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Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Father Bernard Vaughan's query regarding the number of those whose reason had been unhinged by Spiritualism was effectively answered by the Rev. G. Vale Owen in the last number of *LIGHT*. It may be useful, however, in this connection, to recall the words of the Rev. Charles Tweedale, Vicar of Weston, Otley, in his pamphlet, "Primitive Christianity and Modern Psychic Phenomena," where, replying to Lord Halifax's criticism on "Raymond," he writes:—

This falsehood, this cry of "'ware madness" was raised forty years ago and killed by statistics obtained from asylums as soon as raised. I can obtain them for his lordship if he desires it. It was found that in the asylums from which the statistics were obtained there were very few persons suffering from madness caused by devotion to psychic things, but that there were many cases of religious mania among the orthodox patients. Such is the state of things to-day. Why does Lord Halifax not inveigh loudly against Christianity because of the many cases of religious mania among the orthodox?

We might ask the same pertinent question of Father Vaughan.

A few ounces of authenticated fact outweigh tons of loose talk on the part of irresponsible people. For instance, Professor Enrico Morselli, Director of the Clinic of Mental Diseases at the University of Genoa, says on this subject, "Cases of madness among those devoted to psychic phenomena are very rare. In my long career among thousands of patients I do not remember more than four or five." Our opponents will be wise if they abandon this unprofitable line of attack. We have no statistics regarding the number of persons who have been saved from despair and from consequent madness by the message of Spiritualism, but we can confidently reckon them by thousands. This is an aspect of the subject to which it is well to direct the attention of the impartial observer who has no prejudice to be conserved at the cost of truth and fairness.

Some years ago we gave on this page some passages from "Robinson Crusoe" suggestive of Defoe's attitude towards the unseen world. Defoe was a powerful and penetrative thinker, and got some genuine glimpses of the truth. The matter was revived in our memory by the following letter from a valued correspondent, A.M.H.:—

Owing to the fact that the bicentenary of the publication of "Robinson Crusoe" has just passed, I was led to re-read my old friend. . . . After referring to certain providential hints or "pressures" for the guidance of his life, which he had obeyed, Robinson remarks, "I cannot but advise all considering men . . . not to slight such secret intimations of Providence, let them come from what invisible intelligence they will. . . . Certainly they are a proof of the converse

of spirits and a secret communication between those embodied and those unembodied, and such a proof as can never be withstood."

We fancy the passages to the same effect which we cited on the previous occasion were taken from the remarks of the Spaniards who visited Robinson Crusoe's island—we have not time to look up the reference now, and it is of no great importance. But all such allusions, and there are others besides those mentioned, have an interest for us, not as supports to our position which is in no need of such aids, but as throwing side-lights on the mental workings of our great writers of the past. Those who know Defoe's work are aware how closely he identifies himself with his finer characters, which are animated by his own robust strength and see life as he himself saw it.

THE PROBLEM OF PUNISHMENT.

Mrs. Louise Berens writes:—

One of the tenets of the Spiritualistic religion—the only religion for so many—tells us that "as man sows, so he will reap in the life to come." To me this doctrine is distressing, bringing us back to the awful creed in which I was reared. Like many others I believed in eternal torment, and my youth was haunted by an Ingoldsby Devil with realistic horns and hoofs.

Time passed, and with the swing of the pendulum I escaped, but only at the cost of losing all faith and developing into a complete agnostic and materialist. For more years than I care to count death was to me the utter end, and if after life's fitful fever my body could encourage a rose or illuminate an electric bulb, I felt I had fulfilled a somewhat colourless destiny. From this sad but serene attitude—after severe shock and grief—I was mercifully shaken by the wonderful assurances and incontrovertible proofs afforded by Spiritualism. In the sunset hours of life it has grown to be a light to lighten the darkness. Is it not hard at the eleventh hour to re-enter the vicious circle of retributive punishment? If mortals reap as they sow, can any human being reach the goal of that enchanting "Summerland" so graphically set forth by those that have preceded us?

In my opinion no woman—and is there a man?—could possibly pass the eye of this heavenly needle. May we not believe that the weeds in the flower-beds do not count, and that we shall be held responsible only if we sin flagrantly against the light? Eternal progress is the straw to the drowning, and when this hope takes root in our hearts surely we can ignore the old orthodox hell of selective punishment. The weak—the loving—the irresponsible—countless myriads of God's creatures seem to be at the mercy of their own nature. Alas! "To reap as we sow." I could find it in me to pray for the old belief of annihilation: a belief I fancied scotched for ever.

I should be grateful if experienced but open-minded Spiritualists would advise me.

* * * Mrs. Berens' letter opens up a wide field of discussion and speculation. For the moment we offer two considerations. As we construe the matter there is no such thing as "retributive punishment"—it is purely a question of cause and effect. The Deity has no recourse to punitive agents. The eternal laws carry out exactly all His purposes in the Universe, and in the end it is seen that in each soul is its own heaven and hell, man is judged and condemned by himself. To judge others is always dangerous, since we do not know their circumstances. And the circumstances of earth life are always misleading. We are told that when free of the flesh, a great amount of grossness and temptation is left behind for ever, and many a spirit presents a totally different aspect. The clogs that shackled its vain efforts after good are cast off and its expression of its real self is easier, clearer—and truer.—*ED. LIGHT.*

A MAN who lives only for himself lives for nothing. Idealism is all-embracing. A man cannot live for himself and have any ideals.—*FRANCIS GRIERSON.*

THE MAY MEETINGS AT SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' ANNUAL CONVENTION.

One of the loveliest days May could offer, with sunshine and clear skies, greeted the event which stands foremost in the yearly programme of the London Union. A more effective contrast to the great blizzard which befell on the Sunday of the Albert Hall meeting could hardly be imagined. To pass from the brilliant sunshine outside to go into the shadowy, but not altogether cool, recesses of the South Place hall cost one something like a pang. It was a needless one—inside the hall there was sunshine of another and better kind—the hall was crowded with people radiating sympathy, animation and happiness. In point of numbers and enthusiasm the Convention this time, as was generally agreed, surpassed all its predecessors. There was on this occasion a "veteran" note in the proceedings—perhaps it came out of the strong contrast, for the "Old Guard" is dwindling rapidly; it is the day of youth. Mention was made of Mr. W. O. Drake as being present. The name took the memory of the present writer back to the 'eighties, when Mr. Drake was a vigorous speaker. On the platform was the veteran and venerated James Coates of Rothesay, strangely vigorous for a man so well up in years. We noted also more than one figure whose name and fame seemed to belong more to the last generation than to this.

Looking round the hall, especially at the evening gathering, it became clear how much of youth and vigour, how much of intellectual force, as well as moral energy and enthusiasm, has now come into the movement to provide the driving and directing power of the future.

THE MORNING MEETING.

In opening the proceedings of the fifteenth annual convention of the Union of London Spiritualists, on Thursday, May 15th, the Chairman (Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn), president of the Union, struck a note which must have awakened an answering echo in the breasts of all his hearers when he expressed the hope that that lovely morning might prove but a symbol of the wonderful time on which we were about to enter, and that the peace which had come within reach on the outward plane would be succeeded by a peace on the inner plane—such a peace as could only be established when the heart of humanity beat in sympathy with the eternal law. If the time which Mr. Gwinn anticipates is really coming Spiritualism will have a large share in bringing it about, but it will be a Spiritualism of the type set before us in the very thoughtful paper read by Mrs. Mary Gordon, the secretary of the Union—a Spiritualism which is "not merely the record of some interesting psychic phenomena," but is something more—

"A PROGRESSIVE SYSTEM OF TRUTH."

Mrs. Gordon claimed that in the world's recent upheaval, with its tragedy scarcely finished, Spiritualism had been the only consolation of the bereaved, but wonderful as was its efficacy in convincing the sincere investigator of the absolute naturalness and reality of a future life, that was but a beginning—an introduction to a greater message which it had in store for a seeking world. Modern Spiritualism was the dawn of a great democracy. While offering nothing new, it sought to convey to the many what was previously the exclusive cult of the few. The materialist considered the material world the real world, and human thoughts and faculties the outcome of the physical brain, so that with the dissolution of the body the man no longer existed, but the phenomena of Spiritualism had demonstrated to us that the life principle was continuous and indestructible. They had also demonstrated that life, consciousness and organism were inseparable. Life was, indeed, unthinkable without form, as we had only become conscious of it through form. What was this life and consciousness? It was customary to think of consciousness as the prerogative of man, but it was evident that it was shared in a minor degree by plant and animal. Animals showed some degree even of self-consciousness. Mrs. Gordon continued:—

"Sharing in common the sub-consciousness of matter, as expressed in all manifestations of life, through the cells of his own body, man extends his self-consciousness through the medium of his brain. It would seem as if self-consciousness were only expressed in a lesser or greater degree according to the possession, size and quality of a physical brain."

"Whether the form [of the physical body] is the result of energy, drawing round it light, heat and colour, beginning in the lowest possible germ life, gradually gathering force and bulk, working up through every manifestation of life, illustrating the body-building process from generation to generation, evolving slowly but surely the spirit or consciousness, till it has reached the human, is not known, although many accept this theory."

"This idea was held by Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, as a Spiritualist and scientist, simultaneously with the scientist Darwin. Others again hold the view that whilst the process of the production of the form most probably is quite in agreement with the protoplasmic idea, in that a great likeness in the magnetic, electric, chemical, physiological and anatomical structure is undoubtedly present, the ego or spirit

is incarnated during the final building of the particular form it inhabits.

"That the life, consciousness and organism present themselves together as a living man or woman in this stage of its existence, we know."

"The incarnate spirit presupposes a previous existence. No proof beyond dreams and visions, thought to be the recollections of past experiences of man himself, is yet forthcoming. Undoubtedly in the course of the evolution of the expression of the ego, the truth or otherwise of this theory will stand out clearly. We may rest assured that Truth alone will stand in the final analysis, and be found to be in perfect harmony with any other idea which embodies truth."

"The claim of the physicists that the thought realm or consciousness of man is the outcome of the form, would appear to be destroyed by the oft-repeated demonstration of thought, consciousness and individuality of the disembodied, and it would seem as if the ego, or spirit, were the real cause of the particular form it inhabits, both the physical and ethereal double which it withdraws with it when it passes out of the fleshly envelope."

"This is supported by the law of destruction working all the time in the cell life of all forms."

"The biologist will agree that a continual breaking down and rebuilding of every cell in the physical body takes place, the structure conforming to the sub- and active consciousness of the ego. Much has been written and expressed of the potency of the thought realm to transmute the elements of the body from disease into health. The experiences of man all go to show the dominance of the will and thought plane over every other part of his being."

"Man realises himself to be something greater than a physical body, for he transcends its sensations. This extension would point to the finer and subtler body called the soul body, with its psychic faculty, termed the sixth sense, operative in the fourth dimension, the counterpart of the five senses of the physical body."

"W. H. Evans, in 'Constructive Spiritualism,' says:—'The soul I regard as the theatre of all those greater activities connected with our planetary and cosmic life. It is, in fact, the intermediate vehicle or medium used by the divine innermost to come into contact with this rougher and cruder form of physical existence.'

"Henry Frank says, in 'Psychic Phenomena, Science and Immortality': 'If we could imagine the outer, denser, opaque elements of our physical body completely dissipated, leaving yet a body, though spectral or invisible, still in every minute detail the exact counterpart of the exterior, but now dissolved body, we would possess in the mind a vivid picture of the protoplasmic organism that actually exists within each human being. If, again, we could conceive of this protoplasmic organism, though invisible, suddenly made luminant, so that while radiant, it would reveal its perfect outline in spectral form, we would still more accurately fashion to our minds the inner mysterious body which exists within our palpable exterior body.'

"The repeated experiments of the psychical researchers have proven that this psychic or soul body is the point of contact between the discarnate and incarnate. It is this body which the clairvoyant sees and the clairaudient hears."

"It is undoubtedly this body which has been both photographed and weighed, and is used as a fluidic emanation, from the medium in the physical body, to clothe the manifesting spirit, to be seen as a materialised form."

"The idea put forward that the phenomena of Spiritualism are the working of the sub-conscious mind, can probably be applied to much that is claimed to be a transmission from another world, yet it points to the fact that man has this body with him before the change called death."

"Still, the proportion of appearances, messages, and manipulations of solid objects, if ever so small, manifesting such distinct characteristics of personality, memory, affection and continual consciousness, makes it impossible to dispute the evidence or explain on any other grounds than the hypothesis that it is the return of human spirit."

"Clairvoyants have both seen and heard birds, animals, etc., in the spectral form, but whether these exist through the persistence of their own consciousness, or the compelling thought and love of their human association, is not yet determined. It is certain that some animals, if not all, possess the power of extended vision, and there are many cases on record where this attribute has saved the physical life of their human companions."

"So little, comparatively, is yet known of the range of the senses, where the physical ends and the psychic begins, that it is possible much that has been considered abnormal will be proved to be purely normal, and that which is accepted as part of physical sense, psychic."

"This is a tremendous field waiting exploration."

"Throughout Nature, we find cause, means and end following sequentially. The means is the medium; and the objection raised against psychic phenomena because a medium is necessary, is due to the lack of application of common knowledge."

"The facts of psychic phenomena are with us and have the support in the conviction of their reality of some of the greatest minds of this and past generations."

"Andrew Jackson Davis, whose visions, inspirations and trance experiences have been of such tremendous value to men in opening up the secrets of natural and spiritual science, actually published to the world, as revealed to him during the

trance state, some of the wonderful secrets of Nature which only later were discovered by the scientists, and so confirmed.

"Many people will follow the facts of both ordinary and psychic phenomena without seeing they are a means to an end, and that behind all that science can establish for us is a great purpose or design.

"The phenomena of Spiritualism will need to be applied to some principle or they will prove to be unstable and meaningless. Psychic phenomena differ from the ordinary phenomena of Nature in that they are allied to some form of human consciousness; and the point in all these various happenings is that there is a consistent and persistent claim that they are caused by the spirits of people who once lived here.

"This claim is the only theory that unifies the facts, without breaking down at the crucial point, and emerges from the facts themselves.

"The fact of human survival of bodily death is most important and fraught with weighty issues, in that it demonstrates that the universe is rational.

"Immortality cannot be demonstrated by any single phenomenon other than man's living after death, and the central dogma of religion is as much a principle of the Universe as it is a dogma. The principle of immortality runs through all worlds, because the substance of which they are made is indestructible.

"The facts of Spiritualism fall into line with the other facts of the Universe, and reveal the interdependence of worlds; and we see that the line of continuity is unbroken, as the seen merges into the unseen."

Mrs. Gordon here quoted Pope's lines, beginning:—

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

"Life," she said, "is not seen in its true perspective when our vision is limited to the material side of creation; for it is as real, if not more so, when man transcends his body and enters into communion with the realm of spirit.

"In the spiritual realm, man can realise the oneness of life—that life being the divine life. He sees God in all things and realising the Immanence of God, responds to the higher octaves of Being.

"Man is instinctively religious; the lesser seeks the greater. What is more wonderful than the realisation of the overshadowing of that great and Infinite Presence? To be alone with God is to realise the significance of true companionship. In Him is comprehended the all, and in mystical communion with God we are strengthened and refreshed. For our life to be 'hid in God' is to increase it a hundred-fold—man realising that he is allied to Omnipotence and Omniscience. Recognising his own inherent nature as a part of that great Infinite Life, his activities are stirred, and he seeks the expression of his own potentialities.

"Spiritualism clears away the old erroneous ideas of God, Heaven and Hell, held by many religionists, and presents to man the law of cause and effect working out in his extended consciousness as personal responsibility. Pain and happiness are consequences. An infringement of an organic law produces physical pain. An infringement of a moral law causes mental pain. The consequent suffering is designed to win us to an obedience of law that we may have joy and happiness. Whatever may be the purpose of creation, we see that suffering and pain, together with sorrow, enter largely into the outworking of that purpose. They would appear to be the forces most conducive to the refining education of the soul.

"Pleasure as an end can never compare with the joy which is the natural accompaniment of loving service to another. As the dynamic of religion is love, so service to man is the proper outlet for the attainment of those innate spiritual forces of which man is conscious.

"No man can feel he is a spirit without realising the significance of his relationships to his fellows, and the grave responsibilities that rest upon his shoulders.

"There is no denying that the knowledge that man is immortal has a tremendous influence in our daily life. The Spiritualist sees his fellows as spiritual men and women, whose life-tide rises from the same source as his own, and realises that we are builders not for a day, but for all eternity.

"This is the only knowledge—with the great outstanding fact that Spiritualism brings to us, of love that never dies—which will help in the great reconstruction that man is justly demanding to-day.

"Love is the centre and mainspring of all religion. Love can save to the uttermost. Love has perfect faith. Love conquers all difficulties and wipes out all misunderstandings. Love can reconcile all enemies, and destroy all enmity. Love purifies, ennoble, and enriches the soul, and it endures for ever.

"Moral relationships, economic adjustments, and all the perplexing social difficulties of to-day have their solution in the soul of man.

"There must be a real community of feeling, a social consciousness developed, and until the spiritual consciousness of the race is reached, and is convinced of its own immortal destiny and power, no satisfactory adjustment can take place.

"Spiritualism can leaven the thought of the world, and in its catholicity can take in every shade of opinion, every aspect of truth. It is so democratic that it would give its knowledge to the fireside of all, without regard to class, creed, or colour.

"Recognising science as the handmaid to religion, it gives a rational philosophy, makes for sanity, and is a specific for the health of body, mind and spirit."

Mrs. Gordon's address was preceded by a beautiful rendering by Miss Dimmick of Solveig's song from "Peer Gynt" and was followed by questions, ably replied to by the lecturer, and a brief but animated discussion.

(To be continued.)

"EXPERIMENTS IN PSYCHICAL SCIENCE."*

To many readers of *LIGHT* the bare announcement of a new book on psychical research by Dr. Crawford would secure expectant attention. Those who have not read his work on "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena" should do so at their earliest opportunity, and thereafter take up the continuation volume just published. It deals with "contact," levitation and "direct voice" phenomena, in an admirable scientific manner. The reality of such phenomena, so very strikingly shown in the earlier work, is in the later experiments enforced beyond the pale of disputation. The sceptic who carefully considers these two books cannot possibly remain sceptical and escape odium of some sort—it might be sheer prejudice of the least defensible variety, intellectual obtuseness or cowardice, if not "original sin," which to some belated minds still wears a dark halo of finality. Let there be no mistake about it; there is no getting away from Dr. Crawford's demonstrations as scientific psychic facts accurately observed and recorded. "Psychic phenomena are quite as real as any others," says the author, "and the man who nowadays denies their occurrence on *a priori* grounds is not worth wasting time upon." In theory and practice that dictum is sound through and through. The first "spirit" phenomena of the circle over which Dr. Crawford presides are usually raps, which occur "right out in the circle space, on the table and on the chairs of the sitters," varying from slight taps to big blows as from a sledge-hammer—the latter easily heard two stories below, and outside of the house. The sitters are seated around the table, but do not touch it, and "are only passive instruments in the hands of the invisible operators." Their contribution to a successful sitting is suggested by the fact that they weigh less after than before it. Precise figures of this loss are supplied in the book. The medium, whose position relative to the table and circle is diagrammatically shown, may lose nearly half her normal weight during some of the experiments; it is, however, practically all restored to her before the conclusion of the séance.

Conversation between the invisible operators and the mundane controller of the circle is effected by means of light raps and a simple code agreed upon. How natural and convincing it all is! "I wish to test this statement of yours," says Dr. Crawford in relation to an experiment, and forthwith his requirements are met. "I want you to levitate the table by this method," he explains, and is at once assured that they will try to do as desired. "I arranged with the operators that the medium should sit on her ordinary chair until 'power' was sufficiently developed, and that they should give three raps when they were ready for me to proceed with the experiment," all the complications of which were duly fulfilled. Thus were ascertained location, shape, area of invisible material, etc. The controller asks for so much materializing matter to be taken from the medium's body and deposited loosely on the floor, and the dial of the weighing machine on which sits the medium demonstrates accomplishment.

In levitations and "direct voice" experiments with the "trumpet" all visible contact is conspicuously absent.

It is a book not to be appraised in a short notice—it must be read.

W. P. B.

SUSAN COUNTESS OF MALMESBURY will be "at home" at 3, Wilton Crescent, on Thursday, May 29th, at 3.30, when Dr. Ellis Powell will give an address on "The Higher Aspects of Psychic Research." The chair will be taken by the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould.

DR. POWELL AT MERTHYR.—Dr. Ellis Powell, who was accompanied by Mrs. Powell, visited Merthyr Tydfil for the week-end and spoke at two meetings in the Drill Hall. At the afternoon meeting, where the chair was occupied by Mr. H. W. Southey (the Editor of the "Merthyr Express") the speaker dealt with the commanding position now occupied by Spiritualism as a science. At the evening meeting, which was a crowded gathering, Dr. Powell spoke on the part destined to be played by Spiritualism in social and political reconstruction. This, to most of the audience, was an entirely new aspect of the work of Spiritualism, and the effect of the exposition was such that although the meeting was really a religious service, a unanimous vote of thanks to the speaker was passed. Merthyr is still enthusiastically reminiscent of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's visit, which gave a tremendous local impetus to the movement.

* By W. J. CRAWFORD, D.Sc. John M. Watkins. Price 6/- net.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C. 1.

The Alliance possesses the largest Library in existence of occult, mystical, and psychical books. Members' annual subscription £1 1s. For prospectus, syllabus of meetings, classes, &c., apply to the Secretary.

THE FUTURE OF SPIRITUALISM.

The perils of prophecy are proverbially great, especially when the prophet has placed his reliance on an impression which he unconsciously moulds in accordance with some personal idea or prepossession. Too often his prediction is falsified by the event when it arrives. It is always possible, however, to make a fairly accurate forecast of coming events by taking into account a sufficient number of factors in a survey of the present, for out of these the future grows. It should not be a futile task, then, to attempt to outline in advance some part of the career of this subject of Spiritualism.

First let us consider the fact that it has been the victim of ridicule, persecution, and boycott for fifty or sixty years. During that time it has suffered enough at the hands of its enemies and some of its followers to have destroyed utterly anything that was not made invulnerable by containing a living and growing form of truth. "The table," said a well-known journalist some time ago, "the table has begun to kick up its legs again." The jibe was an eloquent one. In a single sentence it recorded the persistence of an idea, the public attitude towards it, and the kind of mountebank criticism which endeavours to burke a matter by a misleading statement designed to emphasise some element in it which is regarded as ridiculous. It is as silly as though some enemy of, let us say Cromwell, endeavoured to depreciate his character and achievements by continually pointing out that he had warts on his face. It is sillier, in fact, for there is really nothing funny about a table or even a child's toy. Both are associated with kindly, human and innocent things. But we need not labour these points. Looking round, we can see some facts that need no argument. We can see a deep public interest on every hand in the question at the root of the whole matter—a life after death. That is the question, and the cleverest attempts to garble the truth, or to put its seekers off the scent, are seen to be increasingly difficult and useless. The priests are discovering this by observing the failure of their most frenzied harangues; the Pressmen, who are rather more intelligent, or perhaps we should say more in touch with popular needs, are getting a little bewildered. The old tactics seem to have lost their virtue.

What does it all mean? Here is a subject the surface and outlines of which are blurred with a multitude of things obviously grotesque and undignified—things which would instantly destroy the reputation of any other cause or movement—and yet it makes its way in spite of all opposition. It has been killed over and over again, and we have read its obituary notice a score of times, but it rises again stronger and more insistent than ever. It has been pelted with clods of earth, blown upon by tornadoes of wrath, drenched with the cold water of indifference and aloofness, and scorched with satire from a thousand pens. But somehow the elements are all friendly to it: the earth nourishes it, the winds strengthen it; the water feeds it; the fire gives it kindly warmth.

What of its future? We see it growing and flourishing, and in its growth shedding all its present crude and ungainly aspects. It will be known and seen for what it is—a truth essential to the welfare and progress of the race, long suppressed and distorted, but returning again and again, until it is permitted to take its true place in the philosophy of human life from which it should never have been expelled. It is the most precious thing of all the divided and scattered fragments of life which the future will build into their

places so that the fabric may be complete. When it has thoroughly penetrated the thought of the time and become a part of the race consciousness—as it assuredly will—we shall cease to hear of such terms as "psychic," "occult," "mystical." They belong to a phase of isolation yet to be outgrown. In the meanwhile we who are called to be its champions and friends will do well to keep our hearts and minds on the *central idea*, refusing to be drawn aside from our path by small considerations arising out of personal differences of opinion and doctrine. These are not of the essence of the matter. The idea is the thing that counts. Opinions and doctrines govern small departments of human thought like the petty princes of petty states. Ideas rule the world.

THE CHRISTIAN AND SPIRITUALISM.

In a second article, "The Christian and Spiritualism," the "British Weekly" continues the examination of Spiritualism, quoting Flammarion and Sir William Barrett. The substance is contained in the sentence, "In its attitude towards the death of our Lord, Spiritualism separates itself entirely from the Christian Church." But surely the writer of the article, presumably Sir William Robertson Nicoll, must have made a very superficial investigation of the subject if he fails to appreciate the fact that Spiritualists number among them many people who remain devoted members of the Christian Church. The fact of the existence and influence of evil spirits is brought out in the course of the article and against this we have nothing to urge save the common-sense consideration that evil spirits, so-called, exist on both sides of life. We meet many undeveloped souls in the flesh, although we do not usually refer to them as evil spirits.

From a letter by the Editor of *LIGHT*, which follows the article, we take this extract:—

"Crude, ungainly, and repellent as it may seem in some of its aspects, it represents the return of something in the nature of man which has long been suppressed and denied, so that it was unable to evolve naturally and harmoniously. Of course, it has its dangers, like everything else of any importance, but we may remember that the coming of the motor-car found us with a legal enactment concerning four miles an hour, and a man with a red flag to go in front of the road engine, which enactment had to go, so that humanity could get on."

In the following issue of the "British Weekly" (15th inst.) Sir Arthur Conan Doyle acknowledges the appearance of the two articles as "refreshingly reasonable and moderate." He suggests that the theological position of the Spiritualist is "about midway between the Unitarian and the Evangelical, while it differs from both in claiming, rightly or wrongly, to still possess those gifts of the spirit which were called apostolic in the early Church and which bring religion into the domain of scientific experiment and proof."

Sir Arthur continues:—

"As to the use of the séance, I am in agreement, to the extent that I believe it may easily be overdone and become mere wonder-mongering. It is invaluable sometimes for convincing the earnest materialist that there really are things beyond his philosophy. It is also invaluable in some cases of bereavement. But when a man's faith has once been changed into knowledge by demonstration, I think he may leave the séance entirely alone, for the literature of the subject will teach him more than any séance is likely to do."

In a postscript to his letter Sir Arthur says: "In placing the theological position of Spiritualism as somewhere between the Unitarian and the Evangelical, I am, of course, only stating my own impression. The matter is, I admit, fluid, and it is wiser perhaps that it should remain so. I have met men of many faiths who were able without difficulty to reconcile them with the complete tenets of Spiritualism."

"THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS."

(FROM LIGHT OF MAY 25TH, 1839.)

SPIRITUALISM AND CREDULITY.—While the reaction against materialism, the assertion of spirit, is increasing rapidly in France generally; while at Salpêtrière and at Nancy, French physicians of the highest rank are getting towards the borderland where mind and matter seem to merge in one; while all this is going on among those to whom the word Spiritist may even still be an abomination, the French Spiritist himself seems gradually to be becoming less and less in touch with the intellectual march of the age and to be developing into a worshipper of Alan Kardec, who has been placed at the head of a kind of mutual admiration society.

THE best conversation is that in which the heart has a greater share than the head.—LA BRUYERE

COMMON-SENSE SPIRITUALISM.

BY STANLEY DE BRATH, M.Inst.C.E. ("V.C. Desertis").

SYMPOSIUM III.

(Continued from page 158).

C. I have found some Spiritualistic sects just as dogmatic as the Athanasian Creed, and much less theologically informed.

A. Doubtless some are, but they cannot logically continue so; facts will be too much for them.

C. How so?

A. Because facts must force them to the admission that they do not know, and cannot discover, whence the soul comes or whither it goes. How, then, can they pretend to dogmatise on such profound mysteries as the relation of the Christ to the Eternal Father, or on the modes of action of the Divine Spirit?

C. But this cuts at the root of the creeds.

A. I think not; it only cuts at the root of authoritative pronouncements as the tests of a man's religion.

C. But you must give definite teaching.

A. Certainly; but there is all the difference in the world between giving definite teaching which must progress as knowledge opens and giving unchangeable final pronouncements. It is the claim to finality which is the root of sectarianism. Is it not true that the only spiritual facts we can definitely understand are the survival of the soul and the response to prayer? Do we understand any spiritual principles beyond the principle of Justice, the principle of Purity, and the principle of Love? Are not these the very principles of action for want of which social troubles arise?

C. But we need the beliefs on which to found the practice.

A. Has our system of beliefs produced the general honesty, personal purity and desire for truth which should have flowed from them? Belief in root verities is one thing; assent to theological teaching is quite another. Did not our Lord found the whole of His teaching on the idea of the Fatherhood of God as the only form of the relation of the creature to the Creator that Man could understand? Did He not prove by visible facts that the Spirit of God can transform the lower nature? Did He not show that the life of the soul is not interrupted by the death of the body? And does anyone really claim that we, at the present day, know more of these root facts than He thought it expedient to reveal?

P. We seem to have come a long way from Modern Spiritualism.

A. Scarcely so, if you will follow my meaning. I am taking Spiritualism as the opposite of Materialism, and I can acknowledge no narrower definition. In that sense I am a Spiritualist, but in no other. If I may adopt a modern colloquialism, I have no use for trivial phenomena except as proofs of a living reality to those minds who cannot see that the spiritual principles of Righteousness and Love are the strongest of all proofs of the Spirit of God in the world. The phenomena do but supply a ground of conviction to those to whom the evidence of the senses is greater than the evidence of Reason and Conscience; and they furnish useful matter for the psychological laboratory and clinic. But let a man genuinely believe in spiritual consequences as he believes that fire burns and arsenic poisons his body, and you will have the frame of mind which makes a League of Nations possible.

S. Just so! The obstacles to the League of Nations are Fear and Distrust and Selfishness, not with regard to the Germans alone, but to each other. Minds imbued with the conviction that the duty and the privilege and the joy of humanity is to make the conditions under which the Kingdom of God can come, would find no insuperable obstacles. But I am sorry to see some Spiritualists much more inclined to argue over debatable matters than to show that Spiritualism rightly understood supplies the most vital needs of the day.

C. What do you take those needs to be?

S. Truthfulness first and foremost, then Self-discipline and clean life. Truthfulness alone would almost suffice. Let us clear our minds of cant. Can you trust a company prospectus? Are Income-tax returns honestly filled up? How many men can you trust to keep their own "time"? How many men will speak the truth when they have made some blunder? How many workmen are above "pinching" materials as they leave the works? Why, when I was at W— a regular trade went on in stuff surreptitiously taken: they had to search men in order to stop it. And as to lying for wages; there was a regular business in handing in the zinc checks of men who were taking holiday. There is a great cry for democracy, but does anyone mean to tell me that the men who "pinch" aluminium are going to be honest with public money and patronage? Look at Parliamentary questions and answers; is not every evasion looked on as a clever bit of tactics? Lying faithlessness has ruined Germany. And look at the ravages of alcoholism and syphilis, with their train of a hundred thousand cases per annum of still-birth, premature senility, and paralysis.

C. But the Church has fought against these things from the first.

S. Yes, in the abstract; but she has lessened the force of her teaching by doctrines of the efficacy of blind belief and of the remission of consequences.

CHAPLAIN. How could Spiritualism do better than the Church in fighting social evils?

SOLDIER. A man thinks very differently about truth-speaking when he knows that his best and dearest who have passed over know every lie he tells and every fraud he commits, and that every such act is really physically deforming his soul which must shortly be seen exactly as he has made it. He feels very differently about sex when he knows that its abuse will fill his mind with thoughts which will not only make him a leprous horror as soon as he enters the state where all thoughts are open, but will link him, perhaps for years, to the souls he has helped to drag down. He acts quite differently when he knows that every act of his, in trade, in social, and in professional life is making him an agent for or against the resistless power which has fore-ordained the evolution of the soul as the goal of mankind. By ignoring the psychic facts, the Church has thrown away the most powerful of all incentives to true and clean living. I should have liked to see the clergy lead the Spiritualist movement.

C. I am afraid that is impossible.

S. It is. And why? Because the Church distinguishes between "Christian truth" (by which she means her own doctrines) and other truth. Truth is one; all that is true is part of a necessarily coherent whole.

C. But we should readily admit that.

E. In theory, yes; but then why not admit the psychic facts? Of course I am not speaking of all clergy, and would not on any account hurt anyone's feelings, but we agreed at the outset of this discussion that we would state things as we see them without fear or favour. Is it not plain fact that the Church has given up the surface meaning of the Bible and the theology of the last century, and has put nothing vital in their place? She has no real convictions, or her leaders would explain the Bible as what it is—dramatic and moral, not historical or scientific—a literature, not a direct Divine message. The gospel of Respectability is dead and damned, and nothing has arisen in its place except the sects that are seeking for what they do not find in the Church.

C. You are a bit rhetorical. Can you prove what you say?

E. Yes, I think so; at least I can give you an instance. Mr. Harold Begbie is certainly a Churchman. In one of his books ("An English Family," p. 281) he says, through a typically English character, that he cannot reconcile the injunction, "Love your enemies" with the statement "Not peace, but a sword." He goes on: "I addressed myself direct to Christ. 'Tell me,' I asked Him, 'What are you doing at this hour? . . . Are you declaring to the Germans, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'; or are you crying, 'Little children love one another'?" No answer came."

A. Poor human nature! How easily we take our little part for the whole! It was only the other day that I heard a clergyman speak of the Church as "a select society in a world of sin" and quote St. Paul in support. I ventured to remind him that St. Paul, writing in the time of Nero, amid the brutalities of the arena and dissolute Roman society, was perfectly correct; whereas the European "world" consists of 90 per cent. or so of baptized persons. No real division can be made between "the Church" and "the world" nowadays.

E. Do we not too readily forget that the normal mind can cognize only three orders of reality—Matter, Force, and Mind? We invest abstract terms with fictitious reality. Matter is real, and if we assume that God has correlated our senses to external reality (and unless that is so everything is illusion), we know a good deal about Matter. Forces, as we know them, are the resultants of an infinite number of very small energies: there is no single force called Gravity or Magnetism, etc., but only the sum of a number of atomic energies. We also know Minds, incarnate and discarnate. Christ is a reality, but "Christianity," "the State," "the Church," "the World," and all such like terms are but convenient forms of speech for groups of minds which function more or less alike. "Public opinion," on which the State is based, is an average resultant of 40 million minds expressed through ten or twelve million voters, most of whom do not know what they are voting for, controlled by a Press worked by a very few individuals. So, also, "Spiritualism" is whatever we choose to make it. Let us keep to substantiated facts. (*To the Archdeacon*): Will you not give us your view of these things?

A. The scientific view that there is no one force in Nature, but only resultants of an infinite number of small energies, seems to me quite true; it is the same in the spiritual world of minds, and is borne out by Our Lord's practice. He worked on individual souls, not on masses by a creed or a policy. His Spirit enlightened individuals. He called no Councils, and Conciliar history is not convincing of direction by His Spirit. That is a bold saying for a Churchman; but while there is plenty of evidence for the direction of saints and heroes by the Holy Spirit, Councils have not been

conspicuous either for charity or for wisdom. Councils have laid down creeds and rules. Our Lord gave us neither—He give us principles. Rules inhibit thought, principles oblige us to think, for every principle requires sound judgment in its application. We are to forgive our enemies (*echthroi*)*, but to boycott the obstinate evil-doer, (Matt. xviii. 17) until he repents and amends. There is no contradiction at all, but different principles for differing occasions. I always wonder whether the people who are so willing to forgive their country's enemies are equally willing to forgive personal injuries; they seem to hate pretty thoroughly those who do not agree with them. This truth of the accessibility of the Spirit, and—if you like to put it so—the vulgarising of religion, seems to me the work that Spiritualism has to do. (*Turning to the Physician*) You, I gather, would like to see the subject left in the hands of scientists?

P. Yes, I would; I have little patience with the crudities of Spiritualists.

A. And you (*turning to the Chaplain and the Engineer*) say you would have preferred to see it led by the clergy. Well, it seems to me that in the former case the result would have been an indefinitely suspended opinion, and in the other a new "orthodoxy." *Sed Dis aliter visum*, it has been given to the democracy, and the democracy has grasped the commonsense of the matter.

E. But the Church might now direct the democracy.

A. Possibly, if the clergy do not attempt to speak with any authority other than that which comes through knowledge of the evidence. We need, as a nation, to return to Our Lord's simple verities—the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of Man, and the Life Everlasting—reinforced and explained by all that physical and meta-physical science can teach us, beginning with the objective reality of the spirit-world. There are large numbers of persons now who sincerely desire realities, and feel that Love must always be founded on perception of realities of some kind. "Mystics" really love God. Why? Because they see His wonder and beauty in the universe; they have a consistent outlook on life. And the curious thing is, as Henry James has remarked, that mystics of all religions—Christian, Jewish, Moslem, Hindu—all understand one another and take substantially the same views.

E. Yes; I once found myself in close agreement with an old Moslem, who accepted all he found in the Gospels, and all I told him of Spiritualism.

C. What do you mean by a mystic?

A. I mean one who has the insight which sees that Matter is the vehicle of Spirit, and is therefore the Garment of God. A mystic, of whatever denomination, believes Spirit to be the greatest reality that a man can know, and sees the world of Matter with a world of Energy interior to it; guided by the Cosmic Intelligence which makes the worlds, and interior to that again the Creative Love which makes Beauty.

According to this concept, God created the heavens and the earth—the material world—"in Arché," which means in Principle, as well as "in the beginning"—Matter expressing in its own degree the reflects of the Divine Ideas—Beauty, Truth and Goodness, by its form, its laws, and its utilities. In the next higher grade—Life—these three are expressed in a different manner and by higher laws. In the human, the selfsame Principle finds its expression in Truth of Intelligence, Beauty of act, and Goodness of Will. The Creative Love permeates and governs all. It only is permanent, though all its manifestations are real. Each phase of being is complete and perfect in proportion to its capacity to reflect the higher attributes. The crystal can reflect mathematical and chemical form only: the flower shows the varied forms of life: the animal can show courage, devotion, and adaptability: the human can show Intelligence and Love—the Image of God.

We know Beauty by form and colour, i.e., by and through Matter. Art is the handmaiden of Spirit. The Incarnation seems to me to mean that God made "the express Image of His Person" manifest in human flesh to bring home to us that it is in the truly human life of wisdom and love, in the work for noble ends and the exercise of spiritual strength, that God is more manifest than even in the Power that upholds the worlds. In short, that just as the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld that His glory was the splendour of grace and truth, so also every human body is the appointed field for the operation of the Divine Spirit Who will bring in the Kingdom of God by the change of hearts which will prevent, rather than cure, the evils which result from broken laws.

P. You agree, then, that it is by the physical evils that we know the nature of moral evil—that it works out to physical degeneration and death.

A. Yes; and Pain is the only means whereby those who do not love can possibly learn. If we could abolish pain we should be striking across God's own law of Consequences,

whereby He governs the world. Pain is the instrument of human evolution. Immortal spirits cannot be subject to the law of death which is the instrument of evolution in the animal world. Those who love do not need the lessons of pain. Some of us know what it is to have loved unselfishly; we have loved as children; we have loved as lovers; we have loved as parents; some of us have learned to love a cause, an art, a country; some again, love knowledge, beauty, and order—which is to love God who is the Source of each of these. To those who so love all things are added—health of mind and body and the strength that overcomes the world by raising us above its accidents. How has the race learned the distinction between Good and Evil, but by the fact that the one leads to permanent happiness and health, and the other to discord, disease and misery?

E. I wish that the race really had learned it. We are suffering for not having learned it. There are now many who have learned the chief lesson of the war; but there are also many who have not, and wish to slip back into all the old class-selfishness. We have to realize that Civilization might be defined as that state of life in which all citizens are freed from incessant struggle for mere subsistence, leaving neither time nor energy for development towards the true evolutionary goal. Till the better life is possible for all honest workers, we are not a truly civilized nation.

A. Yes, that is real Spiritualism, and we shall have to learn that, either in the light of God's love or by experience of what its rejection brings us to.

C. Do you mean Bolshevism?

A. I do. Bolshevism is only the logical outcome of Materialism in a disorderly mind, as Prussianism is that of an orderly one; the one aims at class domination by force without industry as the other aimed at national domination by force with industry. Some day we shall see that there are only two principles on which we can order our lives—Spiritualism or Materialism—the one leading to the Kingdom of God, and the other to the kingdom of the devil; the one making the body the servant of the Spirit, the other seeking to make the Spirit the servant of the body. I believe with the wise Master of Balliol, who said: "What will be the deepest, most useful, truest, and most lasting form of philosophy? Common sense idealized: or, rather, a meeting of common sense and metaphysics, well expressed by Coleridge: 'Common sense is intolerable when not based on metaphysics.' But are not metaphysics intolerable when not based on common sense?"

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PRESS.

THE VIEWS OF "JOHN O' LONDON."

The "cloud of witnesses" about which we hear so much from writers and speakers on matters psychic are prominent just now, but they are witnesses, not solely of the truth of survival, but chiefly of the vital interest the world is displaying in the question of Spiritualism. Articles on the subject are legion in the newspapers and in the magazines and reviews.

Perhaps one of the most striking expressions of opinion is that uttered by Mr. Wilfred Whitten (Editor of "John O' London's Weekly") in the issue of his magazine for May 17th, 1919. In a vigorous article entitled "How Much Religion is Left?" he indulges in some plain speaking. The following are some extracts. First he discusses the weakness of the Church. He says:—

"One thing seems certain: the Christian dogmatic answer to the mute questionings of a tortured world has become weak and faltering. It is not necessary to open a book or a newspaper to know this; it is the thought and language of the street. Implicitly, the Churches admit it; explicitly they are in a state of panic. Their alarmed watchwords are re-statement and union. But the world distrusts these 're-statements' of a faith which they had been taught was divine and built upon a rock; and as to the union of the organised Churches—well, they know what to think about that."

Next the clarion call of the New Revelation is noted.

"Now comes Spiritualism, which is something positive—not a decay of the Churches from within, though it springs from it, but a formidable attack from without. I am not concerned just here with the truth or error of Spiritualism. Whether it is truth or error, it challenges the Churches and is a symptom of their decay. When the Albert Hall can be filled on an inclement night by an invitation to join in a Spiritualistic memorial service to those who have fallen in the war; when three thousand people meet in Edinburgh and five thousand in Glasgow, and very large numbers in other towns, to hear the 'New Revelation,' we may draw that conclusion."

Spiritualists may not agree entirely with what follows, but it is a bold statement of a distinguished writer's opinion:—

"Spiritualism menaces the Churches because it takes their

* The Greek word *echthros*, used in Matt. v. 44, means a private foe, *inimicus*, not a public enemy, for which there is a quite different word—*polemios*. *Hostis* is an antagonist, *inimicus* an unfriend: *hostis* need not be *inimicus*. The English words are ambiguous, the Greek and the Latin are not.

* Benjamin Jowett. Life and Letters." Murray, 1897. Vol. ii., p. 77.

main business out of their hands. The prize, the hope, and the joy which they have offered to men is eternal life under beatific conditions, guaranteed by the death, resurrection, and promises of Christ, whose Divine power to fulfil this great promise they have always proclaimed. But in the fifty years before the war this gospel had lost much of its hold on men's minds and hearts. Still, until recently, the Churches had to contend only with desertion or doubt. To-day they are attacked. For Spiritualism—whether it has 'come to stay or not'—attacks the creed of Christendom. Idle to pretend it does not when it undertakes to prove a future life by direct human experiment."

Devout men and women, we are told, asked in the past for no other assurance than that which has been the essence of the Christian dogma—namely, that the future life was divinely promised and revealed, and was to be accepted by faith. But times have changed. To-day they do ask for this assurance:—

"Spiritualism professes to offer them a near view of the life beyond. It makes the claim to bring back the spirits of the dead to show themselves, to tell us how they live in the next world, and to talk with us about our affairs. But it brings them from a region and a state of being alien to the Churches. If these manifestations and descriptions are genuine, then the future life is something entirely different from anything the Churches picture. It turns out to be essentially a continuation of this life, brought into the natural order of things. It is therefore in no sense a support to the Christian dogma."

Lest, however, we should allow ourselves to be unduly elated by what he has written, "John O' London" administers a mild douche. He says:—

"As a protest against outworn myth, Spiritualism is a sign of the times, but as a gospel it repels the normal man. It stresses, more than ever the Churches did, the importance to our well-being of some vision of the future life. But there is no evidence that we are intended to take an absorbing interest in the next world while we inhabit this one."

To this objection a thoroughly conclusive answer can, we believe, be returned. Enough for the present that we have given a summary of the views in this significant article.

THE MYSTERY OF PATIENCE WORTH.

"The glass had slipped thrice and the sands stood mid-way through, and still the bird hopped within its wicker. I think the glass had slipped through a score of years, rightfully set at each turning, and the bird had sung through some of these and mourned through others. The hearth's arch yawned sleepily upon the black woollen table cover, where yellow fruits cut of some cloth were sewn. It may have been that I fancied this, but nevertheless it yawned."

So commences the story of Hope Trueblood,* and the passage may be held in some measure to indicate the style and quality of the book.

Hope Trueblood—the name grips the imagination, as does the story, especially in the earliest chapters, which portray the elf-like childhood of the heroine. The little one lives in a world in which she has little or no part; why, it is the business of the book to unfold. Slowly the story is unwound like a skein of thread—a skein knotted and frayed, and here and there somewhat tedious to unravel, but it is unwound at last, and then it becomes evident who has made the knots and frayed the thread of life that is Hope Trueblood's. It is long before the discovery that Stephen Willowby senior is the "villain of the piece." It will not detract from but rather enhance the interest of the story to reveal this, for there is much that seems superfluous, and apparently leads nowhere, a fact which might cause the impatient reader to lay aside the book; but to know at the outset that old Stephen Willowby is the "evil genius" is helpful and keeps the interest alive. It is just such a tale as an old person might tell of his or her life, wandering perhaps at times, and touching now and then on matters trivial and of small importance except to the teller, to whom such trivialities are outstanding memories, but who has yet, after all, a story to tell. The explanation will be sympathetically understood. The story is presumed to have been written by that quaint personality, "Patience Worth," through the Planchette, and if rather too-modern phrases, and the slang word "rotter," have somehow got mixed in with the old-world language, we find little fault, because the book in itself is a decidedly remarkable production.

E. K. G.

[It may be remarked that general Press opinions on the subject of this extraordinary book show a curious conflict of view. Some critics laud it extravagantly; others are obviously perplexed, while yet others, like Mr. Arthur Machen, in the "Evening News," describe it as "an infinite deal of nonsense."—ED.]

* "Hope Trueblood." (Skeffington & Son, Ltd., 6/9 net.)

MATERIALISATIONS, FRAUD, AND THE "HIBBERT JOURNAL."

By M.S.B. ("A Member of the Scots Bar").

In the "Hibbert Journal" for April the discussion still continues of the article by Mr. Braithwaite in an earlier issue, "Ghosts as Physical Facts," a short account of Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's book on Materialisation Phenomena. It may be remembered that there was some comment on this article in *LIGHT* of February 22nd (page 60). In answer to Mr. Rolleston who, like myself, had called Mr. Braithwaite's attention to the critique of Schrenck-Notzing's work by Miss Verrall, which appeared in the S.P.R. "Proceedings," Mr. Braithwaite now reverts to the original charge of fraud, advanced argumentatively by many critics and alluded to at length by Miss Verrall and more or less apparently accepted by Mr. Rolleston. The "hypothesis of fraud" has bulked very largely, even overwhelmingly, in all general discussion of this book, a fact readily accounted for by the astounding and bewildering nature of its contents. Perhaps some further comment and criticism may be of interest to readers of *LIGHT* who may chance to occupy a similar position to my own of honest but sympathetic inquiry, and of willingness to entertain and test any hypothesis, afraid of none, and eager for the best working solution, or the most probable or any seeming final one that suggests itself.

And first as to this "hypothesis of fraud." Mr. Braithwaite makes some very illuminating remarks on this, which, were they not at least half-true, would indeed appear cynical in the extreme.

"It is enough for the ordinary scientific man and for the ordinary Spiritualist to hear that fraud is alleged. They will at once, for different reasons, refuse to read the book."

As regards the Spiritualist I greatly doubt that, for the simple reason that no allegation is more inevitable against every book devoted to psychic phenomena; and, did he act so, he would be left with little to read, concerning physical manifestations especially. But as regards the "ordinary scientific man," general experience must approve it as entirely true; and what a comment it is on "scientific inquiry"! "Alleged" fraud merely! When a medium—as in the case of the lady now so familiar to us, through the astutely advertising "Express," as "the masked medium"—clairvoyantly reads a sealed letter handed to her by a representative of the very newspaper which is purporting to find out the reality of these phenomena, the matter is closed for the "ordinary scientific man" because a Mr. Stuart Cumberland, without the least colourable evidence, alleges fraud! One may well ask what is the good of a newspaper inquiry if its representative is so entirely incapable of concocting a crucial test, or preventing all possibility of collusion? Is there no way out for the poor medium?

Of course there is. Fraud is a question of fact, not of psychic phenomena. We need go into no legal disquisitions. The plain honest man of common-sense can decide—once the facts are placed fairly and evenly before him—as to whether alleged fraud is or is not possible, has or has not occurred. Mr. Braithwaite, while thus excepting the curious combination of ordinary scientific man and ordinary Spiritualist, argues that the S.P.R. at least should not be deterred by mere allegations of fraud. Emphatically, so do I. But I also hope that no reasonable being will ever be deterred by mere parrot cries of fraud without honest inquiry into the matter, if he is interested in it at all. Certainly he must not "refuse to read the book" on that ground. And here let me say it is most important that he should insist on the "allegator" making out his case. It is so easy to allege fraud; for many men it is the hall-mark of "science," even though that be of the sixpenny handbook order; but, in almost all cases, as in "direct voice" and "materialisation" phenomena, the challenger carefully stops there, for he has attained his end. He never condescends to explain how fraud is even practicable, or workable, or mechanically or otherwise possible in the given circumstances. Nor does he ever bring about results from his methods put into practice.

To illustrate what is meant, let me quote from a pamphlet written by the late Sir William Crookes and published in 1871. Mr. Crookes, as he then was, had conducted numerous experiments with perhaps the most famous and efficient medium of whom we have record, D. D. Home, under the strictest test conditions and the most effective he could devise; and, as is now well known, he was no mere specialist but a scientist of the widest study and experience; unusually so, indeed. These established that alteration in the weight of bodies had taken place, there had been levitation of these and of Home himself; musical instruments had played under conditions which made it impossible they could have been played by normal means; there had been "direct writing" and other phenomena familiar to Spiritualists. So far as honest, capable experiment conducted by highly efficient, trained and most skilful experimenters, can carry proof—so far, that is, as such human proof can go—these experiments must be accepted as scientifically made and conducted and the results verified. What was the result? On the publication of the results in the "Quarterly Journal of Science" there appeared in the "Quarterly Review" ("the savage and tartarly") an insolent and impertinent

article of abuse written by an anonymous "physiologist." Mr. Crookes was described as an incompetent observer, badly educated, quite unreliable! The pamphlet is Mr. Crookes's reply, both to it and to the venomous discussion which rose later in newspapers and magazines all over the country, which of course followed the "Quarterly's" lead. The storm raged both against him and Mr. (later Sir) William Huggins who had been witness of the experiments and had vouched for the facts. The whole contemptible business is a typical example of "scientific" rage and fury in so-called argument, quite as coarse and unregulated as any theological quarrel. In the later newspaper controversy a Mr. Spiller, who had once been present at a séance with Home and Mr. Crookes but never at any of the séances under test conditions, sought to disparage the experiments by misrepresentation for which ordinary men find a shorter word. *Inter alia* he inferred that if he had been under the table when the accordion was played in so mysterious and seemingly impossible a manner the "trick" would have been detected! What follows is Mr. Crookes's comment and this is what I would wish to impress on all who allege fraud:—

"If Mr. Spiller has really found out how this 'trick' is done, why does he not publish it? for he would then have solved one of the most puzzling problems ever presented to his notice—a problem still unsolved by far wiser heads than his."

Time brings its revenges. This pamphlet well repays perusal now that the great experimenter and dauntless pioneer is dead, full of years and honours. How does the "Quarterly's" unmannerly attack read now? Of what avail the spite and abuse of the anonymous physiologist? It impresses one dreadfully to-day to read this indignant and able answer, though it saddens one to note the spitefulness and littleness of men, their lack of honesty and veracity in debate, their virulence against any who upset their ridiculous deductions by plain facts; men, too, in whom openness of mind and candour are supposed to be cardinal virtues. This precious "Quarterly" Reviewer actually insinuates that the Fellowship of the Royal Society, conferred on Mr. Crookes for the discovery of "Thallium," was conferred on him "with considerable hesitation"; and he at least did not hesitate to say that in saying this he "spoke advisedly." Yet Mr. Crookes shows that this, like a dozen other statements made by this worshipper of truth, was mere mendacious spite.

Mr. Braithwaite alludes to the best known (but fanciful) foundation for a charge of fraud against Schrenck-Notzing's medium, "Eva C.," the appearance in one of the photographs in the book of the letters MIROI suggesting a newspaper, "The Miroir," and its use in manipulating a trick. I have not Schrenck-Notzing's book by me, but in a French book now before me, "Les Phenomenes dits de Materialisation," by Madame Juliette Alexandre-Bisson, who conducted these experiments with Notzing (Germany, as is well known, always managed somehow first to catch the world's ear!), and with many others before him; to whom the care in preparation and the contrivances for scientific observation and the most elaborate precautions against fraud are due, who was the *sine qua non* of the business; a like photograph appears. It is one of the least interesting; for all that is shown is a mass of the mysterious substance, like a huge tumour, resting on the head and shoulders of the medium. These letters are plainly printed on it. Compared with the photographs of faces, fingers, busts, figures, etc., profuse in other pages, where the substance has been wrought into shape and apparent life, or into wooden effigy flats, the mere photo of the substance itself hardly provokes a second glance, much less challenge. In the book the "fraudulent appearance" of many of these is freely granted; itself an argument against fraud. Here the letterpress below calls attention to the letters; though it does not mention any "Miroir." There is no appearance of any plate or picture taken from any "Miroir." And the text of the book reveals that not only must fraud be alleged and maintained against the medium, "Eva C.," but also against the authoress herself, Mme. Bisson, and presumably Schrenck-Notzing! It will be found, too, that this involves a wholesale charge of fraud and conspiracy all round against other well-known French scientists, such as Prof. Richet, Dr. Geley, etc. (A most suggestive and able scrutiny of these results by the latter has lately been put before us in the excellent article by Miss Dallas in *LIGHT* of March 29th.) In fact, the charge involves what cannot now be even entertained by any sane student. Of this very photograph which has excited distrust, or rather of the "substance" depicted in it, Mme. Bisson mentions (p. 157, Fig. 119) that "the medium takes the hand of Mme. B. and makes her touch the substance which rests on her shoulders. Mme. B. then feels her hand full of a heavy liquid, thick and disagreeable to hold." The substance, then, could not have been a folded "Miroir" surreptitiously introduced by the medium, or Mme. Bisson must have known it. But, indeed, fraud and the "Miroir" newspaper and falsehood and all the stock-in-trade of the "ordinary scientific man" are childish objections when advanced against facts so well vouched for.

Mme. Bisson gives (p. 15) an elaborate description of her arrangements and precautions against fraud, which, knowing the history and fate of all previous experiments, she

had naturally ever in her mind. It would be hard to conceive an omitted one. The medium never entered the cabinet save when put there in trance by Mme. Bisson, who kept the key of the séance-room in her pocket, and always had it searched. She herself undressed the medium completely before every séance, and dressed her again in black drawers (those of a *danseuse*) and smock-frock, fastened at the wrists and so sewn up and contrived by the ingenious Madame that "thus attired it was impossible for the medium to slip her hand within the vestments which covered her." There was "control" at every séance, by the doctors; "of her nose, ears, mouth, throat, hair, and even gynecological and rectal control!" Miss Verrall's interesting "regurgitation" suggestion was impossible. At first a relative of the medium put her in trance, but Mme. Bisson soon adopted this task also and the relative was dispensed with. Later, Mme. Bisson installed Eva in her own home so as to have her completely and continuously under her care. She coaxed and educated the medium for her work, and taught her to take an intelligent interest in the proceedings, to gratify the requirements of the doctors. She explains the séance-room and its fittings, and the cabinet and its contents, and she prints a lucid plan of it all. The medium held her hands outside the curtains of the cabinet, or at other times Mme. Bisson kept hold of them. There was a red electric lamp within the cabinet as well as three cameras—one at each side, and one overhead. The séance-room was abundantly supplied with cameras, ordinary and stereoscopic, and with two magnesium light apparatus to catch every aspect.

All this was not attained at once, but only after months of effort and contrivance, the result of careful thought and experience.

(To be Continued.)

THE L.S.A. MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND.

The L.S.A. Council and *LIGHT* gratefully acknowledge the following donations received since those already recorded:—

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Mrs. Boustead (per Sir Arthur Conan Doyle) ...	5	0	0
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"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND, 1919.

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

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. Arthur Jacob ...	1	11	0
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L.S.A. SOCIAL MEETING.

We would call our readers' attention to the fact that Mr. W. J. Vaustone's lecture at 5 p.m. next Thursday, the 29th inst., will be followed at 7 by the fifth and last Social Meeting of the Session, when, after refreshments and a brief selection of music, an address will be given by Mr. Percy R. Street on "Spiritualism and the Need of the Moment."

THE Queen has accepted a copy of "Summer Songs Among the Birds," by Miss Elise Emmons.

WE understand that the announcement in a weekly newspaper that Sir Oliver Lodge is about to issue a new book dealing with psychic matters is without foundation.

SIR OLIVER LODGE has an excellent article in the "Weekly Dispatch" of Sunday last. We shall have more to say concerning it in our next issue.

THE "Medium in the Mask" gave her "first séance" at the Victoria Hall, Criterion Restaurant, on Monday afternoon, when members of the Press were invited. We reserve our impressions until next week.

"REVIEW OF REVIEWS."—The May number of the "Review of Reviews" gives an excellent summary of the leading topics and events of the month. Sir Harry Brittain contributes an article urging the claims of the Middle Classes' Union.

BOY SPIRIT'S SONG.—The Rev. E. R. Powell, minister at the Merthyr Temple, has given an account of happenings at a séance at a private house at Ferndale, at which he was present. In the presence of six persons, he said, the little son of the house, who died some time ago, "materialised," and floated from the cabinet. By way of a test the father asked the apparition to sing, and presently, says Mr. Powell, a child's voice was heard singing a little melody the boy had sung just before his death, and which the parents alone knew to be the last words he had uttered.—"Weekly Dispatch."

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, Mr. Robert King, "The Physical Organs of Psychical Perception." June 1st, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke-place, W.2.—At 11 a.m., Mr. Ernest Hunt; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. E. W. Beard. Wednesday, 28th, at 7.30 p.m., Mrs. Mary Gordon.

Camberwell.—Windsor-road, Denmark Hill. — 11, Mrs. Alice Harper of Australia; 6.30, Mr. Nickels of Luton.

Croydon.—117b, High-street.—11 a.m., Mr. Brown; 6.30, Miss Lakeman.

Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall. — 11 a.m., circle; 6 p.m., Mrs. M. Crowder, address and clairvoyance.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—7, Mrs. Podmore. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Brown.

Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street. — 6.30, Mrs. A. Boddington.

Walthamstow.—312, Hoe-street.—7 p.m., Mrs. Fielder, address and clairvoyance.

Holloway.—Grovevale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station). —11.15, Mrs. Brookman; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. Richd. Boddington. Wednesday, 28th, at 8, Mrs. A. Jamrach.

Battersea.—45, St John's Hill, Clapham Junction.—11.15, circle; 6.30, Mrs. Orlowski. 29th, 8.15, Mr. and Mrs. Brownjohn.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead. — 7 p.m., Mr. Wright. Wednesday, 28th, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Bloodworth. Addresses and clairvoyance.

Brighton.—Windsor Hall, Windsor-street. — Mr. A. Punter of Luton, addresses and descriptions: 11.15, Windsor Hall; 7, Athenæum Hall; 3, Lyceum. Monday, 8, healing circle. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mr. Gurd.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—11.30 and 7 p.m., addresses and clairvoyance, Mr. A. Maskell, dedication of shrine to arisen ones at evening meeting. Monday, 7.45, psychic readings, Mr. Maskell. Thursday, 7.45, inquirers' questions and clairvoyance. A hearty welcome at all meetings. Lyceum every Sunday at 3 p.m.

HUSK FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwell, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges with thanks the following contributions:—Kaye, £1 ls.; A Friend, £1.

As will be seen by our advertisement columns, Mr. W. S. Hendry is directing a system of health culture by nature-cure and psycho-therapeutic methods at the Food Reform Guest House, Nutfield-road, Redhill (Miss Bardsley, proprietress).

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY (London).—A meeting was held at 13a, Baker-street, W., on the 9th inst., at which the reconstruction of the society was agreed upon, and a sub-committee (consisting of Dr. Abraham Wallace, Dr. Mansfield Robinson, LL.D., and Mr. Gambier Bolton) was appointed to arrange for suitable headquarters and other details.

OPENING OF A NEW CHURCH.—The Society known as the Church of the Spirit, which for twenty-five years has met in the Masonic Hall, Camberwell, has recently taken over, on a three years' agreement, the People's Church in Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, and the opening service in the new building, which will seat about two hundred and forty persons, was held on the 16th inst., Mr. E. W. Beard occupying the chair. Mr. Beard having declared the church open, addresses followed from Mr. James Coates and Mrs. Wesley Adams, the latter of whom also gave a number of clairvoyant descriptions, all of which were recognised. Mrs. A. de Beaurepaire sang two fine solos. Mr. G. T. Brown, as president of the Society, thanked the chairman, the speakers, and all who had contributed to make the opening a success, and after a few kindly words from Mr. Osborn, the owner of the church, the service closed. The attendance was a large one, and all present were delighted with the new building as a real place of worship for Spiritualists.

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