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Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

Edited by DAVID GOW.

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The Philosophy of Death, first published many years ago, but since reprinted in several editions. Less elaborate descriptions have been given countless times by clairvoyants and others familiar with the phenomena of bodily dissolution. Lately we came upon one of these, a description by the late Mrs. Helen T. Brigham, who, some twenty years ago, ranked as a leading speaker in our movement in New York, and is worth quoting here:—"Out of its tenement of matter the spirit withdraws gradually—never suddenly, as some believe. The bodily circulation ceases and the change, beginning at the extremities creeps gradually upwards until the great engine, the heart, is still. Then the clairvoyant eye could observe over the prostrate figure a sort of mist, an undulating luminous something, which at first seems only a vague emanation from the body. This slowly takes form, and having shaped itself it glides away, breaking the little cord of connection which held it to the body, and which once severed is never again united. Generally the condition which follows the transition of the spirit is a state similar to the sleep of the new-born infant. Some spirits claim to have no experience of this somnolency but that is easily understood, for the period of unconsciousness is sometimes of very brief duration. On awaking, the enfranchised spirit finds itself with those whose lives are in sympathy with its own."

NOTES BY THE WAY

* * *

THE word "phenomenon" is used so largely in psychic circles that, as in the case of many other hard-working speech-units, it is almost in danger of losing its true significance. The keen-sighted philosopher knows that the mere raising of the hand is a spiritual phenomenon, while the functioning of the mental powers entails the use of spiritual forces and laws of such high complexity that, by comparison, certain seance-room manifestations appear to be utterly dwarfed in the scale of marvels. But here one is dealing with phenomena of the spiritual, rather than of the material order, and the distinction needs to be appreciated. For in the realm of life there are higher spiritual laws that transcend the lower ones, and these, although at first unstable and capricious, are seen, on close examination, to be as unalterable and unvarying as the physical laws which alone the materialist recognises. But there is a sign of change, and it is clear that the ranks of the Materialists are thinning. More and more it is being realised that to use spiritual powers in order to deny the existence of those same powers, is mere stultification.

* * *

THE process of death was never so finely or categorically described as by Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis, the "great seer of the nineteenth century" in a pamphlet

IT is an old and oft repeated idea that there is in man an essential reality—something of the Eternal—which remains unchanged through all the mutations of the relative world. It was one of the main doctrines of Kant, and has been presented in innumerable forms, with much commentary and illustration. Dugald Stewart gave it expression when he wrote "Of all truths we know, the existence of mind is the most certain." And no intelligent person can fail to recognise that there is something in each of us which thinks and wills and reasons, independently of bodily circumstances—something that is permanent and enduring. While the material world is in a constant state of flux and change, there is something that stands outside and above it, something which belongs to the Eternal World, which was before our birth upon this globe, and which will persist after our death. That to us is a central truth, however it may be interpreted in its relation to our present life—which is for the most part rather a sense of existence than life in any deep or full sense. That life encloses and enfolds us all, but we can know little or nothing of it until we have grown to that stage of consciousness reached by the great mystics who, while "still in the body pent," have enjoyed those moments of illumination, which in his own case, Tennyson described as "the clearest of the clear, the surest of the sure."

EMERSON'S JOURNALS

THEIR PRESENT-DAY BEARING

By J. McDONALD (Johannesburg)

God hateth the obscure. On the last day, as on the first day, He still says, Let there be Light.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

EMERSON has long been a favourite among spiritualists and what one might call incipient spiritualists. His fame grows with the years, and everywhere his authority as a Teacher is recognized. But while the Essays and Poems are familiar, the ten volumes of the Journals, covering a period of forty years in the life of the Seer, are not so well known. These make wonderful reading, notwithstanding that Emerson himself says, "It is the vice of journals that they contain the second best."

The following extracts from the Journals are put forward as bearing on subjects within the province of LIGHT. The compiler is responsible for the arrangement and the headings.

COINCIDENCES.

We are sometimes startled by coincidences so friendly as to suggest a guardian angel.

Do you not believe that advertisements are given you continually of that which most imports you to know; but you, in the din and buzz of the senses, do not regard the vision? Miracles are continually occurring in the privatest spiritual experience which the man heeds not in his headlong partisan fury to celebrate and assert the miracles of the Church. By attention and obedience to the heavenly vision he would bring his perception to a finer delicacy.

There are, I take it, in each man's history insignificant passages which he feels to him not to be insignificant, little coincidences in little things, which touch all the springs of wonder and startle the sleeper Conscience in the deepest cell of his repose—the mind with all her faculties rushing out in alarm, suspicious of a Presence which it greatly behoves her to respect . . . In solitude and in silence Memory visits her inmost chambers to produce these treasured tokens of connexion and immortality.

PHENOMENA.

In a dance they talked of miracles, and at concerts of Spiritualism. (1838).

Bettine says the reason spirits so seldom appear is that they do not like phantoms, ugly phantoms such as the men are.

A man finds out that there is something in him that knows more than he does. Then he comes presently to the curious question, Who is he? which of these two is really me? the one that knows more, or the one that knows less? the little fellow or the big fellow?

Oliver Wellington describes to me Samanthe Crawford, of Oakham, who thought and felt in such strict sympathy with a friend in the spiritual world that her thought ultimated itself in a preternatural writing on her arm, and again into writing on a paper which seemed to float in at the only open window, and lighted on her lap. (1846).

INSPIRATION.

You are as one who has a private door that leads him to the King's Chamber.

A great lack of vital energy; excellent beginners, infirm executors. I should think there were factories above us which stop the water.

Much of what we learn, and to the highest purpose, of life is caught in moments, and rather by a sublime instinct than by moods which can be explained in detail.

I suppose the same impulse of the air entering into the trachea of an ass will bray, and into the trachea of a nightingale will sing. Inspiration is as the receiver.

To him who, by God's grace, has seen that by being a mere tunnel or pipe through which the divine Will flows, he becomes great and becomes a man—the future wears an eternal smile, and the flight of time is no longer dreadful. I assure myself always of needed help, and go to the grave undaunted because I go not to the grave.

THE SCEPTICS.

It is not certain that God exists, but that he does not is a most bewildering and improbable chimera.

A religious culture to the intellect of man is needed. The intellect has been irreligious these many years, or ages.

It is not true that educated men desire truth. The medical committee decline proffered opportunities of witnessing experiments in animal magnetism. (1838).

I believe nothing is more ungrounded than the assertion, that scepticism is, in any manner, the natural fruit of a superior understanding.

The examination of a single idea with the eye on exact philosophy leads to atheism and to universal doubt. But many ideas federated lead men to belief.

I mourn at the scepticism of prosperity, the scepticism of knowledge, the darkness of light. I love to trace the unambiguous workings of a greater hand than ours.

It is in the order of nature one of the curbs and ligaments, that great good is first contended against before it is heartily appropriated, as the heroes first made war against the Amazons whom they afterwards married.

Although reason teaches us that the deliberate devotion of a philosophic mind is more worthy than the vague fears of a superstitious one, yet we are apt to inquire if the pride of learning has not been known to harden the mind even to the plain proofs of divine providence.

How slowly, how slowly we learn that witchcraft and ghostcraft, palmistry and magic, and all the other so-called superstitions, which, with so much police, boastful scepticism and scientific committees, we had finally dismissed to the moon as nonsense, are really no nonsense at all, but subtle and valid influences, always starting up, mowing, muttering in our path, and shading our day. The things are real, only that they have shed their skin, which with much insult we have gibbeted and buried. (1842).

THE EARTH TRAINING.

The earth is not a place of results but a place of lessons, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.

God is a reality and his method is illusion.

If any one feeling is positive, it is personal accountability.

The Musts are a safe company to follow, and even agreeable.

"Don't cry, Miss Lizzie, the Lord is tedious, but he is sure" (quoting a New England "auntie").

We must not seek to dwell always in contemplation of the spirit. So should the man decline into an indolent and unsuccessful person and stop short of his possible enlargement.

I believe in the existence of the material world as the expression of the spiritual or real, and so look with a quite comic and condescending interest upon the show of Broadway with the air of an old gentleman when he says, "Sir, I knew your father."

Man has no natural food, but was expected to convert inedible into edible substances. Thus, too, God has done with the religious education of men; he has sowed truth in the world, but has let them arrive at it by the slow instrumentality of human research. Such was the wise remark of Origen.

Don't trust children with edged tools. Don't trust man, Great God, with more power than he has, until he has learned to use that little better. What a hell we should make of the world if we could do what we would! Put a button on the foil till the young fencers have learned not to put each other's eyes out.

It is a striking feature in our condition that we so hardly arrive at truth. The final cause of this is, no doubt, found in the doctrine that we were not sent into this world for the discovery of truth, but for the education of our minds, and our faculties are best exercised by doubts, not by facts. The immediate consequence of this arrangement, like all other parts of human nature, is its admixture of evil. It is productive of that scepticism which throughout the world combats the advancement of truth.

THE AFTER LIFE.

Every man contemplates an angel in his future self. In heaven, as soon as one wishes to rule, or to despise others, he is thrust out at the door.

Even in our feeble conceptions of the heavenly hosts, we seek to fill up the painful chasm that divides God from his humble creatures upon earth by a magnificent series of godlike intellects. Worlds like ours were the cradle of their infancy. Their minds, like ours, learned the rudiments of thought from the material creation.

Of course the light of Nature countenances the notion of a proper Purgatory, of an island between evil and good where the poor tempest-driven sufferers must perform sad quarantine to purge out the sores of human nature that might infect or offend the society of heaven. . . . What external help can be afforded, I have no doubt will be afforded, and this chiefly in two ways—an increased facility of locomotion, and of social intercourse, and this at once removes the chief impediments that in this world obstruct our education. When therefore we escape from life, we shall not perchance escape from disappointment, from indolence and the punishment of indolence—from the frequent sense of incapacity and of immense inferiority. (1826).

THOUGHTS ON ETERNITY.

One is glad of eternity when we find so much to learn. The pleasing evidence of immortality is our dissatisfaction with any other solution.

Eternity is only desirable when regarded as the career of an inquisitive mind.

The exhalation we call death is still in the current, and the current knows the way.

If a man carefully examine his thoughts he will be surprised to find how much he lives in the future. His well-being is always ahead. Such a creature is probably immortal.

We must infer our destiny from the preparation. We are driven by instincts to higher innumerable experiences which are of no visible value, and which we may revolve through many lives in the eternal whirl of generation before we shall assimilate and exhaust.

It seems to me that ardour and enthusiasm are the proper feelings which belong to things of eternity and make the habits of angels; but man waxes cold and slow at the word, and fears to commit himself upon these topics in the presence of his fellow-worms.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

The English believe that by mountains of fact they can climb into the heaven of thought and truth: so the builders of Babel build. But the method of truth is quite other, and heaven descends, when it will, to the prepared soul.

The religion that is afraid of science dishonours God and commits suicide. It acknowledges that it is not equal to the whole of truth, that it legislates, tyrannizes over a village of God's empire, but is not the immutable universal law.

The blunder of the savants is to fancy science to be a finality; that it contains and is not contained; but a scientific fact is no more than the scratching of a nail if it stops. All the life of it is in its relatedness, its implication of the All.

EINSTEIN ANTICIPATED.

There is no line that does not return; I suppose the mathematicians will tell us that what are called straight lines are lines with long curves, but that there is no straight line in Nature. If, as you say, we are destroying number by affirming the strict infinite, why then I concede that number also is soluble, and that one of these days we shall eat it like custard. (Written in 1843. See his poem *Uriel*).

Every great fact in natural science has been defined by the presentiment of somebody.

THE ASPIRANT.

God, the moral element, must ever be new, an electric spark; then it agitates and deifies us. The instant when it is fixed and made chronic it is hollowness and cant.

Satisfy me beyond the possibility of doubt of the certainty of all that is told me concerning the other world, and I will fulfil the conditions on which my salvation is suspended. (1826).

Who would decline a sacrifice, if once his soul had been accosted, his virtue recognized, and he was assured that a Watcher, a Holy One followed him ever with long affectionate glances of inexhaustible love?

Confirm my faith (and when I write the word Faith looks indignant), pledge me the word of the highest that I shall have my dead and my absent again, and I could be content and cheerful alone for a thousand years.

Conversion from a moral to a religious character is like day after twilight. The orb of the earth is lighted brighter and brighter as it turns, until at last there is a particular moment when the eye sees the sun and so when the soul perceives God.

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

I would write something worthily on the most affecting of all topics, upon the personal character and influence and upon the death of Jesus Christ, a being whose nature has divided the opinions of men more than did ever any question; who was so great as to leave foundation for the idea that he was a portion of the deity, and, in the opinions least reverent, that he was first of men; a being who would be called renowned, did not fame and what men call glory sink before his majesty into things offensive and ridiculous; a human being whose influence on the fortunes of human society—taking out of account all supernatural influence—has been far the most powerful foreign influence that ever acted thereon; a being whose character was so pure and whose death was so sublime as, if no consequences had followed, would for himself have attracted the greatest admiration.

"PAUL IN ATHENS"*

By NELLIE TOM-GALLON.

HOW to approach this book is the reviewer's first anxiety. For, from all time, words that to one man seem simple and clean, to another may reek of blasphemy. First of all to clear the ground by saying what this book—*Paul in Athens*—is. Complete in itself, it is given as a further instalment of the Scripts of the wonderful chronicler of Apostolic doings—Cleophas. To those who have already enjoyed, in awe and wonderment, the former volume, that says much. By them I shall be forgiven if I am enthusiastic. To the present writer this new Script seems to grow in marvels; to bring more and more delight to the reader.

It deals primarily with the journeyings and work of Paul and his associates in Athens and Corinth. As the Rev. John Lamond points out, in a scholarly introduction, historically it can be checked from the Acts of the Apostles in many instances, and shewn to be in acceptable order.

It enlarges upon, and gives in detail, events that in the New Testament are touched on briefly. As, for instance, when Paul records in his Epistle to the Corinthians that "thrice I suffered shipwreck." It is easy to realise that, at the time, there must have been far wider accounts of such happenings. But parchment was scarce and doubtless difficult to obtain; or the writings, when made, would quite naturally disappear in the ordinary course of events. The Acts of the Apostles, and the Gospels can scarcely be a full and complete record of the times, and it gives one pause to realise that, morally, the whole of the Western world is ruled by a religion preserved in such scanty, though lovely, documents as those.

Here in this new volume we are given the intimate human details of the life of that great figure of Paul, who fought for the life and liberty of the soul man; details that match up with the Gospels and the Acts in perfect accord.

It is as if we walked with that splendid man straight through a life so close-welded to our own that we feel every emotion that is passing through the make-up of him and his associates. So the reader of this gorgeous narrative dives straight into the lives of the people of whom he reads. Take for instance, the wonderful drama that begins in the second chapter. We know from the Acts of the Apostles that Paul, when at Athens, made converts of Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris. The mere fact that their names are singled out from many others unrecorded gives them weight and importance. Yet reticence follows this; perhaps the difficulties of recording stood in the way of our knowing why these two are mentioned.

But in *Paul in Athens* those two names open up to us a human drama so wonderful, so heart-searching in its appeal to every pitiful emotion, that after reading we are left for the time being dazed to the common-places about us.

While I read I longed for the dramatist—there is one living now who could do this thing perfectly—to set upon the stage the story of Damaris and her love for Fortunatus, and the pitiful coil of murder and punishment which grew about that love. And I speak in all reverence when I suggest the stage as the setting for religious drama. The Churches of old knew they could reach the hearts of men best by letting them see the Religious Mysteries portrayed by human beings like themselves. Our stage began in Holiness; and if only this one marvellous drama of human purity and passion, and its purification for the love of Christ by way of suffering and renunciation, could be lifted from the book, humanity would be immensely enriched.

But every chapter in the volume contains some new richness. One of the things in the New Testament life of Christ that has raised endless questions and discussion has been the natural curiosity as to where the Saviour spent those long years between the age of twelve and thirty. From then began the crowded three years that lit an unquenchable flame in the heart of the Western world.

But what happened to Christ in those hidden years? Well, we learn that this great stalwart, Paul, in his travels meets a Stranger who gives tidings of having shared Christ's life in that time. Only a glimpse—but adding something to our knowledge. The death of Barnabas, in the Script of Barnabas, which comes towards the end of the book, is another wonderful episode that finds its way straight into one's heart and brain. It is human drama again—but then the whole book is that.

Where do these writings come from? How do they come? For my part I care little. But let us say that these Scripts of Cleophas are inspired; and let the fretful criticise as to *how* the inspiration came. It makes no difference in the long run. The splendid things are here for our comfort and delight.

However, I would add that I have been privileged to see the manner of their coming; and of that I can tell exactly. In a peaceful room in an artistic house in Chelsea I sat, while Miss Cummins and her ever-faithful friend, Miss Gibbs, came into the room to settle to the business of receiving the Script. The quiet figures sat down in front of a sheet of paper; an elbow rested on the table, a hand shielded the dreaming eyes from the daylight. The right hand of Miss Cummins, with its pencil, was poised at the top of the sheet of foolscap; after a moment or two it was writing, rapidly. At the end of the line the pencil moved on a perfect angle straight to the beginning of the next. When the sheet was full Miss Gibbs lifted the hand and pencil, substituted a new sheet, and the writing flowed on.

So simple and direct as that, it was! For an hour the Script flowed; then the pencil began to flag, the dreaming head drooped; the work was finished for the day.

The first page of writing that afternoon was a message to myself and another visitor who was present; a message of dignified greetings that I hold very happily in my memory.

And for the language! Those who, like the writer, have to take words as their paints and a pen as their brush to make pictures of everyday things for others to read, come in time to revel in beautiful words as a sheer delight.

Well, in *Paul in Athens* I found myself arrested again and again by the beauty of the phrases. As lovely as those of the Bible, but flowering beyond those buds which time and circumstance kept foiled.

A man is described as "a shallow vessel that could hold but the dregs that had come to him from the wine of another's wit" . . . "he had learned a little; therefore he knew naught."

Again, "He stirred not from that stony place . . . while the blossom of the night rose from out the darkness till it lighted all the skies."

Describing Corinth: "And behold, the sky of the west was the colour of wine. And the stained seas to east and west bore upon them scores of ships. White birds of the waters they seemed as they journeyed before the wind."

But where all is beauty there is no need to quote further.

A great gift has come to ordinary men and women, by the help of spirit forces in *Paul in Athens*.

*Riders 7s. 6d.

THOSE CREDULOUS SCEPTICS

By ROBERT BLATCHFORD.

AS a kind of spiritualist doomed to endure in this world of cares and disappointments and tax collectors and politicians, I do snatch an occasional healing smile as I wrestle with the paradoxes of anti-spiritual argument. The sea-green, incorruptible zeal with which our critics manhandle our evidence sticks fiery off against the docile credulity accorded to the "proofs" of their own pet orthodoxies. Talk about notes and beams: my hat!

Now, to my heretical mind, evidence is evidence. It is not a fetish to be bowed down to, nor an offender to be stoned. It is a witness to be examined and cross-examined in a cool, impartial, enquiring spirit. It may be false; it may be foolish and it may hold hints of an invaluable truth. So, when I came away from my first sitting with a Medium I went over and over the evidence, as we say, with a fine-toothed comb. I handled the evidence as keenly and sternly as if I were a prosecuting counsel feed to secure a conviction. And the evidence was unshakable. Evidence which would be flaunted by orthodox persons who accept the Book of Genesis and the Thirty-nine Articles without a cough, resisted my analysis. The evidence seemed so simple. Ill-informed and over-confident critics would dismiss the trivial problems with a shrug and an "of course," or "that's easy." But I do not forget the saying of the famous Clausewitz: the "simple things may be very difficult."

Let me, then, put before the readers of LIGHT just one simple item of evidence which, after years of thinking, still puzzles me. Let me probe and test it and see how it stands. The sceptic will smile; the spiritualist will understand.

Some months before my wife's death her daughter bought her a pair of pretty shoes. She was rather proud of her little feet and she liked dainty footwear. She was very pleased with her present. During her last illness these shoes were kept in a drawer in her sick room. After her death they were put into a drawer in the room where I sleep. *I did not know the shoes had been moved.* This is important. *I did not know.*

Now, at my first sitting the Medium, speaking of my wife said: "She is pleased you have got her things; but why have you given away her shoes?"

I said, "We have not given her shoes away."

The Medium answered: "She says she cannot see them."

How simple. How did the Medium know the shoes were not there? Telepathy. Of course. Telepathy? That means that the Medium read my thoughts. Could she read my thoughts? Perhaps. But she could not read in my thoughts that the shoes had been given away, for I did not believe or think they had. And she could not read in my thoughts that the shoes had been moved, for I did not know they had been moved. So, telepathy does not explain how a Medium who lived in Barnet and did not know my wife nor me, could tell me about my wife's shoes and tell me they were not in the place where my wife had expected them to be.

How did the Medium know? Quite simply. Clairvoyance! The Mediums, besides being thought-readers are clairvoyants. The Medium in Barnet could see into our house in Sussex and could see that the

shoes were not in the drawer in the room. Rather a wonderful woman. But this simple bit of evidence is difficult. The clairvoyant could see that the shoes were not in one room; but she could not see they were in another room.

Let us suppose the Medium to be a thought-reader and clairvoyant. She reads in my mind that my wife had a favourite pair of shoes. She reads in my mind that the shoes were in my wife's room. She projects her astral self into Sussex, goes to the room where she expects to find the shoes and fails to find them. She then risks the statement that the shoes have been disposed of and when I deny it answers that she cannot see them. So her clairvoyance can see an empty drawer; but does not see a pair of shoes in another room.

As I say, the credulity of these critics is paradoxical. They will believe that Jonah lived three days in the belly of a whale and they will believe that a Medium can read a stranger's secret thoughts and that sitting in her room in Barnet she can find her way to a strange house in a strange street, in a strange town and can count the buttons on a dress waistcoat and tell whether the cat had fish or meat for dinner. They will swallow all that; but they *cannot* believe for a moment that a man's dead wife can and will put to him through a Medium a very natural and commonplace question which will help him to believe that her spirit still lives and is still with him. I found it hard to believe that my wife was alive; but I found it harder to believe in the marvellous telepathy of the Medium and the still more marvellous clairvoyance needed to explain her statements.

I will put the matter fairly and plainly. The Medium described to me my house and garden. She said it was my wife who described it. Was that clairvoyance? It could be settled by a simple test. Go to a Medium and ask her not to describe your house; but to describe the house and garden of some well-known author, actor or politician and *she will not be able to do it.* Ask her if Mr. Baldwin had a Broadwood or a Bechstein piano in his drawing room and she will not know. But when she was in a trance she told me of an experiment I had tried in a distant corner of our garden. She said my wife told her. And if I had asked her to ask my wife whether my old friend Dangle had any roses in his garden in Kent, she could not have told me. Clairvoyance seems to be limited in its powers.

The Roman Catholics have a simpler explanation of these mysteries. They say it is all the work of devils. And it may be. If there are such things as devils. And, there again, I am in a cleft stick. I find it harder to believe in devils than in human spirits. I lack the guileless credulity of the sceptics.

THE CHILD'S GATE

When a little child goes home to God,
So tired and white;
It does not enter Heaven by the Golden Gate,
Where splendid shining angels ever stand and wait,
By day and night.

There is a little door in Heaven's wall,
And, just inside
Sweet mother-angels stand with gentle eyes,
And nestling in their tender arms it lies,
All satisfied.

IDA PERCY BRADSHAW.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

By OLIVE MURRAY CHAPMAN.

THOSE interested in Psychic matters cannot fail to be struck by that oft-quoted passage in the first Epistle to Corinthians in which S. Paul gives a list of, what he calls, the spiritual gifts. Many, reading this chapter for the first time in the light and understanding which a knowledge of Spiritualism brings, will find that it holds for them an entirely new significance, and they will recognise in the gifts of healing, of prophecy and the discerning of spirits, to mention a few only on the Apostle's list, some of the very gifts with which spiritualists are familiar to-day.

S. Paul, however, concludes with a warning. While urging his followers to "covet earnestly the best gifts," he reminds them that although they speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, they are become "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The great teacher knew only too well that a man might possess all these gifts, many of which we should call psychic, and yet be most unspiritual, for the psychic must not be confused with the spiritual. So he urged that prophesying, and all the other gifts put together, were of no avail unless a spiritual nature lay behind.

Many people to-day are eager to develop psychic gifts—clairvoyance, trance-mediumship and the like. Some attend developing circles for this reason; but, unless they are at the same time seeking to develop the spiritual side of their natures, they had far better leave the subject alone; and those who seek to cultivate mediumship in a spirit of idle curiosity, for amusement, or a new sensation, do so at their peril, for they will merely tend to attract to themselves beings of an undesirable nature. Mediumship is a responsibility, and the development of the psychic gifts should only be undertaken by those of strong will and character, and with a sincere desire to help others. Under these conditions only good will result, for it is through the psychic gifts rightly used that the Spiritual World is able to manifest in a tangible way. He, therefore, who possesses and uses these gifts aright, may become, metaphorically speaking, the bridge by means of which many seekers after truth may be enabled to cross the dark river of doubt, and to land on the bright shore of conviction, where their faith is no longer a feeble and crippled affair, but a glorious reality.

It may be that the time will come, and perhaps it is nearer than we think, when all these gifts mentioned by S. Paul—clear vision, inspirational and trance speaking, healing and the like, will come into their own, and be generally recognised, thus bringing nearer the time when the Angels of God will be able to mingle freely with the citizens of Earth, and the dense clouds of scepticism that have for so long obscured the nearness and the brightness of the Spiritual World will be dispersed for ever.

Even now, the clouds are lifting, and all who have come into a knowledge of this truth can do their part in dispersing them still further; for to those to whom the Spiritual World is a reality, there is always light behind the darkest clouds, both in so far as their own lives are concerned and those of others.

To the true spiritualist, life is, therefore, steeped in the gift of hope, and its difficulties, seen in their true proportion, are powerless to overwhelm. Personally, I believe that the dawn of a new age of hope is at hand for the World, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary. No one, of course, can deny that there is a vast movement for the suppression of the Spiritual to-day. The Anti-God movement is a fact, and unhappily,

it is not confined to Russia alone. But just as this dark and terrible movement is a fact, so also is the present great spiritual awakening in the World a fact, and this latter is, and must be, the stronger, and will conquer in the end.

What a privilege to be living in this age and to have the opportunity of helping forward by our belief, our thoughts, and our testimony, the glorious Armies of Light! The need is great, and may probably be greater still, for none can tell what lies ahead. But one thing is certain; the Star of Hope will never set; within each human soul, however undeveloped it may be, is a spark of the Divine; and this Divine Force can never be entirely quenched, but one day must come back to its own, must return to its source.

THE LINNET RETURNS

By M. C. MERRETT.

. . . Shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

WORDSWORTH.

I WOULD like to write about a Linnet who found his way! I really loved that little bird; he was my little friend and companion for six years, and had been quite a traveller.

One evening towards the end of May of last year, I returned from a funeral that had lasted all day, to find the door of his cage, which hung at an open window wide open—and the cage empty . . . He could not have survived long. One of his legs had sustained a compound fracture—been set, broken again, and set so many times that it was partly paralysed and practically of no use to him. The Vet. in Devonshire, where the accident happened, told me it was a hopeless case, but he pulled through in spite of that. The London Vet. to whom he afterwards paid so many visits, thought him "a plucky little chap." He was, indeed, to fly away in that crippled condition, to what must have been certain death.

In spite of all these troubles he was a very happy little bird, extraordinarily intelligent, but a shy singer. He would never sing in public. I may mention that originally he had come from the nest, and so had never known freedom.

The object of this little history is to say that he has come back! One morning, shortly after his exit, it was most startling to hear a chirp, which was repeated, quite distinctly. It seemed to come from the top of a bookcase where the cage was sometimes placed. There was no mistaking it; and now ever since I know by the chirping that he flies about the rooms just the same as ever. Unfortunately he will not make himself known if others are present, but this is characteristic of him. He makes one exception, with, it seems, a touch of bravado—that of a cat, who is sometimes present. The cat was at first much disturbed at hearing a bird that could not be seen, but is now used to it.

Evidence of animal survival has sometimes appeared in LIGHT, generally either of a dog or cat, though not I think accompanied by "barking" or "mewing" in their old surroundings. My conviction is that animals can and do survive—and possibly know it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

AN INQUIRER'S DIFFICULTIES

Sir,—First I should like to express my appreciation of the improvement of LIGHT.

A COMMON GROUND FOR COMMUNICATION

Sir,—Referring to the article in LIGHT of May 17th entitled "Notes on Lodge's Conviction of Survival," the reference to slowing down of vibration interests me, as some little time ago I had this under discussion with one on the "other side" and was told that in order to get into touch with me it was necessary to find a common ground, and that this was done by slowing down their vibrations and quickening up mine.

There does not appear to be any difference in substance but a difference in condition, or rate of vibration.
Liverpool. G. RADCLIFFE ROBINSON.

* * *

SPIRITUALISM AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

Sir,—To-day the issue of LIGHT for April 12th came to hand, and I must tell you how much I appreciated the excellent editorial on the Harmonial Philosophy of Davis. It is one of the best characterisations of the Harmonial Philosophy, in a few words, that I have ever read. It should certainly cause many minds to acquaint themselves with Davis and his ideas. I particularly like your description of the Harmonial Philosophy as "a system of thought which takes in Spiritualism and relates it to life generally, but is not at all circumscribed by it." This contains the relationship between the Harmonial Philosophy and Spiritualism in a nutshell.

Concerning this relationship, a distinction, it seems to me, should sometimes be made between "Spiritualism" in the broader and more general sense, and "Spiritualism" in the stricter sense. In the more general sense the term "Spiritualism"—as a system of philosophy in which the spiritual is the real—properly covers the Harmonial Philosophy and other systems of this kind. In this sense it is quite proper to refer to the Harmonial Philosophy, and to cognate systems of thought as "Spiritualism." I note that you frequently employ this meaning of "Spiritualism" in your writings when referring to the general "field" of the subject. This use of the term is, of course, fully justifiable, and it is much to be desired that this general use of the term "Spiritualism" were commonly established among spiritualists.

But, unfortunately, the world at large, and even most spiritualists, take the narrower and stricter meaning of the term "Spiritualism" as being simply a system of spiritual intercourse. In this narrower sense, of course, the word cannot be made to cover such independent systems as the Harmonial Philosophy.

But I think it is best at present to continue the use of the term "Spiritualism" in its broadest sense, and as including the Harmonial Philosophy. Because in this sense the Harmonial Philosophy gets the advantage of being carried on with the movement of Spiritualism and thus becoming known—something it might not be able to accomplish of itself. The distinction between the Harmonial Philosophy and Spiritualism can be made when dealing with these two systems specifically; moreover, the readers themselves can be counted on to make the distinction as they become properly acquainted with the Harmonial Philosophy.

Washington, D.C., U.S.A. JOHN C. LEONARD.
April 24th, 1930.

I have only become interested in Spiritualism during the last few months and I wonder if you could help me in a little difficulty. I have been to four Mediums with a view to getting evidence of survival, and in each case only the Christian names of the spirits who were supposed to be communicating were given.

A large proportion of these names meant nothing to me. On two occasions "Rose" was given as an elderly lady who was much interested in me when on this plane; she might have been an aunt, but I always knew and called her by her surname.

I do not want to believe it, but sometimes I think the reason is that owing to the endless number of Christian names there is less liability to error. Such a large number of names are tried that one is inclined to think there is some guessing going on.

I have read several works and your paper regularly this year, but I have found no explanation of this.
Guildford. R. W. C. PIERCE.

[The transmission of surnames by a spirit person through a Medium is generally a difficult matter. Christian names are, as a rule, more closely related to persons than are surnames, and so appear to be easier to "get over." Another point to remember is that Christian names are often more rhythmic, and bear a more psychical, and even spiritual significance, than do surnames—"they ring true to the soul," as a communicator once remarked to us. As to your failure to obtain definite evidence of survival, we would suggest to you that you cease for a time trying to obtain evidence, and then, after becoming further acquainted with the literature of the subject, renew your quest, acting under the advice of some recognised society (e.g., the London Spiritualist Alliance or some similar organisation). Do not despair! Proof will come at the right time if you pursue the subject seriously and with an open mind. There is fraud and carelessness—conscious and unconscious—in this subject, as in many another. Be generous in thought to a sensitive. Do not look for false issues; seek for the true, and, whilst preserving a critical attitude, do not let it be one of an uncompromising nature. Remember you are dealing with the "finer aspects of the soul"; at the same time keep in mind that communication, even through a thoroughly reliable Medium, is likely to meet with "cross-currents" at times.—ED.]

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. W. H. EVANS.

Mr. R. A. Bush acknowledges with best thanks the following donations:—

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Bubb, Miss E. Maude	2	0	0
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Mr. R. A. Bush, 8, Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W. 19, will gladly acknowledge in LIGHT further donations to this Testimonial, which it is hoped will receive the generous support of all friends.

Light.

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RIDDLEDOM AND REALITY

EXCEPT for the purpose of an intellectual pastime or speculation the sane man does not trouble himself much with regard to the reality or unreality of the world in which he finds himself. He learns that in all probability Space and Time are illusions of the senses, being simply "modes" under which the phenomenal world presents itself. But he still endeavours to catch his trains and to keep his appointments; tries not to step off steep places, and refrains from making violent contact with solid objects, even though he is told they consist only of protons and electrons and ether. In short, he knows that if he is really living in a world of illusory things it is wiser to behave as though they were actually as real as they seem to be.

That is the sensible way, for to occupy the mind too much with transcendental ideas is unwise, to say the least. One so soon becomes washed off one's intellectual footing. It is safer merely to wade in these mystical waters, if one attempts them at all. Even the strong swimmer can only get a short distance before he is compelled to return to the firm earth.

Still; it is wonderful how superphysical theories are invoked to explain our intellectual problems. A mathematician, for example, one day observed to us that the problem of reincarnation never bothered him. That riddle he had solved "in

the light of the Fourth Dimension." You could easily have reincarnation in the Fourth Dimension, he observed airily. And we left it at that!

Lately a contributor to these pages raised the question whether it is possible to alter the past, and seemed to suggest such a possibility. That was certainly revolutionary, because we are all accustomed to regard the past as something unalterable, irrevocable. It seems so clear that the thing done cannot be undone, the word once spoken can never be recalled.

In this matter much, of course, may depend on the way one looks at a past event, viewing it from the standpoint of qualities and values. Shakespeare's dictum "there's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so," contains a deep truth. We see no way of getting rid of the *thing*—whatever it may be. It has a fixity of its own in spite of all the subtleties of the theorists. But we have the power, in some sort, to give it a rather different aspect and meaning. We have all seen instances of fortunate happenings which the subject of them has regarded as very *unfortunate*; and *vice versa*. There are certain people who look back on their experiences of disaster, distress and privation as very blessed things for them. They are actually thankful for their afflictions. These are rare souls. Much more numerous are those who contemplate their past or present benefits and advantages with a sour expression, contrasting them bitterly with the gifts which they think Fortune might have bestowed upon them had the fickle jade been more mindful of their deserts!

It would be possible, as we have already suggested, to resolve all these questions with some large and flourishing generalisation, as thus: Time does not exist in any absolute sense: *ergo* there is no past and no future time; and as for the present, we *know* that has no reality, for it never remains for the most infinitesimal part of a second. This, of course, would wipe out effectively all questions about altering the past or foreseeing the future; or whether we have lived before or shall live hereafter. All such considerations, in short, are beautifully dissolved away, and incidentally we seem ourselves to be dissolved away also in the process! No wonder that in the glut of airy speculations and abstractions woven in ancient days by fanciful thinkers (much as spiders spin their complicated webs out of themselves) the more robust philosophers of later times declared that metaphysics was a futile pursuit; and to-day it is certainly out of fashion. Moreover, there is a suspicion in the minds of many that the old method of dividing up things and treating them as entirely separate from, and independent of, each other is a fallacy. It seems that in the last analysis there is no real division.

But for practical purposes we are bound, by reason of the limitations of our minds, to treat things as they *appear* to be—separate; in short, to observe our categories. Yet we are not to be deceived into supposing that they are real things in themselves. They are “counters”—they represent something. We know, for instance, that our bank-notes are not real *wealth*—they represent gold, and that in turn represents *credit*, and credit, although it is a quite intangible thing, is none the less a basic reality since it is the idea behind the symbols which represent it.

Gradually we find ourselves reaching the conclusion that the only reality of which we have any experience is *Life*, and the only way we can know that is by *living* it rather than by thinking or theorising about it. Further, we reflect that by living it deeply and fully we can find the clues to all our riddles, including that “Great Secret”—whether there is a “life beyond”—a spiritual life. Indeed, some rare souls have settled that question for themselves by the discovery that they are already living it!

“THOUGHT FORMS”

IN Mr. R. A. Bush's admirable book *Jesus Christ at Work*,* there are two enlightening references to “thought forms.” Many clairvoyants tell us they have seen a vision of one of the great saints or even of Jesus Himself. They seem to think that, whoever the one may be who thus manifests, he is actually present in person. There is no intrinsic impossibility in this any more than it is not outside the range of possibility that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the other members of the Cabinet should ring our front-door bells and in their own persons hand us our income-tax forms. This, however, would on the one hand be an unnecessary expenditure of energy and, on the other hand, would leave their subordinates without employment. Things are not done that way.

In the spirit spheres economical organization is no less orderly. To take the two examples from the book mentioned above: One communicator was describing how he and other workers had dealt with a man who had, on entering the spirit life, found himself in the darkness. They concentrated their thoughts upon him until he had, in some small degree, come to realize his condition. Then they impressed the help of his mother who had gone over some years previously. The communicator says, “We never left him. In time we were able to shew a fully developed form to him, a thought form of his mother which appeared like a vision to him” (p. 160). In this case the mother was present in the same sphere; as we should put it in earth phraseology, only a short distance away.

But the same method is used when visions of the high ones are transmitted into the earth environment. A clairvoyant lady had described to Mr. Bush a vision of Jesus which she had observed in the Church at Wimbledon. One of the spirit communicators referred to this incident in the following terms, “The vision of the lady seer was true. It was produced by us with the direct sanction of the Master. He sent the thought picture into the centre of the gathering and we materialized it sufficiently for the lady to see with her clairvoyant eyes. This is the manner commonly employed of producing visions of the Master” (p. 116).

G. VALE OWEN.

* The Two Worlds Publishing Company, price 4s. 6d.

SIDELIGHTS

MR. SHAW DESMOND writing in *Pearson's Weekly* on May 10th on “Foretelling the Future” gives a number of instances in which prophecy has been followed by accurate fulfilment. Here is one: “I will take the very human case of an old lady in London who visited the London Occult Science Circle to which I belonged, and which was composed, with two exceptions, of sceptics, and formed partly for the purpose of exposing the ‘humbug’ of prophecy. This old lady was very poor. At a meeting of the circle, one of the two present who had the greatest prophetic gift (which, by the way, we all possess to greater or less degree, although we seldom realise it) foretold that ‘something to her advantage would come to her shortly into which earth, fire and water entered.’ On her next visit she was asked whether anything had happened to her of this kind. She replied no; although a strange occurrence had taken place—she had been left a vase of Sevres china by a relation, a vase worth over a hundred pounds. ‘Why,’ said the ‘prophet’ who was a well-known scientist, ‘what is china but earth mixed with water and burned in fire?’”

* * *

The writer concludes his article with these words: “These incursions into one of the most difficult and doubtful fields of human investigations are sternly to be deprecated in the case of the average man or woman. There are genuine and conscientious prophets, but there are multitudes of those who, sometimes unconsciously, are charlatans. *Prophecy is still a field mainly for the scientist.*”

* * *

In the *Daily News* of May 13th, Mr. J. L. Hodson, describing a conversation with Mr. Oliver Baldwin, M.P., says “We discussed inspiration, and he said: ‘When I was doing my novel I was standing one night writing at a tall desk, and I suddenly found I had finished two pages that I had written almost without being aware of it. Those pages held the best prose in the book.’”

* * *

The writer goes on, “Mr. (Oliver) Baldwin is a spiritualist, carries a New Testament in his pocket, and never speaks in public without prayer. He is convinced that on two or three occasions a warning Voice has saved his life. ‘I don't say it was a Divine voice, any more than you or I would be Divine if we died to-morrow. But I believe each of us has what you may call ‘a guardian angel.’”

* * *

Quoting Mr. Baldwin, the account continues, “On one occasion I was doing 40 miles an hour on a motor bicycle when a voice behind me said ‘Take care! Take care!’ I looked round—nobody there. I slowed down and came to cross-roads round which a powerful touring car swept on its wrong side. Next time was in the war—on a sunken road near the River Selle in October, 1918. The shelling was pretty thick. I sat on a firestep—my third orderly since the ‘show’ began, near by. The same voice said ‘Visit your company.’ I did. Twenty yards away I heard a shell coming. I dropped flat. A moment later the firestep and orderly no longer existed. . . . I'm certain the spirit leaves the body when asleep. I've felt that. Coming back is sometimes rather painful. More than once I've been conscious of my spirit hovering about a foot above my body.”

"WITHOUT VISION...!"

By VICE-ADMIRAL S. R. DRURY-LOWE, C.M.G.

THE Prime Minister (who certainly does not lack vision) in his final speech at the close of the recent Five Power Naval Conference expressed his belief that "the London Conference has laid foundation stones upon which others will build with thankful hearts." And he appealed to public opinion to range itself behind those who are to conduct the further negotiations necessary. What is the fundamental purpose of these negotiations? In the words of Mr. Stimson, of the American delegation, it is "to help in the promotion of good relationships between the nations of the Earth; to give effect to the World's belief in the possibility of the settlement of all international matters by pacific and rational means." The last sentence contains the pith of the matter, and explains how public opinion can best respond to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's appeal.

The pacific settlement of all disputes is the only alternative to the use of force, and now by their acceptance of the Kellogg Peace Pact the nations of the world have solemnly renounced the use of force and declared war to be no longer legal as an instrument of national policy.

But the effectiveness of this declaration depends on the support it receives from public opinion. "The Peace Pact," said M. Briand, "will mean just what the People choose to make it mean!" And exactly the same, of course, might be said of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Can we depend on the support of public opinion to ensure that these international conventions are respected and observed?

It will be so only if the people are determined to bury the past and realise they have embarked on a new way of life amongst the nations, based on mutual confidence, goodwill and understanding—a new way that has been tried out during the last ten years and *not* found wanting. But what do the people think about it? Do they care at all? "Without vision the people perish," and vision is badly needed in this matter, for there is a deep spiritual significance in this work for peace and goodwill amongst the nations. In the words of H.M. the King, "The labours of statesmen can avail little if the treaties and pacts which they devise do not rest upon a spiritual foundation." Is much importance attached to spiritual values to-day? Not much, perhaps, judging by the popular Press and literature of the day. Yet it may be, as a writer in the *Spectator* recently observed, that underlying this apparent indifference there is permeating a realisation that spiritual ideals, whilst the most intangible, are the most real. A growing number feel that in them and around them is a spiritual force which is related to, and has a vital influence on, their lives and outlook.

Unfortunately there is so much discussion amongst those who appreciate spiritual values! Why cannot we agree to differ on what are really unessentials and to concentrate on what is the common need of all—Peace and Goodwill? How can discussions be best avoided?

With some diffidence I venture to quote words from the Other Side which seem to me particularly helpful in this respect. "We want to see throughout the whole of humanity a great chain of Prayer and Thought for each other, and everyone who works for that end will eventually bring in others. Good thoughts are very contagious, comparable to an epidemic, but a very wholesome and happy one! You have allowed yourselves to think that so long as you do and say what is right your thoughts do not much matter, forgetting that what is Thought to-day will be Action to-morrow! And there is no limit to what can be done by thought on the right lines. The trouble unfortunately is that you are all persuaded your own line is the right one, with the result that you waste endless time and trouble in trying to

convert others to your particular point of view. How much better it would be if Men would agree to differ! Why should we not agree to differ, and get on together with the main job common to us all—Peace on Earth to men of goodwill?

"'Tis time new hopes should animate the World, new light should dawn on new revealings to a race weighed down so long." Four hundred years ago those words were written, and we are still weighed down by our differences and divisions. I plead for Vision in this matter of international relationships, Vision that will enable people to recognise the spiritual significance of this work, and so lead to the strengthening of the spiritual basis on which international peace must be founded. How shall that Vision be found?

..... Where shall we find
The Light of Truth for which we dimly grope?
Are we but chasing shadows day by day—
Ethereal abstractions of the mind?
Or somewhere shall we find Reality—
The Good, the Beautiful, the true?
Down in the deep recesses of our hearts
The answer lies, the hidden mystery;
For none can find the Vision—reach the goal—
Till the Ideal is found Within the Soul.*

THE PATH OF LOVE

By W. H. EVANS.

JESUS said, "A new commandment give I unto you that ye love one another." The word is often upon our lips, but not perhaps so much in our hearts. We all come short of the glory of God and there is no greater glory than love. A loving heart maketh glad the countenance and lightens all the tasks of life. Where love abides there the burden lies easy. "My yoke is easy and my burden is light," but only where there is love. And only those who love can assume the yoke of the Christ-life and take up the burden of the cross.

It is common to confuse the emotion which rises from love, with love itself. How easy to love those with whom we are in agreement, how hard to love those from whom we differ! That is because we are thinking in the emotion and not in love itself. Where there is friendship based upon love there you will find candour and honest speech. How hard it is to utter the word which one thinks to be essential, yet which has the power to wound. Yet there is a wounding which, like the work of the surgeon's scalpel, is right and proper for our soul's health. Loving in the Christ way differs profoundly from our usual conceptions of loving. What is the Christ way of loving? It is loving from the will—from the soul—and not from the emotions. It is love which sees clearly; which has transcended tears; which has trod the path of difficulty and washed its feet in the blood of the heart. Love is no weak and supine thing, but strong, robust, virile. It holds us in the way of pain for our healing, it heaps burdens upon us to make us strong. It lives not for self but for others. Its eyes are not on the cross but upon the triumph beyond. It lives in the perpetual light of God, hence it sees with clearness and power. How blessed are those who experience this love!

The supreme example of perfect love is Christ; yet he never hesitated to speak bluntly when occasion demanded it. "Hypocrites! Generation of vipers!" are expressions which some may think strange to fall from the lips of love; but here we see the perfect frankness

* *Life Transcendent* by Olive Mercer.

and candour of an understanding love. The soul which likened the kingdom of heaven to a child, which brooded over Jerusalem as a mother, could utter stern rebuke when needed. A wise and understanding love walked the hills of Judæa, and still walks the earth to-day. That love would heal, but it hesitates not to pain in order that we may have health.

There is one simple rule by which we may always know how deep and true is our love—whether it be love which springs from mere emotion or from the will and understanding. It might be expressed in three words: watch your reactions. How do we react to the varying circumstances of life? Do we see clearly, or are we blinded with our emotions? Are our judgments harsh and unrighteous? Do we resent criticism? Do we turn our back upon the wise and understanding friend who dares to point out to us our failings? Simple things these, but they tell us so much.

How did the world react to Jesus when he went about doing good? We know, it crucified him because it did not understand. Here was the embodiment of love, yet "he was despised and rejected of men." When we turn aside from our brethren because, in like manner, we do not understand, we crucify Christ afresh. Once again we crush the hands that would save and render them impotent. How slowly we learn! How hard we make the way for ourselves! For we are all guilty in some measure, and we fail often through the very earnestness of our desire. In our eagerness to be of service we spiritually over-reach ourselves; then wonder at the ruin we have wrought. How needful then, as Paul says that we, "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other; if any man have a complaint against any, even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye, and above all *put on love*, which is the bond of perfectness." For it ever remaineth true that we may have all virtue, but if we have not love we are nothing.

* * *

THE PAST.—Our past was created by ourselves and for ourselves. It is the only one that fits us; the only one which can teach us a truth that no one else can teach, to give us a force that no one else can give. Good or bad, glittering or tarnished, it is as a museum which holds rarities whose speech is to us, alone . . . Our past—it is ourselves what we are and what we will become; our past—it is our secret told by the lips of the years; it is the mysterious image of ourselves seized and guarded by Time. It shows us, behind ourselves, as our aspirations and our hopes show us in the future; and from the two forms conjoint we may learn, through ourselves, what we really are.

—MAURICE MAETERLINCK.

* * *

Bible Cameos—A new volume under this title from the pen of Mr. H. Ernest Hunt will make its appearance in June. It comprises a series of twenty cameo-sketches of incidents from the Bible, interpreted in the light of today by looking behind the screen of matter to the vital play of spirit. The author in many cases draws his interpretation from modern scientific or psychic knowledge. The aim of this little volume is to show the age-long vitality of these historic incidents, to display the essentially human touch, and to show the essential similarity between the phenomena of two thousand years ago and those of today. The publishers are Rider & Co., and the price will be half-a-crown.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS

"Are psychic qualities shewn by the hair?" was a question lately raised. It is one I cannot answer. I recall the days when a number of long-haired men made their appearance at spiritualist gatherings, which led to a remark in the Press that Spiritualism favoured the growth of luxuriant locks! Also some years ago I heard a theory to the effect that a close analysis of the hair of Mediums would reveal some minute differences as compared with the hair of ordinary persons. But this question so far as I know was never settled, although I believe that the hair is an index of temperament.

* * *

The etheric body is a not infrequent topic of discussion, and amongst those unacquainted with physics it naturally presents some difficulties. So it is well to remind those interested in the subject that Sir Oliver Lodge's idea of the etheric body is that it is a question of fixed or organised ether and not of free ether. It is not really so hard to believe, considering how little of our present bodies consist of matter and how much of ether. As he has said: "Mind may need a vehicle, a body, a habitation; but it need not always be made of matter." And also he has told us: "The Ether is a permanent vehicle, probably adapted to the utilisation of something still more beyond our senses than itself."

* * *

The disposition to states of scare or panic, and the tendency to give a sensational colouring to accounts of simple events is a mark of infancy. It applies not only to the very young but also to the "children of a larger growth." I have long been accustomed to "bogey" stories about the dangers of Spiritualism. And yet a long experience inclines me to the belief that no greater mischief results from reckless tampering with the forces of the Unseen Realm than by a similar trifling with the forces of the world in which we now live. Tragic mischief may result in either case, but there is ample reason to confide in the intelligent direction of both worlds—the Seen and the Unseen. In the last analysis I think the Universe will be found to be "fool proof"—secure from the worst excesses of wanton malignity, or that far more destructive thing—"blind ignorance."

* * *

I am seldom irritated or depressed by attacks and criticisms, however ignorant and grotesque. Perhaps it is a matter of temperament, or it may be the result of being thoroughly seasoned. Besides, as Sir Roger de Coverley observed in another case, there is a great deal to be said on both sides. One reads, for example, that the direct voice is produced by ventriloquism, or by chemicals concealed in a trumpet to produce a crackling sound which the deluded sitters mistake for a voice giving messages; or that the cold wind felt at seances is due to a cleverly manipulated bellows—or some other rollicking nonsense of the same kind. But before you have quite finished laughing at this kind of absurdity you are "brought up with a round turn" by some story of a newly converted Spiritualist who proclaims that he received a message from "very high spirits" to the effect that he is a divinely-appointed messenger charged with a great mission to reform the world—with many high-falutin' accompaniments. There is no occasion to lose faith in humanity. This *is* humanity—performing its fantastic tricks before high heavens, and there is no need to listen to those who say it is all of the devil. You merely remark that in this case the devil is evidently not a "roaring lion"—but only a dismal ass. And you go on laughing.

D.G.

A LINK WITH LINCOLN

By THE REV. JOHN LAMOND, D.D.

THE fact that President Lincoln was a spiritualist cannot be too widely known, and further, that his great decision regarding the emancipation of the slaves was arrived at through direct influence from the spiritual world cannot be too strongly emphasised. It was that decision that changed the issue of the prolonged Civil War of 1861-4. Some of us can still remember how the sympathies of the civilised world went forth on behalf of the northern states of America when that decision was proclaimed.

During the years 1915-16 I made a prolonged investigation into Spiritualism. I had read LIGHT during ten years. It was stated in the pages of that journal that two remarkable Mediums were in London—Mrs. Wriedt and Mrs. Harris (now Mrs. Harris-Kay). I resolved to find out for myself if the extraordinary phenomena of which I had so often read could be seen and verified. It has occurred to me since that it must have been known in the Inner World that a Scottish parson was in London seeking for evidence as to the reality of psychic phenomena. The evidence was vouchsafed—far more evidence than I at that period bargained for.

One feature was a succession of distinguished Scottish visitors. I have been silent about them ever since. I have my own views of these distinguished visitors. But this I may add, that in nearly every case confirmatory evidence was given of their identity within a period of three months.

At one of these seances Abraham Lincoln manifested. I was surprised, for I had no immediate interest in Lincoln; I certainly did not know that he was a spiritualist. He said to me, "You are here in London seeking for evidence as to the alleged facts pertaining to Spiritualism. Spiritualism is true. There is the possibility of inter-communication between the Two Worlds."

He then went on to describe his anxiety during the Civil War; how various influences were brought to bear upon him to withhold the emancipation act, and how during these critical months a "little woman" was brought to him at the White House. (I seem, as I write, to see that "little woman," her presence was rendered so vivid to me). He told how, in his mental agony, through the lips of that "little woman" he was exhorted to stand up to his convictions. He said that so deep was the impression produced upon his mind that he resolved to emancipate the slaves. I thanked him, and the interview ended.

Now here comes in the curious part of this story. About three months afterwards I was in the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and some one put a book into my hands published by Mrs. Nettie Colburn. The book gives an account of the visits of this Medium to Abraham Lincoln at the White House. I read it with deep interest, as being a confirmation of the statements made to me by the President himself.

It was at that same seance that Andrew Jackson Davis came to me. I have been a reader of his writings for more than fifty years. It so chanced that I had one of his books in my pocket. He said to me, "You have one of my books in your pocket." I knew the Medium was ignorant of the fact. "Telepathy!" it may be argued. Perhaps; but it was certainly not telepathy between me and President Lincoln, for at that time I knew nothing whatever of his interest in Spiritualism or of Mrs. Colburn's visits to the White House.

NOTES AND REVIEWS

"LIGHT BEARERS OF DARKNESS" By "Enquire Within." (Boswell Printing and Publishing Co., Ltd. 6s.)

This amazing book will interest many, but I doubt if it will convince everybody that its main thesis is well founded. It purports to be "an attempt to show that this present movement for World Revolution leading to World Domination is an age-long fanatical effort on the part of some Over-Shadowing Power working through many secret illumined sects." Even the author, who is evidently well informed, does not claim to know anything specific of this "overshadowing power." He is not even sure whether it resides on the Astral or Mundane Plane. Men who think—and all do not—are well aware that there have been age-long efforts on the part of Evil Forces to subvert not only civilisation, but the very fabric of human existence. This is not a new conception; but the author is surely going too far when he charges all occult societies with being agents subservient to the malign Powers. It is not true to suggest that all, or even a majority, of societies concerned with the elucidation of the hidden forces of Nature have a political objective, and are working subterraneously for some grandiose scheme of world domination. The book contains a good deal of interesting information which cannot fail to intrigue those who study the subject, and even those, perhaps, who may have been at one time members of the Stella Matutina—*parvaque pars sui!* Especially valuable at this time is the record of Mrs. Besant's activities in India (of which we are now reaping the fruit), while the cataclysm in Russia becomes more intelligible after a perusal of these pages. Would I be right if I suggest that the author is, primarily, blinded by more-or-less orthodox ideas of religious evolution and, secondarily, haunted by nebulous fears born of an anti-semitic bias?

We have heard a great deal of the part played by the Grand Orient Masons and other secret societies in the French Revolution; no doubt there are similar organisations behind the Revolution in Russia; but the world, now shaken and perhaps afraid, will recover its stability and continue its majestic march towards Perfection. In any case, I suggest that human remedial efforts will not be assisted or enhanced by vague phobias of malign astral entities such as we are introduced to in this volume.

"M.D. (Oxon)."

* * *

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED

- "THE MYSTERIES OF SOUND AND NUMBER." By Sheikh Habeeb Ahmad. (Foyle. 10s. 6d.)
- "CAN I BE A MYSTIC?" By Aelfrida Tillyard. (Hutchinson. 5s.)
- "THE TEMPLE SERVANT." By E. R. Morrough. (Longmans. 7s. 6d.)
- "DE ELECTIONE GRATIAE AND QUAESTIONES THEOSOPHICAE." By Jacob Böhme. (Constable. 10s. 6d.)
- "THE NATURE OF ANGELS." By Alexander White. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d.)
- "CASTLE ENIGMA." By J. Russell Warren. (Ward Lock. 7s. 6d.)
- "SOME ASPECTS OF HINDU MEDICAL TREATMENT." By Dorothea Chaplin. (Luzac & Co. 3s. 6d.)
- "BUDDHISM AND MODERN THOUGHT." By J. E. Ellam. (Riders. 3s. 6d.)

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WEEKLY MEETING.
 Wednesday, June 4th, at 8.15 p.m. Mr. NOEL JAQUIN
 "THE TRUTH ABOUT PALMISTRY"
 Visitors 1/-

GROUP CLAIRVOYANCE.
 (Limited to 10. Bookings must be made).
 Friday, May 30th, at 5 p.m. .. Mrs. ROUS
 Friday, June 6th, at 5 p.m. .. Mr. T. AUSTIN

VOL. IX. No. 1. April, 1930.
"PSYCHIC SCIENCE"
 Frontispiece. Portrait of J. Arthur Hill,
 author of "Psychical Science and Religious Belief"
 Madame Lotte Plaet, a fine psychometrist (with portrait), Mrs. Hewat
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 .. MISS CAMPBELL
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 Healing .. MRS. GREEN & MR. HARDING

CLASSES AND CIRCLES.
 Wednesdays, 3 p.m., Circle for Clairvoyance (June 4th) .. MRS. HIRST
 Thursdays, 3 p.m., Class for Development .. MISS EARLE AND MRS. LIVINGSTONE
 Thursdays, 5.30 p.m., Devotional Groups (Absent Healing), .. MISS STEAD
 Fridays, 3 p.m., Class for Psychical Development .. MRS. CAMPBELL

SPECIAL NOTICE.
 Friday, May 30th, "At Home," Mr. Kirkby and Mr. Jobson (through Mrs.
 Singleton) on "The Origin of the Reflectograph"—Followed by discussion.—
 Members free. Non-members 1/- Tea 9d.

Wimbledon Spiritualist Church.
 (Accepting the Leadership of Jesus Christ.)
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Sunday, June 1st, 11 a.m. Holy Communion .. Mr. R. A. BUSH
 An invitation is given to all who love the Lord Jesus.
 Sunday, June 1st, 6.30. Priests versus Prophets .. Mr. R. A. BUSH
 Wednesday, June 4th, 7.30 p.m. .. Mr. G. T. WYATT
 Address, Spirit descriptions and messages.

Healing—no charge; Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to
 8 p.m., Wednesdays, 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

The London Spiritual Mission.
 13, PEMBRIDGE PLACE, BAYSWATER, W.2.

Sunday, June 1st, at 11. .. DR. W. J. VANSTONE
 Sunday, June 1st, at 6.30 .. MR. GEO. PRIOR
 Wednesday, June 4th, at 7.30. (Clairvoyance) MISS LILY THOMAS
 Friday, June 6th, at 7.30 .. MISS MAUD MacCARTHY
 Will lecture upon Phono-Therapy (Special). Admission by Ticket.

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Participation in the following activities is confined to Members and Associates

MEETINGS FOR PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE.
 Monday, June 2nd at 3. Psychometry .. MRS. ESTA CASSEL
 Monday, June 2nd at 7.30. Clairvoyance .. MRS. ROBERTS
 Tuesday, June 3rd, at 7.30. Clairvoyance .. MR. VOUT PETERS
 Thursday, June 4th, at 7.30. Clairvoyance .. MRS. NUTLAND

GROUP SEANCES.
 Tuesday, June 3rd, at 7.30 .. MR. AUSTIN
 Wednesday, June 4th, at 3 .. MRS. CANNOCK
 Thursday, June 5th, at 7.30 .. MRS. NEVILLE

LECTURES.
 Monday, June 6th, at 7.30 .. MRS. ESTA CASSEL
 A Trance address by one of Mrs. Cassel's controls, followed by questions and
 discussion on subjects introduced.

Thursday, June 12th, at 7.30 .. MRS. BARCEL
 Subject: NUMBER, Name and COLOUR. Demonstration by the Lecturer.
 1st lecture of a series entitled: The Spiritualists' Aspect of Astrology and
 Numerology and their relation to mediumship. Tickets can be obtained
 in advance

PRIVATE SITTINGS can be arranged with the following Mediums:
 MRS. ESTELLE ROBERTS, MRS. CANNOCK, MR. GLOVER BOTHAM,
 MRS. MORREL, MISS LILY THOMAS, MR. VOUT PETERS, MRS.
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 11 a.m.—Speaker: Mr. Dimsdale Stocker.
 Clairvoyante: Mrs. Neville

6.30 p.m.—Speaker: Rev. Drayton Thomas.
 Clairvoyante: Miss Kingstone.

June 8th, 11 a.m., Captain Frost.
 Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas.
 6.30 p.m., Rev. Vale Owen.
 Clairvoyante: Miss Frances Campbell.

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DAILY EXPERIMENTAL WORK.

Arrangements can be made for members to have private sittings with all Mediums approved by the Council, either in the rooms of the Alliance or at the home of the Medium or member, as may be mutually convenient.

Sittings for non-members can be arranged on presentation of satisfactory letter of introduction.

Tuesdays, at 8.15 p.m. Demonstrations of Clairvoyance, etc.

June 3rd. MRS. LIVINGSTONE.

Wednesdays, 8.30 to 4.45 p.m. Conversazione.

Wednesdays, (alternate) at 5 p.m. Trance Addresses, through the Mediumship of Mr. W. E. FOSTER.

June 4th. Answers to Written Questions. (Impersonal and Relating to the Future Life).

Wednesdays (alternate) at 5 p.m. Discussion Classes.

Leader: Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT.

June 11th. The Projection of the Astral.

Thursdays (alternate) at 8 p.m. General Lectures.

June 12th. MR. J. ENGLEADOW on "The Significance of Spirit Teachings in Daily Life."

NOTE: Admission free to members to all ordinary meetings. Non-members cannot be admitted to any meeting except on the presentation of a ticket purchased BEFORE THE DAY of the meeting, or as the guest of a member, who may purchase a ticket at the time of the lecture.

SUBSCRIPTION:

For a membership fee of ONE GUINEA PER ANNUM, which falls due on the first of January, the Alliance provides a centre for enquirers and for convinced Spiritualists, where meetings, lectures, and investigations are regularly carried on.

THE LIBRARIES.

No extra fees are charged for the use of books, except for postage when they are not exchanged personally. *The annual fee of one guinea for Membership includes the use of the Libraries.*

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Bibliography 1d. (classified list of books useful for the student.)

THE SECRETARY attends every day, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., except Saturdays and until the conclusion of lectures, and is at all times prepared to meet enquirers.

The Attitude of the London Spiritualist Alliance towards Spiritualism and Psychological Research.

- (1) There is one belief common to all Spiritualists, no matter how widely they may differ concerning the various issues involved, that is, a belief in the Survival of Human Personality after Bodily Death and its demonstration.
- (2) The Alliance regards Survival as a fact in Nature.
- (3) It recognises that the inferences arising from this fact are scientific, philosophical and religious.
- (4) It affirms that serious experimentation should be encouraged, but deprecates unscientific and aimless pursuit of phenomena as an end in itself.
- (5) It looks upon psychic phenomena as the "preamble to all religions" (F. W. H. Myers), and not in themselves the basis for a New Religion.
- (6) It realises that while some psychic phenomena emanate from the discarnate, others do not.
- (7) It recommends that every communication be subjected to critical examination.

WHITSUN HOLIDAYS.

The Alliance will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, June 9 and 10

The L.S.A. is an Unsectarian Body.

OBSERVATIONS

The Psychic faculties are very delicate, and subject to the influence of definite thoughts of the sitter.

A strong suspicion, without any justification, that the Medium is dishonest, combined with a determination to find deception, would act adversely upon the Medium who, in the supernormal state during the period of the sitting, is highly sensitive to suggestion.

It is to be observed that there is a close parallel between mediumistic states and those of ordinary hypnotised subjects.

An open mind and complete passivity is necessary. Honest criticism in the inquirer is natural, but active criticism causing mental activity during the sitting should be avoided.

A critical analysis should be made after, but not during the sitting.

NON-SUCCESSFUL SITTINGS

It is unavoidable that some sittings will be failures for several reasons:

Sitter and Medium may prove psychically unsuited to each other.

The psychic power fluctuates independently of the will and often of the knowledge of the Medium. It is not like a telephonic message.

It should be understood that sitters sit at their own risk as to whether results are satisfactory or otherwise. If a Medium be conscious of lack of power, no sitting will be held, and the fee will be refunded on application to the Secretary.