

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,019.—VOL. XXXIX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1919. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.
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COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. F. W. South, the Manager, to whom Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A daily newspaper tells us that "animals *do* dream," a question on which, as a lover of animals, we never harboured any doubt. We have observed the antics of our dog when, slumbering, he moaned over some disappointment, being worsted, perhaps, in some visionary encounter with another dog, or it may have been from vexation over the escape of that enemy of the canine species—a cat. Now and again the dog's legs would go through the pantomime of galloping. It was quite easy to guess what Fido was dreaming about. The discovery has led, in some quarters, to philosophy—of a sort. That is to say, the conclusion is that if animals dream they are probably very near akin to "man, proud man." Human superiority to the beast is challenged. What right has man to set himself up as an immortal being? Such a claim is based on pure sentiment, and so forth. We all know the argument; only some of us are a little surprised at the defective reasoning powers of these cynical thinkers, whose appeal is also to sentiment, a reactionary sentiment which, revolting against what it conceives to be human vanity rushes to the other extreme of misanthropic humility.

* * *

Many times have we read emotional appeals to man to abase himself in the presence, say, of the starry heavens or some other spectacle of the grandeur of Nature. So far, of course, as such sentiments applied to the question of reverence towards the manifestations of Deity we could understand them. But man's inferiority to some mighty sun or planet we could never see. The inferiority was merely a physical matter. We refused to stand mute and gasping in the presence of mere stupendous mass. How can man be inferior to that which he can weigh and measure and analyse? Such spurious sentimentalism is very much of the same type as that which tells us that the lower animals are our equals, which bids us observe that the dog dreams, therefore it has a psychological nature and therefore—much else which does not follow at all, except in a mind disposed to cynicism. We are not concerned here to enter into the question of the precise difference between man and the lower animals. There is probably no hard and fast line; it may be simply a matter of development, of evolution, a higher degree of consciousness involving self-consciousness, the sense of individuality. All life, we are told, is *one*.

* * *

Reading lately "The Man of Genius," by Cesare Lombroso, we came upon the following:—

Maudsley remarks that epileptics often believe themselves patriarchs and prophets. He thinks that by mistaking their hallucinations for divine revelations they have largely contributed to the foundation of religious beliefs. Ann

Lee, who founded the sect of Shakers, was an epileptic; she saw Christ come to her physically and spiritually. The vision which transformed Saint Paul from a persecutor into an apostle seems to have been of the same order.

This it may be remarked, in passing, was the conclusion of that same Lombroso who later, as a result of his investigations in psychic phenomena, became convinced of their reality and significance as proofs of human survival—a triumph of fact over theory. It may seem an undignified illustration, but whenever our clerical opponents seize upon the arguments against Spiritualism furnished by the materialistic school of which Lombroso was at one time a leader, we are reminded of an episode in Dickens' "Sketches By Boz." We mean the case of Mr. Augustus Cooper, who, while in a state of mental confusion during a quarrel, "expressed his entire concurrence" in an insulting observation directed against his friends. That blunder, as we remember, involved Mr. Augustus Cooper in terrible troubles afterwards. We foresee troubles for our theological critics equally, because the materialistic school of thinkers to whom they appeal are clear-headed enough to see that the psychic element in human history is all of a piece, whether ancient or modern. All that need be said on the question of madness and degeneracy is that there is a healthy "psychism" and a diseased one, a fact quite familiar to all who study the matter without bias.

* * *

Mr. H. G. Wells, in his famous book, "Mr. Britling Sees it Through," puts these pregnant observations into the mouth of the leading character in the story:—

You see, all organisation, with its implication of finality, is death. . . . What you organise you kill. Organised morals or organised religion or organised thought are dead morals and dead religion and dead thought. Yet some organisation you must have. . . . The unorganised side of life is the real life.

There is much more to the same effect. But we have given the essential portions of Mr. Britling's conclusions. And we are rather inclined to agree with them. You *must* have organisation, as he remarks, but it is the unorganised portion of a movement that supplies the life and power to the rest. That is the reason why, while appealing for organisation, we are not anxious to systematise the whole of our own movement, even if that were possible. We are aware of the existence of multitudes of people who, while accepting our facts and philosophy, remain free lances—unorganised. Many of them do more valuable work in that position than if they wore our distinctive livery. To put it in another way, the point of a spear may be more important than the butt, but it is very ineffective without it. And if we are faced with the paradox that the only sound form of organisation is that which is incomplete we are not disturbed. Life is full of these paradoxes.

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 five to seven, to meet inquirers and give them information and advice.

SIR O. LODGE AND A MEDICAL CRITIC.

The Editor of "The Medical Press" wrote as follows in the issue of September 3rd:—

My own position in regard to Spiritualism is that of the agnostic, inasmuch as I have not seriously studied the subject first hand. Nevertheless, I must confess to having a strong leaning towards scepticism in this matter. The *a priori* argument against the existence of departed spirits capable of revealing themselves to living humans seems to me overwhelming. Consider this one alone. The definite proof of the existence of such spirits would constitute a discovery beside which all the other discoveries of man taken together would pale, affording, as it would, unmistakable evidence of the survival of the personality after the disruption of the body. Seeing then what tremendous issues are involved in the problem of Spiritualism, it is difficult to believe that, if departed spirits, capable of revealing themselves to us, do actually hover about this planet of ours, the fact would not long since have been established beyond all cavil.

I may be asked how I reconcile this sceptical attitude with the fact that men of exceptional intellectual calibre and high scientific attainments, such as William Crooks (*sic*) and Oliver Lodge, to say nothing of such gifted men as Conan Doyle, are convinced and fervid believers.

That men of this stamp should accept evidence which to the average common-sense person seems palpably absurd, is a fact of supreme psychological interest. In attempting to explain it it is necessary to remember how largely feeling bulks in belief. Not only is belief itself a state of feeling—we say we *feel* convinced—but our beliefs are apt to be dominated by our feelings. We are all too apt to believe what we want to believe. The Spiritualist, intellectual and otherwise, is so burningly anxious to believe, that in investigating supposed spiritualistic phenomena his reason is not permitted to have free, unhampered sway.

In dealing with the dry facts of physical and chemical science, there is little opportunity for intellectual bamboozlement. The investigator is conscious that he is confronted by problems which are only capable of solution by close observation and reasoning; he is continually finding himself up against hard, unmistakable facts—facts, they say, are stubborn things—and if he arrives at conclusions at variance with them the untenability of his position, sooner or later, becomes obvious.

But when the problem to be investigated is no mere physical one, but involves so grave and stupendous an issue as the existence of a life hereafter, the opportunities for self-deception in the case of men of intense feeling are dangerously great. Such men as William Crooks (*sic*) and Oliver Lodge combine exceptional intellectual powers with a rich emotional endowment, a combination before which I bow in humble admiration, recognising as I do that true greatness of mind implies something more than the capacity for mechanical thinking. Nevertheless for all their intellectual wealth I venture to think that these great men have unconsciously been led astray by the very richness and intensity of their emotional endowment. If such is the case, the fact is one, as I say, of supreme psychological interest.

A COURTEOUS REJOINDER.

To the above Sir Oliver Lodge replied, in the issue of September 17th, as follows:—

Referring to your editorial notes on September 3rd, pages 176 and 177, the "strong leaning towards scepticism" to which you confess is very natural and proper. That is how most of us began, till we were confronted by facts, which, as you say, "are stubborn things." Your assumption that we were led by our emotions is not justified by reality. I was not "burningly anxious to believe" when I began investigating, and I have no reason to suppose that Crookes was either. The assumption is merely invented to explain something which appears otherwise unintelligible.

You speak of a "rich emotional endowment" with which some men are endowed. No doubt some men are, but I cannot claim to be one of them. That, again, is an assumption not based upon fact.

The argument that the discovery of the survival of personality would be a tremendous one and therefore would have been made long ago, is quite invalid. There is no reason to suppose that all the most important discoveries have already been made. There are no doubt *a priori* feelings, or so-called arguments, against accepting the evidence; but this apparently legitimate prejudice may, and ultimately will, have to give way to accumulated facts of observation. That the conclusions are unpopular in scientific circles is true enough, as also that those scientific men who testify to their gradual conviction suffer disability on that account. All that may be heartily admitted. But the business of a scientific man is to ascertain what is true, not what is popular. There is just as much possibility of error in denying these facts and conclusions as there is in accepting them. Posterity will recognise on which side truth lies, but during our present day and generation the path of worldly wisdom lies on the side of conservatism and orthodoxy. So,

historically, it has always been, when new chapters of knowledge begin to be opened and when hitherto unrecognised facts are clamouring for acceptance.

I have no complaint to make against your attitude, which sounds quite reasonable and is certainly polite. Nevertheless, in the long run, you and many others will find that with the best intentions you have been opposing the cause of truth and have been depending upon assumptions rather than upon facts.

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THE FIXED IDEA.

The position of Mr. Walter Mann, the author of "The Follies and Frauds of Spiritualism" (Watts and Co., 3/6 net), is a simple one—it is that all spiritualist phenomena are fraudulent or delusions. He gives, as facts, various hypotheses how Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and other distinguished experimentalists might have been deceived. While some of these guesses may be useful to experimenters, as indicating how some fraudulent "mediums" have imitated genuine phenomena, it would be a waste of time seriously to criticise Mr. Mann's hypotheses regarding what might have taken place at séances at which he was not present. The chief authorities on whom he relies are Mr. Podmore, Dr. Mercier, Mr. Clodd, Mr. Maskelyne, Prof. Tyndall, and Prof. Ray Lankester. Fortunately, Spiritualism is, from one point of view, a branch of experimental psychology. Fresh experiments are continually verifying former ones. Mr. Mann, of course, does not touch on the experiments of Dr. Crawford, Dr. Schrenck-Notzing, or Dr. Geley, and he prefers to sum up with two *obiter dicta*. The first is his own: "A great deal more could be written to expose the folly and fraud responsible for the prevalent beliefs in Telepathy and Spiritualism; but enough has been said to convince any unbiased reader of the utter want of scientific evidence in favour of these delusions." The second is from Dr. Tyndall's "Fragments of Science," published in 1876, "Science has given us all the knowledge of the universe which we now possess, while Spiritualism has added nothing to that knowledge."

Mr. Walter Mann is a convinced materialist; in his "Science and the Soul" he proves to his own satisfaction that "Modern science knows nothing of the soul; it teaches that the mind is a product of matter, and that the higher intellectual faculties are a function of the grey matter of the brain." It is therefore quite natural that he should be impermeable to any evidence inconsistent with that fixed idea. Some day he will certainly discover that experimental psychology is also a science and that psychic phenomena are its foundation. Meanwhile he is somewhat behind the times.

HUSB FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts., acknowledges with thanks the following donations: Trier, £5; Mrs. Grieve, £1; Mr. Wakeford (Johannesburg), £1; A. Scott, 5s.

THROUGH THE MEDIATION OF ANGELS.

SOME MICHAELMAS REFLECTIONS.

By H. A. DALLAS.

As we approach the ancient festival of St. Michael and All Angels our thoughts turn to the consideration of its cosmic significance. The scriptures of the great religions abound in references to spiritual beings; the ancient Zoroastrians taught that everyone has an attendant spirit, to guide and help him on the path of life. The Hebrews may have acquired the idea of guardian angels by intercourse with Zoroastrians during their captivity in Chaldea, but it is hardly necessary to assume this, for the conception of the universe as peopled by spiritual beings of various kinds is one which arises readily in every thoughtful mind. It seems inconceivable that man should be the only, or highest, intelligent created being in the Universe. If we once grasp the notion of a Spirit Universe in which, indeed, the Divine Spirit is omnipresent and immanent, but in which the Divine activity is manifested through an innumerable and almost infinite number of agencies, the conception is so fascinating and seems so reasonable that it is likely to incorporate itself permanently into our mental scheme. Everyone has some sort of mental scheme of the Universe, either materialistic or spiritualistic, and the belief in angelic beings throws light upon some of the perplexities which attend any mental scheme. One of the greatest of these perplexities is involved in the existence of such ugly phases of animal life as those presented by the butcher bird, for instance, a bird which impales its prey and leaves it to die what seems to us a cruel death. Are we to regard this instinct as directly inspired by the Most High, the Spirit of Infinite Goodness?

In "The Passing of Arthur" Tennyson makes the ideal king moan in his tent:—

"O me! for why is all around me
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond
And enter it, and make it beautiful?"

Tennyson in these lines was giving expression to a view of the Universe which seemed to a student like Alfred Russel Wallace most reasonable. He held a very similar view, and expressed it in his interesting book, "The World of Life." In that work he intimates that he has been "forced to the assumption of an infinite God" by the study of the universe and the development of life and mind, but that it seems to him only logical to assume "that an almost infinite series of grades of beings" are the agents by which the infinite Being originates, develops, and controls the universe.

Wallace suggests that "the whole purport of the material universe is the development of spiritual beings who in the infinite variety of their natures—what we term their *characters*—shall, to some extent, reflect that infinite variety of the whole inorganic and organic worlds through which they have been developed," and he adds that if we "suppose (as we must suppose if we owe our existence to Deity) that such variety—of character—could have been produced in no other way" than that by which we see characters are actually being produced, "then we may reasonably suppose that there may have been a vast system of co-operation of such grades of being, from a very high grade of power and intelligence down to those unconscious, or almost unconscious, 'cell-souls' posited by Haeckel."

Wallace conceives that the control of the higher souls over the lower may be by some process of thought-transference and postulates "a body of what we may term organising spirits who would be charged with the duty of so influencing the myriads of cell-souls as to carry out their part of the work with accuracy and certainty." It is easy to see that if this conception is at all correct there is room for imperfection and mistakes in the product of these finite minds, and some of the facts in the universe which are so difficult to reconcile with the Perfection of God may thus be accounted for.

There are some who will shrink from this idea, because it seems to them to put God at a distance, but this is a fallacy. God is not put at a distance by the fact of human parentage, and yet in human parentage, and in many other human agencies, we recognise that His life and power are mediated to us by finite and fallible instruments. To believe in angelic agency in the production and guidance of the universe merely involves an extension of an already obvious principle. The notion that it puts a distance between God and His Universe is due to the inability of the limited human mind to conceive of Divine immanence and omnipresence. We do not really grasp the truth that "in Him we live and move and have our being," and that this applies to all beings of every grade, so that the Divine Spirit is all in all, but under limitation, and that He wills the limitations which give to these various agents the power to act and the opportunity to develop various characters in acting as His agents.

Wallace concludes that "the vast whole is therefore a manifestation of His power—perhaps His very self—but by the agency of ministering angels through many descending grades of intelligence and power" ("The World of Life," pp. 395, 396.).

This noble conception is in harmony with the cosmic significance of the Festival of St. Michael and All Angels. It has its possible dangers, of course. To some it may seem

easier to think of angels and to pray to angels than to think of God and speak to Him. So does it seem easier to a child to turn to its mother or father for food and guidance, than to God. It needs growth and effort and imagination to believe wholeheartedly in God as Spirit, inspiring all that is best in all beings, and it needs the experience of life, of sorrow, and disappointment, of failure and of death to teach us to recognise our need of the Infinite Wisdom and Love and to cease from idolatry. The essence of idolatry is the tendency to stay the imagination on the lesser agency by which God manifests, and so to forget the Eternal Cause immanent in all.

SIR OLIVER LODGE EXPLAINS.

Unauthorised, gossipy paragraphs have appeared in some papers about the projected move from Edgbaston of Sir Oliver Lodge.

In answer to an inquiry, Sir Oliver empowers us to say that the reason why he determined, ultimately, not to take a house in either Hampstead or Wimbledon was not because he was "warned in a dream" against those attractive places, but because he found that he would be too accessible to interviewers and interruptions and requests for services of all kinds; he found, in fact, that the neighbourhood of London was likely to militate against the serious work which he has in contemplation, and he is therefore planning to go deeper into the country. But he further tells us that he is not likely to move this side of Christmas, possibly not till Easter, and that he has nothing more to say on the subject at present.

NATURE'S MANIFESTATION—THE SEANCE.

OLD SCOTTISH WASHERWOMAN'S RETURN.

Mr. J. Stoddart, Falkirk, writes in the "Christian Commonwealth" of the 10th instant:—

While acknowledging that he knows too little about the occult to offer an opinion regarding the value of the seance, Rev. G. Stanley Russell proceeds to give an opinion, and an opinion calculated to create a prejudice.*

Not one seance in a thousand is held in darkness, and it is "weird" only in the imagination of those unacquainted with it. Personally I attend few seances, but I have always been able to recognise that it is in those very features of the seance that "culture" is so ready to disdain that we find the most profound significance.

Some years ago one of the most gifted contributors to the "Christian Commonwealth" expressed the opinion that if there was a future life it would only be for such as had formed what he called a "spiritual centre"; and Dr. L. H. Hough in the sermon published in your columns last week says the character of Jesus made it easy to believe in His resurrection. So far good. But what of the great mass of mankind who have not formed that "spiritual centre," and whose characters would make it difficult to believe in their survival? Let us be practical.

What, for example, of that poor Irish labourer in the city of Glasgow who, after a spell of unemployment during a severe winter, and after spending his last sixpence in the common lodging-house, wandered out and put an end to his trouble in the Clyde?

Or that old Scotch washer-woman with no belief in a future life, given to taking "a drop too much" and pilfering from her best friends as she had opportunity, and at the end of her hard life found dead on the washing-house floor? What gospel do we find for such as these in the philosophical deductions referred to? None. But how different when we turn to Nature's manifestation—the seance.

I have heard that Irish labourer, at a seance that was neither dark nor "weird," tell of the manner of his exit from this life, and earnestly urge his hearers "for God's sake" to try and make conditions somewhat better for the labouring man than they were while he was here.

I have heard the old washer-woman assure those who knew her here that she had found the upward path; exhort them to the practice of mutual helpfulness, remarking "Mind ye, the little kindnesses ye dae on earth are big when ye come over here"—a sentiment very like "Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water, etc."

Is it not time the pulpit divested itself of its prejudices, and, instead of seeking to depreciate the seance, set about learning its lessons?

* Mr. Stoddart might have quoted these words written by William Howitt in 1860: "If I were to go to Lord Campbell and tell him that I knew more about the business of the Court of Chancery than he did, he would laugh at me; and if Lord Campbell came to me and said that he knew more about the phenomena of Spiritualism than I do, after years of examination, I should laugh at him; and we should both laugh on the same good grounds—at the other talking of things that he had not thoroughly sifted, to a man who had."

EDITOR, LIGHT.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

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MEDIUMSHIP AND COMMON-SENSE.

Mediumship being the core and centre of all that relates to psychic evidences, we are minded to take this week a passage from Dr. W. J. Crawford's latest book, "Experiments in Psychical Science," as a subject for brief comment. The quotation is from the chapter, "Questions and Answers":—

Q. Is it the case, so far as your experience goes, that mediums are hysterical or weak-minded?

A. It is difficult to answer this by a direct affirmative or negative. Miss Goligher [the medium in the experiments of Dr. Crawford] is an extremely practical and strong-minded young woman. She is not excitable, but is placid and cheerful. As I have already mentioned, however, her mediumship has never been pressed. What might happen if she were to sit three or four times a week in promiscuous circles I would not like to say, but I think there can be little doubt she would suffer.

Some professional mediums are, I think, not exactly stable. A good many of them are excitable and given to exaggeration. A few are decidedly eccentric. I have never met one whom I would consider weak-minded, but I think, on the whole, their calling is not very suitable for them, either physically or mentally.

We have met in our time hundreds of mediums, professional and non-professional, and, as regards quality, good, bad and indifferent. Some of them, by the way, regarded with horror Spiritualism and all its works. They knew, in most cases, little or nothing about it, had heard it spoken of contemptuously, and acted on what they heard. Their own experiences, however, they regarded as something sacred and peculiar to themselves, having no connection with the detestable superstitions of others. We derived no little amusement from our observation of these persons. There were a few cases, however, with which we were inclined to sympathise. These were instances in which the mediums knew a great deal of the subject of Spiritualism and had been active in it, but had suffered so much at the hands of vampire hordes of greedy and callous phenomena-hunters and medium-baiters that they retired from the arena, broke off all association with Spiritualism, and thereafter used their gifts only rarely and in strict privacy. That, however, as we have said, is by the way. It may have some interest for students of the matter.

When we come to examine mediumship closely we see that in every case it is a question of interior sensitiveness. We have met many ruggedly healthy people, sound not only in body, but in mind, who were excellent mediums, but, of course, the sensitive spot was there, although not apparent on the surface. When harm resulted it was always through abuse of the gift. Of course there are sickly, eccentric and unbalanced people amongst mediums, but as we know of no class in the community which is exempt from the presence of people of this kind, the fact does not disconcert us in the least. Again, we remember that highly sensitive people are often disposed to react to their surroundings. Let a person of this kind have to live in the atmosphere of people who regard him, and show that they regard him, as a kind of freak, and he is bound to show some little evidence of it in his demeanour. That is a consideration that may explain, in part at least, some of the occasional eccentricities of a medium.

But the want of balance alleged against mediums as a class recoils very much on their critics, who show a tremendous want of balance in their judgments. These people, in judging mediumship, close their eyes to the mischief that comes of pursuing other avocations. They never clamoured against such things as X-rays, radium, aeroplanes—to name but three—which have demanded an infinitely heavier toll of victims—they saw that these things were worth paying for. They illustrate

the dangers of "obsessing spirits," being themselves obsessed by the spirit of bigotry.

Suppose, for the sake of argument, we admitted that mediumship was the unhealthy and unnatural thing that it is held to be by the dwindling body of its critics. Even then we should say that it is a thing we must "go through with." It is the "only way." Humanity in losing sight of its heritage, in denying its true nature, has wandered off the path, and has to be brought back again by a strong, painful and disagreeable process. Brandy is not a good thing for man as a rule. The teetotaler is even more violent in his denunciations of it than is the anti-Spiritualist in his condemnation of mediums. But if we are to believe the doctors there are cases in which brandy will restore to life and health a person who is on the brink of death from cold and exposure. We offer the argument on purely hypothetical grounds, for we do not for one moment admit that mediumship in itself is a pernicious thing. It is implanted by Nature, that wisest of mothers, it is widespread. It is not an acquired habit, a "necessary evil," or a "desperate remedy." It comes spontaneously and when wisely used is a source of blessing to its possessors and their friends.

We hear much of the philosophy of Spiritualism and it has indeed a magnificent philosophy. But in dealing with the majority of its problems we do not find the appeal to philosophy so necessary as the resort to common-sense. Philosophy, indeed, is not of much use in dealing with the ordinary matters of everyday life. Ruskin and Thoreau were philosophers. But they were both strongly opposed to railway trains, and would have kept them out of the world if they had had the power. Fortunately, for us, common-sense prevailed. It will so prevail in this matter of mediumship which will in the end be found to be a great inheritance, even if at first it entails a certain amount of failure and misadventure. That is the course of all human things.

"THE SEVEN PURPOSES": A NOTABLE BOOK.

We have already referred to "The Seven Purposes," by Margaret Cameron (Harpers, 2dol.) as a book which has taken a tremendous hold on the American public, and is beginning to be known and quoted in this country.

Described by its sub-title as "An Experience in Psychic Phenomena," it deals with a series of communications through automatic writing by a cultured American lady who began, as she tells us, with the conviction that although the messages sometimes were remarkable, the assumption that they were dictated by "disembodied personalities" was "rather absurd." By "disembodied" she means, of course, discarnate: the idea of "disembodied personalities" would be absurd to any thoughtful person, whether Spiritualist or Materialist.

The many evidential communications received by Miss Cameron, when she took up the experiments seriously, soon sufficed to change her views, and the book deals with the progression of her studies, which took her from the consideration of purely personal messages to those of an impersonal and philosophical character. These led to the reception of teachings bearing on the question of reconstruction, and the destructive and constructive "forces" operating on the life of humanity.

The teachings are given from a special point of view and involve a special terminology, but are not difficult to follow. The communications (by question and answer) are obviously the outcome of highly intelligent minds on both sides, as the critical reader will not be slow to discover. There is evidence of the influence of the late Professor James in the philosophical scheme developed, and indeed he is referred to several times and gives communications, prefaced in a particular instance by a message promising that he will visit the circle and "give a demonstration of a philosopher simplified to a force"—a characteristic touch.

In the course of his message, which deals with the misdirection of scientists in supposing that physical phenomena alone could be recognised, he observes: "Attempts to explain spiritual phenomena by physical formulæ have been found unsuccessful by everyone save those who took refuge in denial of the thing that moved them to deny, the eternal and indestructible purpose."

It is in truth a notable book, abounding in instructive passages. Perhaps it is not over-bold to claim that it is one of the pioneers of a new order of spiritual teaching that shall be as clear, definite and closely related to the practical issues of daily life, as the old order was, in too many instances, cloudy and indeterminate.

D. G.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

A proposal to invite Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to make a lecturing tour of Australia and New Zealand is being considered by Australian Spiritualist societies. The difficulty that has to be overcome is that of finance.

The British College of Psychic Science, which, owing to war-time conditions was forced to suspend its efforts in 1917, is now preparing to resume activities. A building in West London has been secured, and the work of the College will be under the personal supervision of J. Hewat McKenzie and Barbara McKenzie.

Miss Felicia Scatcherd, in a review of "Letters from the Other Side," in the "Christian Commonwealth," comments on the fact that the output of works dealing with after-death conditions continues rather to increase than to diminish with the ending of the Great War. "Though marked by evident sincerity," she says, "such communications vary considerably in value, and many—unfortunately, as some would say—fully justify the charge of triviality so frequently launched against writings of their class."

This charge of triviality affords Miss Scatcherd an opportunity of stating a profound truth which we welcome and gladly reproduce. "Instead of being a matter for regret," she says, "this is as it should be. One law governs the communication of knowledge on all planes. That original thinker and deep student of occult science and mystical lore, the late Franz Hartmann, was always insisting on the fact 'that higher than himself no man can think.' Emanuel Swedenborg was aware of the same truth when he said that no angel was permitted to reveal truths to a man beyond that man's own capacity for receiving such knowledge, and if this little book deals with subjects of the deepest import in adequate and noble terms, it is because the questioner was so eagerly seeking and so anxious to receive the full measure of truth that might be at the disposal of her beloved and arisen friend. 'Ask, and ye shall receive,' seems to be as true to-day as when that injunction was given by the Master." Miss Scatcherd has done good service in giving such illuminating and helpful criticism.

J. G. Swift MacNeill, M.P., writing in the "Pall Mall Gazette," about the late Lord Charles Beresford, says that on one occasion Lord Charles had a very extraordinary experience, of which Mr. MacNeill had only heard reports. "I took the liberty of asking him," says Mr. MacNeill, "to tell me the incident. He immediately replied that he was on the Chinese Station in November, 1866. He went into his cabin in broad daylight and there saw his father lying dead. The vision lasted for several seconds. He immediately recorded in writing the incident, its date, time, and place, and subsequently found that his father had died at the very moment of the vision. His strong sympathies and affections invested him with some strange telepathic faculty."

In America, as in England, there is evidently something in the nature of a revival in Spiritualistic literature. The "National Spiritualist," of Chicago, just to hand, says: "Daily newspapers are vying with monthly magazines in serving their readers with fresh and thought-creating matter bearing upon the continuity of life for all mankind beyond the grave. Bound volumes surcharged with the same vital truth are issuing with increasing frequency from the presses of our prominent publishing houses."

In further proof of the effect of Spiritualism on American current literature, we find the reviewer of the Chicago "Tribune," in discussing the new summer books, saying: "I sometimes think they are all communications from the dead. These messages or purported messages from those who have 'gone on' and the works on the probability of life beyond death confess to the stark anguish of the world. . . . The sorrow of those who have suffered loss is not easily assuaged, and the desire for some word from the Unknown Country is evidenced by this continual stream of books upon the subject of the living dead."

Mr. Edmund Gosse, in the "Sunday Times," deals with the serious difficulties in the book trade, a subject of the utmost importance to Spiritualism. After referring to the formidable rise in the cost of paper, and what he describes as the monstrous increase in the expense of binding, Mr. Gosse says, "I do not pretend to understand the causes of the present crisis, but I am able to perceive their results. Already it is very difficult to ensure the publication of important works on science and the arts."

The "Christian Commonwealth" is to be congratulated for publishing the notable letter in defence of the séance reproduced by us in this issue. We note, too, that "The Guardian," in an Editorial last month, stated that "A belief in Spiritualism is not in any way incompatible with the highest religious principles." Really it's enough to make old Spiritualists rub their eyes.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's lectures on "Death and the Hereafter" at Portsmouth on September 6th, and at Bournemouth on September 12th were overwhelming successes. At the Portsmouth Town Hall and at the Winter Gardens (the largest hall in Bournemouth) he broke all records for attendance.

A friend who was present at the Bournemouth lecture heard a stranger in the crowd that was surging to the doors say in complaining tones, as he struggled for admission, "Anyone would think it was Tetrassini." Surely a fine tribute to a Spiritualist address.

Another friend who was present writes, "Sir Arthur was in splendid form, and the applause at the end was tumultuous." The effect of the meeting at Portsmouth has been that the small local Spiritual Temple has had to give place to the Portland Hall, the largest hall in Southsea, seating 1,600 people.

Sir Arthur, in his address at Bournemouth, said it was rather a coincidence that he had been booked to speak there during the meeting of the British Association; also that he was to speak at Leicester in October during the sittings of the Church Congress. The proper place for his meeting was within the British Association. They were doing the next best thing in having it during the session of that body.

Among those occupying seats on the platform at Bournemouth were the Rev. Maurice and Irene Elliott (authors of "Angels Seen To-day") and Mr. Horace Leaf. The chair was taken by Mr. F. T. Blake, president of the local Spiritualist society.

The "W. T. Stead" Borderland Library and Bureau opened its new premises at 13a, Baker-street, on Tuesday evening last. There was a large attendance, and Mrs. Mary Gordon delivered an inspiring address. An account of the proceedings will be found elsewhere in this issue.

To the query, "What books do you re-read?" addressed by "John o' London's Weekly" to a number of well-known writers, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle replied, "I seldom re-read now. Time is so short, and literature so vast and unexplored." This reminds us of Sir Arthur's recent explanation of why he was engaged in lecturing in the country at the time when he was supposed to be taking a holiday. It was to the effect that when one reached a certain age there was no time for holidays.

A biography of the remarkable personality of Edward Wyndham Tennant, by his mother, Lady Glenconner, is (says "The Globe") to be published at the Bodley Head this week.

It appears, after all, that the servant girl at the Rectory at Swanton Novers made no confession of having caused the showers of oil and water. At least, she vehemently denies any such admission. The conjurer's explanation, strangely enough, leaves Mr. Maskelyne unsatisfied.

Abraham Lincoln has provided Mr. Francis Grierson with a fascinating subject for a study which he calls "The Practical Mystic." Mr. Grierson, who is one of the most interesting writers of our time, has been too long silent. His new book, which has an introduction by John Drinkwater, shows Abraham Lincoln in a new light. I can think of no one (says a writer in the London "Evening Standard") more capable than Mr. Grierson of writing on the subject of practical mysticism, for his own character is largely compounded of that quality.

Mr. Robert Hichens' new novel, "Mrs. Marden," described as "a romance of Spiritualism," has now run through several numbers of "Nash's Illustrated Weekly." The new weekly has met with a phenomenal success.

The story tells of Evelyn Marden, a rich and worldly woman, the death of whose son in the war stuns her with grief. Her friend, Lady Terretton, who has also lost her boy, assures her that she has communicated with him, and vainly, at first, urges Mrs. Marden to do the same with her son, Ronald. Later the sceptic is induced to meet a famous medium at Lady Terretton's house.

That Mr. Hichens is familiar to some extent with psychic things will be apparent from the words in which Lady Terretton describes what took place with regard to her son: "At the very moment of his death I seemed to see him standing beside me like a shadow, with his eyes fixed on mine. I knew he had passed over before the telegram came. But we are still together." It will be interesting to see how Mr. Hichens develops his story.

WITH THE "SPIRIT DIAMOND" CIRCLE.

By ABRAHAM WALLACE, M.D.

In *LIGHT* of the 9th ult. (p. 256) appeared a report by one of the members of the Society for the Study of Supernormal Pictures of which I have the honour to be President, and knowing the *bona fides* and scientific ability of the gentleman referred to, I became sponsor for its appearance in the columns of *LIGHT* without the name of its author. The record is one of phenomena which are apparently an evolving series of the most remarkable occurrences to be found, so far as I can discover, in the whole history of psychic investigation.

Being in Yorkshire for a short holiday, I there received a cordial invitation from the gentleman to visit his home in Northumberland to examine personally the results of the wonderful manifestations, and especially the reported productions of crystalline substances alleged to be generated by supernormal methods and under prescribed conditions.

All the instructions were received by automatic writing given through the hand of a member of the family from controlling intelligences purporting to be, among others, Michael Faraday and Sir William Crookes. I had examined photographs of the various productions, but it had been most emphatically stated by the controls that the various articles, and especially the crystalline substances—some of them being designated "spirit diamonds"—were on no consideration to be removed from the house in which they had been produced, so that anyone desirous of inspecting these must go there.

I therefore gladly accepted the invitation, so that I might be able not only to see what had already been produced, but hoping possibly to witness the further production of these crystalline products or get some supernormal pictures under my personal inspection. Unfortunately, however, the climatic conditions were said to be such, according to the automatic messages received at the time, that they could only attempt some table phenomena. We were told to hold a séance in complete darkness, using a small table, the only sitters being the gentleman, his son and myself. Immediately on the electric light being extinguished percussion sounds were heard and vibrations felt on the table, which had a small round top and a central pedestal terminating in three feet. Questions were promptly answered, the answers being spelt out in the usual way by rapping at the letter wanted while one of the sitters repeated the alphabet.

The principal communicator purported to be the gentleman's son who passed away in France during aviation action in 1916. I greatly appreciated the reception given me by the "passed on" member of the family, for, having used a formal method of address, a message was quickly spelt out: "Call me 'Crow'"—the pet name given to him by his family and friends. During the course of the séance the raps changed in character, being firmer and louder, the communicator purporting to be Sir William Crookes, and very faint sounds were also given, said to be by Mrs. Susanna Harris's "Harmony."

Here let me interpolate what apparently corroborates these statements. Two days after my return to town Mrs. Harris, who had not, so far as I can discover, known of my visit to the north, telephoned to ask if I had returned, as she said "Harmony" had, at a séance held in the previous week in London, stated that she had been at the gentleman's house in the north of England and "had communicated with Dr. Wallace," and that "Sir William Crookes was also there."

During the sitting the others saw "tongues of fire" over my head, but I could not see anything.

The table was once carried high above our heads, and I was pulled up with considerable force from my seat so that I stood on tiptoe. There was a verbal request for "Crow" to repeat something done an evening or two before, when suddenly at some distance off we heard a sharp bang which sounded like the palms of the hands being quickly slapped together. Once during the séance, feeling a slight irritation of the scalp, I asked the control to excuse me removing a hand from the table. I had just done so when the table was immediately turned upside down and one of the feet gently rubbed my scalp on the very place I had just scratched. I then asked if my shirt front could be touched—a very small area was uncovered—when immediately the table was again reversed and gentle taps were made on the couple of square inches exposed above my vest.

I suggested to the experimenters on both sides that they ought to have a small red light in the room rather than complete darkness, as such results as those obtained were much more evidential in light. Had I harboured any lingering suspicion—which, fortunately, never existed—that I was being tricked, consciously or unconsciously, by my companions making the raps and operating the table, I had an experience towards the end of our séance which would have satisfied any sceptic. Suddenly the father and son said the table has been taken away, but I retained my hands on it while it was carried out of their reach to my right side beyond the circle to the floor behind my chair; while there, with only my right hand on it, I asked questions and received answers by gentle raps, the vibrations being distinctly felt. Thus

ended a most interesting table séance indicating the existence of psychic and physical energy behind the phenomena.

The next evening, the conditions for electrical or photographic phenomena being still unsatisfactory, another table séance was held with all the members of the family, seven sitters being around a larger table, with somewhat similar results to those obtained the previous evening, special attention being given to two members who had not been at home for many months who arrived in the afternoon.

The gentleman is not only an excellent investigator but is a perfect recorder. Careful notes of every séance are kept, the questions put and the answers by automatic script being systematically tabulated.

I went over several volumes of these, and spent many hours examining the "photographs" obtained by supernormal methods (*vide* Section IV., p. 256) and the various substances referred to in Sections V., VI., and VII. My first impression of the crystalline substances was that they were probably "apports" rather than productions by supernormal electro-chemical processes. I examined the various articles by the microscope, using transmitted light, dark-ground illumination and polarised light. Although I have had a fair experience in microscopic work, it was impossible for me to make any approximate guess as to the origin or nature of the "materialised fabric." There was also a peculiar looking object said to be of animal origin which resembled some forms of larvæ. The crystalline products are beautiful objects under the microscope. These have been carefully examined by an expert chemist, and some of them behave in all respects as do natural diamonds.

I may say that during several hours while I was examining the various productions in the gentleman's laboratory, quite a running fire of delicate raps was heard on the door and several articles of furniture. This, he said, was an entirely new phase of the physical phenomena; and was ascribed to the supplementary aid derived from my presence.

I have no doubt that a full report of the whole series of phenomena, with illustrations, will at a future date be published by the gentleman, but meanwhile I am justified, for certain reasons, in withholding his name. I may have an opportunity of witnessing some subsequent experiments, but I must now tender to him and his family my best thanks for the privileges already enjoyed.

DEATH—THE INSTRUMENT OF PROGRESS.

[The following passage in a book by Dr. J. Maxwell, which he kindly sent to me in 1911, seems to express so finely the lesson which the Great War has indelibly stamped upon our minds, that I venture to ask the Editor of *LIGHT* to print it for the benefit of his readers.—H. A. DALLAS.]

In order that those members of the social body still capable of regenerating Europe may have the necessary energy they must have recourse to the true sources of force and activity, to the spiritual powers which direct universal evolution, that is to say to the Ideal, to comprehend the meaning of life, to understand the value of courage, of effort and of sacrifice. Science, art, culture, all the things that beautify human work are also the springs of evolution towards a better future, towards a more perfect life. . . . In seeking the amelioration of life, however, we must not make life itself our object; we must regard it as a means, as a condition of no value in itself, but which has value on account of the opportunities it offers for the progress of the spirit. The value of life is relative, and its value is in many cases inferior to death. . . . The races which desire to survive must sacrifice individuals, and individuals must learn to sacrifice themselves if their death is more useful than their life.

The future will doubtless belong to those who have the consciousness of individual continuity and of the solidarity of races, for they will have grasped the mystery of evolution: life does not produce sudden changes in modes of universal existence, and in the psychic sphere energy is not lost any more than it is in the physical. Mind is not inferior to Matter, which it dominates and transforms.

Death is the necessary agent for the modifications of life, the instrument of progress, the condition for future perfection; without death the individual would be perpetually fettered to inferior forms; death alone has the power to deliver from this servitude.

For the living being, the powerful source of energy, death does not signify destruction but transformation; it should not alarm or discourage us; if there are apparent reasons which make life worth living, there are also realities which are still more worthy that we should die for them.

—"Psychologie Sociale Contemporaine" (pp. 355, 356).

THE CIRCLE OF GOD'S WAY.—Prayer is the golden wedding-ring between ourselves and God. For myself, I divide it into two halves—the one petitioning, the other offering. Of petitioning I would say that this is the work of the soul; and of offering, that it is the pleasure of the soul. . . . This is the circle of His way with us. First is prayer; then love; and after love, humility. With humility comes grace; and after grace, temptation, and in temptation we quickly enter prayer again.—"THE GOLDEN FOUNTAIN."

VINDICATION OF MRS. A. BRITTAIN.

AN EVIDENTIAL SITTING.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle writes under date of the 7th inst. :—

Some time ago the journal "Truth," having acquired the information from me, published in what I consider to have been a very dishonourable way the fact that Mrs. B., whose remarkable clairvoyant results I had described, was Mrs. Brittain. She has been subjected to much annoyance and misrepresentation by that journal, which was totally ignorant of the remarkable series of cases upon which my opinion was formed. It would be well, therefore, to make public a recent example of this medium's power, which will show not only how false it is to maintain that her results are from fraud, but also that the overworked theory of telepathy is unable to meet the case. Mr. Hutcheson, of Aberdeen, with a courage which is too often wanting, has allowed me to publish a letter written originally for my own eyes only.

The following is the letter to which Sir Arthur refers :—

SIR A. C. DOYLE, DEAR SIR,—I desire to thank you for giving me the address of Mrs. Brittain, and in return I give you an interview that my wife and I had with that lady.

We called upon her, without previous appointment, on Monday, August 11th, at 4 p.m. She gave an extraordinarily accurate description of our eldest son, who was lieutenant in the Royal Air Force, and who died in Boulogne from wounds. In physical form and character we could readily recognise the lad, and her mention of several facts of his home life was very evidential. I asked Mrs. Brittain if she could get his name, and without the slightest hesitation she gave us his Christian name. I asked if friends were with him, and he stated through the medium that both grandfathers and two uncles were present, giving their Christian names.

Most amazing was the fact that the names of two lads who were classmates of his at school and who had been killed in the war were also given. He further desired us to inform the lady next door to us, who had a son missing, that her son was with him; and the name of the young man was given. Mrs. Brittain said my son was giving her a message that B— was correct in telling his mother he believed his brother was dead. We did not comprehend this very well, as that lad was still, we knew, in the army abroad. But when we returned to Aberdeen we were astonished to find that B— had returned from the East, and had given expression to that relief. The young man referred to has been missing since April, 1918.

Our second son, also a lieutenant in the Air Force, killed in October, 1918, was revealed to us, giving his name, and adding loving messages to his little sister (naming her, and also giving an aunt's name, and that of a lady friend).

When I asked if he had ever been to our home in Aberdeen since his death, he stated that he was there soon after, and was frequently there with his brother. "Give evidence," I said, and my wife and I were astonished when he informed us of an enlarged photograph of himself, and described a slight defect in the photograph. Now, this enlargement had never been seen by our second son, as it was not in the home until six months after he had been killed. He also communicated the name of the observer in his machine, who was also killed—a Willesden lad.

The name of a young lady, who was a member of my church choir, and died about twelve years ago, was also given.

Telepathy! We cannot accept that, because evidence has been given of what was not in our minds. We believe our boys were with us, and are often with us. We had a real communion with them, talking, through Mrs. Brittain, in a natural manner as though they were present in actual form. And what are we to say about those beautiful messages of hope and courage and comfort which were given, except that we felt very near the gates of Heaven, and that our lives were brightened and gladdened?

I do wonder what the Bishop of London or Rev. F. B. Meyer (see what he said in a recent "Sunday Chronicle") could have to say to evidence like this. Instead of drawing us from religion, it is knitting us more to the facts of a risen Christ, and His compassion for sorrowing humanity in allowing these revelations and messages to be sent.—Yours faithfully, J. HUTCHESON, 114, Osborne Place, Aberdeen, August 25th, 1919.

JOHNSON ON POPULAR JUDGMENTS.—In Boswell's "Life of Johnson," the Scottish biographer records that while in Staffordshire he had been informed of an earthquake, "of which, it seems, the shock had been felt in some degree at Shbourne." On his mentioning the subject to Johnson, the "great sage" offered the following comment: "Sir, it will be much exaggerated in popular talk; for, in the first place, the common people do not accurately adapt their thoughts to the objects; nor, secondly, do they accurately adapt their words to their thoughts; they do not mean to say, but, taking no pains to be exact, they give you very false accounts." The judicious observer of psychic experiments will appreciate the justice of this verdict. It applies even more to the popular criticisms than to the popular advocacy of the subject.

THE "STEAD BUREAU'S" NEW HOME.

SPEECH BY MISS ESTELLE STEAD.

"The most important thing in the whole range of the possible achievements of mortal man." This was the impressive statement conveyed to the late Mr. W. T. Stead by Miss Julia Ames, expressing the value of establishing communication between this world and the next.

Mr. Stead was of the same opinion, and with the active co-operation of his friend on the other side, Julia's Bureau was formed. It was opened on April 24th, 1909, with Mowbray House as its London office, and Cambridge House, Wimbledon, as its "Inner Sanctuary."

On Tuesday last, Mr. Stead's daughter, Miss Estelle Stead, presided at the opening ceremony at the new premises, 13A, Baker-street, of the "W. T. Stead" Borderland Library and Bureau, as it is now termed. There was a large gathering of friends, and a very joyous atmosphere marked the proceedings.

Miss Stead, who was greeted with applause, said :—

"We are met to-night, my friends, in a home that is our very own, and we feel that we have made a big stride. Soon I hope to see the building filled to overflowing, though at present it is just about the size we want. I do not need to tell you that my father is with us to-night. I know it, and you know it. He is overwhelmed with joy at our progress. I feel that I would like to read to you what Julia wrote through his hand in 1893. It was this :—

"I want to ask if you can help me at all in a matter in which I am much interested. I have long wanted to establish a place where those who have passed over could communicate with the loved ones left behind. At present the world is full of spirits longing to speak to those from whom they have been parted. . . . It is a strange spectacle. On your side, souls full of anguish for bereavement; on this side, souls full of sadness because they cannot communicate with those whom they love. . . . What is wanted is a bureau of communication between the two sides. Could you not establish some such sort of office?"

"It was in response to that irresistible appeal that my father decided to establish Julia's Bureau, though he was not able to carry out his wish until a later date. You all know how his idea has grown and what it has been able to accomplish. I have no fear about the future at all. They say we should attempt great things, and that is what we have done. I look forward with joy and enthusiasm, and at the same time with firm assurance to the rich and fruitful work before us." (Loud applause.)

Mrs. Mary Gordon delivered an interesting and thoughtful address, taking for her theme the Bridge Between Two Worlds. Afterwards she gave some successful clairvoyant delineations.

The new premises are larger than those formerly occupied by the Bureau. They include:

A library and reading room;

A Silence Room;

A little Temple of Peace, dedicated in love to those who have passed on owing to the Great War, where members can retire for meditation and communion;

Two Reception Rooms which can be thrown into one for meetings and At Homes, or used separately for classes;

A Restaurant where members can obtain light refreshments for themselves and their friends.

THE ASTRAL BOGEY.

There has been dissension in the enemy camp at Brighton. A Dr. Griggs was announced to lecture in the Hove Town Hall on the 2nd inst. on the dangers of Spiritualism, but one of his hearers, who expected that the lecturer would expose the false teaching connected with our cult, was bitterly disappointed. He wrote to the "Brighton Herald" that, finding Dr. Griggs was propounding "blatant and unabashed Spiritualism," he got up and left in disgust. An Editorial footnote is appended to the letter, informing the writer that if he had only endured till the end he would have found that at the expiration of an hour and twenty minutes (the lecture lasted a couple of hours) Dr. Griggs did commence to advance as many as sixty-three arguments against the practice of Spiritualistic observances.

Two or three of Dr. Griggs' sixty-odd objections to Spiritualism have a familiar sound. Spiritualistic mediums, it appears, are controlled by astrals, and the astral plane being ruled by Satan and peopled by unclean spirits ought to be left severely alone. Moreover, Spiritualism produces physical and mental debility and other harmful effects.

Regarding these dreadful charges another correspondent of the "Herald" remarks that Dr. Griggs taught Spiritualism in Brighton for years, and, judging by his appearance, seems to have survived its debilitating influence pretty well!

THE surprising thing is not that some Christians see and hear saints and angels, but that all do not share the experience. Is it not the essence of unwisdom for one Christian to make the dimness of his own sight the standard and compass of another's vision? — "Angels Seen To-day," by G. MAURICE ELLIOTT AND IRENE HALLAM ELLIOTT.

GEORGE BORROW AND THE OCCULT.

BY HORACE LEAF.

(Continued from page 290.)

George Borrow's natural love of animals enabled him to note many curious incidents that led him to a firm belief that certain individuals possess an inherent power or fascination over certain creatures. Otherwise, he says, he would have been unable to account for many feats which he had witnessed and borne a share in, connected with the taming of brutes and reptiles.

"I have known," he says, "a savage and vicious mare, whose stall it was dangerous to approach, even when bearing provender, welcome, nevertheless, with every appearance of pleasure, an uncouth, wiry-headed man, with a frightfully seamed face and an iron hook supplying the place of his right arm, one whom the animal had never seen before, playfully bite his hair and cover his face with gentle and endearing kisses; and I have already stated how a viper would permit, without resentment, one child to take it up in his hand, whilst it showed its dislike to the approach of another by the fiercest hissings. Philosophy can explain many strange things, but there are some which are a far pitch above her, and this is one."

Both in Ireland and Spain, Borrow witnessed the magical effects certain words had upon horses and donkeys. In Spain the Gypsies found the use of this gift highly profitable, to the great cost of their customers; the Gypsy owner of an animal that was up for sale had merely to whisper in its ear for it to become most tractable, show its best paces, and go far to prove the truth of its master's assertion that a better beast was not to be found in the country. But no sooner was the deal finished and the money in the safe keeping of the Gypsy, who would immediately make himself scarce, than the customer would find himself the possessor of a brute that either would not go, or went in such a manner as to make him wish it would stop. The brute would play such pranks that its new owner had but one desire—to sell it again at any price. A confederate of the Gypsy would then offer a ridiculously low price for the animal on the ground of its many defects, and in the end the nonplussed and deceived purchaser would depart a wiser and poorer man.

It was in Ireland, when quite a lad, that Borrow first witnessed the exercise of this peculiar power. A splendid cob he had been riding had cast a shoe. In a village near by he found a blacksmith, "a wild, grimy figure of a man," who shod the beast so badly as to leave it plunging and tearing in a state of high excitement. A show of affection on Borrow's part was readily responded to by the animal, which whinnied and attempted to touch his face with its nose.

"Are you afraid of that beast?" said the smith, showing his fang. "Arrah, it's vicious that he looks!"

"It's at you then! I don't fear him," and thereupon I passed under the horse, between his hind legs.

"And is that all you can do, agraph?" said the smith.

"No," said I, "I can ride him."

"Ye can ride him and what else, agraph?"

"I can leap him over a six foot wall," said I.

"Over a wall, and what more, agraph?"

"Nothing more," said I. "What more would you have?"

"Can you do this, agraph?" said the smith; and he uttered a word which I had never heard before, in a sharp, pungent tone. The effect upon myself was somewhat extraordinary, a strange thrill ran through me; but with regard to the cob it was terrible, the animal forthwith became like one mad, and reared and kicked with the utmost desperation."

The animal was now so vicious that Borrow saw that merely to approach it would be dangerous. To touch it would mean death. On the man uttering another word in a voice singularly modified, sweet, and almost plaintive, an effect was produced as instantaneous and wonderful as that previously brought about. "The animal lost all its fury, and became at once calm and gentle." Borrow himself became able to act upon horses in a similar manner, and attributed the effects entirely to the tone in which the words were uttered.

In childhood Borrow appears to have been able to exert a peculiar influence over vipers. He once picked up a viper, not knowing its dangerous nature, and the reptile did not so much as move; the mere approach of his brother caused it to raise its head menacingly, hissing, not at Borrow, but at his brother. In Spain he cowed an immense dog, which bounded to attack him, by stooping till his chin touched his knee, and looking him full in the eyes. As usual, he endeavours to find a normal explanation for this by stating his conviction that no large and fierce dog or animal of any kind, with the exception of the bull, which shuts its eyes and rushes blindly forward, will venture to attack an individual who confronts it with a firm and motionless countenance.

The study of humanity assured George Borrow that the face was a thoroughly reliable guide to the disposition and character of a person. Nor does he seem to have been personally mistaken in this respect. All through his adventures

in Portugal and Spain, when distributing the Bible, he had to rely upon his judgment of persons for his personal security. The fact that he appears at no time to have been seriously mistaken in his opinion of anyone of importance to him, speaks for the accuracy of his method.

The eye has been rightly called "the window of the soul." Certainly no part of the human physiognomy so readily reveals the passions, emotions, and intelligence of anyone. Borrow has a good deal to say about the eye, and points out that everywhere the eye of the Gypsy is his most characteristic feature. It never alters. Should his hair and complexion become as fair as those of the Swede and his jockey gait as grave and ceremonious as that of an aristocratic native of Spain, were he to dress like a king, a priest, or a warrior, the Gypsy would still be detected by his eye. This organ frequently has racial peculiarities. Borrow tells us that in the Jew the feature is peculiarly small, in the Chinese oblong; but the Gypsy's eye differs from that of most people by "a strange staring expression, which to be understood must be seen, and in a thin glaze, which steals over it when in repose, and seems to emit a phosphoric light."

Perhaps this is the reason why to these people has been attributed that bane of the superstitious, the "evil eye." Borrow found belief in the evil eye very prevalent among the Spaniards; but the fact is no country has ever been without it. In Gypsy language the term for casting the evil eye also means "making sick," and is supposed to be more effective against children than adults. After receiving the evil glance, the person was supposed to fall desperately ill, and even die. No rational explanation was ever afforded by the Gypsies to show how the power was brought into operation. That certain persons exercise it, however, seems not to have been doubted by the Gypsies, Spaniards, Jews and Moors. Among the Jews and Moors Borrow found the belief very strong. It was even held that the spell might be wrought unintentionally. The evil eye might be cast by an ugly or ill-favoured person, "either designedly or not," and the same effect might be produced by an inadvertent word.

There can be little doubt that most, if not all, of the ill effects resulting from the evil eye are due to self-suggestion. A belief in its power would therefore be essential to any ill consequences, as the firmer that belief the more likely and dire would be the effect.

(To be continued.)

THE DESIRE TO RETURN TO EARTH.

Mr. R. H. Greaves writes:—

I had just finished the reading of "The Riddle of Life," by Annie Besant, "The Blavatsky Lecture," by E. L. Gardner, and "Reincarnation, the Hope of the World," by Irving S. Cooper, all brought to me by an earnest lady who calls herself a theosophist and intended them for my edification, when *LIGHT* of the 6th inst., with its article on "Fallacies of Reincarnation," by "King's Counsel," came to me as a most welcome change.

I heartily approve of all he has written; and yet I have been convinced that some of us have lived before, by the statements of able souls in the Soul-World—who also agree with all that "King's Counsel" has written in answer to Mrs. de Crespigny's article, but who deny absolutely that "a desire to return to earth is never entertained."

If ever a doctrine suffered from the foolishness of the majority of those who accept it as true, reincarnation has so suffered, and so has the belief in cause and effect that some affectedly call the law of "karma." I have not yet come across a rational presentation of either of these doctrines, written by any of those who vaingloriously call themselves "theosophists," and have given up the hope of finding one. All of them seem to be obsessed with the notion that their own individual souls are of such immense importance that the Infinite will drag them (or rather has already dragged them—for most of them think themselves to be near the end of their evolution towards perfection) through hundreds, if not thousands, of incarnations; and all in order to teach them—what? Apparently far, far less than the simplest believer in the Gospel of the Christ (if he be truly a believer) learns in far less than one brief incarnation! "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Why, then, do my friends and instructors insist that they themselves lived more earth-lives than one, and that many others have longed for and attained reincarnation? If they be worthy, it has been for no other reason than that they loved their fellows and wished to live again on earth that they might bring to us some great benefit. That is quite enough; and it is the only possible reason for the desire that is not a selfish, and therefore an evil one, for those who may seem to need to be reincarnated are not likely to desire it at all. There are readers of *LIGHT*, who are not unknown to me, who will themselves desire to return if they come to believe that they could thus do more to further the noble work in which they are already engaged; for he who is unselfish here will be unselfish hereafter and not less willing to make great sacrifice.

THERE are ills for which the only remedy is to forget them.

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., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. — 6.30, Mr. T. Olman Todd. September 28th, Dr. W. J. Vanstone.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, W.2. — 11, Mr. Ernest Meads; 6.30, Mrs. Worthington. Wednesday, September 24th, 7.30, Mr. Horace Leaf.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E. — 11, Mr. R. Boddington; 6.30, London Union speakers. *Walthamstow.* — 342, Hoe-street. — 7, Mr. Thompson. address and clairvoyance.

Shepherd's Bush. — 73, Becklow-road. — 11, public circle; 7, Miss Rotherham. Thursday, 8, public meeting.

Croydon. — 117b, High-street. — 11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mr. George Prior.

Kingston-on-Thames. — Bishop's Hall, Thames-street. — 6.30, Mr. A. J. Maskell, address and clairvoyance.

Lewisham. — The Priory, High-street. — 6.30, Mrs. E. Neville.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway. — 6.30, Miss Violet Burton. Wednesday, 7.30, Mrs. Brownjohn.

Peckham. — Lausanne-road. — 7, Mrs. Podmore. Thursday, 8.15, Mr. Percy Street.

Battersea. — 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction. — 11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mr. and Mrs. Pulham, address and clairvoyance.

Brighton. — Athenæum Hall. — 11.15 and 7, Mr. E. Oaten, President, S.N.U., address and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting.

Woolwich and Plumstead. — 1, Villas-rd, Plumstead. — 7, Mrs. A. Boddington (harvest festival), address and clairvoyance. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. A. Jamrach, address and clairvoyance.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood. — Old Steine Hall. — 11.30 and 7, also Monday, 7.15, addresses and clairvoyance, Mrs. Marriott. Tuesday, 3 p.m., public circle. Thursday, 7.15, questions and clairvoyance. Friday, 7.30, members' social. Lyceum every Sunday, 3 p.m. Next week Miss Butcher.

Holloway. — Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station). — To-day (20th), ladies in attendance, 8 p.m., to receive thankoffering of fruit, vegetables, plants, etc., and assist in decoration for harvest festival. Sunday, 11, Mrs. Mary Gordon; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. P. Scholey. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Annie Brittain. 28th, 11, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Pulham; 7, Mrs. Annie Boddington. Wednesday, October 1st, Mrs. Crowder.

INTERNATIONAL HOME CIRCLE FEDERATION. — The Executive Council has fixed October 3rd for the General Meeting of members, at which Articles and Rules defining the objects and regulating the conduct of the Federation drawn up by the Committee will be presented for adoption. A full statement will also be made as to the circumstances connected with the separation of the Founder from the original Society.

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.I.S.A., Earlam Hall, Earlam 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, Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W. ...	11-0	6-30
*Manor Park Spiritual Church, Shrewsbury Road ...	11-0	6-30
Marylebone, Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. ...	...	6-30
*Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road ...	11-30	7-0
*Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Bræmar 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.		

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (Oxon.)'

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

STANDARD BOOKS SUPPLIED TO ORDER FOR CASH ONLY.

Post free from the Office of "LIGHT," 6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C. 1, at the prices quoted. Remittances must accompany orders, otherwise they cannot be sent.

Spirit Teachings. Through the Mediumship of Wm. Stainton Moses (M.A. Oxon.). By Automatic or Passive Writing. With a Biography by Charlton T. Speer and two full-page portraits; eighth edition. Cloth, 324 pages, 6s. 6d.

On the Threshold of the Unseen. An Examination of the Phenomena of Spiritualism and of the Evidence for Survival after Death. By Sir William Barrett, F.R.S. Cloth, 336 pages, 8s.

Man is a Spirit. A Collection of spontaneous cases of Dream, Vision and Ecstasy. By J. Arthur Hill. Cloth, 199 pages, 5s. 5d.

Spiritualism: Its History, Phenomena and Doctrine. By J. Arthur Hill. Introduction by Sir A. Conan Doyle. Cloth, 270 pages, 8s.

The Harmonial Philosophy. A Compendium and Digest of the Works of Andrew Jackson Davis, the American Seer. Cloth, 424 pages, 11s.

The Religion of To-Morrow. By W. J. Colville. Cloth, 320 pages, 4s. 11d.

Human Magnetism; or, How to Hypnotise. A Practical Handbook for Students of Mesmerism. By Professor James Coates. With Ten Plates, showing induction of phenomena, Experimental and Curative. Third Edition. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

Seeing the Invisible. Practical Studies in Psychometry, Thought Transference, Telepathy, and Allied Phenomena. By James Coates, Ph.D., F.A.S. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

Photographing the Invisible. Practical Studies in Spirit Photography, Spirit Portraiture and other Rare, but Allied Phenomena. By James Coates, Ph.D., F.A.S. With 90 photographs. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

The Gift of the Spirit. Essays by Prentice Mulford. Edited by A. E. Waite. 4s. 11d.

Reminiscences. By Alfred Smedley. Including an account of Marvellous Spirit Manifestations. 1s. 3d.

The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen. By Mrs. Oliphant. Cloth, 2s. 3d.

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Practical Psychometry: Its Value and How it is Mastered. By O Hashnu Hara. 1s. 8d.

Practical Yoga. A Series of Thoroughly Practical Lessons upon the Philosophy and Practice of Yoga with a chapter devoted to Persian Magic. By O Hashnu Hara. 1s. 8d.

Practical Hypnotism. Teaching eighteen different methods of inducing Mesmerism or Hypnotism. By O Hashnu Hara. 1s. 8d.

The Voices. A Sequel to Glimpses of the Next State. Accounts of Sitzings for the Direct Voice in 1912-13. By Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore. Cloth, 461 pages, 4s.

Speaking Across the Border Line. Letters from a Husband in Spirit Life to His Wife on Earth. Paper covers, 2s. 3d. Art Linen Binding, 3s. 4d.

Not Silent, if Dead. By H. (Haweis). Through the Mediumship of Parma. Cloth, 3s. 11d.

The Human Aura and the Significance of Colour. By W. J. Colville. 1s. 7½d.

Claude's Book. Edited by L. Kelway-Bamber. With letter from Sir Oliver Lodge. Cloth, 149 pages, 6s. 4d.

Spiritualism. A Philosophy of Life. By W. H. Evans. Cloth, 76 pages, 1s. 2½d.

Through the Mists, or Leaves from the Autobiography of a Soul in Paradise. Recorded for the author. By R. J. Lees. Cloth, 4s. 5d.

The Life Elysian. Being More Leaves from the Autobiography of a Soul in Paradise. Recorded for the author by R. J. Lees. Cloth, 335 pages, 4s. 5d.

Visions, Previsions and Miracles in Modern Times. By E. Howard Grey, D.D.S. Cloth, 532 pages, 5s. 6d.

Where Two Worlds Meet. Bridging the Gulf between Matter and Spirit. By Sir William Earnshaw Cooper. Cloth, 4s. 6d.

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