

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 2,040.—VOL. XL.

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1920.

[a Newspaper.]

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Dr. A. T. Schofield has been lecturing at the Morley Hall on "Modern Spiritualism as a Science and a Religion." He is reported as saying that it has "ceased to become a science," and in the hands of Sir A. Conan Doyle has become more or less a religion; he also considers that it is "spreading like an infectious disease." Here are some of the doctor's statements:—

No medium existed who did not suffer before long, either physically, mentally, or morally. The vast majority of professional mediums succumbed to vice or drink. These dangers began with the planchette and with table turning, and consisted in the gradual loss of protective will-power, which was our divine guard against devil possession. There was no doubt that the end of Spiritism was possession by an evil spirit. No communication proved that a departed spirit had ever spoken to man. No one could touch Spiritism without being lowered in their mental and moral tone. He had known many cases of insanity come from Spiritualism.

We are used to these collective denunciations, and the appraisalment of their value may safely be left to Spiritualists who know many mediums, often of advanced age, who have not suffered physically, mentally, or morally. Against Dr. Schofield's contention that no communication proves that a departed spirit has ever spoken to man, not only are there hundreds of persons whose knowledge of facts and evidence has brought them to a diametrically opposite conclusion, but the collective evidence of men of science who have experimented on the subject contradicts his ideas. Since Hodgson, who, starting from absolute scepticism, declared after twelve years of study that there was in his mind no room for even the possibility of a doubt of survival and of the reality of communication between the living and the "dead," Hyslop, Myers, and more recently Sir Oliver Lodge have come to a similar conclusion. Dr. Schofield would seem to have cast in his lot with those who think that the facts are genuine, but of diabolic origin. Definite arguments covering all the evidence would be more convincing than vague denunciations, many of which are at issue with well-known facts. People want positive evidence on the sum total of facts, good, bad and indifferent. Religious insanity is no new thing in any form of belief, but when Spiritualists are gravely told that they will all end in being possessed by devils they can only laugh. As for the statement that Spiritualism "has ceased to become a science" (by which we suppose the lecturer means "has ceased to be a science"), that seems a curious thing to say just when it is attracting more scientific notice than it ever did before. There is just enough truth in Dr. Schofield's warnings to bear out the caution given in many spirit messages that whenever any communication comes through at issue with good sense or morality the sitting should be at once closed.

"The British Medical Journal" of January 31st (p. 141) has some details of a case which is most interesting from our point of view. It is that of a signaller in the R.F.C. who was blown up by a bomb while taking shelter in a trench. He became unconscious, and on coming to he found that the trench seemed to him to be twisted round at right angles. This dislocation persisted, the "disorientation" lasting many months. The medical treatment adopted was hypnotic; the physician endeavouring to trace the origin of this disorientation which had appeared before in his history. The hypnotist suggested to him that he was six years old, whereupon he lived through some old experiences with much vividness. "He is sitting on a wooden horse (white with red stripes) in the dining room. His aunt comes into the room and wishes to wash him: he declines and edges away from her: the horse tips up on the edge of the hearth rug and he falls on the fender. He knows no more till he wakes up and finds himself in bed, with his aunt bathing his face." Further suggestion carries him back to four years old, three years old and two years old, and in each of these states he recalls their trifling experiences. This is an excellent illustration of the subconscious memory (cryptomnesia) which has been alluded to in some of our recent articles. It shows how every detail of life, even the smallest, becomes latent but is still there, even though the cells of the brain may have often been renewed, and the physiological (conscious) memory has vanished. It shows how the Self may retain all the events of a lifetime and be its own judge in its next phase of existence.

* * * *

In "Problems of the Borderland," by J. Herbert Slater, a recent book, we read:—

In dreams men walk about in their night-clothes or in strange costumes—this is a very common experience—and no one they encounter shows the least trace of surprise. The dreamer himself takes it quite as a matter of course, for his reasoning power left the brain when the spirit departed.

This is a very sweeping statement, and we take leave to doubt it as being a matter of invariable experience. We could cite the case of at least one dreamer who does not take his peregrinations in night clothes or other unorthodox varieties of costume as being at all "a matter of course." On the contrary he feels very much ashamed and humiliated, and the people he encounters in his dream show by their curious or quizzical glances that they also do not take it as an ordinary matter. Something seems to depend on the dramatic powers of the mind of the dreamer who, in the lower stages of dream-life at least, himself gives animation and character to the personages of his dream. We shall have to make a long study of the creative powers of the human spirit before we can proceed to lay down the rules about dreaming. Sufficient for the present it is to know that in some dreams we come into close touch with other minds—either carnate or discarnate. As regards the latter they dwell, of course, on another level of consciousness which we cannot fully inhabit or understand till we, too, have passed through the great change. But we have no doubt that in dreaming, as in mediumship, there is a certain amount of mental automatism and coloration, which being accepted by the thoughtless as psychical evidence has led to a good deal of the prejudice and incredulity against which we have to fight.

COMMUNION WITH SPIRITS.

BY QUÆSTOR VITAE.

I.

The discussion of this subject at the recent Church Congress has brought it into prominence as one of the questions of the day. The writer, therefore, ventures to present the following observations on this question, which, while they may not concur with the views of many Spiritualists, and still less so with the ideas of orthodox readers, nevertheless represent the conclusions of an observer who has studied the phenomena of hypnotic suggestion under the guidance of some of the most prominent leaders of that school in France, as reported in *LIGHT* some years ago, and has devoted many years to the study of the phenomena of Spiritualism in America, France and England.

Some of the Bishops, speaking at that Congress, referred to mediums as "people with the power of raising spirits." That mediums should thus be described shows how little the speakers in question knew of the subject they were discussing. Mediums have no such power. They are not operators, they are subjects.

HYPNOTISM AND MEDIUMSHIP.

The transmission of thought messages through mediums is so similar in its phenomena to those produced by hypnotic suggestion, that observers who have studied both cannot fail to recognise that they must be due to a similar cause, and the effects must be produced by a similar process. In other words, both must be the results of suggestion, and suggestion is but another word for thought transference.

The "trance" state induced in the medium during "control" is evidently identical with the secondary state, or artificially induced sleep state, or somnambulant state, induced in the hypnotic subject by suggestion. Neither remembers his experiences in the secondary state on awakening, except as we remember our dreams on awakening from natural sleep.

As that secondary state is a negative, involuntary condition in which the will is quiescent, as it is in normal sleep, it is obviously impossible for the medium to "command" the presence of a spirit, which act implies a positive, volitional effort.

Further, it stands to reason that people who have left this physical plane and passed through the portal of death into higher states, are no longer subject to commands from those who are still embodied on this outer plane. The subordinate cannot command that which has become transcendent to it.

The phenomena of Spiritualism are not produced by mediums: they are produced *through* mediums, by operators acting from an inner, higher plane than ours. So mediums cannot be put on the same level as the necromancers of olden days, as some speakers at the Congress suggested. Necromancers are supposed to have used "invocations" accompanied by ceremonial magic, of which mediums certainly know nothing. Neither certainly did the speakers in question, or they would not have made such a stultifying comparison.

The main difference between the phenomena produced through hypnotic subjects and through mediums is that in the former case the operator is present and suggests by spoken commands, and, therefore, comes within the observation of the student. But in the case of phenomena produced through mediums, no operator is visible. But such phenomena so closely resemble those produced by suggestion through hypnotic subjects, that it is only logical to postulate an operator as their pre-condition, acting by thought-transmission from a distance. As the content of the messages thus received so often demonstrate, this must be from an inner, higher plane of being, and the operator is consequently invisible to the human audience. But in both cases it is suggestion that is the motive power in action. Telepathy is but suggestion brought into action from a distance, while suggestion consists in the thoughts of one person being communicated to another person, in whom a receptive condition has been induced, and through whom the communicated thoughts come into expression.

INDISCRIMINATE SITTING FOR DEVELOPMENT DANGEROUS.

The inducing of this receptive condition entails the temporary inhibition of the will of the subject, or of the medium, and partial interference *pro tem.* with his individuality. This is certainly undesirable in principle. The indiscriminate "sitting for development of control" should therefore be discouraged, as much so as experimentation in suggestion by untrained amateurs. In the latter case the subject is unprotected and exposed to dangers and may also be used for nefarious purposes by post-hypnotic suggestion; while if the medium is pure-minded, protection will undoubtedly be exerted from within. But sitting in a circle may open the door to mixed influences.

The study of the sliding scale of secondary states and of secondary personalities which may be developed, in hypnotic subjects and in mediums, and of their relation to the normal self-consciousness; of the states in which the mind sleeps while the body is awake, as in somnambulism and in mediumship; as of those states in which the body sleeps while the mind functions involuntarily, as in dreams, is

a most interesting field of research for experimental psychology to probe in the future.

But the oft-repeated practice of passing into a secondary state of consciousness leads to its development, and in some cases its relation with the awakened self-consciousness becomes more unfolded. On the other hand, one meets instances, in other directions, where the power of auto-suggestion develops spontaneously, leading to most interesting psychological phenomena. But the probing of these abnormal states can scarcely be recommended as suitable for the general public to pursue.

The subjective phenomena presented through mediums must be divided into two classes: Firstly, those due to operators who have passed through physical death, but who still occupy the adjacent inner-earth plane, or psychic plane of the earth, and who may actually come into the presence of the medium and communicate thus by thought-transmission and be seen by the medium while in a clairvoyant condition. Secondly: those phenomena due to operators who have passed out of the inner-earth plane or psychic sphere, through the second death, and entered into the real spiritual world, which is a discreted degree of being and whence consequently they cannot return to the earth, which has passed out of relation for them. These have to communicate through a medium by thought-transmission (telepathy) from an inner higher plane or mode of being, which is a much more complex process than that of the phenomena of the class first mentioned, and will be dealt with separately.

These two classes of phenomena have not yet been distinguished and divided into two distinct branches by Spiritualists, as they must come to be. This is not surprising, considering that we stand at the threshold only of a new domain of knowledge, the data of which are not yet classified; a field vastly greater than that of the physical plane of our universe and in regard to which the means of acquiring knowledge are limited at present to very narrow avenues.

The fact that these two distinct sources of communications have not yet been distinguished and divided, leads to confusion and apparent contradictions, as investigators usually do not think of trying to find out from which plane of being a communicator is speaking.

Further: the spirits in the inner-earth plane, or psychic earth plane, i.e., the plane into which the gate of physical death opens, know no more apparently than we do about the first real spiritual plane, i.e., the plane of inner-personality, into which they pass through the gate of the second death, when they shed their physical form of earthly origin and pass out of the earth's psychic sphere into the next mode of being, which is a discrete degree, and whence consequently spirits do not return, neither to the earth's outer plane nor to its inner plane.

When they are liberated from the physical body they awaken into a state of being which (in most cases, let us hope) seems to them so attractive that they talk in perfect good faith of being in heaven. Yet that state is only an intermediary nexus, the duration of the sojourn in which varies according to the impetus carried in the intelligence of the individual dwellers therein.

INTERMEDIARY AND ADVANCED SPIRIT LIFE.

Such spirits consequently know very little about the true spiritual states of existence. They can actually only speak of their own experience. They know their own condition, but they do not know its relation to other modes of spiritual being. They do not know what stage they occupy in their spiritual evolution. They think that the state they occupy is the real spiritual world, which is not the case, as it is only a temporary stage of limited field. So their communications may unintentionally mislead. Beyond proving that they still exist as self-conscious entities after physical death, and thereby bringing satisfaction to their friends who are still on this side, communion with spirits who are in that intermediary stage cannot bring much knowledge to us with regard to the general problem of spiritual modes of being.

Most Spiritualists who have frequented séances and mediums for any period of time must have found that their relatives and friends cease to communicate with them after varying periods of time. This cessation of communications no doubt occurs when their friends pass on, through the second death, into the first real spiritual plane of being, which is a discreted degree, and in which relation with the earth plane ceases.

(To be continued.)

COMING EVENTS

- February 16th.—S.N.U. Social and Dance, Holborn Hall.
February 26th.—Leaf-Cohen Debate, St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow.
March 11th.—Conan Doyle-McCabe Debate, Queen's Hall.
March 31st.—Anniversary of Spiritualism Meeting, Queen's Hall, by Marylebone Society.

HUSB FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts., acknowledges, with thanks, the following donations: Mrs. Green, £1; E. B., 2/-.

"THE BOY WHO CAME BACK."

AN INCIDENT OF AUSTRALIAN MINING LIFE.

Captain A. Pearse sends us the following psychic experience of a friend of his:—

"Some years ago I was living on a northern Australian goldfield in a camp some distance from a township. The latter consisted of a bank, hotel, courthouse, shops and miners' dwellings, all, with one exception, built of bark and calico, the exception being the courthouse, which was constructed of galvanised iron. The population consisted only of miners. Nobody thought of bringing a wife or family into such a wilderness, and we were all greatly surprised to see one day a man arrive with his wife and little boy. They had come from Maoriland. The man had bought a claim and started at once building a rather substantial and roomy bark-hut on his own ground. He employed a few men and started mining. Things went on cheerfully till the gold-bearing vein came to an end. Not having sufficient capital to search for another vein the man looked round and found employment in another mine some distance away.

"I had become acquainted with the family, and especially with the boy, to whom I had taken a great liking. After a while the mother fell ill and died of fever; and the father being absent all day at his work, little Teddy, who was about six years old, used to come to me at mid-day for his dinner and remain until evening. I greatly enjoyed his company. He was a most lovable little chap, and while he played around me I told him stories by the hour. Soon he took to calling me 'Daddy,' the same as he did his father.

"In these parts there are only two seasons; the dry season and the wet season; the latter generally beginning with rain in December. Teddy had to cross several gullies on his way to my place or going home; but, so far, these had remained quite dry and we had begun to think that no water would ever run that way.

"However, one day in January, a most violent storm broke out. Rain came down in torrents and there was like the bursting of a water cloud. I knew Teddy would by this time be on his way to come to me. When I heard the terrific thunder and saw the continual flashes of lightning I started out to meet him. I went right on to his home (the distance was quite a mile) but Teddy was not there. I ran back, looking right and left, wherever I could think he might have gone for shelter, but in vain. I made for my own house, hoping the boy might have passed me on the road and got there by this time. But again no Teddy was to be found. So I called up every man in my employ and we all started on a new search in which we were joined later by the child's father and several other miners, but the search was of no avail. As all the creeks and gullies were now full of water and most of them had a strong current, everybody concluded that Teddy was drowned.

"I lived a good long time in that part after Teddy's disappearance but never was a trace found of him; until one morning, quite early, I heard a voice calling, 'Daddy, daddy!' It was Teddy's voice quite unmistakably. As I was still in bed I called out: 'Where are you? Where are you, Teddy?' 'In the tree' came the reply, clear and distinct. 'In the tree, just near, in the big tree,' repeated the voice. Getting up and looking out in the direction of the big tree I saw my little friend just for a moment, and then he was gone again. It was not yet daylight, but the night was clear and bright with stars, and I could see the big tree quite well.

"Now this tree had been struck by lightning on the day when Teddy was lost; a large branch had been torn off by the storm and had fallen to the ground right against a big hole in the lower part of the trunk, which was mostly hollow, the interior having been eaten out by the white ants. I tore the branch away and there in the hollow of the tree I found all that was left of Teddy. The ants had eaten my little boy's body, leaving nothing but a small skeleton sitting there in his clothes. Teddy must have got into the tree for shelter and been killed by the same lightning stroke that brought down the branch which, in falling, had completely covered up the hole in the hollow trunk.

"I buried the little fellow's remains in his mother's grave. The next night Teddy and his mother came to me. Again I heard Teddy's voice, saying, 'Daddy, daddy, we are together again.' Then the happy faces of mother and child faded from my vision and I saw them no more."

"FAITH is a fine force, and it works in every life, but that in itself is quite insufficient unless it works for our betterment. There is indeed none more full of faith than your Mr. Pessimist who wanders around in a black world with a sour heart; his faith is profound and hardly to be moved. His faith is almost more than faith, indeed he knows that the world is going to the dogs, and that everything is bound to come out wrong in the end, as well as in the middle and at both sides; nothing ever will go right, and he tells us so before it starts. He has faith that this man will swindle him—and he does; that the other man will leave him in the lurch—and it is so; and that he is the most miserable man on the earth—and he is. Faith works every time."—"Self Training," by H. ERNEST HUNT.

"SIR A. CONAN DOYLE'S GHOSTS."

MR. McCABE'S PLEASANTRIES.

Such (writes Mr. A. S. Marshall, of Glasgow) was the title chosen by Mr. Joseph McCabe, the well-known secularist lecturer, of London, for his lecture in the Partick Burgh Halls, Glasgow, on Sunday, January 18th.

Mr. McCabe has for some time now disposed of the Holy Ghost, and he has now turned his attention to the ghosts of this mundane plane, who apparently have been causing him some uneasiness. However, he seems to have satisfied his own mind, and made a bold effort to try and satisfy the minds of his hearers, that the ghost idea is a delusion and a snare.

He set to work by informing his hearers that Sir A. Conan Doyle had remonstrated with him for misleading the people with his teachings, and thereby causing great harm. However, Mr. McCabe thinks he is going to get his own back when he meets Sir Arthur in debate in London shortly. He is going to point out to Sir Arthur the heinousness of his crime in telling mothers that they will meet their children after death.

Table-rapping, tilting and moving were all explainable by conjuring. Knocks and sounds were due to abnormally developed joints of the limbs.

He divulged to his hearers a great secret when he stated that the so-called messages purporting to come from the spirit world through the medium to the recipient were produced by a wireless system between the recipient and the medium, who caught the thoughts of the recipient and passed them off as coming from the spirit world. He left his hearers in the dark as to how medium and recipient are attuned.

Then he opened an attack on spirit photography, which was, he declared, due to trickery. His idea of a spirit photograph was that of the effect produced when a person shifts your camera when taking an object.

Mr. McCabe smiled profusely as he went from stage to stage, ousting ghosts and exposing their pranks at every turn. The McCabeites greeted his conquests with laughter.

In his eagerness to conquer in other fields of thought, Mr. McCabe has evidently overlooked the most vital point in the study of man. If he leaves out the spiritual side of man, he is not studying man at all, any more than a person can study astronomy without the stars. He stated that man was a chemical machine. But can chemicals think? To me chemicals can no more think than the batteries of a telephone system can talk.

To convince a man who does not want to be convinced is a most difficult task. Nothing will convince such an individual that "death does not end all" till he passes through the physical change called "death," and finds to his great consternation that he is none other than a despised and rejected ghost.

"THE ROAD TO EN-DOR."

Mr. E. H. Jones (Tighnabruaich, Argyllshire) writes:—

In his review of my book, "The Road to En-dor," in *LIGHT* of the 10th ult., Dr. Ellis Powell says that having "fooled the Turks" I have "the assurance to pretend that all scientific investigators of psychic phenomena are as easily gulled as the Orientals."

Dr. Powell seems to have a high opinion of the infallibility of the scientist, and a very poor opinion of the intelligence of the Oriental. His implication is that only the Turks were "gulled," and it is an implication typical of the manner in which Spiritualists are accustomed to disregard inconvenient facts. The book describes in some detail how, as a preliminary to "fooling the Turks," I completely converted to Spiritualism a number of British officers, amongst whom were highly trained scientific men. The scientists were no harder to "gull" than the others, and the conclusions to which they were led by this "open and self-confessed trickery of a very clumsy kind" were curiously similar to those which we afterwards learned have been formulated by Sir Oliver Lodge. Speaking as one who has practised the art of mediumship, I would rather attempt to convert to Spiritualism ten Sir Olivers than one Devant.

If the exposure of trickery which succeeded in making converts of scientists as well as of more ordinary Englishmen and the simple-minded, childlike Turk—if this is of no interest to "serious students of Spiritualism," I agree with Dr. Powell that the book cannot claim their consideration. Indeed, they had better leave it alone lest their peace be disturbed by the thought that they may have been fooled in the same way.

THE annual social and dance of the Spiritualists' National Union at Holborn Hall on Monday, February 16th, at 7 p.m., should prove an interesting gathering.

MISS MARIE CORELLI has a column article in the "Daily Telegraph," February 10th, attacking Spiritualism. We propose to refer to it next week.

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LETTING THE WORLD KNOW.

The blaze of publicity which has been turned on the subject of automatic writing by the "Weekly Dispatch" cannot fail to have far-reaching consequences for good or ill, more probably for good than for ill. Spiritualism, which has long been a leaven working in the European nations (especially in France) against the materialistic doctrines which issued in the Will-to-Power and in Nietzsche's statement, naked and unashamed, that Might makes Right, is now thrown fairly into the arena of conflict.

There is a historical parallel to the present state of things. Many sincere Catholics deplored the apathy and loss of influence of the Church at the beginning of the sixteenth century. It is unnecessary to describe it, Roman Catholic historians themselves admit the abuses. Dean Colet was vehement on the subject: Erasmus desired the suppression of most of the monasteries: but neither had the least idea of separating from the Church. But as long as reform was in the hands of temperate theologians like Colet and Erasmus, and moderate statesmen like Sir Thomas More, little or nothing was done. Not till Luther "flung theology into the gutter" by his popular appeal, was there any real movement. Some people think the Reformation did nothing but harm. A few think it did nothing but good. Most are of opinion that it did both harm and good. But whether for better or worse, it had no force till it had the driving power of popular passion behind it.

The same thing may be observed again and again in the history of the world. It was so with the political ideas of the eighteenth century; and it seems likely to be so again. Not till their minds are roused to action by trouble and conflict will men give heed to new truths; they will not learn by reason, they seem to prefer to learn by pain. Temperate Spiritualists are likely to be as outraged by extremists on both sides as Erasmus was. When the Wittenberg theses aroused a new fanaticism he recoiled from its crudity and violence. Now, there are not wanting those who quote Scripture as to the delusions and deceiving spirits predicted for the "last times." Disregarding the high and noble character of books like "Spirit Teachings" and "Letters from the Other Side," they say that this is casting out devils by Beelzebub. There are others who claim a sacrosanct character for all automatic writings, shutting their eyes to the manifold contradictions, and to the fact that many such automatic communications must, we regret to say, be classed as mischievous twaddle or laboured platitudes. Some such writings can only be referred to the subconsciousness of the writers. Some give very strong evidence that they originate with the unseen personalities who claim their authorship; they are often quite contrary to the expectations of the automatist; they convey opinions quite opposed to his own; they give (as in the Glastonbury script) information (afterwards verified) which could not be known to any living person; some are even written reversed (mirror writing), or upside down, from right to left (*e.g.*, "The Seven Purposes," p. 45).

But in no case do we know for certain from whom they proceed, nor the limitations under which they are given. It is obvious to all students who are familiar with this phase of mediumship that, even if we admit the identity of the spirit writers, there are some very distinct limitations in their powers of communication. They are nothing like as full as conversations with the living. In a few cases the communicator himself (we are taking him for granted) says that he is not fully conscious, but is in a kind of trance. ("Letters from the Other Side," pp. 6 and 41.) It seems to be implied that

as the normal personality of the medium in contact with the unseen is partially suppressed, so that of the communicator is partially suppressed by contact with earth-conditions. However this may be, there can be no doubt that the messages when they go beyond the trivialities given for recognition, show almost (though not quite) invariably, a tincture more or less strong, of the mentality of the automatist.

This has been explained by saying that the communicating spirit projects, not words, but ideas, into the subconscious mind of the medium, which the latter translates subconsciously into language, using the words and expressions with which his own mind is stored. This theory is partly borne out by the fact that messages are sometimes given through (let us say) an English medium from a spirit who in life never knew a word of English and could not write at all. Nevertheless an unmistakably genuine message as to its content is given in good English, and in the first person. ("Psychic Philosophy," p. 126).

Another fact should be borne in mind by those who would keep cool heads. The supernormal faculty termed "lucidity," which enables the crystal-seer to anticipate events, seems to operate by a series of visions. These visions are translated into words, as they were by the seer in Patmos, and as they have been in many recent veridical prophecies of the Great War. The higher class of script always insists that "the language of symbol is a universal language in the inner realms, just as pictorial art is universally comprehended on earth."

"We have speech in the sense that our thoughts are actually pictorial."

From the scientific point of view the mechanism of lucidity, and of the automatisms that are akin to it, is quite unexplained, however undeniable and genuine the facts are. The fact is one thing, its explanation is quite another. Some persons desire to keep the facts within the rarefied atmosphere of psychological science. *Sed diis aliter visum est.* The gods and Sir A. Conan Doyle think otherwise. From their point of view the facts are all-important.

No one who studies the facts thoroughly can doubt that behind all imperfections there is an external intelligence: and at a time when extreme theories of a materialistic nature have taken such a hold that many persons actually think that "the soul is a name for the functions of life" and order their conduct and thoughts on that basis, by far the most important work before leaders of thought at the present day is to convince the world that the soul is a reality both in the body and out of it.

This is what the supernormal phenomena prove to the senses: it is their ethical purpose; the scientific explanation is secondary. Without the actual phenomena the whole subject would evaporate in metaphysical and religious speculations—it would be mere opinion, more or less correct, as in times past, but always mere opinion. But Spiritualism has a body of supernormal facts; and by this it has entered the realm of science, which is the correlation of facts to reasoning and the check of hypothesis by facts. As facts, moreover, they have convinced thousands that the soul survives the body and carries into the after-life the image of its personality. This conviction, however crudely and unscientifically it is sometimes expressed, outweighs all possible abuses. It has convinced many of the paramount duties of spiritual life. It will convince many more.

THE ROAD-MAKERS.—There are souls that are born with an incentive to arduous action, urging upon them to climb mountains and see what lies beyond, and sometimes it happens that they can point out a Promised Land to timid and less adventurous souls. Such pioneers are often scientists, world builders, explorers all, and therefore manifestations of God. They are self-poised souls who are road-making, who forget themselves into immortality, who are spendthrifts of life's resources, who have sailed boldly out on an unknown sea, knowing that, though some have foundered, others may reach the farther shore and possess themselves of unknown land. It is through such souls that the redemption of man from materialism will be consummated, and it is those I would follow and fain would imitate. —VIOLET TWEEDALE in "The House of the Other World."

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

We regret to learn late in the day that the hall at 6, Queen Square is not available for the use of the Alliance on next Thursday, the 19th inst. Mr. Vanstone has kindly consented to give his lecture on "The Spiritual Teaching of the Neo-Platonists" on the preceding evening, Wednesday, the 18th.

Mr. Horace Leaf has postponed, owing to throat troubles, his lecture which was to have been given at Mortimer Halls on Saturday, February 14th.

Sir A. Conan Doyle's forthcoming engagements are, 16th, Durham, where he will be the guest of Bishop Welldon, 17th, Harrogate, 18th, Hanley. We understand that, with his family, Sir Arthur will visit Australia in the autumn.

Mr. F. Britten Austin's excellent articles, "Spiritualism—Fake or Fact," are continued in "John o' London's Weekly" of February 7th. In his second instalment he gives some interesting particulars of the mediumship of Mrs. Piper, whose integrity is unquestioned. It was through her that Dr. Hodgson was finally convinced that there is no room for doubt of survival of the individual consciousness.

The Northcliffe Press having taken up the question of spirit intercourse seriously, some rival journals show a disposition to follow suit, but are now reduced to "running behind." One of these—a London paper—has discovered that there is a peer in our ranks. Prodigious! The dense ignorance which proclaims this as a marvellous discovery, unaware of the degree to which Spiritualism obtains in all ranks of society from the highest downwards, is a striking commentary on the extent to which even a London newspaper can be behind the times.

In an article in "Pearson's Weekly," dealing with the immorality of séances, Mr. Elliott O'Donnell says that "séances are invariably conducted in the dark." This amazing statement needs no comment from us. We leave those bodies of Spiritualists who have had Mr. O'Donnell to lecture to them on his experiences to take up the matter with him. He gives a highly coloured picture of the evil results of séance going—it leads to drug-taking and all manner of iniquity—but so far as the article exposes such vicious and degraded travesties of the subject as he depicts it may have its uses.

In all parts of the country the provincial Press has letters and notices on Spiritualism. Far too many cuttings reach us for separate notices. Some writers, we gladly see, hold judgment in suspense; but by far the greater number take one small group of facts and dogmatise upon it as if it were the whole. The greater number of church lecturers take their own interpretations of texts from the Old Testament as infallible dicta, and ignore all passages which do not meet their purpose.

The Rev. Fr. Longridge has been lecturing on Spiritualism at Newcastle. He "did not wish to imply that spirit communications were the work of evil spirits, but he did assert that telepathy and the awakened subliminal self were the two great factors." Precisely, the awakened subliminal self is "the soul" writ large, and its telepathic power extends from the "dead" to the living. "Could we believe that God would choose such means of communication?" Well, we don't know what God might "choose." He has before this "chosen" the weak things of the world to confound the wise, and He chose to found Evolution on sex with all its attendant abuses.

Dr. Sidney R. Wilson, of Manchester, knows all about it, and as reported in the Manchester "Daily Dispatch," he solves all difficulties quite easily—those who recognise their "dead" are victims of emotion (even in a psychic photo?). Subconsciousness has a part of the brain all to itself which is specially developed in mediums. "The law of the sub-conscious brain is suggestion." Which, of course, explains Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's and Dr. Geley's records of materialisations, and Dr. Crawford's of telekinesis. We would respectfully advise Dr. Wilson to consider *all* the facts or leave the subject alone.

The attitude of the Church to Spiritualism is likely to be a leading topic for some months to come, and in this connection it is interesting to observe the cautious line taken by the "Record." It is indicated by the following extracts: "At the initial stage of inquiry we are met by the question, What exactly are the phenomena? and when we have determined their character as objective fact we are called upon to discuss the inferences from them." This strikes the right note; and if it is followed out it will dispose of the newspaper's other argument that "the long arm of coincidence is very far reaching and the coincidences of life, apart from the possession of special gifts, are sufficient explanation of the many strange occurrences that are reported in the annals of clairvoyance."

Mr. Coulson Kernahan is, we see, continuing his addresses on "Spiritualism and Christianity." The drift of his discourse as reported in the "Sussex Daily News" of January 27th is that "they knew whence Christ came but they did not know whence Spiritualism came, and they need not go to Spiritualism to assure themselves of eternal life." We do not profess to know anything about eternity, but it is an unfortunate fact that the Churches have not convinced the mass of the nation that survival of death is a verifiable fact.

The disciples of reincarnation will doubtless find support for their theories in Samuel Reschevski, the Polish-Jew chess wonder-child, who at eight years of age is meeting all the best players in Berlin in simultaneous games, and beating them.

Mr. G. Ward Price, in the "Daily Mail," writing from Berlin, gives a vivid account of this extraordinary child: "He propped his thin little arms on the table edge in front of him and fixed his dreamy eyes on the board. Occasionally he would raise them and peer fixedly into his opponent's face, as if to read his thoughts. And they are extraordinary eyes—solemn, profound, full of a sort of weariness as if they had looked deeply upon many things. The soul of what old dead-and-gone chess-master lives in this baby body? . . . He is rather a pretty little boy, with a tiny round, fat face, but so very, very small. His uncle says he is eight; he looks five. He speaks only Yiddish, and his life is entirely made up of chess, which he learnt from his father. No particular ability seems ever to have existed in his family. . . . He can play the most complicated game without even seeing the board, carrying all the moves in his head, and he can remember and reconstruct the most complicated game in every detail days afterwards."

Mr. Houdini, the illusionist who escapes from locked cells and closed tanks, makes some pretty confessions in the "World's Pictorial News" of January 31st ult. He was a bogus medium because he was young, poor, and newly married. There is no spirit manifestation he cannot reproduce or improve. Well, we suggest he might produce a psychic photograph of a recognisable face on the fifth plate of a sealed packet of twelve.

A correspondent from Colchester, referring to the recent articles we published from the Rev. Drayton Thomas, raises the point that at the early hour when the anticipations of words in "The Times" columns for the following day were received, the matter for the paper would not be made up into columns. This would explain the differences between the indicated (foreseen) and the actual position which occurred in some cases.

We are glad to see such courageous statements as that of Mr. C. L. Lockhart in the "Daily Graphic" of the 5th inst., who writes under his own name and address cogent facts against the "evil spirit" theory, and the supposed "cruelty" of "holding back" those dear to us who have gone before. It would be well if more persons would show the courage of their convictions.

A correspondent writes: "Your reference to Mrs. Chenoweth's mediumship reminds me of the experience of a friend who paid her a visit in 1916. He was charmed with the whole condition in which she exercised her mediumship—a beautiful dwelling, in charming surroundings, an abode of peace. But more than all did he appreciate the harmonious spiritual condition which he, a hard-headed business man, yet sensitive to these finer influences, not only experienced during a remarkable sitting, but carried away with him and retained for days."

The "Sunday Pictorial" thinks we are "experiencing a positive orgy of superstition," and appears to be torn with apprehension lest the future should be unveiled to those who would give their ears to know just when financial holdings would reach the top of their rise, so that they may sell out at a profit." We can assure our contemporary that these fears are groundless. These are not the "futures" with which Spiritualism deals.

Meetings next week:—

Sunday:—

Miss Maud MacCarthy, 81, Lansdowne-road, 8 p.m.

Monday:—

S.N.U., Holborn Hall, 7 p.m.

Tuesday:—

Mr. Vout Peters, L.S.A., 3 p.m.

Mrs. Inkpen, Stead Bureau, 7 p.m.

Wednesday:—

Mr. Vanstone, L.S.A., 6.30 and 7.30 p.m.

Mr. H. Wilde-Blood, Delphic Club, 5 p.m.

Thursday:—

Miss Lind-af-Hageby, Stead Bureau, 3.30 p.m.

Friday:—

Mrs. Wallis, L.S.A., 4 p.m.

Mr. R. Wilson, Delphic Club, 5 p.m.

Saturday:—

Fairy Play, Grovedale Hall, 7.30 p.m.

SIR OLIVER LODGE IN NEW YORK.

REMARKS ON SPIRIT INTERCOURSE.

The daily papers have published some details of a "friendly talk" which a New York journalist had with Sir Oliver Lodge in the scientist's room at the Ritz Carlton Hotel where he is staying. Doubtless most of our readers will have seen the account, but we enumerate some special points of interest, not losing sight of the fact that as a newspaper report, it may not be absolutely accurate.

Sir Oliver reiterated his certainty that he has actually been in communication with his son Raymond. He spoke of a warning against suicide. "He had been told by those who had tried it, that they were worse off 'upstairs.'" Those who testified "mostly say they are horrified at what they have done."

Asked if there had been any new and striking evidence to strengthen his own conviction of life after death, Sir Oliver told this story, which he said was authenticated and of recent occurrence:—

"A mother was receiving communications, spelled out, which she was convinced came from her son, who was killed in the war. She tried to get her husband to come and receive them, too, but he said it was all nonsense, and refused.

"After a time evidence accumulated, and the husband was persuaded. He appeared unexpectedly while the mother was already in communication with the boy. The lad broke off suddenly, and this message came: 'Ulloerb.'

"The medium said it was all nonsense, but the father cried: 'I know what it means. He says "'Ullo 'Erb," and 'Erb is what he used to call me!'

"That was so striking that the father was convinced and thereafter he received many messages."

Sir Oliver added that he had "talked with a good many of the young fellows killed in the war."

"They are quite happy and active. They find a job, and only hope that people over here won't grieve about them too much. They haven't gone out of existence. They tell us about trees and animals and flowers, and I sometimes think they still see this side from another point of view."

His son Raymond, added Sir Oliver, was very much in touch with the family and "knows when a marriage or a birth or such is toward. He knew I was coming to New York, and he was much pleased, believing I should do a lot of good here."

MISS LILIAN WHITING'S IMPRESSIONS.

Miss Lilian Whiting writes from Boston, U.S.A.:—

The most brilliant anticipations of Sir Oliver Lodge's lecture tour in the United States are exceeded by the reality. No auditorium is large enough to accommodate the throngs eager to hear him. That the cost of tickets (inevitable in so expensive a tour) even exceeds former opera prices, is no obstacle to the eager desire to listen to Sir Oliver's lectures. Standing room is at a premium. The opening lecture given in Symphony Hall, in Boston, on the night of January 20th, saw the spacious and beautiful white and gold interior crowded with a distinguished audience representative of Boston and Cambridge; of Harvard University, and of the great Institute of Technology. Literature, Art, Science, and the Church came to do honour to this scientific leader of new vitality in spiritual thought. The winning presence of Sir Oliver; his gracious manner, combining the dignity of the scholar with captivating simplicity; his rich, sympathetic voice, and the felicitous presentation of his theme, won all hearts. What is the secret of Sir Oliver's magic in making each hearer feel as if he were a special and personal friend? I asked myself the question as I looked at the vast audience.

Two reasons, either one of which is ample, combine to draw those immense audiences of the most intelligent people; one being the fame of the speaker as a really eminent scientist, especially as the man who has divined the secrets of the ether; the other, that his theme of the continuity of life, and its evolutionary progress, is the most intense interest of the hour. He is signally qualified to offer illumination on the problems of the life that is and that which is to come. A physicist who is a leading authority on the laws of matter; a philosophic thinker gifted with the most intense intellectual energy and spiritual divination; a psychical researcher in whom scientific acumen and spiritual discernment meet—Sir Oliver Lodge is, indeed, singularly qualified for his high mission. The limits of space will not permit me to say much of the large amount of ground covered by these lectures, nor is it necessary to the *clientele* of LIGHT, who are so familiar with the trend of his thought, but it is not too much to say that they are vital in their creative evolution. They bring to the vast audiences a vision that is substantiated by rational, scientific, and deeply reverent thought. The wave of spiritual interest now sweeping over the civilised world can no more be checked than the oncoming tide of the ocean. It is as resistless as the energy that governs the planetary courses. It has come to lift humanity to the plane of fuller comprehension of the nature of life, and of its absolute continuity, unbroken and uninterrupted by the change we call death; it has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

THE WONDERS OF SOUND.

"THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES."

Miss Maud MacCarthy on Sunday night last, at 81, Lansdowne-road, Holland Park, gave the first of a series of lectures on the inner teachings of the nature and use of sound, which she and a group of artists have been receiving for some years. The lectures are designed for serious students who wish to learn many of the actual forces inherent in sound.

Miss MacCarthy is eminently qualified to talk about sound, for she is a distinguished violinist who was hailed by the "Athenæum" as "the legitimate successor of Joachim." In her present lectures, however, she is considering the inner nature of sound, rather than the outer.

Most artists, she said, felt that there was some inner and hidden tradition in the arts and crafts, and she looked forward to a revival of inspiration along these lines. There was something, she considered, in the nature of sound which might be helpful to the painter or the sculptor, as well as to the musician. As there were several very distinguished artists in the audience, this view was probably shared by them.

Mr. John H. Foulds, the well-known conductor-composer, played on the piano a sequence of chords which Miss MacCarthy said had been heard by her group of investigators as clearly as the audience could hear her speaking. The chords were impressive in their often magnificent dissonances. They were illustrative of the following passages from the Bible:—

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars."

"Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

"Ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."

Mr. Foulds mentioned that a considerable amount of music had been thus communicated, and said that to reproduce the tremendous vibrations they had heard he had found it necessary to invent a couple of instruments. Hearty applause greeted Mr. Foulds' interesting demonstration.

Miss MacCarthy related that on one occasion when getting music communicated to them "a very curious and wonderful thing happened." She herself was "ensouled" by a higher being, who in turn became ensouled by a still higher being, and she was thus enabled to touch a loftier realm of consciousness. The result was extraordinary. "Those of us who are accustomed to take these revelations calmly were in tears, and the scribe was hardly able to take down what came." Referring to the glimmerings of "the music of the spheres" thus vouchsafed, Miss MacCarthy expressed the hope that none of her hearers would ever get more than a glimmering, for, she said, anything more was beyond their power to bear, in their present cycle of existence. "It might," she added, "explode them into the next world." A note of caution was given. "When you are practising these things," she said, "you have to bring the rest of your life into harmony with them. Unless this is done, great trouble will ensue."

Referring to the connection that certain notes had with certain emotions, she said that some might think that what she was telling them had little to do with actual musical art. They had found, however, that Beethoven was peculiarly susceptible to analysis on the lines she was indicating.

Mr. F. Bligh Bond (author of "The Gate of Remembrance" and "The Hill of Vision") at the close of the lecture made some interesting observations on the existence of a fundamental note in nature. He said he believed that the Chinese considered it to be the note F. Many of those present remained after the close to discuss with Miss MacCarthy points raised by her.

On Sunday next, at the same address, Miss MacCarthy delivers the second lecture of her course, taking for her subject, "The First Extension of Hearing, Breath, and Touch." She will again have the valuable assistance of Mr. John H. Foulds. As Miss MacCarthy's drawing-room was crowded last Sunday, those wishing to attend are advised to be early.

SUNRISE.

In starlight shimmering an angel stood
In the thin air above the dewy ground,
The breeze went by and dare not touch, nor could,
His sparkling robe with blue fire girt and bound.
Waiting the coming day, with eyes intent
Eastward, to where the cool grey mist was torn
By the grey hills, from their imprisonment
Set free, in honour of the princely dawn.
The crimson cavalry of courtly day,
God's fiery banner barred with gold unfurled,
The silver spears of light in brave array,
The flutter of a waking, wondering world,
The angel saw and cried aloud his praise.
Then in his smiling face, enraptured, shone
God's love and peace, going forth in answering rays.
So stood and gazed, and instantly was gone.

F. FIELDING-OULD.

CERTAINTY VERSUS DOUBT.

DOES BELIEF LESSEN THE VALUE OF LIFE?

By H. A. DALLAS.

Among the many interesting articles in the January issue of "The Hibbert Journal" not the least interesting is one on "Life and Death," by T. W. Rolleston.

In a fine passage Mr. Rolleston traces the trend of evolution from the physical atom to "the emergence of a conscious spiritual energy which has nothing to do with the life of the body," and he draws the conclusion that this is not the work of "blind, mechanical causation: it is something incalculable, dynamic and alive"; and he says that he finds it "totally incredible" that "the Power which has somehow urged the long ascent of life up to this height" has "only done so in order, in the end, to push it out into an abyss of nothingness"; that "a Joan of Arc, or a St. Francis of Assisi, or a Florence Nightingale goes clean out of existence like a blown-out candle when the organism through which it expressed itself is dissolved."

With this, and with more besides, one finds complete agreement; but there is a curious inconsistency in the mind of the writer. He apparently thinks that if we were absolutely convinced of a future life the value of this life would be injuriously affected. If there were no future life, he tells us, this life would not be worth living, and yet, he says: "The idea that there is a future life which is to this merely what to-morrow is to to-day would, if it were genuinely believed—which it never is—destroy the value of this life as much as if we believed that there were no to-morrow at all. How many of the noblest elements of this life are due precisely to our deep sense of its unique value!"

Of course Mr. Rolleston's statement that no one "genuinely" believes in a future life which will be as to-morrow to the present, is a pure assumption. He is not justified in making his own measure of belief the measure for other men; but apart from this statement the paragraph is curious and illogical. Why should this life lose its unique value when we regard it as a time in which we are building character, sowing spiritual seeds, the results of which we must gather in the future life?

Surely, on his own showing, this life is less valuable if we have no such assurance. This part of Mr. Rolleston's article contradicts his argument in the earlier part.

It may be urged that to sacrifice this life, when there is no prospect of continued life beyond, is a greater thing than to lay it down with confidence in the future; and yet many a man would be glad to end this troubled existence if he were absolutely sure that death ends consciousness for ever.

"There is a veil which we cannot or must not lift," writes Mr. Rolleston. He even seems to think that it is better that two souls that love each other should remain in uncertainty as to whether they will ever be re-united, whether "identity," memory and affection "are carried beyond death"; but he gives us no convincing reason why this doubt is to be preferred to certainty. His only reason seems to be that he thinks the doubt makes men cling tenaciously to life, which he considers it very desirable that they should do, and that it enhances the heroism of those who give up this precious and unique thing.

This notion has been expressed by others, namely, the fear that this present state would be less valued if the other life were more genuinely and absolutely believed in. But is this so? It is a question of facts, not of what may be supposed to be the effect of such a conviction. Do those who are convinced of survival and of the persistence of affection and memory become careless as to this life? They are more willing to die, but the natural instinct to live operates in them as in others, and unless acute bereavement has robbed life of all charm they are interested in life as much as others. We know cases in which, but for this conviction, the temptation to end life might be almost irresistible, but with it, even desolation and affliction are bravely borne.

The writer of this fine article makes a weak ending probably because he lacks experience. He does not know from experience what have been the effects of exchanging doubt for certainty, and a vague hope for knowledge. So he makes assumptions which are unwarranted and inconsistent with the general tenor of his argument, which is that the highest products of evolution (which must be in its Origin and Fount) cannot be destined to be annihilated by the event of death. If he will carry that principle to its logical conclusion he will see that it is not likely that human affection, being one of those highest products, should lose all conscious memory of itself, or that the exchange of doubt for certainty should prove injurious to the men and women whose hearts have been broken by the apparent tragedy of death.

"**DOGMATISM ON SPIRIT INTERCOURSE.**"—A report of the address on this subject given by the author of "So Saith the Spirit," on the 5th inst., in the hall of the London Spiritualist Alliance, will appear in our next issue.

There are who, bending supple knees,
Live for no end except to please,
Rising to fame by mean degrees:
But creep not thou with these.

—LEWIS MORRIS.

SIR O. LODGE'S SUPPOSED "CREDULITY."

The Rev. Ellis G. Roberts sends us the following:—

Mr. McCabe, in the "Sunday Chronicle," January 25th, states that a medium (Mrs. Leonard) gave to Sir Oliver Lodge a description of a photo which might apply to any one out of the large number taken during the war. The details given are "vague or given as alternatives." The following are actual details as to the photo described in "Raymond" with an attempt to assess their mathematical probability of their existence in any given photo of the kind. Ten details are given precisely. None are vague or given as alternatives. There are no mistakes. The detail of the cane, mentioned by Mr. M., is stated by Mrs. L. to be uncertain, and is, therefore, omitted here.

VERIFIED DETAILS.	PROBABILITIES.
Raymond is identified in a group of 21 ...	1 in 21
"A prominent figure has a name beginning with B" say ...	1 " 12
R. is boxed in among the legs of his comrades; compare p. 107, line 24, with photo.; an ugly blemish ...	1 " 10
Someone is leaning on him (hand on shoulder) ...	1 " 10
Vertical lines at back of group ...	1 " 5
Group contains "dozen or more" ...	1 " 2
It is closely packed ...	1 " 2
Photo not taken in studio ...	1 " 2
Raymond is sitting down ...	1 " 2
Has others behind him ...	1 " 2

Probabilities in favour of McCabe hypothesis are as 1 to 4,032,000 against.

This is a calculation according to the mathematical theory of probability, which is as sure as any other department of mathematics and is recognised by the most rigid critics of the Society for Psychical Research.

"RECONSTRUCTION."

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW.

Professional mediums may indeed cry, "Heaven save us from our friends!" Mr. Fred Barlow notices, apparently with whole-hearted approval (*vide* LIGHT of January 17th), that the Northern Counties Union of the National Union of Spiritualists have decided not to countenance upon their platforms those mediums who give private sittings for professional gain. Is the Union going to make up to mediums for the great loss to their income? I have never heard that Spiritualist societies erred greatly on the side of generosity towards the mediums appearing on their platforms. The unfortunate mediums appear to be "between the devil and the deep sea." Already poor, their income will be further curtailed if they give up all private sittings, while if they continue to hold them, they are deprived of the introductions and safeguards provided by the Spiritualist society.

Moreover, there is another side to the question. Few people have the good fortune to have access to a really gifted private medium, and few people have feelings so robust that they can stand getting intimate and sacred communications from persons they love in the presence of strangers, acquaintances, and even of friends. It is precisely in a séance composed of persons with these "robust" feelings that the war-whoops, tambourine rattling, inane jests, and other phenomena that Mr. Barlow justly deprecates, are most likely to occur.

Mr. Barlow seems to think that the fees for private séances are "absurdly high." Are they, considering the peculiar and rare faculties employed, the great tax on the medium, and the value of the service rendered? Let Mr. Barlow calculate it out, and see whether he would like to take on the profession as a means of earning his livelihood.

I fully agree that it is very desirable to import more reverence and dignity into Spiritualism. It does possess, and is able to present on evidence, a great and noble truth, that there is no death, and it is a truth that may regenerate mankind, but I doubt whether Spiritualism will fulfil what it might do, by building "churches" and by turning itself into one more of the innumerable sects that exist in Great Britain. A "sect" implies theology, and Spiritualism should have as little to do with theology as possible, but simply affirm the great principles on which all noble religions are founded.

C. E. B. (Col.).

"THE other day a clerical gentleman, who evidently knew all about the laws of Nature, said to me, 'We know that the dead are not permitted to return; it is opposed to well-known physical laws.' I asked him whether he had ever heard of the treatise written by Dr. Lardner to prove that no vessel built of material heavier than water could possibly float (copies of which treatise were carried by the first steamer that crossed the Atlantic), or of Sir Humphry Davy's statement that, owing to well-known physical laws, it was impossible to light London with gas!"—PERCY R. STREET.

VISCOUNT MOLESWORTH'S TESTIMONY.

Viscount Molesworth, in an interview in the "Sunday Express" (February 8th), related how he became a convert to Spiritualism.

"Until three years ago," he said, "I had no interest in Spiritualism. In fact, I was not only regarded as the sceptic of the family, but rather atheistically inclined. Then my son was killed. It was a great blow. One day shortly after, while my wife and I were walking in the garden, I felt absolutely as if he were about and endeavouring to make his presence felt. I said to my wife, 'I feel as if Charlie were here.'

"I felt impelled to go indoors with my wife and endeavour to get into communication with him through the table. No sooner had we touched the table than it literally jumped up. That day I obtained my first message from my son.

"The purport of it was so private that telepathy or any other influence was entirely out of the question.

"Since then we have sat often—only, of course, when the mood and the conditions have been in harmony. Take, for instance, this evening. The dry, bright atmosphere would be ideal."

Lord Molesworth thinks it is a great pity that the Church has stood aloof from Spiritualism.

"The attitude which, while admitting the existence of life after death, nevertheless refrains from investigation, frankly puzzles me. The Bishop of London has said that we are the same five minutes after death as we were when alive, and then goes on to say that communication with the dead is forbidden. That is not so. We are asked to inquire, but would it not be helpful if the Church lifted the present atmosphere of frivolity which obtains in some quarters to a reverent and sincere level? I do not believe in the professional mediums. As a matter of fact, the ordinary inquirer should have no need of séances or mediums. If you want to study any science or religion you go to the books. Well, then, to the student a whole library of books is available—Crookes, Barrett, Crawford, and dozens of others.

"I am past my half-century," Lord Molesworth added, "and the more I learn of the life beyond the veil the more I am anxious to get there. And yet the position one is to occupy on the spiritual plane depends on how one has conducted oneself on this. Surely that is the greatest religion one can teach."

THE SOUL: ITS ORIGIN AND GROWTH.

TEACHINGS EMPHATIC, DOGMATIC, AND ORIGINAL.

Mr. William Summers, the author of "Soul Culture" (W. Rodman and Co., 6/- net) defines his subject as "the science of the spiritual development of the human race." The human organism, he holds, is of a dual nature: man not only possesses a natural animal body and animal soul, but with every individual born into the world is a spiritual body and spiritual soul in an embryonic state. "The Spirit of God in man is man's converter from the animal to the spiritual nature. . . . This is the only process and order of becoming a Child of God. This is the way the mortal puts on immortality."

Linking this idea with the conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus, Mr. Summers puts it in this strange way: "Every man and woman is capable of giving birth to a son or daughter of God (for there are no barren among them) and . . . this Son of God born in the soul is the spiritualised man himself, the real man himself incorporated with the nature of God." The doctrine of substitutionary sacrifice, with that of physical resurrection, meets with short shrift. Soul culture is the man's own individual work. The Christianity of to-day the author regards as "a religion of belief and theory;" it is not these that are needed, it is knowledge. Again, we read: "The spiritual world is a real world, and is governed by law, just as the natural world is governed by natural law. The citizens of that world have sense organs as in the physical world, only of a higher state of development."

No growth of a spiritual nature can, it is stated, take place without the realisation of God, and the development of the Divine virtues of justice and equity. But when Mr. Summers tells us what he means by these virtues we are not so sure of their Divine character. For he declares that there are no differing dispensations for men—Christ and Moses do not differ. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is not evil, but equity, justice and righteousness. The Kingdom of Jesus was founded on these principles. He resisted evil all his life. "The Sermon on the Mount was not written by either Jesus or his disciples, but was the product of ecclesiasticism."

Surely this is the merest perversity of argument. We can conceive of nothing less likely to have been the product of any "ism" than the Sermon on the Mount. From the context it is plain that by the injunction "resist not evil" the author of the Sermon did not mean "Do not try to do away with evil," but that love alone (guided by wisdom), and not the principle of "tit-for-tat"—which is what most people mean by "justice," and is quite properly represented

as blindfolded—is the right way to achieve that object. Love, as Jesus teaches both in the Sermon and elsewhere, is the one supreme commandment which includes all the rest. There are no virtues, human or Divine, outside of it. We are to concern ourselves not with what we imagine other people *deserve* (we know absolutely nothing about their *deserts*—good or bad—or our own either), but with their *needs*; and in so acting we shall be like unto our Father in Heaven "Who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

DROGE.

WAS THE MESSAGE CARRIED BY A SPIRIT?

Miss S. M. Bowley (Highgate-road, N.W.) writes:—

With reference to the question of the intervention of spirit persons in cases of telepathy (page 21) the following may be of some interest:—

My father died a few years ago, late on a Saturday night. As I sat in the room waiting for the doctor who had been sent for, I mentally said: "If any spirit friends are present will someone kindly go to Ellen (a friend living on the S.E. side of London) and tell her father is dead."

I wrote to this friend the next day, Sunday, to inform her of the event; and on the Tuesday following I received a letter of sympathy from her. In it she said she had known of my father's death before she had my letter on the Monday.

I wrote asking her to give me the particulars as to why she thought my father had passed on. I was careful not to say anything about the message.

She replied that on Sunday afternoon she had been composing a rather important letter, which required all her attention, when "the silent voice," as she calls it, broke across her thoughts of quite other matters with the words, "Mr. Bowley is not sitting up among the cushions any more," and she knew that he was dead. She enquired mentally, at what time he died. The reply was not clear, and she asked, "Did you say about 3 o'clock?" (in the night). The voice answered, "No, earlier." He died just before eleven.

My friend said she had the impression that the information, in the same words, had been offered her before, but she had not caught the idea. Also, she mentioned that she had not known my father had to keep a sitting position. If she had been aware of this fact she would have supposed him to be among pillows. Though some pillows were used, he was supported, so far as could be seen, by numerous cushions.

Taking the details into consideration, this incident looks more like spirit intervention than direct telepathy.

[Miss Bowley adds that she has the letters exchanged on the occasion, and is willing to show them to us if we so desire.—EDITOR.]

SPIRITUALISM IN FICTION.

Miss E. P. Prentice (Sutton) writes:—

The broad-mindedness and acute spiritual comprehension of many of our old-fashioned novelists has been an eye-opener to me. Note the following from Mrs. Henry Wood's "Shadow of Ashlydat":—

"Say what men will, there is a tendency in the human mind to tread upon the confines of superstition. I believe there are such things as omens, warnings, etc. I never had the gratification of seeing a ghost yet. I have not been taken into favour by the spirits, have never been promoted to so much as half a message from them. But some curious incidents have forced themselves on my life's experience, causing me to echo as a question the assertion of the Prince of Denmark, 'Are there not more things, etc.'"

Perhaps the majority of us have had similar experiences—too sacred for a sceptical public to discuss, nevertheless treasured as the certain and abiding realities that nought can destroy.

THE PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.—If we lift the level of life as a whole we cut ourselves off from adverse influences, and need no longer be concerned with them. The question then is, What enables us to lift the level of life? The practice of the presence of God. Let us start with the idea of the indwelling Spirit as moving in and through all men, making towards the perfection of our natures. The meaning of the contrast and struggle in which we are engaged is the completion of our own spiritual development. The conflict is only necessary until we learn the lesson, make the adjustment. Hence there is no reason to condemn, no reason to wish life were otherwise. We are not tempted above what we are able to endure. God is with us to enable us to conquer. He is with us as life, within and behind the struggling forces. Let us, then, practise His presence by uniting with life wherever we may find it.—"Handbook of the New Thought," by HORATIO W. DRESSER.

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.—Rev. Susanna Harris. February 22nd, Mr. Ernest Hunt.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, W.2.—11, Mr. G. Prior; 6.30, Mr. Percy Beard. Wednesday, 18th, 7.30, Miss Ellen Conroy.

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

Walthamstow—342, *Hoe-street*.—7, Mr. Parry, clairvoyance by Mrs. Connor.

Battersea.—45, *St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction*.—11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mrs. Crowder. 19th, clairvoyance *Lewisham*.—*The Priory, High-street*.—6.30, Mrs. Annie Boddington.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, *Becklow-road*.—11, public circle; 7, Mr. F. Eveleigh. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Stenson.

Croydon.—96, *High-street*.—11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mr. H. Boddington.

Kingston-on-Thames.—*Bishop's Hall, Thames-street*.—6.30, address by Mr. H. Leaf.

Peckham.—*Lausanne-road*.—Lyceum anniversary, visit of London Lyceum District Council. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Mary Gordon.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 and 5, Broadway.—11, Mr. E. J. Lofts; 6.30, Mr. G. Prior. Wednesday, 18th, 7.30, Mrs. Cannock; doors closed 7.35. Healing (as usual) except Tuesday and Saturday.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—1, *Villas-road, Plumstead*.—Wednesday, 18th, 8, Mr. Evans. Sunday, 22nd, 7, Mrs. A. Boddington; members' circle after service. Lyceum every Sunday at 3 p.m.

11, Mr. A. W. Jones; 3, Lyceum, invitation to old and young; 7 p.m., Mr. Ernest W. Beard. Wednesday, Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Smith. Saturday, 21st, 7 for 7.30, Lyceumists' fairy play, "A Disappointed Fairy"; tickets 1/- and 1/10 (including tax). Please secure them early. 22nd, 11 and 7, Mrs. Mary Gordon.

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

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—*Old Steine Hall*.—11.30, Healing Circle; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mme. Paulet, address and clairvoyance. Monday, 7.15, and Tuesday, 3, Mme. Paulet, clairvoyance and psychometry. Thursday, 7.15, questions and clairvoyance. Forward Movement, see advertisement.

Holloway.—*Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station)*.

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