

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

"Light! More Light!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

AN ECCLESIASTICAL DOWSER.

According to a report in the *Daily Mail*, the Abbé Bouly of Hardelot (France) appears to have been performing some astonishing feats by the use of a divining rod. One of them was the discovery of the tomb of Prince Bishop Notger, the locality of which was unknown for centuries. At Liège, the Abbé gave some demonstrations to medical men to prove that, by the aid of his rod, he could determine the kind of bacteria contained in certain tubes, the different kinds of metal contained in another tube, and so on. The statement that he could indicate the exact spot in his body in which a priest was affected with tuberculosis, rather reminds us of the claims made for the famous Abrams box. The case is of especial interest just now when the dowsing or divining rod has become a matter of especial interest and discussion. We observed that a distinguished scientist lately repudiated the powers claimed for it, but as we have repeatedly pointed out, the rod in itself has no virtue whatever. The power is in the human being, and the rod is simply a means of expressing it. Unless the psychic gift is present in the person, the most elaborate rod is worthless. It is interesting, by the way, to note the attention given by ecclesiastics in France to psychic questions. A short time ago we were reading of the researches and discoveries of the Abbé Moreux in connection with telepathy. It foreshadows the long hoped-for alliance between Science and the Church.

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A NOTE ON OBSESSION.

It seems necessary to refer to this question again, in view of some comments which we lately read on the subject—comments which suggest that some people are inclined to leave the facts of this world out of account in their dealings with the next. Obsession, then, is in effect the domination of a person's mind by some idea or influence which may or may not be supernormal; indeed, in some cases may have no connection at all with discarnate spirits. It amounts to the stimulation of something in the person concerned, not something introduced altogether from without and entirely foreign to the personality. A man may for instance be obsessed with the craze for power or the lust for gold. But if the desire were not present in germ to begin with, that would be impossible. The influences, or

streams of force, which stimulate these cravings may come from either world—more usually we think they come from this world. They reveal a lack of balance in the nature, the same lack of balance which leads to that form of obsession in which it would seem that the consciousness of some person in the flesh is under the domination of another consciousness—that of some deceased person. It is a very wide subject, and all we desire to say here is that no individual consciousness is ever displaced by another consciousness. It may be influenced by it, or temporarily dominated, but the influence is never permanent. Even when it is not taken in hand, and dispersed by conscious intelligent action, it ultimately wears itself out. We are influenced by our fellow creatures all the time, whether they are in the flesh or out of it. When the influence is excessive, and we yield to it then it becomes obsession. There is nothing fatal or diabolical in the matter, unless we accept the idea that human beings are entirely irresponsible creatures. Which, as Euclid would say, is absurd.

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OPPOSING DOCTRINES AND THEIR RECONCILIATION.

Amongst the learned contributions to *Psyche* for January is an article on "Materialism, Vitalism and Psychology," by W. M. Marston, who characterises the mechanistic set of thinkers as "hard-boiled." Of their thought he says:—

The mechanistic doctrine is pithy, succinct, and easily understood. Like the emotional set of its adherents, the mechanistic doctrine is aggressive, self-assured, and makes for rapid and decisive action. Materialism, therefore, has proved itself a very useful agent in turning man's intellect from arm-chair speculation to laboratory research.

Concerning the vitalistic set, Mr. Marston writes:—

Science is conceived of by the vitalist as a study and description of the causal influences of the higher upon the lower, the more complex upon the simpler, the more conscious upon the less animate. This doctrine is utterly repellent to many scientists, because it bases itself, initially, upon sheer, unproved assumption, and because, with equal naïveté, it ignores countless instances, appearing in everyday life, where determinative influences are exercised by cruder forms of matter upon human consciousness itself, which the vitalist regards as the highest form of energy.

If the mechanistic and the vitalistic set of thinkers would start their thinking with the clear conception that the Universe throughout is a dual-unity of what we call the material and what we term spiritual, they could not, like Omar, always come out by the same door by which they entered.

THE SCATCHERD MEMORIAL FUND.

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SPIRITUAL CHAOS.

BY FREDERICK STEPHENS (PARIS).

According to Dr. Whitehead and his scientific brethren, the fundamental concepts of which nineteenth-century scientists were so proud, space and time, matter and energy, "are now in the melting-pot," and there, for the present, he thinks we must leave them. The "iron laws" of which we used to hear so much are rusty, and the erstwhile confident note of Naturalism is silent. But although the mechanical and materialistic world-view dominant in the Victorian period is now considered by serious students to be absurdly inadequate, with the consequence that it is now discarded by them, the spirit of the age is one of intense practical materialism. The modern man in the street lives, moves, and has his being engrossed in the pursuit of wealth in order that he may have a good time, amusement being the main object in life. A deadly spiritual indifference rather than any active antagonism to religion is the prevailing characteristic of the post-war world.

Extreme specialisation prevails in all departments of scientific inquiry and intellectual workers are disinclined to venture outside the narrow bounds of their particular branch for fear of being "caught out" by their colleagues. Above all, there is the dread bogey of every positivist who respects himself, the dread of being taxed with mystical or theological tendencies! Organised Christianity is rent with internal dissensions. These have been notorious for years past, but they have now become so acute that the Established Church is threatened with disruption. Here are the Anglo-Catholics, who "nightly pitch their moving tent a day's march nearer Rome," and the Protestants engaged in acrimonious controversy about the Official Prayer-Book, while the Modernists distribute their theological buffetings impartially among both disputants. Meanwhile, outside, and out of reach of the theologians, vast numbers of men and women have lost all real vital belief in religion and an after-life. These ideas have ceased to form part of their mental make-up. If anyone thinks this statement is exaggerated, let him remember that the pragmatic test is the acid test in this matter. Many adopt an attitude of agnosticism with regard to it, in despair of reaching any conclusion, and the orthodox revolutionary Marxist fanatic noisily proclaims his jubilation at the prospect of the early disappearance of what he regards as a "bourgeois" superstition invented to keep "the workers" contented with their earthly lot. Many nominal adherents of the various Christian sects entertain vague and shadowy half-beliefs largely due to the fact that they still carry about with them as a matter of tradition and custom the influences of early life. But it is a subject which they instinctively leave out of their thoughts, except on the Sunday attendance at their Church or Chapel. The late war showed up in lurid fashion the slight hold of Christianity upon the minds of the people at large. The point to note is that this disintegration of belief extends to those of fundamental character. It is no longer confined to minor or subsidiary issues. The existence of God and the belief in the soul as distinct from the brain are now freely questioned and freely denied.

Organised religion, we have been told by that distinguished theologian Dean Inge, is everywhere in retreat, and he does not spare the biting criticism of which he is a master in exposing "the half-belief and half make-belief too common among church-goers. . ."

He warns his obscurantist fellow-churchmen of what is in store in words that show an enthusiasm for science, such as Huxley, in his most joyous anti-theological polemics, might have written: "Science has been the slowly advancing Nemesis which has overtaken a barbarised and paganised Christianity. She has come with a winnowing fan in her hand, and she will not stop until she has thoroughly purged her floor." This is well said, but it behoves us to watch carefully that some of Dean Inge's scientific allies do not carry the purging process too far. For instance, he firmly believes that the visions of the mystic testify to an objective reality—but the majority of psychologists and pathologists would assert that they are merely interesting cases of a pathological nature, and really belong to the mental alienist. The "subconscious" has become since Myers's time a convenient and capacious dustbin, into which everything may be thrown and from which anything can be extracted. When we come to the problem of the survival of death—the most important of all—we find that Dean Inge's philosophy has merely disparagement of psychic research, and appears to be little more than the effort of a powerful and acute mind to find plausible reasons for its prejudices. We are told that "the mere question of survival in time and for a time is almost frivolous to the religious mind," and "so long as we discuss immortality merely as the question whether the individual continues to exist as a conscious being after his death, we have taken it out of its religious context." The answer to this is that it is useless to discuss immortality at all if by that term is meant contemplation and adoration of the Divine Spirit of Goodness, Beauty and Wisdom, in a spaceless and timeless existence. It is not that this idea is denied, it is merely suggested that the statement is little more than a collection of words which reveal no significance on analysis. The Neo-Platonist loftily rejects the more humble end at which the student of psychic research aims. "Aut Cæsar aut Nullus" is his motto. But the metaphysical arguments for immortality, however brilliantly set forth by Plato and his disciple Plotinus, and continued since his time by a series of acute thinkers, still remain metaphysical, and as such make no appeal to the methods by which science has so immensely extended human knowledge. And this is the reason that they leave scientific men unimpressed—and the popular mind, taking its cue from them, remains unimpressed also. Nothing is gained by sneering at the modern interest in telepathy, clairvoyance, etc., and calling it "Modern Necromancy." Schopenhauer and Carl Du Prel were not remarkable for their credulity, and the first-named once said that disbelief in clairvoyance was a mark of ignorance on the part of the sceptic. Why accept the veracity of Plotinus when he relates his transcendental vision of the "One," and pass over the far better supported testimony of modern sensitives to the existence of these transcendental faculties?

A belief which a man cannot connect and co-ordinate with other beliefs relating to similar matters cannot long maintain an independent vitality. Whatever science does not tend to *prove*, she in some sort tends to *disprove*; beliefs die out without formal refutation if they find no place among the store of verified and systematised facts.

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Thus wrote Frederick Myers, and his words are an exact diagnosis of the disease which is sapping Christianity to-day. Unless the alleged events which are related of the Founder of Christianity can be shown to be facts which have been part of human experience for centuries, there is little hope that religion, concerned as it is with transcendental things, will long survive the aggressive secularity of the modern world. It will be useless to weave systems of transcendental speculation based on the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus, suspended, so to speak, in the air and completely out of contact with the world-concepts of physical science. Did not Christ say: "In my Father's house are many mansions"? which we are told means "many halting-places or stages." Is there not an encouragement in these words for the thought that beyond this immediately physical and material plane, there are progressively higher or more etherial planes of being, in which the dualism of subject and object still persists? It is to the enduring credit of that great scientist, Sir Oliver Lodge, that he has pointed out the direction in which research of the future may profitably be directed, by his hint that life and consciousness, whilst manifested in our physical and material plane and conditioned by the limitations of this plane, may yet belong to a super-sensuous and etherial world.

Unless continuity can be discovered, we are left with nothing better than the weaving of systems of metaphysical speculation. And metaphysics, although a delightful discipline, is not unlike mathematics, which, as Bertrand Russell shrewdly says, "is the subject in which you never know what you are talking about, or whether what you say is true."

DO SPIRIT COMMUNICATORS SUFFER?

BY F. J. ATKIN.

A contributor to LIGHT recently stated that he had never come across any evidence that intercourse with embodied beings is disadvantageous to the disembodied. Possibly, then, an experience I had not many weeks ago may, by putting an embodied person on his guard, help some one of those brave souls daring much for the common good.

An enquirer into Spiritualism, a lady, was invited to tea. With her she brought her niece (a stranger to us), and during the afternoon, to our discomfort, asked my wife and myself if we would mind sitting with the planchette, as she wished to ask some questions of our guide.

After several answers had been given, it was noticeable that the writing showed signs of strain. My wife, asked if she were tired, replied in the negative, and we continued; but a moment later our guide wrote: "I am tired. A fog is suffocating me, and I cannot breathe." We immediately said good-bye, and he left us.

Distressed at the thought of what he might be suffering, I asked him about it another evening, and was assured that with us *alone* he was quite comfortable. In the previous seance, however, the strange lady, who was very antagonistic, had, by her hostile thoughts, set up forces which he could not cope with, and these had taken the form of, to him, a choking fog.

That any real harm would be allowed to happen to the spirit communicator I do not believe, but it certainly must have been a temporary discomfort of a most acute kind.

ON THURSDAY, 26th ult., Dr. Hector Munro delivered an address to the London Spiritualist Alliance dealing with the relations between psychic phenomena and the latest discoveries in psychology, Captain Bartlett in the chair. We hope to give further particulars of this address next week.

AN ATTACK AND A REPLY.

"I am a Roman Catholic and have found nothing but help and good from Spiritualism," writes a correspondent of LIGHT, a lady of title, who encloses with her letter a twopenny pamphlet issued by the Catholic Truth Society, entitled, "Modern Spiritualism," by A. J. Anderson, who—to quote the words of LIGHT's correspondent—"has cleverly picked out any weak points in the Spiritualist teachings he has read and carefully refrained from quoting any of the essential ones that teach the importance of good living and thinking."

Now this kind of distortion is so common that, after a while, the seasoned observer ceases to regard it with any feeling of anger or distress. Irresponsible utterances, misrepresentation of facts, abound in such profusion that for the trained and balanced mind they lose their edge by constant repetition. Nevertheless, perhaps it may be of interest to examine very briefly this case for modern Spiritualism as presented in the twenty-page pamphlet of A. J. Anderson—whose name, by the way, the present writer does not recognise as that of an authority on the subject.

It is quite unnecessary to deal exhaustively with Mr. Anderson's misstatements; for the most part they are confined to stale gibes which belong to a past era: for instance, that any attempt to communicate with the souls of the departed "is forbidden by the Bible," a statement that is not worth the trouble of refuting. That old bogey, the Devil, is again brought forward as the probable instigator of psychic manifestations—another argument which repetition has made somewhat tedious.

By the way, would not our Catholic friends be somewhat bored by the accusation that Catholics were Idol Worshippers? Would they think it necessary to refute this dull and ignorant gibe? Would they not feel that such an assertion could only emanate from a sheep-witted ignoramus who was too unintelligent to be worth powder and shot? The experienced student of psychic matters probably feels like that when he encounters the "forbidden-by-the-Bible" attitude and the "communication-with-devils" argument.

I will pass over A. J. Anderson's remarks on fraud, trickery, and auto-suggestion; one can ignore his (or her) reference to "the frightful results which sometimes follow Spiritualism"; it is unnecessary to deal with the general hash which he or she makes of the subject of automatic writing; these things are wearisome, dull, stale and unprofitable; they need no counter-statement. What is of interest, however, is the remark made by the pamphleteer on page 8. It is one that is peculiarly self-revealing. It discloses at once A. J. Anderson's logical standpoint. The particular passage is as follows:—

These communications must either be the truthful messages of discarnate human souls, *in which case crash goes the truth of revelation* [my italics] or else they must arise from a common campaign of spirits who are personating human souls in order to destroy belief in revealed religion.

This paragraph is so truly illuminating that I will forbear to comment upon it. Let it stand alone unadorned. To add anything to it might spoil it.

Personally, I have no sort of bias against Catholics; on the contrary I am a whole-hearted admirer of their high ideals, their austerity, the dignity and beauty of their services, and that high quality, which one can only describe as *tone*, in many Catholic organisations. As I have remarked above, I find misstatement, distortion, misrepresentation, irresponsible utterances everywhere; I find it sometimes in the Spiritualist movement, and out of it; but when I encounter a line of argument such as I have quoted above, I metaphorically throw up my hands in despair. I ask myself, "Is this *really* the Catholic view of modern Spiritualism, or is it merely the personal view of A. J. Anderson?"

NIGEL.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AT KENSINGTON TOWN HALL.

A large and fashionably-attired assembly listened with keenest interest to the address given by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on the evening of January 25th at Kensington Town Hall. The meeting was arranged by the London Spiritualist Alliance (of which organisation Sir Arthur is, of course, President) in conjunction with the Psychic Bookshop.

SIR ARTHUR quoted a number of authentic cases of spiritual intervention, and asked if any critic was prepared to give an explanation of these on any ground other than that of the spirit-hypothesis.

There was, for instance, the case where Mrs. Kelway Bamber's son, killed in action, had given a message concerning one of his brother officers, saying: "Willy has just been shot down behind the German lines." This officer was posted as missing, and for a considerable time there was no trace of him. Subsequently his body, lying beside his wrecked aeroplane, was discovered behind the enemy lines as indicated by young Kelway Bamber. Could telepathy explain this? asked Sir Arthur.

Another remarkable case concerned Major Segrave, the famous racing motorist. While aboard a liner, accompanied by his mechanics, and a racing car with which he was to create the magnificent speed record of 203 miles per hour, Major Segrave received a wireless message: "Change your driving-chains." This was signed by somebody at the engineering works in England where the automobile had been constructed. Accordingly Major Segrave gave instructions for the driving-chains to be replaced by new ones. On returning to England, after his wonderful exploit in setting up an hitherto untouched speed record in the United States, Major Segrave approached the sender of the cable and enquired the reason why it had been sent. The reply was that at a Spiritualistic seance a message had been received stating that one of the driving-chains was not sufficiently strong to stand the strain which would be imposed upon it, and that it would fracture at a speed of 170 miles per hour. "Very well," replied Major Segrave, "let us put this to the test." Accordingly the two chains which had been removed from the car on board ship were taken to the workshop and tested. Sure enough one of them fractured at a strain equivalent to 174 miles per hour. What would have happened to Segrave had this chain been used can be left to the imagination!

"Again I put it to you," said Sir Arthur, "what theory do you offer to explain this message?"

On one occasion, in his own home, some vases and a photo-frame which customarily rested on the mantelshelf were found to be placed upon the rug in front of the fireplace. Subsequently, at a seance, Sir Arthur's son, Kingsley Doyle, now in spirit life, manifested, stating that he had changed the position of the photo-frame and vases in a light-hearted moment for the sole purpose of recording the fact that he had been in his father's house.

Sir Arthur mentioned that he was the privileged possessor of seven private note-books belonging to Stainton Moses, in which Moses had recorded the spirit messages which he had received at various times and from various communicators. These notes were not intended for the public eye. One of the messages was signed, "Benjamin Franklin"; the name was boldly written in a characteristic hand with a convoluted flourish below. "It occurred to me," said Sir Arthur, "that I had in my house a copy of the American Declaration of Independence bearing Franklin's signature. I at once turned it up and compared it with the signature in the note-book. Sure enough, there was the signature, 'Benjamin Franklin,' written in practically identical writing, with the same big flourish in the signature. I do not claim," said Sir Arthur, "that

this proves that the signature in the note-book must have been that of Franklin; that perhaps would be going too far; but I do ask my audience this: Is it likely that an elderly clergyman would spend his time forging Franklin's signature for his own private and personal amusement, intending that no other eye would see it but his own?"

He then recalled the analysis made by Mr. J. Arthur Findlay of some 271 answers to questions which had been put to the medium, Mr. Sloan. One of the questions was definitely wrong, and one was doubtful; the remainder were correct, and out of 269 correct replies it was possible that 100 of them could have been obtained from books of reference and other sources; but the remaining 169 correct answers could not possibly have been known by Mr. Sloan nor obtained by him from any known source.

Another instance which was difficult to explain by any hypothesis other than the spirit theory was that of two young men who set sail in a small yacht, the "Iolanthe," off the coast of Australia, a voyage from which they never returned. Their father was heart-broken, and he visited a medium, through whom one of the sons spoke; he said that the vessel had been overcome by a sudden powerful flurry of wind and had sunk. He and his brother had been drowned. Then he added aside to the father, so that the mother, who was present, should not hear: "Harold was eaten by a large fish."

There seemed to be no method of checking this assertion, but shortly afterwards a huge shark was caught off Geelong. Inside the body of this fish was found a pipe, money, and various small articles which were recognised as having belonged to the drowned boy, Harold. "Our opponents," said Sir Arthur, "are fond of explaining psychic phenomena by telepathy. Are we to assume in this case that it was telepathy from the shark?"

Touching briefly upon the subject of fraudulent mediums, the speaker begged his audience not to allow their attention to be diverted from the main issue by a few rare cases of charlatanism, but to consider authentic facts of which there was a vast and overwhelming profusion. "Do not bother about fake mediums," he said; "you only hear about us when there is something unpleasant to hear."

"I have tried," said Sir Arthur, "to show you that this thing is true. I will now turn to another point. Is it good?" It had been said that Spiritualists "summoned" the spirits. This was quite untrue. All that we could do was to prepare the physical conditions so that those living in the other world could communicate if they desired. That they do desire to do this is proved abundantly. In fact, they wished to get into touch with us far more often than we are prepared to receive them. "It is they who come and we who receive."

With regard to the suggestion that the phenomena came from the devil, he asked, would the devil go round the world impressing upon the people that there was a future state and counselling them to live a decent and upright life in preparation for it?

People were fond of quoting Biblical texts to support anti-Spiritualist views, but one could find a text to support almost anything, and another text to refute it with equal ease. In Bradford, for instance, where he addressed a meeting on one occasion, someone had put up a large text which conveyed a warning against visiting soothsayers. Sir Arthur had written to the local Press next day pointing out that following this text was another which prohibited the wearing of cloth made of two materials, and as the trade of Bradford consists largely of the manufacture of wool and cotton, no doubt the retort "went home," for he heard nothing during the rest of his stay concerning the inadvisability of visiting soothsayers!

In conclusion, Sir Arthur quoted briefly a number of communicators who had spoken of the conditions of their existence. One said: "It is a vast change and very different to what I expected. . . . After

a while the earth life seems like a far-off dream." A lawyer had said: "It is so very different here and wants getting accustomed to. Those around harmonize instead of jarring. Life on earth was just drifting round in a grey atmosphere." Another message said: "In my world everyone has a chance to fulfil his heart's desire."

Discussing the state of mind of new-comers to the next world, one communicator said: "Some come over full of understanding and adapt themselves readily to the new life; others who have been mis-taught wander around dazedly, unable to comprehend their position."

He and his co-workers had discussed the question of religion with their spirit friends; their reply was that all religion is good if it makes a man better and is sincerely followed; it must, however, be a real religion and not a mere matter of formalities, of attending at a stone building once a week. "Do not shake a man's religion if it is real to him," was the counsel given from the spirit world.

MR. R. H. SAUNDERS, who ably presided, paid a tribute to the great work Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was doing for the betterment of the world, and his remarks were warmly applauded.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(The Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by Correspondents.)

THE BAYLIS CASE.

Sir,—If Mr. and Mrs. Baylis can produce the mental and physical phenomena which I have experienced with them by normal—that is, fraudulent—means, if they are not, in fact, mediums, then they can both see clearly in the dark, they can alter the shapes, sizes and texture of their hands and faces, they are marvellous mimics and ventriloquists, they have abnormal memories; and, most amazing of all, they can read unspoken thoughts with ease and accuracy and respond instantly to silent mental requests, while at the same time employed with hands and voices with several other deluded sitters! All this I find impossible to believe.

At my first sitting with Mr. and Mrs. Baylis, held at the Marylebone Spiritualist Association at which all five of us were friends and unknown to the mediums, I slipped on my finger, after the lights had been put out, a ring that had belonged to my mother. On being caressed by hands which I understood to be those of my mother, I spoke to her *mentally*, asking her if she knew what I had of hers; at once she fondled the ring. I had been reading a lot about apports and, *mentally*, jokingly asked if she could take the ring home for me! At once the ring was removed from my finger and a few seconds later I heard my wife's voice from the other side of the circle say: "Why, someone is putting a ring on my finger." (My wife and I were then unknown to the Baylises). I then asked *mentally* for the ring to be brought back to me, and it was at once taken from my wife's finger and put on my own.

There is a sequel to this: At my next sitting with these mediums, some months later, I had again taken the ring from my pocket, after the light had been put out, and had slipped it on my finger. During the sitting the hand purporting to be my mother's gently removed the ring, and again I heard my wife say: "A ring is being put on my finger."

I did not ask for this to be done on this occasion, but I suggest that this unsolicited repetition of my previous mental request may have been given by my mother in order to convince me that it was herself. At any rate, it did prove that the same intelligence was present and remembered my previous mental request.

At this same seance I suddenly felt a hand pushing something into my outside breast pocket. I found it was my wife's necklace. This she had *mentally* asked the spirit, who had signified that he was her father, to do. She had asked, without uttering a word: "Take off my necklace and put it in his outside breast pocket." (The clasp of this necklace is difficult to unfasten, even in light.) My wife also received an evidential answer by hand-tapping to another mental question of a private nature.

Before leaving my office for this sitting I put two postcards in an inner pocket. Both bore the name of my firm in type. No one at the sitting knew that I had these cards. After the lights were out I took them from my pocket, with a pencil, and *mentally* asked if my mother would write something for me on them. The cards and pencil were at once gently taken by hands—no hesitation at all. Other hands then tapped my knees. Soon one postcard was given back to me; the other was handed to another sitter and my pencil was put behind his ear. After the sitting I found the following scrawled faintly on one card: "Mother, with love"; and on the other card: "God bless you."

I repeated this experiment in almost exactly the same way at my next sitting with Mr. and Mrs. Baylis four months later, but this time I threw one of the cards silently on the floor. No one present knew that I had the cards or that I was going to produce them in the dark. On one card was written: "I will help you," and on the other: "Mother love." The words, "I will help you," were a logical answer to a *mental* statement I made during this same sitting; the same words were spoken in direct voice during this seance. My mother did not touch the ring on this occasion, but she stroked my head in a manner which had an evidential reference to something done by her at another place. During this seance I dropped my pencil, and it was picked up immediately and put back into my hand. I see from my notes, written immediately after this sitting, that a direct voice stated to be that of W. T. Stead gave me a prompt and evidential answer to a matter I mentioned to him *mentally*.

Once at a Baylis sitting I asked *mentally* for permission to hold tightly on to a hand. Permission was given by three taps. I held the hand as tightly as I could and it *melted* from my grasp—it seemed to evaporate; there was no pull or muscular movement that I could detect.

I have not had much success with faces; my sight is bad, and I am blind in one eye. I have, however, once recognised my mother's features.

I should also like to state that at Mrs. Baylis's invitation, and with no mention of a fee, I joined her circle for development held by her until recently every Tuesday evening. She has given me incontrovertible proof that she is a clairvoyante of a high order, and also clairaudient, although we were not sitting for any phenomena other than we could get ourselves. Through the guidance of Mrs. Baylis and her husband I have developed slight clairvoyance and sensitiveness myself after sitting only four times in her developing circle. She has also given me tests which I have been able to verify elsewhere. I am convinced that Mrs. Baylis is incapable of deception—even, I insist, of subconscious deception—for she is a very strong-minded woman, by no means helplessly at the mercy of discarnate powers. She seems to have learnt to control them before allowing them to control her.

I enclose my card.

Yours, etc., C.

A PLEA FOR MENTAL MEDIUMS.

Sir,—Is it not time that something was done for the mental mediums? To my mind a good mental medium is a far better channel for spirit communication and evidence than any of the physical mediums we have at present. According to Mr. Dennis Bradley, the income of the Baylises for a period at least, must have been fairly substantial. And for what? Phenomena of a somewhat dubious nature even though genuine, and fragmentary at its best. On the other hand, tried and proved mediums, having indubitable gifts of mental mediumship, who have devoted many years to the cause, and who constitute a vital channel through which the spirit world is proving its message, are neglected. I have known of more than one good mental medium who has withdrawn from the Spiritualist cause, and another who, after a serious operation, could not afford to take any holiday owing to lack of funds.

Yours, etc.,
MEMBER OF L.S.A.

"CLAIRVOYANCE: THE NEED OF RECORDS."

Sir,—I hope Mr. Hannen Swaffer's suggestion on this very important point will be acted upon by all the societies who organise Spiritualistic services and propaganda meetings where clairvoyance is given.

Some of the most evidential matter I have ever heard was given on Armistice Sunday evening at the Queen's Hall, when Mrs. Roberts was the medium. This also is now "lost" for the purpose of recorded evidence; though, let us hope, not "for ever," because those to whom the evidence came are still speaking of the marvellous exactitude of every message and name given.

I always take very full notes of any and all seances which I arrange for myself or friends, and have been able to follow up some remarkable points of evidence and sequence.

Yours, etc.,
K. C. HACKNEY.

LIGHT.

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THE CHEATING MEDIUM

AN ECHO FROM THE PAST.

We have frequently had occasion to observe that the Spiritualists of earlier days had a clearer understanding of the nature of mediumship and the conditions of a successful seance than appears to prevail to-day. The serious student of the subject who reads the psychic literature of the past in the way of journals and books, is often struck by the fact. But it is a necessary consequence of the changed conditions. In the earlier days there was more leisure—life was not lived at such a pace as in these times; moreover, the subject was under a ban, and its followers being few and, in a way, proscribed by public sentiment, were thrust up against the serious side of the subject they were investigating. To-day it is becoming a matter for the multitude, and if there is a certain superficiality of view, that is a natural consequence; knowledge grows always slowly and unevenly.

Of late we have had to hear and read much of trickery on the part of mediums. But that is a very old tale. Not many of our readers will have any personal recollections of the late Mr. C. C. Massey, although his name is still remembered. It was well known in earlier days. Mr. Massey was a barrister and a near friend of Sir William Barrett, whose view of him was that he was one of the ablest minds engaged in psychic investigation.

Between thirty and forty years ago this question of the trickery of mediums was in the air and was being discussed in the *Westminster Gazette*, then an evening paper. In a letter to that journal Mr. Massey testified that he had received his first certain knowledge of supernormal physical phenomena "through the most notoriously cheating medium in London."

"Before I went to him," wrote Mr. Massey, "I was informed that he cheated; I caught him cheating, or seeming to cheat, on several occasions and said nothing about it, was present at more than one regular 'exposure' and attended over seventy sittings before I obtained the satisfaction above mentioned." And Mr. Massey goes on to explain that he visited the medium because, although he was told of the man's propensities, he was also informed from experienced quarters that he was one of the most genuine and powerful of mediums, and also because he (Mr. Massey) had already learned that trickery, or the delusive appearance of it, "were antecedently to be

expected as the results, direct or indirect, of the same influence to which genuine phenomena were to be attributed."

The older and more experienced Spiritualists of to-day are well aware of this. They can confirm Mr. Massey's testimony from their own personal experience, and they will readily echo his observation in the letter under notice, that the possibility of absolutely genuine evidences being gained in such circumstances explains the fact, so puzzling to the ordinary observer, that Spiritualism has not been killed by "exposures."

Now it would be absurd to make any wholesale deductions from this fact. Not all mediums cheat either consciously or unconsciously. There are those who are too stable of mind and strong of character to succumb to seance influences which sweep the weaker types off their feet, so to speak. Their moral and psychic defences do not give way readily to the strong pressure which sometimes plays upon them, consciously or unconsciously. What is clearly needed then on the part of investigators is discrimination in judging results. Of course, it is a rather complicated question. We have known powerful mediums who had such a horror of anything even resembling fraud that they would never give sittings to anyone in any circumstances except under the most absolute fraud-proof conditions. We have known others, quite honest but rather weak types, whose phenomena were sometimes genuine to the last degree of purity: at other times very mixed, and occasionally apparently spurious. A third class were not entirely honest. They gave good phenomena when the conditions were favourable; when the real phenomena did not appear they counterfeited it deliberately, sometimes making their preparations in advance.

It was small wonder in such circumstances that in the eyes of those people to whom everything must be either black or white—and who form so large a part of the public—Spiritualism became a fraudulent thing and physical mediumship tended to die out. There have been signs of late years of its revival, although only to a small extent as compared with the earlier days. This time we hope physical phenomena will be treated with greater care and understanding. When these are better understood and more carefully studied, all that will die out will be the spurious variety, and this will be a boon and a blessing to all of us. For in these matters, as in all else, there is no darkness but ignorance, and ignorance has lain too long over Spiritualism as its darkest cloud.

Worthing Spiritualist Mission Church, Grafton Road.

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FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

In the current *Hibbert Journal* is published a paper on "The Phenomena of Mediumistic Trance," by T. W. Mitchell, M.D. It was read before the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at Leeds, last year. Dr. Mitchell fills nine pages of the *Hibbert* with matter that should interest its readers more than could be expected of the readers of *LIGHT*, to whom the mediumistic trance in its different aspects is a familiar phenomenon. Early in his article he remarks:—

The bare statement that knowledge is sometimes acquired in a supernormal manner, that is to say, acquired otherwise than through the known organs of sense, is in my opinion a statement of a fact of nature which men of science can no longer deny and should no longer neglect. Such an assertion does not express, explicitly or implicitly, any opinion of the way in which such knowledge is acquired or of the source from which it comes. But all may agree that supernormal acquisition of knowledge implies . . . knowledge of events in the outside world, or in other minds, which is not mediated by the organs of sense, and perhaps not mediated by any material things.

After discussing telepathy, telæsthesia and manifestations of survival, Dr. Mitchell allows that while belief in the reality of telepathy may make belief in survival easier, it renders proof of survival more difficult by reason of our ignorance of the limits of telepathy between the living. As regards the out-and-out unbeliever he thus concludes:—

And even if he should be driven to the conclusion that the mind of man may, for a time, in some form, survive the death of the body, he may still find consolation in the reflection: "That even the weariest river winds somewhere safe to sea."

In the *Leicester Mail* there is an account of an address on Spiritualism by the Rev. Father Donald Hole, Chaplain of St. James's Home, Fulham, to the Leicester City branch of the English Church Union, in St. Martin's Schools, Friar Lane. Father Hole said there are three possible explanations of Spiritualistic phenomena: "telepathy, the willing of the medium's subconscious mind, and the operation of discarnate spirits."

Says the *Mail*:—

The best observers were agreed, nevertheless, that messages were actually received from the departed. It was not sufficient to ascribe such messages to diabolic possession.

"I don't think the Devil would be such a fool!" said Fr. Hole, amid laughter, in reference to passages in "Raymond" about "whisky and cigars for new arrivals on the other side."

The *Bolton Evening News* touches upon the "Witchcraft Sets" of to-day:—

A mild craze for the occult seems to be running through Society at the moment. One or two young people who took up Spiritualism seriously were responsible for its beginnings, but now there are far more comic seances than genuine ones. Bright young people have discovered that you can get thrills out of a party in a darkened room.

The Special Correspondent of the *Daily Express* reports from Nice that telepathic messages, extending

over three years, are claimed by Mrs. Fawcett to have been received from her husband, Colonel P. H. Fawcett, the British explorer, who has been lost in the interior of Brazil since May, 1925. Mrs. Fawcett assured the *Express* correspondent that she had been kept in touch with her husband by telepathic means since the expedition started, and added:—

I do not receive the messages myself but through people practised in telepathy who are in communication with my husband. The first words they receive are always, "Tell my wife—"

The messages reveal difficulties and setbacks, but announce now that the party is on its way back, and should be heard of at the end of this month or during February.

My husband has not quite accomplished what he set out to do, but he has made discoveries of great scientific interest.

The newspapers have been giving such full accounts of the poltergeist-like doings in Eland Road, Battersea, that there is no need for us to describe them. It is necessary to remember that quite similar phenomena may originate with discarnate spirits or from an obscure mechanical interplay of incarnate forces. The adolescent cause that Mr. Arthur Machen, in *The Referee*, calls "a wild hypothesis"—"the ferment of the change from childhood to manhood or womanhood, affecting profoundly the whole being, physical, mental, spiritual"—was many years ago clearly stated, not as hypothesis but as the fact of one case at that time investigated. The great change from childhood into adolescence, says Mr. Machen, may generate a force which transcends all our capacity of definition or explanation, which acts as blindly, with as little sense of direction, as the lightning flash.

Regarding the Battersea house mystery, the *Evening Standard* notices the action taken by psychic organisations. The Secretary of the L.S.A. said to a *Standard* representative: "There is nothing remarkable about these disturbances. They conform to type. They may last a few days, or they may last six months."

The *Evening News* quotes Mr. Harry Price, Honorary Director of the National Laboratory of Psychological Research, as saying:—

It has been a very puzzling case, and assuming that the occurrences were not due to any human agency they were remarkable for their similarity to poltergeist manifestations.

The incidents were all very true to type—so true, in fact, that they were worthy of investigation. It is not unknown for a poltergeist to throw money about. The unfortunate thing, so far as this one is concerned, is that only pennies were used. Apparently it had some difficulty in securing Treasury notes.

We note with regret the decease of Mr. E. Kay Robinson, the distinguished naturalist and author. In 1887 he was editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, on which paper Mr. Rudyard Kipling was one of his assistants. He afterwards rejoined the staff of the *London Globe* with which he had previously been associated. He was much interested in *LIGHT* and some years ago contributed a theory of the future life to our columns, for while he accepted supernormal phenomena he was inclined to dispute the reality of personal survival.

AN EXHIBITION is being held at the Abbey Gallery, 2, Victoria Street, Westminster, of Arild Rosenkrantz's painting "The Omnipresent" and other drawings. This exhibition will be of interest to theosophists and those interested in the symbolical side of the pictures. So great has been the interest that the exhibition is being extended for another week, closing on February 11th.

FAKE PHENOMENA OF THE PAST.

There was a crowded assembly at Queen's Gate Hall, South Kensington, on Tuesday, 24th inst., when Mr. Harry Price, Hon. Director of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, delivered an address on "Fake Mediumship," followed by practical demonstrations of *leger-de-main*.

Mr. Price's address concerned almost entirely that class of "mediumship" that belongs to a bygone age—escaping from sealed bonds, slate-messages, reading in complete darkness, passing of matter through matter, types of phenomena which for the present-day Spiritualists are but of academic interest. The lecture, which was illustrated by a profuse number of lantern slides, was followed with intense interest.

CAPTAIN NEIL GOW, who presided, in introducing the speaker, pointed out that Mr. Price's address was in no sense an exposure of mediumship; it merely related to fraudulent mediums, as well as genuine mediums; this remark might seem platitudinous, but he, the Chairman, wished to make it absolutely clear that in the lecture and demonstration there was no thought or suggestion of accusing mediums, in general, of trickery.

The object of Mr. Price's lecture was, firstly, to show the enormous strides that have taken place in the psychic movement since the days of dark cabinets, rattling tambourines, and other meretricious "phenomena"; and secondly to show how difficult it would be in modern times to practise successful charlatany in the face of up-to-date methods of control.

"If there were no fools there would be no fraudulent mediums, and psychical researchers would have an easy task," said Mr. Price. Charlatany was as old as the hills. Ancient Greek priests made a science of deceptions; Hero of Alexandria had exposed these priestly tricksters, with their bleeding statues, talking gods, and fire-spitting idols. It is still possible to see the ruined temples, with vaults, secret doors, and speaking-tubes by which the ancient Greek populace was fooled.

In more modern times we have a mass of records of charlatans who have made a good living by pretended clairvoyance. Francis Coxe, the wandering miracle worker who was "exposed" in 1561, was put in the pillory in Cheapside; we know very little of the rights and wrongs of this case, but there is a publication on record in which Coxe confesses to trickery.

Another figure was John Romberch of Venice. He issued in 1533 a remarkable work giving a clever system by which it was possible to repeat word-for-word the contents of a page of print after one glance, and by which the order of a newly-shuffled pack of tarot cards could be remembered after once seeing the manner in which the cards were placed.

With regard to spurious physical mediumship generally, pointed out Mr. Price, it was not easy for a scientific mind to discover how even the simplest conjuring trick was done. The trained scientific mind scores in the application of physical apparatus applied to the record of phenomena, but often fails in detecting the means by which his apparatus can be made to give false readings.

Among the various charlatans who have imposed on the credulous in the past was Mary Thomas, of Wales, who early in the nineteenth century claimed that by divine power she was able to exist without earthly sustenance. For over two years this old lady reposed in her bed, apparently without a crumb or a drop of liquid passing her lips. She claimed that all her nourishment was derived from spiritual sources. Thousands of visitors, including scores of medical men, saw her—each one leaving a trifle of money with the old lady's daughter. Guards were placed round the woman's bed, night and day, for a whole month, but failed to find any trace of deception; Mary Thomas was

declared to be genuine. Unfortunately, Mary grew bolder and submitted to a second test, at which more stringent precautions were taken; it was then found that on removing a panel from the head of the bed a cavity containing food was revealed. The whole fraud was then apparent. The daughter was in the habit of surreptitiously placing food in the secret cavity which the mother removed and devoured by night—probably under the bedclothes. In one season these two frauds netted over £200, in those days a considerable sum.

Another amazing case was that of Mary Tofts of Godalming, who claimed that a message from the Almighty informed her that she would give birth to a number of rabbits at intervals. This was in the year 1726. Mr. John Howard, a surgeon of Guildford, attended her and certified that five rabbits were born in the usual manner. An enormous sensation was created; the news spread to London; Mary Tofts and her rabbits were the chief topic of conversation in the coffee-houses and the news-letters of the day. The King, George I, sent his own surgeon, Mr. St. André, to enquire into the case. The King's surgeon found Mary Tofts in labour of her fifteenth rabbit, which was born dead, placed in spirits of wine, and forwarded to the King. St. André's report was entirely favourable to the genuineness of the phenomena. From certain physiological characteristics he observed he was convinced that the births were natural. Mr. Price forbore to explain the somewhat disgusting methods by which this fraud was perpetuated. He said that full details are on record in pamphlets of the period.

Coming down to modern times, Mr. Price then touched upon various methods of producing spurious physical phenomena—stroking by "hands," spirit lights, the reading of letters in sealed envelopes in darkness, "spirit" messages and pictures on slates.

One of the most complex problems of the psychical researcher, said Mr. Price, was the fact that so many charlatans undoubtedly possessed genuine psychic faculty; they were fraudulent and genuine at the same time; when the psychic power failed they eked it out by artifice. The celebrated Eusapia Paladino was a case in point.

One of the most dramatic exposures of recent years was that of Charles Eldred. The fact that Eldred carried about a certain chair with him gave rise to a very natural suspicion. At a seance at Bayswater on March 5th, 1906, the medium and his chair were seized. The chair was found to contain a secret compartment, inside of which were found a flesh-coloured mask, a quantity of white silk, beards, wigs, and other paraphernalia of fraud. Many persons came forward to testify to the perfect genuineness of Eldred's phenomena. His exposure, however, was complete, and LIGHT of March 17th, 1906, gave full details and a photograph of the articles found in the secret compartment of the trick chair, and also of the chair itself, which, said Mr. Price, was "a work of art of which any conjurer might have been proud." In spite of this exposure in LIGHT, and other papers, Eldred was still giving materialisation seances five months later.

"Nothing that I have said this evening," said Mr. Price, "is intended as an attack on, or criticism of, genuine mediumship or upon honest mediums. My remarks are uttered as a serious warning to the credulous. I will conclude with the words of Dr. George F. Warne, the noted American Spiritualist: 'Mediumship is only as strong as its genuine demonstrations, only as safe as its accurate communications, only as trustworthy as its test-proved phenomena.'" (Loud applause.)

Mr. Price then entertained the assembly by a demonstration of some most mystifying illusions. One of the most significant—an entirely new piece of deception based upon a method not yet exploited—was the bell-box trick. A cigar-box containing an electric bell was examined by the audience, afterwards being placed on a wooden tray, which was held by the lecturer who walked among the audience. Upon request the bell rang, although Mr. Price's hands were several inches

away from the box. Messages written by the audience, placed in sealed envelopes, which in turn were put in a locked box, were read by Mr. Price in complete darkness, the entire lecture room being plunged in obscurity. On the light being turned up, the box and the envelopes therein contained were certified by a member of the audience, Dr. Neville Whyment, to be absolutely intact. Questions written by the audience were placed in a hat, one of them being taken out at random—or apparently at random; a reply to the question was then found to have been written on the inner side of two slates which had been previously cleaned by a member of the audience and tied together by the chairman—a most mystifying and astonishing piece of *leger-de-main*.

One of the most impressive demonstrations of the evening was the "cotton bandage" trick. Mr. Price's wrists and ankles were tightly bandaged by linen tape which was afterwards sealed by Dr. Whyment and Miss Phyllis Fletcher, who both expressed their opinion that the lecturer was "well and truly bound." A screen was placed in front of Mr. Price, and after an interval of two or three seconds tambourines were rattled, whistles blown, a pistol fired, and various objects were thrown over the screen. On removing the screen two or three seconds later, it was found that Mr. Price was still tightly bound and the seals were intact.

A CASE OF PSYCHOMETRY.

Miss Ida Wild sends us the following striking instance of the psychometrical powers shown by the late Mrs. Grainger of Exeter.

The instance of her psychometry I quote here was told me by the persons concerned, who are my intimate friends.

The girl who visited Mrs. Grainger was driven to Honiton Station in the morning by her father, and as it was a colder day than she had prepared for, she borrowed his muffler to wear. Her object in visiting Exeter was to apply in person for a situation of which she had heard, and it was only as a pastime that she called on the medium, late in the afternoon.

Mrs. Grainger sat "knee to knee" with her, and, taking the fringed ends of the woollen muffler, wrapped them about her own hands as she talked.

She said: "This man has had an accident with a horse." The girl agreed; her father had had several accidents with horses, the worst—which immediately sprang to her mind—leaving him badly marked in the face.

Mrs. Grainger continued: "There are no bones broken," to which the sitter replied, "No; but his face was cut about dreadfully." Mrs. Grainger denied this stoutly, and in a rather "irritable" tone said: "I tell you there was no mark. It was his *own* dog." The girl noticed the discrepancy of this, but did not argue further.

It was arranged beforehand that she could not be met in the evening on her return, and she walked home, to find her father sitting over the fire, apparently well. But when the "chap"—hired man—came in, he drew her aside to tell her "maister" had had a nasty tumble, and should get to bed.

She went at once to her father, who told her that, as he had driven into the court after seeing her off, one of the dogs had jumped up at the horse; the horse had reared wildly, throwing him across the railing from the high cart.

He added that he had said nothing then, not wishing to distress her, but remarked, "I fear I've broken a rib." She declared he had not, and told him her adventure with Mrs. Grainger. It was true he had *not* broken a rib; also it was his own dog that caused the accident, as the psychic had stated.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

It is well to get a "sense of values." Much has been said on the subject of obtaining knowledge from the spirit-world, together with the solution of all kinds of mundane problems. It is complained that the amount of knowledge gained is very slight. How strange! One would suppose that the discovery of a human life in the natural order after death was one of the most tremendous pieces of intelligence the world had ever received. Yet there are people who, having gained that knowledge, complain that they have received nothing of any importance!

* * * *

It must be a sight for the gods to witness a man gaining a communication from (let us say) his departed father, and although assured that it was his father, yet being bitterly disappointed to find that his father could not tell him where he had put some particular document before he departed from the earth! I have sometimes thought that when spirit communicators find us easier to approach on the level of the really important matters that concern us as spirit beings, they may find it less difficult to "put through" those smaller items of information which relate to our everyday life—important to us, but not of the *first* importance.

* * * *

A thoughtful man once told me that although he knew nothing about Spiritualism, he accepted its message, because: "you cannot kill life." It reminded me of the lines (I quote from memory, and may not be quite accurate):—

When the red slayer thinks he slays,
And when the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not all the subtle ways
I turn, and pass, and come again.

That is a poet's idea of the indestructibility of life, and a fine one.

* * * *

It has been remarked as a queer paradox that death should be regarded as something dreadful and mysterious, and at the same time very cheap and common. It has certainly been dealt out in a wholesale way in recent years. Which reminds me of a conversational bore who at a club remarked: "It is strange to think that every time I breathe somebody dies." As the speaker's breath was strongly flavoured with the fumes of stale liquor, a bystander remarked that it was *not* very remarkable.

* * * *

So it seems that steam railways are eventually to give way to petrol and electric traction, and cable-telegraphy to wireless. Let us wait and see, remembering that the electric light has not yet disposed of gas, and motor transport not entirely got rid of the horse. Sometimes the old things are more trustworthy than the new, although they may not be so rapid. Mr. G. K. Chesterton once drew a contrast between a piece of rope and a piece of telegraph cable, and a knife and a pencil sharpener. With the rope and the knife one could do many things, but the telegraph cable and the pencil sharpener had but very limited uses. They had been specialised, and lost their general value. The old things have their merits.

D. G.

CORRECTION.—Miss H. A. Dallas points out that in her review of *The Bridge*, in LIGHT of December 17th last (p. 619), the sentence, "Most of the communications recorded in this book were received by Miss Walker as an intermediary, the lady, Mrs. White, for whom they were intended, being present," should have read, "Mrs. White . . . *not* being present."

MENTAL STRENGTH AND BODILY WEAKNESS.

By MAJOR R. P. MORRISON.

All are united in praise of strength, but few trouble to enquire into the nature of the quality they admire. "Strength" is of many kinds, and these are not always found in combination, but all are included in the two main channels: mental and physical strength.

Great confusion of thought exists regarding these two channels; the word, "channel" is used advisedly, because strength may well be called the instrument, or channel of power. This confusion arises from the difficulty of realising a mental cause-world through the medium of the physical senses.

Physical strength must always reflect its mental counterpart; and yet, paradoxically, it does so inversely. In respect to physical strength, man is one of the weakest animals; but, in spite of this apparent handicap, he is able to subdue all other animals by virtue of his superior mentality. Why, then, should he continue to covet a quality that relates him to the kingdom he governs, rather than to its inner counterpart, which is his birthright as a "Lord of Creation"?

A right understanding of this question would do much to clear away the tangle of thought which, at the present time, is retarding human progress. There can be small doubt as to which form of strength (mental or physical) is most worshipped in the world to-day. A glance at any newspaper will reveal pages devoted to physical athletics of every description; but the greatest feats of mental strength only receive passing notice.

This is significant as an index to the verdict of the majority. No monarch receives greater tribute than a champion athlete in any branch of sport, but the champions of "mental athletics" are permitted to go their ways in peace. There are a few, no doubt, who achieve a measure of popularity because their personalities and mental gymnastics appeal to the imagination; but these form the exception to the rule. It is well that this is so, because mental strength is born in secret and springs from the peace of contemplation.

Hero-worship marks an undeveloped intellect, and it will decline with the growth of mental power. A study of evolution will show that strength of body is in inverse ratio to strength of mind. In primeval days, when mental power was in its germ, monsters of enormous physical strength roamed the land. Humanity's greatest athletic champions flourished at a time when science, both material and spiritual, was in its infancy. The old knuckle-fighter of the prize ring was a monument of physical strength and endurance; the modern glove-fighter relies, almost entirely, upon his mentality. Instances could be multiplied, but these should prove sufficient to demonstrate the fallacy of bowing down before physical prowess.

The confusion of thought arises from the fact that man stands midway between the animal and spiritual kingdoms; through his body he is related to the animal, through his mind to the spiritual. But all that appertains to the body seems the only reality owing to the physical nature of the senses; whereas the qualities of the mind seem ethereal because the corresponding senses are, as yet, undeveloped. Therefore humanity still covets animal qualities and makes little effort to develop its birthright in the mind.

The world of mind is the world of causation, whose effects appear in the world of matter; but the material nature of the senses makes it seem as though the effect is really the cause. This appearance is strengthened by the fact that the cause, itself, must have a correspondential reproduction in matter.

To take an example: physical training is supposed to promote increased vitality with its accompanying health. There are countless systems of muscular exer-

cises which profess to free the flesh from all its weaknesses. Sport, and outdoor games of all sorts are recommended by doctors and physical culture experts alike as necessary to produce a condition of physical perfection. But this is putting the cart before the horse. The truth lies in the fact that abundant physical vitality must express itself in some form of physical exercise.

This gives rise to the question: "What, then, causes physical vitality?" The answer—subject to a certain qualification—would be: "A lack of mental vitality." The gymnastic motto, "A sound mind in a sound body," might well be changed to: "A stagnant mind has a sound body." This may seem a revolutionary statement, and would doubtless receive no credence from the physical training experts, but it is supported by the facts of evolution. Savages are much finer specimens, physically, than civilised men. Animals, when removed from the immediate influence of human mentality, enjoy a state of physical fitness that the greatest athlete must envy. And yet, since man is linked to the animal through his body, even the physique of the animal is dependent upon the progress of human mentality.

If the soundness of this reasoning be granted, it would appear that mental strength can only be acquired at the expense of the body; power of mind means weakness of body, because the mind requires for its growth the vitality that would otherwise feed the bodily nerves. The further progress of humanity along the road of evolution would not be possible in any other way, because the spiritual (or mental), and the material worlds have not yet amalgamated sufficiently for the cause to produce an accurate effect. In other words, mental qualities still become so distorted when in contact with matter that they are reflected in opposites.

This is, however, a necessary stage in evolution, and the time must inevitably come when mental power will find expression in an abundance of bodily vitality.

"The perfect man we will but
only find,
When mind shall equal body,
body, mind."

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Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—February 5th, 11, service; 6.30, Mr. T. W. Ella. Wednesday, 7.30, public circle at 55, Station Road.

Peckham.—Lausanne Road.—February 5th, 7, Miss J. B. Proud. Thursday, 8.15, Nurse Giles.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—February 5th, 7.30, Mme. de Beaupaire, trance address. February 8th, 7.30, Mrs. Holloway, address and clairvoyance.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—February 5th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Miss Estelle W. Stead.

Fulham.—12 Lettice Street (near Parsons Green Station).—February 5th, 11.30, circle; 3, Lyceum; 7, Rev. G. Nash. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Fillmore.

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