

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.

The sights and the sounds of the spirit land
No stranger to us than the white sea-sand,
Than the dawn of the day or the eye of the moon,
Than the crowded street in the sunlit noon. . . .
—GEORGE MACDONALD.

THE SPIRIT BODY AND THE SUB-CONSCIOUS.

In his letter "A Plea for Clear Thinking," in LIGHT of the 25th ult., Mr. G. B. Mundy makes an interesting point. He suggests that the terms sub-conscious, super-conscious, subliminal and the like really cover the operations of the spiritual body and brain. To that extent, of course, these vague terms could be simplified, and indeed abolished. Through the operation of the spirit brain certain knowledge is impressed upon the physical brain. It is found to be accurate knowledge gained apparently by some super-normal process and at once we are told that it was obtained through the subconscious or subliminal or supraliminal faculties. That, of course, is the discreet and philosophical way, and apparently very necessary at that stage of the world's thinking when it is considered a mark of superstition to talk of spirits. We adopt the non-committal phrasing ourselves quite often, remembering that we have a subject which for most can only be approached by easy stages. It is now some thirty years ago since an advanced spirit communicator offered the same explanation as that put forward by Mr. Mundy. We do not expect to wait another thirty years to find it generally accepted.

* * * * *
A "TINGE OF MATERIALISM."

The Rev. B. G. Bourchier, in his recent sermon on Spiritualism, made the complaint that Spiritualism had a tinge of materialism. It is an objection we have heard several times, feeling that it did more credit to the idealism of those who urged it than to their sense of practical values. Surely unless it showed some affinity with material things Spiritualism would have made but little appeal to the mass of mankind. It would never have touched them. It would have been too much "in the air." It would have been like offering moral maxims to a starving man in place of the more material loaf of bread. Meantime we would sug-

gest to those who offer the objection, that the spiritual world is infinitely vast and varied and that nothing employed by Divine Intelligence as an end to human progress can be safely despised. "Man is one world and hath another to attend him," wrote George Herbert. But the world which immediately attends him is not the celestial world, but one most nearly related to his own state. That is in the reasonable economy of things. From mundane life to heavenly glories is more than a single step. Even the advanced spirits who come to earth must needs take on something of the earthly semblance and adapt themselves to earthly conditions. The "hither hereafter" may not be "all that we might expect." It will certainly be all that we actually deserve, until we have advanced sufficiently to deserve all the supernal delights to which we aspire.

* * * * *
THE VISIBLE SIGN.

We take the following extract from a letter which reached us recently. It came from an old and tried friend, a Scottish newspaper man and a member of one of the oldest Highland families. He had long followed with a kindly eye our activities in psychical research without feeling any conviction himself of the reality of the matter. And now he writes:—

I ought to tell you that after having remained unconvinced by men—and I think rightly—I made a pact with a friend whose name is very dear and sacred, that whichever died first should solve the great problem by appearing to the other. . . . My friend appeared to me in a room in the full light of afternoon; but no words passed between us. . . . In this supremely interesting matter only seeing can be believing.

Those excerpts are sufficient. Our old friend has been convinced in his own way, and a very granite obstinacy broken. Whether his experience was "evidential" in the official sense, or not, it has sufficed for him. He waited many years for the kind of proof he needed; now he has it and we are content.

TOWARDS THE HILLS.

A little rest in silence and content,
And dreamless as the slumber of the sea,
Would stay my soul or ere the light be spent
And time grows dark for me.

The broken dreams of men are all around
Scattered like roses in a rain of fire,
Shards of their hopes encumber all the ground
Whose hands have dropt the lyre.

Darkness above me in the clouded arch,
And here a cold and cheerless prospect chills,
Yet after rest let me not cease to march
Towards the purple hills.

—HERBERT PRICE (South Africa).

SPIRITUALISM AND THE SAINTS.

By E. W. DUXBURY.

In the annals of Spiritualism few stranger stories have been told than that contained in the following narrative and vouched for by competent ecclesiastics of the Roman Church. It is extracted from the Biography of "Sœur Thérèse of Lisieux," by the Catholic Editor, the Rev. T. N. Taylor. It should furnish somewhat of a *pièce de résistance* for the peculiar talents of the negative critic. Here there is no "professional medium" to serve as a peg on which to hang a charge of trickery. The private character of the letters detailing the occurrences and the searching investigation made by the ecclesiastical authorities render it difficult to believe in a "pious fraud." "Hallucination" might have proved a useful negative weapon for the critic, were it not for the fact that hallucination does not produce tangible bank-notes, which help to defray current expenses. It would be highly convenient if it did. The "devil theory" might have been resorted to, had not the distinguished Jesuit, who at first adopted it, eventually felt obliged to abandon it completely. It would be equally difficult to characterise the phenomena as "degrading." Here is the quoted narrative:—

The town of Gallipoli lies far down the map of Italy, just inside the "heel," and across from Otranto. Nearly three years ago the inmates of its little Carmel were in debt and utter starvation, at times substituting for their dinner a visit to the chapel. Several months previously the life of Sœur Thérèse had been publicly read in the Community, and now the Prioress decided to make a special appeal to the Blessed Trinity through the intercession of the "Little Flower of Jesus." The triduum ended on January 16th, 1910. On that day Sœur Thérèse kept her promise of "doing good upon earth" and of "coming down," by bringing in person 500 francs to the distressed Prioress. But this was only the beginning of a series of prodigies, destined to throw into relief a seemingly chance remark of the Little Flower to Mother Mary Carmela on that occasion: "My Way is a sure one."

The following letters from Gallipoli tell their own story. It must be premised that a most strict canonical investigation has been made of the facts here related, and that the distinguished Jesuit who presided over the first Tribunal, after having emphatically attributed the whole affair to diabolical intervention, was converted, by the overwhelming evidence, into an ardent apostle of Sister Teresa of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face.

FIRST VISIT: THE MESSAGE.

Letter from Mother Mary Carmela, Prioress of the Carmel of Gallipoli to Mother Agnes of Jesus, Prioress of the Carmel of Lisieux.

Carmel of Gallipoli.

February 25th, 1910.

Dear Reverend Mother,

I send you the account of the miracle wrought on our behalf. But a long document signed by the whole community, by a commission of priests, and by the Bishop himself, has been forwarded to Rome.

On the night of the 16th January (1910) I was

in great suffering, and was also worried about certain grave difficulties. Three o'clock had struck and, almost worn out, I raised myself somewhat in the bed in order to breathe more easily. Then I fell asleep and in a dream, it would seem to me, I felt a hand touch me, draw the bed-clothes about my face, and cover me up tenderly. I thought one of the Sisters had come in to perform this act of charity, and without opening my eyes I said to her: "Leave me, for I am all in perspiration, and this movement gives me too much air." Then a sweet voice, which I had never heard before, replied: "No. It is a good act that I am doing. Listen! The Good God makes use of the inhabitants of Heaven, as well as of those of earth, in order to assist His servants. Here are 500 francs, with which you will pay the debt of your community." Taking them from her hand, I answered that the debt amounted to only 300 francs. "Well," she replied, "the rest will be over and above. But as you may not keep this money in your cell, come with me." The night was bitterly cold. "How shall I rise," I thought, "all bathed in perspiration as I am?" The Heavenly Apparition, however, divined my thoughts, adding with a smile: "Bilocation will help us."

Suddenly I found myself outside my cell, in the company of a young Carmelite nun, whose veil and robes shone with a brightness from Paradise that served to light up our way. She led me downstairs to the turn-room or parlour, and made me open a wooden box wherein was enclosed the bill which had to be paid. There she deposited the 500 francs. I looked at her lovingly, and threw myself at her feet, crying out: "O my holy Mother! But she raised me up and caressing me affectionately, replied: "No, I am not our holy Mother (St. Teresa). I am the Servant of God, Sœur Thérèse of Lisieux. To-day, in Heaven and on earth, we keep the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus." Quivering with emotion, not knowing what to say, I cried out again, and the words came to my heart more than from my lips: "O my Mother!" But I could say no more. Then the angelic Sister, putting her hand on my veil as if to adjust it, gave me a sisterly embrace and slowly withdrew. "Wait!" I called to her, "you might mistake your way." "No, no," she answered with a heavenly smile, "My Way is sure, and I am not mistaken in following it."

I awoke, and in spite of my exhaustion I rose, went to choir, and in due course received Holy Communion. The Sisters noticed that something was wrong and wished to send for the doctor. In the sacristy the two sacristans insisted strongly on knowing what was the matter with me. They also desired that I should go to bed and have the doctor summoned. To prevent this, I explained that I was deeply moved by the impression of a dream, and in all simplicity I told them my story. Both of them urged me to examine the box. Finally, as they insisted, I did as they desired. I went to the parlour, opened the box, and . . . there I found in reality the miraculous sum of 500 francs!

The rest, dear Mother, I leave to your own imagination. Overwhelmed by such goodness, we are one and all praying that our great protectress, little Sœur Thérèse may be beatified.

Sister Mary Carmela of the Heart of Jesus.

(To be continued.)

ABSOLUTE PROOF.

By "GWENHWYFAR."

"He refuses to believe that the human brain is the most unreliable of instruments, and yet who among us has not been tricked time after time by deceptions of the eye, the ear, and memory? My explanation of psychic phenomena, namely that they are the products of a heated imagination, he leaves severely alone."

As I have not had the advantage of following all Sir Arthur Keith's argument, I merely quote these words as typical of a certain class of critic, whom I will call, for convenience, Mr. X. Mr. X. is very sceptical, but I can be sceptical too. He declares that psychic phenomena cannot be proved. I assent joyfully. But I maintain that physical phenomena cannot be proved either. And I do not find him very ready to accept my contention that all the events of every-day life are the products of a heated imagination.

How do I know that my dinner is not an hallucination? The human brain is so unreliable an instrument that the mere sense of hunger may be sufficient to conjure up the delusion of food. My eyes have often deceived me; why should not my sense of touch and taste do the same?

Mr. X. criticises a case of clairvoyance. A mother, grieved by the loss of her soldier son during the war, visits a medium, who describes the lad, his height, features, colouring, and even the little scar on his face resulting from an accident in childhood. She adds details of his uniform, and the time and nature of his service, and gives messages that seem to imply knowledge of his home life. And the mother goes away consoled, believing that she has been brought into actual contact with her boy. Mr. X. properly points out that a mixture of fraud, or hallucination on the part of the medium, combined with coincidence, will account for everything. Precisely so. But how do my friends know that I am myself, save by trusting to these senses that are so easily deceived, and the unreliable human brain that can neither observe correctly, nor draw accurate conclusions from what it observes? For all they can tell I may be a visual, auditory, and tactile hallucination. Or, on the other hand, I may be some shameless impostor, who, having murdered the original Gwenhwyfar, is now impersonating her. My height is not uncommon; neither is the colour of my hair or eyes; the little mark on my hand where I cut it years ago is easily explained away—many people cut themselves in childhood, and the similarity of position and size may be due to coincidence. My friends have never taken record of my finger-prints, nor even measured me after the Bertillon method. How can they tell that they are not being deceived? My knowledge of home matters—the Tichborne case has taught us not to rely too much upon that. A little thought-reading will fill up all the gaps, and Mr. X. will always find his task simplified if he admits the existence of telepathy.

In common life people do not argue thus. They take it that the points of recognition are *cumulative*; and that, while any one alone might be due to coincidence, all, together, cannot be. But why not apply this to the case of clairvoyance? I ask nothing more than that Spiritualism should be treated with the same common sense that applies to every-day human life. I protest against the extraordinary fastidiousness that is brought to bear upon it. Granted that our senses are unreliable, by what else are we to judge? We cannot afford to distrust them in common matters. The man who refused to eat till he knew that his food was not a sensory hallucination, would speedily starve to death; and the man who treated all his friends as impostors, till they could absolutely prove that they were not, would probably find his suspicion grow to mania that would land him in an asylum.

Personally I believe that much of the opposition to Spiritualism arises from a mixture of fear and dislike. Many of us are life-weary. We have been disillusioned so often, and found the process so painful; we have lost so many of the hopes with which we set out in life, that we cannot realise the possibility of finding them again elsewhere, and we do not wish to survive.

Others among us probably dread the thought of retribution. It is not pleasant to think that the faults that we have suffered to grow unchecked, will accompany us into another life, there to hinder our progress, and destroy our peace, until we learn to root them out. To a certain type of mind the thought of *responsibility* is terrible. It would be so difficult to lead a life of easy self-indulgence, if we believed that every action had abiding and enduring consequences which we must be prepared to meet.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S new story, "The Land of Mist," enters a new phase in the August issue of the "Strand Magazine," for now we have the description of a seance and an entertaining account of a discussion on Spiritualism amongst the *habitués* of a literary club. Some new characters are introduced, apparently drawn from life in a few instances, with that skill in word-portraiture for which the author is famous. The story "marches" vigorously, and promises dramatic developments as it proceeds.

SPIRITUAL LAW AND PHYSICAL DEFORMITY.

By R. H. SAUNDERS.

I rarely seek tests, though I often have them given me. An excellent one was conferred some time back. I had been reading Sir Frederick Treves' "Reminiscences." We all know he was a great surgeon, but in psychic matters he had much to learn, like many of our otherwise "great" men. This is shown in the chapter "In articulo mortis." To Sir Frederick the hereafter was an undiscovered country. "I hold," he says, "their (i.e., Spiritualists) conclusions are either incredible or impossible," although he admits these very words were, only a few years ago, applied to the marvels of X-rays and wireless. "They are hallucinations. Belief in the supernatural has a fascination for some minds, especially for minds of not too stable an order." The brilliant intellects of many countries which hold our tenets must bear these superficial strictures in patience.

There is one story in the "Reminiscences" called the "Elephant Man," probably the most gruesome in literature, but which reveals Sir Frederick Treves in a humane and beautiful light.

Some seventy years ago was born a human being with little resemblance to normal mankind. I must not give the details of this terrible monstrosity; suffice it to say that until Sir Frederick saw the man, then about twenty years of age, no one who saw him could refrain from exclaiming "How horrible!" He was being carried round the country by a showman who treated the poor wretch worse than a dog. Sir Frederick released him from this slavery, and found him sympathetic accommodation at the London Hospital, where he received every attention until he passed on.

Whilst reading of this dreadful freak of nature, I put the book down, and thought of the fundamental point of Spiritualism, survival of personality. We know the spirit body does not exhibit malformation, but the thought would cross my mind, "What a terrible thing if this soul has, for any purpose of identification, like we know materialised spirits at times show, to assume the human form!" The idea was disturbing, but it passed away, and I gave no further thought to the subject. I had an appointment the next morning with a direct voice medium, who, of course, had no idea what I had read the previous night—indeed, the incident was not even in my own mind then. A spirit who has on many occasions spoken to me manifested, and said, "I was with you last night." "Yes," I said, "where was I?" "Oh, at home," was the reply. "You were reading. Not the 'Evening News,' but a medical book—no, a book by a medical man." "Ah!" I said. "I know now. I was much disturbed, and I—" "I know all about it," interrupted the spirit, "and I wish to speak to you concerning the case you read. We have no difficulty in sensing your thoughts. You may take this as a test, for the medium knows nothing of what you read, nothing of what I am going to say. Let me tell you that spirit is perfect—being spirit it cannot be otherwise, and all disabilities, malformations and bodily or mental imperfections disappear after the passage has been made, and everything functions properly." "I quite appreciate that," I said, "but we know when spirits materialise, or when they impress their picture on a plate, they resume, for a time, their human form, and it was a dreadful thought that—" Again I was interrupted. "His malformation is not the only thing he can be recognised by here—there is the actual I—the spirit nature, and that poor fellow had a sweet and lovable nature which not even his twenty years of martyrdom soured. That nature blossomed out in all its beauty here, and his long agony is as nothing to the compensation obtained by his happiness in the spheres. Some time ago, I cannot say how long, for time, as you know it, does not exist here, I was called to assist in the passage of two souls, joined together in the physical body, in a manner you call the Siamese twins. Until I arrived I had no idea what was required of me, for I saw the cord had not been severed, and the two were lying side by side, not yet awakened." "Did you sever the cord?" I asked. "No, that is the duty of a Higher spirit who attended for that purpose. When this was done I knew it was my duty, as it is my happiness, to awaken the sleeping souls to consciousness this side, and comfort them—two separate and distinct entities, and they will progress as such. They knew nothing of this subject, like millions who cross here, and they have to be enlightened."

Here we have a passing thought, to which I had given no further attention, registered in the spheres, and the momentary disturbance it gave rise to cleared and explained. I had not sought the "test," but it was a strikingly effective one, and no hypothesis of "hallucination," to which Sir Frederick Treves, in his ignorance of these matters, attributed such incidents, will account for it.

The facility with which our very thoughts are read by spirits is another wonderful law, the key to which is not yet in our possession. I have often carried on a curious one-sided conversation at a direct voice sitting. I have framed my questions *mentally*, but the spirit manifesting at the time never has any difficulty in replying audibly.

AMERICAN MEDIUM IN LONDON.

REMARKABLE SLATE-WRITING EXPERIMENTS.

By HANNEN SWAFFER.

There is now staying in London a remarkable slate-writing medium, Mrs. Pruden, who, over seventy years of age, has been brought from Cincinnati, Ohio, by Mr. Roy Holmyard, an Englishman who has lived in America for thirty years. Mr. Holmyard, who has been a Spiritualist for seven years, is now the vice-president of a psychical research society in Cincinnati; he thought it his duty to bring the old lady to London while she was enjoying good health.

I sat with her and Lord Dewar last week, when it was proved to me that she possesses extraordinary powers. She has also sat with Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle, and Dennis Bradley, while, during the next few days, she will sit with all sorts of distinguished people under a pledge of secrecy. Her visit is being planned to convince "wobblers."

I must say of her that if she were the only medium with whom I had ever sat I should have found her powers more convincing than those of any medium I have sat with except Dennis Bradley. I except him because I have known him as a personal friend for fifteen years.

The sitting took place in Lord Dewar's suite in the Savoy Hotel, in broad daylight, the necessary condition of darkness being obtained by pinning a bed-spread round the table under which Mrs. Pruden held the folded slates. All through the sitting she was entirely visible to us, except for the hand which held the slates; and, so far as the other hand was concerned, we held the other end of the slate ourselves, at different times, thus making certain that the two slates, in which a small piece of lead pencil had been placed, were tightly closed in such a way that it would have been impossible for anyone to write inside, even if he had managed to get between the slates, which, of course, were only a fraction of an inch apart.

The procedure took the form of our writing questions on slips of paper, which the medium did not see, folding them up and placing them under the table. Immediately afterwards, we could hear the sound of writing taking place on the slates. When you held the slates, you understood, perfectly, Mrs. Pruden's statement that, when the message was completed, a spirit friend tugged it, to tell you.

Lord Dewar wrote a message to a friend who died in Paris six weeks ago; an answer immediately came, which seemed strangely evidential, and which was signed with his name, "Jack Douglas." A woman friend of Lord Dewar's, who was also present, obtained a message from a colonel in a Sussex regiment who was killed in the war. She was almost staggered by the fact that her message was most intelligently evidential, and that her friend signed his name in full. Lord Dewar said it was the most evidential sitting he had ever attended.

My messages, of course, came from Lord Northcliffe. My question, placed upon the table, had asked for evidence from some spirit I had not heard from; but the first answer, from Lord Northcliffe, given clairaudiently, was that I was not to seek for further evidence but to get on with "the work" and write another book.

The sitting lasted for two hours and was most impressive. Mrs. Pruden's spirit guide is Wilbur Thompson, who was a brigadier general on the Southern side in the Civil War. He was called "The Swamp Fox of the Confederacy" because of his great aptitude of spying for the South. His photograph, which lies before me as I write, shows a man of culture, a man with smiling eyes.

Mrs. Pruden, who afterwards dined with Lord Dewar, Mr. Holmyard and myself, proved to be a woman of the highest intelligence. She is the president of a woman's club in Cincinnati, and is a medium, to whom local clergymen often send bereaved people when they have buried their friends.

"We have done all we can for you," they say. "Go and see Mrs. Pruden."

When we were dining, I introduced Mrs. Pruden to Senatore Marconi, who said he would like to sit with her.

"I first became conscious of my powers when I was eleven," Mrs. Pruden told me. "I used to hear my mother speaking to me, but with such difficulty that it took several days to get one sentence through. We then belonged to the Baptist Church and my father naturally did not believe what I said, but afterwards, in maturity, I developed my powers."

After sitting with Mrs. Pruden, I realised, more than ever, how badly the Spiritualist movement wants mediums. If only we had a hundred like her on this side of the Atlantic we should make headway.

During dinner, Lord Dewar was telling the old lady how a relative of his thought a good deal about the subject of Spiritualism:

"I have a message," she said. "I have just heard Wilbur say that 'Arthur says she ought to think a good deal of the subject.'"

"Arthur" is the deceased husband of Lord Dewar's relative, and he thought it a remarkable piece of evidence; but I must add, in comment, that, unfortunately, during the sitting I mentioned that "Arthur" had come through to him at a sitting at which we were both present, when Valiantine was over here last year.

CURRENT ITEMS.

"T. P.'s and Cassell's Weekly" (18th ult.) includes an article on "Victor Hugo as Spiritualist, Table-rapping with a Beautiful Woman," by Francis Gribble.

The "Daily News" advertises a series of twelve of the most famous ghost stories and weird legends of the haunted houses of Great Britain now being filmed for America this summer by Cosmopolitan Productions, Limited, a British film company.

The "Huddersfield Examiner" informs us that a highly successful rally of Spiritualists was held at the Spiritualist Church, Harp Road, Quarmby. Tea was served, followed by a procession around the district.

The "Bury Free Press" says:—"There has been a distinct revival of interest in Spiritualism, consequent upon the conversion of several notable public men to the mystic cult, and to the 'revelations' of Mr. Hannen Swaffer of recent conversations with the late Lord Northcliffe."

"The Morning Post" (20th ult.) gives an account of the sermon preached by the Rev. Basil G. Bouchier on Spiritualism, at St. Jude's-on-the-Hill, Hampstead Garden Suburb, of which a report appeared in our last issue. It records the preacher's statement that men of intellect and power were not subscribing to the doctrine of Spiritualism without there being a tremendous substratum of truth in it.

The "Record," in "Church of Ireland Notes," admits that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's lectures in Ireland, delivered on successive evenings, were very largely attended; but it suggests that his hearers went to the lectures "to listen rather to the literary creator of 'Sherlock Holmes'" than to the popular apostle of Spiritualism. Of course.

The "Hornsey Journal" says that growing numbers and interest mark the services and meetings of the Hornsey Spiritualist Fellowship, both in Felix Hall, Crouch End, and in the open-air at the Clock Tower.

Some reasons why church attendance has fallen off in the present day were given at a meeting of the Ryde Spiritualists held at the Anglesea Hall by Mr. G. H. Hibbins, B.Sc., lecturer at Sheffield University, who in an address on "The Search for Truth," said that orthodoxy had got out of touch with the needs of the times.—"Portsmouth Evening News."

At the end of a long article on the "uncanny" accomplishments of the Princess Wahletka, in the "South Wales Daily Post" (13th ult.), she is reported as of the opinion that her special gift is the development of a sixth sense with which one-half of British women will be endowed in ten years' time.

IN THE SILENCE

I find it well to come
For deeper rest to this still room;
For here the habit of the soul
Feels less the outer world's control.
And from deep silence multiplied
By these still forms on every side,
The world that time and space have known
Falls off, and leaves us God alone.

—WHITTIER.

DECREASE OF FRITZ GRUNEWALD.—As we go to press, we learn of the death of Fritz Grunewald, of Charlottenberg, Berlin, who expired of heart disease on the 21st ulto.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

PUBLICITY-MONGERS AND THE MEDIUM.

"THE CURE OF CANCER."

SIR,—You say in a recent note, "It is so clear that diseases brought on by unnatural modes of living can only be effectually cured by obedience to natural laws." You refer to artificial forms of diet, and as regards these the marvel is that we do not suffer more than we do, because it is not only a question of pure natural food but also of the conditions in which we partake of it.

What, for instance, is the subject of conversation when we take our meals in company? Is it the good acts and virtues of absent ones, or their faults and failings? Too often the latter is the topic. Now, if we harbour malice or jealousy we are apt on these occasions to give vent to them—parents to children, children to children, husband to wife and neighbour to neighbour. Here is the point we should consider: The saliva mingling with our food in mastication is often poisoned by our thoughts. "As a man thinketh so is he." We do not always play the part we might do in the School of Life, viz., to build up those conditions of physical health which would cause our bodies to be fit temples for the Spirit of God and so banish disease.—Yours, etc.,

SYDNEY BARTLETT.

50, Stoney Stanton-road,
Coventry.

THE "COBWEB SENSATION" AT SEANCES.

SIR,—Reading Mrs. F. E. Leaning's contribution to *LIGHT* of July 11th (p 333) brings to my mind a curious description given me some time ago by a lady who had attended a séance in America, and who was asked by a voice if there was anything she would wish to see, to which she replied she would much like to see some lace, if possible. Her desire was soon gratified, for almost immediately before her eyes appeared what seemed the most exquisite lace it was possible to imagine. She asked if she might touch it, and was told she might, but that the "lace" could not last long. She handled it and said it was clammy, like nothing she could imagine, so much as a handful of damp cobwebs, all rapidly dispersed. Another curious thing happened to a friend who attended a séance and whose mother appeared and talked to him, but told him she could not stay more than about two minutes. At his request he was allowed to take her hand in his. He told me it was deathly cold, and gradually, as the figure grew less distinct, the hand he held seemed to melt away in his. He said he could liken it to nothing else but taking up a handful of snow and feeling it gradually disperse.—Yours, etc.,

CLAUDE TREVOR.

Florence, Italy.

PREMONITIONS OF DEATH.

SIR,—Seeing in "Rays and Reflections" of July 11th the notes on animal sensitiveness to impending death, I venture to write to you.

As a lover of animals and student of their ways, I am convinced that animals do foresee and indicate events, such as a removal or a death.

This sensing of the latter seems similar to what a human medium senses. An example of the similarity stands out very clearly in my mind.

It was not more than a year ago in Cape Town. The sea a royal blue, and the sky as brilliant in colour; the wonderful mountains—almost within a stone's throw—and the palm trees nestling against their sides.

A scene such as this was what I had before me one morning when I attended a meeting at a friend's house. Nothing could have been less suggestive of death; but when my friend asked me where I would sit, I shrank from remaining in the verandah room, and said I would prefer another, explaining to my friend that I would tell her why after the meeting.

Subsequently I told her that on entering I had seen an open coffin on the table, too high for me, when seated, to see a form in it, but the peculiar smell of death was there, and I felt there was a dead body in it.

A week later, on a subsequent visit to the house I was asked if I had the same feeling about the room. "Oh, no," I answered. "Well," said my friend, "I must tell you that this past week there has been a terrible accident here." The large metal top to the roof had fallen in, embedding a young man, a workman aged 25, so deeply in the ground that it took hours to dig him out, and then he was dead. This happened within thirty yards of the place where I was sitting on entering.

Now, undoubtedly this smell of death that a medium may have is also possible to a dog, and is the most likely means of impressing his psychic sensibilities, seeing that our canine friends have the sense of smell so strongly developed in the ordinary way.—Yours, etc.,

MANYA A. RICKARD.

48, George-street,
Portman-square, W.1.

SIR,—It will be remembered how the "Scientific American's" notable investigation of psychic phenomena ended joyously, in that every one of the contending parties gained the particular prize which each one most coveted. The enterprising journal retained its bonus of 2,500.00 dollars; Mr. Houdini got a vast amount of free advertising; and "Margery" won the admiration of all Spiritualists for going through a terrible ordeal in a manner that has brought conviction to all minds open to receive it.

After this happy *dénouement* it is not to be wondered at that another enterprising journal has doubled the prize, and now offers five thousand dollars to the first person who will demonstrate the actuality of supernormal phenomena to the satisfaction of a committee chosen by said enterprising journal. And we are told that "the phenomena must be visible, produced in full light . . . and any known physical or chemical means of testing the phenomena must be permitted to be used." Moreover, the names of those who will compose the committee are divulged, and we find four professors of Harvard University, and Mr. Harry Houdini.

This most enterprising journal writes grandiloquently of all that will be gained for science and mankind when its committee shall have established the existence of supernormal phenomena, and ends by saying that "the discovery might well be worthy of a Nobel prize"!

Readers of *LIGHT*, whose minds have not been steeped in "flapdoodle," will be surprised when they recall that Richet, most distinguished of physiologists, after thirty years of intensive study has already written a book certifying to the very phenomena which this enterprising journal now starts out to discover; moreover, Professor Richet has been deemed worthy of the coveted Nobel prize.

"The Literary Digest," of July 4th, from which the above announcement is taken, heads its article, "Another Chance for the Mediums," though where the chance comes in is not apparent to anyone who knows anything about mediumship. It looks as if this "chance for mediums" were of the same nature as the chance which was accorded to the psychics of earlier days, who were soused in a pond, and if they sank they drowned, and if they floated they were burned as witches! For the spirit of "Salem" is abroad to-day, though the methods employed are not so honest. Let us hope that no genuine medium will permit his gifts to be used in the manufacture of publicity.—Yours, etc.,

B. M. GODSAL.

San Diego, Calif.

THE NATURE OF ECTOPLASM.

Mr. R. H. New (Hove) writes in reference to the recent discussion in the "Morning Post":—

The controversy as regards Ectoplasm requires elucidation. What is Ectoplasm? Nobody really knows, nor can anyone know much about the constitution of elements other than those in which the Spirit, for the time being, is incarcerated. By the light of experiment, however, and judging by its effects, it is assumed to be a spiritual substance that permeates the entire body of flesh to the point of saturation—just as a sponge absorbs moisture. It constitutes the connecting-link between spiritual and material substances. Without Ectoplasm the material body could not be actuated; Ectoplasm, therefore, is the medium by which the internal spirit body controls and directs the work and life of the fleshy material substance. This implies that the higher constituent elements govern the lower, and that the elements on each plane are affinitive in their action, though differently constituted.

When, for instance, a limb is amputated, the ectoplasmic duplicate permeating that limb retains its original form and position, and the surgeon's knife makes no impression on it. The patient cannot realise, for some time, that the limb has actually gone, because the evidence of feeling remains.

The case for ejected Ectoplasm by a medium in a trance is different, it can then be seen, handled and photographed, if the conditions are favourable, but in the case of an amputated limb or a dead body, the Ectoplasm is not in a state of ejection, and it is consequently invisible and intangible.

The cause of visibility in the ejected Ectoplasm would appear to lie in its connection with physical matter under control, as compared with physical matter over which control has ceased.

From what has been stated it is reasonable to infer that at each succeeding stage of existence, on a fresh plane, the old series of 88 or 90 chemical elements of this plane are blotted out through inability to act on the new organism, and this process of a continuous new series of elements interacting on changed organisms is repeated "ad infinitum" with every change we call death.

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.

THE "WRONG SIDE OF SPIRITUALISM."

A MEDIUM'S TRAGEDY.

From M. R., a London reader, we have received the story of a sad case, in which the mediumship of a young woman of fine, sensitive character was completely ruined and herself brought to the gates of death. The disaster was caused by the heartless selfishness of sensation-mongers and empty-headed Society folk, desirous of "thrilling" novelties and quite indifferent to the welfare of those they employ to gratify their greed for pleasure.

To us it is an old and sorry tale. The annals of Spiritualism contain many examples. They represent what our correspondent calls the "wrong side of Spiritualism." Yet we should not give all the blame to the ignorant self-seekers who exploit delicate and sensitive people for the sake of psychic sensations. Something is required of those with psychic gifts—care, discretion and strength of will to resist the temptation to place their gifts at the service of wealthy idlers.

But the case narrated by M. R. seems to be a specially flagrant instance. It is rather a long story, and we can only give it in summary here. But we should at the outset challenge M. R.'s complaint that genuine Spiritualists have "done nothing" to protect mediums against those who seek to use them for vain and selfish ends. This is not the case. For many years our journals have exposed those things and given warnings innumerable. "The evil continues"; true, because it is the fate of warnings to fall generally on deaf ears. Moreover, commercialism has invaded every department of life, and there is nothing so precious that it will not be brought into the market under pressure of need.

But to come to the story. It relates to a young woman of rare psychic gifts who, ignorant of their use and value, placed them at the disposal of those whom our correspondent calls "bogus Spiritualists"—the worthless class already described. One of the uses made of this sensitive creature was to invite her to a country house for the purpose of making her sleep in a haunted room "just to see what would happen." The happenings are not recorded, but as the room had an evil record we can imagine the effects on the psychic.

Later came unlimited planchette and automatic writing, always after a heavy dinner with copious draughts of wine (alas, how often we have heard of such abuses).

Yet, with much other communicated matter, there came fine, high messages from a son, killed in the war, to his mother, a fashionable woman, of the earth earthy. We learn that he warned her against frivolous trafficking with the Unseen. He showed her that her mode of life, with its eternal rush after gaiety and material advantage, was making it impossible for him to reach her. He told her that her atmosphere was dark and heavy with earthly influences, and he himself was not sufficiently developed spiritually to cope with these evil conditions. He told her of the beauty and wonder of the new life for those who cultivated their higher nature.

The mother was indignant and contemptuous. She did not want to hear these things. She hated that sort of stuff. She wanted her son to talk about the things she was interested in. And finally she flung out of the room in a rage, "leaving the medium shuddering and alone in a room where the frustrated love of a noble spirit beat the air in pain."

After that, the medium—gentle, highly strung, simple and ignorant—fell into the hands of people of the same ignoble type as the woman of fashion, and her character began to show marked deterioration. In the end she became the prey of undeveloped spirits. She showed a craving for fine clothes, for excitement and for all the artificialisms of fashionable life. In the end she became the victim of a vicious man, and finally sank so low that after an illness she was left but the mournful shadow of the woman she had been.

Save that it is a special and poignant instance, there is nothing here with which we had not already been made miserably familiar. Even if the story be not true, it remains typical of many cases of actual fact.

But we must not lose our sense of proportion in considering these matters. It is only the psychic element which distinguishes such cases from the thousands of other tragedies in which innocence and ignorance are made the victims of selfishness and sensuality. The trappings of swine still beat the things of beauty into the mud. There are still many "bogus Spiritualists" abroad who are ready to have spiritual gifts prostituted to the service of folly. But to-day humanity is moving in regions where the triumph of evil ways is short-lived. It is becoming more and more sensitive to spiritual forces, and action is followed swiftly by reaction. It was not so in the older days when the material husk was coarser and stronger.

None the less should we utter our warnings and call upon all men and women of good will to resist to the utmost these abuses of spiritual things, and to cooperate with the Unseen Powers which can work more rapidly and easily with their aid than without it.

THE SOURCE.

Behind the Bread, acres of waving wheat;
 Behind the Grain, a firmly-kneading hand;
 And far behind them both, with wealth replete,—
 The Land!

Behind the Garment, shuttle and shaft and wheel;
 Behind the Wool, root, worm and beast at strife;
 And far behind them all, with joy to feel,—
 Life!

Behind Mankind, saurian and gibbering ape;
 Behind each act no gift of thought-control;
 Yet far behind, in rudimentary shape,—
 The Soul!

Behind Intelligence—wisdom and doubt and ruth!—
 A wistful dream that scourges like a rod:
 One piercing ray from immemorial Truth—
 God!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Onitsha, Nigeria.

SIDELIGHTS.

The present editor of "The Clarion," Alex. M. Thompson, in his notice of Robert Blatchford's new book, "More Things in Heaven and Earth," says of the former editor of the "Clarion" and his work:—

As a journalist he is constitutionally handicapped by an impediment which absolutely prevents him from writing what he doesn't believe. It may happen that he is mistaken. His vivid mind may over-colour what he sees. The very clearness of his vision, focussed on one facet, may lead him to misjudgment. He may change his mind. But whatever he writes is what he strongly feels and what his conscience compels him to write.

Knowing all this as a result of over forty years' close intimacy, I naturally read this latest book of my old friend with deep respect. It has impressed me. It has puzzled me. It has made me realise more than ever that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

Further on in his article, Mr. Thompson observes:—

We have been devoting ourselves to physical science since days earlier than Aristotle. We haven't made any real advance in metaphysics since Plato. I am convinced that, for the present, we have practically worn out the beaten road of physics: the immediate future of scientific discovery lies along the virgin region of the mind. We have to begin to study the problem of Life. We have to explore the properties of vitalism. We have to begin to understand certain facts of our experience which we group under the name of consciousness, but about which we know less than a duck knows about the great nebula of Orion.

In "The Spectator," in a recent issue, under the heading of "A Milestone in Metaphysics," a reviewer of Sir Oliver Lodge's "Ether and Reality," touches upon features of recent scientific progress, and then strikes off at a tangent to say:—

The most notable result of all this new work is that it appears as a definite growth and evolution in human thought, and not simply a sight of the other side of the shield. One is reminded of the evolution of musical appreciation. The ancient Greeks had no harmony in their music, and it is thought they would have been unable to appreciate the ideas now expressed in harmonic form. To-day we have advanced to a stage in which we can understand the most complicated harmonic expression, as, for example, that of Stravinsky. This is parallel to the evolution of the modern attitude to the idea of the Universe in that a more complicated appreciation is possible, but even more, we can now have an entirely new outlook. It is as if—to return to the musical simile—orchestration had just been discovered, with all the other musical paraphernalia already available.

Recently we reproduced a paragraph that seemed to illustrate, in a confirmatory way, the superstition regarding thirteen at table; here is one on the same theme, with a different implication, from an article "On Superstition," by Sir Herbert Russell, in the "Western Morning News and Mercury":—

It is easy enough to laugh at this, and call it ignorance. But if we begin to ridicule superstition, the difficulty will be to know where to stop. On one occasion, whilst dining in the war correspondents' mess in France, I made a startling discovery. We were thirteen at table; it was Friday, and the date was the thirteenth of the month. As far as I know, all the other twelve are alive and well, and I can positively answer for the thirteenth, after having lived for eight years under this sinister omen. Only one of the thirteen professed to be profoundly disturbed by the revelation when I pointed it out, and he has since done the best of the lot.

The following excerpt is from "The Western Mail" (16th ult.):—

The Fakir Kir Tor Kal Tahra Bey is now astonishing Paris with his amazing performances. This man, in public, inflicts himself with sword wounds, which heal in the short space of twenty minutes and from which blood flows, or does not flow, according to his desires.

He can also bury himself alive for a lengthy period without any apparent ill-results.

The Fakir is already well known in Egypt and Turkey, and before arriving in Paris had penetrated the most exclusive Italian circles. Mussolini watched him, the Diplomatic Corps watched him, and King Victor Emmanuel expressed a desire to see him. The highest medical and scientific men put him to the test, including Professor Quirico, the Royal physician.

The Special Correspondent of "The Westminster Gazette" (17th ult.) reports an extraordinary "faith cure claim" by a woman who had been paralysed for eighteen years. He writes:—

Bungalow dwellers at Oyster Fleet, Canvey Island, are impressed by what is claimed to be the cure of a woman. Miss Polly Teskey, who has been bed-ridden, owing to paralysis of the arms and legs, for eighteen years, and has been dumb for many months.

All Monday she was in a coma, her mother, her doctor, and neighbours had prepared for her death.

To-day I saw her sitting up, and talking cheerfully with neighbours.

Miss Teskey told me that when she was in a trance she was in a beautiful garden talking with Christ. She said He told her why she had been so long in bondage and how now she would regain her strength.

"Have you the strength to believe that I can make you bodily well again?" He asked. She said, "Yes, Lord, I believe."

With these words on her lips she got up from bed and walked across the room.

"I have walked out of the garden to-day," she said; "it is so beautiful. Three years ago I came here on a bed in a lorry from Leyton. I have never seen Canvey until now. I was quite reconciled to dying."

The remarkable thing is that the abdominal complaint involved in the paralysis was instantly cured. Miss Teskey comes of an old religious family of the Plymouth Brother persuasion.

The "New York Times" (8th July), in a "special" to it, discloses the fear of ghosts shown by a County Court. Condemned to death for murder, a negro was to be hanged in an enclosure erected for the occasion behind the county jail, although it had been arranged that the execution should take place elsewhere. The "New York Times" says:—

It had been planned to hang the condemned man in a barn, but the change was brought about through the fear of the Montgomery County Court that the barn, which is in the jail yard, would become haunted following the hanging.

Sheriff Farmer, who is a young ex-Service man, scoffed at the idea of the building becoming haunted, but has been obliged to conform with the wishes of the County Court.

From an article in "Reynolds' News" (July 19th) on "Miracles of Faith Healing," by Alex. Erskine, Professor of Neurology, we take the excerpts following:—

Neurology is a simple and harmless method of speaking to a patient's mind while it is not working through the ordinary channels of the brain.

In other words, it is like giving instruction to an unskilful driver of a motor-car who has stopped the engine so that he may listen better.

The driver is the mind, the motor-car the brain, and the instructor is the medical neurologist. Suggestion on the subconscious mind acts as a healing agent, so that if the mind is inspired along proper channels it has a beneficial effect on the body.

Mind created the body and can restore it. That is a proven and established fact. But how does it do it? First, by faith, and faith from a scientific point of view is a wonderful power. It is the realisation of things desired, brought about by belief.

So we understand scientifically that the mind is a separate entity which has the power to see and know. But, while it is connected with a man's body in a normal state of consciousness, it is not permitted to see or know except through the physical senses. The neurologist must work upon the mind when it is not in harness. That it does see under these circumstances is proved by absolute fact, as, when in the state called somnambulism, a sleep-walker has found paper, pen, and ink, and written a letter. Upon awakening next morning he has had no memory of doing so.

"The Scotsman" (July 17th) has an entertaining article on "Haunted Houses of the Future," in which the author says:—

Among the ghosts of the future, I can see a long procession, dim and yet familiar.

There is the shingled maiden, sighing for her locks of yester year; there is the housewife, sighing that though commissions sit on food prices, food prices still are high; and there is her husband sighing too, because he always has to pay, he cannot think what the Government is coming to, and he cannot find a house to haunt at a reasonable rent in any case.

W. B. P.

MEDIUMSHIP AND MONEY PRIZES.

By VISCOUNTESS MOLESWORTH.

I am told that the silly custom of making psychic phenomena the subject of wagers and cash prizes has prevailed since the earliest days of modern Spiritualism. I am further assured—although I am unable to verify the statement—that in no single instance has it ever settled anything. Anti-Spiritualists have offered money challenges to mediums to produce manifestations under (usually) impossible conditions. Spiritualists (who should have known better) have challenged conjurers to reproduce physical phenomena, and in one notorious instance the case was carried into a court of law to decide whether the conjurer had really duplicated the particular manifestation which was the subject of the challenge. In that instance the conjurer lost the case; but it did very little credit to the Spiritualist movement.

All these things are violations of the whole spirit of our subject, however we may look at it. If we regard it religiously it is simple sacrilege, if scientifically, it is dishonouring to the dignity of the inquiry—a violation of good taste.

I see in a recent issue of the "Morning Post" that a Mr. Gilbert, an American, has offered a reward of 500 dollars to any medium who can reveal a secret code-word arranged between him and his wife who died some eight years ago. It is strange to read that both parties were "students of psychology and believers in Spiritualism." Just why he should suppose that a money reward will effect what no other motive has been able to accomplish, I am unable to understand. A "student of psychology" should know better. It seems that about 139 alleged spirit messages have been received by him, not one of which contains the agreed pass-word. This should hardly have surprised a student of Spiritualism, who knows that we are investigating a region the laws of which are little understood, and that pre-arranged tests—especially when reinforced by the money factor—nearly always break down. The "Scientific American" test is a sufficient example. We have many instances of striking tests and evidences from the other side, but they are nearly always spontaneous. These things are never given to sensation-seekers or those who offer wagers and prizes. We are better without the atmosphere of the lottery or the betting ring.

I have just seen a cutting from an American newspaper in which appears a letter from Mr. B. M. Godsal, a contributor to LIGHT. He comments on the case of a newspaper which, imitating the "Scientific American," offers a prize of 5,000 dollars (£1,000) to the first person who will demonstrate the reality of supernatural phenomena. The journal writes in glowing terms of the gain to Science which would be accomplished by such an achievement, and actually suggests that the discovery might well be worthy of a Nobel prize. I am glad to see that Mr. Godsal makes the following comment on this absurd proceeding:—

Minds not bemused by flapdoodle will be surprised when they learn that Charles Richet, most distinguished of psychologists, after 30 years of intensive study, has written a book certifying the genuineness of the phenomena which this enterprising journal now starts out to discover. Moreover Professor Richet has already been deemed worthy of the coveted Nobel prize.

Such ignorance of the subject which they profess to investigate is characteristic of the persons who offer cash inducements to mediums. It is really not too severe, I think, to suggest that mediums who submit themselves to investigation in such conditions really invite the disasters that usually follow.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S PSYCHIC MUSEUM.—Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has established a highly-interesting Psychic Museum in the basement of the Psychic Book Shop, Abbey House, Victoria-street, and on Friday, July 24th, a number of London Pressmen viewed the exhibits. Sir Arthur explained the various objects to his interested listeners, who made a number of inquiries. Several good reports were afterwards published in London newspapers. The Exhibition is now open to the public at a charge of one shilling. It is well worth a visit.—L. C.

GARDEN MEETING AT "OAKWOOD."—The L.S.A. Garden Meeting on Saturday afternoon last at "Oakwood," Hendon Avenue, Finchley, was well attended. Mrs. Henry Withall welcomed the assembled guests in the name of herself and her late husband who, she felt sure, was amongst the unseen friends present. The time spent in the beautiful garden was greatly enjoyed. Miss Dorothea Walenn gave some delightful violin solos accompanied by Miss Amy Kemp, and there were two amusing recitations by Mrs. Barbara Musgrave. The party dispersed with many expressions of pleasure and of gratitude to the hostess for a delightful afternoon.—E. K. G.

THE "HIGHBROWS."

Some of us who are known as simple and credulous, but none the less earnest and even devout Spiritualists, are at times hard put to it to understand the real meaning of some of the magnificently learned conversations and lectures addressed to us by our more advanced brethren.

Although lost in admiration of the truly wonderful language employed, the uncomfortable little thought will creep in that the words may (Oh! pardon me, dare I say it?) perhaps be used after the manner of the wily politician, who when a commonsense explanation is requested, will reply, "The impression gained is an utter travesty of my real inner meaning."

For instance, chatting recently on Materialists, an advanced Spiritualist who is a brilliant conversationalist was understood to offer the following sentiments. His volubility was rather marked, so that a few slight errors may have crept in, but this was the gist of his observations:—

"The cacophonous expression of uncerebrated mentality is undoubtedly the most subliminally disastrous tergiversation of the cryptesthetic emanation. The homoconcentric or even epicentric platitudinarianism adumbrated in the superkinetic Materialist indicates the absence of any such desire as acquisitiveness of psychic knowledge.

"Constitutionally segregated from both the allotropic and anthropomorphic conception of all that appertains fundamentally to the acquirement of Truth, he consistently, intuitively and instinctively surges in rebellion against Spiritualism.

"The crepuscular intellectuality of an individual of adamantine obduracy is such that it is an utter impossibility to combat it by other than extraordinary orthographic and similar literary gymnastics.

"Hyperacute as this hypothesis may be, hylotheism and hylopathism may supervene, showing that incapaciousness is not entirely obdurate and that inalterability is almost indistinguishable from and indeed inseparable from introspection.

"Unlaboured as are these unpremeditated and simple remarks one feels that the advanced psychic must always regard them as profoundly syllogistic."

My difficulty with the above was mentioned to another advanced Spiritualist, but he assured me that this extemporaneous lucubration is of inordinate simplicity and that supraliminally analysed it is but a periphrastic enunciation (or was it denunciation?) of a paradigm.

So helpful, isn't it? One feels like dear old Omar Khayyam who related how, in such discussions, "I evermore came out by the same door as in I went."

A. A. C.

"THE VISIONS OF VERSAILLES."

Mrs. Walter Tibbits, author of "The Voice of the Orient," etc. (Hôtel des Réservoirs, Versailles), writes:—

Having read the review in LIGHT for January 31st last of "An Adventure," I am now staying at its *mise-en-scène*.

I came partly because I heard from the other side that Marie Antoniette was *aupres de moi*, because for the last year I have been living near the scenes of her triumphs and troubles and thinking of her.

Needless to say I have been much at the Petit Trianon, but, not having external clairvoyance, cannot verify the enthralling tale of the akashic records reviewed by Mrs. Leaning in your columns. I therefore write to say that if any of our mediums having that clairvoyance are passing through Paris on their holiday and care to come here, I shall be only too pleased to assist and entertain them. We might have some interesting results to give to the world.

"BLATCHFORD THE HERO."—An article under this title, by the Editor of LIGHT, appeared in the "Clarion," of 17th ult., in the course of which the writer observed, "When we have set out all our evidences for human survival, there are still those who say there may be some other explanation. These are the people who are looking for *absolute proof*, and there is no such thing. All we can have is reasonable assurance, and our reasonable assurance in the matter of human survival is, to my mind, quite as strong as our assurance that we are men and women living in a world which we call real, but which may not be so real as we think."

SELF-TRUST is the essence of heroism. It is the state of the soul at war, and its ultimate objects are the last defiance of falsehood and wrong, and the power to bear all that can be inflicted by evil agents. It speaks the truth, and it is just, generous, hospitable, temperate, scornful of petty calculations, and scornful of being scorned. It persists; it is of an undaunted boldness, and a fortitude not to be wearied out.—R. W. EMERSON.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION IN THE HOME CIRCLE.

ADDRESS BY SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE in December last year (see LIGHT, 1924, p. 762) delivered an address at the County Hall, Admiralty Arch, describing certain important communications received in his own Home Circle through his wife's mediumship.

On Sunday evening last, in the same hall, Sir Arthur continued his discourse on the same topic, but this time giving fuller and even more impressive particulars. There was an overwhelming audience, and many were unable to obtain admission. Lady Conan Doyle was present, and among the visitors was Mrs. Pruden, of Cincinnati, a gifted sensitive whom Sir Arthur in his book, "Our Second American Adventure," describes as one of the great mediums of the world.

The REV. G. VALE OWEN, who presided, said it was to be their last meeting in that hall, as in future the services (beginning in October) were to be held in the Steinway Hall, morning and evening. He desired to thank the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on behalf of his own Committee, for the help they had rendered, and also to thank the organist, the voluntary choir, the stewards, and other workers for their valuable assistance.

Mr. Vale Owen, for his first lesson, read from Ezekiel xiv., 12, and for his second lesson from the Spiritualists' Reader ("Letter from Julia"). In introducing the speaker, he said it was almost superfluous to welcome Sir Arthur because he was one of themselves. They were always glad to hear him, and always gained enlightenment from what he said.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle said he wished to pass on to them some of the instruction he had received in his own domestic circle. This was the highest form of communication. "There has never been a religious development so comforting, so intimate, so beautiful, so all-pervading and real as that which comes to those who have a high spirit in their homes." In the future, he believed, religion would take that form, the séance at home, and such gatherings as theirs that night would be for the purpose of comparing experiences, and thus extending our knowledge and our upward growth.

He had made allusion last December to his Home Circle experiences. His wife's mediumship developed slowly, first taking the form of inspired writing. Later there came messages which they were convinced came from their own people who had passed over.

"I may add," said Sir Arthur, "that neither of us is in the least credulous, and we were on our guard against self-deception." They made every conceivable allowance for cryptesthesia and all the other bogeys, but one by one they became ridiculous as explanations. Many of the messages had been correctly fulfilled. Instances in point were cited, with dates, such as the disturbances in China, the earthquake in Japan, and "Red" activity in Africa.

A high Arabian Guide was described, and the speaker devoted the main part of his discourse to a brief outline of the very impressive communications that came from this source. The world was to go through a process of redemption by suffering. Natural convulsions produced psychic convulsions, and it was through these latter vibrations that the world was to be cleansed. The threatened calamity really meant the reformation of the world, the coming of the Christ spirit, and the opening of the millennium.

It was not to be indiscriminate, but to be selective. "The world will be passed through God's sieve. All that has the least seed of spirit will be held back. All that is evil will fall through into the pit." That was the message.

The world, like a garden, needed the soil turned over and the beds replanted for the spring and summer of the world which were now coming. In the past it had been the winter.

The speaker had obtained confirmation of these messages through Mrs. Osborne Leonard and Mrs. Barkel, and similar prophecies had reached him from all parts of the world.

The prospect seemed dark, but, rightly viewed, it might mean the coming regeneration of the world.

The speaker hoped he had been able to convey to them the high nature of the messages. He might add that his unseen and honoured friend took a keen interest in every phase of the family life.

"We are," continued Sir Arthur, "as true Spiritualists must be, a very happy family. When we were in America someone who had opportunities to observe us closely said, 'Why is it that you all seem so happy?' On which one of the children said, 'Oh, didn't you know? we are all Spiritualists.'"

He claimed no special privilege. He had been assured that many had had similar experiences to his own, and they all knew that their honoured Pastor had had them above all men. With a grateful heart he gave testimony that night to the angelic guidance that had come to him.

L. C.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

A reflective reader poses the question whether the reasoning or the intuitive mind is to be preferred. If we consider them as the masculine and feminine type respectively it is clear that neither is to be preferred before the other. Each is equally necessary; indeed unless both were in action all human progress would cease.

Personally, for immediate purposes, I prefer to see a problem approached first by the intuitive method, and the result afterwards checked by reason. The intuition arrives at its conclusion with electric swiftness. It is there before the slow reasoning mind has begun to move, and if it is later proved to be wrong, no time has been lost; there has been no long and arduous journey to a wrong destination.

When Intuition makes a new discovery and afterwards Reason goes carefully over the ground which the Intuition has taken at a flying leap, and arrives at the same point, we are as near certainty as is humanly possible.

For the rest, it is observable that the intuitive or feminine method is characteristically capricious, and requires special conditions to set it in action. Any slight disturbance sets it all awry. We can see instances innumerable in the case of psychics who exhibit in a special form a faculty which is to be found in the world at large. Generally, I should say the intellectual or reasoning mind represents Thought, the intuitive mind, Feeling. The first would say with Descartes, "I think, therefore I am"; the second would reverse the proposition and say, "I am, therefore I think!"

I lately heard a man complain that he was being bored to death by Spiritualism, a matter in which he took not the slightest interest—his pet subjects being literature and the drama. He wanted to discuss these, but two of his friends, who were recent converts to Spiritualism, insisted on arguing their own subject with him. That he should have shown distaste for the subject seemed to them, I think, a sign of moral depravity—they felt he should be bludgeoned into a proper frame of mind.

But he said he was bored, and he showed it. There was the fact. And one "should sit down before fact as a little child" (Huxley). So I sat down before this fact, and considered it. I reflected that there are men who have no love of poetry (this man had) and are bored by it. Of other men to whom all music is a distracting noise. I recalled the case of the man who, on going to live in the country, complained that he could get no sleep because of the beastly row kicked up by the nightingales; of the huntsman, in "Punch," who found that his hounds had lost the scent of the fox in a bed of "them stinking v'lets." We are inclined to laugh over such cases. Why should we be intolerant of the man who is bored to death by Spiritualism?

It is just a question of the point of view, and that is always changing. Some of our most recent public converts and champions had at one time far stronger things to say against Spiritualism than that they were merely bored by it. We are apt to forget that there is no fixity anywhere in life; that the sceptic of to-day may be the missionary of to-morrow. Again, we must respect individual rights. A man has a right to reject a truth, and those who possess it have no right to force it upon him against his wishes. That, as a rule, only tends to strengthen his prejudices. Rather give him freedom to adopt the idea of his own choice—or leave him alone.

Going back once more to the question of number coincidences, Mrs. Leaning sends me the following instance by way of quotation:—

A famous naturalist, a friend of F. C. Selous, relates that amongst the hundreds of times in which he had sat down to table with the "unlucky" number thirteen, he had only once seen any objection raised. On that occasion Matthew Arnold, the poet; Edgar Seebohm, the playwright, and Edgar Dawson, an old personal friend, rose together, so as to defeat any evil influence. Within six months Matthew Arnold died suddenly of heart disease (1888), Edgar Seebohm was murdered in New York, and within the year Edgar Dawson was drowned in the "Quetta" in Torres Straits on his way home from Australia. A triple coincidence, and with three apparently healthy men, was certainly very extraordinary. (Millais, J. G. *op. cit.* p. 118).

D. G.

WHAT THE CLAIRVOYANT SEES.

BY W. E. BUTLER.

The question is often asked, "What does the clairvoyant actually see, when exercising his gift?" and it may perhaps be of interest if I endeavour to give the views of some of those who are qualified by experience in these matters.

I will first of all lay down as a basic principle the following statement:—

"Man is a spirit, whether in the body or out of it."

Since man is a spirit, he will have the potentialities of Spirit within him, and psychic science proves to us that man can unfold these potential powers and transform them into active forces. The methods by means of which such unfoldment may be brought about are, roughly speaking, three in number, viz.:—

(a) By conscious individual effort.

(b) By stimulation of the latent faculties through the influence of the spirit people.

(c) By a judicious blending of the two former methods, i.e. by co-operation with the unseen operator.

Since, psychically speaking, we are still in the childhood of the race, we shall expect to find that the usual sequence of development will be from method (b) to method (a) or (c) according to the temperament of the individual concerned.

In actual practice we do find this classification, so that before we discuss the question of what the clairvoyant sees, we must endeavour to understand *how* the clairvoyant sees.

When the psychic faculties are brought into action by the spirit operators, we find that the process is in close parallel to a very common mesmeric phenomenon termed "community of sensation."

Now, in mesmerism we sometimes find that there exists between the operator and his subject a psychic link whereby the subject is able not only to perceive in his own body the sensations of the operator, but also to perceive his very thought pictures.

An analogous link exists between the discarnate operator and his incarnate subject, and the mental pictures and emotional changes of the spirit being are reproduced in the consciousness of the psychic.

In order, however, that these impressions may be received by the subject, it is necessary that his own latent powers should be stimulated. It is common knowledge that subjects for the higher mesmeric phenomena have to be carefully developed, and in each case two distinct forces are brought into action.

We have first a concentration of vital force or magnetism of a material order upon the bodily nerve centres of the subject. This magnetism serves as a connecting link between the material and the psychic planes.

When such a link has been established, the spirit operators project a finer kind of psychic force, belonging to the spirit plane, down to their subject, and a community of thought and sensation is set up.

At the same time, the finer forces projected by the spirit operators stimulate the latent spirit perception in the subject.

It follows, therefore, that the activity of the psychic faculty at this stage of development will be very largely conditioned by the psychic atmosphere generated by the sitters, as this provides the coarser magnetism needed to stimulate the physical centres.

As development proceeds, the need of the coarser magnetism lessens, and the subject comes more and more under the sway of the higher magnetism of the spirit operators, with a consequent unfoldment of the powers of his own spiritual nature.

So we come to the point where the psychic exercises his own powers independently, apart from any stimulus, whether from incarnate or discarnate operators.

When this stage has been reached, the psychic, if he be truly wise, will continue to co-operate with his spirit friends, and receive the added power of perception which they can give him when necessary.

Such is the normal unfoldment of the psychic faculty, but it so happens that such a regular unfoldment is not always the result of psychic development.

For various reasons, many psychics cease to develop beyond a certain point, and so we find our clairvoyants may be divided into several classes, according to the stage of unfoldment at which they have arrived:

This variety of clairvoyant perception is, however, of benefit, since it provides us with psychics of varying degrees of power, suited to the various conditions under which they work.

So we find we may roughly divide clairvoyants into the following groups:—

(1) Spirit-impressed clairvoyants, receiving their visions and perceptions from spirit operators.

(2) Normal clairvoyants, whose perception is confined to the psychic planes, and whose powers are exercised independently.

(3) Normal clairvoyants whose independent powers have been developed to a degree at which they come into touch with the spirit-world, and gain direct perception of that

world. This latter type is usually assisted by advanced spirit-beings, who train the unfolded powers of the psychic.

When we consider the phenomena given from our public platforms, we find our demonstrators, as a general rule, come under the first two heads.

Very few clairvoyants have the independent psychic vision of the spirit-world, so we may dismiss this class with the remark that clairvoyants who belong to it are of a very superior order, and can furnish the most excellent evidence of the reality of the spirit world.

Let us return now to classes (1) and (2). We can now understand that the clairvoyant of class one is in magnetic sympathy, or "rapport," with a spirit operator (usually his guide).

Messages and mental pictures, received from the spirits who desire to communicate, are transmitted from the guide to the clairvoyant, who then describes the communicating intelligences.

We may say then, that clairvoyants of this class are recipients of telepathic impulses from discarnate beings, that these impulses are expressed by the clairvoyant in physical terms, and that for their correct reception the physical magnetism of the sitters and the psychic magnetism of the operators have to be delicately adjusted.

When we come to the clairvoyants of class (2) we find a different method of perception. The psychic is using his own independent psychic perception, but it does not range above the psychic or etheric plane. It is apparent, therefore, that he will only see earth-bound spirits, spirits whose proper plane is the etheric realm, or such etheric forms as may be built up by the spirit operators.

Certain individuals are the possessors of an aura containing a surplus of this psychic or etheric substance, and this is withdrawn from them, and moulded, by the will-power of the communicating spirits, into an image or picture of their own earth body.

We may say, then, that clairvoyants of this class perceive by the independent functioning of their psychic senses, that such perception is upon the etheric levels only, and is dependent upon a supply of etheric material from the sitters, in order that the manifesting entities may build etheric forms, and finally that such independent action of the psychic senses is limited by fatigue of the bodily mechanism, and also by the diminution of the magnetic forces received from the sitters.

In putting forth this little paper on the subject of clairvoyant perception, I wish to assure the reader that it is merely a tentative explanation of psychic perception, and is not in any sense an authoritative statement.

Helpful and constructive criticism upon the subject of clairvoyant perception will go far in the elucidation of this important phase of mediumship.

TUBBENDEN LANE.

Have you heard o' that thing called Tubbenden Lane?
It twizzles and twirles like a worm in pain;
And see it arter a spell o' rain!
Yet there's many a spot not half so fair,
With the hedges with hops and flowers aflare;
And apples and pear-trees all are there.
Of course, I've seen many a grand domain,
But I don't think I like 'em like Tubbenden Lane.

You'll be knowing that house in Tubbenden Lane—
Don't know our house in Tubbenden Lane?
Why, it stands on the right; you can see it plain.
There's a strawberry field across the way,
And beyond are the woods where the rabbits play
And the picnickers go of a summer's day.
It ain't what you'd call a grand domain—
But you'll see if you go down Tubbenden Lane.

It's the house where me and the Missis bides;
There's our bonny darter there, besides;
And the boys! Why they'd make you hold your sides
When they pay us a call, as their work permits;
And the ragging and joking and all, it's—it's—
Well, I can't find a rhyme as exactly fits.
But that don't matter; the thing, in the main,
Is the love in the house in Tubbenden Lane.

And there's one thing more as you ought to know:
It's a place where the Angels come and go.
No, it aint very big—it's distinctly small—
But they come in their hosts, and it holds 'em all.
They give us their love, and a blessing too,
Then away they go, for they've much to do.
And I says to the Missis, "Old lass, you see,
They aint forgot us." "No, dear," says she;
And she weeps while she smiles, as a woman can.
I just let out a cough, me being a man.
Then we turn to and put up a bit of an hymn,
Just to tell the dear Lord as we're grateful to Him
For sending His friends from His Grand Domain
To our own little house in Tubbenden Lane.

—G VALE OWEN.

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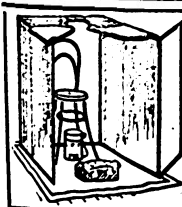


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 Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—August 2nd, 11, public circle; 6.30, Service. Thursday, August 6th, 8, Mr. F. Crook.
 Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—Saturday, August 1st, 8; Sunday, August 2nd, 11.30, 7, Mrs. L. Harvey. Thursday, 8.15, Miss Mary Mills.
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