translated spirit friends can and do communicate—under favourable conditions—with those on earth, and that they are more willing to assist us in our daily trials than we are to accept their assistance.

"You, dear reader, are not asked to accept this hypothesis, because the accumulated prejudice of centuries cannot be overcome until you also have had some personal experience, and recognise that this is a simple statement of scientific fact, substantiated by such eminent scientists as Sir W. F. Barrett, Sir William Crookes, Sir W. E. Cooper, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, all of whom, after devoting many years to research work, declare that the continuity of life and communication between the incarnate and discarnate is as fully proved as any other fact demonstrated by science."

### A PROPHETIC MESSAGE.

Here is a case involving prevision, and comparing with a somewhat similar case, related by "D." in *LIGHT* of the 26th ult. (p. 26). The reception of a message narrating in the past tense an event which had not then happened but did afterwards occur is very curious. The story is told by R. A., a military correspondent who is personally known to us. He writes:—

"A friend of mine, Mrs. L., has for some time been able to get automatic writing. Her husband, Mr. L., and a son, Major L., are both dead. Another son George was serving in France until the beginning of October last. On the night of the 25th September, 1918, the following message was received by Mrs. L., purporting to come from her son, Major L., by automatic writing: 'George has been wounded slightly in the leg.' (Mrs. L.: How is he? Have you seen him?) 'I have not seen him. He is in hospital. Father told me.' George was perfectly well on September 25th, but was slightly wounded in the leg on September 29th and was sent to a hospital in London."

AN infinitude of tenderness is the chief gift and inheritance of all the truly great men.—RUSKIN.

THINK of how He gives who takes away. Out of the bottom of the miry clay I write this; and I look forward confidently; I have faith after all; I believe, I hope, I will not have it reft from me; there is something good behind it all, bitter and terrible as it seems.—R. L. STEVENSON

DR. ELLIS POWELL addressed a large gathering at Rochdale on the afternoon of Sunday, the 16th inst. on the subject of "Our Soldiers in the West." The Rochdale people had laid themselves out to make his visit a success, not only by organisation, but by means of posters 8ft. high which were all over the town. The result was a very successful service, which should give a great impetus to the movement in Rochdale. Mr. G. F. Knott took the chair, and the greatest credit is due to him for the energy and ability with which the affair was organised. Rochdale, by the way, is hoping for a visit from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in the course of the next month or two.

## TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

These notices are confined to announcements of meetings on the coming Sunday, with the addition only of other engagements in the same week. They are charged at the rate of 1s. for two lines (including the name of the society) and 6d. for every additional line.

*Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W. 1.*—6.30, Mrs. E. A. Cannock. March 2nd, Mr. J. J. Morse.

*The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke-place, W. 2.*—11, Mr. Ernest Hunt; 6.30, Mr. E. W. Beard. Wednesday, February 26th, 7.30, Mrs. A. Jamrach.

*Spiritualist Church of the New Revealing, 131, West End Lane, Hampstead.*—Will re-open on March 2nd.

*Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.*—6.30, Mr. T. Ella.

*Tottenham.—68½, High-road.*—7 p.m., Mr. A. T. Connor.

*Croydon.—117b, High-street.*—11, service and circle; 6.30, Mr. G. R. Symons.

*Walthamstow.—39, Rectory-road.*—7 p.m., Mrs. Fielder, address and clairvoyance.

*Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.*—7 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington. Wednesday, 26th, at 8, Mrs. E. Neville, address and clairvoyance.

*Holloway.—Grovevale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).*—11.15, Mrs. Adain, address; 7 p.m., Mr and Mrs E. J. Pulham, address and clairvoyance. Wednesday, 26th, at 8 o'clock, Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Smith.

*Brighton.—Windsor Hall, Windsor-street.*—Mr. Rimmer, addresses and clairvoyance: 11.15, Windsor Hall; 7, Athenæum Hall, North-street. Also Monday, at 3, and Wednesday, 8, o'clock, psychic readings at Windsor Hall.

*Camdenell—Masonic Hall*—11, church service; 6.30, Mr. G. T. Brown. March 2nd, Mr. H. E. Hunt.

*Battersea.—45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.*—11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mr. J. W. Humphries. 27th, 8.15, Mr. and Mrs. Brownjohn.

*Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.*—11.30 and 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton, addresses; Lyceum, 3 p.m.

Monday, 7.45, brief address and clairvoyance. Tuesday, 7.45, lecture II., Astrology, Miss Samson. Thursday, 7.45, inquirers' questions and clairvoyance. Friday, Guild, Athenæum Hall.—Sunday, 3 p.m., lecture, "Heaven, Where Is It?" followed by clairvoyance, Mr. A. Vout Peter.

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## THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (Oxon.)'

### ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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