

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,020.—VOL. XXXIX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1919. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.
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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The cultivation of the will is so much a part of the direction of life nowadays that the following from "The Psychology of Behaviour," by Dr. Elizabeth Severn is worth quoting. Dr. Severn, by the way, was in London a few years ago and did much good work in psychotherapy, as recorded in these pages. In the course of a chapter on the Will, in the book mentioned, Dr. Severn writes:—

My first prescription for a strong will is an independent and self-confident attitude as being the best means to lift us out of the group consciousness or race thought into one of our own making. We are too much influenced by outside things—especially by our family, friends, the community and nation. We do not know what we think or what we want, because our habit has been to move only in established directions. The paths in the brain are mostly deep ruts worn there by long use sustained by reverence for custom and tradition.

In a word, we are too much the slaves of our heredity and environment.

* * * *

Proceeding, Dr. Elizabeth Severn points out, as an instance, that to ask the average person what he really wants is to throw him into a state of confusion in which he flounders indefinitely before he is able to catch a thread that will hold him. Everyone is desirous of bettering his condition, but is unable, as a rule, to define clearly what he needs. Now, this cloudiness of mind is an evidence that the will is not strong:—

Will to be effective must therefore be *positive, concentrated and unified*. The force of it is dependent upon the intensity of the desire behind it, and the elimination, or subjection at least, of every other conflicting desire. It is remarkable that so many people are unable to co-ordinate their various desires enough to centralise them into one general purpose. . . . Many persons with the finest natural equipment are hopelessly weakened by an inability to throw into one steady stream their various impulses and purposes. . . . Where so many fail is that the force of their will is diffused over innumerable interests until its entire potentiality is dispersed and lost.

These are at least useful hints.

* * * *

In the course of an article, "The Language of the Prophets" in the July "Quest," Professor Maurice A. Canney, of the University of Manchester, offers some observations which should be useful to those who study psychic states. Thus he writes:—

The inspiration and the ecstatic state of a prophet may be compared to some extent with the exaltation and emotion of more ordinary persons when they are profoundly and religiously stirred. Persons who have been "converted" suddenly, as we know from the study of religious experiences, are apt to behave in a strange manner and to speak in a way that is not usual with them. Very often

they use language which is either incoherent or unintelligible. It would seem that a person who has had some such experience as that known as "conversion," having changed his consciousness, finds it difficult to express this change in ordinary terms. Human language is not adequate to express the new state of mind and feeling. This, added to a state of excitement in which the ordinary control of speech is absent, produces hurried and incoherent utterances. In a manner somewhat analogous, we may suppose, the prophet is stirred to such an extent that his speech does not flow in the ordinary premeditated and measured style.

The Professor is dealing mainly with Biblical prophets and the famous mystics, but, as we are beginning to realise, there is a general unity of experience in what we classify as the occult, the mystical and the psychical—they represent varying grades and forms of extra-mundane expression. We need to be very catholic in these matters, to exercise imagination and tolerance, however strong our prepossessions may be in favour of clear and definite teachings.

* * * *

Reflecting on these questions of inspired deliverances, we begin to understand the saying that the things of the Spirit are to the children of this world foolishness. We have carefully to discriminate between mere meaningless jargon and those utterances which seem to be the product of another order of intelligence, however much it may sound like what the poet described as a divine madness. As Professor Canney remarks:—

The language in which a divine message is conveyed is not the language of ordinary human speech, but, in the first instance, the language of the soul or spirit. It is a language that is not translated easily and quickly into any human tongue. Thus the effort to express in words something almost inexpressible, something felt rather than thought, produces often words and sentences that are not to be judged by the ordinary canons of speech. The gold of divine inspiration is there, but it pours forth mingled in a peculiar way with the dross of human thought and expression.

For some years past there has been going on a re-statement in plain speech of much of that mystical wisdom of the past which could not be understood of the people. The gold is being extracted and the dross rejected—would that in some cases the task had been boldly undertaken long since!—and we are gaining the results in pure and profitable form. But there are still rich mines to be quarried. The modern interest in mysticism is significant of the recognition of a spiritual reality behind much that seems not only obscure but forbidding in the deliverances of the world's mystics, prophets and seers.

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.

THE argument that we neither see nor hear the angels, nor are able to form any conception of what they are like, might prove to be destructive but for this fact: It is *not* so. Angels are seen and heard and spoken to by an ever-increasing number of Christian men and women, who have a *lively* faith in the doctrine of angels and the Communion of Saints.—"Angels Seen To-Day," by G. MAURICE ELLIOTT AND IRENE HALLAM ELLIOTT.

GEORGE BORROW AND THE OCCULT.

By HORACE LEAF.

(Continued from p. 304.)

The surest evidence of the self-suggestive nature of the power of the evil eye is found, perhaps, in the means adopted to cure its bad effects. "When one falls sick of the evil eye," says Borrow (explaining the belief of an Eastern people who taught that, "For one person who dies of sickness, there are ten who die by the evil eye") "he must instantly call in to his assistance the man cunning in such cases. The man, on coming, takes either a girdle or a handkerchief from off his own person, and ties a knot at either end, then he measures three spans with his left hand, and at the end of these three he fastens a knot and folds it three times round his head, pronouncing this *barraka* or blessing: 'Ben porat Josef, ben porat ali ain' ('Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well'); he then recommences measuring the girdle or handkerchief, and if he finds three spans and a half, instead of the three which he formerly measured, he is enabled to tell the name of the person who cast the evil eye, whether male or female."

Having discovered the culprit by means of this magical process, the mother, wife, or sister of the sufferer walks forth pronouncing the name of the latter with a loud voice, and making her way to the house of the guilty person, takes a little earth from before the front door of the house, and a little from before the door of his or her sleeping apartment. Some of the saliva of the culprit is then demanded, which must be given in the morning before breakfast; then the mother, wife, or sister goes to the oven and takes from thence seven burning coals, which are slaked in water from the bath in which the women bathe. The four ingredients, earth, saliva, coal and water, are then mixed together in a dish, and the patient is made to take three sips, and what remains is taken to a private place and buried, the person who buries it having to make three paces backwards, exclaiming, "May the evil eye be buried beneath the earth." There are variations of this strange formula, but all have the same marks of mystic inspiration, as shown in the inclusion of the sacred numbers three and seven. Every step in the procedure is calculated to emphasise upon the sufferer the need and possibility of a cure; and it is reasonable to suppose that the mind capable of invoking the evil effects upon itself, can also dismiss them by the same power.

There are several incidents mentioned in Borrow's works which show him awake to the powerful effects of suggestion upon the health and actions of individuals. He was himself a subject of the habit of "touching," so characteristic of the famous Dr. Samuel Johnson. It was probably this that led him to confess in "The Romany Rye" that he had a mind, as he himself well knew, with some slight tendency to madness, and had he not employed himself, he must have gone wild. When quite a young man he admitted to an acquaintance his one-time faith in the habit of "touching." "I have touched myself in my younger days, both for the evil chance and the good. Can't say, though, that I ever trusted much in the ceremony." But the fact that he indulged in the practice at all is proof of some degree of confidence in it. The vigour with which the occult appealed to him in his own person, and the great degree of sensitiveness of his psychic nature is perhaps manifest in the difficulty he must have experienced in curing himself of this habit, and its almost overwhelming tendency to return under provocation.

In the chapters in "Lavengro" in which he gives a graphic account of the unfortunate author he met, who was obsessed with the habit of "touching," he tells how, on awakening from slumber the morning after a long conversation on the subject with this interesting personality, he felt an irresistible inclination to touch first the bed-post, then the lintel of the door; and then various other objects in turn. Only his good sense and firm will saved him from what threatened to be a return of a habit which, whilst in itself practically useless, nevertheless shows the character of the psychic deep beneath the common-sense nineteenth-century Englishman. "I felt very much inclined to touch the leaves of a flowery shrub which I saw at some distance, and had even moved two or three paces towards it; but, bethinking myself, I manfully resisted the temptation. 'Begone!' I exclaimed. 'Ye sorceries, in which I formerly trusted—begone for ever, vagaries which I had almost forgotten; good luck is not to be obtained or bad averted by magic touches!'"

Two other examples of his knowledge of the power of suggestion may be cited—one in which it wrought somewhat on himself, and the other showing how cleverly and cunningly he availed himself of the faculty for the purpose of freeing a mind burdened with a thought that made the poor man's life a misery to himself and his sweet and patient wife. Borrow's moving account of the terrible fits of fear and remorse experienced by the "Welsh Preacher," Peter Williams, is a real contribution to psychology. The paroxysms of wild despair and agony of mind and soul to which this poor man was subject, because of his belief that when a child he had committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, are striking examples of the dreadful effects of obsessing ideas upon sensitive temperaments. A mere phrase uttered by Borrow in apparent carelessness brought about a change in the preacher's life which his grateful wife could only

designate as "blessed." As she correctly said, it altered the current of her husband's mind; and in that way changed his views of life and the whole world from darkness to light.

The other incident is connected with a gentleman, a martyr to insomnia, who had been lent a book by a friend and informed by him that if he read it in a pleasant part of his estate he would infallibly sleep. This actually came to pass, for before finishing a page he was always in a dead slumber. He could only account for it on the supposition that the enchantment of the scene acted in co-operation with the book and brought about the desired result. Borrow solved the mystery by asking permission to glance at the book, which he found abounding in description of scenery, but on the whole commonplace, although "couched in most gentlemanly and unexceptionable language, without the slightest mixture of vulgarity, coarseness, or piebald grammar."

"Such," he says, "appeared to me to be the contents of the book; but before I could form a very clear idea of them I found myself nodding, and a surprising desire to sleep coming over me. Rousing myself, however, by a strong effort, I closed the book and returned it to the owner, assured him that the narcotic influence lay in the book, and not in the surrounding scenery, and that he might sleep wherever he cared to read it."

Borrow clearly inferred that that suggestion was sufficient to induce the condition of sleep.

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE NEW REVELATION.

"Nash's" for October contains the fifth and last of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's series of articles entitled "The Vital Message." In this he takes the New Testament record and points out at some length how close is the analogy which exists between the phenomenal events associated with the early days of Christianity and those which have perplexed the world in connection with modern Spiritualism.

Concluding this part of his argument, he writes:—

"Enough has been said, perhaps, to show the reader that it is possible to put forward a view of Christ's life which would be in strict accord with the most modern psychic knowledge, and which, far from supplanting Christianity, would show the surprising accuracy of some of the details handed down to us, and would support the surprising conclusion that those very miracles which have been the stumbling block to so many truthful, earnest minds may finally offer some very cogent arguments for the truth of the whole narrative. Is this, then, a line of thought which merits the wholesale condemnations and anathemas hurled at it, not only from Rome and Canterbury, but even from Little Bethel?"

At the same time Sir Arthur would not have these remarks quoted as sustaining the literal accuracy of the New Testament record. On the contrary, he holds that it would be "a good, though an unattainable, thing that a really honest and open-minded attempt should be made to weed out from that record the obvious forgeries and interpolations which disfigure it." But it is not only revision that is needed: "a change of emphasis is also needed in order to get the grand Christian inception back into the current of reason and progress." It is still, he holds, beyond doubt that Christianity has broken down (not Christ's teaching; for that has seldom been followed) and that this breakdown has been brought home to everyone by the terrible catastrophe which has befallen the world. He sums up:—

"Is it not time, then, for the religious bodies to discourage their own bigots and sectarians and to seriously consider, if only for self-preservation, how they can get into line once more with that general level of human thought which is now far in front of them? I say that they can do more than get level—they can lead. But to do so they must have the firm courage to cut away from their own bodies all that dead tissue which is but a disfigurement and an encumbrance. They must face difficulties of reason, and adapt themselves to the demands of the human intelligence which rejects, and is right in rejecting, much which they offer. Finally, they must gather fresh strength by drawing in all the new truth and all the new power which are afforded by this new wave of inspiration which has been sent into the world by God, and which the human race, deluded and bemused by the would-be clever, has received with such perverse and obstinate incredulity. When they have done all this they will find, not only that they are leading the world with an obvious right to the leadership, but, in addition, that they have come round once more to the very teaching of that Master whom they have so long misrepresented."

The publication of "The Vital Message" in book form is expected shortly.

THE future world has been somehow painted to the mind as a place of continuous praise. It cannot be thus: It must be a life of activity, for happiness is dependent on activity; death is cessation of movement; life is all movement.—GENERAL GORDON.

SINGING BY MATERIALISED FORMS.

TWO WONDERFUL SEANCES IN WALES.

From a correspondent who is well known to us we have received the following account of two very remarkable materialisations at Merthyr, held with the gifted medium, Mr. Evan Powell:—

Shortly after the visit of Dr. Ellis T. Powell to Merthyr in the summer, a séance was kindly given by Mr. Evan J. Powell, the resident minister of the Merthyr Spiritualist Society, at my house, at which we had very striking phenomena in materialisation and voices. The medium was corded to the chair in which he sat by myself and a gentleman who had never attended a séance before. The latter was asked by me to take particular notice of his mode of fastening and the knots. The medium, having been secured, his thumbs were, as a final precaution, connected by a single cotton thread across the space between both hands, which rested on his knees.

Remarkable events followed the medium's passing under control. Amongst them was the appearance of my wife, who brought out from the cabinet a vase of flowers and placed it to my face, at the same time laying a hand upon my head. She did the same to my daughter who sat next to me, and called her by name. She then went across the circle to a nephew and his daughter and said to them, "Don't be afraid—it's auntie—can you see me?" Both saw her perfectly, and so did other members of the circle, and her niece, who was wearing pince-nez, felt the lace shawl that she appeared to be wearing brush her face and it caught the pince-nez and caused it to fall into her lap. The spirit's movements were followed by a light which came repeatedly close to my face, yet while others had remarked that they saw her distinctly and the drapery about her, singularly enough neither I nor my daughter saw her, and I said so. After that the light came very close to my face and I recognised her voice when she said, "Can you see me now?" I am sorry to say that I did not, nor did I when she elevated herself in the middle of the circle and asked if we all saw her. I saw the light, but neither features nor form. After that a very cold current of air passed between me and my daughter, who said she felt very cold and that something was behind her, though her chair back was within three inches of the wall.

A few seconds afterwards I felt a heavy hand upon my right shoulder, another hand grasp my left arm above the elbow, the pressure of a body forcing itself round me, and then I was drawn by much pressure against the breast of a materialised form. A voice said "Father!" and a face with moustache pressed against mine, and kissed me on the forehead and both cheeks. It was my son. He crossed the circle to his cousin, laid his hands upon his shoulders, told him not to be afraid, kissed him on the forehead and spoke humorously to his daughter and to a member of the band of his old detachment who was present.

When the control called for the light, after wishing us good-night, to my amazement the rope, except the end fastenings, was loose in the chair, and the medium lying on the floor close to the door from which the control had seemingly passed out.

I should observe that a movement of some kind was heard before the control wished us good-night, as of something passing over the heads of some of the sitters. His last words were to put up the light and look to the medium.

We went to the medium, who was still in his trance, and found the cotton strand connecting his thumbs intact as we had left it at the opening of the séance. The proof was thus given that he had been held to the chair throughout the evening until he was liberated and removed by some power other than himself.

SPIRIT DUETS.

On the 19th inst. advantage was taken of the presence of Mr. Spencer, of Glasgow, at the Temple to hold another séance. There were fifteen persons present in all, including five members of my own family. My son and son-in-law, a London journalist, were two of the members of my family and both were sceptics—but deeply interested in obtaining some undeniable evidence of the reality of the phenomena. They both received it, and their scepticism vanished.

The medium was roped by my son and son-in-law, and the single cotton thread connecting the thumbs was again resorted to.

The psychic strength of so numerous a company was apparent immediately the light was extinguished. Within half a minute bells were jingling in different parts of the room. The control sent them away and called for a prayer, which Mr. Spencer offered. Then the control greeted friends that he knew and had the names of the "sceptics" given to him—and during the sitting he rallied them repeatedly.

Phenomena developed the instant that singing began, by the entry of my grandson, killed at Mons Hamel, who went straight to his father and laid his hands upon him. Conversation ensued between them, and when the singing ceased the boy brought a vase of flowers from the cabinet, took it

to his father, then came with it and put it in my face and spoke to his "Uncle Alf" and to "Auntie," of whom he asked where his cousin E— was that night. The voice had his own soft, natural intonation, with a faint lisp, and was without a trace of the medium's.

The control then asked for another hymn, and we sang "When the mists have rolled away." No sooner was it begun than I was startled by hearing a fine baritone voice singing with us close to me. It was a lovely voice. I tried repeatedly to satisfy myself whether it was a reality or an illusion. Then this voice ceased and another, unmistakably a female voice, joined the singing, and I thought I surely must be mistaken. But while these doubts were ruminating, the male voice struck in with the female with greater force than before, and their harmony dominated the whole volume of sound from the company. Everyone wondered who were the singers. The voices were so powerful, so mellow and sweet, that I said, "Well, this is really heavenly music." Whether I was heard or not, the observation was followed by a more intense expression of this spiritual music than before. It was beautiful and astounding, and an entirely new experience to us.

When this singing had ceased I heard a clear, distinct human voice addressing my son-in-law, say, "Hello, E—, old chap," and a smart slap on his knee accompanied it. He immediately answered, "Is that you, Hugh?" "Yes," was the reply. E— replied, "I'm glad you've come, old fellow, how are you now?" To which Hugh answered, "Better than I was. I am getting entirely reconciled now." Further conversation followed. Then I asked a question, as I knew the gentleman in this life, "Was that you singing with us just now, Mr. M—?" He answered, with his native modesty, "Well, I was trying to." I said it was delightful, and I thanked him.

While this was going on we heard the voice of a lady talking to Mr. Spencer, who told her he was very pleased to meet her. At that moment the control asked us to sing again "At even, when the sun was set." The gentleman, he said, wanted to sing again, and he was a fine singer and so was the lady. The hymn was started and these two spirits joined. I never heard anything so impressive. Their united voices overpowered all the rest. It was so powerful, indeed, in the corner of the room where we three sat, that it seemed to vibrate my chair. I heard and felt the profound inspiration of the gentleman, who sang in our faces. The lady's voice was of similar power and sweetness, and though they were singing in harmony with the rest they were each perfectly distinct.

Soon afterwards the lady said, "Good-night to you all, kind friends"; the gentleman followed with the characteristic farewell, "Good night, E—," with a vocalisation as perfect and distinct as in natural life.

Following this my wife came into the circle, and I distinctly heard the forcible step of a person lame in one foot with its measured tread, at the same time the rustle of a silk dress sweeping the floor—unmistakable signs of identity. I will not take up space by detailing her doings—only to say that she brought roses from a vase on the mantelpiece for all of her own family, and touched and spoke to us. Wherever she went her light moved with her, and several say they saw her, but I did not. The control said she would have built herself up, but her grandson was so eager to get to his father that he came in with her and used up some of the power. He took a bronze figure, over three pounds in weight, from the mantel piece over to his father, and laid it in his lap.

The control now said that he feared the power was too weak for further phenomena, but he asked us to sing again, something soft. It was done, and as it finished I felt a hand take my left hand as it lay upon my knee (I was end man, as I mentioned) and put a rose into it. The spirit then gripped my hand firmly and drew me up. Then a voice spoke.

It said, "Father! Don't be excited—don't get agitated (I had spoken his name with much emotion), bear up, bear up."

He kissed me on the forehead and both cheeks, and then drew up his sister and kissed her, and afterwards crossed over to his brother and cousin and greeted them. Finally he turned to a member of the circle who had been a member of the band of his detachment and said, "Good-night, trombone."

It only remains to explain who the spiritual singers were. The gentleman was the closest personal friend of my son-in-law and held a very important confidential position in one of the largest concerns in Great Britain, manufacturing explosives. He was travelling to Scotland in an express, which met with a disastrous collision just over the border two years ago. Two soldiers on his right and left were killed outright. He appeared to be uninjured, but three weeks afterwards in his London office he suddenly collapsed, and five weeks later passed away. He was a magnificent singer, and a master of the piano.

The lady gave her name to Mr. Spencer as Emma Hardinge Britten. Of course, as Mr. Spencer had no personal acquaintance with that lady, knowing her only from her works, her identity cannot be vouched for; but we knew four out of the five visitors without possible mistake, and we may presume that Mrs Emma Hardinge Britten might in some mysterious way, familiar only to spirits, have been drawn to our circle on this occasion.

H. W. S.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

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

THE REFLECTIONS OF "BOWSHOT."

(WITH APOLOGIES TO MR. J. A. SPENDER'S "BAGSHOT.")

Long ago *LIGHT* described Psychical Research as the Cinderella of the Sciences. The fairy godmother has yet to arrive. When she does it might be suggested that for the pumpkin to provide the magic coach she might select the head of any one of the learned gentlemen who write books against the subject.

There is a beautiful French motto which appears on certain old sundials, and which may thus be Englished, "When I cannot see clearly I do not speak." It has a more than playful wisdom. If it had been generally followed humanity would have been saved an almost infinite amount of misdirection from swarms of fanciful and speculative writers who discourse voluminously on things of which they have no glimmering of real knowledge.

The man who "trims" and equivocates is so much the normal man that he is strongly disposed to regard the man who speaks the truth exactly as he sees it as a doubtful, suspicious and probably "deep" customer.

Some words seem to have a hypnotising power—usually a sinister one. Popular use or misuse has charged them with a significance that never belonged to them in their origins. Consider the word "ghost." It has something so uncanny and sepulchral about it that not to believe in ghosts seems almost a healthy and virtuous attitude of mind. And yet a ghost is simply a spirit, whether an archangel or a poltergeist. "Demon" is a still more flagrant instance. It means precisely the same—a spirit. As for "Hades," that term likewise has become debased—it conjures up ideas of gloom and horror. Yet all that it denotes is an unseen world. These are the bogies that frighten a humanity still in its infancy, but more childish than childlike.

It has been stated that the words attributed to Jesus, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," are really an interpolation by some monkish scribe of the past. There is something to be said for this view. Forgeries and interpolations were not uncommon amongst the monastic scribes. The doctors of divinity occasionally "doctored" the manuscripts. And one cannot help noticing that in the phrase quoted there is a play on the name Peter (meaning a stone or rock). The old monks were fond of puns.

There is a vision which comes to the artist which, if it may not be classed as actual spiritual vision, is near akin to it in refinement, delicacy and beauty. Of such are Keats's "magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn," Henley's "shining sensitive silver of the sea," and Wordsworth's "the silence that is in the starry sky; the sleep that is among the lonely hills." These and innumerable other phrases from the great poets speak to the spirit in a tongue which, if not quite its own, it can at least understand.

Some of the most caustic comments on the anti-Spiritualist have proceeded not from Spiritualists but from those outside their ranks. Thus a well-known author remarked the other day that it seemed to him

there was nothing so calculated to convert people to Spiritualism as the criticisms of its Sadducee opponents. And I heard a famous poet say, in allusion to an attack on mediums, that the author of it, having for years tried to show his superiority to somebody, was now reduced to kicking the only class of persons who could not hit back—the despised mediums.

When I was asked once to define Professor James's philosophy of Pragmatism, I could find no better illustration than the man who was cured of blindness by Jesus. The Pharisees examined him on the question of the character and credentials of Jesus, to which the blind man could only reply that all that concerned him was that, having been blind, he could now see. That blind man was the first Pragmatist.

The greatest evils of existence are not those which are inflicted upon us by others, but those which we inflict upon ourselves. In the halls and penitential places of the spiritual world every sufferer comes at last to the knowledge that he was placed there not by the fiat of some judge or correctional court, but by his own act and deed.

It is amusing and edifying to observe how certain persons, having with consummate skill and pains reared for themselves an edifice of troubles, modestly resign all credit for their work and attribute it to the hand of Destiny.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

WINTER SESSION.

As will be seen from our advertising columns the winter session of the L.S.A. will be opened next Thursday (October 2nd) at 7.30 p.m. in the large hall attached to the rooms of the Alliance, when a social meeting accompanied by clairvoyant descriptions will be held. These occasions are always most enjoyable, and we trust that the attendance will be a large one.

It will be noted by all who have received a copy of the syllabus that evening meetings are a feature of the new session. So many of our friends, especially of the sterner sex, are unable to attend afternoon gatherings that it has been decided, while not altering the times hitherto fixed for the Tuesday séances and the Friday trance addresses by Mrs. M. H. Wallis (3 p.m. and 4 p.m. respectively), to put on the hour of the Thursday meetings from 5 to 7.30 p.m. The first Thursday evening meeting in each month will be like that announced above—of a social character, with clairvoyance. The others will be devoted to lectures, given alternately by Dr. W. J. Vanstone and other speakers. Dr. Vanstone will take for the topic of his opening address on October 9th, "The New Era: Its Beginnings To-day." The lecturer on the 16th will be the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis, B.A.; on the 30th Mr. Percy R. Street; and on November 20th, Dr. Ellis T. Powell. Their subjects will be announced later.

As hitherto, the Tuesday afternoon meetings for clairvoyance are confined to members only. To all other meetings associates are admitted without charge, and visitors on payment of 1/-.

Each week's fixtures will be advertised in the preceding issue of *LIGHT*.

On account of the great number of new members it is found necessary to issue tickets of membership. These tickets are, of course, non-transferable. Each ticket must be signed by its holder, and its production can alone ensure free admission to any meeting.

THE ETHERIC BODY.—Regarding the constitution of the etheric double Mr. Chester Green (Brighton, Mass., U.S.A.) sends us a long quotation from Mrs. Besant's "Man and His Bodies," which he evidently regards as an authority on the subject. She states that the Etheric Double is composed of four ethers, which interpenetrate the solid, liquid and gaseous constituents of the dense body, surrounding every particle with an etheric envelope, and thus presenting a perfect duplicate of the denser form, the physical body. It is by means of the Etheric Double that the life-force, Prana, runs along the nerves of the body and thus enables them to act as the carriers of motor force and of sensitiveness to external impacts.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Until Mrs. Wriedt announces her intention of receiving visitors, friends and inquirers are kindly asked to refrain from forwarding requests to see her.

Alderman Jabez Chapman, the President of the Leicester Spiritualist Society, is the Mayor-elect of Leicester.

Professor Haraldur Nielsson, of the University of Reykjavik, returned to Iceland last week after a stay of several months in England. During his visit he investigated psychic matters, and had sittings with a number of prominent mediums.

The Professor, who paid us a call before his departure, said that a slight misunderstanding had occurred in reference to Mr. Tweedale's recent statement in *LIGHT* to the effect that his book was the only one on a psychic subject in the Icelandic language. Mr. W. T. Stead's "Letters From Julia," it appears, was translated into Icelandic several years ago, and both Professor Nielsson and Mr. Einar H. Kuaran have written books and pamphlets on the subject. Mr. Tweedale's book, the Professor said, was the first to be edited and brought out under the auspices of the Icelandic Society for Psychical Research.

Louise J. Miln, in the "Sunday Chronicle," replying to a contribution from the Rev. F. S. Myers condemning Spiritualism, remarks "I have never once attended a séance or a private sitting at which the disembodied spirits—real or fraudulent—were not 'on the side of the angels.' I have never known one to advise evil or advocate wrong."

The "Sunday Chronicle," we understand, refused the publication of certain letters from correspondents who sought to champion the cause of Spiritualism, in reply to the attack of Mr. Myers. These letters, which have been published elsewhere, are couched in unfortunate language, the writers' zeal outrunning their discretion. Such critics should learn a lesson from Mrs. Miln's contribution. It was an admirable reply to the charges made against Spiritualism, and was expressed in polite terms. The result was that the "Sunday Chronicle" printed it with a double-column heading, "Defence of Spiritualism," with a sub-heading, "A Reply to the Indictment of Fraud and Danger." The moral is obvious. We draw the attention of would-be critics to the patient, restrained and courteous reply of Sir Oliver Lodge to a medical sceptic, published in our last issue.

At the recent meeting of the British Association in Bournemouth, much interest was shown in Dr. Waller's machine for photographing thoughts and emotions. Experiments were made with men and women in the audience. One diagram represented the feelings of a Belgian woman during an air raid. She proved so good a subject that the lecturer had only to say "think of Belgium" and her emotions were reproduced by the machine. She could be happy or unhappy at command, and the machine duly recorded the degree of her happiness or the reverse.

All people take about two seconds to respond as one saw (says the "Daily Mail" report) in several rough and ready experiments with the audience. The emotions or thoughts responded to all sorts of stimuli. Sometimes the lecturer just asked a sudden question; sometimes threatened to burn the victim or passed a hand quickly over his eyes. In each case the result was duly recorded. It is remarkable that any physical movement lessened the emotion as registered by this electric machine, which responds so sensitively to the electric energy of the nervous centres and the brain.

A writer in the Philadelphia "Evening Public Ledger," after reviewing in a fair-minded way the claims of Spiritualism as given in a number of books by well-known writers on the subject, concludes, "The inquiring student can find no better summary of the whole subject than is contained in J. Arthur Hill's 'Spiritualism: Its History, Phenomena and Doctrine.'"

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is announced in our advertisement columns to lecture at Wimbledon on Sunday, October 5th. Next month he will be busily engaged in a lecturing tour. He speaks at Northampton on October 13th; at Leamington on October 14th; at Hanley, October 16th; and Worcester, October 17th. He is to visit Aberdeen on November 12th and 13th.

In his recent lecture at Southsea Sir Arthur said he had that day penned a challenge to the Rev. F. S. Myers in connection with a statement the latter had published with re-

gard to the late Dr. Forbes Winslow's views on the question of the sanity of mediums. There was, Sir Arthur declared, ample evidence to show that Dr. Forbes Winslow had entirely withdrawn from that position after closer study of the subject.

From our files we see that Dr. Forbes Winslow lectured at the Cory Hall, Cardiff, on March 21st, 1912, on "The Mind of Man—What is it?" under the auspices of the local Spiritualist society. Referring to the phenomena of dual personality, he said, "The ordinary medical man without psychic knowledge classifies all these symptoms as within the range of imbecility, and the clairaudient who hears the finer vibrations than the normal, and the clairvoyant who sees the finer vibrations, have in the past been incarcerated in asylums solely on the evidence of these symptoms, from which fate I have rescued many by refusing to certify." This is surely a strange authority for opponents of psychic matters to quote.

But here is a stiffer pill for those to swallow who seek to find support in Dr. Forbes Winslow for their reckless statements. Dr. Winslow, in a lecture he delivered at Merthyr on October 22nd, 1911, was questioned about a statement which he had made long before regarding the connection between Spiritualism and lunacy, and in reply frankly admitted that when he made it he was a young man. "He fully believed at the time that what he said was true, but since then he had had much experience in abnormal and psychical phenomena, and had completely changed his views on the subject. He now knew that what he said forty odd years before was a mistake—but it was a mistake honestly made and he as honestly admitted his error." Dr. Forbes Winslow further added that he had been the means of preventing one of the best materialising mediums from being sent to an asylum through "mistaken symptoms."

The Rev. Chas. L. Tweedale informs us that the new edition of his book, "Man's Survival After Death," is expected to be out in October.

Now that the war is over the tide of visitors to London from various parts of the world has set in. A number of Spiritualists from South Africa have called recently, some of whom, though only here for a few months, have joined the Alliance. They recognize the value of the wonderful library which is thus at their disposal, and they will be able to attend some of the interesting meetings of the coming session.

We hope that the example of Mr. Hutcheson, of Aberdeen, in allowing his name and address to be given in connection with an evidential sitting he had will be followed by others in like circumstances. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in our last issue, commented on Mr. Hutcheson showing "a courage which is too often wanting."

Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten many years ago, in writing about Spiritualism in England, referred to the same subject. She said that she frequently received valuable testimony which could not be used because those communicating it insisted on withholding their names and addresses. She rightly observed, "There is no satisfaction in offering such shadowy testimony to those who are asked to believe in occurrences of an unprecedented and often startling character." The passage occurs in her great book, "Nineteenth Century Miracles."

Mrs. Maris Warrington Billings, a member of the staff of "Azoth," the American monthly magazine of occultism and mysticism, has paid us a visit. She has come to London to arrange for the publication of some of her books. Mrs. Billings, who writes automatically, has published "Cleomenes," "An Egyptian Love Spell," and other works.

She relates a curious and quaint circumstance connected with her control, who purports to have been an English peer. Through his books he has so impressed his personality on readers in America that they write to him and he replies to them through Mrs. Billings. Still more quaint is the fact that he has his own banking account made up from the sale of his books, and out of this fund he disburses sums for charity. On these lines staid England cannot hope to compete with America.

In his first séance in "Mrs. Marden"—the spiritualistic novel now running in "Nash's Illustrated Weekly"—Mr. Hichens introduces a tambourine, a concertina and a rattle, and he describes the sight of these articles as making Mrs. Marden "feel almost sick." The novelist, too, becomes melodramatic. When the lights were all turned out except one, a sitter's eyes "gleamed with light like a cat's," and the features of another sitter "resembled those of a mask modelled and painted to represent Famine." The instruments mentioned were duly played

SPIRITUAL POWER.

ITS UNFOLDMENT AND DIRECTION.

BY LILLIAN WHITING.

The initiation by which one achieves the power to relate oneself to the universal energy so as largely to overcome the limitations of fatigue and of time is a very positive and not at all a merely passive matter. Spiritual receptivity is not a negative attitude. It is not holding up, languidly, an empty cup, expecting that some time and some way it will be filled without exertion on our part. Spiritual receptivity is not to be regarded as a matter of emptiness, but, rather, the condition of the very highest receptivity is that of the highest degree of spirituality. When electricity flies from the static to the dynamic, leaps across any gulf or through any obstacle, it is not because the object to which it leaps is inert, but rather because it is in a highly charged state which attracts the corresponding potency to itself. This illustration exactly portrays the condition of receiving from the atmosphere this current of infinite and irresistible energy, which enables one to achieve a vast amount of work in a very little time, and without exhaustion.

To come into this condition is a work involving the entire three-fold force of body, mind and soul. For while the spiritual inhabits a physical body, the condition of the body must affect, proportionately, the receptivity of spiritual power. The body is the temple of the indwelling spirit, and it has laws which must be obeyed. The body is the result of its range of attraction. It is constantly changing, old atoms being thrown off and new ones attracted, and because of this, one can make his body what he will. It may be gross and heavy, or it may be made light and subtle. As its only use is as the vehicle of spirit, the more light and agile and subtle it can be made, the better it fulfils that purpose.

The factors in making it light and subtle are air, water, exercise, food, and thought. Fresh, pure air is one of heaven's best gifts, and no one is less appreciated. Not merely is it enjoyed by going out of doors, but by keeping every room constantly supplied with pure, fresh, life-giving air. The cold bath on rising in the morning is—in its effects, at least—almost as much a condition of spiritual as it is of physical vigour. It may be made far more efficacious by impressing upon the subtle body the thought of the spiritual cleansing and renewal that is typified by the physical cleanliness. To direct the thought thus upon the purification of the spirit is to invest the bath with an intense current of magnetic power. The day is past when it could be considered an absurdity to stamp the impress of thought upon an external act. Let one plead, as he plunges into the cold, sparkling, invigorating water: "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." Let him assert to himself as he emerges: "I will rise in newness of life." The bath may be thus invested with fairly magic properties, and one is made anew and made alive, and every nerve responds to a higher range of vibration. It is not necessary to be an athlete in order to take sufficient exercise for the attainment of the finer state of life. The spirit in which one takes his walks in the open air is far more important than is their length, their frequency, or their duration.

The question of food is always important, and the eating or abstaining from meat is not a merely arbitrary distinction, but is based on laws as exact as those of mathematics. Every substance has its own rate of vibration. The vibration of animal life is on a far lower scale than that of human life. It is instinct with crude passions, fears, desires, all relating themselves to a lower plane of existence. When this food, then, is taken into the human body, it sets up its own range of correspondences, and it builds up,—not the finer, the subtle and the ethereal body, but the coarser one. Food should really be taken for the subtle rather than for the physical body; that is, it should be taken of such a quality that the subtle body can appropriate the finer aroma. Food that is pure, light, wholesome, fits the body to respond, like a fine-tuned instrument, to the higher vibrations of spiritual energy. Food that is heavy and coarse unfits it to respond to this range, and thus clogs and imprisons the indwelling spirit. Once realising this principle man can determine for himself the quality and quantity of the foods that best fit him to express his higher life. There can be no arbitrary rules. Needs and powers vary with the individual, and each must, by test and experiment, determine for himself.

The human organism is a chemical laboratory of the most complex variety, and the action and reaction of food depend upon a thousand things, inclusive of both physical and mental, which cannot be decided, in any authoritative way, by one for another. More potent, however, than any one of these, and more potent than all combined, if multiplied a thousandfold, is the factor of thought. "As a man thinketh so is he." It is literally true. Thought shall determine his form, his bearing, his presence, his atmosphere. Thought shall also determine his power to command his life, rather than to accept it at the mere drift and mercy of circumstances.

"Soul's desire is means enow," says Emerson. The soul's desire should control the soul's progress. For the soul is the divine spark that remains in its high relation with the divine, and may thus be trusted. Mere desire on a lower plane has often to be denied and uprooted before progress can be made; but the soul's desire is to be held supreme.

To be able to direct our life: to recognise the forecast, and choose, and select, and combine events to the highest purpose, is a perfectly normal condition, and it is one which it is man's duty to achieve by this high and harmonious living.

MYSTERIOUS MUSIC IN A CHURCH.

The following appeared in the London "Star" of the 9th inst. :—

A tale of ghostly music is told by the vicar of Avenbury, Herefordshire, the Rev. Archer Shepherd.

Writing to a party of antiquaries who had made a pilgrimage to the lonely parish church of Avenbury, Mr. Shepherd, having apologised for being unable to meet them, said :—

"By some strange, unexplained cause the sound as of a voluntary played on an organ is heard at times to proceed from the church. Three such occasions have come under my notice. On the first the music was heard by several members of the family of Colonel Prosser, of Bromyard, who were walking along the footbridge by the church. They all heard it, and believed it was the organist practising. They afterwards found that neither he nor anyone else had been inside the church that day.

"The American organ was replaced by the present harmonium. One Saturday afternoon when I was in the vicarage garden I heard the harmonium being played, and supposing that the woman who cleaned was allowing her child to strum the instrument I hastened to forbid it. The music continued all the time I was walking down the meadow till I came within ten yards of the churchyard. Then it ceased, and I found the church door locked and no one there.

"On another occasion I heard the music as I was driving in Avenbury-lane. It sounded like a voluntary, and continued while the pony trotted about 100 yards and ceased when I came opposite to the church."

A lady who formerly lived in the locality, writing from Leamington, says :—

"I am inclined to tell you of an experience my husband and myself had 40 years ago in this same church one Christmas night. It was snowing very fast, and we entered the porch. It was then midnight, and almost immediately we heard what at first we thought were many human voices conversing. The church seemed full of extremely happy, joyous sounds. Although we distinctly heard so many voices in the church, we could not distinguish a word they said. Naturally we tried the door of the church, but it was locked. We went outside, but the church was in darkness. The wonderful sounds came distinctly from the inside of the church, and the experience so impressed us both that the memory has never grown dim."

THE OLD AND THE NEW SPIRITUALITY.

In the September number of that excellent little magazine "Vision," Clifford Bax tilts at the still current mediæval conception of spirituality, which regards the senses as the antithesis of the soul and exalts the man who abstains from this and that. We expect him to wear "the white flower of a blameless life" :—

"'A blameless life!'—And is that enough? Does that alone constitute spirituality? Generation by generation, we adopt the old values because we are inert, but we know now that they do not satisfy us. Our ideas have changed. We must change our ideal. We must recognise at the outset that spirituality is not exclusively a matter of morals. It comes also from a development of the psychic imagination and a culture of the senses. . . . Psychic imagination unites us with the experience of others, and, no matter how blameless we may be, if we lack this faculty we must be insulated and small. Now, since it cannot be acquired in the wilderness but only in the world, we must admit that the world may spiritualise us and that life is not an experience to be cold-shouldered. If, again, we recognise that the material world is not ignoble but reveals the vast Imagination that conceived it, we must realise that the senses are the allies and not the enemies of the soul. We must cultivate our senses and cease to be proud of our indifference to the fair things of the earth. The shape, texture, perfume and colour of the wild rose proclaim that the world's Artificer is a Poet; and if our senses bring to us no joy from such manifestations of His fancy we are by so much removed from understanding Him and therefore the less spiritual."

ERRATUM.—In the last paragraph of Mr. Hutcheson's letter on p. 303 of last week's issue, through no fault of the writer, the name of the Rev. F. B. Meyer was substituted by mistake for that of the Rev. F. S. Myers.

NATIONAL UNION FUND OF BENEVOLENCE.—The Honorary Financial Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Stair (14, North-street, Keighley, Yorks.), acknowledges with thanks the following subscriptions received in August: Mrs. Woodroff, 2/-; Mrs. Dawdall's circle, £1; A Friend, South Kensington, £5; A Friend, Sheffield Centre, 10/-; United Societies' Garden Party, Sheffield, per Mr. Higginbottom, £20 5/-; B.E.C., Oldham, 2/6; Total, £26 19s. 6d. The disbursements during the month amounted to £18.

FRIVOLOUS MESSAGES.

A SUGGESTED EXPLANATION.

One of the most disturbing problems, no doubt, by which the Spiritualist is confronted is the often too flagrantly frivolous nature of communications received through the trance-medium.

Any light on the subject would certainly be welcomed, and although an explanation, having for its foundation nothing more substantial than a mere theory may fail to confound the derisive attitude of the many opponents who are ever ready to pounce upon an apparently vulnerable point, it may still be useful as an indication that the particular question with which it would deal is not altogether unanswerable.

Now, I can well conceive the possibility, in the Spirit-world, of a state which, while differing in certain respects from our own "dream-life," may be the actual equivalent thereof. Herein will be found, I believe, a not altogether unsatisfactory solution of the problem.

Whereas, in dreams, earth-dwellers are at times wafted into higher spheres, those on the other side may recall therein certain episodes of their past experiences of earth-life.

When we dream, it is presumed that only certain of our mental faculties are active, and that these, unconstrained, uncontrolled by the rest—(the critical, reasoning faculties)—are allowed to wander erratically through the most absurdly impossible situations, encountering without surprise or question adventures which they would in their wakeful state immediately recognise as absolutely ridiculous. Frequently the dream thoughts of even the most intelligent, the most sedately methodical of men and women, could they be faithfully recorded, would make the most nonsensical reading.

Granted, then, that a dweller in the Spirit-world may at times lapse into this equivalent of our own dream-state, may he not recall therein past experiences of his earth-life, including even such insignificant details as the enjoyment of a cigar, or the quaffing of a favourite beverage—to quote extreme cases?

Should that spirit dreamer be brought *en rapport* with an entranced medium, is it not rational to suggest that these apparently irrelevant thoughts, these dream-ramblings, may be impressed upon her mind and duly included in her "communications"?

I fully believe that the existence in the Spirit-world of this dream state would account for many not yet satisfactorily explained phenomena. The spirit dreamer, rehearsing, reconstructing, for example, some episode of his earth-life, would probably include in his dream certain details of his personal appearance, of the fashion and pattern of the clothes he wore on that particular occasion, hence the "Ghost," the "White Lady," the "Knight in Armour," and similar apparitions that are said to haunt certain places at stated times, periodically in fact.

I would carry the argument still further, suggesting that but for this dream state in the Spirit-world, by far the majority of the manifestations connected with Spiritualism would hardly be possible. And for the following reason. Whereas our earthly mediums are credited with the possession of senses, or of certain faculties which, in a manner, transcend, psychically, those generally allotted to mankind, so the medium of the Spirit-world may be one who has not yet completely thrown off certain material essences from which even the passage through the gate of death has failed to free him.

These two form the natural link, the natural point of contact between the two worlds, and only our most highly developed mediums may join hands, as it were, with spirits of a higher plane.

ALFRED R. SUTTON.

. The writer should note the views on this subject put forward by Miss Scatcherd, and quoted in our "Lighthouse" columns last week.

THIS life is not the book; it is only the first chapter of the book.—G. H. MORRISON.

MR. E. J. MCCARTHY, the author of "Motionism, or the World's True Religion" (Caxton Press, Ltd., 5/- net), has made a quite new discovery, which he sets forth in twenty-four chapters mostly composed of very brief and very emphatic and ejaculatory paragraphs. The Christian trinity, he tells us, is fallacious, because one of its terms is missing. It is composed of two visible terms named matter and mind coupled together by a third term named "God," which is quite invisible. The true trinity consists of the first two terms coupled together by a third named "motion," and all "are visible to the naked eye." We wonder when mind became visible to the naked eye and when motion became an entity. Evidently we do wrong to speak of the motion of an object, as if the former belonged to the latter, and not *vice versa*, for we learn that matter is "motion asleep," and mind is "motion awake," and that these are "the two universal contraries which leave nothing unaccounted for." So far as we can see, they account for nothing, but have themselves to be accounted for.

THE TEACHINGS OF CLAUDE.

We well remember the social meeting of the L.S.A. held in December, 1917, in the society's old rooms in St. Martin's Lane, at which Mrs. Kelway-Bamber, in a narrative marked by refreshing clearness of diction, told how her son, Claude, killed two years before, while fighting German aeroplanes in Flanders, had given her convincing evidence of his continued presence with her—evidence which no theory of telepathy from the sub-conscious self could possibly explain away.

In November last year appeared "Claude's Book," an interesting series of communications in which the young airman gave his mother an account of some of his experiences since passing over. The narrative is now continued in "Claude's Second Book," published like the former volume through Messrs. Methuen and Co. (6/- net). In her preface to the new work Mrs. Kelway-Bamber states that some of the communications it contains were received by her through direct impression from her son, but the majority of them were given by him, as before, through the mediumship of Mrs. Osborne Leonard.

Many of the passages in the earlier work were regarded at the time by Dr. Ellis T. Powell, who contributes the introduction to the present volume, as so deep and pregnant that he could not suppose Claude to be aware of their full significance. These profundities, he says, were obviously beyond the ken of a young soldier just passed into the spirit life:—

"Since there is no miraculous bestowal of knowledge upon the spirits who pass to the other plane the inference from Claude's language was his spiritual contact with the sources of advanced knowledge and his ability to echo some of their teachings, without being alive to the full import of that which he was transmitting."

This inference Dr. Powell finds to be wholly confirmed by the second book: "The expert in the psychic sciences recognises in it at once a marked advance upon the first." But over and over again he will have "forced upon him the conclusion that Claude, though he has greatly advanced in knowledge, remains occasionally unconscious of the full purport of his words—that is to say, he is in 'touch' with exalted sources of teaching, though he has not yet fully assimilated what he has received."

Leaving the thoughtful reader to discover the more profound teachings of the book for himself and draw his own conclusions as to how far Dr. Powell is probably right in his inference concerning their source, we will select for quotation some eminently practical remarks from a chapter on "Ideal Sitters"—for Claude holds that to obtain good results sitters should be trained as well as mediums! He is speaking of methods of communication:—

"It is a purely arbitrary distinction to say that one form of communication is 'higher' than another, and that therefore 'trance' mediumship is preferable to sitting at a table, for instance; it is far less laborious and quicker for the sitters, certainly, but not necessarily 'higher' in any sense. The beauty, dignity and interest of anything received from the other side depends on the sitters. You might as well say it is 'higher' to receive a message from a friend through 'wireless' instead of through the old-fashioned telegram. After all, it's the subject-matter and not the method of transmission that is the main thing. I have been with spirit friends when they have been communicating with their people, and have heard not only tests but most interesting and beautiful facts of their life here given through the table; it has been a communion of souls fortified by love and aspiration, a common means to a sacred end. On the other hand I have heard you complain of trance addresses that consisted of a series of ordinary platitudes that anyone might have uttered without troubling to go into trance! Of course some of these methods are much more accessible to the majority of people, and are abused in consequence; but this is not a subject to play about with, it should be treated as a serious or indeed sacred matter or left severely alone; it is dangerous to play with fire, and if people lightly and carelessly invite the attendance of discarnate spirits they may live to regret it. At best they can only get frivolous, untruthful, and unmeaning messages, and at worst they are opening the door to admit uninvited guests whose influence they may find it difficult to eradicate."

A much needed warning. It applies not only to the frivolous seeker for marvels, but to the man or woman who is eaten up with spiritual pride and self-conceit. The discovery of the fact of spirit communion has for such persons a special danger. They quickly become convinced that they are in receipt of special revelations never vouchsafed to ordinary mortals and are in grave danger of losing what mental balance they ever possessed.

D. R.

MRS MARY MOORE (Surbiton) takes exception to the allusion by V. C. Desertiis, in his comments (on p. 266) on the Bishop of London's Hyde Park address, to "the Paines and Ingersolls and other atheistic writers." She writes: "It seems strange how this mistake can arise, because every page of Paine's goes to prove—and is written to prove—his belief in the great Eternal God, creator of all things in this marvellous universe."

REINCARNATION: SOME REPLIES.

Mrs. de Crespigny's recent article on this subject and the reply by a King's Counsel, on p. 286, have drawn contributions from other correspondents, of which, however, we can only find space for abridged reports.

Mr. W. Boyd Shannon quotes some of the observations of "King's Counsel," and comments on them thus:—

"No evidence of any description can be produced." If the teachings of religion be taken as a proof—and this includes all religions—there is considerable evidence. To take only the Christian revelation, there is the direct statement by Christ: "Ye must be born again." Why so direct and unambiguous a saying should be supposed to mean something other than it states, is difficult to understand.

"The assumption that reincarnation is necessary in order to prevent injustice overlooks the fact that compensation can be made in the spirit world for inequality in earth life." How can it be possible—on a plane where matter, as we understand it, is not—for a murderer to learn not to murder, or for the glutton and the drunkard to learn the necessary self-denial, or for the coward to learn heroism and self-sacrifice and the ability to meet and bear pain?

All the trials of the flesh have use in educating and perfecting the character. Life is lived for experience. But if it be lived without gaining those necessary conquests, the experience must be passed through again, in order that the necessary lesson may be learnt. It can only be attained by conquest of the particular weakness.

With regard to the reincarnation of those who have no wish to be reincarnated, this is impossible. It is the desire to be, which is one of the principal causes.

Mr. J. Scott Battams, writing as a mere student, but after some years of study, confesses that the truth of reincarnation is with him rather an intuition than a logically reasoned conviction. He says:—

I have no doubt—though, of course, no proof—that there are, and ever have been, advanced souls to whom re-birth is a matter of *knowledge*, and that the gaining of this personal assurance is one of the first steps demanded of the neophyte in the occult schools. It would seem that the most convincing arguments for the truth of reincarnation come along philosophical lines. I venture to suggest that Spiritualism would gain—especially on the phenomenal side—if its devotees, instead of ignoring the theosophical and occult teachings, were to borrow some of the light they cast on the obscure problems which confront both schools of thought.

Constance Gill (Muswell Hill) sends an inspirational message received from a departed friend in reply to a question on the subject. The answer was to the effect that there is no fixed law in the matter. If any spirits felt—and some did so feel—that to be back in a material body would help them in their progress they could come back. But there was no need for them to do so, seeing that every chance of rising and of becoming more spiritual was given them on their own side.

Mrs. de Crespigny writes:—

My remarks in *LIGHT* on reincarnation seem to have been a little misunderstood. It was in no way an attempt to write exhaustively on the subject, but merely a *review* of Mr. Sinnett's article in the "Nineteenth Century" for August—which I would bring to the notice of any really interested, one way or the other, in the theory of re-birth on this earth.

MR. COATES'S TOUR IN THE NORTH.

Mr. James Coates, who has returned to London, gives the following account of his recent experiences in the North:—

Shortly after my arrival in Scotland, I was asked by the President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists to occupy their platform on August 24th. I found that the officials of the Glasgow Association worked together very harmoniously, and all their undertakings were marked by success. They now hold their meetings in the fine McLellan Galleries in Sauchiehall-street, where large audiences are the rule. I was struck by the good results achieved in Glasgow, and by the decision arrived at to take, as an additional step in propaganda work, the Langside Hall for three months for lectures and expositions on Spiritualism. A leading provincial speaker and clairvoyant will be present at the opening of this hall in October.

It gave me much pleasure to revisit Belfast, where I was the speaker for the Association in George's Hall, High-street. This society has difficulties to contend with, because it is not able to obtain a large building. It was found impossible to get the use of a cinema hall for Sunday services, so strong was the prejudice against Spiritualism. Ulster Hall, one of the finest in Ireland, could only be obtained occasionally.

On my return from Ireland I again had the pleasure of being on the platform of the Glasgow society. Mrs. Cannock, from London, was the speaker and clairvoyant. Her address was listened to with deep interest, and her vivid clairvoyant descriptions impressed the large gathering that was present.

MENDING THE ETHERIC BODY.

A SPIRIT'S "CURIOUS TASK."

Mr. C. E. Willis (Camberwell) forwards the following automatic script received by him recently, regarding the rehabilitation of individuals who have passed over suffering from deformity or disfigurement. He says, "The information I have received could no doubt be tested by others who are in a position to make inquiries of their guides. It would be extremely interesting if the matter could be pursued further by other investigators."

The script (received August 16th, 1919) is as follows:—

I have a curious task to follow. You must know that many people here are in a very damaged state owing to the war and my work is to make them understand that their new limbs will come in course of time. You see, that a deformity is always reproduced in the etheric body because the deformity is part of the personality of the being, and he or she could not live without it. This will sound most strange to you, I am sure. You must understand that our bodies are photographed on our egos so that your body is permanent until reconstructed or, rather, rehabilitated. Your deformities are actually part of yourself until your spirit and concurrently your etheric body becomes mended and purified so as to be capable of reconstruction without altering in an adverse way the predominant higher spiritual characteristics of the ego itself.

Now, when a man passes over who is a hunchback, he is still a hunchback here until he has become spiritually advanced enough to influence his etheric body, irrespective of the influence of earthly recollections, but a man who has lost his limbs in battle goes through a different process altogether; he is at once awakened with his limbs whole again if he only lost them a short while before his passing over; but if he lost them some time before, he has to become accustomed to being without them here for a little while and then he goes through a spiritual operation and the surgeons here, by prayer and spiritual efforts, reproduce his limbs for him sound and whole as they were in life in your plane.

Our contributor will find support for the message he received in "So Saith the Spirit," by a King's Counsel. On page 187, the author says:—

"In the course of a message from Amra on this date (December 1st, 1918) he mentioned that on first passing over the spirit-body possesses the blemishes of the earth-body. He illustrated this from the case of Byron, who, on first waking up in the spirit-world after passing over from this life, found that his spirit-body had the same malformation of one foot as his earth-body has possessed."

The message proceeds to tell how Amra rectified the malformation.

THE ESSENCE OF LIFE—ITS UPWARD IMPULSE.

We cannot too seriously and constantly realise that the terrible ordeal through which the nations have so lately passed was the actual trial of strength between the two great philosophies which have divided the civilised world between them since Darwin demonstrated the fact that creation is carried on by means of evolution.

Because this fact finally negated man's earlier belief that creation was effected once for all by a series of separate Divine acts which took place long ago, the temptation to deny a good purpose in creation was too strong for many minds, gloomily impressed by the evidence on every hand of that remorseless struggle in nature which Darwin unfortunately described as the struggle "for existence." It is true that all nature, as it exists to-day, exists only as the result of that struggle; but nevertheless existence was not the object of the struggle. Creatures could not struggle until they already had existence, and in the course of the struggle they were all constantly risking their existence. For what? For betterment of one kind or another.

So the truth is that all nature exists, as it is to-day, only by its ceaseless striving in the past for better things. Since our present condition of existence is the result of the struggle, it may seem a small point to insist upon, that the struggle is misnamed the Struggle "for Existence"; but it makes all the difference between a philosophy of Life and a philosophy of Death.

My point leads at once to several questions. Why does nature struggle ceaselessly for better things? Why were not creatures, having existence, content to remain as they were originally? Why cannot anything that lives be permanently contented in this world? At once we see that the very essence of Life is its upward impulse, which is the creative force of the world.

The fact that all nature seems to have been at strife from the beginning does not affect the fact that Life is a good force which is always improving the world and will achieve its final purpose of creation here by the establishment of universal loving-kindness on earth.

—E. KAY ROBINSON, in "The Meaning of Life."

Be yourself; do not lean or apologise.—O. S. MARDEN

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W. 1. — 6.30, Dr. W. J. Vanstone. October 5th, Mr. A. Vout Peters.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, W.2. — 11, Mr. F. W. Beard; 6.30, Mr. Ernest Hunt. Wednesday, October 1st, 7.30, Mr. Robert King.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E. — 11, Mrs. Mary Gordon; 6.30, Mr. Nickels, of Luton.

Walthamstow.—*342, Hoe-street.*—7, Mr. Percy Smyth, address and clairvoyance.

Shepherd's Bush.—*73, Becklow-road.*—11, public circle; 7, harvest festival. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Brown.

Reading Spiritual Mission.—*16, Blagrove-street.*—11.30 and 6.45, Mr. Arthur Lawrence.

Croydon.—*117b, High-street.*—11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. Jennie Walker.

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

Lewisham.—*The Priory, High-street.*—6.30, Mr. R. Boddington.

Peckham.—*Lausanne-road.*—7, Mrs. Mary Gordon. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Graddon Kent.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway.—6.30, Mrs. Alice Harper. Wednesday, October 1st, 7.30, Mrs. Jamrach.

Brighton.—*Athenaeum Hall.*—11.15 and 7, Mrs. Jamrach, addresses and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mr. Cager.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—*1, Villas-road, Plumstead.*—7, Mr. Phelps, address. Wednesday, 8, members' meeting, annual election of officers.

Battersea.—*45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.*—11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mr. and Mrs. Brownjohn. October 2nd, 8.15, Mr. Sturdy, address, Mrs. Holloway, clairvoyance.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—*Old Steine Hall.*—11.30 and 7, also Monday, 7.15, addresses and clairvoyance, Miss G. Butcher. Tuesday, 3 p.m., public circle, Miss Butcher. Thursday, 7.15, questions and clairvoyance. Lyceum every Sunday, 3 p.m. Next week Nurse Graham.

Holloway.—*Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).*—To-day (Saturday), 7.15, whist drive, silver collection at door in aid of building fund. Sunday, 11, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Pulham; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mrs. A. Boddington. Wednesday, Mrs. Crowder. October 5th, 11 a.m., Mr. T. O. Todd; 7, Mr. G. Prior.

READING.—Mr. Percy R. Street celebrated, on the 20th inst., his 13th anniversary as the Resident Speaker of the Reading Spiritual Mission, when the annual harvest festival was also held. The hall was profusely decorated with a splendid collection of the choicest fruits and flowers. Mr. Street took for his subjects for the three special services, "The Golden Harvest," "Spirit Workers and Spirit Labours," and "A Vision of the Future." On the following day the harvest produce was sold and realised the sum of £22, which, with the collection, was placed to the credit of the National Memorial Church Fund.

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., 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, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W. ...	11-0	6-30
*Mash 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.		

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