

# Light:

L 29X

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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**"THE HIGHER ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM."**

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## CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .. .. .	241
"The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism" .. .. .	242
Moss Fairies .. .. .	243
Significant Photographic Experiments .. .. .	244
The Human Investigation Society .. .. .	244
Piano Playing Phenomena .. .. .	244
Letters to the Editor .. .. .	245
The Identical Spirit .. .. .	246
Sidelights .. .. .	247
Reflections on Sir Oliver Lodge's Recent Address .. .. .	248
The Way of The Spirit .. .. .	248
The Personal Side .. .. .	249
Rays and Reflections .. .. .	249
Mesmer and Mesmerism .. .. .	250
Notes on New Books .. .. .	250

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

### AN ELECTION NOTE.

Somewhere in one of the Charles Dickens's humorous satires on the intelligence of his countrymen he tells how, when, at an Election, an old farmer was troubled about the disposal of his vote, he was told that one of the rival Parties was the Gentlemanly Party; so he at once put on his boots and voted for it. Since those days the standard of education, if not of intelligence—they are not the same thing—has risen considerably, and the average voter of to-day requires something better than this rather vague generalisation to influence his vote. That an important aspect of Spiritualism—the question of mediumship—should have been made an election issue is a matter of satisfaction to some of us and of annoyance to others. But the fact remains, whether for good or ill. It is certainly a very practical step. A vote is usually more effective than a pious opinion. Our own standpoint in the matter is concerned rather more with our main proposition—the reality of a spiritual world. This, although more than a generalisation, being to us a very vital and definite matter, is too mighty a theme for the average mind, which prefers something smaller, more immediate and more amusing. There is no reason to grieve over this. Many trivial things are more important than they seem. They serve to keep life sane and wholesome, and it certainly appears at times that those whose minds are entirely taken up with large and serious subjects are inclined to be rather dull fellows.

### "IN THINGS DOUBTFUL, LIBERTY."

A long letter from P.H.P., Auckland, New Zealand, informs us that the writer does not deny the phenomena of Spiritualism, but he complains that Spiritualism does not give him a logical explanation of the origin of life, and that Spiritualists disagree on the subject of reincarnation. He goes very fully into various aspects of the matter, complaining that while "Theosophists attempt to harmonise the facts by introducing the theory of reincarnation", Spiritualists "remain silent on these problems and can offer nothing". This does not at all coincide with the facts as we see them, since we know that Spiritualists debate the problems in question and offer many theories about them, although nothing final and authoritative. But Spiritualism is not a system with definite doctrines or

dogmas. Its fundamental position is the *spiritual nature of life*, involving human survival of death and communication between the spirits incarnate and discarnate. Being agreed on these main principles, Spiritualists quite naturally differ on some of the details and having no supreme authority in the way of a Pope or a Council to lay down what they should or should not believe in these disputed questions, there is, a considerable amount of diversity, or what our correspondent, P.H.P., would doubtless regard as a distressing indefiniteness. To us, this lack of fixity is a distinct gain: it gives opportunity for private judgement and independent thinking. It is to be regretted that our correspondent finds it a matter for vexation of spirit.

### THE INCREASING PURPOSE.

Mr. James Douglas always writes as a mind highly sensitive to the thought of the time. In a recent article from his pen in the *Sunday Express* he puts the present position into a sentence: "Science is sloughing its materialism more rapidly than Theology's sloughing its materialism." He points out that "Science is abandoning its old disbelief in the existence and persistence of the soul after the death of the body." He cites Professor McDougall as testifying that the evidence that man is not a machine is growing in strength. That indeed was the theme of Sir Oliver Lodge's recent address at the Central Hall, Westminster. It is probable that Mr. Douglas, who was, we think, rather repelled from Spiritualism when in some of its elementary forms it was first thrust on his attention, has now seen its larger meaning, and discerned those contours of the subject which at first escaped his attention. He puts the scientific position in a graphic way when he says:

Science has dissolved matter into a shadowy mist of invisible phantoms and ghosts which it calls electrons and protons.

He believes in these "wraiths of mathematic science" because he feels there is a spiritual universe behind and beyond them. He writes finely on the question of the extension of personal consciousness into another life. That is a problem which perplexes even many of those who believe in survival, and who do not yet realise that it is not a question of the loss or diminution of personality, but of its enlargement and enrichment to a degree "unshadowable in words" as Tennyson put it when writing on the same theme.

### THE MAY MEETINGS.

The 28th Annual Convention of the London District Council of the Spiritualists' National Union, Ltd., was held on Thursday, 16th inst., at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street. The three meetings, morning, afternoon and evening, were attended by large enthusiastic audiences. The speakers were Mr. Hannen Swaffer, Mrs. Barbara McKenzie and Mr. Horace Leaf. Mrs. Estelle Roberts gave remarkable clairvoyant delineations at the afternoon meeting.

We hope to give a fuller account of the proceedings in our next issue.

## "THE HIGHER ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM."

[Miss Cordelia Grylls sends us the following extracts from *The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*, by Wm. Stainton Moses ("M.A., Oxon"). This book is now out of print, but a copy of it is in the Library of The London Spiritualist Alliance, and other similar Libraries. It is well worthy of perusal by all interested in the subject.]

*Materialisation Seances.* "I believe the whole method of conducting materialisation seances to be erroneous. . . . It has been usual to seclude a medium from view by means of curtains or a cabinet. It is an old story that I detest this method, and protest against the bewildering perplexities that it introduces into the investigation. . . . Now, when a medium is secluded from view, it is very difficult indeed to say with any certainty what takes place. She is bound to her chair, and, if a form appears, and if, further, the medium and the form be seen at the same time, or if the medium be proved to be in her chair at the time that the observers see the form, there is good evidence for one special class of manifestation called Materialisation or Form-Manifestation. There is a compact and perfectly unimpeached body of evidence for the reality of this astounding phenomenon, and exposures do not touch it.

"If, again, the tying be secure, and a form be presented without any proof that the medium is in the chair, and if, further, she be found in her place with tying unmolested after the seance is over, there is evidence of an interference with ordinary natural law by occult power, but no cogent evidence of materialisation. It is this phenomenon that I believe to be of the most frequent occurrence in cabinet seances. And, being as it is, of a totally different order to that which enquirers come to see, when they find from observation that such is the case, they not unnaturally consider themselves duped.

"The beings, whoever they may be, who produce these manifestations, are able to laugh at our bonds, and to release the medium from the most complicated ligatures. They do also, as has been repeatedly demonstrated, dress up the unconscious medium, and present her transformed and sometimes transfigured body as a 'spirit-form'. Of the moral aspects of such a procedure I will say nothing. It is a fact well known to experienced Spiritualists that the spirits who are able to deal with gross matter so as to produce these physical manifestations are beings who are not possessed of high moral consciousness. Whether they are instruments in the hands of more progressed intelligences or not, the fact remains that they can give no trustworthy information, and that they do demonstrably in some cases enact what must be described as a fraud, of which the entranced medium is or may be unconscious. Now, since experienced Spiritualists know that such power resides in the beings with whom they have to do, is it not a duty to explain to those who know nothing of the subject that they have such power, that they use it if they think fit, and that, in any given case, unless absolute proof to the contrary is forthcoming, the form produced is most probably the transformed medium? In the vast majority of instances that have come under my observation I believe this has been the case. And I think very decidedly that the fact should be plainly stated.

"I would hope, however, that for the future we shall be content with eliciting such phenomena as can be had without secluding the medium, and with light sufficient for observation. Dark circles should be relegated to private meetings where no tests are wanted, and where such seances have their place and their use."

*The Churches.* "The Church and the world in the present day is but little different from the Church and the world in the days of Christ. In the Church of England, among the different sections into which it has been severed, the High Church—the Pharisees of the period—are occupied with the minutiae of ritual,

wellnigh to the exclusion of real, vital religion. The Low Church are occupied in teaching terrible dogmas which found no place in Christ's Gospel, and in consigning to irremediable hell all who refuse or are unable to accept them. The most active religious life is found outside of the National Church, and in quarters most widely removed from acceptance of its tenets. The Christ Idea, the spiritual Truth that he proclaimed, is dragging out a lingering life, choked by the weeds of sacerdotalism and human theology."

[*In reply to attacks.*] "It may be worth while to say that Spiritualism is not necromancy, but that it is, in its complete sense, the intervention of the spiritual with the material world, of which intervention the Bible is one long record. It is no new thing, and was known as well to the prophets and seers of Israel as to us."

*The Devil.* "Theology framed for itself long ago a devil which has been a convenient lay figure ever since. I do not see why such a devil as Calvinists, Puritans and the narrow school of Evangelicals believe in should not account, on the most comprehensive principles, for the whole mystery of evil. He is practically an omnipotent god of evil, powerful for evil as the Supreme for good, restrained by no laws, trammelled by no compunction from within—a merciless, sleepless, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent god of evil. No power can exclude him from man's most secret life, for he is lord of all man's passions. No power can fetter him until a mysterious far-off day, when he is at last to be disposed of for ever.

"Our heart sickens at the notion that this personage is loose in the world, malignantly trying to delude confiding folks. If this be so, then we are, indeed, accursed. But we take heart of grace, and boldly strip the mask from this gruesome fiend. He has been a steady growth. Oriental love of imagery and personification crystallised him first into shape. He was furnished up, dressed and rendered hideous by the morbid fancies of medieval monks, whose minds, from a long, unnatural course of fasting and maceration and loneliness had become warped. The creation was then taken in hand by such poets as Dante and Milton, further embellished and adorned by poetic fancy, until he has come forth the convenient fetish of popular theology such as we hear of now in the full-flavoured, fire-and-brimstone theology of the Calvinist.

"When the theory is taken to pieces and examined it simply evaporates, and the Devil merges into one of the undeveloped spirits who abound, both in and out of the flesh. And this is probably the truth. In the world to come, as in this, the evil and good are mingled; change of condition works no magic change of nature. 'He that is holy, is holy still, and he that is filthy, is filthy still.' Evil men become in their turn evil spirits, and act accordingly.

"Far be it from me to deny that undeveloped spirits may and do cause vast mischief, both in the flesh and out of it. But we are now fighting against the notion of an arch-fiend of evil, such as medievalism has pictured and modern Christianity has adopted. While there are devils, many in the sense of undeveloped spirits in the body and out of it, there is no such arch-devil as the theology has evolved for itself."

*Man's Future Destiny.* "Man is the arbiter of his own destinies. It rests with him whether, in the honest and conscientious discharge of the duties and obligations laid upon him, he will fit himself for future progress, or whether he will neglect his spiritual development and live a corporeal existence which shall starve his higher nature and chain his spirit down by centering his affections exclusively on earth and earthly things. Helps man has, if he will avail himself of them; but not a store of merit laid up for him on which he may draw at will, and by virtue of which he may reverse on his death-bed a character which has been the imperceptible growth of a lifetime, the laborious aggregation of myriads of daily acts. For these acts man's absolute accountability is emphatically maintained.

"The future life, differing from the present one only in degree, and, in the states immediately succeeding this only in a very slight degree, is a life of continued progress, in which the sin-stained spirit will be compelled to remedy in sorrow and shame the acts of conscious transgression done in the body. . . . The retribution laid upon the transgressor consists in his being made to see the result of his sins, and to remedy it in all its infinitely-ramifying consequences, so far as that is possible. . . . The penalty must be paid somewhere and some time and by personal effort."

*The Spirit creed:* "The idea of a good God sacrificing His sinless son as a propitiation for man is repudiated as monstrous. Equally strong is the rejection of the notion of a store of merit laid up by the death of this incarnate God on which the vilest reprobate may draw at his death, and gain access to the society of God and the perfected. In place of this it is said that man can have no saviour outside of himself; that no second person can relieve him from the consequences of the conscious transgression of known laws; that no transference of merit can wipe out in a moment a state which is the result of a lifetime's work, nor counter-balance that which is indelible, save by slow process of obliteration, even as it was built up; that man stands alone in his responsibility for his deeds and must work out his own salvation, and atone for his own sin. The material resurrection and the material heaven and hell go, too. The resurrection of the body, long since given up by scientific men, is superseded by the resurrection of the spirit body, the real individual, from the dead matter with which it has been temporarily clothed; not in a far-off future, but at the moment of dissolution.

"This body goes to the place for which it has fitted itself. Its heaven is a state of development and consciousness of duty done, knowledge gained and progress made. Its hell is the remorse of cleared perceptions, of knowledge, of opportunities wasted and graces lost; the awful, terrible state wherein the spirit is led to see itself, its foul sins, its sensual lusts and disfigurements, as the Pure and Holy see them; the lonely sense of wasted life; the sight of loved ones soaring away and leaving it alone with the deprived; the feeling that the great work has yet to be done; the burning flame which shall eat out the past and leave a future of renewed helpful effort to be begun anew. Material fire and brimstone are gone, but does not hell remain?"

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### THE NEW SPIRIT.

That distinguished Rationalist, and our very good friend, Mr. Frederick J. Gould, sets out a very rational (if not officially Rationalistic) gospel in the course of a little pamphlet *Ireland and Humanity*, which lately reached us. He heralds the coming of the "genius of Love" in humanity, and he sees a general fusing and fraternisation amongst the peoples of the world. "We are all starting afresh," he says; and continues:

On the plane of the universal, the older combinations slowly dissolve into a fellowship that knows neither masters nor aliens. . . . In reaching the goal, neither Catholicism nor Protestantism, nor Islam, nor Judaism, nor any other venerable faith will dominate. The religion of humanity, developed on a basis of freedom of mind and utterance can alone lead the exodus from the ancient confusion, economic, political and racial. Such a religion will carry from the past every element of grace and beauty, and richly enlarge that grace and that beauty.

Mr. Gould sees, as we all see, the working in humanity of the Spirit that shall make all things new.

## MOSS FAIRIES.

BY ELSIE BLOMFIELD.

A short time ago when the frost was very severe I had a most curious little experience, of which I can offer no explanation. I was out walking, and feeling very miserable because of the bitter cold. I was thinking of nothing but getting to the end of my walk as soon as possible, in order to restore a little warmth to my frozen hands and feet. I had noticed, in passing, a wall, in a sheltered corner of which was some moss, grey with the frost, and then suddenly everything vanished, and I was myself standing among the moss. The stems appeared to me now to be about 7 or 8 feet high. It was all rather grey and misty, and I myself looked unsubstantial and cloudy as I glanced down. Then I saw moving among the moss-stems a number of little elves or gnomes. They were, in relation to the moss-stems, and to me, in this changed condition, about a foot high, and they were grey-green in colour, with the semblance of clothes marked on them as markings show on the skin of a green caterpillar. They even had little gold buttons. They wore pointed caps, and I think these could be taken off at will. Each little creature carried a tiny electric light, like a dew-drop, on the end of a tall stalk, and as they moved with slow steps, and a motion almost like swimming, sometimes on and sometimes off the ground, it appeared that the frozen moss derived vitality from the moving lights. Then I glanced up and saw that all above me and adhering to the moss were the most wonderful glittering starry frost-crystals, of fairy-like delicacy of structure and design. They formed, one above another, a transparent roof of ice-stars, and it was so beautiful that for a second I could not breathe, and then it all vanished, and I was standing by the wall, in my normal state, only feeling hot, instead of cold.

Later on, only a few days ago, I had a somewhat similar experience. Again I had noticed some moss, but this time it was green and growing on an old tree. I had scarcely perceived it, and had not regarded it with any particular interest, and certainly had not consciously thought of my previous adventure, when again I was among the moss, which was like a forest of strange, gigantic ferns. At the roots of the moss-ferns were many curious little structures, all separate, but in a general way alike, shaped after the fashion of the wax cells made by bees, only these were transparent and shining with lovely colours, as if dew-drops had been cut into thin pieces to form their sides and pointed roofs. Some shone with a bronze-golden light, and some rose-pink, and others green or blue or violet. Presently I perceived that each was the little hut or dwelling-place of a tiny gnome such as I had seen before, only now the gnomes were in bright caterpillar green. They slipped in and out of their dew-drop huts, but did not appear to be doing anything in particular this time, though some had lights of various colours twinkling on the stalks they carried. Then, as before, all vanished and everything was as usual.

I cannot account for these experiences in any way. I wonder if anything similar, involving such a queer change of condition, has occurred to anyone else.

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### A FABLE.

One day the World came to an end; the entire Globe burst with a loud Report into a myriad billion of fragments which went flying into the Void. Now it happened that on one of these flying fragments of Earth, there clung a Learned Gentleman with Side-Whiskers and horned-rimmed spectacles. And as the fragment hurtled into Space bearing its Learned Burden, the Gentleman was heard to murmur through his whiskers: "Nothing really happened. All this is merely the effect of the Subconscious Mind!"

N.

## SIGNIFICANT PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPERIMENTS.

An interesting lantern lecture given on Wednesday, May 8th, to members of the British College of Psychic Science by Mrs. Hewat McKenzie and Major C. H. Mowbray, showed the results of photographic experiments made at the College with various mediums during the last six months.

MR. STANLEY DE BRATH, who presided, dealt with the high importance of the physical results in psychic experimentation from the point of view of science.

MRS. MCKENZIE, in her lecture, discussed some of the difficulties experienced in securing photographs during materialisation experiments and the importance of co-operation with the "guides" of the medium in order that no ill-effect might result to the ectoplasmic structures—visible or invisible—from the sudden illumination of the flash-light. By exercising care, none of the mediums experimented with had suffered any harm.

MAJOR MOWBRAY, who handled these interesting and educative experiments, described the cameras, plates and flash used. Photographic enlargements, showing various ectoplasmic extrusions, the arrival of apports and telekinetic action, revealed many aspects relating to activity and structure which would have otherwise been quite lost. Fifty slides were shown, representing work done with Mr. J. Lewis of South Wales, and Mr. Guy L'Estrange of Great Yarmouth, telekinetic in both instances. Perhaps the most interesting of these slides were those dealing with the mediumship of Mr. T. Lynn, of Northumberland, showing the arrival of "apports" at the moment of delivery. These appeared to be sustained in mid-air by ectoplasmic "rods". These sittings were held under satisfactory conditions, and in Mr. Lynn's case a degree of light was allowed. It is not perhaps too much to say that since the experiments made by Dr. Crawford in Belfast with Miss Goligher, there has not been such a valuable series of results obtained in these Islands.

Half a dozen slides which before being developed had been held (in light-tight covers) between the hands of two College members were shown; curious markings were obtained. Two of these photos might have passed for a map of the starry heavens, while others showed clear-cut and striking symbols.

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## THE HUMAN INVESTIGATION SOCIETY.

At the opening meeting of this Society at its meeting-place in Arcadian Grove, Etherea, the Chairman, Mr. Oberon Silverbright, spoke as follows:—

Fellow-members and Friends,—First let me welcome you all in the name of our Council. We are glad to see so large an attendance. It indicates that this question of examining the evidence for the existence of a human race and opening communication with it is receiving increased attention. We have now received and examined the statements of some 20,000 Ethereans regarding the reality of a sub-Etherean state of existence. Some of the evidence is admittedly striking, but it has not yet reached the point of being coercive—it is still far from providing satisfactory proof. Many of the witnesses, as belonging to the sect of Humanists, being naturally anxious to establish their case for the existence of a human race, lay great stress on their memories of having once belonged to it and lived in a lower state. But that is not evidence. Even some of those amongst ourselves are aware of such memories—more or less dim—but these may be adequately accounted for either by unknown potencies in the mind, or those dramatic powers of the consciousness which, feeling it logically necessary to refer to some stage of existence prior to the present one, calls up a picture of some imperfect and mortal state. It

is always a cloudy one, and, as our best analysts have shown, so utterly contradictory and confused in its particulars as to be quite untrustworthy. Nevertheless, although to non-members of our Society the quest may seem to be one bordering on futility, we propose to continue it. As you will be aware, some few of our members are of the opinion that the case for pre-existence has been made out, and without, as a Society, agreeing with this view, it is at least the fact that a case has been presented to us and we must examine it from every angle. While it remains true that we have in our archives a great many depositions from those who claim not only to have seen but to have spoken with inhabitants of this alleged sub-Etherean world—that is to say, with human creatures—our Council is unanimously of the opinion that the reality of these beings has not yet been established. They do not appear to show signs of independent intelligence or individuality. We find the alleged communications from them eccentric, incoherent, pointing at the best to a low grade of sentient life of little interest except as a curious speculation.

A letter I lately received from an applicant for membership asks why it is considered necessary to investigate the reality or non-reality of a supposed race of beings of a status so far inferior to our own that to establish contact with it can be of no particular advantage or benefit to us as Ethereans. But the claims of Science are paramount, and although we may take leave respectfully to doubt the conclusions of those two or three scientists amongst us who assert that they have actually communicated with this lower world, our Council is unanimously of opinion that the Society should continue its researches. Our friend Mr. Emerald Sylvander, as some of you know, has a theory that this idea of a lower state and of communications from sub-Etherean beings is simply the outcome of reverberations or reactions from the vibrational life of the world in which we at present dwell. He calls it the "Echo theory", and without pronouncing any opinion upon it I will now ask him to read his Paper, which you will thereafter have the opportunity of discussing.

D. G.

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## PIANO-PLAYING PHENOMENA.

We were a harmonious party of seven enjoying tea one afternoon when I heard a series of raps on the tea-table. Mrs. Everitt, who was sitting next to me, heard them also, and said, "Oh, I suppose you and your party are here, 'Znippy'." Three loud knocks followed, and then four more, which number indicated that the "invisibles" (as Mr. Everitt often called them) desired to convey a message. I accordingly repeated the alphabet, and the following resulted: "Much power: hold a seance after tea."

We delightedly acceded to this request, and, with lights lowered, sat round the tea-table. Immediately came the message, "Lock piano, put all lights out." This was done, one of the party putting the key of the piano in his pocket. In a few minutes we all heard the piano being played. Although no tune was at first discernible, very shortly there followed the air of a well-known march, played, however, with but little bass. I remarked upon this, whereupon there was a clash of bass notes, and a stream of light came from the piano. Speaking in the direct voice, Mrs. Everitt's guide said, "We will answer 'Yes' or 'No' by light flashes if you ask who are with us." This we did, and several affirmative answers were given. "Znippy" then told us of many other spirit people who were present whom we had not thought of. Raps, lights and "direct voice" continued to be used by our communicators for upwards of an hour, when we were told to conclude the seance with the singing of the Doxology.

I record the above as an instance when darkness made the phenomena more remarkable than usual. Mrs. Everitt was sitting nearly six feet away from the piano, which was at least four feet from any sitter.

L. H.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

## SPIRITUALISM AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

Sir,—Is it not an excellent thing in itself that politicians shall be made conscious of our existence, our strength and our needs?—Yours, etc.,

WATCHMAN.

Sir,—Let us vote for those who are most fit to govern a great empire. If Spiritualism be of God we need not worry about temporary worldly persecution.—Yours, etc.,

“A DEVELOPING PSYCHIC”.

Sir,—With reference to the correspondence in your paper, I wish to associate myself with the view of “A Developing Psychic” (in LIGHT of May 4th), viz., “that we must not do evil that good may come”.—Yours, etc.,

ELLEN F. PEARSON.  
(Ex-Assist. Supt. of Post Office  
Savings Bank.)

Golders Green, N.W.

Sir,—In the coming momentous election, the main question which everyone must ask is, surely: Which party do I consider best fitted to guide the nation as a whole during the next five years? Each individual who thinks has important subsidiary questions in mind; these are many and diverse, but to allow them to become the determining factors in our decision, taking precedence of the larger question, seems to me unstatesmanlike. The electorate must learn to think and act on the broadest principles and to realise the effect of the election not only on our own commonwealth of nations, but on the world itself; whatever Government comes into power, it will be open to the influence of public opinion, and it is through that influence alone that justice in every department of life can be attained.—Yours, etc.,

H. A. DALLAS.

## THE REV. G. VALE OWEN :

## AN APPRECIATION.

Sir,—The appreciation of the Rev. G. Vale Owen which appeared in LIGHT recently is very opportune, and should serve to remind us of our individual and collective indebtedness to him.

His several books are permanent and most valuable contributions to the literature of Spiritualism, and his position and influence in the movement are unique.

It is becoming more and more evident that the Spiritualist movement is being evolved into something far higher than the mere cultivation of psychical phenomena, and that the higher teaching of Spiritualism is destined to play a vital part in the development of the “New Revelation” of which we hear so much. Who is better qualified to expound the teaching of the Christ on this side of the veil, in the light of the New Revelation, than the Rev. G. Vale Owen; and why should not Spiritualists have the benefit of his teaching and ministrations in some permanent London centre?—Yours, etc.,

J. ENGLEADOW.

6, Farquhar Road, Upper Norwood, S.E. 19.

## RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

Sir,—As Spiritualists, does it not behove us to send prayers and thoughts of help to the distressed and miserably persecuted religionists in Russia? The terrible action of the godless, backed by the Soviet power, is exerting its evil influence. The Russian Church and the missionaries in the country are making a brave fight against the strangling decrees, and need every help in their struggle against evil forces.

We can invoke the aid of the lovers of the Russian people who are in the larger life to help the overwhelming distress, and support the faith of the suffering, and also send out our own prayers.—Yours, etc.,

L. M. LAMONT.

## TIME—IN THEORY AND IN PRACTICE.

Sir,—Perhaps it would be useful to make a distinction between Time as an idea and Time as we know it in daily life. We apostrophise the former as Father Time; we speak poetically of the hand, the loom, the shores and the corridors of Time, and we liken it (or him) to a stream going on to the ocean. At the end Time is so personified that he appears almost as a menacing phantom having the uncanny ability to turn boys and girls into old people—something as inevitable as Fate and co-equal with the Eternal. That which a dozen times a day we call “time” is much less occult. The earliest human beings noted intervals between happenings such as the rise and setting of the sun (speaking as pre-Copernicans), the phases of the moon, tidal ebb and flow, and the fall of the leaf. They obviously, without inventing a word right out to signify these gaps, hit upon something which expressed the idea. Time and Space go together. When, sixty years ago, I was at a school in Germany, the finger-posts on the roads showed the distances in hours, and one could read: “To Worms, 2 hours.” The speedometer on a car and the patent log on the taffrail do the same. Apart from spaces to cover, or, say, from something to do, time can have no meaning. Its relation to Space is not constant—one will walk four miles in an hour, and another only two or, maybe, six. The clock is a mechanism with a round dial marked into 12 equal spaces; and a ray of light, an express train, or a cripple use varying quantities of these spaces (indicated by a metal pointer) in so much time. There is, I should say, no need to ascribe fantastic qualities to time—to speak of its suspension, or acceleration, or to call it a dimension. Everything on the physical globe lives its span, and dies, as we put it, i.e., it ceases to make use of the space available in that particular form and takes on another. Properly, time is imaginary, and when we realise there is no such thing we shall have attained to where there is time no more.

Space is a different affair, for it really does exist—even a goal-keeper would laugh if you said there was no space or distance between his goal-posts, that it was a pure illusion.

Referring again to time, we must, of course, while on this earth and subject to what we consider its influence, continue to use the parts of speech which have grown up with it as “when, then, now, formerly, later”, and also the moods and tenses of the past and the future; the present indicative “I am” or “I have” would not suffice by themselves.—Yours, etc.,

E. HARVEY.

“It has many times seemed to me that I am really a passive instrument in the hands of a person not myself. In view of having to wait for the results of those unconscious processes, I have proved the habit of getting together material in advance, and then leaving the mass to digest itself till I am ready to write about it.”—DR. THOMSON.

## LIGHT.

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## THE IDENTICAL SPIRIT.

Some inquirers into our subject are easily satisfied. The flimsiest "proof" convinces them. As a humorous observer put it: Mr. Timothy Oddleposh visits a seance for the first time, and receiving from the clairvoyant a vague description of a gentleman of middle height and broad forehead with a moustache and side-whiskers, instantly identifies it as his departed Uncle Joe. With an ecstatic cry of "There is no death!" he immediately goes off to start a new Spiritualist society!

That is, of course, a mere drollery, but unfortunately there is a good deal of truth in it. Our humorist might have taken another imaginary case, say, that of Mr. Sempronius Stickfast, who, having already received enough evidence to convince the average man a thousand times over, at last receives a proof of spirit identity so dazzling that he at once goes off to write a book dealing with some new discoveries in the possibilities of Cryptæsthesia and the Subconscious mind.

But these, of course, are the two extremes of the subject, and the majority of us are wisely contented with the middle way between the two. Spirit identity is the crux of the matter. None but the very dull and stupid dispute the reality of the phenomena on which the case for human survival is considered to be based. (As a matter of fact, it has other bases—but that is another story.)

Is spirit identity proved? To many of us it has been proved so abundantly that to doubt it would be tantamount to doubting our own identity. And the proofs are growing ever stronger and stronger.

Some of the best evidences never get into print. The recipients are not at all anxious to convince what they regard as an ungrateful world, while others shrink from publicity—rather an odd trait in a civilisation which is given over to every kind of loud advertising! It is something to be grateful for that there are still some reticences left. It may, of course, be said that it is the duty of these people to speak out what they know. Perhaps it is, but a man's duty is a matter between him and his own conscience, and we are against all fussy interference with the right of private judgement and freedom of choice. That is the rule in the higher world—it should be the rule here.

Let us conclude on this subject of spirit identity with a case which recently came under our attention (it was one out of several similar cases).

A serious student of psychical research, A.R., had, after several years' experiments, failed to find what he regarded as proof positive. Before his death, he arranged with a Spiritualist friend—a contributor to this journal—that if there were really an after life he would try and return to his friend and report the fact and describe his experiences, especially in the matter of cremation, for he had left instructions that his remains were to be disposed of by that method. His friend visited a well-known medium, and the first message, which began with the full name of A.R., immediately took up the subject of the compact between them—in short, he resumed without the slightest prompting their discussion at the point at which it had been left before his death. He gave a detailed account of his experiences, having, as he said, concentrated his mind upon them in order to recount all he had seen and experienced. He answered clearly every question put to him—he revealed his personality by mannerism and phrases. We have read the account—it is consistent with other statements made by other spirit communicators through other and unrelated sources. If it is held that Telepathy could explain everything in the case we should be inclined to agree. But it would have to be Telepathy between a discarnate spirit and a spirit in the flesh. No other kind of Telepathy would account for it. And this is but one out of a multitude of such cases—its only special feature is that in this case the spirit-communicator had taken care and pains to memorise all he desired to convey and that his friend was not so much concerned to gain the proof as he was to give it. Indeed, it was rather a matter of convincing himself that communication was possible. He was, in short, doing his scientific psychical research from the other side, for almost his first remark was that he was satisfied of the identity of the person to whom he was talking! That suggests that there are two sides to this question of identity and that we on this side have not a monopoly in the matter of doubt and cautious investigation. That is a delicious thought; if we are permitted later to give the story we shall dwell on the deliciousness of it!

## THE COMPREHENSIVE VIEW.

A subject which ranges from the contemplation of celestial worlds to thought-reading and the psychic faculty in the lower animals, is extensive enough in all conscience. As one of our friends remarked: "My activities in Spiritualism require me at one moment to be able to discourse on the nature of Deity and at the next to switch off to the consideration of how the widow Brown shall get into touch with her departed husband." And, indeed, this is what Spiritualism means if it is pursued in any comprehensive way and is not restricted solely to the observation of seance phenomena, which is not sufficient to occupy the whole mind of anyone whose mind is not of a rather low calibre. But as there is nothing outside of the Divine Intelligence, nothing can be safely despised, nothing can be dismissed as "common or unclean". It is simply the difference between low and high grades of truth, a series of gradations of infinite extent. The enlightened soul will never despise the elementary things any more than he would look with contempt on the lower rungs of the ladder by which he ascended; the lower rungs are as important as the higher. The soul grows by taking in the gross things and converting them into the finer elements of life. It finds, for example, that the "spirit light" manifested at a seance is not to be distinguished from the Illumination of a mystic except as a matter of *degree*, and that the lines and divisions which we make in our observation of the world have no existence in reality, since the "One Spirit" of which Shelley wrote is manifested in all.

## SIDELIGHTS.

"The Church has a great deal to learn from scientists in regard to reverence for truth," said the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams, Chairman of the Congregational Union, in a speech reported in the *Daily Mail* of May 8th. "We have got to realise," he said, "that our traditional doctrines concerning Jesus, hammered out as they were in the early councils of the Church, cannot be made current coin in the intellectual world of to-day."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Mysterious, ravishing and exquisite" music has been heard in the neighbourhood of an old house near Cox Hill, Lincs., according to the *Empire News* of May 5th. Mrs. M. J. Fea, a former resident, has heard the eerie strains on repeated occasions. She describes the sounds as being like the music of a harpsichord or spinet. There is a local tradition that the house is built on the site of an old tithe barn, and there is another legend that the music-haunted building stands over a buried golden chalice which was hidden in the soil by local monks, as protection against pillage by Cromwell's soldiers. All of which may be mere idle rumour. But as to the reality of the ghost-music, Mrs. Fea is quite positive. "You may smile and be sceptical, but there were few quiet nights," she says, in reference to her own occupation of the premises.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another "haunted house" case is given in the *Sunday Chronicle* of May 5th. Mr. W. H. West, caretaker of a house in Bridgend, sleeps alone in the premises, which are said to be over six hundred years old and formerly used as a monastery. Mr. West says he has no belief in ghosts, or "any nonsense of that sort", but admits that "very funny things" happen in the building at night. He wakes up in the night hearing a faint, distant shriek; then there are scrapings, tappings, sounds of moving furniture, and footsteps along the dark corridors of the house.

\* \* \* \* \*

The *Evening News* of May 3rd, in a review of the Marquis of Huntly's new volume of reminiscences, *Auld Acquaintance* (Hutchinson's), devotes considerable space to the psychic experiences of the author and his family. The Marquis describes, in the book, an experience of his mother many years ago, in which she saw the apparition of his brother Lewis, at that time a first-lieutenant on board H.M.S. *Captain*. Says Lord Huntly:—"He appeared to her as lying on a couch and fast asleep; she tried to wake him, but was unable to. So positive was she that he had appeared to her and something was wrong, that she declared her intention of communicating with the Admiralty, to make inquiries. Later in the afternoon I was on my way to call again to inquire after her when my sister Gracie met me and told me a telegram had been received from the Admiralty announcing that the unfortunate ship *Captain* had foundered and that my brother was among the missing."

\* \* \* \* \*

"It all came in a vivid dream. As plain as anything, I saw father lying dead at the bottom of the stairs at his shop, and I could not get it out of my mind for two or three days." This is what Miss Stella Armstrong, of Leeds, said to a *Daily News* representative, while discussing a strange dream which proved to be tragically prophetic. The *News* (of May 7th) devotes nearly a column to the case, which concerns the death of Miss Armstrong's father, who was found dead in his shop at Rusholme, Manchester, in circumstances that point to foul play. The tragedy took place several days after the dream.

"I sometimes think that we are all like savages who have just got into touch with a civilized race, and who have hitherto thought that they were the only people in the universe," remarked Sir Oliver Lodge during a lecture, reported in the *Morning Advertiser* of May 11th. He was addressing the Charles Fox Association at Oxford at the time, having taken as his subject the Shakespearean quotation: "There are more things in Heaven and earth," etc.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is another quotation from Sir Oliver Lodge's address: "Do not assume that there is no life except in this lump of earth. If there are higher beings, and we can get in touch with them and learn the laws of their existence, we are living in a very remarkable age. . . . We are on the verge of a discovery which may have very great importance. The chief change that has come over our vision in my lifetime is that we attend less to matter and more to space."

\* \* \* \* \*

Sir Oliver Lodge is also quoted by the *Yorkshire Telegraph & Star* of May 7th., this time in reference to his address in London to members of the S.P.R., in the course of which he remarked: "Death is solemn, but so is birth. Entry into a new state of things always is so. The world of matter to which we enter at birth is wonderful enough, but it has too its moments of frivolity, such as Derby sweepstakes, and so on. I see no reason to suppose that any existence in which we share shall seem to us entirely different in that respect. In so far as we remain ourselves we may expect other things to remain much the same too, and I do not expect to be much surprised when I get there. I think it will be equally real and equally substantial, freer and less hampered, but not greatly different."

\* \* \* \* \*

"For many years now I have studied the great, amazing and absorbing science of psychics, and my experiences both in theory and in practice have been staggering in their stupendous magnitude. The phenomena which I have witnessed at seances and elsewhere have been bewildering in their colossal grandeur," says Mr. Glyn O. Tripp in the course of a challenging article in the *St. Helens' Reporter*.

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### "SOME UNKNOWN REGION OF THE MIND."

We have had so much discussion of late on the Subconscious in its various relations, that it seems worth while quoting an Oriental mystic, Ramacharaka, who touches the question in his own way, as thus:

Intuition is above the field of consciousness, and its messages are passed downward, though its processes are hidden. The race is gradually unfolding on the mental plane of Intuition, and will some day pass into full consciousness on that plane. In the meantime it gets but flashes and glimpses from the hidden region. Many of the best things have come from that region. Music, Art, the love of the beautiful and good poetry, the higher form of love, spiritual insight, and, to a certain degree, intuitive perception of truth come from this region. These things are not reasoned out by the intellect, but seem to spring full-born from some unknown region of the mind.

That phrase, "unknown region of the mind", is apt. Much probing will never discover the sources from which the higher things flow to us. The secret of beauty is never to be revealed by any intellectual process, and the anatomist of the spiritual life rarely does more than articulate the dry bones of the body of thought and feeling. We see the skeleton but "all the bloomy flush of life" has disappeared in the process.

YOUR NEWSAGENT CAN SUPPLY "LIGHT" WEEKLY

## REFLECTIONS ON A RECENT ADDRESS BY SIR OLIVER LODGE

BY H. A. DALLAS.

When I had escaped from the hurly-burly of Victoria Street into the fresh air and quiet of the country I was able to assimilate the long address I had listened to from Sir Oliver Lodge on "The asserted difficulty of the Spiritualistic Hypothesis from a scientific point of view".

As I meditated on it, certain salient points emerged, revealing the unity of conception. Sir Oliver's mind is one which may be described as a unifying mind. He sees truths not as beads artificially strung together, but as an organic whole—as Truth.

Science and Philosophy, Birth and Death, Things Present and Things to Come are unified in one essential Reality.

*The Universe is one*, that is the fundamental fact on which the "spiritistic hypothesis" rests. That is why the first part of his address dealt entirely with scientific discoveries, that is to say with the fact that, as we now know, all that we see originates in the unseen in interstellar space, all material objects are just the terminals of forces which originate and operate in that vast region beyond our ken—we cannot see those forces: we can only see their effects.

It is therefore entirely in accord with the latest revelations of science to recognise that the more subtle manifestations which constitute humanity—life, mind, consciousness, the moral and æsthetic faculties, wisdom and love—likewise originate in the unseen. We are spirits here and now by virtue of the possession of these qualities.

The Oneness of the Universe, seen and unseen, is the key that we should apply to unlock its mysteries. The possession of a key does not imply the skill to turn it in every lock; but the more widely we use it the better insight we shall gain into the immense problems that lie around and before us; for we shall perceive that continuity is an essential element in the Universe.

Here we find that mind and spirit invariably require and use an instrument to relate us to environment; in other words, we need bodies; hence, we conclude, in harmony with experience, that in the future when the bodies of flesh are worn out we shall still require and possess bodies fitted to our environment. This conclusion is involved in our conception of continuity. That is merely one instance of the way in which Science and Philosophy may be applied. We do not know precisely how our present material bodies of constantly fluctuating atoms are held together into one form; the formative principle cannot be in the changing atoms: it must, like other great forces, be in the unseen—"the resurrection of the body" does not imply the resurrection of the atoms but the liberation and activity of the body-forming potency.

A bodiless spirit, a spirit that possesses no instrument for manifestation is an unscientific as well as an unphilosophic conception, inconsistent with the principle of continuity which pervades the Universe.

Sir Oliver pointed out that in the light of the principle of continuity it is reasonable to expect that our minds may interpret our future environment in a manner very similar to the present. Our present environment is largely determined by our interpretations which are not always identical, although they are approximately the same. Even now when portions of our organism break down we have learned to utilise other instruments in order to supply our deficiency, and it should not therefore seem unthinkable that those who have cast aside their material bodies entirely should find a way to utilise the bodies of those still incarnate when they wish to contact again the environment of this world. Communications through mediums are not a device opposed to all normal experience, and they are strongly attested by experiences designated (perhaps incorrectly) as supernormal.

*The Universe is one*: we reap what we sow, our future will be determined by our present; when that is realised there will be no danger of thinking too lightly either of life or death or of our responsibility for the use of our present conditions and our material bodies. Sir Oliver's teaching, rightly understood, gives no sanction to the easy-going opinion "the next life will be much like this, so we need not bother". That is the sort of construction, however, that superficial listeners and reporters, who isolate a few sentences from their context, may have put upon this thought-provoking and profoundly scientific and philosophic address, which required concentration and subsequent reflection in order to grasp and assimilate its aim and unity.

[It should be understood that the above is not a report but simply a meditation on the address and an indication of some of the points Sir Oliver touched upon.]

## THE WAY OF THE SPIRIT.

BY B. M. GODSAL (San Diego, California).

The outcry which arose from orthodox ecclesiastical circles when Colenso, Bishop of Natal, brought out his book dealing with *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua* still reverberates in living memories. The Bishop had gone to Africa to teach the natives, but the simple reasoning of his Zulu converts upset the orthodoxy of the Bishop.

About twenty years ago E. Stanley Jones went as a missionary to Christianise the natives of India, and he, like Colenso going to Africa, took with him an open and teachable mind. The new truth concerning the Christ which India has taught the missionary, and through him is teaching the Western churches, is beautifully told in his book, *The Christ of the Indian Road*—now in its twenty-sixth edition.

The pith of the lesson received by the missionary from his Indian friends consists of the essential difference between Christianity and Christ. He writes that the Indians, with their swift and accurate intuition, are "making an amazing and remarkable discovery, namely, that Christianity and Jesus are not the same—that they may have Jesus without the system that has been built up around him in the "West". For instance, a leading Brahman expressed his views thus: "I don't like the Christ of your creeds and the Christ of your churches"; but when he was confronted with the idea of a Christ who walked down the open road healing and teaching the maimed, the poor, and the lepers, he earnestly asseverated "I could love and follow the Christ of the Indian Road". And it seems that a majority of Indians, from Brahmans to "untouchables", are preparing to follow such a Christ.

Anyone who has ever lost touch with the Bible, partly because of the legendary character of the Old Testament which he was told to believe, and partly because of the doctrinal implications imported into the New Testament, and who as a result of direct investigation has recovered his faith in spiritual things, will naturally go back to the Bible with renewed interest, and his acceptance of it will be similar to that adopted by Colenso's Zulus and by the natives of India. In fact, the knowledge gained through Spiritualism in its highest and purest form puts one in the way of understanding all that is vital in both the Old and the New Testaments.

The natives of India, apparently, are quick to point out the fact that the Western churches lack the manifestations of Spirit enumerated by St. Paul. A Hindu lawyer is quoted as saying: "What you Christians and the Church need to-day is a new Pentecost." And the missionary sadly admitted the need.

Any suggestion that a new Pentecost is already here, and that instead of bringing intensive manifesta-

tions to a few chosen persons gathered in one place is extended over the whole of mankind, would probably be rejected by the clerical mentality. Nevertheless, it is true that the urgent need of this materialistic age is being supplied by an outpouring of Spirit. And when this spiritual flow descends upon truly receptive souls it confers gifts as wonderful and as good as any ever recorded, and where it meets with worldliness and greed it is converted into lies and deception, and when it encounters unilluminated intellect it produces nothing but bewilderment.

Those who worship the past live ever in eager expectation of a recurrence of some great event which took place long ages ago. But it seems that God, in his wisdom, never quite repeats his work—lest, no doubt, the progress of his children be checked, by learning to look backward when they should be pressing onward to their high destiny.

In tracing a parallel between Calvary and the voluntary sufferings of their hero Gandhi, the Hindus show that they do not regard the former as a "sacrifice" in the pagan sense. Mankind has always been seeking a mystic way of saving itself from the consequences of its sins by laying them upon some innocent animal and sacrificing it to appease the anger of a wrathful Deity. But Jesus taught, by precept and by example, that God is pure love and therefore needs no appeasement, and that the only sacrifice in any way efficacious is the sacrifice of self for the good of others, which in small matters is called unselfishness and in great matters is called "sacrifice", culminating in the supreme sacrifice of life itself on behalf of humanity, all of which may well be acceptable to Divine Love.

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## THE PERSONAL SIDE.

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MR. A. VOUT PETERS.

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It was in March, 1895, Mr. Peters tells us, that he first sat in a seance. Before then he had several experiences of psychic phenomena but knew nothing of Spiritualism. To-day he is amongst the best-known exponents of the subject both as medium and speaker, a special feature of his work being that some of it has been done abroad in seventeen different countries, from Iceland to South Africa. As a clairvoyant he has achieved great success both in public and private. His experiences would fill a large book, and be not only picturesque but instructive. He has seen his own spirit guides materialised through the mediumship of Florrie Cook (Mrs. Corner) and Messrs. Husk and Williams. He has also witnessed remarkable physical phenomena in Russia and Holland with private mediums there. When his mediumship commenced he was a victim of tuberculosis, and neither of the two doctors who attended him held out any hope of his recovery—twelve months was the limit of life assigned to him by the more hopeful of the two. Yet to-day he is in better health than ever before. He is intensely devoted to his work, for which he has endeavoured to train himself, both physically and mentally. With the natural sensitiveness of the medium he combines a strong understanding; he is a reasoner and a close and critical observer of men and things. Without being himself a writer, he has cultivated a study of literature, and is singularly well-informed on the subject, especially as regards the Elizabethan writers; and he has a discriminating taste in poetry. He possesses an extensive library, which includes many rare books. Also, he is interested in languages, being something of a linguist, and the study of race origins. In short, he can discourse with knowledge on several themes besides Spiritualism, although on that subject his information is extensive, and his experience enables him to speak with some degree of authority.

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

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An arresting sentence was spoken in that excellent play, "The Ivory Door", which had a too brief run at the Haymarket. "We have talked away the truth!" says one of the characters in a burst of exasperation.

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At the beginning of his S.P.R. address at the Central Hall, the other day, Sir Oliver Lodge expressed the hope that the people at the back would be able to hear him. And then he told the following story, related to him by a humorous Dean of the Church. A rather dull speaker with a voice of small compass was addressing an audience, with the result that a man in the back seats rose and complained bitterly that he could not hear a word of the speaker's discourse. And then there came a voice from the immediate neighbourhood of the orator. It said: "Sit down, you fool, and thank God!"

\* \* \* \* \*

The "Magic Staff" of Andrew Jackson Davis was: "In all circumstances keep an even mind." One was "never to be elated or depressed". To accomplish this is to get to the height of high philosophy, indeed, and sit tranquilly "on the calm, peaceful flourishing head of it". Still, I cannot think that much would be accomplished in the world to-day without the strenuous, anxious, fervent type of missionary, taking himself very seriously and his mission as of overwhelming importance. But it is an ideal to be attained, somehow, somewhere, when after a great deal of strong effort one attains at last to the effortless life which can achieve without strain. Joan of Arc represents, by the way, a pattern in this matter—quiet, simple, trustful, child-like; but even she must have lost her placidity of mind sometimes in the heat of the battle and when facing the faggots.

\* \* \* \* \*

A recent discussion on Swedenborgianism reminded me that when a very young man I attended a Spiritualist meeting and saw amongst the audience the venerable figure of Dr. Garth Wilkinson, translator of Swedenborg. He was of ponderous mind, yet amongst his books he produced (in 1857) a little volume of verse, so fairy-like and fanciful that it seemed impossible he could be the author. He called it *Improvisations from the Spirit*, for the verses flowed rapidly off his pen without conscious effort. They were undoubtedly "psychic", of the same fantastic kind as some psychic paintings, belonging neither to heaven nor earth, but to a middle region which we call the "subconscious". Garth Wilkinson was a veritable "link with the past", for, born in 1812, he was amongst the literary figures of early Victorian days, a friend of Emerson and Carlyle, and one of the pioneers of some humanitarian movements, such as anti-vivisection.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some time ago a correspondent inquired (*apropos* an article defective in its grammar): What is a "misrelated participle"? I explained at the time, but a fresh example of the error has cropped up in an account of a psychic experience of which the narrator writes: "Being an apparition, I felt extremely nervous." Now the writer obviously does not mean that he himself was an apparition, but that he was in the presence of one. A really droll instance of the kind occurred when a town-bred squire in a country village was called upon by a villager and his wife, who lamented the death of their pig. The squire was puzzled. "Well," he said gruffly, "what am I supposed to do about it? Send a wreath?" "No, sir," was the reply, "but we're very poor folk, and we thought, as bein' the biggest pig in the neighbourhood, you'd kindly subscribe a trifle to make up our loss."

D. G.

## MESMER AND MESMERISM.

Mesmer, whose full name was Friedrich Franz (or Anton) Mesmer, was born in the year 1733 and died in 1815. He was the first medical man who wrote of the stellar medium (which in these days we call the Ether) in a book, *De Planetarum Influxa*. In youth he belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, and was educated for the priesthood. Later he decided to pursue another vocation and became a doctor of medicine. A serious quarrel occurred between himself and a certain Jesuit father (when Mesmer was about thirty-three years of age) over the authorship of the book dealing with Planetary Influences, the priest claiming the inspiration of it, and the young savant stoutly resisting the claim.

It is probable that this unfortunate episode in Mesmer's life led to the attacks upon him by members of the Roman Catholic Church. So much was he abused by them and by others through them, that the word "Mesmerism" fell into disrepute, and had to be changed to another—"Hypnotism", by James Braid before the medical world would consider the power of Suggestion as a healing power (which was one of Mesmer's discoveries) and then only in a reluctant way. Yet it was Mesmer and other men of courage who experimented with him, and those who followed his methods in later days, who were able to employ the resources of biological magnetism, the secret of which was undoubtedly Mesmer's discovery.

This was no chance discovery, for it is said that Mesmer showed the possession of psychical powers (as for instance, clairvoyance) which enable him to perceive, as Andrew Jackson Davis later perceived, the effluences, or refined emanations sent out by all things in Nature.

It was Mesmer who classified the qualities of the vital emanations which he discovered, and who also proclaimed that man was a magnet of infinite quality.

We take the following extracts from an article on Mesmer received some time ago from Miss Annie Pitt of Cape Town:

In the early 'eighties of his century he rose to fame in Paris, but the patronage of a queen was his undoing. After his fall (which came about because he subverted the physical to the psychical) he retired into obscurity, and after many years spent in reviling the powers that be, he returned to his humble home and demonstrated healings to poor and needy people.

In 1812 the Emperor of Austria sent for him, and in one hour Mesmer proved his claims successfully to him, but success had come too late, and in 1815 he passed away from earth in his sleep.

The irony of fate was surely demonstrated in this wasted life, which had given everything to others and received nothing in return; for after Mesmer had laid his theories before the French Academy of Science, it was only to find them scornfully rejected; then he returned to Germany to experience neglect and ingratitude, and to find the laurels *he* had so justly earned, encircling the brow of his disciple Puysegur.

Time is at last rendering justice to his claims, and Spiritualism, New Thought, Theosophy, and Christian Science are all reaping from the wisdom conceived in this great mind, enlightened by the power of God which was expressed in and through him.

His theories may be thus briefly summarised:

Animal Magnetism is a fluid universally diffused; it is a medium of mutual influence between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and animated bodies. It is continuous so as to leave no void. Its subtlety admits of no comparison.

It is capable of receiving, propagating and communicating all the impressions of motion. It is susceptible to flux and reflux.

The animal body experiences the effect of this agent by insinuating itself into the substance of the nerves; it affects them immediately.

There are observed, particularly in the human body, properties analogous to those of the magnet, and in it are observed poles equally different and opposite. The action of animal magnetism and its virtues may be communicated from one body to other bodies animate and inanimate.

*This action may take place at a remote distance without the aid of any intermediate body.*

It is increased, reflected by mirrors, communicated, propagated, augmented by sound. Its virtues may be accumulated, concentrated, transported. Although this fluid is universal, all animal bodies are not equally susceptible to it. There are even some, though a very small number, which have properties so opposite that their very presence destroys all the effect of this fluid on other bodies.

Animal Magnetism is capable of healing diseases of the nerves immediately, and of others mediately. It perfects the actions of medicines, excites and directs salutary crises in such a manner that the physician may render himself *master* of them. By its means he may *know* the state of each individual's health, judge the most complicated diseases, prevent their increase, and heal them without dangerous effects or troublesome consequences, whatever be the age or temperament of the patient.

In Animal Magnetism Nature presents a universal method of healing and preserving mankind.

[These rules were written down by him in 1778 as history can prove, and from the fuller side of life he asks this pertinent question: "Have latter day savants ever improved upon my methods, or religion proved anything beyond them? If so, then I will no longer presume to say I was the door by which humanity came into the stretches of this divine wisdom, for I affirm that in these imperfect lines you have the embryonic thought of all inventions, currents and healing balms, which have since my time resulted in the release of imprisoned energy."]

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## NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

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"THE HOUDINI MESSAGES." By Francis R. Fast. (F. W. Redford, 150, Broadway, New York, U.S.A., 25 cents.)

Mr. Fast has done good service in setting down the facts concerning the Houdini messages, received through the mediumship of Mr. Arthur Ford. Readers of LIGHT will recall that following the receipt of two spirit messages, one from the mother of Harry Weiss (otherwise Houdini), and the other, in the form of a code, from the Handcuff King himself, the medium was made the victim of a scurrilous attack by an American newspaper. Allegations were made that Ford had been overheard confessing fraud, a statement which the medium vigorously denied. After a lengthy examination, during which some scandalous activities on the part of a hostile group were disclosed, Ford was given a vote of confidence by the Board of Trustees of the First Spiritualist Church of New York.

The whole story is set out in this little book. It is related that one man confessed, under oath, that he had been hired to impersonate Ford, and in that capacity to grant a fictitious interview. Mrs. Houdini adheres firmly to her statement that the code-message is the correct one that was pre-arranged between Houdini and herself.

J. A.

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Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High Street.—May 26th, 11, Open Circle; 6.30, Mrs. H. Butterworth. Wednesday, 7.30, Public Meeting at 55, Station Road.

Richmond Spiritualist Church, Ormond Road.—May 26th, 7, Mrs. Holloway, address and clairvoyance. May 29th, 7.30, Mr. A. Clayton, blind Medium.

Croydon.—The New Gallery, Katharine Street.—May 26th, 3, Lyscum; 6.30, Mme. de Beaurepaire, trance address. May 29th, 7.45, Mrs. Evans.

Cricklewood.—Ashford Hall, 41 Ashford Road.—May 26th, 6.30, Mrs. Baxter. May 29th, 3, Circle; 8, Miss L. George.

Brixton.—17 Ashmere Grove, Acre Lane.—Sunday, May 26th, 11.15, Discussion: "Mental States", Mrs. Boddington, opener. Friday, May 31st, 8, Open meeting, Clairvoyance. (A few vacancies in Tuesday development class).

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