

LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS & PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

"Whatsoever doth make Manifest is Light!"—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Fly time! fly speedily—
Come life and light!

—LADY NAIRN.

KNOWLEDGE: ITS USE AND ABUSE.

A piece of carping criticism which we heard lately was that a knowledge of Spiritualism did not make people any better. Not necessarily, of course; but the same objection might be levelled against numerous other forms of knowledge. Certainly in innumerable cases people have been made not only the better but the happier for the assurance that there is a life beyond the grave, so there is really no point in the objection. We who have the knowledge give it forth to be used or abused. And it can be abused. We have known such a case as that of a man who followed the trade of a writer and who gained the evidence of a life beyond. But finding afterwards that it paid him better to write against Spiritualism than for it he took the more pecuniarily profitable course. We imagine this is not an isolated case. In fact we know it is not. All are not cast in the heroic mould, and it is usual for a man to set his own interests before the common good. So it will be no doubt until it becomes generally realised that in the long run our duty and our interests are identical.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

We said something last week concerning the early stages of the telephone and the phonograph (it was misprinted "photograph," but the meaning was clear), and the chilly reception which they encountered. We might have added another instance of the same treatment in the case of the aeroplane, but for the fact that we had mentioned that instance several times before. If we refer to these things again it is as illustrations not of intellectual scepticism, but of irrational emotion. The emotion that stirred the "coldly critical" opposition was compounded of the love of the old against the new, impatience with the slow processes required before the inventions could be made to justify themselves, and, in at least one instance, we think, personal hostility. It was the late Lord Northcliffe who did most in this country to promote aviation, and he had some bitter enemies who found an opportunity to vent their spleen on the man by attacking one of his pet-ideas. The charge often made against Spiritualists that they are emotional is a

two-edged blade—it cuts both ways. The spectacle of an excited materialist like Mr. — complaining that the Spiritualist is excited is sufficiently funny. The whole essence of the question lies in the subject itself—whether it is true or untrue—and not in the mental make-up of those who contend for or against it. Slavery and other evil things were defended in their day by mild philanthropists against intemperate fanatics—or at any rate by people who were so described. In the case of the battle over human survival and spirit communication we are simply seeing history repeating itself. And we are assured that the result will be precisely the same. The truth will prevail in the end.

THE USES OF OPPOSITION.

As we hinted in a recent leader, the work of the spiritual movement is under wise direction and its strategy is skilfully designed. We have observed with keen interest how some of the attacks—especially upon psychic photography—have led indirectly to inquiries by those interested and these in turn to many important developments. Truly "there is a soul of goodness in things evil"; and it is a long experience of the truth of this that keeps us patient in circumstances which in some quarters arouse indignation and dismay. Always in the end, it seems, the weapons of the attackers are turned against themselves, and some particular event which seems a disastrous set-back at the time becomes transformed in the end into something valuable and helpful to the progress of the truth of human survival. It should never be forgotten that no force can act effectively unless there is an opposing force. So much is this the case in human affairs that long ago we lamented the fact that Spiritualism seemed to have no sufficiently powerful and intelligent opposition to enable it to advance effectively. Of ignorance and malicious obstruction we had much, but this is gradually disappearing and its place is being taken by a more intelligent body of criticism which, however mistaken it may be in some of its conclusions, is yet helpful not only in "putting on the brake," but in preventing a too ready acceptance of things which require careful testing before being included in psychic evidences.

TRUTH.

How many thoughts we cherished in our youth
Must yield the palm to Time's extended hand,
Nor flinch before the sterner grip of Truth,
If haply we can better understand.

Although our hearts are torn that we must leave
Some shelter that had seemed our very own,
No newer building will the mind conceive.
Until we raze the structure stone by stone.

Why linger in a paradise for fools,
With Truth's more precious palaces to win?
Why patch a leaking roof with ancient tools
That must some future time let daylight in?

FACTS AND FANCIES OF SECOND SIGHT.

BY HORACE LEAF.

(Continued from page 231.)

A GIFT OF MANY RACES.

Although second sight is generally associated in the minds of the British with the inhabitants of the Highlands of Scotland, it is confined to no particular country. The Highlanders have not even been celebrated for it as long as some other European races, and certainly not nearly so long as the peoples of the East. The Jews were at one time considered first in eminence for it; and their scriptures contain many examples of prophecy and vision, often of a richly symbolical nature.

The early Christians appear to have held the faculty in high regard as a "spiritual gift" earnestly to be sought after. The Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Lapps, Zulus, French, Hindus, Maories, North American Indians, to mention only a few races, have believed in and exercised the faculty. Indeed, no race seems to have been without it. Modern primitive races often perplex unsympathetic anthropologists and comparative religionists, by showing their ability in the use of the gift.

One of the earliest references to its symbolical form is found in the "Odyssey," where Theoclimenus sees a shroud of mist about the bodies of the wooers, and drops of blood distilling from the walls of the hall of Odysseus.

The Pythia of Delphi also saw blood on the walls during the Persian War. Similar examples occur in the Ancient Islandic Sagas. "Nial's Sagar," written in the ancient Norse language about the year 1200, contains the history of a certain seer named Nial and his family. He was called a *spamadr*, that is, a person capable of foretelling events. Originally a heathen, he became a Christian soon after Christianity was introduced into Iceland, and did much to propagate the new faith among his family and friends. His progressive character is well shown in his arguments in favour of the necessity of Christianity. The old religion of Odin, Thor, and Frey, he contended, was quite unsuitable to the times. The book is no doubt a plain statement of facts relating mainly to Nial and his family, and reveals him as a man of high probity, sound common-sense and judgment, and wide sympathies; and apart from the exercise of his second sight, in no way departing from the normal standard of his fellows, except that he appears to have been mentally and morally their superior.

NIAL THE NORSEMAN.

"Nial," says the Sagar, "was very rich in property, and handsome to look at, but had no beard. He was so great a lawyer, that it was impossible to find his equal; he was very wise and had the gift of foretelling events, he was good at counsel, and had a good disposition, and whatever counsel he gave the people was for the best; he was gentle and humane, and got every man out of trouble who came to him in his need.

This is by no means a bad character, and although such good qualities are not usually ascribed to seers by the popular mind, it is in close agreement with what we know of the dispositions of other great seers, accounts of whom have come down to us with any degree of clearness.

It was often as dangerous to neglect Nial's advice as it was beneficial to follow it. Had his friend Gunnar done as he warned him to do he would have escaped his violent death. It was similar with Nial's own sons. They brought upon themselves, as their father foresaw they would, a horrible doom through neglecting his counsel.

He was asked by Gunnar: "Døst thou know what death thyself wilt die?"

"I do," replied Nial.

"What is it?"

"What people would think the least probable."

Nial meant that he would perish by fire; which he did.

Naturally many curious notions exist as to the cause of second sight. It is not generally regarded as hereditary, although there is a belief among the Highlanders that the seventh son of the seventh son has it naturally. Others declare that it is a special sign of divine favour and the reward of great virtue. There is, however, no particular reason for believing either of these notions, as quite ordinary persons without any special claim to holiness or birth possess it. Observation inclines to the opinion that the power is often transmitted from parents to children. Nor is the gift confined to the poor and illiterate, as Dr. Samuel Johnson long ago pointed out, an erroneous supposition which has considerably strengthened the fallacy that the visions are merely hallucinations misunderstood through ignorance. Educated people are often endowed with the faculty; indeed, there is reason for supposing that it is more frequently exercised in modern times than it was in less cultured ages.

NOT AN UNMIXED BLESSING.

Although not always valued when possessed, there appears to be a great desire to retain the gift, even by those who profess to regard it as a kind of affliction. Whether this illogical state of mind arises from the desire of possession or from some deeper cause it is hard to say. That the faculty is not an unmingled blessing is obvious from the fact that it is more often related to sad events than to joyful. Seers frequently appear keenly to feel the various emotions related to the different incidents recorded through their power. Some difference from normal personality in this and in other respects must be allowed for the possession of so unusual a quality; especially since it is of a nature almost entirely psychological.

The desire to retain the gift has been known to be so strong as to lead to tragedy. Among the Highlanders there is a belief that if a seer discloses what he has seen before the event revealed happens, the gift will be lost. This is doubtless due to a belief in fatalism such as a faculty of this nature is almost sure to give rise to. It is reported that recently a second-sighted man for this reason refrained from warning his brother against taking part in a regatta, although he had foreseen the accident by which his brother was drowned.

Among the things which must long baffle the scientist, the philosopher, the historian, and the theologian second sight will doubtless hold a prominent position. Hitherto it has been studiously avoided by all the orthodox in these various classes of thinkers. That this cannot always continue is obvious. The question of psychical research is too pressing to be left out of the serious consideration of matters pertaining to the nature and destiny of the race. One thing is clear; second sight finds no part or lot in materialism. The faculty which can pierce through walls, and encircle the earth in an instant, which can reveal with life-like clearness and accuracy that which is occurring beyond the reach of the normal faculties, which can delve into the past and bring forth forgotten events, and which can project itself into the future, and from the womb of time extract the unborn in its future perfection, must surely be related to a totally different kind of creature than that of which it is declared physical matter is the sum and substance of his being.

SOME PROBLEMS.

It must do even more than this. The whole question of time and space, of personal responsibility, and of human individuality and association must be re-considered if justice is to be done to the subject. Where is the seer when he observes what is happening at a distance? Where is he when he beholds the past being lived again before him? Where is he when he plunges unexpectedly into the future? One might well ask where is human responsibility if our actions already exist in time and approach us inexorably? This, *prima facie*, is what the seer tells us when he foresees an event; and so arises the question of freewill, and all that it connotes.

Questions of the gravest importance are linked up with the ability of the seer to become *en rapport* with total strangers. Among the hundreds of millions of mortals, why does he suddenly and unaccountably become attuned to one, and that one a perfect stranger to him? How is it that he observes what is occurring to that person in all its details, sharing with him acutely the fears or joys that oppress or lighten his lot? Nor may he ever see this individual during the whole course of his life, except in that fleeting vision.

It is safe to conjecture that with the growth of knowledge concerning man, problems must be solved which may utterly revolutionise our present conceptions; already this has been shadowed forth by experimental psychology. Will man emerge better or worse in our estimation, compared with our present conception? Shall we find him more closely linked with matter and perishable things, or with higher imperishable qualities? If second sight can inform us in any way, its indications are all in favour of the view that man is a far more wonderful creature than we can at present imagine him to be, and essentially spiritual.

CURRENT ITEMS.

In the "South Western Star" we read that about a hundred members and friends of the Battersea United Christian Spiritualist Church attended a recent social gathering and dance.

"The Surrey and County Times" (9th inst.) reports a characteristic lecture by the Rev. G. Vale Owen to a large audience in the Ward Street Hall, Guildford. At the close of the lecture questions were asked and answered.

Mr. J. R. Gordon, Vice-President of the American Society for Psychical Research, left London on the 13th inst., returning to New York by the s.s. "Majestic." He made many new friends during his visit, and we bade him farewell with real regret.

From an account of them in the "Edinburgh Evening Dispatch" we learn that many remarkable demonstrations of psychic powers by the Princess Wahletka were given at the North British Station Hotel, Edinburgh. A few examples are quoted in our current Sidelights.

The "Chatham News" tells us of "some astonishingly correct" clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. A. Jamrach at a meeting held under the auspices of the Gillingham Spiritualist Society, and of a testimonial to Mr. and Mrs. Ellis Booth for having founded the Society and during a period of four years acted as President and Secretary.

At the "Literature and Law" dinner at the Lyceum Club, on the 15th inst., the Lord Chief Justice was present, with Sir John Ross, Sir Hamar Greenwood, and Mr. Mitchell Banks, K.C., M.P. Mrs. Leonard Rees presided, and the toast "Our Guests" was proposed by Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny.

The "Birmingham Gazette and Express" (6th inst.) tells effectively the story of a "Strange Cure of a Cripple," by Mr. Alexander Erskine. For eight years the patient had to use crutches: two spells of a year each were spent in bed, in a hospital. Mr. Erskine explains that it was a faith cure; "the happy result of the sufferer's absolute trust; the power of his own mind really worked the miracle—almost—of recovery."

COMEDY AND TRAGEDY IN PHENOMENA.

BY A MEDICAL MAN.

If I venture to record the following two cases, it is because I can vouch for the absolute *bona fides* of the narrator, who is a near relative and a very level-headed nurse. We will call her "Mrs. C." Fuller details are in the discreet hands of the Editor.

AN EARTH-BOUND SPIRIT.

Some thirteen years ago Mrs. C. was residing in a well-known district of Bucks, and amongst her friends was a "Nurse B." who, though elderly, was often employed in the locality; and it was she who confided to Mrs. C. the following eerie story.

A "Mrs. D.," her daughter, and a rather delicate son, were well-known residents in the district. The son formed a passionate attachment to a young girl of an inferior social status living in the vicinity. Her mother strongly opposed the intimacy. He was stricken with a fatal illness, and previous to his passing he wrote a letter to be given to his mother after his death, in which he implored her to send the girl he was leaving a thousand pounds. This sacred request was not carried out; and the contents of the letter were not divulged till after the death of his mother. Meanwhile "Mrs. D." became strangely nervous and depressed—a condition naturally ascribed to the loss of her son. Eventually she took to her bed and a nurse was engaged. On the first night, whilst sitting by her patient in the dimly-lighted room, an apparition of the son appeared, as if through the closed door. There was no movement, but his large dark eyes were fixed on his mother as if in mute appeal. The nurse was terrified; and the mother wrung her hands, exclaiming: "My son! My son!" The apparition slowly dematerialised; and Mrs. D. told the nurse that her son had appeared several times—a fact that determined the latter's departure in the morning.

At this juncture "Nurse C." came on the scene, and witnessed the same apparition but without fear or distress. A short time after the young girl died—the loved one joined her lover. This love affair, and also the existence of the letter were unknown to "Nurse C." at the time. The ghostly visits became more frequent; and the patient grew rapidly worse, and towards the end became more or less delirious; and all "Nurse C." and the daughter caught of her mutterings were the words: "letter . . . ottoman . . . scarf," and were ascribed to her delirium. She, too, "passed on," and shortly afterwards the daughter informed "Nurse C." that on turning out the ottoman in her mother's room she found the dead son's letter wrapped in a black scarf. Its contents seemed to them to throw light on the mother's illness and supply a motive for the son's eerie visits. Although unconnected with the above sombre happenings, "Nurse B.'s" death three years after was both sad and tragic. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*

TRUTH FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

Although much unconscious humour "comes through" at séances, unpleasant truths would seem to be rare. The following experience related by "Mrs. C." supplies a combination of both.

About eighteen months ago she was asked to attend a "Mrs. M." whose companion-help, "Miss N.," was leaving; and being a Spiritualist "Mrs. C." advised her to advertise in *LIGHT* for a similar post. This she did, and received a request from a "Mrs. X." to meet her at Victoria Station. They met, and after a preliminary conversation, "Mrs. X." asked "Miss N." if she would mind accompanying her to a private "circle," as she was very anxious to obtain the advice of an incarnate nephew, on whose judgment she could rely. Although a somewhat unusual request, they proceeded to the séance, the "circle" consisting of four sitters and the medium. They were soon *en rapport* with the discarnate one—or perchance his "shell!"—and "Mrs. X." promptly enquired: "Is the lady sitting on my right in every respect a fit and proper person to become my companion-help?" Swift as thought came the disconcerting reply: "Companion-help! Companion-help! It's a *slave* you want." The circle promptly separated; "Miss N." accepting the spirit's testimony at face-value—a risky course in similar mundane transactions. She is now, I am told, a writer on the life after death.

THE CLARA IRWIN APPEAL CASE.

The appeal against the conviction of Mrs. Clara Irwin, of Sandmere Road, Brixton, and a fine of £10 at Lambeth Police Court, for fortune-telling was dismissed by the Divisional Court of the King's Bench on Wednesday, 13th inst. Mr. Hewitt, K.C., who appeared for the appellant, claimed that as the police officers whose fortunes were told had not been deceived there had been no offence. In dismissing the appeal the Lord Chief Justice remarked that the law had been firmly established in 1921 by a full court of five judges.

FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SEEKER.

CONDUCTED BY F. E. LEANING.

XIII.—CHARLES FOSTER.

The medium, Charles Foster, is said to be the original from whom Lord Lytton drew the character of Margrave in his "Strange Story." One of the traits common to the real man and the fictitious one is the extraordinary blend of the heartless and the sentimental. "He was not only Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," says his biographer, "but he represented half a dozen different Jekylls and Hydys." But whereas Edward Hyde was entirely bad, Foster was not vicious; he was only "absolutely uncontrollable" and unaccountable. The story of the man and his mediumship was written in a rare little book by his business manager, George Bartlett, entitled "The Salem Seer," from which Mr. Holt quotes generously, as it is out of print and not accessible to the majority of readers. Bartlett himself is known to the great author, who testifies of him that he does not often meet a man who inspires him with so much confidence in his sincerity. It is not surprising to learn that Foster was a medium of strong and varied range when we find that his grandparents and parents before him had marked psychic endowments, so much so that, as a baby, his "spirit friends" rocked his cradle by the hour.

One of Foster's peculiarities was a great dislike of the dark, and he could not be induced to give "dark séances," and no wonder when we hear of what was likely to occur. On one occasion an artist friend, more in curiosity than kindness, persuaded several other men, including Foster, to visit his studio, and then suddenly turned out the light. "What occurred that night," says Bartlett, "will not be forgotten by any of us, for it seemed for a few moments as though the world had come to an end; that the building had been blown up by dynamite, or that an earthquake was upon us. It seemed as if everything in the studio would be broken and ruined. Even I was frightened. . . . We simultaneously said: 'Wilson, light the gas,' and when the gas was lighted, we found only a few things disarranged; and it is a mystery to this day how to account for the hurly-burly. Poor Foster was faint. He could hardly stand, was pale as death, and there was a cold perspiration on his forehead."

That forces of the poltergeist order focus themselves in a medium of this type is evident, and that only the absence of light is necessary to bring about a manifestation is also clear. Thus on a certain summer night Bartlett tells how they were both awakened by a fearful commotion, to find a couple of large packing-baskets (bought to accommodate extra luggage and still empty) running round the room, flying into the air, crashing against each other; and how finally all the chairs were piled upon their bed. He adds that "no harm was done, however," which was fortunate, for very often destruction follows outbreaks of the kind.

It was not for physical mediumship that Foster is chiefly remembered, however, for the phase yielded to other developments, and the more mental forms. The two orders imperceptibly grade into each other, so that whereas we have at the one end phenomena which seem wholly physical and material, and which do not by any means compel a spiritistic explanation, at the other end we have the kind of evidence that makes an overpowering appeal to logic to "call in the spirits." Between these two comes a range where telepathy is in evidence, and it was this that characterised Mr. Holt's own sitting with Foster on a Sunday evening in the early 'seventies. He and his wife went, unknown and unannounced, to Foster's room at a boarding-house. "There was," he says, "no machinery, no trance, no airs of mystery," in short, "nothing outside of ordinary conversation, except the remarkable substance of the conversation." The remarkable element consisted in the transmission of impressions in the medium's mind in answer to mental questions put by the sitter, and strongly suggests successful thought-transference more than anything else. I think this is shown by Foster's facility with names, for he gave his sitters on this occasion the names of perhaps a dozen of their friends who had passed on, in about the order of their prominence in the minds of his visitors, beginning with that of the baby whose name was uppermost in their expectation. Moreover, the medium liked, and even urged, his sitters to concentrate their attention on the question put, and this is an essential of thought-transference in experimental work. Mr. Holt, of course, was too good a researcher not to supplement his experience with a wide range of the study of that of others, and he is not generalising without book when he says, "I find that those who deny are almost invariably those who never saw the phenomena at all." But there is significance in the fact that he was put in the way of seeing them comparatively early in life, and the fruit of this, in his great work, will be the subject of the next paper.

EVIDENCE AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

ADDRESS BY MR. T. DUDLEY PARSONS.

The members of the London Spiritualist Alliance had the advantage of listening to a lucid and reasoned discourse by a trained legal mind in the address delivered to them on May 14th, by Mr. T. DUDLEY PARSONS, B.A., Barrister-at-law, who took for his subject, "Evidence and Personal Experience."

Mrs. KELWAY BAMBER, who presided, said that in the matter of Spiritualism she was in the position of god-mother to the lecturer, for she had been the first to introduce him to the subject. She was proud of her godson, and was convinced that he could help the cause by presenting it in a scientific way.

Mr. PARSONS said that it was some time before he obtained evidence of a conclusive nature. They had to take into account the state of mind of the investigator. Some, with a knowledge of psychic science, did not need a great deal of evidence, while others were necessarily slower in reaching the goal.

In analysing evidence it was natural, being a lawyer, that he should regard it more or less in a legal way. Evidence might be defined as that which was going to prove what one wanted to establish or to render more likely the fact intended to be proved. Well, in reviewing the subject of Spiritualism, he found that the evidence satisfied his mind from a legal point of view; sufficient had been accumulated to satisfy any ordinary, reasonable mind. At the same time he was not content. He felt that somehow the standard should be made higher, so that no other answer than survival could possibly be returned after weighing the evidence. He was much in the same position as Professor Richet, who was perfectly satisfied that the phenomena were genuine, but explained them by a theory of his own called Cryptesthesia. He was in that state of mind, wondering whether the undoubted facts could not be accounted for by the working of some hidden power of the human mind.

The lecturer went on to explain that when he was at this stage, Mrs. Kelway Bamber kindly introduced him to Miss Stead in 1920. Then it was that he learned his first lesson from the Other Side, and that was that if we are only sincere we shall get our doubts removed. (Applause.)

He described in detail a séance with Miss McCreadie at which his deceased uncle was described to him in a way that could not be mistaken. He was a stranger to Miss McCreadie. Some time later when he was calling on a relative, in response to a spirit message, he found that after two efforts he was unable to make the door bell sound. He mentally asked his uncle if he would ring the bell. There was an immediate ring, and on being admitted he was told that the bell had been out of order for the past six months. Subsequently he learned that with this single exception it continued to be unworkable.

Even after these experiences he was slow in coming to a full acceptance of the spiritual interpretation, remarking, "It takes time to readjust one's warp and woof to the new thread running through it."

He reasoned with himself regarding the power of the subconscious mind, considering that if this were the source of the happenings, it must be a veritable diabolical agency. Any theory worthy of acceptance, he came to see, must be an explanatory one, not an irrational one.

"Finally," he said, "on weighing it all up the evidence left me without a leg to stand on. I am a Spiritualist because nothing other than the philosophy of Spiritualism will explain the facts that have come to me." (Applause.)

In conclusion he said: My experience is probably not wider than that of many of those before me, but our movement gains by this recounting of our experiences to one another. One needs facilities for investigation, and it is our duty and privilege to support an institution like the London Spiritualist Alliance, which helps us so much in this way. (Applause.)

On the motion of Mr. Henry Collett, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the lecturer.

L. C.

SOUL AND BODY: THE CALL OF THE HARMONIOUS LIFE.

In witnessing the failure of the soul when it disdains the body—its failure alone to preserve a pure religion of life unsupported by mind and body, one asks if the old feud between soul and body could be made up: is that it? Had the Greeks paid greater homage to the soul—it is so exigent, the soul—might they not still be the leading race? Has not the soul been a little selfish these past two thousand years—one hesitates to say it: but has it not? Must the soul put itself into everything that the mind conceives and the body performs—lose itself to find itself—the soul above, but permeating and making divinely beautiful the whole man—is that the message of the triangle?

—From "Life Symbols as Related to Sex Symbolism."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

SIR,—The very interesting review by Mrs. Leaning, in your issue of 9th inst. of "Modern Psychism," by Mr. Baseden Butt, raises one or two points which might be worth discussion.

The relation which undoubtedly exists between Spiritualism and Theosophy seems to me to be particularly important—all the more so, in fact, because it is so frequently overlooked or disputed; always remembering, however, that Theosophy is an adaptation of the ancient wisdom of India and Egypt to modern needs, and not, as it was defined by a witness in the Law Courts recently, "a religion invented by Mrs. Besant." Spiritualistic philosophy tends almost inevitably in the direction of Theosophy; first, through its denial of the dogmatic and exclusive doctrines of orthodox religion, and secondly, by the frequent introduction of the idea of reincarnation. As most readers of LIGHT will already be aware, one of the earliest Western teachers of reincarnation was the French spiritist, Allan Kardec, and in one or two places he even drops hints which seem to suggest the Eastern doctrine of Karma. And within the past few years reincarnation has appeared in the Glastonbury scripts received by Mr. Bligh Bond, to say nothing of many other cases of automatic writing and trance-utterance on the subject in circles where there was no previous acquaintance with, or belief in, the doctrine.

Moreover, even members of the Society for Psychical Research have sometimes shown in their writings strong Theosophical tendencies as a result of Spiritualistic investigation; and columns of your journal could be filled with quotations on this point from the writings of William James, Frederic Myers, Dr. Schiller, and Mr. Lowes Dickenson. At the same time, there is frequently considerable estrangement between Spiritualists and Theosophists, and this is due very largely to the unwarranted and bitterly hostile attacks made upon Spiritualism by Madame Blavatsky. There is even a danger of Spiritualists, Theosophists, and psychical researchers falling into mutually exclusive or actively hostile camps—a most undesirable possibility. This, it seems to me, is where Mr. Butt's book is particularly valuable. As I understand it, it is an attempt to bridge the gulf between Spiritualism and Theosophy by showing where they have ideas in common, and, by the creation of a better mutual understanding between the two movements.—Yours, etc.,

ISABEL KINGSLEY.

14, Belsize Avenue, N.W.3.

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF KATE FOX.

MR. F. W. PERCIVAL'S RECOLLECTIONS.

SIR,—In LIGHT of the 9th inst. you published an admirable paper by Dr. Lamond in which he tells the story of the Fox sisters and furnishes many interesting details which will be new to most of your readers. I well remember the enthusiastic welcome which was accorded to Kate Fox when she came to London in 1871, and I had many opportunities of meeting her in private houses through the kindness of my friend Benjamin Coleman, who went out to America for the express purpose of investigating psychic phenomena there and making the acquaintance of the Fox family.

Kate Fox never gave séances as a professional medium; all the expenses of her visit to England were paid by Mr. Charles Livermore, a wealthy American, who had been able to communicate with his wife after her death by means of Kate Fox's mediumship.

My séances with her in London were quite informal, and no one who heard the astonishing raps which were produced in her presence could ever forget them. On several occasions in a large private drawing-room I held the door open so that I could see both sides of it while Kate Fox was sitting in an armchair at the other end of the room in broad daylight, and at my request loud raps came first on one side of the door and then on the other. Raps also came on various parts of the ceiling and on different parts of furniture which were named by me.

Finally, in order to test the intelligence of the operator, I devised some very simple arithmetical problems which were promptly and correctly answered by raps. I have had séances with Stainton Moses and many other mediums at which there were very loud raps, but I never heard them so far from the medium as they were when Kate Fox was present.—Yours, etc.,

F. W. PERCIVAL.

1, Chesham Street, S.W.1.
May 9th, 1925.

THE FUTURE OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES.

SIR,—The Community Services fill a great need and are much appreciated. Especially appreciated is the leadership of Mr. Vale Owen.

The experiment has proved a great success and now—what are we going to do about it?

Voicing the opinion of a small group of subscribers in the congregation, I venture to suggest that our aim should be permanency. We should have a permanent place of worship and should endeavour to secure permanently both the future and the ministrations of Mr. Vale Owen, who has sacrificed so much for the cause of Spiritualism.

At present we are leasing a hall which, while we were lucky to get it for an experiment, is no more suitable or ideal for our services than would be any hall which is used between-times for other purposes. Any rental we may pay for such a place is money thrown away.

I would suggest that every effort be made by the Committee to secure, for a number of years, a house in a suitable neighbourhood, that this house be offered to Mr. Vale Owen either as a town residence for himself and his family, or for any other purpose he may desire, and that part of it be used regularly for our Sunday services.

What say your other readers?—Yours, etc.,

"A SUBSCRIBER."

THE EMPTY TOMB.

SIR,—The article by Sir William Barrett calling attention to the remarkable experience of Madame d'Espérance as reported by Miss Dallas is of profound interest as bearing upon "The Empty Tomb." I can well recall my difficulty with this subject; and that on one occasion it was well-nigh impossible for me to prepare my Easter sermon owing to the perplexity of mind I was in. That Christ came back and spake with His disciples there is no doubt, but what became of the physical body? The tomb was empty. The grave clothes were left in the tomb as if the body had dissolved away. (see John xx. 5, 7).

In reading Colonel Olcott's "Old Diary Leaves" I came on a passage in which he states that Eastern adepts can after death dematerialise their own bodies. If this is so, then we can understand that our Lord's body was dematerialised.

I would point out to Sir William Barrett that the experience of Madame d'Espérance does not quite solve the difficulty. That experience, if real, was certainly of an extraordinary character—almost beyond the acceptance of the most convinced Spiritualist. We read that the body of D. D. Home was on certain occasions perceptibly elongated. That surely was marvellous enough; but that the limbs of Madame d'Espérance should actually disappear—well, that takes one's breath away! *But the limbs came back.* It was only a temporary de-materialisation. True, months had to elapse before she recovered her normal health. The outward physical body of the Christ in the grave, according to the narratives given in the gospels, completely disappeared. What became of that outward physical body? This is a question that has troubled me for many years. I would be grateful to Sir William Barrett or to anyone who can throw further light on this problem.—Yours, etc.,

JOHN LAMOND, D.D.

WAS THIS TELEPATHY?

SIR,—The anniversary of the sinking of the "Titanic" prompts me to write of a strange experience which I had on the night when the ill-fated ship met her doom. I was at that time passing through a period of intense anxiety and was not sleeping well. Between two and three o'clock in the morning—if I remember correctly it was almost the exact time that the "Titanic" struck the iceberg—I awoke very suddenly with a feeling of terrible fear. As soon as I was fully conscious I realised that I was practically immersed in water and extremely cold. The bedding, my clothing, hands and face and hair were apparently dripping wet, and I could hear a confused murmur of sounds. Feeling unable to move, I called to my son who was sleeping in the next room, and he came into my room and turned on the light. I said to him that the water pipes in the house must have burst, as my bed was flooded. It was some time before I could understand that it was seemingly only a nightmare and before I could compose myself again to sleep.

Early in the morning the cries of "Extra!" from the newspaper carriers roused me, and my son came to tell me of the "Titanic" disaster.

I had no personal friends on the "Titanic." I had met Mr. William T. Stead once, many years before—I think in 1888 or 1889—possibly before his great interest in psychic matters began. This meeting was at a dinner at the home of Mr. P. P. Bliss, in Boston, Mass., at which I was accompanied by Mr. W. J. Mitchell.

Mr. Mitchell died in 1890. Did he try to warn me of the danger to the ship on which his friend lost his life, as I was warned of the fate of the "Arabic" more than three years later?—Yours, etc.,

A. L. SINCLAIR.

LIGHT,

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"LIGHT" proclaims a belief in the existence and life of the spirit apart from, and independent of, the material organism, and in the reality and value of intelligent intercourse between spirits embodied and spirits discarnate. Its columns are open to a full and free discussion, its only aim being, in the words of its motto, "Light! More Light." But the Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by correspondents or contributors.

AN INSPIRING MESSAGE.

SIR OLIVER LODGE ON ETHER AND REALITY.

Thousands—it may have been millions—of people "listened in" to the series of lectures delivered by Sir Oliver Lodge from the Broadcasting Station (2 LO) a short time ago, and many of these listeners will have an especial welcome for the present book, "Ether and Reality,"* for here they will find the material of his discourses set out in permanent form. And it goes without saying that to some of those who heard of the lectures but did not actually hear them the book will come as a boon.

Even those who are familiar with Sir Oliver Lodge's writings will be impressed by the remarkable clarity of language in which he unfolds a theme that might easily be made obscure and abstruse by one who did not link a profound knowledge of the matter with a power of lucid expression. Sir Oliver has a style like running water—a simplicity of phrasing which must either come as a gift or be won by much wrestling with difficulties.

Amongst the themes handled in the work are the various aspects and powers of the Ether; Electricity; Magnetism and Electro-magnetism; Matter (as one of the forms of Ether energy); Life and Mind and their use of the Ether; and the book concludes with an epilogue, "The Ultimate Psychological Reality," which might stand in Science beside the finest Epilogues of dramatic poetry. Indeed in the great final Synthesis, towards which we are working with so much travail to-day, the Science of Poetry and the Poetry of Science will in the end be gloriously revealed.

Sir Oliver, in his Epilogue, describes the Ether as "a link between the worlds, a consummate substance of over-powering grandeur." "By a kind of instinct one feels it to be the home of spiritual existence, the realm of the awe-inspiring and the supernal." Yet, as the great Scientist points out, the Ether is a physical thing, it is not a psychical entity; it possesses definite physical properties. "It is not Matter . . . but it is the vehicle of both Matter and Spirit."

Here is an inspiring passage:—

Speculatively and intuitively we feel to be more in direct touch with the Ether than with Matter. How we can act on Matter is a mystery. How we

have constructed and how we move our bodies we do not know. We are apt to identify ourselves with our bodies. But there is evidence which shows that we are really independent, that we continue in existence, and can leave our bodies behind. Matter is not part of our real being; not of our essential nature; it is but an instrument that we use for a time and then discard. Probably we do not act directly upon Matter at all. Our will, our mind, our psychic life, probably act directly upon the Ether, and only through it, indirectly, on Matter.

The book finishes on a high note:—

[The Ether] is the primary instrument of Mind, the vehicle of Soul, the habitation of Spirit. Truly it may be called the living garment of God.

To us the book comes with a message even more eloquent than that in which it is conveyed. It is rich in the suggestion that the path of Humanity is along the great highway of Nature. Her splendours unfold and eclipse the brightest luminaries of all the other pathways, including even the psychic one. The lesser lights are at last quenched in the greater one, as the light of stars fades in the sun. All the paths tend at last to that great Trunk Road. The "supernormal" must tend at last to the Normal, the "preternatural" to the Natural. And Science equally with Religion can point the way.

THE IRWIN APPEAL CASE.

The appeal to the Divisional Court over this fortune-telling case has ended in failure. It was at the best a forlorn hope. The result was almost a foregone conclusion, for there was little or nothing in the case of a sufficiently distinctive character to warrant any expectation of victory. However, these desperate enterprises occasionally succeed.

Meanwhile we fear there is a good deal of canting sentiment over these cases. There is the cant of those who talk as though fortune-telling was a legitimate part of spirit communion or spirit communication. Then there is the cant of those who affect to believe that fortune-telling is something diabolical and blasphemous.

Let us clear our minds of cant in these matters. Fortune-telling is not nefarious, or we should not find palmists at church bazaars and other decorous assemblies. Neither is it necessarily spiritual or spiritualistic. At present the law confines its attacks to the matter of fortune-telling as a technical offence, that is to say, prediction of the future, which may range from foreseeing a great spiritual advance in the career of the consultant to the forecasting of his or her marriage to a dark man with a title or a golden-haired lady with a vast fortune (as the case may be). They are all fortune-telling, apparently, and that is the absurdity of the business. When predictions of the latter kind are given to married policemen and their wives the Law may well be excused for doubting the reality of clairvoyance.

Spiritualism can live without fortune-telling, although apparently some mediums cannot. The blame is not theirs. It is the fault of the community which should protect the possessors of spiritual gifts, and ensure them a livelihood beyond reach of those temptations which beset the sensitives on every hand in their struggle for existence. It is a hard world for poets, artists—and mediums.

COMMENDATIONS OF "LIGHT."

I have been a regular subscriber to LIGHT for a good many years. As a one-time Editor myself, I appreciate the excellence of the matter you provide for your readers with such unflinching regularity.—M. HOLMES.

The issue of LIGHT for May 9th strikes me as an extraordinarily perfect one, treating of a great many aspects of Spiritualism and showing the critical and scientific attitude, which the average sceptic does not expect to see connected with Spiritualism.—K. J. KABRAJ.

* Hodder & Stoughton, 3s. 6d.

SIDELIGHTS.

Mr. E. W. Oaten, in his able editorial in "The Two Worlds" of the 15th inst., refers to one of the cardinal facts in the history of Modern Spiritualism, when he says:—

It must never be forgotten that the spirit people did not come to us because we asked for them.

After alluding to the way in which some people treat other world visitants—"as botanical specimens or newly discovered chemicals"—Mr. Oaten adds:—

We are all in favour of careful and cautious enquiry, but we have often been surprised that the spirit people persist in their efforts to convince us of their identity, in face of the far from human treatment which many people give them.

From a special article in the "Yorkshire Evening Argus" (8th inst.), we take the following:—

Obliging spirits hovering above Keighley whisper profitable counsel to distraught business men, and write Latin prescriptions for the benefit of the sick and infirm.

It seems that business men very often approach Mr. W. T. Thistlethwaite, Secretary of the National Spiritualist Church, Keighley.

"I know of one individual in this district," said Mr. Thistlethwaite, when interviewed recently, "who resorted to a medium with my letter of recommendation, when on the verge of bankruptcy. Rather sceptical, he insisted upon sitting with his back to the medium, in order that she should not see his face.

"Yet she recited his business career from the date of his start, pointed out his mistakes, and told him how to proceed.

"The advice was taken—and now the man in question—a building contractor—is getting on very nicely indeed."

And what of the Latin prescriptions?

"These," declares Mr. Thistlethwaite, "are indited from time to time from the dictation of a Keighley lady, who was never taught a word of the ancient tongue.

"Neither has she received any instruction in medicine, but her diagnosis and prescriptions are claimed to be remarkably accurate.

"Hundreds of sick people come to consult her annually. When considering a case, this mystic medicine woman falls into a kind of trance—and then words issue from her mouth concerning the nature of the complaint. If necessary, she then dictates to her sister a Latin prescription which, state Keighley Spiritualists, usually proves remarkably accurate."

Several newspapers give long reports of Mr. J. M. Hickson's healing mission at Bolsover Parish Church, Derbyshire. From the "Nottingham Journal and Express" (12th inst.) we take a small excerpt:—

His [Mr. Hickson's] contention was that the mission of healing formed part of the mission of the Church, and should be exercised.

Then following his address, the patients approached the altar rail and, kneeling, received the imposition of hands from the missioner, whilst the Vicar of Bolsover (the Rev. J. M. Paget) followed with a special prayer.

There were nearly half a dozen men and women totally incapacitated, who were brought into church in bath chairs, spinal carriages, and the like, whilst many injured miners, hobbling on sticks and crutches, were to be seen amongst the throng.

The cases included a blind man, a one-legged man, at least two cases of "shaking" paralysis, several deaf people, and most pitiful of all, sickly and crippled children who were carried in their parents' arms.

There were no instantaneous cures, but it is notable that one lady who had been bedridden for three years, and practically unable to turn, was afterwards able to move her hands and arms without difficulty or pain, and in the Church Hall after the service was carrying on an animated conversation with church workers and members of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade.

In a short centenary article in the "Evening Standard" on Huxley, by Edward Shanks, the author says:—Though it was in reason's name he strove, yet he had about him something of the coldness and remoteness from ordinary humanity of the fanatic, as when he said: "If some great Power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being turned into a sort of clock and wound up every morning before I got out of bed, I should instantly close with the offer." But he did strive for what he thought was right and what he thought was true; and in this effort he became one of the chief promoters of a tremendous revolution in thought.

In the "Evening News" account of Bishop Welldon's charge against society, lately delivered at Kingsway Hall, there is a short reference to Spiritualism:—

Spiritualism, Dr. Welldon said, was not the enemy of the Christian faith. The enemy was materialism.

That the passionate desire for communication with the dead had persuaded men and women of high intellectual character to accept ill-accredited stories of "messages" was unhappily true.

But this experience, while a reason for the utmost caution was not in itself a reason for pronouncing all Spiritualism to be a chimera, or all the phenomena of Spiritualism to be absurdities.

As examples of the psychic demonstrations given by the Indian Seeress, Princess Wahletka, at a hotel in Edinburgh, we quote from the "Edinburgh Evening Dispatch" (11th inst.):—

Many questions were asked, and all were apparently satisfactorily answered. No questions were spoken, all that was necessary was for persons to concentrate their thoughts on the query they required answering.

One inquirer was answered in a manner which caused laughter. "You are not really thinking about the first question. You are thinking of making money on a horse. You must think about one thing. You want to know who to bet on for the Derby. In reviewing the candidates for the race I see five letters, L, M, N, O, and P, and P and M and figure, predominate."

A man was told he was not really ill, that he needed relaxation, to take two months' rest, and he would be brought back to normal health.

Several people were told they were too shy to ask questions, but the answer to what they were thinking about was given.

In one case, Mr. Royal said to the "seeress," "Answer that lady's question," pointing to the rear of the room. Two women put up their hands, simultaneously, and although the Princess was blindfolded she immediately inquired "which one?"

The following excerpt is from the "Birmingham Post's" report (8th inst.) of the second lecture on "The Biological Aspect of Normal and Abnormal Psychology" to members of the medical profession at the University, Birmingham:—

Affirming the insoluble union of animal life with psychic phenomena, the lecturer remarked that three drops of absinthe essence transformed the ideas. Another ego replaced the whole nervous personality. Could one explain this in any other way than by chemical action? All the facts of general physiology seemed to establish with great force that every form of poisoning of the nervous system was a chemical phenomenon. It was necessary to admit, if poisons acted upon the psychic life, they did so by a chemical modification of the nervous cells which presided over psychic activity. Surely that was so. But could they go further and point out the chemical element of the nervous system on which the poison acted? The answer at present was "No."

From the "Birmingham Gazette and Express," under the heading, "Theories of Telepathy," we take the following, signed "S. P.":—

In every foolproof test by qualified investigators, telepathy has remained unproven. It exists, however, in Kentish Glory and other moths, and is said to be used immediately by Central American Indians for broadcasting news of war, fire, flood, etc., over vast regions in one night.

The moth's secret lies in the power of the female, when disturbed, to send a message through space with the "velocity of light" to the male, a distance of 100 miles or so. He likewise buzzes round and, if free, flies straight to her at 50 miles per hour.

The native's *modus operandi* is as follows: Open wickerwork half-round drums, filled with bits of hide and bark, which harbour the insects, are fitted with skin covers, and spaced in camps 50 miles apart. At midnight, "A" gives his drum a bang at intervals, according to a pre-arranged code. This excites the moths, and results in the females sending out an S.O.S. at each beat. The males in "B" receive the message, which is deciphered by the listener there. He sends it on to "C," and so on, in stages across America. African natives probably use a similar method.

W. B. P.

CRITICS OF THE CHRIST—ANSWERED BY SPIRITUALISM.

THE ASCENSION.

By I. TOYE WARNER-STAPLES, F.R.A.S.

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As might be expected, the same critics who reject entirely, or "explain" away as visionary, the phenomena of the Resurrection, also discredit the Ascension. Thus the Rationalist Paulus says that the revived Jesus taught the disciples occasionally during the forty days after the crucifixion, and then feeling His end approaching He went to Jerusalem, and on the Mount of Olives in the early sunlight He blessed His followers and moved up the hill whilst a cloud interposed itself and hid Him from them. Then the two men previously seen at the Transfiguration stood before the disciples and told them "to be up and doing"—they were secret adherents of Jesus in Jerusalem. "Where Jesus died they never knew, so they came to describe His departure as an ascension." It is extraordinary that it never seems to strike critics of this type that the men who wrote the records, and others who acted in the events narrated, must have had a *little* common sense and honesty. Why should we assume they were all credulous fools? And those who expected His early return to earth would surely have found Him had He been visible after this dramatic parting!

It is the overwhelming egotism and credulity of such critics that first strikes the attention of the unbiassed reader.

Yet even Paulus was convinced at the last, for on his death-bed he said whilst dying, "There is another world"—so he evidently saw something which caused him to make this remark. His father also believed that he was in communication with the mother of Paulus, after her death, and the son had to pretend to believe the same.

Bahrdt and Venturini thought that during the forty days the Christ lived with the Essene Brotherhood, after having been revived from His supposed death; and that He died naturally some time after His appearance to St. Paul on the Damascus road! Other critics have copied these views, but they are very feeble and poor arguments, in the light we now have.

Hase—1800-1890—tells us that the Ascension is merely a mythical version of a departure to the Father; whilst Schleiermacher says "Something happened, but what was seen was incomplete, and has been conjecturally supplemented." In other words, invented, by the authors of the Gospels! Strauss believed the Ascension to be a self-evident myth!

Dr. Ellis Powell, who made a special study of psychic references in the New Testament, tells us ("Psychic Research in the New Testament") that the Greek word used in the account of the Ascension means a mist or vapour, and that the Latin term "nebula" comes from the same word, so that the "cloud" was not an atmospheric one at all, but rather a "screen for the process of dematerialising the materialised body" of the Christ.

There must be great difficulty in striving to reconcile the orthodox idea of a physical body disappearing into a real cloud, with the facts of modern science! But for the student of psychic science these contradictions do not occur at all, and the Ascension is credible and a natural phenomenon. St. Mark describes the Ascension thus: "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God." St. Luke (xxiv. 51) says, "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven." (In the margin of the Revised Version is a note stating that some ancient authorities omit this last sentence entirely.)

St. Luke gives a fuller account in Acts i. 9-11: "As they were looking he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."

It is noticeable that only two of the four evangelists even mention the Ascension of the Christ, whereas all mention and lay great stress on His Resurrection. Of these two, neither was an apostle. St. Mark is supposed to have obtained his information from St. Peter; and St. Luke himself tells us that he collected from a variety of sources and that there were many accounts of the Christ's life extant when he wrote his gospel and the Acts. The Ascension was a distinct stage in the after-crucifixion manifestations of the Christ. Until then He had frequently

materialised and allowed the disciples to have evidence of His identity with the Master they had known and loved during his earthly ministry. But *after* the Ascension, so far as we know, He materialised no more—that is, He was not touched or handled by any of the disciples; He did not assume a temporary body of flesh again.

Nevertheless He appeared in His glorious etheric or spiritual body on many later occasions, notably to St. Paul on the Damascus road; to the same apostle whilst he was praying in the Temple; also on the night following his trial before the priest when we are told "the Lord stood by him and said, He of good cheer—thou must bear witness also at Rome." (Acts xxiii.) And again in Acts xvi. 7, as well as on other occasions. St. Stephen saw the Christ in glory, just before he was stoned to death.

St. Luke tells us that the "men in white apparel" said that even as the Christ disappeared, so would He again re-appear. To-day we should explain this account of the Ascension somewhat differently from the orthodox manner of a generation ago.

We should say that after the death of His mortal body the Christ manifested in His psychic body, and on many occasions for a brief time materialised a temporary material form; after about forty days He did not again materialise, but simply opened His disciples' eyes, or developed their psychic faculties, that they might see His etheric body clairvoyantly, even as He promised them—"the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me—I will love him and manifest myself unto him." (John xiv. 19-22.) That is, the Christ would show Himself only to His disciples. In the Gospel attributed popularly to St. John the Christ makes frequent references to His after-death appearances: "I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice," etc.

Before the Ascension He came into material conditions in a material body, whereas *after* that event He manifested Himself no less truly but in a different manner. Previously He as it were came down to their slower rate of vibration that He might be touched and seen by ordinary human faculties and senses, whilst subsequently He quickened their vibrations so that they could behold spiritual things—could ascend to His state of consciousness for brief periods.

If heaven be more a state of perception than a place, then we may say that we ascend with the Christ even during this life, during moments of extreme spiritual exaltation or supreme self-sacrifice and love. We can be in hell or in heaven whilst yet in the flesh, just as we are spirits here and now and have immortal life as a present possession.

St. Paul takes little notice of the Ascension—it was, and is, the Resurrection that is the vital fact. When once the continuity of life was established it mattered little that we should know so exactly where that life should be lived. Naturally the Christ, being already perfect, had no need to linger on the lower stages of Paradise—where He told the thief on the cross they would both be that same day. He was ready and fit to pass on to greater glory. The brief period of forty days which He spent in earth conditions was used to comfort and help His disciples and to prove the reality of His conquest over death: "I am not yet ascended unto your Father and My Father," He told Mary on the resurrection morning.

It is well that St. Paul and others saw Him again afterwards, for to many this ascension would have seemed a final parting—whereas the case was quite the reverse, for the psychic body of the Christ could get into quicker and closer touch with His disciples than could ever be possible in the physical form.

After the Ascension, the Christ became an inhabitant of another dimension in space, and therefore could transcend our present known laws of time, space, and environment. It was not necessary to go to any special place to be in communication with Him, for He could always be reached telepathically by the fervent prayers of His followers. As He had said, "It is expedient for you that I go"; for as a surviving immortal and free spirit He was not fettered and limited—as even He was limited by the shackles of the material body. As a parting promise He had said: "Lo, I am with you *always*—where two or three are gathered together there am I in the midst."

The records show that so long as a living faith and love prevailed He was seen by many who had the faculty of clairvoyance or who in moments of extreme ecstasy became clairvoyant. And when our own psychic gifts are again cultivated—as was commanded by St. Paul—is it too much to hope that under special conditions we shall again be able to have the open vision of the Master? *Will this be literally and in truth the Second Coming?*

Even as He ascended, that is, passed to a higher state of existence, so shall we in due time ascend when we are sufficiently purified to bear the glory of that place which He has "gone to prepare" for us. Though we shall all survive death it may be a very long while before we "ascend into heaven," there are many intermediate states to be passed through, each exactly fitted to our state of advancement and spirituality. We shall not be brought into overpowering light until we are able to bear it.

The Ascension probably took place at night after Christ had given them His final instructions. After supper He "led them out" to Bethany, and in the quiet night bid them farewell.

CONVERSAZIONE AT CAXTON HALL.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

"THE AWAKENING"—A PSYCHIC EPISODE.

Sardou, the famous French dramatist, said many years ago that all his plays were given to him from the spirit world. We had a reminder last Monday that this source is still open.

A very successful Conversazione organised by the W. T. Stead Borderland Library was held on that night at Caxton Hall, Westminster, in the presence of a large and enthusiastic gathering. In an excellent programme interest centred in the production of a short play entitled "The Awakening," communicated from the Other Side by Geoffrey Knight.

It was a poignant, arresting little sketch depicting the "awakening" on the Other Side of a corporal and three privates who passed out in the war, and the audience, the majority of whom were Spiritualists, were able to understand and appreciate it to the full.

The Prologue, impersonated with dignity and effect by Miss Estelle Stead, proclaimed, "In this Episode we are but portraying the work carried on in the Borderland from day to day." And the Epilogue, sustained by the same artist, spoke of the efforts of many on both sides of the veil to break down the barriers, and to them the message was, "Go forward with courage—carry on."

As in so many cases encountered at Rescue Circles, the Tommies scorned the suggestion that they were "dead," and when the truth was at last brought home to them they were terrified and distressed. Those interested will find similar cases related in Admiral Osborne Moore's "Glimpses of the Next State" (p. 511 *et seq.*) in the chapter entitled "Waking the so-called Dead," and also in Dr. Wickland's important book, "Thirty Years Among the Dead."

Miss Stead, in the course of a few remarks after the play, said it was her father's express wish that she should produce a psychic play or episode, and she related how "The Awakening" came to her.

Mrs. de Crespigny voiced the appreciation of all present. She realised the significance of the play, and had always felt the importance of making people understand something of the existing conditions before they passed to the Other Side.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle hoped that the play might reach a wider public audience. It could be enlarged with advantage to show how the newcomers in the Beyond were made to see that there was work for them to do in that other world. (Applause.)

Earlier in the evening a splendid programme of high-class music, songs and recitations was given and highly appreciated. The artists were Mme. Corelli Green, Miss Constance Dreyer, Miss Estelle Stead, Miss Bertha Woolcote, Mr. Alexis Kirilloff, Mr. Granville Britton, and Mr. Hugh Clayton.

The hostesses for the evening were Mrs. Champion de Crespigny, Mrs. Kelway Bamber, Mrs. A. A. Vlasto, and Miss Estelle Stead.

L. C.

"THE MESSAGE OF NORTHCLIFFE."

In an address with the above title, Miss Louise Owen spoke to a large meeting in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, on Saturday evening, May 16th. There was frequent applause, and the speaker had a very sympathetic audience. The Rev. G. Vale Owen presided.

With a woman's privilege of discursiveness, Miss Owen ranged over a wide field, discussing, among other things, the grounds she had for believing that she was in touch with Lord Northcliffe, his messages, the legal treatment of mediums, Mrs. Deane's spirit photographs, William Archer's *post-mortem* remorse, and the refusal by some London newspapers of the advertisement of that meeting.

Lord Northcliffe's message of hope to the world was stated to be that in future people were going to have a chance of living decent lives in comfortable homes. Miss Owen said that a series of Northcliffe communications received by Miss Lilian Walbrook were to be published first in America. She also referred to other messages from the same source which would appear in due course.

L. C.

Mrs. JAMRACH, on behalf of the Little Ilford Christian Spiritualist Distress Fund, wishes to acknowledge with thanks parcels of clothing from Mrs. Ovenden (Cardiff) and Miss Ruth Goldsmith (Sutton).

Mr. BUGH BOND has received the registered parcel of scripts from "Sister Andrew," and desires to say that these appear to promise some matter of interest, which he could better explain on receipt of an address.

ARTS AND CRAFTS.—An exhibition of Arts and Crafts in connection with the International Fellowship will be held on May 30th, 31st and June 1st in the Marylebone Hall of the Hotel Great Central, Marylebone Road. On Saturday, 30th inst., at 6.15 p.m., an address will be delivered by Dr. J. H. Cousins (of Adyar, Madras, India).

The decease of Lord Leverhulme recalls to mind the story which he told of himself many years ago when he was Sir William Lever. He and Lady Lever were accustomed to give the children of Port Sunlight little open-air festivals in which every provision was made for the children's games. The mother of two of the children had taught them to pray that Sir William and Lady Lever might go to heaven, but after a time she noticed that they omitted this part of the petition in their nightly prayers, and she inquired the reason. The reply was, "We have been thinking it over, and we have decided to leave it out because if Sir William and Lady Lever go to heaven who is to give us our treats?"

At the hearing of the Irwin Appeal Case, Lord Hewart told an amusing story of what happened to two members of the Bar who visited an alleged medium. We quote from the "Daily Sketch":—

These men, said Lord Hewart, thought they would like to speak to a famous cardinal. After a long delay there appeared on a small stage, arranged somewhat like a cardinal, the man they had seen on entering the house. He uttered one word: "Benedictine!" (Laughter.)

Putting aside the question as to how a small stage can be arranged like a cardinal, I may say that a similar story is told much more amusingly by Lady Grey of Fallodon in the book "Survival," edited by Sir James Marchant, issued some time ago. I have no doubt there are many variants of it, but the story has not been scientifically attested on proper psychical research lines, as all these stories should be, for what is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander.

"Punch" lately has had at least two jokes which should have a special interest for us. There is a picture of the vicar's daughter talking to an old sailor. She is asking him what he thought of a lecture on the Atom on the previous night, and he replies gruffly, "Never heard such a parcel of lies in my born days." There is another picture in which a famous clairvoyant, who can enter a room blindfolded and find any hidden object, is depicted as looking vainly for his lost golf ball!

The question of lucky and unlucky numbers with which I was dealing lately has been taken up by the "Star," which deals particularly with the number "13" and quite a long list is given of the cases in which 13 is shunned as a maleficent number. I am glad to notice, however, a recognition of the fact that 13 is not always unlucky; it may be very lucky indeed, if one is to attach any importance at all to the notion of luck and ill-luck in numbers.

The "Star," for example, gives the case of a woman player in a Yorkshire whist drive who had 13 letters in her name, lived at No. 13, sat at No. 13 table for the last 13 hands, at her 13th drive won the 13th prize, which was a sitting of 13 eggs! It sounds just a little bit "difficult," this story, as though the writer of the article were giving rein to his imagination, but the tale is at least appropriate.

A recent critic of Spiritualism (a Northumberland parson) remarks that it has its dangers to the inexperienced, "for we are playing with forces greater than we know." Dangers there are, of course. We can agree with the critic there. Only it is worth remembering that the same objection would apply to many other forms of investigation and discovery: electricity, chemistry, aviation, and the like—all of them representing "forces greater than we know." But we are not all of us "playing" with them. Those who set up to expound the subject without knowledge, are really the people who may be said to be "playing" with the matter. Those who know it do not play with it.

The same authority tells us that those (spirits) most likely to respond from "over there" are naturally those who most want to get back to earth. That is a refreshing variant on the foolish old objection that spirits are dragged back or "called up" to dance attendance on the living. If only our clerical critics could get it into their head that the "dead" are human beings living humanly in a perfectly natural world the elementary stages of which are closely contiguous to the earth, we should have less confusion and perplexity and less of that deadly seriousness which by imagining an after-death state of unknown horrors and mysteries prevents the healthy action of the sense of humour which acts also as a sense of proportion.

D. G.

MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

By M. L. CADELL.

During the last two years the writer has received occasional communications through board and traveller, giving advice regarding illness. They have been of practical help, and the circumstances, which I relate below, seem to preclude subconscious knowledge. All was down at once. The confirmations of the diagnosis were also written down at the time. The communicator has always been the same, a son who has passed over. At the time of his death he had no medical knowledge, having been educated for the profession of a soldier. A doctor of wide experience and breadth of view to whom the writer told the facts given below, suggests that possibly a spirit can see into our bodies and so "sense" when anything is amiss with them, in a way we cannot at present understand.

I know that there are doctors who consult a non-professional medium when the diagnosis of a case baffles them. I quote some cases below.

1. A near relative, A., took erysipelas and was removed to a hospital for infectious diseases. A day or two after admission, the poison, which first attacked the face, was reported to have spread to the heart. A. was now said to be critically ill, and on our making enquiries at 2 p.m. through the 'phone the doctor was so gloomy that I thought he must be preparing A.'s wife and relations for his death. I felt quite despairing. At 6 p.m., as usual on Sunday, I took out the board and traveller and the following came through. First came a message of affection and then, "Make your mind easy. A. will presently improve and get well." "Are you sure of this?" I asked, and was answered, "We are able to tell when someone we love cannot recover. . . . A. is turning the corner to recovery. Fear he will be a good deal weakened by this turn. Many will help the recovery." A quite cheerful communication on another matter followed.

Next morning I went with A.'s wife to the hospital. She was in terrible anxiety, but I was able to help her greatly by my firm confidence that all would yet be well. The doctor and consultant met us and reported a tremendous fall in temperature between the hours of 1 a.m. and 4 to 5 a.m. The temperature had been over 104 and it fell during these hours to subnormal. Doctors are reticent, but there was no doubt that this tremendous change in the condition of the patient took them by surprise. They feared a collapse owing to the strain on the heart. For three days neither of the doctors would give hope of recovery, as the heart was weakened and A. was not a young man, but as a matter of fact he got perfectly well, and the illness has left no bad effects.

The interesting point is that the "turn to recovery" and the weakening effects of this "turn" were foretold about six hours before they took place.

I may add that I had no previous experience of a case of erysipelas, though I knew there was a disease of that name.

2. One of my children was threatened with appendicitis, although the attacks of pain were not sufficiently severe to necessitate an immediate operation. Medicines were prescribed which seemed to have a good effect, and we decided to take her with us on a previously arranged trip to Switzerland. We hoped all would go well. I asked our doctor if diet mattered; he said it did not, but that it was important she should drink water in abundance.

In Switzerland, unfortunately, the attacks of pain came more frequently, and we became very anxious.

One evening I got what follows through the board: "B. should diet, avoiding heavy foods; take little meat, eat fruit which has been stewed—no acid fruits, but much soup, and lots of milk. Be careful she does not do too much. Fatigue gives undue strain."

We followed this advice, and were able to enjoy our holidays, though there were still occasional slight pains. In passing through London on our way home, I took B. to see a specialist. He diagnosed trouble with the appendix, and advised an operation when convenient. As I was leaving, I asked: "What about diet?" His reply was concise: "Avoid heavy foods and sour fruits."

Exactly what I had been told six weeks earlier! Probably this advice, which we had acted upon, gave us the chance of carrying out our plans and benefiting by the holiday.

I had often heard of the danger of seeds and stones, but the advice given was absolutely novel to me.

3. At a sitting with a professional medium who knows nothing about my family circumstances, in the midst of other matter, I got what follows:—

"A young lady at home. Ask her if she feels her eyes? 'Sunshine' [the medium's guide] has been taken to see her."

I thought "Sunshine" was using her imagination and that this was not a genuine message from my son, but on asking the "young lady at home" if there was any truth

in this, she owned that she had headaches, especially after motoring, reading or painting. We consulted a doctor and he attributed the headaches to eye-strain, and advised the wearing of a Crookes lens. These spectacles have, happily, banished the headaches.

The eyes did not look at all weak, and I had no knowledge of the headaches. The writer considers that the spirit help given was of the greatest use.

4. A brother of the communicator, a boy of 12, had an attack of measles. It was a perfectly normal case, the temperature not unduly high, and the boy was so much better that the doctor said he might get up on the following day, and that the nurse, who came at night, was no longer required.

I went to a friend's house to sit with her for "book-tests," using the board and traveller. I had left my boy in high spirits, and my mind was quite free from anxiety on his account.

But at once, instead of the expected "test," this came: "D trusts his mother will take good care of C. [the sick boy]. Be on your guard, or he will be liable to . . ." at this point we were interrupted. At the end of the sitting came: "great care of C."

On the following morning the nurse said that before she left she thought she ought to mention that she noticed the boy's pulse was "dropping every seventh beat," and that I had better mention this to the doctor.

He had not felt the pulse for a day or two and the illness, being so slight, the nurse left no written chart to be shown to him. The doctor, when he came, found the condition as stated, and ordered another week of complete rest in bed.

This was proof that the "great care" insisted upon on the previous day was most necessary.

5. Some months after this, the same boy took influenza. The doctor reported that his throat was inflamed, but after the first day or two he was encouraged to take nourishing food, and he ate quite well. Still the temperature remained above normal, and I could see that when about ten days had gone by the doctor considered that as the throat was much better, the temperature should now be normal.

Sitting with a friend for "book tests" at her house, the following came in the middle of other matter:—

"Give C. nothing to eat just now. Get his tongue clean. Get into his mouth some rhubarb."

I did nothing about this, as the boy utterly refused to let me see his tongue: but on the doctor's next visit I made bold to ask if he would examine his tongue. To his evident surprise, he found the tongue white and spotted. He ordered practically a starvation diet and doses of rhubarb and soda, and very soon the boy got well.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

"OUR MANY LIVES, HERE AND ELSEWHERE."—By J. H. M. (C. W. Daniel Company. 6d. net.)

Another little work suggesting Re-incarnation, and somewhat half-heartedly recommending the theory for acceptance. The author is to be commended for his insistence upon the spiritual law that "all things work together for good." As to whether the theory of re-incarnation sustains that law is a moot point. At any rate, the reader of this booklet will find much to interest him, if it does not convince him of anything more than the ability of the writer to place abstruse theories before the public in a comparatively simple manner.

Spiritualists will read with appreciation and agreement the concluding paragraph of this book:—

But whether we live again as mortals on Earth, or remain in spirit spheres once we have left our Earth body, does not affect the most important point—that we live again and for ever, and that in each "spell" of life, wherever it is lived, we prepare our own conditions for the next "spell."

"ASTROLOGY: THE LINK BETWEEN TWO WORLDS."—By S. Elizabeth Hall, M.A. (John M. Watkins, 1s. 6d.)

This is an able treatise dealing with the origin and significance of the lore of the stars. It approaches the subject from the historical side, and is especially concerned with the philosophical and mystical meanings of Astrology, for the author holds that "the Astrology that makes its chief purpose the foretelling of the future by means of the horoscope is not only placing the less before the greater, but is obscuring an important principle by the undue weight given to a particular application of it." That passage at once reveals the book as one for the deeper student who is concerned with larger issues than the forecasting of events. To such a reader the little work is one to be commended for its exposition of the doctrine of the divine nature of the stars and their relation to the essential soul of Man.

"NEW REVELATIONS IN ASTRONOMY AND GRAVITATION," by William Henry Parkes (J. Miles & Co., price 2/-), is a pamphlet likely to excite controversy in scientific circles. The writer makes several startling statements which may be correct but for which sufficient proof is lacking.

A CURE FOR WORRYING.

We take with acknowledgments the following paragraphs from the Manchester "Sunday Chronicle":—

Dr. Bernard Hollander, President of the Ethological Society, writing in "The Practical Psychologist," suggests several ways of remedying the "blues."

"Worrying people," he says, "may be reminded of the fact that whistling to keep up courage is no mere figure of speech. Moreover, a hearty laugh would be good for them.

"People who are worrying, feeling cross, fretful, or out of sorts in any way, should go to the looking-glass," he adds, "stand before it, and take a long, searching look at themselves, and see if they would want always to present just such a face for everybody to look at! Let them get their face to smile, even if their heart does persist in feeling sad, and after a while their heart will smile too.

"Worry," declares Dr. Hollander, "is a process of borrowing trouble from the future to augment our present sorrows. People addicted to worrying should remember that their troubles are caused, not so much by events as such, as by what they think of them.

"The idea that one must have fine clothes, diamonds, or automobiles, in order to maintain one's place in society, has wrought the ruin and brought about the downfall of many otherwise happy families."

Dr. Hollander maintains that worrying people are obsessed by doubt, in which case they cannot come to a decision; or, if able to come to a decision, they are unable to carry it into action.

"The simplest rule to be adopted in combating doubt, this conscienceless thief of our energies," he says, "is found in the resolute decision to decide—to decide, even with the risk of error, the risk of starting upon the wrong road. A touch of recklessness is to be preferred to dashing down the incline of least resistance.

"Another fact that is not sufficiently realised is that, if the mind is given wholesome food, it will develop and grow strong; if it is given unhealthy food, it will grow morbid and sickly; if it is given no food, it will feed on itself and wear itself out."

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED.

"Sermons in Silence." By Jamsetji Dadabhoy Shroff. D. B. Taraporewalla, Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay (Rs. 2).

"Yoga: A Study of the Mystical Philosophy of the Brahmins and Buddhists." By J. P. C. Fuller. William Rider and Son, Ltd. (6/- net).

"The Faculty of Communion." By the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, D.B.E. Longmans, 4/6 (net).

"Scientific Palmistry." By Noel Jaquin. Cecil Palmer, 7/6 (net).

"Ether and Reality: The Many Functions of the Ether and Space." By Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S. Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd. (3s. 6d. net.)

"Astrology: The Link Between Two Worlds." By S. Elizabeth Hall, M.A. John M. Watkins. (1s. 6d. net.)

"Apologia Alchymiae." By R. W. Councell. John M. Watkins. (5s. net.)

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SUNDAY'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—May 24th, 11.15, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. T. W. Ella. Wednesday, May 27th, 8, Mrs. Brownjohn.

Croydon.—Harewood Hall, 96, High-street.—May 24th, 11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. R. Champion de Crespigny.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High-street, Peckham.—May 24th, 11, Service; 6.30, Mrs. de Beaurepaire. Wednesday, 7.30, at 55, Station-road.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—May 24th, 11, public circle; 6.30, Mrs. Bloodworth. Thursday, May 28th, 8, Mr. J. Gilchrist.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—May 24th, 7, Mrs. A. Boddington. Thursday, 8.15, Miss L. George.

Bowes Park.—Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (down side).—May 24th, 11, Mrs. Redfern; 7, Mr. Allen Wells.

St. John's Spiritualist Mission, Woodberry-grove, North Finchley (opposite Tram Depot).—May 24th, 7, Communion Service, Rev. G. Ward, May 28th, 8, Miss Fillimore.

Central.—144, High Holborn, W.C.1.—May 22nd, 7.30, Mrs. A. Patterson. May 24th, 7, Miss L. George.

St. Luke's Church of the Spiritual Evangel of Jesus the Christ, Queen's-road, Forest Hill, S.E.—Minister: Rev. J. W. Potter. May 24th, 6.30, Service, Holy Communion and Address. "Dr. Beale" Healing Service, May 27th, 7.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. ROSBAK (Denmark).—There is not, to our knowledge, any source from which you can obtain the pictures you require.

C. MACB. (Glasgow).—Thank you. A remarkable experience, and one to which we will refer. When you have the personal evidence there is no need to rely on authorities. But authorities are helpful in many cases.

"A SYMPATHISER."—These fine-spun distinctions are beyond us. Either there is a life after death for humanity, or there is not. The character, grade and quality of that life is another matter, of which we can have no clear idea, except that it must be human—and natural.

F. E. K.—We suppose of every movement it may be said that "it suffers less from its rogues than from its fools."

J. ARMSTRONG.—Thank you. You are quite correct in your reasoning, but we have mentioned the matter in LIGHT more than once.

MR. LEWIS SPENCE, whose "Problem of Atlantis" aroused so much fresh interest in the sunken continent, has written a striking book on the origins of the American civilisations. The book, under the title of "Atlantis in America," will be published by Messrs. Ernest Benn early in June.

"Every evolutionary process," said Democritus, as he watched Epaminondas trying to turn a young eel into a trout, "every evolutionary process," said he, "may be said to reach, at some point, its full glory before the decline begins." And at that instant the eel died.—From "The Daily Express."

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Madame Thornton, Clairvoyante, Psychometrist. Psychometry by post, from 2s. 6d. Definite answers to definite questions. Send birth date or small article. Highly recommended.—27, Borough Rd., North Shields.

Dover Spiritualists' Society. Good speakers wanted for Sunday Services, June 14th, and onwards.—Robt. W. Igglesden, Sec., 13, Salisbury Road, Dover

Medium and husband (Junior Civil Servant), urgently require loan of £150 for the purpose of obtaining a small residence. Persons who can assist are asked to communicate with W.E.W., c/o 53, Surrey Road, Reading.

Mme. Manya Rickard, natural and trance medium, having travelled over Europe, has settled in London, and still has some open dates for meetings. Open Circle 2s. 6d., Wed., at 4, Friday 1s. 6d., at 7. (Investigators). 2D, and many buses, trains pass the door.—Phone, Finchley 2410, Lydbrook House, Regents Park Rd., Church End, Finchley.

