

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

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SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1919.

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6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW,
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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The séance for physical phenomena, which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle attended at Cardiff on the 15th ult. has been the subject of so many reports and discussions in the general Press, that it is unnecessary to do more than offer some comments on the matter here. First, we notice that the medium was Mr. Tom Thomas, the collier, of Penydaren, whose powers as a physical medium were only attained by years of training and development in a circle of men and women earnestly devoted to the work of supplying the world with those physical evidences which are still needed by our materialists. We observe that amongst the sitters were Mr. Lee Joseph, J.P., Mr. David Williams, C.B.E., Chief Constable of Cardiff, Superintendent Harrison, and, we believe, one other representative of the forces of Law and Order. We are assured that they and the other fifteen or sixteen people present were satisfied of the genuineness of the manifestations, as many others before them, sitting with the same medium, have been satisfied. Having read the account on its first appearance we waited next for the howls of indignation which it would excite. The howls were duly forthcoming. People who had but the vaguest notion of the whole matter and its true meaning burst into the newspapers snorting and bellowing their wrath and indignation; which is all to the good. The superstition which had been killed so many times had come to life again, and was in a manner laughing at them.

* * *

It would be waste of time to go over the questions and comments offered by the opposition. Some of them are so absurd as to suggest that many of the critics did not even stop to think what they were writing about, for a few minutes' reflection would have enabled them to answer many of their own questions and objections. In the "Daily Mail" of the 19th ult. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle points out that the phenomena he witnessed are "very elementary and only useful as forming a final argument against materialism by showing that there are unquestionably powers, and intelligent powers, outside our ordinary senses." That puts the matter in a nutshell, and answers reefs of questions and criticisms from the unintelligent powers who live entirely in the radius of their very ordinary senses. In the "Evening News," in an interview given to Mr. W. McCartney, Sir Arthur expanded his explanation, and we give some extracts from the interview on another page. Something like a mild counterblast is provided in the same issue of the "Evening News" by Mr. Arthur Machen in his review of the book, "Future Life," translated from the French by Louis Elbé. Mr. Machen leads off with

an allusion to the rector in "John Ward, Preacher," who finds himself compelled to tell a dying friend that he could not tell him whether there is a future life or not. Mr. Machen has no fault to find with the rector. The answer to the question, he thinks, must always be "I don't know," because "we cannot have bodily and material evidence as to the spiritual and immaterial world." But that is precisely what we are having all the time. What is it but the spiritual and immaterial that animates the bodily and material? The great Mystics saw evidence of the presence and power of the spiritual world everywhere. Blake could see it in the very "mud and mire of things." Mr. Machen has a reputation for being something of a mystic himself. Has he forgotten?

* * *

Mrs. Rachel Fox, who is concerned with an attempt to revive the doctrine and prophecies of Joanna Southcott, sends us a message received through her hand in September last and directed to be sent to a late prominent Bishop of the Church. It is a warning against evil spirits and Satanic power which were to stir up revolts and insurrections amongst the peoples of the earth—Bolshevism, in short. We have given several times before our views on the subject of Joanna Southcott, and need not repeat them, although Mrs. Fox's message contains the statement that the only way of escape from the dominion of Satan on earth lies in the investigation of the new "law of My mouth which I gave through My prophetess, Joanna." We want to be courteous to Mrs. Fox, but we are bound to tell her that there are abroad to-day a great number of such prophets and such messages, each and all claiming divine sanction and offering an "only way of escape." It was only a short time before writing this note that we were visited by a gentleman who, having had a personal interview with the Deity and been given a new Bible—the only word of Truth—besought us to assist him in making known his revelation to mankind. This also was "an only way of escape," and our visitor was (of course) the *only* person commissioned to save the world. (He was not a Spiritualist.) We have our own opinion about these things, and may be excused from giving it here, except to the extent that there is a real psychological action behind them, only it is misunderstood and misinterpreted. We think if it could be arranged that a few of these divinely commissioned persons could meet each other and compare notes they would receive some shocks and surprises.

* * *

One other word on the subject of Mrs. Fox's communication. She is evidently exercised about our denial of a belief in the existence of "any spirit or spirits of evil." Our correspondent is under a slight misapprehension. Let us say emphatically that we have never denied such a belief. On the contrary we know that there are abroad many wicked spirits in and out of the flesh—"devils," if one likes to put it that way. We have all met them. All we contend is that there are no supernatural powers of evil—no fiends of the mythological or theological order. We have long seen that there is no room for Satan or any power or personage of absolute evil. And we have also realised that the lowest and basest spirit is as much dependent on Divine power as the highest archangel. The Devil

myth dies very hard. The child who, with some little bodily disorder or some unsatisfied want shows peevishness, is told that its misbehaviour is traceable to Satanic agency—the Devil is at the little one's back. Later, children of an older growth look round on a world seething with war and discontent, and see the Devil still at work. If they had learned to look a little deeper they would see forces at work much more within the understanding that comes of reason and experience. They could find all the causes without going outside the realm of natural law. The old theologies, hatched in ages of ignorance, while we can credit them with some good work, did a great deal to disease and debauch the natural understanding. Holding by an intelligent and reasonable over-ruling Power, we feel no temptation to consider theories of diabolism which, while they seem to solve problems of evil, give us a Universe confused and chaotic, in which, so to speak, God is not Master in His own house.

INTERVIEWS WITH SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

As mentioned in Notes by the Way, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has been interviewed by a representative of the "Evening News" on the subject of his account in the Cardiff "Western Mail" of a recent séance for physical phenomena in that town. We give the following quotations:—

"The demonstrations [said Sir Arthur] are simple first lessons. They are the elementary step. Thousands of people come to my meetings already holding the faith that after life the spirit survives: and I tell them as plainly as I can that our religious beliefs are justified by what I state to be incontrovertible evidence of survival. There is more than the body: and without qualification I state now that we have proof of communication after death.

"I have been going about the country addressing meetings at which there was not an inch of room to spare. The audiences have been extraordinarily large. It would be a mistake to talk of the people as enthusiastic. That is not the word. They, if I may say so, have been reverent. Wherever you go you find them serious and anxious—wanting light and comfort."

This brought me (writes the interviewer) to the point I had wished to place before Sir Arthur.

He is one of the most famous of war historians, and these historians want first-hand evidence and documents for everything that they put on paper. They approach their task pretty much as a judge does his. Then Sir Arthur's detective stories have placed him in the estimation of the public as one of the keenest of analytic minds of our time.

I suggested that the ordinary man was the more astonished when he found Sir Arthur Conan Doyle accepting such incidents as that at Cardiff. I added that I had told such people that he never clouded the question in verbiage or vague and stately words, but came down firm, in the same curt English in which he writes, so that every man and woman could understand his bold meaning.

"That is the truth exactly," he replied. "I say that there is survival after death. I say that I have had proofs of it. I stand secure upon that belief. I am as sure of it as I am of the carpet under my feet."

In the "Daily Chronicle" of the 20th ult. is another interview with Sir A. Conan Doyle, from which we extract the following:—

"Then you don't oppose Christianity?"

"Oppose it?" he (Sir Arthur) exclaimed; "I am endeavouring to restore it. This is Christianity which has been mangled beyond recognition. This reconciles Christianity with proof and reason from which it is at present divorced."

THE MOVEMENT IN NEWPORT.—Writing from the Monmouthshire town, G. M. says: "The two Spiritualistic Societies here are well attended. Our accommodation is overtaken every Sunday and Monday. On the occasion when Sir A. Conan Doyle spoke here, many were unable to gain admission to the hall, which seats eleven hundred people. A vicar took the chair and several other clergymen supported the speaker on the platform. The clerical element was also noticeable in the audience."

The Annual General Meeting of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists was held on January 26th, when the following officers were elected: Hon. President, Mr. James Robertson; President, Mr. Peter Galloway; Vice-Presidents, Mr. W. T. Thomson, Mr. J. M. Stewart, Mr. J. B. Bell, and Mr. McDowall; Secretary, Mr. J. B. McIndoe; Treasurer, Mr. M. Martin; Financial Secretary, Mr. James Cameron; Minute Secretary, Mr. T. R. Day; Curator of Bookstall, Mr. Geo. W. Thomson; Librarian, Mr. David Reid. The financial statement showed in the general fund of the Society a balance of income over expenditure of £6 15s.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

From Mr. Charles W. J. Tennant, District Manager of the Christian Science Committees on Publication we have received the following:—

Mr. B. M. Godsall, writing from San Diego in *LIGHT* of February 1st (p. 39) asks "why it is that Christian Science, which relegates so much of human experience to the delusion of mortal mind, has had such a vogue." The success of the movement is due to the fact that Mrs. Eddy rediscovered the divine Principle which lay at the back of the healing and reformatory work of the prophets, Jesus, His disciples, and the early Christians. It is a historical fact that spiritual healing was carried on by the Church into the third century, and that the dead were raised by the early Christians as late as 255 A.D., according to Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

That these works were intended to be continued for all time is quite clear from the words of our Master, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." These works were evidently done through the spiritual understanding of divine Principle, and not through the agency of the carnal or human mind, for to the carnal or human mind existence seems material. The five physical senses can take no cognisance of that which is spiritual. God, Spirit, is not perceptible to them; this is precisely why St. John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. . . . For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father (Spirit), but is of the world (carnal mind)."

The Mind of Christ is the only Mind by which God can be known—hence St. Paul's admonition, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Christian Science reveals how to obtain this divine Mind, and thereby overcome the false beliefs of the carnal or human mind.

In your issue of the 15th Mr. Wake Cook makes some aspersions with regard to Christian Science, which I trust you will also grant me space to refute.

He affirms that Christian Science is powerless in some cases. This is not so, as its divine Principle and rule never vary, and are able to meet and destroy every disease in every circumstance when properly applied.

Our critic takes objection to Christian Science "reducing God to a Principle." Let us examine the word Principle. It means cause, origin, source. Can God be conceived of as anything less? There is no question of reducing God from something greater to something less in designating Him divine Principle. This name for God gives one a much clearer sense of His immutable, immortal, eternal nature.

Christian Science does not work through the exercise of the human mind in what is termed suggestion in curing the sick, as our critic supposes. It works through spiritual understanding, in conformity with the saying of Jesus, "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The centre and circumference of Christian Science is God, infinite, life, Truth and Love, and there is nothing narrow in Mrs. Eddy's teaching with regard to gaining an understanding of God. Christian Science teaches that there is only one Mind, which is God, and that the universe, including man, is the spiritual offspring or emanation of this Mind. From this it will be seen that eternal existence is quite apart from the temporal or material sense of things, and that if man is ever to be immortal he must be so now. The mortal never becomes immortal, the finite can never become infinite, the material can never become spiritual.

Humanity is beginning to understand the fact that mortal history is a dream narrative out of which it has got to awake. It is a deep sleep, hence Paul's admonition. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead (the carnal mind), and Christ (Truth) shall give thee light (spiritual understanding)."

"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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Miss Gregory	0	10	0
F. W. Vedder (U.S.A.)	0	9	9
T. Jones	0	5	0
Miss Massy	0	2	6

"RACHEL COMFORTED."—Sunny's mother wishes it to be known that the book of this name will, she hopes, before long be given to the public. Meanwhile, all rights, including the title, are strictly reserved, and no use whatever must be made of them without the permission of "Rachel."

THE PASSING OF MR. J. J. MORSE.

After nearly fifty years of arduous work as a medium and trance speaker Mr. J. J. Morse has passed to the better land. The news, which reached us by telegram on Thursday, the 20th ult., came with a sense of shock, for although he had been visibly failing for some months, all his friends were hopeful that he would live to see the completion of fifty years of labour in October next, and a movement was on foot to offer him a national testimonial when that anniversary was reached, as mentioned in *LIGHT* of February 15th (p. 56). It would not be easy to appraise the value and volume of the work he achieved in the presentation of a sound and practical philosophy of Spiritualism, or to over-estimate the service he rendered to the movement by a fearless advocacy of its principles in the old days when it was a very Ishmael amongst the faiths and philosophies of the time—a voice crying in the wilderness. On this subject we shall have more to say later. In the meanwhile our sympathies go out to Miss Florence Morse, his daughter and only child, herself a well-known medium. As will be remembered, Mrs. Morse passed over, after a long illness consequent on shock from air-raids, in November, 1917.

We take the following items of his biography from "The Mysteries of Mediumship," a series of interviews with mediums published in *LIGHT* in the year 1894.

Mr. Morse was born in 1848, losing his mother four years later. Six years after that event his father also died, leaving the ten-year-old boy "at the mercy of the world, penniless, and with scarcely a friend." An uncle took charge of him, and he was sent to sea. To adopt his own words in the interview:—

"After a few trips I met with an accident, and being in consequence discharged on the Tyne with only ten shillings in my pocket, I arrived in London with sixpence left, and so ill that I could scarcely stand. My friends, if I can call them so, roundly asserted that I had run away from my ship, and would have nothing to do with me. The next six months of my life were spent in a public infirmary. On my recovery I got employment at a City public-house, a circumstance which, without going into details, I may say led to my first practical acquaintance with Spiritualism."

The circumstance to which he alludes was a visit to Mrs. Hopps, the mother of the Rev. John Page Hopps (afterwards so well known as a preacher and writer) who at that time kept a haberdasher's shop near the tavern at which Mr. Morse was employed. Entering the shop he found Mrs. Hopps discussing Spiritualism with a customer, and with the levity of youth he remarked to the old lady, "You are not such a fool as to believe that stuff, surely." She answered him quietly, and after some conversation she lent him a couple of books on the subject. These made a great impression on his mind, and receiving later an introduction to Mr. Cogman, a veteran worker, he attended his first séance. There were physical manifestations, and his attitude towards these was of the kind usual in the case of the ordinary observer new to the subject—one of contempt, dislike and bewilderment. But later in the proceedings he was the subject of the first attempt to submit him to entrancement. The results were naturally disorderly, and he shouted and performed many antics. "perfectly conscious of my absurd behaviour but quite unable in any way to control my actions." When he came to himself, he apologised to Mr. Cogman, who "smilingly accepted my apologies, said he was used to that sort of thing, and asked me to come again, whilst I was registering a mental vow not to do so."

To abbreviate a long and interesting story, Mr. Morse was in due course developed as a trance medium and began to deliver sermons and addresses, which gradually reached a level of excellence that amazed his hearers, and the phenomenon was witnessed by several men distinguished for their intellectual power—the late Sergeant Cox was one of them. He dealt easily and ably with the most abstruse philosophical questions with a range and depth of thought and mastery of diction quite astonishing. The Press of the day took a great deal of notice of these orations, leading papers like the "Daily Telegraph" and the "Christian World" giving lengthy reports. He made his first sustained address under control in April, 1870, in the Hall of the St. John's Associates, Clerkenwell. The first regular Sunday service address to Spiritualists was in the old Cavendish Rooms three months later. In course of time he learned something of the "power behind." The chief control stated that he was "Tien Sien Tie," a Chinese mandarin of the second class, living on earth in the reign of the Emperor K'ea-Tsing; he has more than once given a long and interesting account of his life in China some three centuries ago, his transition to spirit life, and his association with a large group of spirits who made it their business to work in co-operation in various ways to stem the flood of "materialism and dissatisfaction with the accepted teachings in this world, and that disbelief in the immortality of the soul which was rapidly spreading amongst the people who were considered the most religious and most civilised on this planet." It appeared that there were in all a band of twelve spirits, mostly of Eastern nationalities, associated directly with Mr. Morse's mediumship. One of those best known to Mr. Morse's many friends was "The Strolling Player"—a man who on earth was what we should

now call a "barnstormer"; he had a sad life and a tragic death, perishing by the roadside, of destitution. "Keenly witty, shrewd and vivacious," the "Strolling Player" supplied the humour and lighter elements in the discourses, and more than once he has told the story of his life in *LIGHT*. Such a moving document has seldom been put on record. The older generation of Spiritualists are well familiar with it. To the younger generation the wonderful record of Mr. Morse's life and experiences, the splendid quality of the teachings given through him, especially in the 'eighties—addresses which were models of literary grace combined with a rare depth of wisdom—are not so well known. In those far away days the present writer often heard and reported these addresses, and many of them are buried in old files of *LIGHT*, "The Two Worlds," and other journals. But although their direct appeal has passed, the teachings have gone far and wide over the earth, and have had and still have a living influence on the minds of many to-day. Both the principal controls, "The Chinese Philosopher" and "The Strolling Player" have revealed themselves as actual living characters, and in their communications have given such a wealth of information concerning their lives as men and afterwards as spirits, the conditions of the world in which they now live, the modes and methods of communication with earth, that if it could all be gathered to-day into printed volumes would amply suffice to answer every difficulty and solve every problem that we have yet seen raised in connection with what to most of the world is still, alas! a "new revelation."

Since writing the foregoing we learn that Mr. Morse was taken ill on the 18th, the nature of his disorder being at first difficult to diagnose, but ultimately the doctor in attendance decided that it was a sharp attack of influenza. Its effect on the heart was fatal; after noon on the 19th Mr. Morse became unconscious and sank rapidly, and at about half past six passed quietly away.

THE REINCARNATION PROBLEM.

While thanking Mr. G. R. Dennis for his courteous reply to my question as to the reincarnation of Elijah in John the Baptist, I confess I am still somewhat perplexed. I take it that he believes that Elijah did become re-incarnate as John, also that, after John's death, Elijah appeared to Jesus on the Mount of the Transfiguration not in the character of John, but in that of Elijah, as an "actor who plays many parts, while remaining the same individual through them all." This seems to give us the following alternatives: either (1) that the ego in question first became incarnate on earth in the person of Elijah, which one would doubt, seeing that Elijah was evidently a highly progressed spirit; or (2) that the original ego may appear from time to time, on the astral plane in any of those parts in which he has played. In the present instance, e.g. the ego selected that of Elijah in preference to that of John. Which, if either, of these would Mr. Dennis, as a Theosophist, approve?

G. VALE OWEN.

HUSK FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges with thanks the following contributions: Mrs. Green, £1; Geo. Edwards Roberts, 5s.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION.—We call attention to the Memorial Service to the late Mr. J. J. Morse on Sunday evening at Steinway Hall, as advertised elsewhere. The Marylebone Association was closely connected with the labours of Mr. Morse in the past.

INDIAN PLAYS.—Under the auspices of the Union of East and West, two Indian plays were presented at the Comedy Theatre, Panton-street, W., on the afternoon of February 12th, the characters being interpreted by actors and actresses of high standing in the profession. The first, in order of presentation, "Savitri"—a beautiful story of wifely devotion we have noticed in *LIGHT* before. The second was Sir Rabindranath Tagore's "The King and the Queen," and of this powerful drama we cannot better the description given by the author's fellow-countryman, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, in a recent little book of essays, "The Heritage of our Fathers," issued by the Theosophical Publishing House: "The theme [is] the 'life-force,' a something that works its will in a way that is unmoral to our morality. The king passionately loves his queen, but it is a surging, torrential love, and he cares for nothing but her. The kingdom's miseries have no message for him while he listens to the message of his love for the queen. . . . She leaves him to save the people. The life-force now leaves the channel of love and digs for itself a new channel, that of war and conquest. As senseless as he was in loving, so is he in his martial valour, and he drags down with him in a great cataclysm his queen and his country." Mr. Jinarajadasa points out that one great thought in Tagore's plays is the supreme spiritual beauty of womanhood. In this respect his women characters stand in clear contrast to the men.

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J. J. MORSE: IN MEMORIAM.

Yet another of the "Old Guard" has passed away leaving us the poorer for the loss of his presence, but vastly the richer for his work. He braved the storms and enjoyed the scanty sunshine of some fifty years of such labour as it is given to few men to achieve. Few men, indeed, could have toiled so hard and done so much even to serve their own personal ends, but the great trance medium, whose career in Spiritualism dates back to the late 'sixties of last century, laboured for a cause and for humanity.

We have given on another page a brief outline of his career—the full tale of it would fill many of our pages and greatly surprise thousands of those newcomers to psychical inquiry who, knowing the name of J. J. Morse, know little more of him. A public knowledge was more observable in the earlier days of his mission, over forty years ago, when, as we have mentioned elsewhere, his trance-addresses were noticed in the popular Press and attracted the special attention of some of the more intelligent minds of that period. It was not that the interest in his work waned. It became more concentrated. The message he delivered went home to the hearts of thousands in all parts of the world: the average man who represents the great mass of the community gave J. J. Morse and the movement he represented a cursory glance and returned to more congenial pursuits. The message was not for the ordinary man—at that stage.

Those whose interest was a sustained one were a little more than the average—they had some dim "sense of eternity," and followed the light more for itself than for the strangeness of its appearance and the wonder of its source. On this head we need say little more at present. Tributes and reminiscences from those who knew him and followed his career will later assist us to present a more living picture of the man and his work. The outlines, of course, will be a little blurred. Time has done its work on the record, but it has only scattered the husks. The seed has been carefully garnered, and all the gains conserved.

Let us only add now a few details omitted in our obituary notices in other columns.

Mr. Morse, in the 'seventies of last century, was the founder of the Progressive Literature Agency which he conducted for many years; he was assistant editor of *LIGHT*; he was active in the founding of the Psychological Press Association and did much work as correspondent of other journals of the time, "The Medium and Daybreak," "The Herald of Progress," and "The Banner of Light" amongst the number. Of the last named journal (a New York publication) he was for some time editor during his stay in the United States, over which he travelled, on lecturing tours, several times. At the time of his death he had been for many years editor of "The Two Worlds," a position in which he followed the late Mr. E. W. Wallis, who left that journal to take the post of assistant editor of *LIGHT* in the year 1899.

Much remains to be said, but not now. We stay at this point to salute the veteran who has passed. He has gone out of a world in which for many of us it is harder to live than to die. But he has gone out full ripe for the change, having done in the fullest measure the task assigned to him and left a record that, although it may not be always associated with his name, will keep his work in perpetual remembrance.

"The sweetest canticle is 'Nunc dimittis,' when a man hath obtained worthy ends," and with our departed

friend the ends he served were of the worthiest. He was a worker for humanity. He died in harness. For him the long night is ended, and the day has broken. We may bid him not only "Good-bye," but "Good-morrow!"

THE CHURCH AND PSYCHIC SCIENCE.

In "The Church Family Newspaper" of the 14th ult. appeared a letter from Mr. F. Bligh Bond (author of "The Gate of Remembrance") from which we take the following extracts:—

PRISON AS TRAINING COLLEGE.

My attention has been drawn to the following amazing announcement on the part of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England:—

"An arrangement has been made whereby Knutsford Prison, Cheshire, would be taken over as a training-place for the clergy. Five hundred men could be trained there forthwith."

In other words, it is proposed to throw an army of more or less sensitively organised men, spiritually untrained and undefended by acquired stability, into an environment reeking with the atmosphere of misery and habitual criminality, with a material entourage of a chilling and depressing nature.

The Church is supposed to believe and to preach the reality of worlds unseen, of the power of thought and spiritual influence for good or ill, the power of prayer, the existence and power of spiritual evil and temptation. She conducts her services in buildings designed to create, and reserved to store, the atmosphere of devotion. She affects to believe in the reality of their influence for good.

But every truth has its inverse, and to hold the one whilst denying the other is unreal and insincere.

Officials are often Sadducees, and Church officials, by their methods and policy are apt to give this impression. Quite material things, like money, they can appreciate. They will even credit it with a spiritual power. One of their own official pamphlets speaks of "the finances of the Kingdom of Heaven." Also, they would probably be sound enough on such questions as the desirability of avoiding the use of derelict cancer hospitals for the purpose of training-places for clergy; but where matters of business organisation impinge upon the domain of spiritual principles, they are blind guides.

THE NOVELIST AND PSYCHICAL EVIDENCES.

Mrs. Philip Ch. de Crespigny, herself a well known novelist, writes:—

"The article by Helen Mathers in last week's issue is yet another voice from the army of thinkers to whom the truths of Spiritualism make an irresistible appeal. Some people argue that witness from a maker of novels is worthless, as the lively imagination of a writer of fiction must be considered an adverse factor in the trustworthy nature of the testimony. This argument is generally brought forward by persons who have no imagination themselves, and are consequently quite incompetent to give an opinion.

"The novelist is an expert on imagination, and has reduced it to the position of servant. No one knows better how to call it into play, or to relegate it to the background; no one is in a position to recognise with greater accuracy when it is playing a part unasked. A novelist's imagination is a well-trained instrument, under control, and an instrument, moreover, about which the man of so-called 'common-sense,' talk he never so glibly, knows little or nothing. A man with no sense of taste might as well object to the ruling of one more completely developed, on the score that with so active an appreciation of flavours he is more apt to be mistaken than a man with none.

"Therefore the experiences of the writer of 'Comin' thro' the Rye' have more than common interest and are another tribute to the altruistic quality in the urge of Spiritualistic beliefs, which would share with others the treasure trove, although it should entail the laying bare of innermost chambers of the heart."

When you pray, "Thy Kingdom come," you either want it to come or you don't. If you don't, you should not pray for it. If you do, you must do more than pray for it—you must live for it, and labour for the Kingdom of God.—RUSKIN.

THE DIRECT VOICE AT THE THOMAS SEANCES.—Several newspapers record the fact that the brothers Thomas gave "another successful séance" on Friday, the 21st ult., at Pontypridd. It is further stated that in two instances the direct voices of the guides of the medium were heard. We now listen for the solemn antiphons of the ventriloquial fraternity proclaiming to a benighted public the explanation of ventriloquism, as something which only they could have thought of.

RECONSTRUCTION AND THE CHURCHES.

By THE REV. ELLIS G. ROBERTS, M.A. (Oxon).

Mr. Wake Cook's article in *LIGHT* of February 15th will doubtless be favourably received by a considerable section of your readers, that is to say by progressive members of the Churches. In what follows I write not as a critic of the article, but as desirous to call attention to certain highly important factors in the problem he suggests.

Mr. Bernard Sickert, in the "English Review," has most justly and pertinently pointed out that the teaching of the Church has been completely revolutionised in the last thirty years. Much, therefore, of the criticism aimed against it is irrelevant and indeed misleading. Does anyone in the present-day teach the old doctrines of hell-fire and the total depravity of man? If so I imagine that he does so to empty benches.

I should be greatly surprised if I found that any modern divine would agree to the statement that Christ preached eternal torments. Even thirty years ago such a declaration would be hotly contested by Greek scholars of such calibre as F. W. Farrar, to say nothing of others. And criticism has advanced with giant strides since the days of Farrar. The great danger at present is quite in the opposite direction. A sentence selected from the "Letters from Julia" hits the point to a nicety: "People don't believe in the hell of fire any more, and they have by their recoil forgotten that there is a real hell." Here lies one of the great weaknesses of modern preaching.

The fault of the modern Churches is not that they teach eternal punishment or an infallible Bible, but that they are throwing away the baby with the bath water, and drifting into mere negations. One can hardly take up a copy of the religious weeklies without finding a lament over some eminent divine who "abandons the historical basis of the Creed." Rationalism, hard pressed by psychical research, has "taken sanctuary," and if Mr. Clodd desires to get out of the reach of Spiritualism he will best consult his safety by going to church. There he will be quite secure, especially if the preacher should be a professor of Theology.

But the ever-increasing discrepancy between the actual teachings of the clergy and the beliefs to which they are formally committed is a very serious matter indeed, and this, and not the merely superficial causes enumerated in the Archbishops' report, is the real reason for the dead failure of the Church to retain her hold on the nation. The Church cannot possibly commend herself to men's conscience in the sight of God as did the great Apostle of old, if, while going to the very extreme with rationalistic criticism on the one hand, she insists on the damnable section of the Athanasian creed on the other. It is over forty years since J. A. Froude urged that the bishops of his day should issue a straightforward pronouncement on the problems that were exercising the minds of intellectual and honest men. The challenge evoked no response, and since the days of Froude things have gone from bad to worse. The real weakness of the Church is that her doctrine is in a state of absolute chaos. The nation has every right to ask the national Church—What does she believe?

By THE REV. G. VALE OWEN.

Mr. E. Wake Cook's downright and inspiring article is a bit of plain-spoken talk, which is much needed at the present time. But a few words seem to be required on his reference to "the doctrine of eternal torments, preached by Christ Himself." That is quite true; but why blame Him? Spiritualists teach the same truth. Apparently the trouble arises from the very imperfect translation of the Greek in the English Bible. From the original I deduce that the Christ taught that there is a state of unhappiness and anguish which is "everlasting," not "never-ending" but "perpetual," as the fires of Gehenna outside Jerusalem were perpetual. Into this state go the wicked on their entrance into the spirit life, to reap what they have sown, as another metaphor has it. Their "punishment" is, therefore, "eternal," i.e., it is "of the ages," "æonian," and not of this present world alone. Again to change the metaphor, out of this prison they will not come forth "until they have paid the uttermost farthing." Is not that in agreement with the best Spiritualist literature? Conformity of such literature, both generally and in detail, with the teaching of Jesus is one of my greatest comforts—not what the Authorised Version apparently makes Him teach, but what He really did teach.

From Mrs. E. Newenham Hoare (Reigate) we receive the following:—

Some of Mr. Wake Cook's strictures on us Church people may be deserved; I think they are. But he seems quite unaware of the fact that there is a large body of people in the Church to-day—in fact, I think it is a very large majority—who protest earnestly against the beliefs with which he credits us. Does he not know that large numbers of us believe in Progressive Revelation; that the Old Testament is to them of quite different value from the New; that they hold the Old Testament writers to have been profoundly mistaken in believing those "many barbarities" to have been the

will of Jehovah? Again, is he unaware that the statement that Christ Himself preached the doctrine of Everlasting Punishment is more than questioned? Mr. Cook is really attacking the Church of fifty years ago. In the present day we have come—thank God—to recognise that our Lord was an Eastern and used Eastern hyperbole, and that our stupid literalness of mind has been responsible for an appalling misunderstanding of His teaching. In this very article of Mr. Cook's we have, if I may say so, an example of this. He sees contradiction between the Angels' "Peace and Goodwill" and the Master's "I came not to bring peace but a sword"; and, indeed, I have known people cite this text as a proof that Christ was an advocate of war! Yet the whole tenor of His life and teaching shows to demonstration that He was speaking in hyperbole, as Easterns naturally do. I am confident that the vast majority of Church people to-day would passionately repudiate the idea that our Lord consigned to "everlasting torments" those who do not "meet the requirements formulated by the Church." Misunderstanding of Eastern hyperbole—misunderstanding by those who heard—mistranslation of the language used in the Holy Land: one or more of these, we hold, may account for our forefathers' mistakes; but that the Master ever taught such a doctrine we never can and never will believe!

Mr. W. B. Haynes writes:—

It is a pity that E. Wake Cook's able article should be disfigured by misrepresentations of Christ's teaching. A glance at the context of Matt. x. 34 would have shown him that "sword" there has nothing to do with war; the topic is the inevitable divisions occasioned by the proclamation of new truth. Again, Christ does not teach the doctrine of eternal torture: æonian discipline all of us believe in, none more than Spiritualists. May I remind him that the New Testament is Eastern, and not to be read through Western spectacles? Oriental hyperboles have long been the happy hunting-grounds of theologians and creed-mongers. Christ's discourses were addressed to Jews in their own language and style, on their own affairs, with a view to the effect on themselves; and His predictions concerned the immediate future—"this generation." The so-called "Last Judgment" parable, which Mr. Cook appears to have in mind, is no exception. We must not credit to Christ the follies of ecclesiastics.

HOUDINI, MEDIUM OR CONJURER?

Mr. J. Hewat McKenzie, of 1, Stanley Gardens, Bayswater, W., writes:—

My attention has just been called to a paragraph in *LIGHT* of February 8th which, in elucidation of the matter, I must ask permission to repeat. It ran thus, "Some years ago a story got abroad to the effect that Houdini's marvellous feats in releasing himself from handcuffs and other forms of captivity were effected by 'psychic power.' Mr. Hereward Carrington publicly contradicted the story, as one who, knowing Houdini, was able to affirm that his tricks were the outcome of pure legerdemain. The tale, however, persisted in some quarters, in spite of the denial, not a little to the regret of those who are more concerned for the quality than the quantity of psychic evidences. Now that Houdini has been 'filmed' while performing some of his astonishing feats, let us hope we have heard the last of the absurd theory."

Now, although I have a very high regard for *LIGHT* as an authority in most matters relating to psychic science, I cannot let this emphatic statement pass unchallenged, as it directly controverts statements made in my book, "Spirit Intercourse: Its Theory and Practice" (pp. 80, 86), in which I confidently attribute to Houdini mediumistic powers of a transcendent character. That the cinema screen, which daily presents "faked" films for public consumption, should be considered as offering sufficient testimony to contradict the theory of the reality of dematerialisation within a closed iron tank, or to the shooting of hidden bolts, surprises me very much, nor can I help feeling amused that *LIGHT* should quote Mr. Hereward Carrington as an authority, seeing that a few years ago one of its most valued contributors, the late Vice-Admiral Osborne Moore, seriously questioned Mr. Carrington's ability to judge psychic manifestations.

Who is to be judge—the critic in his armchair, or the painstaking investigator? I do not think either Mr. Carrington or any representative of *LIGHT* has tested Houdini's powers, while I have done so under strict test conditions, and I must re-assert my belief that certain of his most marvellous feats are demonstrations of psychic power. What he may add to this by legerdemain for public use I cannot tell; I refer only to the phenomenon examined by myself.

As to Mr. Carrington, is he really an expert on this matter? He is best known as the author of "The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism," which purports to expose the tricks of mediums. On p. 411 of that volume he makes this interesting statement: "The majority of all test and trance mediums are frauds, just as the mediums for physical

manifestations are frauds," and further, in his preface to the book he says, "I have quoted . . . specially from a work entitled 'The Revelations of a Spirit Medium,' which contains much valuable information but which is now practically unobtainable, owing to the fact that a certain number of Spiritualists (with a genuine love for truth!) bought up and destroyed all the copies of this book—together with the plates—so that, unless one should be fortunate enough to possess a copy, it is unlikely that the book will ever make its way into the investigator's hands, and hence the contents be lost to the reading public for ever!" Some of us know this book, and that it was written anonymously, but this fact Mr. Carrington omits, although a great part of his own book is a reprint from it, and very, very little the result of personal investigation on his part.

As a truth-seeker, I wished to meet Mr. Carrington, so that he might put me in touch with the fraudulent mediums he so freely describes, and made it my business to call upon him in 1916 when visiting the States. I spent some pleasant hours with himself and his charming wife, and received a list of the "frauds" he wished me to test, in addition to some mediums whom he considered genuine. I travelled thousands of miles to various cities, and called upon all his "fraudulent" and "genuine" mediums and in due course gave Mr. Carrington the result of my examination. The proofs I brought back to New York in the form of slate-writing and psychic photography, and evidences of materialisation, were of such a character as to cause Mr. Carrington profound thought, I believe, and to prove to him that all his so-called "fraudulent" mediums were as a matter of fact first-class demonstrators of psychic powers, and this without any shadow of doubt.

I have the kindest of feelings towards Mr. Carrington, and believe that he wrote his book largely on the testimony of others, and that since that time he has obtained many genuine demonstrations and has considerably modified his early opinions. During my visit, Mr. Carrington questioned the accuracy of my statement regarding Houdini and an appointment was made for me to meet the latter at Mr. Carrington's house in order that he might personally meet my statement. Your readers may make their own deductions, for Mr. Houdini failed to keep the appointment made by Mr. Carrington, although he lived but a short distance away and was entirely at leisure professionally at this time.

I am persuaded that he does not wish the public to know that some of his work is due to spirit agency, for an announcement of this kind would be badly received by a music-hall audience. Legal processes might also be entered against him, and the disturbing mental forces which would be aroused during his performance would possibly militate against any successful demonstration of a psychic nature.

In face of the above facts, I still adhere to my written statement, and trust that if opportunity arises *LIGHT* will decide to examine Houdini's manifestations on behalf of itself and its readers.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, speaking at the Theatre Royal, Merthyr, on February 16th on "Death—and the Hereafter," said that Spiritualists knew, from experiments and research, what happened after death. Anyone who studied the evidence had absolute proof of what the truth was. Messages from those who had passed over to the "other side" were in agreement that death, far from being painful, was a pleasant process, and that, experiencing a happiness such as they never imagined in this world, none of them wished to return.

"THE FAVOURITE CRAZE OF SOCIETY."—We take the following from the "Daily Chronicle" of the 25th ult.: "If, as seems likely to be the case, Spiritualism is the favourite craze of Society in the coming season, it will have some very distinguished defenders, in addition to those whose names are already before the public. Some years ago, when Mr. Balfour was at the height of his political power, someone was scoffing at Spiritualism in his presence. 'Your scepticism carries you too far,' said Mr. Balfour. 'There is nothing in political life as I know it to be compared to the interest, the profound interest and significance of psychical research.'"

MATERIALISATIONS.—At the hall of the London Spiritual Mission, Pembroke Place, on Wednesday, February 19th, Mr. Horace Leaf delivered a lecture, "Ghosts in Solid Form," accompanied by lantern illustrations, which showed, amongst other things, the difference between the psycho-plastic material and the substance appearing when developed into human forms. Mr. Leaf also illustrated by lantern views the effects of light on the materialisation processes, and dealt with the Schrenck-Notzing experiments, demonstrating the gradual development of the materialised form. Mr. Percy Beard was in the chair, and there was an overflowing audience, crowds of people being turned away. The occasion, indeed, was highly successful; the financial results for the Mission being most satisfactory. Amongst the audience were several medical men and persons of scientific and social distinction. It may be mentioned that the pictures shown on the screen included photographs of such well-known spirit operators and visitants as John King, Katie King, and "Sister Amy."

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ATOM.

By LIEUT.-COL. E. R. JOHNSON. I.M.S. (RETIRED).

Mr. Craven's letter in *LIGHT* of February 15th deals with the structure of the atom, and its investigation by clairvoyance, in some detail. Perhaps some of his strictures on the subject of my letter of December 28th would have been omitted if he had had more time to study the book and the papers I showed him.

As an instance, he writes: "The results are presented with the dogmatic finality of which few but Theosophists dare to be guilty." The following sentences from the first two pages of "Occult Chemistry," which I here quote, indicate a standpoint which is exactly the opposite:—

OCCULT CHEMISTRY.

"It may be remembered that an article bearing the above title appeared in 'Lucifer,' November, 1895. In that article three chemical elements—hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen—were presented tentatively to the public. . . .

"We have, however, lately had the opportunity of pursuing these researches further, and, as a considerable amount of work has been done, it seems worth while, again tentatively, to report the observations made. Certain principles seem to emerge from the mass of details, and it is possible that readers who are better versed in chemistry than ourselves may see suggestions to which we are blind. An observer's duty is to state clearly his observations; it is for others to judge their value, and decide whether they indicate lines of research which may be profitably followed up by scientists."

"Our observations cannot be regarded as established by the outside world until others have corroborated them; and we put them forward in the hope of stimulating work along this line, and thus bringing to science, when its instruments fail it, the old, old instrument of enlarged human vision."

Again, Mr. Craven, in his summing up, attributes the whole scheme to the "vagaries of the sub-conscious mind." Everyone has a right to his own opinion, but if he had qualified it by the word "tentatively," as the authors of "Occult Chemistry" have done, it would have been less open to objection. I may add that the sub-conscious mind has usually been regarded by psychologists as possessing the deductive faculty only, and not a positive or inductive one. Both "Occult Chemistry" and the case mentioned, with which it is compared are, whether they be true or false, not deductive, but inductive and constructive.

Rules made for the establishment of claims for priority of discovery have been made by orthodox chemists, and similar rules exist in other sections of science. The majority are, I know, unlikely, and probably wisely so, to alter their rules to suit exceptional cases.

The case of Mendeleeff's prediction in 1871 is on a somewhat different footing. It was a prediction only; while "Occult Chemistry" is based on actual observations accompanied with diagrammatic figures; although, as yet, they are unconfirmed by orthodox science.

Mr. Craven's other points mainly bear upon the question as to whether the atomic weight of an element depends on its electrons or on its nucleus. The matter has evidently not yet been settled by orthodox science, for within the last few years the views of scientists have completely changed and just now, according to Sir Oliver Lodge, the electrons are only credited with an insignificant weight as compared with the nucleus. Sir Oliver Lodge has stated that there is no trace of dynamic structure whatever in the diagrams shown in "Occult Chemistry." This is quite true. The investigator never made any such claim, and if the scientific instinct is offended by the table of atomic weights obtained claim voyantly, as shown on page 4 of the book, it is because it fails to see the reality of the figures and their bearing on orthodox chemistry. That the authors of "Occult Chemistry" omitted to figure the nucleus, which is assumed to exist in every atom, and on which the dynamic structure of the atom depends, was due to the fact, stated in the book, that only etheric vision was used; its limits being the ultimate physical atom.* If, as seems probable, the nucleus is on a higher plane of Nature than the physical we might as well criticise a writer on Natural History who figures a camel and omits to give a diagram of its soul. Since Materialism has gone out of fashion, we most of us are aware that atoms, camels, men and suns each have a life side, a soul, or spirit call it what you will—as well as a form side. We do not yet know much about the former aspect or the laws which govern it. Take the case of the sun, which, with its attendant planets, has been so often compared with the physical atom. It was formerly believed that the laws of gravity were immutable, but astronomers now know that the reversing layer of the sun's envelope presents a paradox quite un-

* The term "Ultimate Physical Atom" is defined as follows: "Any gaseous chemical atom may be dissociated into less complicated bodies; these, again, into still less complicated. After the third dissociation but one more is possible; the fourth dissociation gives the Ultimate Physical Atom. This may vanish from the physical plane, but it can undergo no further dissociation on it."

solved. It is clearly exempt from the operation of the known laws of gravity, although by conventional theory it should be subject to this to an overwhelming extent. So the atom, by analogy, may have undisclosed paradoxes, and we have not yet reached a stage when the wisest among us may venture to dogmatise; but any contribution to our knowledge, even if it be tentative, should be welcomed by those who are in search of the truth

IS THE HOUR OF DEATH PRE-DETERMINED?

Mrs. Wallis' control, "Morambo," in answer to a question as to how the guides and guardians know when an earth dweller is approaching the hour of his transition, said that they observed the gradual attenuation of his etheric cord when he left the body in the sleep state and that an unwonted and significant activity in his temporary visits to the spirit world was also noticeable. Some, he said, who gave every indication of quickly passing and for whom friends were waiting with the spirit robe all ready were held back by the strong desire (and prayers, no doubt) of their earth friends or by their own refusal to "let go." Asked as to who it was who determined the day and hour of death "Morambo, if we understood him rightly, replied *no one*, the spirit passed out when his physical frame was exhausted or when it met with some accident. He expressed the opinion that the latter incidents were *real accidents* and not in any way under the control of unseen agents in fact that spirits often successfully intervened in the nick of time to prevent their resulting fatally for their charges. The present writer had the temerity to disagree with the control and suggested that the hour of death, which meant so much to the man himself and to his loved ones, was determined by God or His higher angels, but "Morambo" would not concede the point. Here is a case where we are as much entitled to form an opinion as a dweller on the other side of death, unless he comes from spheres of enlightenment immeasurably above us. The Christian belief in Providence is a source of great comfort and peace: the doctrine that nothing happens by chance, *i.e.*, that everything is foreseen and provided for. An "accident" to us is no surprising and disconcerting incident to God who "makes all things work together for the good of those who love Him" and will surely not allow a man to be snatched out of the world to the shortening of his educational course and the grief of his relations unless in His wisdom the time is come and in the highest sense it is best so. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? . . . Fear not, therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." The life of Jesus Himself was safe until His work was done (John xi. 8, 9; Luke xiii. 32) and the method of His passing was known beforehand (Zech. xiii. 6, John xii. 32) though His enemies worked out the details of their own free will and with full responsibility.

So the least of us may fall sick or stand where bullets are flying and pass through the danger with life if our hour is not come. The obligation to guard well our lives is not diminished: "Thou shalt not tempt"—*i.e.*, try—"the Lord thy God" by running in front of a 'bus nor by omitting reasonable precautions when pestilence is abroad. Suicide would seem to be a profane attempt to tear oneself out of the hands of Providence and to be an act of unique folly even among man's harebrained doings. St. Paul, when in peril of his life, hears a reassuring voice saying, "Fear not. Paul; thou must stand before Caesar" (Acts xxvii. 24), and the history of Jeanne D'Arc seems clearly to illustrate the same truth when through a hundred dangers she is preserved until her work is done. The glorious end was evidently long foreseen by those who led her on step by step, but her enemies were in no way constrained (at all events by good spirits) to bring it about.

F. FIELDING-OULD.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH IN ICELAND.

We have had the pleasure of a visit from Miss S. Björndóttir Jensson, of Reykjavik, Iceland, who bore a letter of introduction from an old reader of *LIGHT* in that country, Mr. Harald Neilsson, who is Professor of Theology at the University there. Miss Jensson gave us some interesting particulars of the psychic movement in Iceland, and we were pleased to learn that it now has a Psychical Research Society of its own, with a membership of 350, including many members of the learned professions. We were glad to have news of Mr. Kr. Linnet, of the Icelandic-Bench, who contributed a beautiful little dream story to our columns some time ago, and to hear also of Mr. Matthias Jochumsson, the national poet, whose verses on the war we quoted from the "Times." We have asked Miss Jensson, when she returns home, to convey the cordial greetings of *LIGHT* and its readers, and to ask that one of the Icelandic writers mentioned will favour us with an article giving further particulars of psychical activities in the "Land of Fire and Ice."

"LOVE AND WISDOM."

In the course of a letter lately received from Mr. B. M. Godsal, of San Diego, California, he refers as follows to the article on the above subject in *LIGHT* of December 14th, 1918 (p. 395):—

"While I agree with the feeling and intention and meaning of the article and admire the way in which it is expressed. I would like to suggest a somewhat different definition of the terms employed.

"Might one not say that Intellect, or Intelligence, is complementary to Love, and that their product, or their child, is Wisdom? In that case Love and Intelligence would constitute the dual principles of Attraction and Repulsion which hold suns and planets in perfect equipoise, and their child—the result this miracle of equipoise that we see around us—would represent Wisdom: and 'Intellect without Love is a frozen waste.'

"Again, if it were Intellect and Love that are expressed in the sexes, then when they merge in the heavenly marriage, the fruit of the union—the two acting as one angel—would constitute Wisdom.

"This principle seems to run through every possible problem or course of action that can be submitted for our decision the wisdom of it lies always between the two extremes of Intellect (or practicality) and of Love, or Sympathy.

"Thus Wisdom is the one and only quality that cannot be carried to an extreme, because it is itself the centre between extremes and in this manner it constitutes the final and greatest good; because there is no attaining to the heart or centre or *wisdom* of a matter until one has compassed and measured both of its extremes.

"Of course I know that most thinkers use 'wisdom' in precisely the manner in which it is used in your article, but believing that Wisdom comprises the highest possible attainment (not only ultimate but at all stages), in that it points the way to the purest truth (at any particular stage), and having been taught that 'truth' is ever a third something lying between two extremes, it seems to me that the term wisdom should be reserved for the act of God: that is to say for the *effect* proceeding from the two constituent qualities of our Father-Mother God namely Love and Intelligence. This is true whether it be God working through man or through Nature."

There is much to be said for Mr. Godsal's view. Thus we can easily conceive of a person who displays love without wisdom. It is not so easy to imagine one who without love is at the same time wise, except in the narrow sense of being intellectual. And the intellect is a small faculty competent only to deal with matter. But we are always hampered by the want of exact terms in which to express our thoughts.

"THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS."

(FROM "LIGHT" OF MARCH 2ND, 1889.)

When Laurence Oliphant and other *persona grata* in London drawing-rooms showed what a fund of after dinner amusement Spiritualism furnished, it became fashionable at once. Great men and great dames especially the great dames, for they had more time worshipped the most recent fetish in material and mental darkness. They did not know what it all meant, but it was new, strange, eerie, creepy. And so the most exclusive ornaments of Society, who would not look at anyone out of their special set, though he might be one whose name would be lustrous for ages after his death, made familiar quips with the dear "Peters" and "Irresistibles" and all their kind. Not much boycotting there. That time has practically passed, and we have entered another era, and a better. Men of capacity and position have demonstrated the reality of the action of a force governed by an external intelligence. Many are still at work in the same direction, no man making them afraid.

—From "Notes by the Way," by "M.A. (Oxon)."

∴ "Peter" and "Irresistible" were the names taken by two spirit operators at materialisation circles at that period.

It is a royal thing, when one is doing good, to hear evil spoken of oneself.—MARCUS AURELIUS.

A GREAT DISCOVERY. The following allusion to a recent leader in *LIGHT* appeared in a letter by Mr. Bligh Bond in the "Church Family Newspaper" of the 14th ult., from which we quote elsewhere in this issue: The Editor of a London weekly, in his leading article last week, speaking of a book written by a well-known clergyman who has recently realised the power of the unseen, says: "We know that he will appreciate with us the infinite humour of life in ordaining that after preaching for centuries the reality of a world of spirits, the clergy shall awaken one by one to the earth-shaking discovery that they have been telling the truth."

HOW DOES PSYCHOMETRY WORK?

By E. E. CAMPION.

To-day's need of psychic science is to ascertain the relations between thought and matter and to interpret both by a common standard, if that be possible. A student who wanted to know all that is to be learned about birds would not acquire all the facts by watching birds in a small cage. He might come to the false idea that a bird was a rather lively creature and could hop about, but as far as he could see was otherwise rather stationary in habit. The most salient characteristic of the bird, its flying power, would be lost to him. In a similar way a study of thought without considering the phenomena of telepathy would be barren; also such a study would be deficient in scope if psychometry was neglected. Evidence of the exercise of this gift should be collected with much greater method and pertinacity than is the case. For on this evidence must rest, in the future, momentous conclusions.

A question arises, to which I have not seen a complete reply, as to the nature of the psychometrical gift and its underlying principle. Does the psychometrist read from the material object held in the hand thoughts which have been impressed upon the object, or does the material object form a link of introduction to the subconscious thought systems of the former possessor? Is it a case of occlusion of thought, as spongy platinum absorbs gases, or as tobacco or tea will assimilate the odour from paraffin or the aroma of an apple? Or is it that a rapport is established between two successive possessors of the object? The enquirer might consider himself on safer ground in embracing tentatively, at least, the latter alternative. But in that case a *modus operandi* by which the subconsciousness of the first possessor becomes an open book to possessor No. 2 is called for. Is the rapport established by association of ideas? Thus, "A" (or Possessor No. 1), while the object is in his possession, gets accustomed to it. It is often in his mind. If it is a glove, for example, he is putting it on and off, mislaying it, finding it again, or, if he be tidy, putting it where he knows he will find it. Any article of ordinary wear is handled and thus becomes a live idea at least twice a day on rising and going to bed. The idea of the object becomes a clearly defined item in the consciousness and therefore sinks into the depths of the subconsciousness quite inevitably and is at the beck and call, under suitable conditions, of a cognate idea in the mind of another person, "B."

The object itself, when it passes into the hands of possessor No. 2 ("B"), whom we will assume to have the psychometrical gift, is first of all sensed by him or her. The idea of it is vividly conceived, as the older school of psychologists would perhaps say, or projected into the ether, as certain new thinkers would put it. When projected it is thrown forth not as an independent vagrant but as subject (by the associative affinity which exists among all ideas in the same mind) to the idea system of the psychometrist. It also has the power, under certain conditions, of associating not only with the psychometrist's other thoughts, but with those of any person whose subconscious memory contains a clearly defined idea of the same object. There is thus established a point of contact between the subconsciousness of the two individuals.

But individual No. 2 ("B") has the power, let us assume, of exercising his abnormal gift while remaining conscious. He is thus able to attract into his own idea system certain ideas from the subconsciousness of the former possessor of the object.

What the ideas so attracted will be probably depends upon the state or the psychometrist's mind at the time of the experiment. Once having got *en rapport* he can conceivably receive and report upon any ideas associated in the mind of "A" with the material object. Or it may be that once rapport is even transitorily established a new active idea thrown out by the psychometrist, consciously or unconsciously, in the form of an enquiry, will energise and attract responsive ideas in the subconscious mind of "A."

An alternative view is that psychometry is a phenomenon of the occlusion of thought, such thought being subsequently abstracted from its material matrix by the receptivity of the psychometrist.

"AT EVENTIDE IT SHALL BE LIGHT."—With reference to the article under this title by Miss Helen Mathers (p. 63) we have to express our regret to the famous authoress that the article appeared without certain alterations which she desired to make in it, owing to the proof reaching her too late. Printing difficulties, made worse by the influenza scourge, coupled with postal delays, are to blame; but we certainly should have made it clearer that the title of the article is that of Miss Mathers' projected book in which all the proofs of her statements will be contained.

STILL the measure of our needs
Outgrows the cramping bounds of creeds,
The breath of a diviner air
Blows down the answer of a prayer,
And all our sorrow, pain and doubt,
A great compassion clasps about.

—J. G. WHITTIER.

EASTERN THOUGHT AND WESTERN PRACTICE.

By S. DE BRATH ("V.C. Desertis").

These two little companion volumes* are meditations "in an aphoristic form" designed "to convey knowledge concerning the being of Man." It is postulated that the etheric body and the elemental world, the astral body, and the thought body, and a "super-spiritual" world are realities cognisable by interior experiences. Meditation on these is to lead to liberation—the Fourth State, in which "Man finds himself as a spiritual being in a super-spiritual environment, even when all experiences of the physical, elemental and spiritual worlds, and therefore all experiences of the senses and of thinking, feeling, and willing, sink into oblivion."

Students of Theosophy may possibly find these meditations useful, but resting, as they do, on intuition and self-analysis, they are in marked contrast with the whole experimental method which we identify with Modern Spiritualism. That method proceeds from the experimental verification of psychic and quasi-physical forces (e.g., Dr. Crawford's psychic rods and Dr. Geley's ideoplastic substance) to other proofs of objective psychic facts connected with clairvoyance, clair-audience, healing, and kindred faculties and to analysis of messages from the Beyond. It endeavours to substantiate the true origin of these phenomena by verifiable tests, such as cross-correspondences, the moral bearing of the communications and their relation to proved physical science.

What edifice future psychological science will build on these foundations can scarcely be anticipated, but Western thought requires a firm foundation of physical fact for all theories soever. The Eastern method of Yoga, or occultism, has indeed produced a highly complex metaphysical system, but it cannot be said to have done much for the spiritual (i.e., moral) progress of the lands where it has had free play for centuries. Those who know the East are aware that the qualities which we associate with true soul-development—truthfulness, justice, pity, and personal purity—are even less prominent than among ourselves.

The practical problems of our own land and our own day are many and urgent. They arise from two root-causes—the materialism which denies the spirit, puts profit before honesty, and sensuality before honour, and the dogmatism which places the essence of religion in creeds, doctrines and ritual, and so relegates love towards God as the Father, and towards man as the brother, to mere vague emotion without any actual effect, and so to practical insignificance. Thus it has come to pass that large numbers of mankind have lost all real belief in the Divine government, in the continuous life of the soul, and in the law of moral consequence. These must ever be the foundation of any durable polity, and to re-establish these verities in the minds of men is in the present chaos of conflicts a task so vast that it is permissible to doubt whether high-flown Eastern theories will be of much practical use.

THE REINCARNATION PROBLEM AND THE ETHERIC BODY.

In reply to the observations of "Truth Seeker" (p. 55) Mrs. S. F. Ross Smith sent us a letter which we should have liked to use, but it was too lengthy. We therefore forwarded it, at her suggestion, to "Truth Seeker" direct. No doubt, however, readers who are conversant with Theosophy will know something of the line of reasoning followed and the occult sources from which Mrs. Ross Smith's ideas are gained.

Mrs. Ross Smith alludes to the anonymity of "Truth Seeker," but we do not think that the disclosure of his identity would have materially assisted the elucidation of the matter. We can at least say for him that he is an old student both of Spiritualism and Theosophy, and recognises with us that Theosophy has made known some fundamental truths in Religion and Philosophy, however badly some of its followers have gone astray in their judgments on Spiritualism, a matter on which Mr. Sinnett has frequently expressed himself.

On the subject of the ether, Mrs. Ross Smith refers to Sir William Crookes' great lecture on the "Genesis of the Elements" and his allusion to a primary substance (protyle?). The material in this lecture, Mrs. Smith claims, was largely founded on Mme. Blavatsky's occult teachings concerning the ether. It is a large question, and for the majority of us the way of safety seems to lie in waiting on the discoveries of "orthodox" Science, however tardy its steps, and however apparently bigoted, sceptical and obstinate its attitude. Not until an "occult" discovery expresses itself to us in the form of a demonstrable fact can it be legitimately claimed as a fact, and brought within the area of knowledge.

* "A Road to Self-Knowledge," 124 pp., and "The Threshold of the Spiritual World," 140 pp. By RUDOLPH STEINER. (Putnam 1918).

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, Special Memorial Service for the late Mr. J. J. Morse. See front page.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke-place, W. 2.—11, Mr. G. Prior; 6.30, Dr. W. J. Vanstone. Wednesday, March 5th, 7.30, Mr. Robert King.

Lewisham.—*The Priory, High-street.*—6.30, Mr. Horace Leaf.

Spiritualist Church of the New Revealing, 131, West End Lane, Hampstead.—Opening indefinite owing to the illness of Mrs. Mary Davies.

Harrow and Wealdstone.—*Gayton Rooms, Station-road, Harrow-on-the-Hill.*—6.30, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Craze.

Brighton—*Windsor Hall, Windsor-street.*—11.15 and 7, Mr. Boddington, addresses; 3, Lyceum. Monday at 8, Healing Circle. Wednesday at 8, public meeting.

Kingston-on-Thames.—*Bishop's Hall.*—6.30, Mrs. Beaurepaire, address and clairvoyance.

Camberwell.—*Masonic Hall.*—11, personal messages; 6.30, Mr. H. E. Hunt, address.

Croydon.—*117b, High-street.*—11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Mr. Philip Tovey.

Holloway.—*Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).*—11.15, Mr. T. O. Todd; 7, Mr. Percy Smyth. Wednesday, Mrs. Pulham, psychometry.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—*Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.*—7, Mrs. S. Podmore, address and clairvoyance. Wednesday, Mrs. George, address and clairvoyance.

Battersea.—*15, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.*—11.15, circle; 6.30, Mrs. Bloodworth. March 6th, 8.15, Mrs. George.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—*Old Steine Hall.*—11.30, healing circle; 7, address, Mr. Jas. Macbeth Bain; 3 p.m., Lyceum. Monday, 7.45, brief address; clairvoyance by Miss Struthers and Mr. A. Cape. Tuesday, 7.45, monthly healing circle. Thursday, 7.45, enquirers' questions and clairvoyance. Friday, Guild. Next week end, Mrs. Mary Gordon. Forward Movement, Athenæum Hall.—March 9th, 3 p.m., Mr. E. Hunt. See special advertisement.

MR. VOUT PETERS AT BRIGHTON.—Last Sunday afternoon, in connection with the Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood, Mr. A. Vout Peters addressed a large audience in the Athenæum Hall, on "Heaven, Where is it?" describing how this earth was surrounded by zones of ever increasing degrees of refinement and how the spirit, released from its material environment, naturally gravitated to the zone for which it was best fitted. After his address, which was listened to with rapt attention, Mr. Peters gave a number of clairvoyant descriptions, all of which were fully recognised. He concluded with an appeal on behalf of the movement in Brighton, which was responded to by a good collection. A vote of thanks moved by Mr. A. Cope and seconded by Mr. W. Lane, was carried with acclamation.

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