

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.

In the matter of deciding on the genuineness or otherwise of mediumistic manifestations, experience has made us cautious. We have known quite honest mediums denounced as rogues, in circumstances when it really looked as if the charges were well substantiated. But further investigation showed that the accusers had been misled by circumstances which appeared suspicious, but were really the result of accident or misdirection in the exercise of perfectly genuine powers. On the other hand, we once assisted in the exposure of a bare-faced fraud. The charges of trickery were unanswerable, or so we thought until the incursion into the matter of a number of zealous, but utterly obstinate, persons, who defended the "medium" and his "phenomena." They held doggedly by the idea that the manifestations were genuine, chiefly on the ground that they had been apparently genuine on previous occasions. But the facts were so starkly incapable of being explained away, that the excuses offered were simply absurd.

* * * *

When it became apparent that the idea of fraud in the case was unescapable, the defenders fell back on the convenient theory that the medium at the time of his trickery was impelled to it by a "wicked spirit." It was their "last ditch," and we left them in it. It is pretty clear that those who are given to the idea of "wicked spirits" as an explanation of wrong doing have little acquaintance with the psychology of the human mind. It is certainly evident, too, that if this theory were generally admitted the whole machinery of human justice would speedily be wrecked. It seems to us a point of reason that this supposed interference of one order of existence with another would not be permitted in the Divine economy, and some of our wiser instructors in spirit life have often pointed out the fallacy involved in the idea that diabolical agencies are permitted to run riot in the human world. Doubtless there are interactions of thoughts and influences from each side of the veil, stimulating, according to their kind, the good and evil in each of us, but to be tempted to cheat, for example, a man must have cheating propensities to begin with. These "devil" theories are best combated by that robust common sense which looks for reasonable interpretations of the problems of a life that is everywhere under intelligent and intelligible law and government.

* * * *

Mr. B. M. Godsall (San Diego, Cal.) writes:—

The suggestion that LIGHT should provide an article on social questions starts a line of thought pointing to the conclusion at which you seem to have arrived already. One sees that it is not well to mix the teachings of principles,

which are true for everybody, with the attempted application of them to social problems about the terms of which we are by no means agreed. Spiritualism itself, while insisting that the little questions of everyday life be settled in accordance with the highest precepts, shrinks from presenting us with ready-made conclusions—it will not save us the necessity of thinking things out. The wisdom of this becomes apparent when we reflect that each living problem is alone of its kind, therefore a revealed solution would be likely to cause error and confusion, through being applied to other problems besides the one intended. Thinking in this way has removed, for me, a difficulty regarding the life of Jesus, and I venture to speak of it because I have found that one's own difficulties are just those that are felt by the multitude, though not felt apparently by learned expositors. When told to admire, and to try and imitate, the most perfect life ever lived upon earth—the life of Jesus—I have felt "How can that be called perfect which in extent is so very imperfect, of which all that has been handed down to us forms little more than the barest sketch of a life, leaving out all of life's most vexatious problems—social, sexual, and economical? Can a fragment, however beautiful, be called perfect?"

* * * *

Mr. Godsall's letter is timely, and we are glad to have his confirmation of our own view that a great movement can only move safely along the lines of great principles, for these comprehend the smaller movements of thought which are always complicated with questions of doctrine, opinion and policy. Mr. Godsall continues:—

I now seem to see that inasmuch as Jesus did not live for His generation alone, but for ours also, we must bear in mind that perfect solutions of the problems of those days, such as would have been in harmony with the feeling of that age, might be imperfect solutions to-day, and consequently stumbling-blocks, tending to discredit the ever-true principles that He taught. Thus it seems that we should look to a world-teacher for an exposition of principles, which remain true for all time, rather than for an example, however perfect, of their practical application to worldly affairs, because that works out a little differently in every instance: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." (Hebrews vi., i.). In short, we may receive principles, but can merely imitate their application, and imitation is always in error because no two cases are exactly alike.

A BUREAU FOR INQUIRERS.

To meet the present great demand for information on matters relating to Spiritualism, there has been established in connection with the London Spiritualist Alliance an Inquiry Bureau, of which Mr. Percy R. Street has kindly consented to take charge as Honorary Director. Mr. Street attends at the offices of the Alliance, 6, Queen Square, on Tuesday afternoons from three to four, and on Friday evenings from six to eight, to meet inquirers and give them information and advice.

BETTER be on the side of the angels with an empty pocket and a dinner of herbs than on the side of the monkeys with your wallet bursting with Treasury Notes.—JAMES COATES.

MINGLED SOCIETY IN THE HEREAFTER.—How could the chiefest of the saints make progress, where there was no grief to claim their active sympathy, no guilt to evoke their spiritual care, no need to claim their self-sacrifice, and no trials to discipline them into even higher moods? Or how could the sinful, excluded from every influence of personal goodness, rise out of the atmosphere of evil around him? Such a conception of the divine education of man in the life to come is wholly at variance with God's education of men in the present. If we would learn the laws of God in that life, we can do so most surely by acquainting ourselves with God's laws in this. For what is spiritually true here cannot be false there. "The divine education of man is carried on by the mingling of souls here, and there appears to be no ground for the belief or conclusion that it will be otherwise in the life to come.—DR. CHARLES.

HUMAN SURVIVAL AND "THE HIBBERT JOURNAL."

By M. R. CRAIG.

Sir Oliver Lodge, in the July number of the "Hibbert," makes a trenchant reply to Mr. Robertson's somewhat querulous criticism of his pioneer article in the January number, the well-known "Ether, Matter and the Soul."

The "Hibbert" is certainly up-to-date in appreciation of the now almost universal interest in survival and what we may conveniently term psychism. In this number Mr. C. D. Broad, who last October pursued an inquiry into how far survival was to be desired, turns to the subject once more with a discussion of "the antecedent probability" of it. He recognises that "empirical investigation by way of psychical research seems the only method left for those who are not prepared to base their beliefs on the authority of revealed religion or of Professor Ray Lankester." (How much of revealed religion is not itself psychical research?) But here his inquiry is preliminary, not psychical.

As before, Mr. Broad seems inclined to make it "six of one side and half-a-dozen of the other" so far as any rational or practical conclusion can be reached. But, on the whole, since mind does *not* seem to be completely dependent on the body and since an "immaterial factor" (Sir Oliver Lodge, in his reply, makes capital play of our ambiguous use of this vague adjective!) seems necessary and to fit in with the facts, "the scientific view either involves the sheer miracle of the creation of a new kind of substance by matter alone, or it has to be supplemented by a hypothesis which makes survival perfectly possible."

Even then Mr. Broad is not inclined to go so far as to say it is probable. "We may at least hazard the guess that so far as we can see it is only with a few men and under exceptionally favourable circumstances that all these conditions are likely to be fulfilled." Alas! poor Yorick! If to Mr. Broad's mind this is really the best his hazard and guess-work can do, he is Dubiety incarnate. Charles Lamb in a famous essay once made the remark that "the twilight of dubiety never falls upon a Scotsman." Yet this article hails from the "University of St. Andrew's"! Presumably Mr. Broad is an exile!

Perhaps one is most inclined to disagree with him *in toto* in his estimate (in gauging probability) of the value of such facts as the ubiquity and universality of our intuitive belief in survival in all times and climes and races. It is true this does not prove the belief, but on the other hand, how does Mr. Broad explain the origin and existence of the universal belief? If it is not warranted by observation and induction or deduction, is it not thereby all the more wonderful and noteworthy? And, in fact, does not our later knowledge and more careful observation go more and more to strengthen it? It is not easy to accord any value to Mr. Broad's assertion that this instinctive belief is merely "an easily explicable limit to our powers of imagination." He would make it a mere deduction from our continuity, our waking always each morning—"a sole and sufficient explanation" one would think too smashingly contradicted by the fact that the dead do *not* wake and are apparently done with, to serve as basis of belief in survival. More, is not the comforting and comfortable sort of bodily resurrection this would imply, simply *not* the instinctive belief in survival universally expressed as spiritual or "of the shades"? The Greek believed in it, and did not like it at all: "better the meanest, landless man on earth than rule over all the shades that are below." Had he thought as Mr. Broad thinks of survival, Homer could not have written that, or put these words into the mouth of a Greek hero. Belief in survival, it seems to us, was emphatically no "easily explicable limit" to Greek imaginations, or any limit at all, one thinks, to that of any people.

This disagreement with our writer makes itself evident again, if in a less degree, with what he has to say as to the value of a Moral Law as supporting belief in survival:—

"Ethical arguments may therefore simply be dismissed as irrelevant wherever they occur."

There is, of course, much point in what Mr. Broad says in support of this. We cannot infer survival as a necessary consequence of ethical conditions. But, if a Moral Law, the existence of which struck Kant with awe, does not imply survival, the two intuitions or "instinctive beliefs" are so inter-related as to support each other powerfully. And here, again, how explain at all a Moral Law on materialistic or even utilitarian grounds?

Mr. Broad's article, however, finds a fit and curious supplement in the article which immediately follows it in the magazine, "Isaac Taylor's Physical Theory of Another Life," by Miss Marker. Taylor was an East Anglian artist and writer of the early nineteenth century; and Miss Marker's article is largely composed of extracts from the somewhat original thesis of Taylor, which is, that a study of our life now will discover the germs of the life to be, and its likely type.

According to Taylor, the germs of another life are not to be looked for in the "animal organisation" but "among the moral sentiments and the intellectual faculties." All that can be said "in illustration of the theorem of the immortality of man as foreshown by his moral sense, by his

expectation of retribution, by his aspirations after a better existence, by the vast compass of his faculties and by his instinctive horror of annihilation"—all these "can be condensed into a single proposition"—"that the idea or the expectation of another life is a constant element in human nature, or an original article in the physiology of man."

"Nothing can be more absurd than the supposition that any efforts of the mind, how strenuous soever, can enable it to conceive, even in the faintest manner, of a mode of existence essentially and totally unlike our actual mode of life; for this we are to imagine ourselves to be endowed with a real creative faculty. But the task we now undertake, although arduous, is altogether of another sort; inasmuch as it is proposed to specify the conditions of a mode of existence, differing from the present *as little as may be* [the italics are Miss Marker's], and yet in a manner that shall secure the highest advantages. On a line of conjecture like this, sobriety may be mistress of our course, nor need we set a single step without a sufficient reason for the direction we take."

Taylor's work is remarkable as having been written in 1836, when the grip of the Church was so much stronger than now, and when there was, as in this author himself, little or no knowledge of things psychical as we understand them, when survival could only be thought of (in his own words) "with a sort of incredulous apprehension as a mysterious article of our Christian faith." It is remarkable that he *does* regard the next life as a *natural* transition from this one, a next step onward merely, so that his inquiry leads him to almost exactly the same conclusions as the latest psychical experiments in collecting information "from the other side." This is the more noteworthy because, in his day, the Church and almost every thinker on these subjects regarded a next world as a final stage and either (in Carlyle's scornful words), as a "celestial lubberland," or a painfully punitive process, or a hell of sulphur and smoke. The author's notion is that "we are quite disappointed that the change in the transition is so small," "that it has not made us more wise or virtuous," and that, in short, the more we change the more we are the same person.

This Isaac Taylor appears, in fact, to have been almost the prophet of the revelations of the future life familiar to us in recent books purporting to be descriptions of the next world as it actually appears to its residents, the survivors of our human life.

But it must not be forgotten that this argument is double-edged. Perhaps sceptical opponents will find in it support for their contention that in these last a merely sub-conscious faculty is at work in ourselves.

THE DELPHIC CLUB.

At a meeting held on Wednesday, the 9th inst., at the rooms of the Delphic Club, 22a, Regent-street, formerly occupied by the "International Club (for Psychical Research)," COLONEL ROSKELL described to a sympathetic audience the measures he had taken to secure the premises and to build a newer and better enterprise on the ruins of the old. It was clear from his statement that he had faced a very difficult and involved position in the work of salving what was necessary to form a new club, and it certainly seemed that he is to be complimented on the way he handled the situation, and the very engaging and straightforward avowal of his personal attitude in the matter. There was some little discussion, but nothing of a hostile or "criticising" tone was uttered. On the contrary, there seemed to be a very cordial recognition of the courage and public spirit in which the Colonel had stepped into the breach.

One member of the audience, desirous to be helpful in popularising the venture, suggested that the "occult" character of the club should not be made too obtrusive. But this proposal, which sounded more provocative than it was meant to be, was not well received. Indeed, it gave occasion for a harangue from a militant lady on the question of being ashamed of one's faith, and so forth. Of course it is a fine point whether a social club with an "occult" note is not better than an "occult" club the social element in which is a less important feature. A club usually acquires its distinctive character and atmosphere by a process of "natural selection" rather than by bearing a distinctive label. Perhaps Colonel Roskell recognised this when he gave it the delicately suggestive title of the "Delphic" to replace a name not quite so happy in its significance.

CAPTAIN STEELE, a member of the old club, congratulated Colonel Roskell on his manly and straightforward statement. He was glad to see that the new venture was to be more in the nature of a fresh club than a mere revival of the old one, and warmly approved the measures which had been taken by Colonel Roskell. There is certainly verge and room enough for the enterprise, and we wish it all success.

THE FINANCIAL QUESTION: DONATIONS.

To the donations of £10 each from the Rev. Stanley Gordon, Lord and Lady Molesworth, Mr. Charlton T. Spicer and Mrs. T. R. Marshall, we add the following with grateful acknowledgments:—

Mr. T. Sowerby (Cleethorpes), £10.

THE UNCEASING REVELATION.

SOME REFLECTIONS AND A WARNING.

By B. M. GODSAL (San Diego, Cal.).

In mediumship the degree of internal evidence afforded by the intelligence displayed seems to vary inversely as the external evidence through phenomena apart from the medium. The effort to produce physical, or direct, action appears to leave the spirits with little strength for intelligent communication; or more likely, the condition imposed upon the spirit who would in any degree reclothe himself in matter—perhaps a condition of steady concentration, of will power—is such as to render the delivery of messages exceedingly difficult.

This fact seems to throw a light upon the distinction made, in the Old Testament, between "prophets" and those who possessed familiar spirits; the former spoke intelligently, under entrancement, with their own voice; the latter were mediums for the direct voice or for materialisation, through whom little of value could be received. That this was so is evidenced by the story of the Witch of Endor to whom Saul said, "I pray thee divine unto me by the familiar spirits, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee. . . ." Again, in Isaiah viii. 19, the inefficiency of the direct spirit voice seems to be referred to when the prophet asks if a people should "Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto the wizards, that chirp and that mutter"—rather than seek unto their God.

The prophets—the "Men of God"—seem never to have received their messages by the direct voice. They spoke in a state of ecstasy, or trance, which was sometimes brought on by means of music, in a manner familiar to us to-day; for instance, 2 Kings iii. 15, Elisha, when consulted, says, "Now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him." Moreover, a true prophet was expected on occasion to work wonders by the power of God; but the Jewish law seems to have forbidden, under penalty of death, all dealings with spirits other than "God," or His angelic messengers. As a natural result of this official persecution of those who acknowledged communion with departed mortals, and of those through whom spirits could materialise, we find existing, in the time of Jesus, the sect of the Sadducees, who denied all resurrection and personal immortality whatever—a sect not yet extinct, and not yet reconciled to the facts of Spiritualism. But the "prophets of the Lord," speaking under impression, were by no means infallible, as we see in I Kings xx., where we read that about four hundred of them were deceived by a lying spirit put into their mouths by the Lord to persuade Ahab to his death; as related by Micah, who shook off the evil influence which at first affected him also, and speaking truly "in the name of the Lord" reversed the prophecies of the lying spirit—though without annulling their misleading effect.

At a time when it was believed that a true prophet received his message direct from God it was highly important to be able to distinguish between "true prophets" and those who received their messages from other spirits. In early Jewish history the test was the ability to forecast coming events; thus we read in Deut. xviii. 20, 22, "But the prophet which shall speak a word presumptuously in my name . . . that same prophet shall die"; which is further defined, "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass . . . the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously"—this undoubtedly would encourage ambiguity and equivocation when dealing with the future. The test applied by the early Christians, according to St. Paul, was the sacred name of Jesus; thus we read, "No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." But evidently this did not work satisfactorily for very long, because we soon find the Church attempting to curb its prophets by declaring that messages delivered when in a state of ecstasy were of the devil, and that only false prophets accepted gifts. To quote the "Encyclopædia Britannica," "both canons were innovations designed to strike a fatal blow at prophecy . . . the bishops not being quite prepared to declare boldly that the Church had no further need of prophets"—for any prophets at all would be a disturbing element in a Church that was developing in external organisation, and becoming established, formal, and secular. Hence we find that in the second century it was ruled that God had spoken once for all through the early prophets and the apostles, and that He had no further revelation to make. This ruling, which is in force to-day, makes any message that is at all new, to that extent untrue and the bearer of it a heretic. Thus we have a Church from which all fresh revelation and inspiration and intercourse with the spirit world are cut off, and the worship of a dead letter is upheld as the completed and perfect work of God!

Spiritualism, on the contrary, while its fabric is built up of facts proved scientifically, receives its doctrine from a never-ceasing flow of revelation. Though it is true, no doubt, that, as A. J. Davis says, "Divine principles can scarcely descend into the strictly human sphere without misapprehension"—still this was not less true yesterday than it is to-day. Moreover, it is not less true of material principles than it is of spiritual principles, and it would be as

reasonable for us to rest upon the science of former ages as it is to accept the spiritual interpretation of prophets and apostles as complete and final for all time.

Our cause is steadily forging ahead; let us see that it does not follow in the wake of the original—the true—Christianity, and become de-spiritualised in the process of becoming popular and respectable—and even fashionable. Let us hope that it will never be tempted to quench the spirit, by muzzling its prophets, in order to establish an orthodoxy. We may be sure that there is no shibboleth by which true prophets can be outwardly recognised, because if there were it would work to our detriment by causing us to rest our faith upon external tests, and thus draw us back into the old rut of "believe or be damned." The same God who speaks by the mouths of his holy but not perfect prophets, speaks also within the heart of each of us, and not until the two voices are in accord can we know that the prophet bears what, for us at any rate, is a true message.

PROFESSOR JACKS AND THE TELEPATHIC THEORY.

Writing from France, C. E. B. (Col.) refers to the recent address by Professor Jacks to the Religious Thought Society, and remarks:—

Professor Jacks solves the question as to how the mental forms of psychical phenomena are produced entirely to his own satisfaction, and apparently to the entire satisfaction of the Dean of St. Paul's:—

"It only requires a 'sufficient extension of the hypothesis of telepathy.'" Yet no one should know better than Professor Jacks that the word "telepathy" was coined by Frederic Myers, who at the same time gave its definition. In effect, it is the transference from the mind of an active agent to the mind of a passive recipient of a conscious idea, thought, or mental picture by none of the recognised mechanical means of thought conveyance.

For "telepathy," as thus defined, there does exist a considerable amount of experimental evidence, although, no doubt, an out-and-out Rationalist, such as Professor Ray Lankester, would consider Professor Jacks also to be "a fair sample of a credulous person" for believing even so far in telepathy.

Professor Jacks' "sufficient extension of telepathy," appears to involve the power on the part of a medium to become aware of a latent, or sub-conscious, thought in the mind of another, and not only to extract appropriate information from this mind but even from the mind of a person not present and unknown to the medium, and often to the sitter. To call this an "extension" of telepathy is amusing, but a trifle disingenuous, in view of the fact that there exists no experimental evidence whatever for the existence of such a faculty.

The chain of reasoning would seem to be somewhat as follows: If selective thought-reading were a fact, the medium could, by the exercise of that faculty, obtain the appropriate information, therefore selective thought-reading must exist as a faculty. In reality, I think the reasoning is a little different and amounts to this: If a medium had the power to extract exactly the information required from the mind of any person or persons on earth who happen to possess it, it would explain how the information is obtained. I am afraid to concede it as possible that a discarnate intelligence can communicate with any living person, therefore I assume that the medium does obtain his information by a process of selective thought-reading. The cases where the information is not possessed by anybody on earth are necessarily very rare, and may be ignored on the score of insufficient evidence.

Professor Jacks attributes a great deal to those attitudes of mind that he calls "expectancy" and the "wish to believe." As regards "expectancy," I hardly remember a case where any spontaneous apparition has appeared to a person in a state of "expectancy." Professor Jacks himself only thinks that he was "on the point" of seeing a ghost in a haunted house; as a matter of fact he saw nothing more mysterious than a ray of moonlight, but his description of the "nervous tension" of his mind clearly shows that he is temperamentally unsuited to investigate psychical phenomena. As regards the "wish to believe," if it is prompted by a deep sense of the vital importance of the matter, it is at least as likely to evoke a severe standard of criticism as the detached, superior attitude of mind of a professor whose criticism is to some extent biased by the fear of being thought a credulous fool.

The problems raised by modern psychical research can, it appears to me, alone be solved in the light of ancient alchemical theory, and it is owing to this truth having been so little recognised during recent times that the investigations of such associations, as, for instance, that of the Society for Psychical Research, have made such little headway in arriving at definite conclusions in connection with the laws of nature and supernature, of which their records contain the evidence.—RALPH SHIRLEY in the "Occult Review."

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THE SAYINGS OF "PHILEMON."

"Letters from the Other Side"* is one of the few books of automatic or inspirational communications to which we are able to extend a welcome. The identity of the author, or recipient of the messages, is not disclosed, but to those who are in the secret it offers an additional warrant for the book. The Rev. Dr. Cobb, in a Foreword to the volume, provides some instructive reflections on the general principles of psychic communications, so-called. Dr. Cobb's reasoning is always helpful to those who can follow out on philosophical lines the great idea of the continuity of Mind and its independence of purely physical limitations, an idea that seems to take up, enfold and illuminate the narrower question of psychic proofs and demonstrations.

The Preface, by Mr. Henry Thibault, describes the circumstances in which the communications were received. We gather that the medium or "scribe" had no acquaintance with the communicating spirit in this life, knowing his name only. She received the messages apparently by mind contact, registering ideas "which were flashed with extraordinary vividness and rapidity through her brain, one part of which seemed to receive the thought, while the other almost automatically furnished the word clothing." Yet more often than not this latter "was in form curiously similar to that used by the communicating spirit when on earth." It is, of course, a commonplace with instructed students of psychic communications that, for the most part, messages from "the other side" are expressed in language furnished by the minds of the experimenters here. The exceptions are special cases in which the communicators are able to reproduce more or less perfectly the particular language they spoke on earth, and their own individual phrases and forms of expression. These are invaluable as proofs, but like the Shakespeare problem, the personal question must take a subordinate place beside the fact of the quality and importance of the ideas presented. Not that we are concerned in this particular instance with "flashing thoughts from brooding depths of genius," but rather with much that appeals to us as being sensible, suggestive and enlightening.

"Philemon," the pseudonym adopted by the communicator, underwent a severe ordeal of questions from those in the group to which he addressed himself. We can only deal with a few of these, but they are a sufficient evidence of his quality of mind.

Here are some significant remarks in reply to a question as to "Philemon's" capacity for communicating with earth:—

Where I have lived in the body, spoken, thought and prayed, I have, in common with all living beings, left *images*, pictures, that may be galvanised into the semblance of life when I direct my thought or attention to the old persons and places. But much that is regarded as coming from me is merely the cast-off, effete resultant of past activities, only slightly permeated with my living, vital ascended self. Some of the communications received are largely due to past associations much clogged and hampered by self-directed thoughts. When writing here [i.e., with this particular medium] this objection does not hold good to anything like the same extent. *The quality is purer.*

There is a whole volume of explanation in those few sentences when applied to some of our perplexities in the matter of spirit communications.

Asked about Sir Oliver Lodge's book, "Raymond," "Philemon" replied:—

I only know of Lodge's book what I get from you and others, but I know of the boys and men who slept *here* and

in their dreams enjoyed banquets (they had starved on earth); and, remember, these dreams are often transmitted by mediums as well as the waking experiences of those who are here.

Elsewhere, dealing with the same subject, "Philemon" says:—

A man living in a submarine would not need submarine accessories on dry land unless his mind had become warped through long living under water. . . . The cigarettes and whisky-and-soda were *dreams*, realistic dreams. The medium was not subtle enough to be able to transmit Raymond's statements so as to be understood. In despair Raymond had to let it pass. But he does not stop at the ethereal whisky-and-soda and cigarettes, and those who have objected to the book have never given themselves the trouble to go beyond the, to them, objectionable materialism of the spiritual world. These objectors "spiritualise" matter to such an extent that they live in a universe as vague and formless as a mirage.

On this subject of ministering to the reactionary physical cravings of a newly-arrived spirit, as in the instance of the whisky-and-soda, related by Raymond, the communicator says that he personally, while on earth would never have allowed these artificial restoratives.

But those who would administer either on earth need not kick against their use in the next stage on the grounds of incongruity. That is all artificial spirituality to the extent to which it is not a subconscious condemnation of such practices *anywhere*. I should prefer to keep the sufferer semi-conscious until the spiritual faculties were sufficiently powerful to lift the soul into the condition where these pseudo-physical cravings would atrophy and fall away of themselves. Music is one of the safest and surest means to that end. Love, true brotherly loving sympathy, in addition, would be necessary in order to feed the starved emotional nature, the main cause of all these cravings.

Doubtless the starved emotional nature of thousands on earth is the real cause of many unnatural cravings, unsparingly condemned by moralists who do little or nothing to create a better condition. Censure is cheap and confers on the critic a pleasant sense of moral superiority — it is a kind of mental "dope," rather inferior, perhaps, to whisky, morphia and cigarettes.

Let us cite in conclusion some observations of "Philemon" on Fate or Destiny, always a subject of interest to those who think a little more deeply than the ordinary:—

Persons of an average order of intelligence, strict in the observance of pre-determined actions, go straight to their fate. For them a bomb or a fishbone, a shipwreck or a shoe-lace, is their fate, the instrument of their exit from earth. Those of a more elastic type of nature, open to impressions from their fellows or ourselves, can be saved from fateful-fatal circumstances when those in charge of them see the danger and would turn them aside from an impending "fate." These are the wise men who "rule their stars"; the former are the fools who obey.

It is not decreed in the sense you imply that a certain expedition shall be the last—that the hour of exit from life is fixed; that sudden death was a fate one might have avoided, and a destiny changed. But that does not say that a Higher Power is not over-ruling and directing all the time.

This strikes us as being good sense, wherever it comes from. It is better than "moony rhapsodies" which may mean something or nothing. It is the product of a clear state of consciousness, and that is all we have much use for in this subject, which has too long been the victim of confused thinking, most of all on the part of those who set up as critics or exponents on the basis of a little knowledge or none at all. The book, small as it is, contains much else of interest and value to those who not only read but reflect on what they have read.

THE QUEEN'S HALL MEETINGS: £100 FOR THE L.S.A.

The London Spiritualist Alliance and LIGHT have gratefully to acknowledge the receipt of a cheque for £100 from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the proceeds of his lectures at Queen's Hall, after payment of expenses. The amount will be placed to a Special Fund to be expended under his direction. Sir Arthur is thus doubly serving the movement, and earning the gratitude and appreciation of all its adherents and well wishers.

THE Editor is at present away on holiday. Letters requiring his personal attention will be dealt with on his return.

* J. M. Watkins, 5s. net.

SPIRIT INTELLIGENCE AND THE SUBLIMINAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

THE "SUBCONSCIOUS" THEORY.

BY W. H. EVANS.

The theory of the subconscious or "subliminal self" has been seized upon by some writers and used to discredit the action of discarnate spirits in the production of psychic phenomena. The persistence with which some people hail any and every theory as an explanation of psychic happenings, rather than admit spirit agency, indicates the strength both of their prejudices and of traditional ideas relative to the state of our friends just over the way. Spirit is often the last thing they will give in to, and any theory which can account for a part of psychic phenomena is welcomed, more it would seem at times because it crowds out the spirits than because it gives a satisfactory explanation.

The number of such theories is almost legion, for nearly every student in the early days of his investigation theorises, and quaintly amusing are some of the ideas which have been put forward. These theories have passed successively into oblivion, with the exception of one or two which, when first promulgated, led some to think that spirit-activity was not needed, but are now seen to be complementary to the spirit hypothesis. Thus telepathy and the subliminal consciousness, when properly understood, form natural corollaries to the activity of our spirit friends.

It is well to bear in mind that the subliminal consciousness is not different in kind from the ordinary waking consciousness, but is one with it, albeit operating under different conditions, and the line of demarcation between the two aspects varies with every individual. The subliminal region of a medium's consciousness is considered to be larger and more productive in certain directions than that of people who are not mediumistic. That may be true, but in the absence of any means of measuring this elusive part of ourselves, it is not wise to dogmatise. But by meditation one may become aware of this region and may even learn to influence its activities, and sometimes win a tract of it and bring it permanently into a condition of everyday awareness. The normal consciousness looks outwards, but it is possible for it to look inward, and (shall I say?) downward into the "abysmal depths of personality." Some people are aware of this inner vision daily and are influenced by it even as much as by their outward environment.

THE SUBLIMINAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

But what really is this subliminal consciousness? Is it not a name for that which underlies all phenomena—another way of expressing the reality of which this phenomenal existence is an expression? Is not our individual consciousness, with all its sense of separateness from and yet of union with all other things, a focussing point of that underlying reality? It seems to me that if we are to postulate a subliminal region to our human consciousness we must extend the postulate to include all life. For if we accept the statement that we are all sub-consciously in union one with another, and that there is no real separation, it necessarily implies a union with all that is. In our best moments we are aware of it, and the ecstatic state of the mystic is but a more vivid realisation of union with God, or with what may be termed the subliminal consciousness of the universe. The thought is rich in its suggestiveness; it touches so many aspects of life, and contains such great promise.

INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND MASS CONSCIOUSNESS.

By suggestion, which F. W. H. Myers defined as "a successful appeal to the sub-conscious self," it is possible to bring about results which to the ignorant seem miraculous. There is no difference between the action of Jesus in bidding a sick man to arise, and that of the modern healer using the power of suggestion. Both appeal to the sub-conscious self of the patient, and that is probably the true self, or at least that part of us which is in closest contact with the source of all life. But it implies other things equally suggestive—that the sub-conscious knowledge of each is very much vaster than the knowledge of the waking self. May not the line of evolutionary development, which culminates in the perfect instinct of the insect, be but an integration or focussing of subliminal powers for certain ends and purposes? The life of the hive-bee, for instance, is not an individualised existence such as ours, but a subordination of the individual insect to the mass consciousness of the swarm. There is one life in the hive, and it is summed up in the social activities of the thousands of bees which inhabit it. Unlike man, the bee has no need to learn its tasks; as soon as it emerges from its cell it starts to work, fanning to keep the hive cool, or sweeping, or doing any task which is needed. Now instinct and intuition are very similar in their results, if they are not of the same nature. But what is the difference between the power exercised by a mathematical or musical prodigy, and the homing instinct of birds, or the instinct of the bee? Will there ever come a time when the evolution of intellect will result in a perfect blend of instinct and intellect, or, as we

should say, a perfect intuition? This underworld of consciousness which binds all the diversified forms of life, which are but individualised emergences therefrom, what does it hold for the race of the future? The suggestiveness of it is profound.

DESIGN IN NATURE.

If we dwell upon this we may perchance catch some gleam of the creative impulse in Nature. Despite what some folks may say about the absence of purpose in Nature, we cannot close our eyes to the marvellous adaptations of means to ends which the whole kingdom of life reveals. Neither can we regard the various adaptations and developments of the myriad life forms as fortuitous, or as independent of any directive agencies. Life exhibits directivity; whence is the spring of that power? It is not, as far as we can see, in our waking consciousness. The development of the human foetus goes on independently of the thought currents of the mother. True, the mental states of the mother are reflected in the child, but the mother is not aware of this. She cannot tell how the child body is being formed, any more than she can tell how the stomach digests the food she partakes of. She only knows that these processes go on without her volition. The formation of the child in the womb, of the winged insect in the chrysalis, are creative acts. By some means life is directed to a definite end. Now if we postulate a subliminal consciousness to man, we must extend it to all Nature. That, it seems to me, suggests what the religious thinker speaks of as the creative power of God. Thus the sub-consciousness of the mother, linked up as it is with the eternal principles of creative activity, directs the sub-division of cell life in foetal development. It is not too bold to speculate that our globe has a definite sub-conscious life, that it is this life which has the power of directivity, and has flowed out into the two definite streams of conscious activity culminating as reason or intellect on the one hand, and instinct on the other. The mechanical adjustments revealed in anatomical structure, the understanding of chemical affinities shown in digestive processes, come from the perfect intuition of sub-conscious life, because all principles and laws are inherent in that life.

REASON, INTUITION AND INSTINCT.

Let us reflect upon reason and instinct. The radical difference between them is: reason is dynamic, instinct is static. "Instinct," wrote Spencer, "is specialised memory"; the result of repeating an action millions of times. But that is not a satisfactory view unless we unite it with the reflections in the foregoing note. In some respects instinct seems superior to reason, but it fails to give us satisfaction because it lacks the creative power of reason. Now the creative power of the sub-conscious life of the planet is not confined to a few species as we know, so that we can only regard instinct as a perfect flowering of that life in a very limited sense. The great distinction between instinct and reason is this: instinct knows, reason discovers; the one has a limited range, confined to a few simple needs so that a flower garden will satisfy it; the other requires a universe for its development. One is a circle, closed, and complete in itself; the other is a spiral, ever ascending, ever winning new kingdoms, and ever dreaming more daringly of the future. Instinct is finality; reason is progression. Yet both spring from one root.

(To be continued.)

THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES.

The following remarks by President Wilson—taken from his recent address in Paris to the International Law Society—have a peculiar application to the progressive stages of development through which our movement is passing:—

"One of the things that has disturbed me in recent months is the unqualified hope that men have entertained everywhere of immediate emancipation from the things that have hampered them and oppressed them. You cannot in human experience rush into the light. You have to go through the twilight into the broadening day before the noon comes and the full sun is upon the landscape.

"And we must see to it that those who hope are not disappointed by showing them the processes by which hope must be realised, processes of law, processes of slow disentanglement from the many things that have bound us in the past. You cannot throw off the habits of society immediately any more than you can throw off the habits of the individual immediately. They must be slowly got rid of, or, rather, they must be slowly altered. They must be slowly adapted. *They must be slowly shaped to the new ends for which we would use them.*"

The italics are ours.

CHRIST brought life and immortality to light by rising from the dead and appearing to and communicating with His followers. These first believers were honest men who had not been sophisticated to the extent of disbelieving the unusual; men who trusted their senses and believed their report as we do in ordinary affairs. So with the early Spiritualists.—J. ARTHUR HILL, in "Spiritualism: Its History, Phenomena and Doctrine."

HAS NATURE HER OWN PHONOGRAPH?

A RECORD OF A STRANGE EXPERIENCE.

The above question is suggested by the following incidents, which are absolutely true, but names are suppressed on account of the private nature of the case. Early in March, 1918, a lady who had been living for some little time with her sister in the ground-floor flat of a house in London, developed marked and painful symptoms of mental aberration. She eventually disappeared from the flat, was missing for two or three days, but, after an exciting incident, was placed under temporary restraint. Medical opinion, however, was adverse to the imposition of any permanent restraint, though there could be little doubt that the emotional centres of the brain were in a deranged condition. In these circumstances her relatives had no option but to take her back to the flat, which they did one afternoon early in April, 1918. A painful scene then occurred. The patient became very excited and noisy, and reviled her relatives for what had occurred for upwards of an hour. The emotional stress was very great for all concerned. In addition to causing great disturbances in the house, the patient was very wilful, and, after remaining about a month in the flat, again left it to lead her own life. This time her relatives were powerless to interfere, and for many months the patient has neither visited the flat, nor communicated with her relatives living there.

The upper flat in the same house is occupied by another family, including a grown-up son and daughter. On the evening of July 1st, 1919, this daughter had been to the theatre, and returned home about 11 p.m., noticing a light through the glass door of the back room of the ground-floor flat as she went upstairs. After entering their own flat, she met her brother, who told her that the patient in question had returned to the house. She was incredulous, so her brother told her to listen for herself. She then opened the door at the head of the stairs, and distinctly heard an altercation proceeding from the back room of the ground-floor flat, and, in particular, the well-known loud and angry voice of the patient declaring that she would never forgive her relatives for what had occurred. This was followed by the voice of the patient's sister, and by a man's voice requesting the patient not to speak so loudly. The voices continued for some little time, and the brother and sister told their mother what they believed had occurred, and she afterwards commented on the unpleasant visit to the patient's sister. In a subsequent interview the daughter stated that so realistic were the voices and so distinctly did she hear the sentences she quoted, that she could have given evidence on oath that the patient had actually returned to the flat that evening, and that the altercation was a real one. Yet all the time the present writer, who was awake in the room from which the voices appeared to proceed and who had also been present at the original incident, was quite unaware that anything unusual was happening. A strange feature in the case is that the voices seemingly heard practically reproduced what had actually occurred more than a year before, and, by a coincidence, all the persons present on that occasion, except the patient, had been present in the flat that same evening. The electrical conditions of the atmosphere were evidently disturbed, as a thunderstorm, with heavy rain and hail, occurred the following evening. The brother and sister in the upper flat stated that they had not been thinking of the patient at the time, and that the incident was unique in their experience.

If visual and auditory imprints on the ether can thus apparently be reproduced under certain unknown, subtle conditions, and be recognised by those psychically attuned to them, Nature may be said to possess her own cinematograph and phonograph. This theory might explain many appearances stated to have been seen in connection with certain ghost stories of a somewhat meaningless type, and would remove the grounds for accounting for the same as due to the agency of discarnate spirits.

The above story, though perfectly true, is of a type which would not be believed by those persons who pride themselves on what they are pleased to term their "common sense," and in this respect falls within the same category as many stories which have relation to the unseen world.

X. Y. Z.

* * The narrator of the above extraordinary story, who vouches for its truth, is a regular contributor to our pages. As the affair relates to family matters, we respect his desire that the names of the persons concerned shall not be published as quite natural. Perhaps some of the obscure natural forces at which the narrator hints were concerned in the case narrated by Miss Morison and Miss Lamont in that remarkable book, "An Adventure," recounting things seen and heard in the Petit Trianon at Versailles in 1901, when to the sight and hearing of the two ladies the events of 1792 were strangely reproduced.

How to HYPNOTISE.—"Mesmerism and Hypnotism," by Caxton Hall (Blackpool: Page & Co., 1/-), is a handy manual that may prove useful. In the historical survey that is given some important names are, however, omitted, such as those of Dr. Esdaile and Dr. Elliotson.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

A weekly paper has a hopeful message for those who are in the dark and are troubled by it. It tells us that the darkest place in a room is immediately under the lamp.

Mr. James Coates, who is in his seventy-sixth year, and who has sustained the toils of his lecturing campaign splendidly, is now, we understand, in Scotland, and will return to town in September.

The Nottingham Conference of the S.N.U. turned out to be a great success. The address of the President, Mr. Ernest Oaten, was received with enthusiasm and ordered to be published.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has done a fine stroke of work for the public good by his attack on food profiteers in "The Times," and by his valuable suggestions for preventing these harpies from battenning on the flesh and blood of their fellow creatures. It was a timely warning not only to the vultures, but to the Government itself, which may, by neglect, find itself later in a difficult position.

The "Globe" of the 8th inst. contains an attack upon Sir A. Conan Doyle under the heading, "Our Etheric Bodies," in which the writer finds that, "like Sir Oliver Lodge, in the romance of 'Raymond,' he (Sir Arthur) places his sole trust in a single female medium." If the critic knows no more of the facts than this, he should hold his peace. Such mis-statements are an affront to the meanest intelligence.

Mr. Horace Leaf's lantern lecture on "Materialisations" was repeated last week at the College of Ambulance, Vere-street, and, as on the former occasion, the hall was too small for all who sought admission. The utmost interest was displayed in the lecture, and Mr. Leaf was frequently applauded.

A new book, of which we hope to give a fuller notice shortly, is "The Seven Purposes," by Margaret Cameron (Harper's, 8s. 6d. net). It has created a great impression in America. It deals with planchette and automatic communications, and outlines a philosophy of life. Here is a quotation: "That is the eternal battle, between the purposes of progress and building, and the purposes of disintegration. It goes on in your life, and it goes on not less bitterly in ours."

We are glad to learn that Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, after lying seriously ill for several weeks past at a nursing home at Bath, has recovered sufficiently to permit of her being transported in an ambulance to Southampton, whence, on the 12th inst., she took passage for America in the Aquitania, accompanied by her medical attendant. It is to be hoped that the distinguished poetess will not judge of the warmth of English hearts by the inclement reception given her by our English climate.

"Le succès de Sir Arthur Conan Doyle est donc grand. Chaque fois, après son passage, on note une recrudescence de l'intérêt pour les phénomènes spirites, et le nombre de croyants à leur réalité et aux doctrines dont ils sont la base augmente dans de larges proportions. Quand nous sera-t-il donné d'assister en France au même spectacle reconfortant qu'en Grande-Bretagne? Où se trouve l'homme célèbre qui voudra faire entendre aux foules les paroles de salut?" This is the comment of our Paris contemporary, "La Revue Spirite," on the campaign of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in England.

In announcing that the Harrow and Wealdstone Society have a new meeting place at the Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone, Mr. R. McLellan, the secretary, writes: "Sir Henry Lunn spoke at the Wesleyan Church here on the 6th inst. against Spiritualism, with special reference to 'The New Revelation' and 'Raymond.' I went prepared to take notes, but he merely dished up again matters we have dealt with before, and there was really nothing in it worthy of serious attention. The Rev. F. C. Baker's pamphlet, 'The Iniquity of Spiritualism,' has been taken up by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and also by Messrs. Mowbray and Co., the religious publishers."

This month's "Modern Astrology" contains an article on "The Universe under Spirit Control," in the course of which the writer, the Rev. Walter Wynn, says: "I know nothing in a technical sense of astrology; but if the aim of the science is to prove that the universe in its movements is under the control of a mind, that plans and sees and knows everything in it, in a sense beyond our comprehension at present, I agree. The fact is, we shall never understand our life, this world, or the universe, until we interpret them in

terms of Spirit. This is my deepest conviction. We are groping in the twilight at present, but the world will emerge into daylight presently." The Rev. Walter Wynn is the Editor of the "Young Man and Woman." He is interested in "Biblical" cycles, and is the author of a little work on "The Bible and the War."

Mr. B. M. Godsal (Los Angeles) remarks in a recent letter: "If the views of some of our friends, as expressed in *LIGHT*, were as lacking in length as they are in breadth, they would be mere 'mathematical points.'" He continues: "One of these writers seems to be harking back to the idea of 'sheep and goats,' but, as a spirit communicator well put it, to separate the two would need a surgical operation in most of us; in fact, we are 'cross-breeds.'"!

From Brazil Mr. Ismail Braga writes as follows to the British Esperanto Association, 17, Hart-street, W.C.1.: "I venture to ask you whether you would have the goodness to let me have the address of the English Spiritualist Review, *LIGHT*, to which I should very much like to subscribe. Or, if you could do it easily, send me one copy of this world-famous review. Very often I read about it in the French and Brazilian Spiritualist Press, and, as I am intending to learn the English language, I should like to subscribe to it straight away."

For the benefit of those interested we give the text in Esperanto of Mr. Braga's letter: "Mi kuraĝas demandi al vi, ĉu vi povus bonvole liveri al mi la adreson de la angla spiritualisma revuo '*Light*,' kiun mi tre multe deziras aboni, aŭ se estus al vi facile, sendi al mi unu ekzempleron de tiu mondfama revuo? Tre ofte mi legas pri ĝi en la franca kaj brazila spiritualisma gazetaro, kaj tial ke mi intencas lerni la anglan lingvon, mi volas jam ĝin aboni."

Seven year old Bobbie Day, of Brighton, whose clairvoyant powers were referred to in the Press a few weeks ago, has found a rival in a still younger child. A representative of the "Daily Express" has been informed by Mrs. James, of Exeter, that her son, aged four, can describe scenery when he has his back turned to it, can tell the contents of a locked drawer, and can quote from the pages of a closed book. "He is not popular among other children," she added, "because if one of them has stolen any trifle he can identify the child." Mrs. James is a believer in astrology and the theory of reincarnation. She was able to tell her interviewer the exact date and almost hour of his birth, although she had never seen him before.

Dean Inge, in his sermon at Kensington on Sunday, faces two ways. He at once declares that "it is hardly possible to paint the prospects of civilisation in too dark a colour" and "the conditions are favourable for a great religious revival." Surely a real great religious revival would be the best of all prospects for civilisation. As to his concern about the revival of superstition, no doubt in some quarters the reaction from materialism has gone to too great a length, but it is at least a healthy sign.

HUSB FUND.—Mrs. Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts., acknowledges with thanks the following donations: Sir A. Conan Doyle, £1; Mrs. M. G. Thompson, 5s.; A. Friend, £1; Mrs. Cranstoun, £1 1s.; "Emma," £2.

DIRECT VOICE PHENOMENA.—Dr. Liefchild relates ("Remarkable Facts"): "A brother minister described to him how he was startled out of slumber by hearing the word 'Rams-gate'; he wakes and still hears it again. Complying with the mysterious summons he goes and saves a boy's life from drowning, and receives the medal of the Royal Humane Society. This has long been known among psychical researchers to whom mankind are indebted for the scientific study of such things as the 'direct voice.' We have noted it repeatedly in the spontaneous cases, and in the revival testimony; the Spiritualists, Home and Mrs. Everitt among them, were frequent recipients of this phenomena attested to by many witnesses.—('Visions, Previsions and Miracles in Modern Times,' by E. HOWARD GREY, D.D.S., from L. N. Fowler and Co., obtainable from *LIGHT* office, 5/6 post free).

SPIRITUALISM IN ABERDEEN.—Mr. Joseph Stevenson, of Gateshead-on-Tyne, writes: While on holiday in Aberdeen lately I found there were three societies in existence there, which shows how the subject is spreading. The society of which I particularly wish to speak is the "Bon-Accord," held in Music Hall Buildings, Union-street, of which the President is Mrs. Murray. The speakers for the Sundays during my visit were Mr. Duncan, of Aberdeen, and Mr. Gow, of Glasgow. The audiences were good and intelligent and the services were conducted on devotional lines. The society has a bookstall for the sale of literature and our journals, *LIGHT* and "The Two Worlds." I heard very good reports of the work they were doing. I may here say I know a good number of people who, although interested in the subject, do not attend the public meetings here. Mrs. Murray, Messrs. Duncan, Crowcroft and Hill would welcome any visitors from the South to the "Granite City."

THE AGE OF THE SOUL.

MANKIND'S SPIRITUAL DESTINY.

By C. V. W. TARR.

In the stupendous march of world-events, the fall of dynasties and thrones, the disruption of mighty and sinister leagues, the disintegrating of empires, the freedom of subject races from the hated yoke of age-long oppressors, the birth and revivification of national and racial consciousness, under the moral and material pressure of the great allied democracies and freedom-loving peoples, we are conscious of a reality and law at work which beggar the language of thought and stultify the imagination.

Nation calls to nation across the deeps of world-tragedy and innumerable woes; racial souls have fused in a moral and spiritual union, the lightning of which has flashed over the world's history, illuminating its meaning and revealing the certainty and security of a spiritual destiny for the masses of mankind. And this immense and unparalleled spectacle of national and racial movements, the groaning and travail of peoples, the astounding and bewildering debacle of tyrannical autocracies and sinister oligarchies, is the expression of the psychological determination of the spirit of history and nature, accomplished by a psychic cataclysm with its concomitant material armageddon.

It is the twentieth century renaissance, the modern Illumination.* And, as the events of world-history to-day stand forth in their vast and spiritually portentous proportions, like the majestic and eternal Alps over the valley of the past, so also is this renaissance different from all its predecessors—deeper in its inspiration, more fateful for mankind, than the renaissance of history. For the world-soul feels the breath of the spirit upon it; it thrills with subtle fires kindled by the Master-Spirits of the human world that is unseen, and a mighty and beautiful ideal strikes the chords of universal hope in a whispering, wondering prelude of harmonies too sublime and marvellous for its half-awakened self to apprehend or even to dream of. The wave of human history has touched the shores of the immortal spirit-world, and the pentecostal comforter of the Illumination has suffused it with a new light.

Nor does it matter to us that the spirit-world is little known, as the modern Spiritualist knows it, to the great mass of mankind, that psychic science is the youngest of the sciences, that the practical knowledge which guides the life of humanity is as yet but little influenced by the marvellous realities and possibilities of human life disclosed to the world by modern mediumship. For the Illumination is wider than Spiritualism, or psychic science, or mediumship; it is wider than history, because humanity can never completely embody its light.

And so we can see that this light breaking in upon the world-consciousness through the monstrous engulfing clouds of war and famine and pestilence, even as the sun's rays pierce the gloom of a stormy sky, is the light "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," is in very truth "The Light of the World."

The inspiration in man of the spirit of the Illumination in ages past has been embodied in sublime monuments of art, which rear their hoary piles of magnificence and grandeur in our cities to-day as the symbols of the divine, raised up by an incomparable and supreme devotion. But the inspiration which created these masterpieces of art fled from the soul of man. Man could not bear the sustained waves of that light which beat down upon him from the higher world; he must needs turn away from the splendour for a space as one dazed. But the Illumination of our time is more fundamental. Its light has pierced to the soul of humanity, and it will be embodied not alone in the external forms of art and literature, nor in the spreading of the scientific recognition of psychic laws and worlds, but as its beginnings already show, in the reconstruction and regeneration of human society on the fundamental basis of moral and spiritual principles. In short, in the birth of the religion of humanity.

How wonderfully significant then, in the light of this conception, is the great body of psychic data, the proofs which establish the independent reality of the soul and its survival of bodily death; of soul communion transcending time and space limitations, and its tremendous suggestion of the existence of spiritual bonds between individual and individual, literally as real as the physical bonds between the myriad cells of any living organism!

Dimly and imperfectly we perceive the outlines of a Universal Plan, catch the thrill of a Cosmic Presence co-ordinating the infinite complexity of civilisation, and directing and controlling the infinite diversity of its activities for the simple purpose of spiritual growth and evolution. The age of the soul is with us, and in Spiritualism (by which is meant the truth of Spiritualism and not a movement) will remain the spirit of the Illumination which has pierced the gloom of war, and casts the light of spiritual hope and destiny for mankind over the tragic ruins of thrones and empires.

With the ideal of universal brotherhood emerging into

* "Illumination" was the name given to the great intellectual movement of the eighteenth century.

living reality from the blackened and sinister wreckage of materialistic politics and diplomacy, the knowledge of immortality will find expression in a new-born genius. It will create higher and spiritual forms of art embodying the inspiration of the spiritual world. It will give birth to a new race of singers, who will breathe forth the fires of truth in forms of poetic art out-shining the masters in beauty and power, and finally will give to material science its true and spiritual dignity of servant to the life and soul of man.

JESUS CHRIST AND SPIRITUALISM.

"Inquirer" writes:—

I have read with some amount of interest and not a little astonishment the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould's article on "Jesus Christ and Spiritualism" (*LIGHT*, p. 224).

I must admit that I cannot quite understand the implied accusation made against modern Spiritualism as being identified with Theism and with having an "anti-Christian tendency."

He begins by stating that "No one has a right to call himself a Christian unless he believes in the Divinity of Jesus Christ." I would ask, Does Mr. Fielding-Ould not believe in the divine nature of every man? for we learn from the Scriptures that man was made in the image and likeness of God, therefore "man is the expression of God's being," as beautifully and tersely put by Mrs. Eddy in "Science and Health."

I should like also to ask him if Jesus Christ, the prophet of Nazareth, differed in kind or merely in degree from humanity at its highest; if in kind, will he give the reasons for his conclusion? He says that he is "not arguing for the truth of the conception" of Jesus Christ being "a son of God in a unique sense," but I presume he regards himself as a Catholic believer, and, if so, I hope that he will not withhold from your readers the basis for such a dogmatic assertion.

He brings forward the statement of Peter as recorded in Matthew xvi. 16, addressed to Jesus: "Thou art Christ, the son of the living God," but he leaves out of account Peter's later pronouncement made after the Master had passed away, when he referred to the mediumistic qualities of Jesus in Acts ii. 22, where it is recorded that he said: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works (Gr., powers) and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know."

Instead of thrusting upon enlightened Spiritualists the dogmas of the Catholic faith—Roman or Anglican—rather let Mr. Fielding-Ould study that remarkable book, "Spirit Teachings"—a product of Modern Spiritualism—in which it is stated (p. 67): "We know of how little worth are the theological notions to which men attach so much importance; and we are content to leave them to die in the brighter light to which we lead the soul, while we supply the needed information on important topics. Only we must eradicate dogmatism. That is all-important. Opinion, when harmless, we do not meddle with."

*. Further communications on this subject are held over until next week.

THE INTERNATIONAL HOME CIRCLE FEDERATION.

The first meeting of the Council appointed in connection with the International Home Circle Federation was held at the Food Reform Restaurant, Farnival-street, E.C., on Tuesday, July 4th, when an Executive Committee was formed to carry on the work. The Executive consists of the following ladies and gentlemen:—

Mrs. Cannock, Miss Estelle Stead, Mr. Percy Street, Mr. Pugh, Mrs. Harper, Mr. Engholm, Mr. Blyton, Mr. Ford, Mr. Dimmick, Miss Baines, Mr. Dixon, and of that number the following officers were duly appointed: Mr. Pugh, Chairman; Mr. Blyton, Secretary; Miss Baines, Assistant Secretary; Mr. Dixon, Organiser.

A Bureau for inquirers, members and friends was opened at the Food Reform Restaurant, on Friday, the 11th inst., when a large number of prominent Spiritualists were in attendance. Many applications for membership were received, and inquiring visitors appreciated the opportunity given of obtaining introductions and advice respecting Home Circles. It is proposed to include in future a brief musical programme. Every facility for afternoon teas is available to visitors. During the evening a well-attended meeting of the Executive Committee took place, Mr. Thomas Pugh presiding. It is hoped that effect will be given very shortly to the various resolutions passed at the opening Conference respecting the formation of Home Circles throughout the country. All communications should be sent to the Secretary, Mr. Thomas Blyton, 36, Southampton-street, Strand, London.

THE Roman ladies, who had never heard of the doctrine of the Resurrection, clothed themselves in white for mourning. It is left for the Christian world, which looks beyond the grave, to wear the habiliments of despair.—ALPHA.

SOME THOUGHTS ON HOME CIRCLES.

By MRS. LOUISE BERENS.

It is interesting to note that *LIGHT*, in common with other authorities, has lately been exhorting the faithful to cultivate the "Home Circle." Séance at home is the up-to-date watchword! This advice gives one "furiously to think." It comes from the salt of the earth, so naturally and meekly I acquiesce, and yet—and yet—confess—sorrowfully confess—that I am not in full sympathy with the scheme.

Like the farmer who drank claret, I'm afraid of not getting "forrarder." In the average household there are innumerable obstacles: interruptions, frivolity, foolish attempts at fraud, the difficulty of isolation, the absence of suitable atmosphere, and the impossibility of perfect privacy.

Mr. Percy Street—whose opinion I venerate—assures us that the highest type of Spiritualism lies in this direction. He says that mediumistic power is generally discovered in some member of the family—often most unexpectedly—and points out that those who have "crossed the bar" would return with infinitely greater pleasure to the familiar precincts than be confronted with the drab surroundings of the average professional. I think there can be no two opinions on the latter point; but is it a counsel of perfection? I wonder! Spirits, as we know, find it hard to manifest under the most favourable circumstances. Imagine a loved one striving to pierce the veil and exhausting power beating ineffectual wings in vain efforts to get through.

Terrible thought! Those that are sensitive would feel and know something of this, I am pretty confident; indeed, as I write I note that the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, in the issue of *LIGHT*, June 21st, says, "The power to perceive an unseen presence is not uncommon"; also, "The unseen presence may thrill the soul with an insupportable joy."

Think of the bitter, the passionate regret when too late we realise we have frittered away opportunities, just at a moment when we should have concentrated our keenest intelligence, and all the vital energy that is in us, in procuring the finest instrument to be found in heaven or on earth.

I am glad that some who have far more right to express an opinion appear to agree with me. In Dr. Crawford's celebrated book, "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena," page 3, he says, "For psychical research is like no other kind of research. Before we can have *anything worth having* [the italics are mine] in the way of results we must have the following set of conditions as nearly perfect as possible." He then gives five rules. The first—we need go no further—is, "A very powerful medium." On page 4 he continues, "The five conditions given above for successful work in the psychic realm are in my opinion absolutely essential. Omit only one of them, and the results suffer from a scientific point of view."

On page 13, referring to Miss Kathleen Goligher, his "very powerful medium," we read, "Many times I have observed the keenness with which she followed what went on, evidently forgetting for the time being that she herself was the prime cause of all the phenomena, and that without her there would have been nothing."

As an example on the other side, there is nothing more striking than the domestic sittings held at "Mariemont," the home of Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge. To my mind they were far more "evidential" and convincing than any of the more important scenes detailed in "Raymond."

Most people by this time have read—or rather skipped and dipped into—"Raymond." If you mention the book to an ordinary outsider, in nine cases out of ten, the words "whisky and cigars" rise mechanically to the lips. It appears to end their knowledge of this wonderful work. To such I commend the close perusal of the private sittings at "Mariemont." The remarkable and touching doings in the bosom of this family would, I think, lead the most hardened opposer to further inquiry, and honest, persistent inquiry almost invariably leads to conviction.

But then the Lodges are a privileged community, steeped to the lips in psychic lore from earliest consciousness. Less fortunate mortals can scarcely hope or expect results such as these. It may be that the true path lies in compromise. Would it meet the case if Home Circles devoted themselves to serious self-development; simultaneously securing the services of a "powerful medium," who at regular intervals would give them the benefit of his or her gifts, in the calm and sacred atmosphere of the home?

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE's three meetings at Eastbourne, Hove and Worthing "went splendidly," we are told. At Hove a bouquet was presented to Lady Doyle by Mrs. Goodwin, wife of the leader of the Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood. At Worthing the vote of thanks was moved by Mr. Israel Zangwill in a witty speech.

THE NATIONAL JEWISH SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY.—The Secretary, Mr. Henry Sander (temporary address, 207, Brady-street Buildings, E.1.), writes that on Thursday, the 10th inst., at the society's temporary meeting place, 25, Princelet-street, E.1, Mrs. A. Harper, the American clairvoyant, gave a very interesting address on "The Conscious and Sub-conscious Mind," followed by clairvoyant descriptions, which were greatly appreciated. The President, Mr. Thomas Pugh, occupied the chair.

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

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

Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. — 6.30, Mrs. M. Inkpen. July 27th, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.
The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, W.2. — 11, Miss Violet Burton; 6.30, Mr. Percy Beard. Wednesday, July 23rd, 7.30, Mr. Thomas Ella.
Walthamstow, 342, Hoe-street. — 7, Mr. Davis.
Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall, Thames-street. — 6.30, Mr. Horace Leaf, address and clairvoyance.
Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street. — 6.30, Mrs. Joy Snell, address.
Croydon.—117b, High-street. — 11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Rev. Susanna Harris.
Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road. — 7, Mrs. Bloodworth. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Stenson.
Peckham.—Lausanne-road. — 11.30, circle; 7, anniversary; local speakers. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Mary Gordon.
Battersea.—45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction. — 11.15, Mrs. Imison; 6.30, Mrs. Orlowski. July 24th, 8.15, Mr. Wright.
Camberwell.—Windsor Hall, Denmark Hill, S.E.15. — 11, Mrs. Mary Gordon; 6.30, Miss A. Smith. 27th, 6.30, Mrs. Beaumont Sigall.
Brighton.—Athenæum Hall. — 11.15 and 7, Mrs. Jamrach, addresses and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting.
Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead. — 3 p.m., Lyceum flower service; banner to be dedicated by Mr. G. R. Symons; continued at 7 p.m., evening service. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. E. Marriott, address and clairvoyance.
Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall. — 11.30 and 7, addresses and clairvoyance, Mr. Trinder; 3, Lyceum. Monday, 7.45, special lecture on Camp Experiences by Mr. S. Naylor, followed by clairvoyance by Miss Struthers. Thursday, 7.45, questions and clairvoyance. Next week-end, Mrs. Neville.
Holloway.—Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station). — 11, address by Mr. H. M. Thompson; 3, Lyceum; 7, address by Mr. T. O. Todd on "Matter's Last Gradation Lost," including a Vision, "The Pilgrim's Milestone." Wednesday, Mrs. Mary Gordon. Sunday, 27th, 11 and 7, Mrs. Jenny Walker, of Canada.

Mrs. ALICE HARPER, from America, Australia and New Zealand, lecturer on Spiritualism and kindred subjects, healer and psychic, will accept engagements from societies, churches and others for single or course lectures in any part of Great Britain. Address for dates, 72, Agamemnon-road, West Hampstead, London, N.W.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
*Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction ...	11-30	6-30
*Brixton, 143a, Stockwell Park Road ...		7-0
Camberwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill ...	11-0	6-30
*Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road ...	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Gymnasium Hall, High Street ...	11-0	7-0
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ...		7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earlham Hall, Earlham Grove ...		7-0
*Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road ...	11-15	7-0
Hackney, 240a, Amhurst Road ...		7-0
Harrow, Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone ...		6.30
*Kingston, Assembly Rooms, Bishop's Hall, Thames Street ...		6-30
Lewisham, The Priory, 410, High Street ...		6-30
*Little Ilford, Third Avenue Corner, Church Road ...		6-30
London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W. ...	11-0	6-30
*Manor Park Spiritual Church, Shrewsbury Road ...	11-0	6-30
Marylebone, Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour Street ...		6-30
*Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road ...	11-30	7-0
*Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Bramar Road ...		6.30
Plumstead, Perseverance Hall, Villas Road ...		7-0
Richmond, Castle Assembly Rooms ...		7-0
*Stratford, Idmiston Road, Forest Lane ...		7-0
*Tottenham, "The Chestnuts," 684, High Road ...		7-0
*Upper Holloway, Grovedale Hall, Grovedale Road ...	11-15	7-0
*Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway ...		6.30
*Lyceum (Spiritualists' Sunday School) at 3 p.m.		

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