

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,016.—VOL. XXXIX. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 1919.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Mr. Stuart Cumberland, whose name, as a "thought-reader," was familiar to readers of *LIGHT* a generation ago, presents to the world his latest conclusions on psychic inquiry in a small book, "Spiritualism—The Inside Truth" (Odhams, Ltd., 2s.). We gather from it that he is astonished at the persistence of Spiritualism, after the repeated exposures of its hollowness, and "the utter failure of the elect to make good any one alleged miracle." We learn that "the game of deception goes merrily on"; that "mediums wax fat," and that mediumship is a nefarious profession. Dear innocent soul—so confiding, so naive, so ingenuous—the credulous Spiritualists are not in the same street with Mr. Stuart Cumberland, who believes in greater miracles than we could possibly accept! He recalls forcibly to our minds the spectacle of Mr. Stiggins at the Temperance gathering who, himself in an inebriated condition, expressed the opinion that "this meeting is drunk, brother Tadger." We can only "laugh," like the American traveller in Dickens, as we read the conclusions of this modern Rip Van Winkle. We found the most interesting portions of the book in Mr. Cumberland's accounts of the Welsh medium Thomas, and also the "Masked Medium," and in view of the current reports concerning the attitude of Spiritualism towards that mysterious lady, we are grateful for Mr. Cumberland's testimony that in his verdict on the proceedings at the so-called test séance the Editor of *LIGHT* "struck the cautious note." But even this may be wrong! For the honour of our personal judgment we should be glad to think otherwise. Mr. Cumberland's pronouncements have a very limited value. He may be good at microscopic examinations, but the big things are beyond him.

Nevertheless we feel not unkindly towards Mr. Stuart Cumberland. Even he has obviously passed under the maturing influences of age and experience. They have somewhat mellowed the asperities of his former judgments, and his dogmatism is balanced here and there by evidences of groping perplexity. One can read between the lines of his book a mental attitude that might be thus expressed: "This Spiritualism is a farrago of fraud, nonsense and self-delusion, as I have proved over and over again. Yet X—and Y—and Z—are all believers in it, and they are level-headed, capable men. What does it all mean?" Mr. Cumberland concludes his book with the hope that he has not "hurt the feelings of any true believer." Very nice of him! We should be far less gentle, holding that if the "true believer's" attitude is based on humbug and delusion it is a pious duty to hurt his feelings—it is the best service you can render him. We are not so much

concerned with those who are humbugged by the materialistic sceptic. Life has already begun to hurt their feelings severely. It will hurt them worse as time goes on. If the sceptic were able to take a comprehensive view of things instead of continually squinting at "phenomena," some of which are genuine, some of which are faked, and some neither entirely one thing or the other, he would see that Spiritualism is a great idea, and that its "bag of tricks," as the Sadducee calls it, is a very minor part of it, however necessary to rouse the attention of a purblind world. A great life-wave is upon us, and all these petty marvels and the squabbles over them are just its spume and spray.

* * *

Discussing Edyth Hinkley's article, "Is Telepathy the Master Key?" (in the May "Nineteenth Century"), Dr. Hyslop writes as follows in the July number of the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*:—

It is evident that she has no patience with telepathy. She speaks of the "Law of Parsimony" as invoked usually to bolster up the claims of telepathy in preference to spirits, and then in lieu of invoking it in her own behalf, raises a sceptical doubt about the law to vitiate its force. That law forbids using any new hypothesis when known causes suffice to explain the facts. It might have occurred to the writer to show that the law was on the side of spirits and not on the side of telepathy. This much-used theory is not a cause of any kind, and it is not a known cause, when assumed to be a cause. It is but a hypothesis limiting evidence, and explains nothing. It merely classifies facts that are not evidence for spirits and other types of phenomena. Its explanatory hints are accompanied with a big "if."

Dr. Hyslop continues:—

We know consciousness with the living as a cause, even a form of energy, and we are but conforming to the Law of Parsimony when we appeal to consciousness, whether living or discarnate, as an explanation. It is a *known* cause: telepathy an unknown cause, and not legitimate in a scientific court for any explanation whatever. The Law of Parsimony is, therefore, on the side of spiritistic, and against telepathic theories.

THE ROADMENDERS OF LIFE.

How reconstruction—the question of the hour—must, to be effective, rest upon a spiritual basis, was described in happy and telling fashion by Mr. Percy R. Street in an address he delivered on August 17th at the London Spiritual Mission, Pembroke Place, before a crowded audience.

Out in France, said Mr. Street, there was a group of men he had often encountered, who were playing what seemed to some an insignificant part, yet without them the war could not have been won. He referred, he said, to the roadmenders, the men who laboured to make the roads passable and enable the fighting troops, guns and ammunition to make their way up to the line.

The roads of life had been torn up for four-and-a-half years, and to-day everyone talked of the necessity for reconstruction. The heavy artillery of circumstance had ploughed up our lines, causing the old order to disappear. Man stood upon the threshold of a life to which reconstruction held the key. Many schemes had been put forward; but those responsible for them hardly seemed to realise that any edifice which was to last must be built in conformity with the natural order of things. It must be based upon the fact that man was a spiritual being, that his life must be lived in conformity with spirit. All policies of reconstruction, therefore, must be along spiritual lines. In this task of reconstruction they must not overlook the help to be obtained from the mighty legion of God's living dead. They were true roadmenders.

WE are all born for love. It is the principle of existence and its only end.—DISRAELI.

IS SPIRITUALISM RATIONAL?

A REPLY TO RATIONALISTIC ARGUMENTS.

By W. H. EVANS.

So important has Spiritualism become nowadays that it even invades the after-dinner speeches of the Rationalist Press Association. Among the members of this Association the general opinion seems to be that Spiritualism is irrational, but after perusing the speeches as reported in a recent issue of the "Literary Guide," I can only conclude that those who did refer to the subject really know very little about it. For some time past there have appeared articles in the "Guide" dealing with Spiritualism, and always from the Rationalist standpoint. Some even think that belief in a future life is a superstition, and that superstition being a hindrance to progress, such a belief must be killed. Many excuses are made to account for eminent men becoming Spiritualists, and in the issue I refer to is an article by Dr. F. H. Hayward on "Spiritualism and Physicists," in which he attempts to prove that because of the extremely cold and objective nature of the study of physics, the student is shut off from human interests, and after pursuing this course for a number of years feels the need of something warmer, and consequently takes up the study of psychic science. But it is not physicists alone who study psychic science, as Dr. Hayward himself admits. Men of every degree study Spiritualism, and students of every kind of science are to be found in the ranks of the Spiritualists, so that it seems to me we do not want a long argument to prove to us that it is the non-human nature of physics which largely accounts for physicists taking up the study of psychic science. I detect in the various articles which have appeared in the "Literary Guide" a note of fear, and this becomes plainly observable in Mr. Archer's reply to Sir Ray Lankester. One at least would imagine that Rationalists would esteem truth above mere opinion, but it seems that great openness of mind which should be the *sine qua non* of a Rationalist is often painfully absent. In the course of his address Sir Ray Lankester said, "It seems to me that there is danger at the present time of the significance of the word 'rationalism' being overlooked. It is sometimes supposed, and wrongly, I think, supposed, to be identical with 'freethought.' That term is liable to great misapprehension, for freedom nowadays has come to be confused with, and supplanted by, anarchy. Now, the Rationalist is not an anarchist. We do not welcome any and every freedom of thought, every impertinent or foolish suggestion, and I think we need to be very careful about the way in which we allow ourselves to be associated with some of the later developments of a kind of freedom of thought which appears to me and to a great many others to be mere folly. I am thinking of so-called 'Spiritualism' and the hasty belief in telepathy, both of which are entirely opposed—in so far as they are devoid of experimental proof—to the essential principles which we advocate as Rationalists."

Later Professor L. T. Hobhouse took up this question of freedom and said, "Freedom is the condition of rationality, as it is of goodness and virtue. From the outset I think we must protest against associating it with anarchy. Freedom is the antithesis of anarchy, notwithstanding the current very disingenuous attempts to identify them." With this I think every Spiritualist will agree.

Sir Ray Lankester's remarks are an introduction to an attack upon the chairman, Mr. William Archer, who had written an article on Telepathy in which it seems he announced his acceptance of thought-transference as a fact. In his reply he stated, "In the first place I would say very briefly to Sir Edwin Ray Lankester—after apologising for misquoting him, which I am sorry I did—that the difference between him and me is a difference in our valuation of evidence. I think the part of Rationalism is to accept loyally the evidence that satisfies us. The evidence as to the existence of thought-transference seems to me conclusive. We cannot all agree, and, though I am sorry, I am not surprised that it does not satisfy Professor Ray Lankester. But there is one point upon which it may be useful to warn him and others. It is unwise to mix up thought-transference with Spiritualism. The Spiritualists are almost as much opposed to thought-transference, or as much inclined to make light of it, as Professor Ray Lankester himself, because the one great argument that we, who do not believe in Spiritualism, have against Spiritualism is that we attribute to thought-transference a great many of the phenomena which, in the absence of thought-transference, I do not hesitate to say, would absolutely prove the spiritual hypothesis. It is by thought-transference we are able to keep Spiritualism at arm's length. I myself should be very sorry to believe that the future life was the foolish and unsatisfactory thing that Spiritualists represent it to be, and my belief in thought-transference enables me to cling to another hypothesis."

So much for this frank interchange of opinion between our rationalistic friends. Both Sir Ray Lankester and Mr. William Archer seem to be labouring under delusions about Spiritualism. What they are afraid of is not Spiritualism itself, but what they imagine it to be. Now Spiritualists are not opposed to thought-transference, neither are they inclined to make light of it. Thought-transference is a part of Spiritualism, perhaps not the most important, but still sufficiently so for all Spiritualists to study. Mr. William

Archer says, "It is by thought-transference we are able to keep Spiritualism at arm's length." Really! But does not Mr. Archer see what thought-transference involves? Can he not see that his acceptance of this fact is a capitulation to Spiritualism? One can understand Sir Ray Lankester; for him there is no telepathy. He roundly disbelieves any such fairy tales. I do not know whether he has subjected the question to prolonged experiment; if not, then he is on this question irrational, and should hasten to make good his claim to being a Rationalist by carrying out an exhaustive series of experiments. Mr. Archer is convinced that thought does go from one mind to another by other than the recognised channels of sense. Now, it does happen that people receive thoughts that can only originate from the minds of people who are said to be dead. In fact the whole process on the mental plane and in the mental phenomena of Spiritualism whereby communication is established between this world and the next is telepathic. The acceptance of thought-transference tacitly implies the possibility of a mind in the other world communicating with a mind in this world.

The Spiritualist claims that, as Spiritualism is the study of psychic phenomena, it is a perfectly legitimate and rational study. We may not be in love with the mode of communication, but that should not prevent us from trying to understand the method used. All we ask of the Rationalist is that in regard to the question of Spiritualism he will be rational, and not sully the pages of the "Literary Guide" with such puerile criticisms of a subject which the writers in the "Guide" do not understand. There is much virtue in getting to understand your opponent's point of view, and if in future the contributors to the "Literary Guide" will, before they write anything about Spiritualism, study it first, and experiment too, they will be saved from much absurdity. I would like to suggest that, as this subject is important, the R.P.A. form a committee for its investigation, that they experiment amongst themselves and develop their own mediums. There is no need for them to consult professional mediums at all. The process of investigation can be carried on in their own rooms or offices without any Spiritualists being present. All that is wanted is the open, or the rational, mind, and the observance of a few simple rules, which LIGHT will be glad to furnish. If this is done for two years, I have no doubt a change will come over the R.P.A. But will they be rational enough to do it? I wonder.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON AND HIS CRITICS.

The Rev. Ellis G. Roberts writes:—

It is much to be regretted that critics of the Bishop of London have devoted so much attention to the negative side of his recent pronouncement on Spiritualism, leaving its positive side almost unnoticed. Yet the latter is all-important, while the former is comparatively negligible. It is not even certain that we have a correct account before us. As reported in the Press, the words of the Bishop appear to display a confusion of thought which one would not expect from a scholar of his position. Eminent rationalists have written of "spurious drivell," but a logician like the Bishop would hardly commit himself to obvious self-contradiction. I suspect a slip of the tongue on the part of the speaker, or a slip of the pen on the part of the reporter.

The real significance of the matter is indicated by Mrs de Crespigny. It is that a leading dignitary of the Church—probably the most influential of all her dignitaries—has approached so closely the position of Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir A. Conan Doyle. The issue between them has been narrowed down to a very limited space indeed. This fact is of the highest importance. It may lead to an honourable peace. Or, if hostilities are to continue, then it will render possible that fight to a finish which is the next best thing.

Readers of LIGHT must have noticed with amusement or indignation, as the case may be, that those conceptions of a future life, for which they have contended during many years, are now being calmly reproduced, without any acknowledgment, in the religious Press and by people who have not a good word to say for Spiritualism itself. A much-advertised and much belauded article by Miss Marie Corelli appeared a short time ago in the "Weekly Dispatch." It was just what might have been written by any emotional Spiritualist with a superficial knowledge of the subject.

The fact is that the tide of battle has turned, and that with proper tactics Spiritualism is bound to gain a notable triumph. The only possible hindrance to this is dissension and want of tact among Spiritualists themselves. To this subject I may return again.

To some the very thought of the departed having any knowledge of what is going on on earth is saddening. They cannot bear to think that their loved ones should be spectators of all that goes on when the heart faints by the wayside or yields to the pressure of the enemy. And all this is most natural, and would cast a dark shadow over our lives were it not for a great and glorious fact, namely, that our loved ones are never mere spectators. They are with us in the fight. They know that "Not failure, but low aim is crime," and they make allowance for our frailty though they neither overlook nor condone our faults.—"Angels Seen To-day," by G. MAURICE ELLIOTT and IRENE HALLAM ELLIOTT.

IMMORTALITY AND HUMAN SURVIVAL.

THE COUNSELS OF REASON.

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

There seems to be a natural tendency to deny to the dying sinner, whose soul has starved within a pampered body, an equal chance of survival with the saint whose soul has grown strong at the expense of its mortal charge—thus depriving death itself of sustenance: "And Death once dead, there's no more dying then." As if to correct this tendency, the earliest phenomena of Spiritualism gave direct evidence tending to prove the survival of sinners rather than of the beatitude of saints. For the reason that spirits of the lowest development are the ones that dwell closest to the material world, they were used by the higher powers to produce significant physical phenomena; and perhaps another reason has been to reinforce the evidence for survival at a point where it is naturally weakest.

We have been told that undeveloped spirits were thus employed at the birth of modern Spiritualism, in the spring of 1848; moreover, from time immemorial this class of unfortunates has provided most of the haunting ghosts, who as a rule have been unable to deliver their message to a world that denied the existence of ghosts—and besides was rather afraid of them.

To what extent does proof of survival assure us of immortality? To me it seems that the degree of assurance varies inversely as the spirituality of the surviving soul. If a completely selfish mortal can survive death, *i.e.*, the simultaneous destruction of his body and the removal of everything upon which he has learned to lean, then *a fortiori* he can survive all lesser injuries; and is there another mishap in all the worlds that we could reasonably suppose would constitute as great a catastrophe?

Of course the teachings of Spiritualism are shot through with promises of immortality too voluminous to give—in whatever way the spirits may gain their knowledge. But let me quote from a book which happens to be lying on my table, "John Wesley's Farewell to Earth," given through Mrs. Cora Richmond in 1885:—

"And to undo whatever doubt the ministrations that I gave upon earth may have left in the minds of those who loved the name of Christ for my sake, I would say that the spirit of love pervading the universe I have found adequate to make whole and sure every spirit in whatever degree of darkness; that it is only a question of time, only a question of growing from spiritual infancy to manhood . . . and the universe will no longer be a prison-house to any living soul. I do not say that you will in many years attain it, or cycles of years; but if you exist to-day, and there is a spark of intelligence, or if the human form encases you, the light that burns within is an eternal flame. . . . Even if you are immured in darkness they (the rays) pierce, by vibration, through the sod and find you out at last."

Again, from another spirit:—

"I do believe that the worst conditions, spiritually, are in some degree benefited by that change, that the release from the outward body, which is the scene of passion and suffering, is in some measure a release to the spirit, whatever the condition of that spirit may be."

While external proof of immortality seems scarcely within the bounds of possibility, still the deeper one dives into human nature the more certain one grows that the same ultimate destiny awaits us all. The contrary belief becomes a discord. To deny immortality to any living soul is to deny it in equal emphasis for ourselves; because no man can measure another's spirit, and least of all can he match his own soul against those of other people.

Of course, in daily life, we pass judgments—more or less correct—upon men's characters in regard to their social relations, but that does not imply that we possess any grounds upon which to form moral judgments. The mere fact that we see ourselves from within and view the rest of the world from without, is in itself a bar to the forming of moral judgments. Even in everyday life this essential difference in standpoint often leads us to compare our own intentions with another man's performances—a comparison altogether in our favour.

A. J. Davis mentions somewhere three sources of evil for which a man cannot be held morally responsible, namely, that in which he was born, that to which he was educated, and that which circumstances have forced upon him; though needless to add, the protection of society may justify "punishment" for evil derived from any of these sources, as it may require the segregation of lepers.

Spiritualism, as I understand it, is in accord with Sir W. F. Barrett's belief that "the spiritual education of the race is not limited to this life"; but in the place of "potential immortality" I would say that Spiritualistic teachings hold out the promise of actual immortality with potential happiness. Spiritualism seems rather to discourage obscure speculation concerning ultimate truths. And it avoids the sophistry that would parcel out strange worlds by metes and bounds into definite heavens and hells. Its light, upon the distant scene, is misty and is focussed upon a single step only—the step through death into fuller life. And though this step leaves us free of the body and its limitations, and free

of all the countless penalties that matter has imposed upon us, still it by no means frees us from the shackles that our own wrong motives have clamped upon us.

But why should not a bound and dwarfed soul gain freedom and growth in the spirit life? Selfishness, as we know it, is entirely of the body, which lives and waxes gross by the act of seizing and drawing in towards itself; whereas the giving out to others is the aliment, and might be called the selflessness, of the spirit. Is it not possible that a spirit whose growth has been stunted by the body may, as his keener perception becomes gradually and painfully awakened, learn his lesson in the end quite as thoroughly as another spirit learned it while dwelling in the flesh? Worldly experience teaches that very often it is those that have failed who make the best guides past the dangers that wrecked them. Perhaps in the Divine economy it is provided that sinners shall eventually become the most efficient guardians of virtue, and be permitted to unlive the sin they know so well by helping others to overcome it in the flesh.

Nor can it be supposed for a moment that a prospect of non-survival, or a threat of postponed and contingent annihilation, would have the slightest deterrent effect upon the materialistic folly that is expressed in the phrase "life is short and you will be a long time dead"—lately found posted in a German hall of dissipation. Such a state of mind is better met by the threat of absolute life—"you cannot share in the death of your body—the sole object of your loves and ambitions. Deprived of the instrument of selfish gratification you will be your own punishment, until you can grow to attain real happiness in living for that which then remains to you—others"—a truth that changes values all round, even in the opinion of the most selfish.

And if this reasoned-out motive is far inferior, spiritually, to the impulse of love as an incentive to right living, still it is a degree more human than the threat of extraneous punishment; and as a stimulus to virtue it is certainly more effective than either a denial of the survival of sinners or a threat of their ultimate extinction, which, indeed, would seem rather to serve as incitements to wrongdoing by creating a presumption that all debts could be cancelled in annihilation.

In my experience the average man is by no means averse to the idea of non-survival, but perhaps this is owing to the manner in which the churches have brought life and immortality to his notice.

REPORTED MESSAGE FROM ROBERT EMMET.

The Editor of "The Times" has sent us a letter he has received from Mr. Arthur R. Colburn, attorney and counsellor at law, of Washington, U.S.A., enclosing a communication which the writer requested should be forwarded to us if not deemed suitable for publication in the leading journal.

Mr. Colburn, it appears, has been receiving through his own hand some remarkable writings on various subjects and this particular communication purports to come from the young Irish patriot, Robert Emmet, who was executed in 1803. We cannot say much on the evidential issue, though the automatist is quite satisfied as to the source of the message, but apart from this the script contains some points of interest—as, for instance, the intimation in the opening sentences that names count for very little on the other side:—

"Robert Emmet is my name by which I was known when an actor for a brief time in the scenes of your world. When I came to take up the broken thread of life in the world of spirit, I found little use for my name. It served for a while the useful purpose of identifying me in the minds of those who knew me by name alone, but this was temporary, for here we know one another by the sense of identity. We call a friend by telepathic message wrought with the peculiar combination which portrayed the personality and individuality of the friend and no other. Thus we are not embarrassed by perhaps a thousand individuals responding to the call of a name only! This would be distressing and disconcerting."

In his former life here he acted in what he thought to be a worthy and patriotic cause, but if he were back on earth again, he would pursue a very different line of conduct.

"I would work and speak more to promote the well-being of the souls of my fellows, than to seek by deeds of violence to attain some possibly Utopian state for the fancied improvement of conditions affecting the bodily comforts and intellectual dignity and political adjustment which were more the characteristics of my former efforts. They resulted in failure and my own untimely end. I could have wrought better."

The last sentence expresses a conclusion at which we shall probably all arrive when we look back on even the best efforts of our mortal career.

THERE are those who regard it [Alchemy] as having been a foolish and fantastic effort for material wealth, whilst, on the other hand, there is a school which puts forward and defends the view that Alchemy had nothing whatever to do with metals, but was a spiritual science or art concerned only with the soul of man. Both are partial and hence erroneous views; and it is only when we see in Alchemy an attempted philosophy which took the whole universe for its province that we can begin to understand it aright.—H. STANLEY REDGROVE in the "Occult Review."

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

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A COMEDY OF DREAMS.

(IN LIGHTER VEIN.)

We had a dream which was not all a dream (as the poet says) in which, sitting in our accustomed chair and musing on the tumult and the terror of the time, we were visited by a lady of gaunt exterior, high-nosed, peremptory, with inquisitorial eye-glasses and an uncompromising mouth. She intimated her desire to ask questions, merely "for information," after the manner of the celebrated Miss Dartle. Having expressed our willingness to answer to the best of our ability any question, whether it related to the letters of Junius or the letters of Julia, the lever of Archimedes, or the cantilever of Dr. Crawford, we awaited the ordeal before us, and never winced until she prefaced her questions with the statement that she knew all about Spiritualism. Then, indeed, we felt a cold shudder of apprehension, for the people who know all about any subject into which they are inquiring, before they inquire, are appalling people to meet. We looked round at the door, we even thought of the window—but that was undignified. We saw we should have to face it out.

"My difficulty," said Miss Dartle (let us call her by that name) "is that in all these phenomena (which I don't deny) we have no positive proof of human survival of death. We don't know the powers of our own minds; we don't know how far some unknown faculty in us may go in producing all these things—materialisations, raps, voices, writings, lights and all the rest of it. I have read about them all, and myself seen many of the manifestations. Mind you, I grant their genuineness—they do apparently happen. I allow that."

We murmured our grateful thanks, and again she urged on her wild career, talking at a great rate and with a fluency which we cannot attempt to reproduce.

"What I ask," she said, "is, where is your proof? We know that many people are self-deluded. How do we know where this self-delusion ends?"

We attempted to reply that we have only human criteria for the existence of anything, ourselves included, and were proceeding to a consideration of the limitations of logic, but she cut us short.

"Oh, yes, I know what you are going to say. I have been all over that ground. We have to start by conceding something. I have to begin by assuming the reality of my own existence. But why should I assume anything else? Of course I assume also your existence and that of the other people I meet."

Again we thanked her, apologetically suggesting, however, that we and the other people had probably done the assuming on our own account.

We do not propose to follow Miss Dartle in all her convolutions, permutations and ramifications. She sounded on her dim and perilous way for an hour by Bloomsbury Clock. She ranged the field of Psychic Science like a female Newton, she strode the gulf between Mind and Matter like a Colossus. She quoted the psychologists, examined every department of supernormal phenomena. She talked of folk-lore, savage rituals, Berkeley, Sir William Hamilton, Sir William Barrett, atavism, Fourth Dimension, the Seer of Patmos, the Seeress of Prevorst, Blake, Hallucinations, Hypnotism, the Subliminal Self, "The Golden Bough," and Mr. Edward Clodd. (She was a very accomplished woman.)

We nearly went down under it. We feared every moment she would unexpectedly produce something new—something or somebody we had not heard of before. She might have flooded us with differential

fluxions. But she did not know that . . . and we were saved. And then, as she paused for breath, we pulled ourselves together.

"You were saying, Miss Dartle," we remarked, "you were saying that you conceded your own existence and that of others. You did not ask us if we conceded yours."

"But—I don't quite understand. Of course you admit my existence?"

"Not at all," we replied; "speaking editorially we question your existence. We shall regard you as a figment of our imagination until we have positive proof to the contrary."

"But surely . . . I am here and talking to you, and you are talking to me."

"So it appears, but it may be only a mental phenomenon, due to some unknown faculty of our mind—pure hallucination, in fact. You assume you are here, assume you are talking to us, assume we are talking to you. We have decided to go beyond you and make no assumptions whatever, except that we are all of such stuff as dreams are made of. This interview is all quite probably a dream."

"But . . . you are joking, of course, Mr. Leader-page. We all know the difference between dream and reality. I do."

"There," said we, "you have the advantage of us. We don't. Madam, we once dreamt that we went to sleep and had a dream, and in that dream we reclined on a couch in a Theban palace, and had another dream in which we were a sleeping child in some Elysian region. And we woke out of one dream into another, and so came back, stage by stage, to the dream of our daily life. We have no proof that we are really awake yet."

"Then you refuse to accept my visit as a real experience?"

"In the absence of any criterion of ultimate reality, Miss Dartle, we are reluctantly compelled to take that step."

"Then you deny —"

"We deny everything except ultimate reality, of which we have no absolute proof. For the purposes of this interview we have accepted your doubt about things, and pushed it to its logical conclusion. Good afternoon!"

She seemed to retire, looking a little bewildered. We appeared to ourself as opening the door for her and returning to our accustomed chair. . . . Perhaps she was real after all. . . . But we have no absolute proof of it.

THE HIDDEN POWERS OF THE ETHER.

In the third of Sir Oliver Lodge's articles in the "Observer" on "Sources of Power" he remarks on the extraordinary density of the ether. He calculates that a cubic inch of ether represents far more than a ton. "Anyone who guessed that it was half a million tons would not be guessing so absurdly as he might imagine he was." But, Sir Oliver asks, "how can effective rigidity—a property usually associated with solids—be possessed by a fluid substance through which planets and other bodies move with perfect freedom, i.e., without encountering a trace of resistance?" Sir Oliver suggests that the solution may be that the ether is in rapid motion and he points out that "a strong jet of water when struck with a hammer behaves like a solid bar; a long flexible chain hanging and revolving rapidly over a pulley can be kinked and dealt with as if it were a wire." A cubic foot of space, Sir Oliver estimates, "contains enough power to drive every engine and every furnace in the world for a century. Once such a source of energy as that is even partially tapped, nothing further in the way of mechanical resources will be needed. But how far away are we from being able to tap it! I see no clue at present. . . . The method of approach must be indirect and along the avenue of pure science. The clue, the golden bough, must be found before there can be any entry into the Elysian fields."

LIFE has two ecstatic moments, one when the spirit catches sight of Truth, the other when it recognises a kindred spirit. . . . Perhaps it is only in the land of Truth that spirits can discern each other; as it is when they are helping each other on, that they may best hope to arrive there. —GUESSES AT TRUTH."

WHAT IS THIS REVELATION?

THE MEANING OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY SENEX.

Readers of the "Times" will have noticed a remarkable interchange of letters between two University divines upon the subject of how "to save a stricken world"—suggesting what one of them calls "a Christian offensive." Mr. Hoover is quoted as confessing at the Carlton Hotel on August 1st that even the problem of production can only be solved by "what, for lack of a better term, he would call a spiritual revival." Mazzini's dictum is also quoted, "He who can spiritualise democracy will save the world," and one of these writers asks the other "when it comes to doing, what would you have us do?" The same learned Canon of the Church suggests, as the antidote to Bolshevism, indifference, and re-action, "an idealism based on the twin sense of the all-importance of God, and the unity in Him of all mankind."

"Times," August 20th, "Christianity the Antidote.") These distinguished divines would scorn to call themselves Spiritualists or to have any faith in mediumship, yet Spiritualists have long since found in mediumship the living power which alone can "spiritualise democracy." "Christianity," as these divines use the word, with all its encrusted connotations clinging to it like barnacles to the hull of an old wooden ship, has failed signally to spiritualise even the Church, much less democracy. As a consequence the scrapping of the old vessel and the laying of a new keel of better material and on better lines are urgently called for. Democracy awaits the building of this new ship of "State Religion."

Now, for Spiritualists all men are spiritual beings, whether they know it or not; and as spiritual beings their real life is mediumistic. Unconsciousness of the truth does not alter the truth, but is like blindness to the light. Can the human race alter its own constitution merely by ignoring it? The trouble is the want of sight, not the want of light. The work of mediumship is an effort to open the eyes of the spiritual man to know himself as he really is, and to find the light within himself. When the democracy find the light—then Mazzini's dictum will prove itself true; and Mr. Hoover will get his "increased production" and many another ideal of physical welfare and happiness.

The revelation of man's spiritual nature by such imperfect means as that of clairvoyance and other psychic gifts to individuals is but the beginning of a great spiritual offensive—now being carried on by such men as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and many others of like courage. It has given light to hundreds of thousands already. It reached the trenches. It looks as if it would reach and illumine the democracy long before it reaches the Churches of the land. It is not a new revelation but the revival of an old revelation known long before any Christian church was built or dreamt of, and it promises to survive them all.

What is this revelation? It is nothing more nor less than the effort of the spirit within man to reach his intellect and his heart, and to be acknowledged and not ignored. It is the revelation of the inner man to his physical nature. Every human being must be mediumistic—else he is no spiritual being at all. He must live in two worlds at the same time, whether he knows it or not. Those who have taken this fact to heart have learnt to live their inner life unconsciously. They get into conscious touch with their spiritual life, and from that moment the aspect of this "stricken world" is changed. They have become their own mediums, with a new consciousness which is beyond all the arguments of logic and "learning."

Now, imagine the effects of such consciousness on mankind to-day.

Imagine the wealthy landowner seeing his superior in his labourer or cowman, or the great millionaire perceiving in his army of employees a great trust imposed on him, and their cottages or slums an overwhelming burden of shame and responsibility for himself! Imagine a peer envying a ploughboy or a Professor or Dean looking for real illumination to an ignorant labourer or the servant who sweeps out a study!

Yet these things may come to pass when the secrets of all men's hearts are revealed to themselves by the light which comes not from argument or politics or learning or success in life, but from the new light of an inner consciousness and a new knowledge of oneself.

Every man is his own medium. Every good thought, every kind action is a step upwards towards the light of his own spirit. Every evil thought, every selfish act, every wrong done to another, whether within legal rights or not, is a step downwards into the darkness of a blinded soul.

Who does not know the influence of a great and noble character on those who are brought into touch with it—an influence, too, mostly unspoken and not expressible in words? The power of our thoughts is the power of ruling the world for good or ill. They are our real prayers to heaven and the most potent influence in the world.

When Spiritualism has succeeded in its great mission of showing the world its own powers of mediumship, the world will know for itself the immanence of God and the unity of men with themselves and Him. Meanwhile no logic, no learning, and no religion can prove it to them; but only that

personal experience which is open to every man who, against all appearances to the contrary, seeks it in himself and has some belief in his own mediumship.

This "stricken world" is "stricken" by its own evil materialistic thoughts. It can be "saved" by nothing short of an inflow of power from the Source of all good and great thoughts—through the mediumship of men who at last have learnt "to know themselves."

Even Government departments and "limited companies" may then be inspired by the new "soul of the nation." Perhaps the miners, too.

THE DIALECT QUESTION IN MEDIUMSHIP.

Mr. P. Fraser (New Malden) writes:—

Relative to the problem referred to in Mr. A. M. Heathcote's letter in your issue of July 26th, perhaps the following may prove of interest:—

Recently, with a few friends, I held a circle for the express purpose of putting questions to the spirit friends. Among other questions, the following was asked:—

"Can you tell us why there is such a difference between the utterance of the medium in his normal state, and that of Peter? [Peter is an Indian control, who was in the service of an Englishman for a number of years and has used the medium for thirty years.] Also, why does a spirit, such as that of a dark slave, who was formerly on a plantation and who had never heard English spoken, when controlling a medium, speak in broken English?"

The Control answered as follows: "The reason that our Indian friend uses such language when speaking through the medium is, that by relapsing into the old manner of speech he finds it easier to control the vocal organs of the instrument he is using, as the old associations enable him to get into closer contact with the medium. It is not an easy thing to control and use the organs of a medium. On the contrary, it is a very difficult matter, requiring a great deal of concentration on the part of the operator."

"In the case, however, of spirits, such as dark slaves who have never heard English spoken, the fault is really due to the conception of the medium. When he, or she, is told that a certain dusky friend is desirous of speaking, and feels the spirit's influence, the mentality of the medium acts unconsciously, of its own accord, and speaks as it thinks such a spirit would naturally speak when on your earth, and this fact is very much deprecated by us and is a source of grief. The spirit may be striving its utmost to get a thought or expression through, but the mind of the medium is so strong as to dominate the conditions, and the utterances are not those which the spirit desires to express. But the only thing to do is to keep on trying, until such time as the medium may be more fully controlled, to get the real expression through."

You will observe that the above agrees in substance with your remarks on the subject.

L.S.A.—THE NEW CENTRE.

As matters remain at present, we are faced with the prospect of having to be content with an establishment much inferior to what we had hoped and expected. If this should happen—it shall not if we can help it—the Alliance cannot fairly be blamed. It will be solely due to lack of means. The appeals of Sir A. Conan Doyle have been eloquent enough to move the hearts of some of those wealthy friends who, without feeling the expense could, and they would, provide the home we need. We do not despair, because sooner or later the end will be achieved, even if the apathy of those who are able to help us results in a prolonged stay in another temporary abode, ill-equipped, inadequately staffed.

SPIRIT DRAWINGS FROM PARIS.—Madame A. Dizier sends from Paris for our inspection an interesting collection of spirit drawings or designs in black and white. They display considerable artistic merit, and Madame Dizier informs us that outside of her mediumship she possesses no ability in this direction.

WHAT SPIRITUALISM IS DOING.—All those who are aware of the reality of psychical facts will recognise in the modern movement of Spiritualism a powerful alliance. For it testifies to the naturalness of the powers of Christ and the Buddha. It destroys the miraculousness of phenomena of unusual occurrence. It prepares the way for their recognition as part of the truth universal. It discovers the kernel of soundness amid the husk of ancient legends. It restores their intrinsic worth. It thus links the past with the present. Then it comes in the spirit of the Great Healer, unto those bowed down by sorrow, to heal the wounds of the bereaved and bring comfort to those that ache with longing for vanished faces and voices sunk to silence. It lifts the darkened pall of death. It puts out the lurid fires of hell. It shows the face behind the veil to be loving and kind. And so by bridging the hereafter and the present with a securer arch than the rainbow of hope, it makes One Communion of Seen and Unseen, it bears witness to One Life whether in the body or out of the body, One Life, One Law, One God. "Was Jesus a Psychic?" Address by the REV. TYSSUL DAVIS.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

During a single day last week we received letters from Persia, Japan, Siam and Palestine, asking for information and for books to be sent. The fact is worth recording as an evidence of interest displayed in widely-distant centres. We have also recently had visits from people from remote places.

One of these visitors, who came from Buenos Aires, said that in his city there were some fifteen Spiritualistic societies, all with good membership. The chief form of mediumship was that of trance, though at La Plata spirit photographs were obtained. A feature of the work of the societies, he said, was the holding of lectures to which the public were invited.

Amongst our recent visitors from northern Europe has been Professor Oskar Jaeger, of the University of Christiania, with whom we had a pleasant interview. Dr. Jaeger has met several people prominent in the movement here.

The Working Men's College, St. Pancras, has, we learn, established a society for psychical research. Mr. R. Boddington, at the invitation of the members, recently attended and gave advice regarding procedure.

Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, in the last issue of "Common Sense," makes a plea for a committee of leading Spiritualists to bring out an authoritative epitome of those "miracles" upon which they are prepared to base their claims.

A new religion, which is also a "True Religion," is announced. It is called "Motionism." Great claims are made for it in a notice heralding a book on the subject, by Dr. McCarthy Morris, to be published next month.

It is definitely stated in the Press that at the Lambeth Conference, which, owing to the war, was postponed from last year and is now fixed to take place in 1920, the discussions arranged will include Spiritualism, Christian Science, and Theosophy.

The best we can say of "The Elemental" (Routledge, 1/6), a series of sixteen "tales of the supernatural and the inexplicable," by Ulric Daubeny, which takes its title from the opening story, is that they have not sufficient verisimilitude to do much harm. They might be unwholesome reading if they made a stronger appeal to the reader's imagination. As it is, none but the most credulous and impressionable mind could possibly be affected by them.

Elise Emmons' happy twitterings of verse, "Summer Songs Among the Birds" (John M. Watkins, 2/6 net), reviewed in our columns a few months ago, have reached a second edition. The new volume contains thirteen additional poems. Though the singer has here and there her serious notes, her songs mostly reflect life in its gladdest moods.

The opposition our movement encounters is not all a bad thing, for we have to remember that, as Novalis says, "To become properly acquainted with a truth, we must first have disbelieved it, and disputed against it."

V.U., of Bedford Park, writes us that she resides next door to some people whose nephew, a boy of 13, living with them, was drowned a few days ago in a swimming bath. On the day of the inquest she was with a lady medium, Mrs. Seyfarth, who described the deceased lad, mentioned his Christian name, Charlie, spoke of an injury to the nape of his neck, gave the name Stanley, and stated that Charlie said, "Now I can go to the sea." Our correspondent knew that Charlie was intending to start for Bexhill on the day following his death, but not till later did she learn from the family that the boy died from an injury to the nape of his neck, nor that Stanley was the name of his great chum.

We understand that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's new book, "The Vital Message," now running in "Nash's" Magazine (although the September issue does not contain an instalment) will be published on the 1st of November next.

A visitor from Glasgow, who paid us a call last week, says that the Association there is in a flourishing condition. It has suffered a hardship in having to give up the City Hall, which has been taken by the Government. The meetings are being held in the McLellan Galleries, where the accommodation is inadequate for the numerous inquirers who are coming forward every week. A noticeable feature is the demand for books, large numbers of which are being sold.

Mrs. de Crespigny's statement in her article in our last issue, that few nowadays do not believe in Darwin's theory of the origin of species, is challenged by a correspondent, who quotes Professor Wm. Bates, President of the British Association in 1914, who said: "The principle of natural selection cannot have been the chief factor in delimiting the species of animals and plants. . . . To us Darwin speaks no more with philosophical authority. . . . We have done with the notion that Darwin came latterly to favour, the large differences can arise by accumulation of small differences."

Mr. Robert Hichens' next novel will have for its central character a woman who becomes interested in Spiritualism. The book is entitled "Mrs. Mardon," and is expected to be issued in October. Mr. Hichens' attitude of mind may be judged from an article he contributed to the Press in March last. In it he wrote, "Can the dead speak to us? I don't believe they can." He stated that he had had sittings with mediums, among them the celebrated Eusapia Palladino, with whom he sat in Rome. In another article, however, he describes a prediction made to him by a crystal gazer, and tells how it was strangely verified.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett has edited the revised edition of "Occult Chemistry," by Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, issued by the Theosophical Publishing House. The book, which will be remembered, embodies clairvoyant observations on the chemical elements.

In his latest book on Spiritualism, Mr. Stuart Cumberland, although a sceptic, has some pertinent remarks on the "Masked Medium." He alludes to the offer of £500 by the "Sunday Express," and to the refusal of the money by a masked lady on the ground of "her deep-lying interest in Spiritualistic truth." As the "ghost" she produced is stated to have been a bogus one, it is clear that she did not lose anything by this virtuous declaration. But the statement naturally made a deep impression. Mr. Cumberland remarks, "It was not for the *impresario* and his medium to seek to make money out of trading upon people's superstitions and hankering after the supernatural." In short, it should have been straightforward, giving their exhibit and leaving it to the observers to guess how the various feats were performed. If the believers in Spiritualism claim the performances as the work of spirits, well then, so much the worse for Spiritualism. In that case Mr. Cumberland thinks they "would have hit Spiritualistic professions pretty hard." As it was he takes strong exception to the claim they actually pursued as "being productive of no little mischief."

Mr. Bligh Bond, author of "The Gate of Remembrance" is shortly publishing a new book entitled "Materials for the study of the Apostolic Gnosis," in conjunction with the Rev. T. S. Lea, D.D., Vicar of St. Austell (Cornwall). It is a further study of the Gnostic system of numbers discovered in the Greek Testament and the Septuagint. This system is now shown to possess a doctrinal significance, and embodies in many cases the essence of old Catholic tradition respecting the inner meaning of the parables, holy names, and the Gnostic narratives generally. It suggests a new meaning for the term "verbal inspiration." The book is expected to appear in October and will be issued by B. H. Blackwell, Oxford.

In ancient days there was an infallible test for deciding whether a woman accused of witchcraft was guilty or innocent. She was thrown into a deep pond. If she floated she was a witch and was burned. If she sank she was innocent, and drowned in the experiment. How history repeats itself! shown by modern instances in which men of science have been forward to test the reality of Spiritualism. When they decided in its favour they were denounced as unscientific; the matter still remained under condemnation. If they decided against it without investigation, then the question was left as before. But in either case the subject suffered. The only difference was that experience showed that it was charmed life—it could neither be drowned nor burned—to-day it is more alive than ever.

Mrs. Mary E. Settle, secretary of the Calgary First Spiritual Church, in writing to us for copies of LIGHT, says, "We find a bigger demand than we can supply for Spiritual literature among our members and friends, even in this away spot." Here is an opportunity for missionary efforts on the part of readers who have any spare books, papers, or pamphlets.

A series of stories on psychic subjects by Mrs. F. Champion de Crespigny will commence on September 1st in the "Premier Magazine" (Fleetway House, Farringdon E.C.).

When Mr. Horace Leaf gave his lantern lecture "Materialisations" at Richmond on the 20th inst. the paper, referring to the crowded audience, judged that there must be a boom in Spiritualism. The suburban roads were evidently waking up.

HOW THE WORLD VIEWS IT.

By LOUISE BERENS.

The extraordinary psychic experiences detailed week by week in *LIGHT* must, one might suppose, strike a materialistic world with awe and amazement. There have been sufficient sparks to start—in the ordinary course—a mighty conflagration. But indeed it is not so!

The woman in the street and man in the club set angry faces and close contemptuous ears, refusing to investigate or enquire. The strongest evidence of communion with another world seems to possess an extraordinarily irritating effect. "If it isn't wicked it's silly, and if it isn't silly it's wicked," says the woman. "Rot!" exclaims the abbreviated man. "You believe this twaddle?" cries a third.

Such are the flowers of speech too frequently overheard. That Spiritualists are dealing with fixed truths is the only notion that never penetrates the brain. It is true that the publicity of the last few months has greatly quickened investigation, but it has simultaneously roused a tempest of controversy. In certain classes an unobtrusive believer has not to wave in the gentlest manner the red rag of Spiritualism to bring down an avalanche of condemnation and ridicule. Apostles of the "New Revelation"—Oliver Lodge, Crawford and the big guns generally—are even yet scarcely aware, I think, of the full tide of flowing opposition. One comforting fact emerges from this mountain of senseless rubble. It is more and more evident that the personally convinced Spiritualist does not care a filbert for adverse opinion or criticism. Even the juggernaut of the Press is powerless to evolve more than a passing smile.

The human mind is so constructed that "I have seen," "I have heard," "I have touched" must always prove stronger than the stoutest argument. Faith by itself has proved insufficient for vast numbers, but when some of the most, sanest intellects of these and other days come out into the open and corroborate our ordinary faculties by the light of myriad tested experiences the great hope crystallises into exquisite certainty. Belief develops by leaps and bounds, and turns to a tower of strength standing four square, defying attacks from the biggest "Bertha" of Press or Church. Created argument defeats its own object. We know the result of convincing a man against his will; and woman is no times more fiercely "of the same opinion still." Better far better—take a silent back seat and let remonstrance and vilification rage unchecked. We can afford to wait for the cessation of the thunderbolts.

In the long run the most vicious attacks have no more effect than the ripple of the tide against the rock of Gibraltar. Let me repeat it. No influence can shatter the personal equation. He or she has arrived through sore distress at the solid level, aided and abetted by circumstances, memory and keen human senses.

A lovely flower of perfect faith often blooms suddenly and in unexpected quarters. A hard-headed modern young man strolls into a "direct voice" séance in a spirit of cynical curiosity; or is sent, maybe, by a strong and greedy editor in search of a "scoop." He leaves in ecstatic bewilderment, taken to his foundations. He has heard the voice that has long been still; has recognised a peculiar laugh, or been startled by some unmistakable trick of speech or manner. It is over. The barred door is flung wide; a dazzling light shines through, and he enters into his kingdom.

The Bishop of London is a good and great man; has done much for his fellows, and lived the selfless life. His lines are cast with the high and mighty in the exalted places of the earth, but he is still a wanderer and outsider. Some day, perhaps, he may sit at the feet of Dr. Crawford, of Glasgow, or climb to the attic of an obscure tailor in Glasgow. Then, in seeking to know what he can know, he may obtain here and now—his exceeding great reward.

WESTERN civilisation is pagan and materialistic, and it is therefore competitive and self-regarding. Here and there Christianity has modified its essential brutality, but in its softness, in its disregard of the ordinary human sanctities, still outjuggles the jungles. Its characteristic products are the slum and the war. — RICHARD ROBERTS in "The Albert Journal."

From "The Principles of Love," by Lewis Lincoln (published by the author at 19, Clyde-road, Addiscombe, Croydon), we take the following excerpt: "The use of material symbols to express spiritual concepts is a wide and universal thing. It possessed by sages and spiritual philosophers in all languages, nations and languages. It is the re-action from material symbolism that makes of spiritually-minded people so-called agnostics, atheists, infidels. It is frankly and openly impossible to express the phenomena of consciousness in terms of material. The phenomena of human conduct, human actions, human social effect, are in no way touched, revealed, or explained by Haeckel's 'Riddle of the Universe.' The similarity of the physical parts of the ape of man in no sense explains, elucidates or reveals the difference of right and wrong in human social relations." There are some good thoughts in this tiny brochure, but it is unwise to command much of a sale at the price charged. viz., or post free 10½d.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

Miss H. A. Dallas writes:—

I am very glad my friend E.N. has sent an account to *LIGHT* of the experience she had with Mr. Hope. The photograph, of which she has kindly sent me a copy, is undoubtedly an excellent likeness of her son. I gave it to my sister to examine, together with the photograph taken in 1915, and she studied it from the point of view of an artist accustomed to paint miniatures of those she has not seen and therefore trained in making minute observation of details and taking careful measurements, and her verdict was most satisfactory. The lines of the face and the measurements are the same in the two photographs.

I have thought it worth while to mention this, because some readers of E.N.'s report may make the mental reservation that a general similarity may be found between two faces without their being identical, and that some persons are quick to discover a likeness when the wish is to find it, even when the similarity is not very marked.

These objections do not apply to this case. My sister does not personally know my friend E.N. and has never seen either her or her son.

This is not a shadowy image, but a clear face with a sweet and intelligent expression; he is looking at his mother with tender feeling.

I showed the photographs to another impartial witness, a critical friend, and he said it was the best spirit photograph he had seen; and he added, "It is the same face."

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS PARASITES.

A VOICE FROM THE PAST.

The disaffected, the come-outers of every Church and creed, the Bohemians, the Ishmaelites, the iconoclasts, all gather round the new standard, and press eagerly into the new camp—not that they have any special interest or care for the new views that are propounded, but in the hope that the new party may furnish them with new opportunities, and that from the new platform and vantage ground they may be able to work for their own particular purposes. Now this applies, I think, pre-eminently to Spiritualism—every fad and fancy, every crank and crotchet, every wandering heresy and fantastic theory seems to fasten upon it. We have Theosophy without a God, Religion without a faith, Spiritualism devoid of spirits, and a Psychology from which the psyche is altogether eliminated. Has a man a mission to establish a new religion, to found a new Christianity, to revive an old superstition, is he the recipient of a new revelation, or has he been favoured by the angels with a recipe for the elixir of life warranted to confer health and beauty, and immortal youth, at the small cost of five dollars a bottle—the Spiritualist Press is the very place in which to advertise the precious boon to a much suffering and waiting world. All the old and baseless speculations of the Orient, doctrines of Metempsychosis and Transmigration, graceful conceits of the Rosicrucian—all the superstitions gathered from all the ends of the earth are revived. We have spooks and shells, Kobolds and Gnomes, Elementals and Elementaries, Sylphs, Undines and Salamanders—all resuscitated and proclaimed from the housetop of Modern Spiritualism. The roar and cry of all the wild beasts of the forest may be heard in our travelling caravan; creatures of every kind, clean and unclean, take refuge in our Noah's Ark, especially those who can find no rest for the sole of their foot, either outside the ark or within it. We have had many definitions of Spiritualism; to some of these no reasonable exception can be taken, but after all, the world will judge Spiritualism very much by Spiritualists, not by what they profess, but by what they are. The world cares little about verbal definitions, however accurate, it cares more for men, it cares for us in the concrete rather than in the abstract, and it will judge us by what we are and the company with whom we habitually consort. We are not all unmindful of the obligation to entertain strangers, to dispense large and liberal hospitality to visitors, with the proviso that they do not assume the character and swell into the proportions of an invading army. But what can be thought of the motley folk who huddle together for shelter from the pitiless rain of public opinion under cover of our protecting and capacious umbrella? I daresay some of you will have read the very interesting memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini. You will call to mind a very striking incident in his life. He was about to cast a famous statue, the largest in the world. Just at the supreme moment he found that a portion of the metal he had relied upon had been abstracted. In his rage he seized upon everything in the shape of metal which came to hand, regardless of its character and value: here a massive goblet, there a golden urn or a precious work of art, together with the meanest household utensils—all were seized and flung into the melting-pot to complete the statue. Something like this is very much the case with Spiritualism; things rich and rare, and things base and mean, are all thrown into the crucible, and when the very composite statue is produced this is placed upon a pedestal to stand before all the world as the image and representation of Modern Spiritualism.

—From an Address by MR. THOMAS SHORTER in *LIGHT* for March 2nd, 1889.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND: ITS NEEDS.

LIGHT, not being a journal run entirely on commercial lines, is now considerably dependent on this fund in view of the enormous increase in the expenses of its production. We learn that there has been a heavy falling off in this source of maintenance and are reluctantly compelled to make another appeal to our wealthier supporters.

SPIRIT CONTROL: SOME REFLECTIONS AND CRITICISMS.

BY AN UNCONVENTIONAL SITTER.

Spirit-control, as exhibited in trance or inspirational speaking, is inseparably bound up with Spiritualism. It frequently forms an inquirer's first experience of spirit manifestation, and is of all phases of mediumship the most perplexing and unsatisfactory. It is perplexing because it closely parallels certain other well-known phenomena in the domain of psychology, and it is unsatisfactory because it offers little, beyond the assertion of the medium, in proof of a controlling intelligence.

At the outset one is tempted to ask, "Is it really a spirit that has temporary possession of the medium's brain, or is it a case of auto-suggestion in which an imagined personality is endowed with appropriate details and utterances and dramatically presented as of spirit origin, just as in a dream a conversation may be carried on with a person without the dreamer being aware that he is supplying the answers to his own questions?"

In hypnosis, if it is suggested to a subject that he is a vocalist or an orator, he will immediately assume the part to the best of his ability, and he may even exhibit more talent under hypnotic influence than in the normal condition, but no one familiar with the facts would think of associating his efforts with spirit agency. If hypnotic suggestion can accomplish so much, why should we hesitate to attribute a similar power to auto-suggestion in the case of certain peculiarly sensitive persons? Then, again, we have the remarkable phenomenon of multiple personality, as evidenced by well-attested cases in medical literature, where alternating states of personality, mentality, and even moral character have been a pronounced feature in the condition of the patient—changes transcending anything observed under spirit control, and yet alienists have not found it necessary to seek an explanation in agencies external to the sufferer.

Spiritualists sometimes try to justify their belief in spirit control by pointing out that "controls" have been known to criticise their mediums, to make public little failings, or to undertake to influence them to the performance of certain acts at a specified time, but instances of this kind cannot be accepted as evidence of an independent intelligence apart from that of the medium because the same thing has been observed when multiple personality was being investigated—one personality often discussing or criticising another, or even exhibiting a marked dislike or antagonism.

Bearing these facts in mind, is it necessary to go outside the medium for an explanation of spirit-control? An inspirational address, as a rule, reflects the intelligence of the speaker—he does not display greater intellectual ability in the trance than out of it; and, even if he did, a subjective rather than a spiritualised condition would seem, as in hypnosis, to be indicated.

If we admit the possibility of spirit intervention in mental processes it at once becomes exceedingly difficult to determine what belongs to the ordinary, or everyday, mind and what to the spirit mind or intelligence. A man talking to himself or absent-mindedly scribbling upon his blotting-pad might assert that he did so under spirit influence, and his claim would appear to be quite as reasonable as that put forward by the controlled medium.

Then there is the question of spirit healing and the diagnosis of disease. This seems to be well attested so far as successful results are concerned, but it is undoubtedly a form of suggestive treatment rendered unusually potent by being associated, both in the mind of the healer and in that of the patient, with the idea of a spirit doctor. And here one would like to call attention to the significant fact that spirit doctors and advertised controls can be relied upon punctually to keep appointments, while séance-room spirits have to be tediously, and sometimes fruitlessly, waited for.

It would be of considerable interest and scientific value if persons subject to spirit control would record any particular sensations, physical or mental, that they may experience in connection with this condition. Is there any loss of consciousness or sensibility during the control, and on returning to the normal condition is there a full or only partial recollection of what has been said or done? Such information would be useful in determining the psychological significance of the phenomenon.

They that love beyond the world cannot be separated by it. Death cannot kill what never dies; nor can Souls ever be divided which love and live in the same divine principle.—
WILLIAM PENN.

"LIFE AND MATTER."

The death of Haeckel, which has led to some renewed demand for his books, should also direct attention to Sir Oliver Lodge's "Life and Matter" (Williams and Norgate), in which the materialistic philosophy of the German biologist is considered and effectually answered. It is now becoming apparent, even to the ordinary thinker, that what has chiefly led the world astray has been the half truth—the notion that because some particular idea appears to be true its opposite must necessarily be false. Haeckel found his truth in Substance, Matter. To him "the law of Substance" was the universal law, and lo, everything which related, or appeared to relate, to a spiritual universe or a spiritual idea became instantly false. Sir Oliver Lodge sees that both ideas are true, and integrates the apparently opposing truths in his philosophical scheme. Those who desire to study the question in its completeness should, after reading Haeckel, take up the work of Sir Oliver Lodge, which does not merely oppose, but also supplements, the conclusions of Haeckel, who, it may be said at once, was a very acute, but not a very comprehensive, thinker.

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND THEORIES.

Mr. A. Matthews (Balham) writes:—

The phenomena cited by "Brigadier-General" can not only be explained by the operation of the subconscious mind, but in the absence of any proof that another explanation is the correct one, the subconscious mind theory is the obvious solution.

In the first place, evidently someone in the circle must have psychic powers, even if only to a limited extent, or the phenomena would not take place. The subconscious mind is extremely suggestible and will try always to carry out suggestions which it receives, whether from discarnate intelligences or from living persons. The mere fact of sitting in a circle is already a suggestion and the subconscious mind acting on this suggestion gives communications purporting to be from some individual known to the sitters—in the present instance, "G."

It is quite possible that the messages come from "G." himself, but there is no reason to think this without clear proof. This is not an idea or mere theory, but is well known to all psychic investigators; the whole matter is exhaustively dealt with in Myers' "Human Personality."

"THE THINNING OF THE VEIL."

The "Seeker" for August contains an appreciative notice by Caroline Eccles of Mrs. Bruce Wallace's book, "The Thinning of the Veil." "There can be little doubt," says the reviewer, "that the veil between the world of the seen and the unseen, the material and the spiritual, is thinning; evidences of this are apparent on every hand, as only those who are biassed and blinded by prejudice can fail to see. Amongst these evidences few can be more convincing than this undoubtedly sincere account of experiences obtained, not by forced and artificial methods, but by natural, simple evolution of psychic faculties, latent, as we are assured, in the whole race and in due season to be attained by every individual."

The appreciation is preceded, however, by a note of warning, doubtless needed in some quarters, against the unwisdom of accepting any teaching claiming to come from beyond the veil without subjecting it to the same examination by the same critical reasoning that we should apply to more ordinary teaching:—

"The temptation to put aside our reason and fall into a disposition of too credulous receptivity is perhaps one of the chief dangers to those who deal with psychic matters, while it is reasonable to believe that the human soul may not be less subject to error when it is discarnate than when it dwells within a body of flesh. And there is no more need for bated breath and an attitude of mental genuflection and prostration in approaching these spirits from beyond the veil than in our everyday association with the embodied spirits who walk amongst us in the physical world. The thought arising in your mind or mine may be no less divine in origin than those we read here, as having been received in an hour when consciousness was lifted above the level of that of every day and the senses were awakened to keener and finer faculty. For we must not forget that at every moment of our lives it is our blessed privilege to be—if we will—in closest, most intimate association with the Source and Author of all spirit."

In making these remarks the writer has in view what she regards as seeming discrepancies in the teaching of the book. But in pointing these out (and she herself suggests their explanation) she disclaims doing so in any spirit of captious criticism, "or with any failure to give deepest gratitude for the many lovely thoughts and descriptions of visions of exquisite beauty which the book contains, which bear their own testimony to their origin from the Source of all Truth and Beauty."

HUSB FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwell, Elstree, Herts., acknowledges with thanks the following donations: Emma, £2; A Friend, £1; Mrs. Smith, £1.

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.

- Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., 3, Vere-street, Oxford-street, W.1.*—6.30, Mr. Ernest Meads.
- The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, W.2.*—11, Mr. Ernest Hunt; 6.30, Mr. E. W. Beard. Wednesday, September 3rd, 7.30, Mrs. Alice Jamrach.
- Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.*—11, Miss Ellen Conroy; 6.30, Mrs. Edith Marriott.
- Walthamstow, 342, Hoe-street.*—7, Mr. Jones, address and clairvoyance.
- Shepherd's Bush.*—73, Becklow-road.—11, public circle; 7, Mr. F. Eveleigh. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Stenson.
- Kingston-on-Thames.*—*Bishop's Hall, Thames-street.*—6.30, Mrs. Harper, address and clairvoyance.
- Lewisham.*—*The Priory, High-street.*—6.30, Mrs. L. Harvey.
- Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway.*—6.30, Madame de Beaurepaire. Wednesday, 7.30, Mr. A. Vout Peters; silver collection.
- Peckham.*—*Lausanne-road.*—7, Mr. and Mrs. Connor, address and clairvoyance. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Mary Clempson.
- Brighton.*—*Athenæum Hall.*—11.15 and 7, Miss Mills, address and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mr. Everett.
- Battersea.*—*45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.*—11.15, circle; 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. Sturdy, address, and Mrs. Bloodworth, clairvoyance. September 4th, 8.15, Mrs. George.
- Woolwich and Plumstead.*—*Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.*—7, Mr. Tayler Gwinn (President U.L.S.), address. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Marriott, address and clairvoyance.
- Holloway.*—*Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).*—11, Mr. A. W. Jones; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mrs. Crowder. Wednesday, Mr. Podmore. September 7th, 11, Mr. T. O. Todd; 7, Mr. A. Punter.
- Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.*—*Old Steine Hall.*—11.30 and 7, address and clairvoyance, Mr. A. Vout Peters; 3, Lyceum. Monday, 7.30, great meeting, Athenæum Hall, North-street, "Messages from the Living Dead," Mr. A. Vout Peters. Inquirers' meeting, Tuesday, at 3. Thursday, 7.15, questions and clairvoyance. A hearty welcome.

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	6-30
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ...		7-0
*Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earham Hall, Earham 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, 3, Vere-street, Oxford-street, W.1. ...		6-30
*Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road ...	11-30	7-0
*Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Braemar 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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