

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,035.—VOL. XL.

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 1920.

[a Newspaper.]

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

The comments of "The Times" on Sir Oliver Lodge's article in the "Hibbert Journal" (from which we quote elsewhere) illustrate how little is known about the psychological facts which are generically called "Spiritualism." These supernormal happenings were not invited or sought for. They range from the subconscious memory which recalls events completely effaced from the normal memory (such as a language unheard since childhood) to the phenomena of automatism, telekinesis (movement of objects without contact), and materialisations. These have been studied by many men of science in England and on the Continent, and have been established as facts. Many theories have been advanced to account for each separately. From the first these phenomena have presented a very extraordinary feature—they have shown in many cases what seems to be an external intelligence. This external intelligence often claims to be the surviving spirit of some human being, and when it gives the kind of tests of personality of which Sir Oliver's "Raymond" is a type, it is quite natural that the plain man should accept the statements at face value when they affect him personally. But the essential difference, and it is essential, between the old "necromancer" and the modern "medium," is this: that the former claimed to "call spirits from the vasty deep" and the latter only provides a special organism by which spirits *if they are there and want to communicate*, can do so. The phenomena are sporadic and not producible at will; they arise from that vast world of the subconscious, of which philosophy is compelled to take more and more note. In themselves they are older than Socrates' conversations with his daemon, and the very term "subconscious" means that there are causes which convey knowledge of distant or future events to our limited sense-consciousness and operate by means at present supernormal.

\* \* \* \*

Many of us have come into possession of the proofs of a spiritual world without money and without price, and those not merely the inward "intimations of immortality" which few attain, but such intellectual evidences as can "clinch" the intuitive perceptions. They are not to be obtained to order or for "cash down," and if any person chooses to take up the position that these proofs, not having fallen to him personally even when he has "bid" £1,000 for them, are non-existent, he must be left to find out the truth in the only conclusive fashion, *i.e.*, in the course of nature. It is not a money matter. The genuine medium cannot be bribed to obtain phenomena over which he has no control. He does not "raise ghosts" or "produce voices," a simple elementary truth which may haply dawn on some news-

paper writers when it has been repeated to them a sufficient number of times, say a thousand. One of the greatest of our newspaper proprietors once said that when the average reader had seen an advertisement for the tenth time he began to have a hazy idea that he was being told something. But only by repetition did the idea come at last to sink into his mind. Psychic science is not a commercial matter (yet) and we must not wonder at the general obtuseness on the part of the outside world. But the newspaper writer ought to be a little more intelligent than the newspaper reader.

\* \* \* \*

When, a good many years ago, this country having embarked on a wrong policy had discovered its mistake, the late Lord Salisbury summed up the position in his own frank fashion. He said, "We have put our money on the wrong horse." It was a true verdict (the war proved that), but the phrase in which he expressed it offended many superfine and mealy-mouthed persons. Truths must not be uttered too bluntly. That is why we sometimes resort to fables. For, as Rudyard Kipling puts it:—

When all the world would have a matter hid,  
Since Truth is seldom friend to any crowd,  
Men write in fable, as old Æsop did,  
Jesting at that which none will name aloud.  
And this they needs must do, or it will fall  
Unless they please they are not heard at all.

It was Rudyard Kipling, by the way, who wrote the poem which concerns the foolishness of those who go down to Endor. It embodied a good deal of prejudice, and it tickled the ears of the groundlings or we should not see it so continuously quoted in anti-Spiritualistic diatribes, especially those that proceed from what is called the "religious" Press. There is some truth in it, as there is in all the attacks made upon us by our most intelligent critics. It would astonish some of these same critics if they became aware that some of their objections were first raised by Spiritualists themselves against the abuses of the subject by its more inexperienced and undisciplined followers. We have heard at least as bitter comments on the foolish side of Spiritualism from Spiritualists as any that have proceeded from our enemies. The opposition does not know this. How should it? It is like the old breed of politicians who could only see the good in their own side and the evil in the other side. It was a profitable policy while the people were "green" and ignorant and gullible. To-day there is more intelligence abroad, and politicians have become a by-word and an offence. Time is a great revealer. We are content to work for our truth and to await the further diffusion of intelligence. We await it with confidence; it can do us nothing but good. We have no fictions for whose fate we tremble, no truths which we are not content to have tested and tried to the uttermost.

### WATCHNIGHT SERVICES.

There was a record attendance at the Watchnight Service on December 31st at the Reading Spiritual Mission, and the gathering was characterised by a sense of spiritual communion. All present joined in singing Kipling's "Recessional," and its recurring refrain of "Lest we forget" had a solemn significance. Mr. Percy R. Street, who presided, delivered an address marked by inspiring and lofty thought. He reminded his hearers that the world now more than ever before needed from them high and noble aspirations and resolves. Successful watchnight services were also held by the London Spiritual Mission and the Battersea Society.

## "THE TIMES" ON SPIRITUALISM.

REPLIES BY SIR O. LODGE AND SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

An article by Sir Oliver Lodge in the "Hibbert Journal" for January, entitled "The Attitude of the Church to the Phenomena known as Spiritualistic," called forth a leading article in "The Times" of January 1st. Replies to this were made by Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir A. Conan Doyle. We are not able to reprint from the "Hibbert" more than a few extracts, on points referred to by "The Times." The whole article, however, we strongly commend to our readers. In our Notes by the Way will be found some comments on the subject.

Sir Oliver, discussing the newspaper reports of the recent Church Congress, says:—

First I will take a sentence from a leading article in "The Times" of October 17th. The writer says that I and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle "proclaim the existence of people with two powers, the power of raising spirits and the power of foretelling the future." Well, as it stands, the statement is unintentionally untrue. Practice of necromancy, and incantations to raise ghosts or the devil, are redolent of the middle ages; so far as I am concerned I know nothing about such processes, nor have I any knowledge of people who practise incantation or any form of magic. As to foretelling the future, such a power is at present *sub judice*. To say that it is non-existent is absurd. Every astronomer foretells the future; so do doctors; and even statesmen and politicians sometimes. Predictions are usually inferences from the present, and are always liable to unforeseen contingency. They are never infallible. Something may interfere with the predicted return of a comet or a swarm of meteors, or even with an eclipse, though the latter contingency is unlikely. If a wider knowledge of the present, and a closer acquaintance with the springs of human action, enable some Intelligences to infer about the future more than would ordinarily seem possible—especially about human affairs subject to the disturbing influence of genuine free will—well, it is for us to find out if such a power exists. At present I have never dogmatised on that subject—and the communicators with whom I have been in touch are very modest about it, though they imply that occasionally exceptional sources of information are open to them—but I am willing to collect trustworthy evidence of such a power and seek to ascertain its Laws. Evidence not properly authenticated before the event cannot be allowed to count.

Speaking of the solace brought to many homes, he writes:—"It has been suggested to me that I should give one example of the help afforded by the facts. It is difficult to select, so I take a letter from a war-widow (personally a stranger) which happened to come to-day, and extract a few passages; explaining however that the feelings of gratitude are rightly due to the facts themselves, not to a mere agent":—

"A sense of overwhelming gratitude . . . for all you have done for my husband and myself compels me to express my feelings. . . . You may remember that some few weeks after my husband's death in action I wrote to you and besought your aid. You can never guess what that meant to me, then and now, also I doubt not that the kindness was an aid to my husband, and in years to come I trust will help our boy. [She then speaks of her own experience through a medium and of her reading of books, and continues:]

"I have the greatest pleasure in watching the affection between my small boy (who was six months old when his father left us here) and his father, whom he speaks of in the most natural if still babyish manner. I am perfectly confident of the presence of my husband—at some times more than others—and I feel a mutual joy between us in consequence. Love has not been weakened by the passing, and whilst grief is natural . . . I can and do sense the very close companionship of my husband, and that alone has helped me through these two years."

"Well, that represents," comments Sir Oliver, "the kind of effect produced in a great number of cases, though not all are able to express themselves. I am not surprised that people who possess the knowledge wish to scatter their pearls broadcast, even though they themselves run the risk of being rent by the inappreciative."

Here is the reference to Raymond to which "The Times" alludes:—

I observe that one speaker at the Congress succeeded in making capital out of what he uncharitably calls an "admission" of mine, viz., that the stress and urgency of Raymond's need to communicate subsided after identity had been proved and family conviction had been attained, so that now communications from him were for the most part easy and chatty like an occasional letter home. It was not an admission, it was a statement; made, as I hope all my statements are made, with the sincere object of presenting the truth, whatever it may be. I see nothing in it but what is perfectly natural; and I may now

take the opportunity of supplementing that statement by adding an exception. The exception is when anything of importance is happening or likely to happen in the family, with whose doings Raymond still keeps in close touch. Then he indicates a desire that we shall give him an early opportunity of speaking.

### COMMENTS BY "THE TIMES."

The following leading article, headed "Sir Oliver Lodge and Spiritualism," appeared in "The Times" of January 1st:—

Sir Oliver Lodge, writing in the "Hibbert Journal" for January, says that a statement in a leading article in our columns was "unintentionally untrue." We said that he and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle "proclaimed the existence of people with two powers, the power of raising spirits and the power of foretelling the future." We hasten to give further publicity to his disclaimer, and should be only too glad to accept it at its face value. It would be a useful counterblast to the common belief that the claims of Spiritualists have been examined and are supported by high scientific authority. Sir Oliver Lodge protests that he knows nothing of the practices of necromancy and incantation, or of the people who practise them. No doubt medieval necromancers employed magic circles, fat from the bodies of suicides, and prayers said backwards, whilst contemporary "mediums" use darkened rooms, banjos, and hymns. No doubt also the medieval performers attached great importance to the production of visible manifestations, and these have recently been rather "blown upon." But the essential part of the claim, the claim to get into communication with the dead, is identical in the two cases. Sir Oliver Lodge, in the article in which he challenges our statement, announces, not for the first time, that after thirty years' study he has been impelled to the hypothesis that communications sometimes come from friends "on the other side." He asserts that they come through "mediums." He publishes a testimonial from a war widow who, following his advice, by means of books and through a "medium," has "sensed the very close companionship of her husband" for two years. He tries to make out a case for foretelling the future by pleading that this is done by astronomers and doctors with varying accuracy, and he deprecates its apparent illegality when done by other persons. He says that some "intelligences" seem to be able to foretell about the future more than would ordinarily seem possible. He states that his son, who was killed near Ypres in September, 1915, keeps in close touch with the family, and transmits communications to them, especially when anything of importance is happening or is likely to happen. In his book "Raymond," he describes a warning, obscure until after the event, which he received through a "medium" in America, and interprets it as a prediction of his son's death and subsequent communications with him. Sir Oliver Lodge does justice neither to himself nor to the public in attempting to ride two horses. We desire neither to interfere with his beliefs nor to place obstacles in the way of his investigations. But we have a right to demand transparent candour from a man who claims to be an exponent of the scientific method and to have applied that method to phenomena which, to say the least that may be said, have sometimes been associated with fraud.

### SIR A. CONAN DOYLE'S ANSWER.

In "The Times" of January 3rd, Sir A. Conan Doyle wrote:—

As you were good enough to couple my name with that of Sir Oliver Lodge in your original remarks upon Spiritualism, you will perhaps allow me to associate myself with his disclaimer of the views attributed to us. Those views were that mediums had the power "of raising spirits and of foretelling the future." To "raise a spirit" would seem to imply that we had some control over those who have passed into the beyond. Such is not the case. The most that we can do is to make the physical conditions such that if they should of their own desire wish to manifest themselves to our senses, they may be able to do so. As to "foretelling the future," I have expressly stated in my "New Revelation" (p. 123):—"On the whole I preserve an open mind upon the powers and limitations of prophecy." I have known some very remarkable cases of fulfilment, and I have known grievous lapses. From their higher ground the spirit people see the relations between cause and effect more clearly than we do, but I for one would never admit that they have any certain power of foretelling the future. Thus on both counts you have unwittingly misrepresented my views. You add that mediums use "darkened rooms, banjos, and hymns." The darkened room is common, but by no means universal, the banjo is, so far as I know, unknown, but hymns and prayer do certainly accompany this, the most solemn of all religious functions.

Sir Oliver has published his one war-widow letter as a sample, no doubt, of a large correspondence. I have myself received hundreds. Of these, 60 complete successes out of 72 attempts have been obtained from a single medium. These documents are entirely at the disposal of yourself or of any other competent authority who would care to examine them. My testimony, however, is more direct than this, since I can solemnly declare that, using an unpaid medium, I have beyond all question or doubt spoken face to face with my son, my brother, my nephew by marriage, and

several other friends since their death. On each occasion there were six or more witnesses.

#### SIR OLIVER LODGE EXPLAINS.

In "The Times" of January 5th Sir Oliver Lodge wrote:—

There is no lack of candour in my article in the current "Hibbert Journal," criticised in your fifth leader of January 1st, nor any attempt to ride two horses; the attempt is to convey information and to cultivate precision of language in a subject which to people unimpressed with its importance may appear tiresome. My object was not to repudiate anything, but to get the facts rightly stated. As I was careful to say (p. 264), sentences were cited "not for the sake of controversy, but for the sake of explication." I then said that the power of foretelling the future (in the sense intended and explained) was *sub judice*; as it is. Also that we had no power of "raising spirits." The extract from a widow's letter—"I can and do sense the very close companionship of my husband"—should not be read as signifying the raising of anything that appealed to bodily senses. I am not responsible for using the word "sense," as a verb, in this phrase, though your quotation marks, and change of pronoun from "my" to "her," may make it appear that I am. The word is popularly used to signify an awareness, or mental impression, apart from the recognised senses. I suppose the idea is that the impression comes through an extra unnamed kind of sense.

### A PIONEER IN PSYCHIC RESEARCH.

SIR WILLIAM BARRETT, F.R.S.

A brief and very interesting biography of Sir Wm. Barrett, F.R.S., appears in "The International Psychic Gazette," of the current month. The work of this eminent physicist is traced from his first experiences as a skilled assistant at the Royal Institution to his chairmanship at the Royal College of Science in Dublin.

His first introduction to occult, or as we prefer to call them, subconscious phenomena, was through hypnotic experiments. In these he found that the hypnotised subject would accept any suggestion, completely hallucinating the senses of sight, hearing, taste, etc., and would reproduce in the most striking manner the thoughts and sensory impressions of the hypnotiser. This thought-transference, Sir William discovered, could be effected without speech or any signs whatsoever. Further experiments in thought transference without hypnotism showed that simple and elementary results could be so produced, and these were embodied in a paper on "Abnormal Conditions of Mind," read before the British Association in 1876.

Sir William at that time considered that the most satisfactory explanation of many physical phenomena of Spiritualism could be accounted for by hypnotic hallucination.

He says:—

Accordingly, in my paper at the British Association a year later I advanced this hypothesis to explain these alleged extraordinary Spiritualistic phenomena, and urged that a special committee of scientific experts should be appointed to inquire into the validity of the evidence I had adduced in favour of thought-transference, as well as into Spiritualistic and other phenomena associated with abnormal conditions of mind. Dr. William Carpenter, the famous physiologist, made a contemptuous speech, which aroused much tumult and angry passion, but Mr. Crookes came forward and said he "had listened with interest and approval to Professor Barrett's paper; he thoroughly believed what had been described, and hoped the audience would also believe it." At the same time, he related some of his own Spiritualistic experiences and wisely dissented from the view I had expressed in my paper. He said the phenomena were *not* due to hallucination. It still seemed to me, however, that Crookes only thought he had seen the phenomena. At that meeting two other eminent scientific men, Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the president of the section, and Lord Rayleigh, also spoke, and warmly supported the appointment of an expert committee of inquiry. Lord Rayleigh, in the course of his speech—(I quote from the local newspaper)—said, "It was wrong to cast ridicule on the investigation of Spiritualism; he himself had been to sittings with a well-known medium, accompanied by a professional conjurer, with the result that the conjurer could not form the remotest idea of how many of the phenomena were produced." Though not present, Sir William Huggins (then Mr. Huggins, and afterwards President of the Royal Society), wrote to me that he agreed with me as he himself had witnessed utterly inexplicable psychical phenomena deserving further investigation.

#### TIME'S REVENGES.

The whirligig of time presents its revenges. These four illustrious scientific men—Crookes, Wallace, Rayleigh, and Huggins—each received the Order of Merit from our King, and three of them became Presidents of the Royal Society, the highest scientific honour that can be conferred in Great Britain. Whilst all their names will be ever memorable in the history of science, most of their screaming opponents

have long since passed into oblivion! Lord Rayleigh, in his recent presidential address to the Psychical Research Society, distinctly stated:—"I repudiate altogether the idea of hallucination; the incidents were always unexpected, and the impressions of those present all agreed."

In consequence of larger experience with a number of mediums and in collaboration with Mr. Dawson Rogers, the then Editor of *LIGHT*, he worked for the establishment of a centre of Psychical Research. This was the beginning of the S.P.R. He was joined by a number of men distinguished in politics, science and letters, of whom the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour and Mr. F. W. Percival are now the only surviving members of the brilliant circle which included Romanes, Lord Houghton, F. W. Myers, Gurney, Sidgwick, and many others. He went to America in 1884 and founded the American Society.

It is interesting to note in view of the reckless statements so confidently made that Dr. A. R. Wallace and Professor Crookes were prepossessed in favour of Spiritist theories that Sir Wm. Barrett, speaking from the personal experience, in which these critics are absolutely lacking, says:—

"We must, however, all remember that we are far more ignorant of this subject than either Mr. Wallace or Mr. Crookes, both of whom commenced the inquiry as *profound sceptics in these matters*, and they tell us the logic of facts has driven them from scepticism to a belief in the genuineness of Spiritualistic phenomena. In spite of ridicule and contempt, Spiritualism undoubtedly presents new and wonderful facts which must sooner or later compel the attention of thoughtful men."

Sir William's concluding sentence has been more than borne out by subsequent developments.

### SCIENCE AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

"The Popes and Science," by Dr. J. J. Walsh, LL.D., &c., and "Twelve Catholic Men of Science," by Sir Bertram Windle, F.R.S., are two books which have been issued by the Catholic Truth Society. They are in the usual style of apologetics—they prove quite conclusively what well-informed persons do not deny. We are well aware that the Roman Catholic Church does not oppose science *as such*, and has many scientific men within her pale, whose medical and other practice does not bring them into conflict with dogma. But such books leave on one side the attitude of the Church when the obvious conclusions are in conflict with Catholic dogmatics. That is the real crux, and the answer is perfectly well known. Of all vain necromancy the vainest is to raise the ghosts of dead controversies. These books contain no references to psychic science, and, therefore, scarcely fall within our province. On the attitude of the Holy See to that science it is sufficient to allude to the Encyclical against Modernism, and to quote from the allocution of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford ("Tablet," April 6th, 1912):—

"Now the essential and most pernicious element of modern Spiritism is precisely this unlawful trafficking with, or seeking to traffic with, spirits, whether good or bad, whether human, angelic, or diabolical in their nature. It is begotten of a morbid and fearfully dangerous curiosity like that of our first parents to know those hidden things which God does not see fit to make known to us, and, therefore, to seek such knowledge is to act contrary to, and to sin against the Divine Will."

This is quite conclusive—it is not a condemnation of theories, as these books maintain clerical antagonism to be, but a bar placed before the research into facts.

S. DE BRATH.

### SPIRITUALISM IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

Some slight indication of the flood of discussion which Spiritualism is calling forth in the newspapers and periodicals of the day is afforded by the list we give herewith. We confine ourselves in this instance to what has appeared in the New Year. Had we included the past few months this issue of *LIGHT* would be entirely occupied with the list.

"Nineteenth Century" (Jan.). "The Church Congress and Spiritualism: A Secular View," by Mary E. Monteith.

"Contemporary Review" (Jan.). "Spiritualism in the Days of Charles II.," by J. G. Muddiman.

"Nash's Magazine" (Jan.). "The Abolishing of Death," by Basil King.

"Strand Magazine" (Jan.). Part two of "The Uncharted Coast," by Sir A. Conan Doyle.

"Hibbert Journal" (Jan.). "The Attitude of the Church to the Phenomena known as Spiritualistic," by Sir Oliver Lodge.

"The Quest" (Jan.). "Spiritualism: Its Position and its Prospects," by David Gow (Editor of *LIGHT*).

"Sheffield Daily Telegraph" (Jan. 1st). Correspondence.

"Daily Express" (Jan. 1st). Telegrams of psychic experiences from New York and Amsterdam.

"The Times." Jan. 1st: Leading article on Spiritualism; Jan. 3rd: Letter from Sir A. Conan Doyle; Jan. 5th: Letter from Sir Oliver Lodge.

"Daily Telegraph" (Jan. 2nd). Review of Sir A. Conan Doyle's book, "The Vital Message."



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### THE OUTLOOK: A SURVEY AND A SUMMARY.

The great wave of psychic activity shows no signs of abating; rather it increases, betokening a deep spiritual impulse below the surface. Perhaps it presages an even greater transformation—the dawn of a new age. For we never make the mistake of confusing the psychical and the spiritual—the one is a faculty, the other is a life; the one a door, the other a great Presence Chamber. We look around and see a confusion of counsels; we are aware of a clamour of tongues in passionate dispute. The tumult disturbs us a little, but not very much. The little thing comes with noise and fermentation; the great thing arrives in silence and tranquility; it works in the interior of life.

Meantime there descends upon us a heavy hail of discussions, controversies, reports, commentaries—very few of them worth any serious consideration. One of our friends, a famous poet, with all the poet's impatience of dulness and stupidity, lately expressed to us his despair of convincing the "common fool" of the reality of the evidences for life after death. Alas, we have the common fool to deal with on both sides of the argument. We must be patient with him; he speaks for common fools, and his words are probably those best adapted to the minds he addresses. And it may be that to the eyes of the higher intelligences we are all common fools. We can only do the best we can not to be entirely foolish, seeking to stand on our feet and see the world with our own eyes and not through the eyes of others, aping their manners and "parroting" their speech.

Things have changed, indeed. We have made a distinct advance. The enemies of the new order—God's opposition, as we once termed them—have shifted their position considerably. Our facts are being accepted grudgingly, but are vigorously denounced as undignified, squalid—a host of uncomplimentary adjectives. We leave aside the argument which talks freely of devils. Science, as Sir Oliver Lodge pointed out, pays no serious attention to theological sign-boards. We have a multifarious subject to handle; it has a multitude of ramifications. It cannot be adequately dealt with even by our most gifted minds. A single department is sufficient for most of them—the religious, the scientific, the philosophical, the social. We look over them all as well as we can and see that, however discordant at present, they are making towards a great harmony. We must bear the discords at present with what fortitude we can.

We have heard lately of the great need for a large and representative journal that shall present the case for Spiritualism in a more adequate manner than any of our present more or less struggling journals. Well, that will come; the time is nearly ripe for it. The great public are beginning to understand. The day has gone by when, as in former days, a few columns of stodge could be regarded as sufficient for the requirements of the case. On the other hand, we do not wish to fall to the temptation of presenting our case in the smart, snappy sensational way which is supposed to be the note of modern journalism. We cannot cater for the "common fool" until he has grown sufficiently in mind to be above the need of common foolery. There are plenty of caterers for him in that line, bogus psychic "experts" with vampire stories and ghost "stunts"; smart writers who, knowing little of our subject and caring less, give the public that which it is supposed to appreciate, witty gibes, glittering pieces of satire, and "arguments" so cheap and fallacious that it

is really a wonder the "common fool" does not turn round upon instructors who hold his wits in such light esteem.

Meantime, the issues grow clearer. Let us try and define them as well as we can.

**SPIRITUALISM.**—It stands for scientific evidence of a life after death, a fact which when once it has laid hold of the general mind is bound to react upon the world's thought and practice. It will bring about that great ideal aptly summarised as the stage at which it will be seen that a man's duty coincides with his own best interests. That is true to-day, but it is not apparent, or we should not see so many living meanly for mean things.

**THE CHURCHES.**—As a general summary, with some notable exceptions, the attitude seems to be that Spiritualism is a mixture of fraud and reality. The fraud is conscious or unconscious; the reality is devilish. With the latter argument, as we have said, we are little concerned. Doubtless there are froward souls on both sides of the way. We don't call them devils, whether they are in the flesh or out of it. They are simply undeveloped. In any case, they are subject to Divine law; and there are angels as well as devils.

**THE RATIONALISTS.**—Their standpoint may be summed up in the rough thus: Spiritualism is a matter of conjuring, superstition and self-deception. There may also be in it a smattering of telepathy and the action of the subconscious mind—this is a liberal concession.

So there it stands—a "triangle"! A serious position in some aspects; in others as comical as the "great triangular duel" in Captain Maryat's rollicking sea-story. The Churches can only kill Spiritualism at the gravest risk to themselves. They cannot kill Rationalism without its aid. And for ourselves we do not want to kill Rationalism. It can do splendid work in its own sphere—it has already done good service by showing the Churches that their duty lies as much in making the earth a better place to live in as in alluring to other and brighter worlds.

This is the position as we see it, shorn of its many complexities. There is a composition of forces all more or less necessary to the final adjustment. We do not fear opposition even when it is ignorant and senseless. When it is reasoned and sincere we welcome it, for only by opposition can Truth succeed. Conflict is the law of progress here. Even in higher spheres it may be needed, but there it will be doubtless a means of harmonious activity—action and reaction—and not the weltering struggle which is "its wavering image here."

### A QUESTION IN SPIRIT IDENTITY.

Mr. C. J. Hans Hamilton sends us an interesting paper on "Problems of Spirit Identity." He quotes from "The Psychic Riddle" (a book by the eminent American investigator, Dr. Isaac Funk) an instance of fact which has puzzled many other researchers. Dr. Funk remarks that although he has had some evidential communications from (e.g.) "Theodore Parker," yet never once has the communicating spirit "described with anything approaching exactness a previous interview." Mr. Hamilton calls attention to the experiments planned by M. César de Vesme, the distinguished editor of the "Annales des Sciences Psychiques" to throw some light on this perplexing phase: When a communication showing good *prima facie* evidence of identity was received through a medium, A, the sitters, among whom was another medium, B, were divided into two groups of which one, including the medium B, went into another room. The "spirit" was accustomed to communicate through B, and was asked to carry a message or indicate a certain line of thought to the first group in the other room. Not once, says M. de Vesme, has he been able to get this done.

This is negative evidence of much value for (1) it establishes the genuineness of the experiment; and (2) it shows that if the communicator is really the personality claimed, the conditions of communication must be widely different from those to which we are normally accustomed; (3) It tends, by the failure, to show that thought is not projected from one group to the other. Experiments of this very simple kind might throw light on this difficult matter. Two mediums are necessary through both of whom the alleged personality is used to communicate; and the subject of matter to be carried from one to the other group should be written by some reliable persons outside the séance altogether, sealed, and opened by the second group only in the presence of the writers.

## FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge sailed for America on Monday last.

At the opening social gathering of the London Spiritualist Alliance next Thursday, the 15th inst., members will have the pleasure of hearing an address by Count Cheddo Mijatovich, former Serbian Minister at the Court of St. James's. Lovers of good music will be gratified to know that the musical arrangements for the evening are in the hands of Mr. A. Weismann, and that Madame Winston Weir will, it is anticipated, give some of her charming songs.

The recent paintings executed by Mrs. Harris while blindfolded are now on exhibition at the Delphic Club for a week, and visitors are invited to inspect them.

Sir A. Conan Doyle in the January "Strand Magazine," in the second part of his intensely interesting series, "The Uncharted Coast," writes, "So far have we advanced that of the eighty or ninety cases carefully detailed in Dale Owen's 'Footfalls,' published in 1859, we find now, sixty years later, that there is hardly one which cannot be classified and understood."

The Sheffield "Daily Telegraph" writes: "We have been following with great interest the discussions, debates and controversies that are raging around Spiritualism. These are increasing and we should rather like to know why. Is it that real discoveries have been made and dependable evidence produced, or is it merely a strain of insanity produced by the war? Curiously enough a number of people who seem to our unenlightened vision completely mad on this point are shrewd, far-seeing, business men of the world in everything else."

Similar testimony comes from many other sources. For instance, we find the following in "The Sphere" (December 27th): "Whether it is owing directly to the war, or indirectly, as a craving for excitement and new sensations, Spiritualism in one form or another is enjoying a tremendous vogue. It is a craze which has had its votaries ever since early times, though it is doubtful whether it has ever held the popular attention quite as much as at present, when the newspapers are full of column-length descriptions of seances and of so-called spirit photographs."

The reference to early times is an opportune one. The phenomena we are now observing have occurred without interruption throughout the ages, and a magnificent record of them will be found in William Howitt's "History of the Supernatural." One change in the present day is that people are no longer afraid to avow their experiences and beliefs.

Miss Edith K. Harper, writing in the "Occult Review" of "The Twentieth Plane," by Dr. A. D. Watson, says, "In the energetic and earnest questioning of the *dramatis personæ* by Dr. Watson, I am irresistibly reminded of W. T. Stead, who always strove to elicit from the Invisibles the utmost they seemed to have the power to convey."

Miss Maud MacCarthy, the famous violinist, is to deliver a series of four lectures on "Modern Pythagoreanism," beginning on Sunday next. The subject matter consists of teachings and demonstrations regarding the arts and crafts and the revival of sacred mysteries therein.

Mrs. Mary Gordon had a congenial task in a recent address at Brighton when she replied to the sermon of a local clergyman condemning Spiritualism. In the course of her remarks she observed that "preachers of to-day say little about hell. They have learned that the intelligence of their congregations has evolved beyond the stage when the fable of eternal punishment could be received as a guide to life."

The mental attitude of the reporter at Mrs. Gordon's meeting is not without humour. He remarks that she "prefaced her address with a prayer which, save in its phraseology, might have been uttered in all sincerity in any Christian church." When Mrs. Gordon, speaking of the alleged dangers of Spiritualism, said that "since she had been a Spiritualist she had improved in condition, physically, morally and spiritually," this painfully precise and literal reporter (he must have been young) commented, "Mrs. Gordon has a particularly robust appearance!"

Sir A. Conan Doyle starts on January 19th a lecture tour which includes Southport, Blackpool, Preston and Morecambe. At Sir Arthur's request Mr. Horace Leaf will follow him at these towns with his illustrated lecture on "Materialisations."

The "Church Family Newspaper" is "authoritatively informed" that it is not correct to say that Bishop Welldon has invited Sir A. Conan Doyle to address a meeting of Durham clergymen on Spiritualism.

"The fact is" (says the newspaper in question) "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has long been known to Bishop Welldon, who invited him to stay at the Deanery, Durham, in the New Year. While Sir Arthur is there he will probably address, not a public meeting, but a gathering of friends, whom the Dean may invite to meet Sir Arthur. The meeting, if it is held at all, will not be in any sense a meeting for the clergy. Its object will be to give a limited number of persons who are interested in Spiritualism an opportunity of hearing what Sir Arthur has to say about it."

We are glad to hear that the English translation is shortly to appear of Dr. Gustave Geley's book, "From the Unconscious to the Conscious." This work, dealing with supernormal faculties in man, amounts to a complete reversal of the materialist psychology which regards thought as a secretion of the brain and supernormal faculty as a pathological state. The irrefutable proofs of the psychic origin of variation supplies the gap left by Darwin, who expressly declared the *origin* of variation to be due to unknown laws. The book links up psychology with physiological involution and should be known to all English readers. The translation is being done by Mr. S. De Brath and the work will be published by Messrs. Collins and Sons, Limited.

An illuminated address in book form and a motor-car were presented last week to Sir Oliver Lodge on behalf of the citizens of Birmingham by Sir Gilbert Barling, Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham University, as an appreciation of his distinguished scientific services as Principal of the Birmingham University. A jewel was given to Lady Lodge. The gifts had been publicly subscribed for.

Sir Oliver Lodge, in replying, said great cities always impressed him as the outcome of the long labour of many generations. We stood on their shoulders; we inherited their work; and it was our privilege to carry it on. Sir Oliver added that as Principal of the University he had never been free to go to the United States, which he was now going to visit almost immediately.

Mrs. Cadwallader, Editor of the "Progressive Thinker" (Chicago), reviewing the past says, "As we look back, we realise how much Spiritualism owes to individual Spiritualists like S. B. Brittain, of the 'Univercoelum'; Andrew Jackson Davis, of 'The Herald of Progress'; Jonathan M. Roberts, of 'Mind and Matter'; Luther R. Colby, of 'The Banner of Light'; C. C. Stowell, of 'The Light of Truth,' and many other men and women who gave the best that was in them and incurred heavy financial losses in an endeavour to spread the truth of Spiritualism."

Before the Royal Colonial Institute, at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Tuesday evening next, at 8 o'clock, Dr. Ellis Powell will read a paper on "The New British Kingship," in which he will elucidate the mystic aspects of the royal office which are now beginning to be the centre of such keen interest both here and on the other side of the Atlantic.

We hear that Dr. Schrenck Notzing is now devoting himself to the study of clairvoyance, and that he has in preparation a book dealing with this subject. It is to be hoped that his experiments have proved as decisive as those he recorded in connection with materialisations.

Michael Temple, in "Nash's Illustrated Weekly" (Dec. 27th), has an article entitled "The Quest for the Supernatural," in which he examines some of the evidence in support of a belief in psychic phenomena. It is good to find a writer who, though not a Spiritualist, examines in an impartial way the researches of eminent men in this subject. He refers to Flammarion, Crookes, Lombroso, and others.

Here is a sample of his clear thinking. After describing at a seance with Eusapia Palladino an act of levitation which three cameras recorded—and remarking *en passant* that photographs have been "faked"—he continues, "but to suggest that Lombroso, Schiaparelli, and Richet would lend themselves to an imposture of that sort is, on the face of it, ridiculous. What they thought they saw is what the cameras recorded. What the cameras recorded is what they thought they saw, and I can find no escape from the conclusion that the thing did actually happen. If it did, no exposure of tricks played at other times by Eusapia can minimise its importance. The strongest man who ever lived, placed in the position in which Eusapia was placed, could not have lifted that table as the camera shows it to have been lifted. We are in the presence of a new force, be its origin and nature what they may."

## A VETERAN RESEARCHER.

## LIGHT ON PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

Mr. James Coates occupies a unique and honoured position in the Spiritualistic movement. He has been engaged in psychical research for a very long period, and the results of his experiences form a valuable contribution to the literature of the subject. In a timely book just issued, "Is Modern Spiritualism Based on Facts or Fancy?" (L. N. Fowler and Co., 2/-), he gathers together some of his earlier researches and presents them with new facts and comments. Now that spirit photography is being discussed in the Press so prominently it is a good thing to have the views of a man like Mr. Coates, who has made a life study of this branch. Of course the major part of his researches is contained in his invaluable book, "Photographing the Invisible" (1911), but the present little work forms a welcome addendum. It is chiefly concerned with the remarkable Standfast Case, briefly referred to in Mr. Coates's earlier work. He was then unable to produce the psychic photographs which are now given. They greatly strengthen the presentation of the evidence—given through three psychics—for what the author considers to be one of the best cases he has encountered. It will well repay the attention of students. He says:—

In my studies of psychic photography this case is, to me, the most interesting. Neither the photographer nor the other two persons influenced knew anything about Mr. Henry Standfast. Nevertheless, his departed wife, urged on by a persistent human love, succeeded eventually in getting into touch with her husband.

No less interesting is the instance of psychography with Dr. T. D'Aute Hooper on account of the light it throws on the delicate conditions of mediumship as well as its limitations. Here we have a case of a psychic who was the means of producing a written message of a splendidly evidential character on plates which he had neither seen, handled nor developed. It is a hard nut for the sceptic to crack. He has no refuge save in the assertion that a number of well-known, reputable men are liars and cheats. The convenient explanation of collective hallucination will not serve, because an objective result was obtained.

Speaking of this case Mr. Coates makes an important observation. He says:—

If photographers studied this aspect more, they would learn the astonishing lesson that the ordinary processes of photography have little to do with the obtaining of psychic photographs or psychographs, as the figures, forms, and writings are deposited on the plate independently of the usual operations.

On another page the author quotes as follows from a letter he received from Mr. Standfast:—

I am particularly interested in reading the communication through Mrs. Coates from Mr. Auld's wife—that it is impossible to photograph the *actual spirit*, but only the resemblance, as well as they can make it, of the body they once wore. So many photos show the appearance of portraits in the process of making, like a sketch incomplete.

In the D'Aute Hooper case the remarks made about "virgin plates" (pp. 33-35) deserve serious consideration. They show the complexity of the operations involved. The author says: "Ridiculous conditions as much as you like, the fact remains that, however willing the medium and his controls may be, we cannot get satisfactory results unless we supply them (the Invisibles) with suitable conditions."

In view of the recent demand for tests in connection with Mr. William Hope, of the Crewe Circle, and others, we cannot refrain from giving Mr. Coates's sensible comment on what he calls "the futility and cruelty of so-called tests." We entirely agree with him. He says:—

First, they are futile, inasmuch as they are of no practical use. As soon as some investigator is satisfied a dozen more want to repeat them or devise others. They are cruel, as they inflict unnecessary strain on the vital and psychic energies of the medium. Second, if the phenomena do not furnish their own evidences, no amount of testing will. In the foregoing case the internal evidence presented by the psychograph is of greater importance than the testing to which Dr. Hooper so readily submitted.

We commend this splendid little book of Mr. Coates to all students. It and its larger companion, "Photographing the Invisible," are indispensable to those who would understand the conditions and difficulties attending communications with those in the Beyond.

L. C.

Mrs. ALICE JAMRACH (11, Sheringham-avenue, Manor Park), as administrator of the Distress Fund connected with the Little Ilford Society of Christian Spiritualists, wishes to acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of two parcels of clothing from Mrs. Hudson, of Huddersfield.

## "I HAVE TALKED FACE TO FACE."

## SIR A. CONAN DOYLE'S TESTIMONY.

Sir A. Conan Doyle, in the "Worcester Advertiser," in the course of a reply to Canon Wilson, who has been lecturing against Spiritualism, relates the following evidential experience:—

"When I have to discuss Spiritualism I always feel as a New Yorker might who heard an argument as to whether there was such a place as America. The thing to him is certain, and yet he can only keep on repeating that he has been there. I have seen and felt these psychic things. I have talked face to face again and again, beyond all question or doubt, with my dead, and yet I can only assert the fact, and mention those others who were present. I want no scientific expert to tell me the truth of it, and yet I have no means of conveying that truth to another.

"The last occasion was in Wales this month (December). My brother came to me and announced himself by giving his family pet name, which I will venture to say no one in Wales could know. He then spoke to me about the health of his wife in Copenhagen as clearly as he could have done if he were in the flesh, and finally gave me a Danish name in reply to my question whether psychic treatment might be good in her case. I noted the name, which was pronounced three times, and I wrote to a Danish friend who informed me that there was such a person in Denmark, and that he was interested in psychic matters. I then communicated with my sister-in-law. Now I ask any reasonable person whence came that name? The medium, an amateur, was bound and breathing heavily some distance away. If he had not been, but had been awake and at liberty, how could he know of this person living in the particular town about which I wanted information? It was not telepathy, since I had certainly never heard of the man. It seems to me pure perversity to ascribe such cases to any cause save the one which they claim for themselves—namely, spirit communion."

## UNFAIR QUOTATION.

In the same contribution Sir Arthur has some remarks, which deserve to be noted, regarding certain unfair tactics of opponents. He says:—

"It is worth while to draw attention to one disability from which Spiritualists suffer in argument, even at the hands of those who, like Canon Wilson, desire to be fair. Spiritualist writers set out to tell the whole truth and they do not, as a rule, disguise that mediums are sometimes fraudulent, that communications are sometimes false, and that evil influences may appear. These concessions are instantly extracted and quoted against them, while their opponents suppress all that is said on the other side, the assured knowledge, the deep consolation, the moral help, the certainty in an age of doubt. Thus an entirely false impression is created. To take an obvious example, anyone reading Canon Wilson's paper would really imagine, save for one line, that Sir Oliver Lodge, instead of being the brave protagonist of Spiritualism, was himself in doubt upon the subject. I continually find my own books quoted in the same way against myself. Still I am of opinion that to be truthful and fair is always in the end the better policy, whatever momentary advantage may be taken by our opponents of our admissions that every good thing may be abused."

## "SCREEN" MARKS IN PSYCHIC PICTURES.

A correspondent in France raises an interesting question with regard to the stipple marks or "screen" marks mentioned in a letter of Sir A. Conan Doyle's which accompanied the publication of a psychic photograph representing his son who fell in the war. Sir Arthur, as quoted by our correspondent, attributes these to a probable transfer of a screen picture from an illustrated magazine; and our correspondent takes up this point and shows that similar "screen" marks have appeared on moulds of a materialised "double." The clay showed similar "screen" marks as if the impression had been made through cambric. (pp. 134 and 198, "Exteriorisation de la Motricité," De Rochas.)

This is attributed by some experimentalists to an invisible protective psychic screen, and good reasons are given for the hypothesis. Till, however, the process actually employed by the operators on the other side is much more elucidated, all these hypotheses seem too much like guess-work. The data are still insufficient.

Our correspondent suggests that "spirits have kept us too long in the dark as to this matter, which touches closely the proofs of their identity." That is so, and useful experimental work could be done in that direction. If automatists would devote their attention to getting *precise* and *exact* matter of this description and would retain the personal communications for those to whom they are specially addressed, automatic writing would stand higher in general esteem than is the case to-day.



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S ATTITUDE TO SPIRITUALISM.

A remarkable play has been running in London for some months at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, but perhaps relatively few persons are aware how much actual history is embodied in it, and how many of Abraham Lincoln's own words are introduced into the dialogue. Still fewer, perhaps, know that his single-eyed perceptions of truth led him to give weight to Spiritualistic occurrences at a time when the very name was anathematized as the height of superstition and fraud; and that some of his most important public acts coincided with the advice so received. The editor of the "Occult Review" has written "A Short Life of Abraham Lincoln," and in the magazine for January, 1919, he published some interesting details, from which the quotations from Miss Colburn's book which here follow, are taken.

Miss Nettie Colburn (afterwards Mrs. Maynard) was a trance medium and Spiritualist lecturer who was frequently brought into contact with the great President of the United States, and published long since her account of some of her interviews. She thus relates her first meeting, which took place in November, 1862, after the battles of Corinth, Perryville, and Antietam, by which the offensive passed finally to the Federal troops.

"I was led forward and presented. Mr. Lincoln stood before me, tall and kindly, with a smile on his face. Dropping his hand on my head, he said in a humorous tone: 'So this is our little Nettie, is it, that we have heard so much about?' I could only smile and say 'Yes, sir,' like any schoolgirl, when he kindly led me to an ottoman. Sitting down in a chair, the ottoman at his feet, he began asking me questions in a kindly way about my mediumship, and I think he must have thought me stupid, as my answers were little beyond a 'Yes' or 'No.' His manner, however, was genial and kind, and it was then suggested we should form a circle. Mr. Lincoln said: 'Well, how do you do it?' looking at me. Mr. Laurie came to the rescue, and said we had been accustomed to sit in a circle and join hands; but he did not think it would be necessary in this instance. While he was still speaking, I lost all consciousness of my surroundings and passed under control."

Her address was given in a masculine voice and with much force, and dealt mainly with the Preliminary Proclamation of September, 1862. The President was urged not to weaken the Proclamation and not to defer it beyond the opening of the next year (1863).

Miss Colburn writes:—

"I shall never forget the scene around me when I regained consciousness. I was standing in front of Mr. Lincoln, who was sitting back in his chair, with his arms folded on his breast, looking intently at me. I stepped back, naturally confused at the situation, not remembering at once where I was. A gentleman present then said in a low tone: 'Mr. President, did you notice any peculiarity in the method of address?' Mr. Lincoln raised himself, as if shaking off a spell. He glanced quickly at the portrait of Daniel Webster that hung above the piano, and replied: 'Yes, and it is very singular, very,' with a marked emphasis. Mr. Somes said: 'Mr. President, would it be improper for me to inquire whether there has been any pressure brought to bear upon you to defer the enforcement of the Proclamation?' To which the President replied, 'Under these circumstances that question is perfectly proper. It is taking all my nerve and strength to withstand such pressure.'"

He turned to Miss Colburn, and laying his hand on her head, said: 'My child, you possess a very singular gift, but that it is of God I have no doubt. I thank you for coming here to-night. It is more important than perhaps anyone present may understand. I must leave you now, but I hope I shall see you again.'"

It will be remembered, and the drama brings out the fact, that the Preliminary Proclamation to abolish slavery met with much opposition, and that the President, against the advice of the majority, made the Proclamation absolute on January 1st, 1863.

This is but one out of several instances that Miss Colburn recalls. Another very remarkable one was the exhortation given in February, 1863, to visit the front in person, at the time when, it is said, the army was demoralised by the "Mud March" of the previous January. I have not been able to ascertain whether the advice was acted upon and whether the President did visit the army between that date and the battle of Chancellorsville when the Federal army was heavily defeated by a much weaker Confederate force under Lee; but Lincoln's actions are certainly remarkably coincident with the advice said to have been given, and Miss Colburn could scarcely have published these accounts which so many could have contradicted had the events narrated not been exact. This is by no means the only time in history when supernatural warnings have unquestionably had great results—the instance of Jeanne d'Arc will be obvious to anyone; the peasant girl who saved France drew her whole inspiration from the spiritual realm, and the entire legal record of her trial remains as evidence to the fact.

S. DE BRATH.

## "THE ROAD TO EN-DOR,"\*

A RECORD OF AMIABLE TRIFLING AND PRACTICAL JOKES.

REVIEWED BY ELLIS T. POWELL, LL.B., D.Sc.

Lieuts. Jones and Hill were prisoners in the hands of the Turks. They got the idea of playing on the credulity of their custodians by bogus Spiritualistic manifestations. "I felt little concern," says Lieut. Jones, "as to whether communication with the dead was possible or not. The object of Lieut. Hill and myself was to make it appear possible and to avoid being found out." And by means of trickery, worked through a Ouija board, these amiable young officers fooled the Turks; and having done it, they have the assurance to pretend that all scientific investigators of psychic phenomena are as easily gulled as the Orientals, and that all mediums are tricksters like themselves.

"If this book," say they, "saves one widow from lightly trusting a creed that is crass and vulgar, . . . then its authors will have had 'most ample reward.'" Well, it is a queer moral and intellectual make up which leads men to suppose that by open and self-confessed trickery, of a very clumsy kind, they have cast the least discredit upon the faith of ages and the considered verdict of modern science. Doubtless it is this intellectual confusion which leads them to choose their title—"The Road to En-dor." The manifestation at En-dor was genuine; but how the road to it can be supposed to pass through elaborately spun-out frivolity, such as this book recounts, is a mystery past the present writer's comprehension.

One passage will serve as a sample of the rest. Says Lieut. Jones with reference to his Ouija board:—

"I secretly nicked the edges of the circle on which the letters were written in such a way that I could always recognise by touch the position of the board."

This is on page 18. Then on page 21 comes part of the account of a séance with nicked letters:—

"As the glass circled under my right hand, I felt for and found the secret nicks with my left thumb."

"U T-H-I-N-K- U A-R-E C-I-E-V-E-R."

"Slim Jim was lounging about the room. He was doctor's prize patient and was at that time afflicted with the enormous appetite that follows a long bout of dysentery and fever."

"Poses as a thought-reader, does he?" he said. "Here! What am I thinking about?"

"Your dinner," said the Spook, and everybody laughed.

"And so on. Mistakes were made, of course, and the glass frequently went to 'next-door' letters, but not more so than on ordinary occasions. It became generally accepted by the company that whether the mediums had their eyes bandaged or not, and whether the position of the board was altered or not, it made no difference."

"Once, when the board was moved, my questing thumb failed to locate the nicks! I was in a quandary, for I dared not feel openly for the guiding marks. But I got my position in another way. The glass began to bang away at one spot."

"Right," said Matthews. "Get on."

"Still the glass banged away at the same letter."

"All right, I've got that one," Alec repeated.

"But the glass paid no attention. It continued the monotonous tapping."

"Looks like doing this all night," I said. "It's getting wearisome. Curse it a bit, someone."

"Leave that d—— "D" alone!" said an obliging spectator.

"O-N-T S-W-E-A-R," the Spook went on at once. We had got our bearings again."

A lady reader of the book wrote to the Editor of *LIGHT* that she thought it ought to be answered. Well, this one extract is an all-sufficient answer, so far as the book purports to claim the consideration of serious students of Spiritualism. As a means of passing an idle hour by the fireside, or as a study of the irrepressible light-heartedness of the British officer, the "Road to En-dor" has its value. As a contribution to the literature of Spiritualism—well, you might as well look for mysticism or metaphysics in the multiplication table.

## SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

All Members and Associates interested in the work of this society, and wishful for more activity in it, are invited to communicate with Mrs. Boustead, "Westfield," Wimbledon Common, S.W.

HUSBAND FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, Penniwell, Elstree, Herts, acknowledges with thanks the following donations:—T. J. Baker, 10/-; F. W. Percival, £1; M. Simpson, £1; per Mrs. Annie Brittain, £3.

\* "The Road to En-dor," by E. H. JONES, Lt., I.A.R.O., with Illustrations from Photographs by C. W. HILL, Lt., R.A.F.

## WHAT SPIRITUALISM REVEALS.

By A. T. CONNOR.

Most critics, and especially hostile critics, of Spiritualism show, by their criticisms, that they regard Spiritualists as a body of morbidly-inclined individuals, who spend most of their time in witnessing phenomena which are the alleged production of "dead" men and women—or, as some of them delicately express it, "in an unholy traffic with the dead." In this our critics err, for Spiritualism is not a "phenomena" movement, but a philosophy of life, with the established fact of communication between the physical and spiritual worlds as the basis of its reasoning. From this great central truth the mind of the student expands in all directions. He sees demonstrated the continuity of conscious individual existence after the death of the physical body; he argues, from spirit evolution, an opportunity of eternal and infinite progression; he realises the necessity of personal responsibility and initiative, with the underlying essential conditions of compensation and retribution in the true meaning of these words; he forms a new ideal of the brotherhood of man, and he deduces from his experiences, his realisations and his ideals a grand new revelation—the Fatherhood of God.

Between this philosophy and others there is only one great difference, but the difference is fundamental. Religionists of the past have founded their belief in a God on man's craving for, and vague realisation of, a Supreme Power. They have then attempted to conceive a God in accordance with their desires, and also attempted to read Nature in the light of that conception. On the contrary, the Spiritualist first of all studies Nature as he finds it, and from the results of his study tries to form an Ideal of the Power of which Nature is the manifestation. Our phenomena, therefore, are only important in so far as they provide us with a reliable starting point for our investigations.

Unfortunately, the laws governing the production of Spiritualistic phenomena are not yet known. All that we can claim at present is a large collection of facts, which have been more or less roughly classified; without, however, any discovery of the underlying laws. This knowledge will come in time, as the reward of painstaking investigation and study, but our present ignorance is a serious handicap, although somewhat mitigated by our knowledge of the general course that various phenomena should follow. We know that for some phenomena a circle is necessary—a circle composed of members who sit regularly, and under certain stringent conditions; for others, harmony and earnestness of purpose are all that are required, no matter who the sitters may be. But we do not know why this should be so, or why some circles obtain phenomena the first time they meet, whilst others have to sit six months or longer before obtaining any results. But, although we have not yet found out the means and laws of production, we are satisfied that we have discovered the producers, and that these are discarnate human beings.

### A BASIS OF EVIDENCE.

Our position, therefore, is somewhat as follows: By the exercise of mediumship, and of various psychic powers which lie awaiting development in most of us, and are normal in many of us, sundry individuals have been brought into contact with different phases of natural phenomena which are outside the range of ordinary experience. To investigate these phenomena, numerous circles and societies have been formed. In one class of circle physical objects are moved, with no apparent physical leverage; raps are heard, with no apparent physical concussion; replicas of physical bodies are built up, from no apparent physical source—these bodies being endowed with movement, sight, hearing and speech; with an intelligence which, in the opinion of the spectators, is human, and a personality which claims that once it inhabited a physical human body. In another class of circle, the brains of mediums are controlled by intelligences claiming a previous experience in earth-life, and these supply data relating to that life which often seem to connect them with individuals whom we had known, but who had departed from physical life. And finally, clairvoyants have described to us persons whom we knew in earth-life, with intimate details known only to ourselves and the persons described—all these convincing us of the fact that our friends are still alive in another sphere of existence, from which they have succeeded in setting up communication with us.

The discovery that our friends are still alive, and still conscious of their individuality, prepares our minds for the realisation of a new truth. If individual life is not ended, nor even influenced, by the death of the physical body, there are no grounds for believing, but many grounds for denying, that it was first brought into existence by the formation and birth of that body, or that it is likely to be ended by the dissolution of future bodies through which it may manifest; and we realise the possibility of the continuity of conscious individual existence apart from the physical body. To this realisation is added the accounts of spirit life and labour given by our returning friends—accounts that open up a vista of ever-expanding progress which is obtained as the fruit of personal endeavour. We can also, by the study of evolution, trace back a line of spiritual progress until it is lost in the mists of the dawn of time. And by combining these two we arrive at the grandest of all our realisa-

tions—that life is a series of manifestations of a progression which is eternal and infinite.

What a glorious prospect is opened to our view by these two words. "Eternal" means "for ever"; "infinite" means "without limit." So our progression is for ever; there never was a time when man the spirit was not—there never can be a time when he will not be—progressing; and it is without limit; there is no height to which we may not rise, no breadth to which we may not expand, if we are only willing to try! And although it may be long and difficult, the path of progression can never be dreary or disappointing, for the traveller is ever discovering new scenery, and ever increasing in the power of appreciating the scenes unfolding to his view. Also, the progress is so graduated that each step is prepared by all the preceding steps. And each step brings a deeper realisation of spiritual truths; a wider outlook on life as a whole; a greater power of attainment, and greater knowledge of how that attainment may be realised. Standing to-day at the end of æons of progression, we know that countless ages stretch before us, and that the farther we go the farther we shall want to go—and the farther we shall be able to go.

(To be continued.)

## PLANTS AS SENSITIVE AS ANIMALS.

The views to which Mr. Vanstone gave expression regarding consciousness in the vegetable kingdom (reported on page 3) receive considerable support from the remarkable discoveries in plant life made by Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose, the director of the Bose Research Institute in Calcutta, and of which he gave an account in an address at the India Office on the 16th ult. By means of the crescograph—an apparatus of extreme delicacy, capable of measuring ultra-microscopic movements—the variations in the growth of plants under different treatments are instantly recorded. As a result of his investigations with this instrument Sir Jagadis is convinced that all trees and plants are fully alive to changes of environment, and that they respond visibly to all stimuli, even to the slight fluctuations of light caused by a drifting cloud. Even the commonest vegetables, it has been found, are as sensitive as animals.

With the crescograph to guide him Sir Jagadis was able to render the life-activity of the plant subservient to his will. A depressing chemical agent was applied and the march of life was slowed down; a timely application of a suitable stimulant revived the dying plant and exalted the growth-activity to many times the normal rate. A very important factor in the employment of chemical stimulants and of electricity was found to be the dose of application, any excess above the critical point bringing about a result diametrically opposite to what was expected. While a particular amount or intensity accelerated growth, an excess retarded it.

But the lecturer regarded as of infinitely greater importance the fundamental unity of life reactions which he had been able to establish between plants and animals. This was shown by the spontaneous pulsation in certain plant tissues which in animals is heart-beat, in the identical effects of stimulants, anæsthetics, and of poisons in vegetable and animal tissues, and in the death spasm which occurred in both.

It is difficult to imagine that such extreme sensitiveness can exist without (as Mr. Vanstone conjectures) some degree of consciousness.

## A ROMAN CATHOLIC CRITIC.

The December issue of "The Nineteenth Century and After" contains an attack on Spiritualism by the Rev. J. B. Brosnan from the Roman Catholic point of view. Briefly, it is charged with being diabolic. This accusation has been so often answered that it is really not worth while to do more than point out the very limited knowledge of the writer even of his own selected facts, e.g., Sir Oliver Lodge "is doing the dead a downright injustice when he deprives them of the helpful prayers of the living." The reverend controversialist is evidently unaware that one of the most frequent messages that come through is a request for prayer. Another which I received personally from a friend who has given many proofs of identity was: "Man does not need to know ever more and more, but to love God." Satan is evidently far on the road to conversion.

The arguments adduced proceed on such radically different premises from ours that to reply adequately we should have to discuss the whole question raised by the Higher Criticism. But we will put one analogy. When the Lord abrogated the whole book of Leviticus by His declaration "making all meats clean," and the whole orthodox view of the Sabbath by saying, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath," He made a much more daring attack on the theories of the inspiration of Scripture than Spiritualism does, or the Higher Criticism either. It has often been said that vital truths have three stages to pass through: First, they are said to be untrue; then they are declared to be contrary to religion; and lastly they are asserted to be what has always been believed. We must congratulate the reverend gentleman on having reached the second stage of conversion. He may reach the third at his transition.

V. C. D.

## 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.*—Mr. A. Vout Peters. January 18th, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.

*The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, W.2.*—11, Mr. Ernest Meads; 6.30, Dr. W. J. Vanstone. Wednesday, January 14th, 7.30, Mrs. Dorothy Grenside.

*Walthamstow.*—342, Hoe-street.—7, Mr. Forsyth. Thursday, Grove-road, 8, Mrs. Harvey, psychometry.

*Shepherd's Bush.*—73, Becklow-road.—11, public circles, Mr. Martin. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Brown.

*Croydon.*—96, High-street.—11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Rev. Susanna Harris.

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

*Peckham.*—Lausanne-road.—7, Mrs. Mary Crowder. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Mary Clempson.

*Brighton.*—Athenaeum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mr. Boddington, addresses; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting. Mr. Cramp.

*Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.*—11 a.m., service; 6.30, Mr. T. W. Ella. 18th, 34th Anniversary Services.

*Woolwich and Plumstead.*—1, Villas-road, Plumstead.—3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. John Osbourne. Wednesday, 8, Mr. Ella.

*Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 and 5, Broadway.*—11, Mr. Frank Jones; 6.30, Rev. Robt. King. Wednesday, Mrs. Boddington; doors closed 7.35. Healing daily at 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., excepting Wednesday and Saturday.

*Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.*—Old Steine Hall.—11.30, Miss Violet Burton; 7, Rev. J. Tyssul Davis. Monday, 7.15, Lyceum Entertainment and Prize Distribution. Tuesday, 3, public circle. Thursday, 7.15, enquirers' questions and clairvoyance. Forward Movement see special advert.

**NEW YEAR SOCIAL.**—The Little Ilford Society of Christian Spiritualists held their New Year Social on the 3rd inst., at the Carnegie Library, Romford-road. The hall was beautifully decorated with festoons of flags, holly, and mistletoe. Songs were contributed by the following artistes:—Miss Stella Thompson, Miss Dorothy Phillips, Miss Doris Goode, and Mr. Burrows, and recitations by Miss Madge Harwood. All of which, with the dances, were greatly enjoyed.

### 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
Church of Higher Mysticism, 22, Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W. ... ..	11-30	6-30
Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road ... ..	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Harewood Hall, 96, High Street ... ..	11-0	6-30
Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ... ..		7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earham Hall, Earham Grove ... ..		7-0
Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road ... ..	11-15	7-0
Hackney, 240a, Amburst 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
Plastow, Spiritualists' Hall, Braemar Road ... ..		6-30
Plumstead, Perseverance Hall, Villas Road ... ..		7-0
Richmond, Castle Assembly Rooms ... ..		7-0
Stratford, Idmiston Road, Forest Lane ... ..		7-0
Tottenham, "The Chestnuts," 684, High Road ... ..		7-0
Upper Holloway, Grovedale Hall, Grovedale Road ... ..	11-15	7-0
Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway ... ..	11-0	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 séances, 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.

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**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.

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