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# Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

Edited by DAVID GOW.

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statements made in communications purporting to come from the Unseen World. The new and astonishing fact that such communications actually were received tended to make the earlier spiritualists uncritical. To-day those who accept everything that happens phenomenally as a manifestation from discarnate spirits, or who place implicit reliance on all the communications received at a seance, are quite rightly regarded as very simple-minded people. But the present cautiousness of the average spiritualist has not, we think, come about as a result of scientific incursions into psychical inquiry, or from the attacks of sceptics. It came as the natural result of long study and experience. The first critical examination of psychical phenomena, shewing the need for discrimination between the psychically genuine and the psychologically counterfeit, came, we believe, some forty years ago from a little body of London spiritualists, very sincere and very sensible men, with little or no scholarship, but with long practical experience. They discovered many things which not until many years later the scientific investigators detected and recorded as new and arresting conclusions calculated to give the spiritualists a rude shock. But the veterans had long before marked these shoals and reefs on their chart, and the scientific discoveries alarmed no one but the shallow and inexperienced explorers of the spiritual sea.

\* \* \*

## NOTES BY THE WAY

ANIMAL survival is a perennial theme. Those who have made any extensive study of psychic phenomena know that there have been manifestations of the continued existence of animal pets. Naturally in dealing with such phenomena there will be some differences of view as to the particular element in the animal which has survived, if any. Still there is a great volume of testimony on the subject, not all, or even the larger part of which, has come from the seance room proper. There was, for instance, the well-known case of the late Sir Rider Haggard in which his favourite dog was concerned. In this instance it was a manifestation of telepathic sympathy between him and his beloved dog which was dying at a long distance from its master. We prefer to treat these matters philosophically rather than scientifically, without, however, disregarding the scientific aspect of the matter. We hold that evolution does not belong to the human side alone; that all life unfolds to higher and ever higher expression. And further we remember that high truth which Diotima expounded to Socrates—it is Love which "bridges the chasm."

\* \* \*

WHEN Spiritualism was still young very few spiritualists seem seriously to have doubted that all seance phenomena were the work of the spirits of the departed, or to have questioned the truthfulness of the

WE have sometimes expressed regret—we might almost say disgust—that certain books or articles giving supposed spirit communications in the form of "teachings" are far inferior to what any capable person could produce by normal means. We noted the slipshod phrases, the dreary platitudes, and the shallow rhetoric which disfigured such writings. It was only the knowledge that much fine and high teaching is also on record—communications thoroughly worthy of the sources to which they are attributed—that saved us from pessimism in the presence of the mass of turgid and commonplace utterances claiming to be "inspired by spirits" and accepted as such by the uncritical. The reality of spirit communication, as we know, has been overwhelmingly proved by authentic evidences of personal identity. But the fact that so much which is put forth as revelation and inspiration is of inferior quality is a matter for regret. Fortunately the standard is rising all the time, and the paltry and trivial matter that in old days formed part of the "literature" of Spiritualism is passing to the rubbish heap. There we see the "sifting of Time." But we would fain see that sifting process carried on to a greater extent by the judgment and intelligence of readers, and their rigorous demand that a great message shall be given in a form worthy of its greatness. If it is urged that Truth is more important than Art or Literature, we would not deny it, but none the less would contend that without them she is but poorly served.

# THE SUPERSENSUOUS WORLD

BY FREDERICK STEPHENS (Paris)

(Concluded from page 277.)

THE current biology, dominated as it is by a powerful materialistic complex, offers a biological theory of memory. It explains memory by protoplasm, brain cells, molecular changes occurring therein. The guiding idea of the theory is that under the influence of sensory impressions there takes place a stimulation of the "irritable substance." So far so good. But there results a *permanent* modification in the arrangement of the cerebral molecules, which become arranged into definite patterns or traces. This is styled an "engram." A recent author, Mr. W. R. Bousfield, K.C., F.R.S., has very acutely criticised the mechanical theory and points out that the motion of a *permanent* engram which can defy the process of metabolism, ceaselessly at work in the organism, is based on no evidence. The theory has to regard brain cells as organs for *storage* of millions of engrams imprinted in protoplasmic structure. Our theory only has to regard them as organs of *transmission*. The essential thing in memory is ideas not words. Let the experiment be performed of taking a sentence whose *meaning* is thoroughly understood; then if one tries to memorize it, one will succeed probably after two readings. Now take the same sentence, jumble the words about until they make complete nonsense, and try again to reproduce it. One may *perhaps* succeed after many failures, and then only by partly associating certain words together. It is more likely the effort to reproduce the jumble will fail. Seeing that, according to the biological theory, memory only depends on auditory or visual vibrations affecting the brain, why should the second experiment fail and the first be comparatively easy? It is because *ideas* are recalled by memory and ideas have *meaning*. The essential thing in memory is *attention*, which is associated with selective interest. The mechanical theory demands that the brain cells should be equally affected whether we attend or not to a series of sensory impressions. Now follow out a train of thought while our ears are being affected by the words of a speaker. Try to recall these afterwards. We shall fail to do so.

On thinking the matter over we shall note that our effort to recall the words of the speaker fails at the exact point where we ceased to attend, engaged in our train of reflection. The "engrams" which the auditory sensations were imprinting on the cerebral tissue (according to the theory) do not succeed in getting themselves recalled.

It is impossible in a short article to give an account of Mr. Bousfield's destructive criticism, so it must suffice to say that he shows the mechanical theory to be quite inadequate to explain the facts of association of ideas, habit, or forgetting. We must abandon the theory, and postulate that memory instead of being a record in protoplasmic structure, is a record in something of *immaterial* nature intimately associated with the first.

At this point, Naturalism, as Lord Balfour used to call it, represented by the hardshell biologist, always raises a formal objection. He objects on principle to this *kind* of hypothesis; he says it is "unscientific," mystical, and even superstitious. He brings forth from his armoury where it is kept in readiness for action, that old trusty weapon, the famous "Principle of Parsimony"—"entia praeferat necessitatem non esse multiplicanda"—entities or principles must not be unnecessarily multiplied in number. He says, very severely, that the ideal of science is to explain the world with the fewest principles possible. We agree that this is desirable, but reply that if it is unscientific to invent "ad hoc" hypotheses, it is no less unscientific to insist on *over-simplification* in obedience to an

alleged requirement. We cannot allow the case to be prejudged like that; each must be sifted. We say that he is guilty of over-simplification in trying to explain life and mind in terms of physics and chemistry *only*. These play their part, but their part is not the whole story. We therefore reject his argument and follow Mr. Bousfield and Dr. Macdougall in their hypothesis of a psychic structure.

## PSYCHOPLASM.

This theory of an etheric basis or structure is only another expression for the fundamental "something" we have been discussing. The difficulties attending the conception of an "engram" in protoplasmic structure can be got rid of provided we conceive the engram to be recorded in an immaterial structure which we may call "psychoplasm." We do not pretend to know anything about its constitution, other than the fact that it is *not matter*. The notion is that a psychic or non-material brain co-operates with a material brain. The latter is responsive to sensory stimuli and the former responds to the ideas into which sensory stimuli are transmuted. With this much wider working hypothesis, Bousfield succeeds in giving an adequate explanation of the facts of memory. He calls this hypothetical immaterial structure in which memories are stored the "Mnema." The "engram" of the mechanical theory is now replaced by the "psychogram" of our wider theory. Bousfield gives an example, and takes the simple word "rat," showing that the linkages with it may have ten ideas, and that *each* of these ten may have ten others, and so on. In seven generations the linkages may easily amount to ten millions. The supposition that each link is represented by a *permanent path in the brain*, is fantastically absurd. To put it briefly the brain is the organ of mind, the ether is the intermediate.

If the reality of this etheric basis be denied, we may ask, what about the space in which the brain, and for that matter, the entire body exist? Recollect that, as Professor Eddington has pointed out, if all the protons and electrons in the material body could be concentrated into one dense group they would only occupy the volume of a pinhead. The atoms of which our bodies are composed are inconceivably *empty*. So tenuous is the atom that, speaking of the carbon atom (of fundamental importance to life), Sir J. H. Jeans vividly compares it to Waterloo Station with six wasps (its electrons) buzzing about inside! What is going on in the interspace? He says "we live in a gossamer universe; pattern, plan and design are there in abundance, but solid substance is rare." We are surely entitled to suspect that this mysterious entity manifesting itself to us in vibrations conveying energy, accompanied apparently by yet subtler vibrations making no appeal to our sense organs or instruments, may be the ether that interpenetrates and supports the protoplasmic network whose atoms, so to speak, float in it. We thus picture our physical framework as a vast aggregation of electrical charges which science is now beginning to describe in terms of wavelengths, frequencies, and so on. If we focus our attention on them as specks of electricity we seem to see them as particles; if we think rather of the vibration aspect, they no longer seem to be material but immaterial, forming in some unimaginable way a sort of bridge between Mind and the organism in which it manifests itself.

If we ask, what becomes of the mind when this aggregate of electrical charges becomes dissociated (in plain language when the body "dies"), it is quite open to us to reply that mind does not lose its identity or go out of existence, because

## THE CHALLENGE OF SPIRITUALISM

By "RITA" (Mrs. Desmond Humphreys).

THE views and opinions on this subject seem illimitable.

I think that a strong point in favour of "Spiritualism" is its persistence. Again and again since its first so-called discovery has its truth been questioned, abused or ridiculed. Yet from the days of the Woman of Endor, Spiritualism has existed and manifested in the world. Amidst "fakes" and trickery, amidst doubts and fears, amidst fatalistic or passive conditions of mind, the fact has been established that Life *is* continuous: the mere accident or necessity of Death does not quench the psychic vitality within the human frame. What we are *here* we continue to *be*: ourselves. If the importance of this thought were more seriously considered, humanity might well pause in its reckless spending of life, health and energy—in its contempt of the *realities* of a future state compared with the evanescent pleasures of the present.

Of course, to the thinker and observer, physical existence seems to have been made attractive for some special reason. Man is born into this world, lives and works in it, finds out some fragmentary meaning of self-appeal, and, clinging to it, achieves. What he achieves may be of importance to others while meaning only pain and endurance to himself. That, again, falls into the plan of creation and sets it as an unlimited outlet for human energy.

Man has been enabled to discover, to adventure, to learn, step by step and age by age, what life is capable of, and what purpose it serves in its brief or prolonged opportunities. The importance of physical existence seems to imply that it has a continuing power—that it does not terminate with physical extinction.

Everything in Nature speaks of one great truth: Change. Earth itself is marked by change. Nothing remains in exactly the same state in which it first manifested. There is a lesson printed large on the Text-book of Life and one who runs may read it. That lesson is Evolution. It has been a slow and gradual process. But the discoveries of the present century point to a more rapid mode of exposition than was the case in times of Galileo or of Newton: of the wise sages of Greece or Rome. Man's receptivity of new inventions has become keen and enthusiastic. In past days it was a mere dogged opposition against anything new or unusual that claimed his acceptance.

Thus we may suppose that the Spiritual Beings on the other side of what we call "existence" have been drawn into communication with a new method of revealing that existence. The education of life does not cease with life itself as we know it. This is the preparatory school for what is to follow. The old bigoted idea that there was only Life and Death has slowly changed into acknowledged consciousness of a meaning beyond Death. It is not extinction, nor is it a sudden transition into a glorified state of Being such as pictures of angels have represented, or the psychic vision of Revelations portrayed. The one great truth Spiritualism has taught is that of *self*-continuation as permanent *self*-reality. We do not at once change into something totally different from what we originally knew as our respective personalities. We continue; we learn; we are guided and taught; and among other things we find that it *is* possible to communicate with those we have left behind on the earth.

Now comes the crux of the whole matter. The first discovery of communication with the "other world"

our hypothesis is that it is not a *dependent* of the physical aggregate, but a *user* of it; therefore the dissipation of the organ would not at all involve the destruction of the entity using it.

On our theory the process of physical death is to be regarded as a kind of *disentanglement* from certain limiting conditions. We are unable to think of any reason why the mind should *not* be able to use new conditions—which are probably less restricted in character—belonging to this new environment, even when the purely material conditions exist no more.

All this is possible if we hold that Mind is not a *function* of body. If we follow the materialists, and try to explain Mind as an epiphenomenon which in some way "arises" from chemical combinations between the atoms of the brain, we shall reject this belief in its survival; but we have seen reason to hold that the mechanical theory is quite inadequate to explain the facts of mind and consciousness.

We have made no mention of supernormal phenomena. This is not because excellent evidence does not exist for them; *quite the contrary*. It is because the hardshell biologist refuses *a priori* to discuss them. This seems sufficiently absurd, especially when it is remembered that the majority of opponents have seldom or never devoted any serious attention to the evidence of psychic research. But those who admit that a good case can be made out for our thesis, even when *confining ourselves to the limits of present-day physics and psychology* will find that the theory receives very valuable support from psychic research. Our working hypothesis fits in very well with evidence from that quarter. After all, this is not so very surprising. The Universe is a Unity, any single fact in it must have universal significance and relation to all other facts. Our sciences are only conventional delimitations made by human intelligence.

### CONCLUSION.

Sir Oliver Lodge is therefore quite right and in close agreement with Immanuel Kant when he tells us that physics and psychics are permanently interlocked. Over a century and a half ago Kant predicted "the time will come when it will be proved that the human soul is already during its life on this earth in a close and indissoluble connection with the world of spirits; that their world influences ours and profoundly impresses it."

That time is not yet come for the world at large, but here are signs that science is tending slowly, but surely, in that direction. Its old and confident negative dogmatism is gone. The Universe is turning out to be much faster and more mysterious than it used to think. Our attempts to prescribe what is not "possible" have become somewhat ludicrous. We had better cultivate a little humility. Surely the time of which Kant wrote *must* come, for otherwise the present civilisation of man, shattered by the great war, and threatened by a flood of materialism and money-worship, will be swept away like others which have preceded it, into swift and inevitable ruin.

THE CREWE CIRCLE.—An address of exceptional interest was given at the British College of Psychic Science on Wednesday, May 21st, by Mr. William Hope, who showed a number of lantern slides depicting some of the best results of the many years' excellent work in Psychic Photography which has been accomplished by the Crewe Circle. Mr. Hope, who was accompanied by Mrs. Buxton, was accorded an enthusiastic reception by a large and appreciative audience who were obviously intensely interested not only in the wonderful photographs that were shown, but also in the vivid explanations which were given with occasional touches of dry humour on the part of the lecturer. M.H.

was treated as all new and uncomfortable discoveries are treated—by scepticism, ridicule, opposition. But there was something *behind* that discovery too strong for continued resistance. The anxiety to re-visit those whom Death had separated, the returning spirit triumphing over the obstacles in its way. Those obstacles were and are very numerous.

A spirit, however true in form to its earthly semblance, cannot make itself visible except under certain conditions. It can often manifest as something perceptible to a complete stranger, yet not to one it has loved, or held in friendship. The explanation of this lies in the magnetic forces of the individual, which offer a possible connection, just as the two opposite ends of the electric wire offer it. Once the *discovery* of communication has been made, the means of manifestation follow.

This has led to that much discussed problem of "mediumship." The spirit finds it possible to control some physical force, and by that means convey messages to a loved and bereft personality on earth. Does this not also answer that ever-recurring enquiry as to why the messages from the "other side" are so often commonplace, and so apparently valueless?

The reason is that *we, as individuals, do not change*. As we were when we left earth, so we remain until we have been educated, guided and taught a Higher Wisdom that may give us entry to a Higher Sphere. Therefore it is impossible for a spirit—able to utilise conditions of trance-mediumistic control—to be other than on earth. A spirit cannot suddenly give forth wisdom, prophecy, stupendous learning. It had none of these things on the earth, and its very ignorance reveals a greater truth of itself as a *continuation* of what was known than of what is now expected!

Most of the enquirers who write to newspapers and ridicule seances are people who have never given the subject of Spiritualism any serious study. They know nothing at all about it. They go to a seance in utter ignorance or out of mere curiosity. They do not understand the difficulties attending communication. They expect a "spirit" to be some glorious abstract thing; to be wise as deity, and acquainted (through the mere accident of Death) with all that belongs to a new sphere, a new universe.

## "BEYOND THE ELECTRON"

By F. C. CONSTABLE, M.A.

IN Miss Dallas's excellent article "Notes on Lodge's 'Conviction of Survival'" in *LIGHT* of May 17th (p. 242) there is a passage which has struck me forcibly. Why? Because I think there is some scientific evidence to be produced in support of it in Thomson's little book *Beyond the Electron*, a book which I may incidentally say appears to me to establish an advance in the purview of scientific thought.

The passage to which I refer in Miss Dallas's article is as follows:

### VIBRATIONS.

Page 39 is remarkably interesting. The communicator insists (apparently in spite of Sir Oliver's expectation to the contrary) that the animation of matter can only be effected by a slowing down process in the ether, whence life emanates.

Now I have not yet read Lodge's *Conviction of Survival*, but had arrived at the same conclusion from a study of

*Beyond the Electron*. This emanation of life refers to the manifestation of life in living material forces.

Let us see, very shortly, what is the theory of *Beyond the Electron*. For lack of space I must assume the reader to be acquainted with the little book.

Beyond our microscopic world there exists what Thomson terms the *heavyside layer*. It must be vast in extent compared with our microscopic world. In this heavyside layer the radiation is so intense that free electrons exist, moving about with velocities by far exceeding the velocity of light. (p. 15). In *our* world, which exists in the ether, there are no free electrons. This radiation "is much more intense than it is at the surface of the earth where the greater part has been absorbed by the atmosphere." (p. 15). What does this mean? It means that this intense radiation *does* affect our world but that the greater part is absorbed by the atmosphere. But the radiations, being absorbed by this atmosphere, cannot get through for man to think about them. He is aware of their existence but cannot use them for scientific thought.

By scientific admission electrons move at velocities far exceeding that of light. Man assumes to measure the electron, but to do this he must treat it as static, he must ignore its fundamental motion. (The electron does move but to measure it, its fundamental movement must be ignored. Science, I think, holds now that Duration is the essential and qualitative element of time, but science must ignore it as immeasurable. These facts mark the limitation of thought as used by man).

But some of these radiations do get through for man to think about them. Up to the limit of the velocity of light they get through. Before man can be animated by life, the vibrations (the velocities) of the electrons must be lowered to the velocity of light. Even wireless communication, as we think it, is subject to the limitations of the velocity of light, and the velocity of light is far lower than the velocities of the electron. It is the ether in which we exist that lowers the vibrations of the electron. Consider the present state of science. It admits the fact of the vast velocities of the electron, but it treats the velocity of light as an ultimate constant! It ignores higher forms of velocity. Einstein's year is a *light* year. And, as I think is generally accepted by science, our world is boundless but finite. This, however, does not account for the heavyside layer where celerities far exceeding light exist. And a world which is finite does not account for the microscopic world, it accounts only for one microscopic world. And our microscopic world is (mechanically) no more than a particular evolution of the macroscopic world. We are aware of the vast celerities which exist in the macroscopic world, a fact brought home to us by the fact of the heavyside layer, but all our thought is limited and these celerities are lost, mainly, to us for thought by the impeding of the ether in which we exist, so that we can only think about them up to the velocity of light. That there is a slowing down process by the ether "before the animation of matter can occur" is a statement which, I think, requires consideration. If correct, it certainly increases the purview of science.

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VICE-ADMIRAL DRURY-LOWE points out that in the course of his article "Without Vision..." (*LIGHT*, May 31st) the passage occurs: "Unfortunately there is so much discussion amongst those who appreciate spiritual values! . . . How can discussion be best avoided?" The word "discussion" should, in each case, have been "dissension," and we willingly print this correction, as Admiral Drury-Lowe wishes to make it clear that the last thing he desires is to avoid discussion.

# THE INSUFFICIENCY OF MATERIALISM

By B. M. GODSAL (CALIFORNIA.)

SIR ARTHUR KEITH, the noted surgeon, who created some stir when addressing the "British Association" by announcing his belief that at death man passes out of existence like the flame of a burnt-out candle, has now expounded his materialistic creed in the April *Forum*.

Dr. Keith admits that within him lurks "a greed of life, an urgent craving for immortality"; but he regards his insatiate longing as a sin of the flesh—to be conquered and suppressed. And he avers that the suppression of this natural desire has brought him "a peace which only those who have felt it can realize."

Looking at Sir Arthur Keith's portrait which, together with a summary of his article, appears in the *Literary Digest* of April 26th, one cannot but feel that, although the scientist's heart may be filled with this hard-earned peace, still very little of it is visible in his face, the expression of which seems rather to reveal the state of mind that wrung from him the pathetic cry "I envy those men and women who know how to keep their creeds intact and unchanged throughout the entire journey of life. Their path is peace, and their hope is sure."

A thinker whose meditations have brought him to the pass of envying the thoughtless has become an outright pessimist, and his line of thought has led him to conclusions that are not true. Evidently, this is what happened to Sir Arthur; and the falsity of his position is shown in the specious reasoning he employs to maintain it. For instance, he argues, "If men believe, I do, that this present earth is the only heaven, they will strive all the more to make heaven of it."

The verbal accuracy of the above contention may be conceded; but whether it work for good or for evil will depend entirely upon the average materialist's conception of what constitutes for him a "heaven" on earth. Paul Tarsus long ago contrasted (Gal. V, 17 to 26) the works of those whose heaven is of this world with the works of those whose heaven is of the Spirit. And to-day the ever increasing number of men holding, with Sir Arthur, that life in the flesh offers them their one brief opportunity of enjoyment are filling the world with envyings, murders, drunkenness," and with all the rest of the long list of horrors anticipated by St. Paul, their efforts to secure for themselves an immediate "heaven" on earth. This actual experience of materialism in action is something quite different, probably, from the earthly heaven that Dr. Keith had in mind.

Without a doubt Sir Arthur, being a good man, expects his material heaven to comprise love, joy, peace and all the other beautiful things enumerated by St. Paul as "fruit of the Spirit." At the same time the Doctor presses his belief that "the spirit, or soul, is but a name for the manifestations of the living brain"—which is flesh. St. Paul, with clearer vision, sees that flesh and spirit "are contrary the one to the other," so that it would be impossible for the flesh of itself to produce the Godlike characteristics which can be derived only from the Spirit.

Furthermore, Sir Arthur Keith writes, "Man has the seeds of immortality in him, but the gift is for the race, not for the individual." It is hard to understand how one can attribute immortality to a race composed of individuals who in his opinion do not survive death, seeing that the leaders of modern science agree that the future duration of life upon this planet is strictly limited.

Surgeons, whose work demands concentration upon the material body, are very apt to become mentally subdued to what they work in, and to accept the doctrine of materialism. But on the other hand a surgeon's training is likely to make him an authority upon the origin of man's physical envelope. So we should listen to Sir Arthur when he says "We have to face the fact that we are the descendants of apelike ancestors," and also when by way of commentary he adds that our humble origin and the heritage it has brought should lead us "to discipline ourselves, and to behave with tolerance, sympathy and charity to all others."

The lowly source from which man's animal nature has sprung in no way disqualifies him for inheriting a place in the highest heaven. On the contrary, it is the humble origin which renders the ultimate perfection possible. The man who, of his own free will, has fought his way upward by overcoming obstacles and animal tendencies and by resisting temptations, has gained for himself heroic qualities which in their very nature are not transmissible, and therefore could not have been conferred upon him as a gift.

It is hardly to be expected that Sir Arthur Keith will go so far as to begin a sympathetic study of Spiritualism; but he may yet be borne in that direction upon the tide of modern scientific opinion, which is trending towards a recognition of the truth that the ultimate substance underlying all phenomena is not material but spiritual in its nature.

## "RELAYING" THE DIRECT VOICE

IN the May issue of the journal *Psychic Research*, published by The American S.P.R., I have just read a passage which bears on some suggestions I made in my Notes on Sir Oliver Lodge's pamphlet *Conviction of Survival*. In an article by Mr. F. Bligh Bond on "The Boston-Venice Cross Correspondence," he quotes Mrs. Hack's statement that Walter's voice was heard in Italy: "She says that all the group are in fullest accord as to the phenomenon of Walter's voice which was full, strong and natural. But even so, it is not necessary to suppose that he was present because he has often hinted at a possibility, or even an actuality of some process of 'relaying' his communications in a manner analogous to the radio. This point emerged in the automatic writing obtained by Margery at sittings some months before. Here Walter spontaneously said that he was relaying for Johannes, the monk of Glastonbury, and the writing of Johannes came through in the cramped style of calligraphy which was characteristic of Johannes, and utterly unlike Walter's style."

This supports the hypothesis that our mechanisms such as gramophones, radio, and telephones are material applications of methods of utilising the forces of the Universe which are in use in the super state, which is non-material, but not non-substantial.

I remember upwards of twenty years ago a remark was made by "Joey" at a seance at which the direct voice was clearly heard; it was to the effect that he was miles away even then, whilst his voice seemed to be in the room.

This issue of *Psychic Research*, by the way, contains several articles that deserve careful study. There is an interesting portrait of a musical prodigy, who, it is claimed, showed understanding of rhythm at the age of eight months, and who, when she was four years old, could give the name of the composer on hearing the first measures of a composition by Tchaikowsky, Schubert, Dvorak, Debussy, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Brahms, Handel, Bach and others.

H. A. DALLAS.

## PROPHECY AND FREE WILL

By W. H. EVANS.

THE question of Fate and Free Will raised by Mr. Horace Leaf in his article "Foretelling and Fate," in the issue of LIGHT for May 3rd, is one of profound interest. Rivers of ink and reams of paper have been used in discussing the questions of necessity, foreknowledge, freedom, and numerous attempts made to "square" them. The vitality of the subject, and the eagerness displayed in its discussion, seem, in themselves, to be some evidence that man is more than a creature of necessity, for his ability to debate whether he is free or not suggests that he possesses at least a measure of freedom. A creature of Fate would, I imagine, simply obey without questioning its decrees. It is because we all have an innate sense of freedom that we ask whether we are free or not. Can this sense of freedom of thought and action, which most of us enjoy, be an illusion? I hardly think so.

A great deal depends upon this question. The whole of morality depends upon it; for if man is a creature of Fate, if he is predestined to definite thought and action, he can have no moral responsibility. Unless man has freedom of choice, and power to initiate new lines of action, he is not a morally responsible being but a puppet carrying out the decrees of some unknown power. Reduced to its logical conclusion, determinism becomes a sort of "can't help it" philosophy.

But what do we mean by freedom? Do we mean independence of law? Or is freedom an expression of law? Do we mean that freedom is the power to do as one likes irrespective of consequences? Surely not. But the manner in which some of the upholders of free-will usually discuss the matter leads one to suppose that such is their interpretation of freedom. Freedom, is, in short, confused with license. The Determinist goes to the other extreme, and it is the middle course which is probably right. We may argue as to what causes a man's likes or dislikes, and speak of the power of heredity and the influence of environment, and regard Man as the sum of these forces; nevertheless, Man does exercise choice, and no Determinist denies it, but urges that Choice is dependent upon extraneous circumstances. The mistake of both schools is their extremism. Law and freedom are co-existent.

Why this sense of freedom of thought and action? Freedom comes from obedience; it is the obverse side of the medal, of which Law is the reverse. When we obey we have freedom; we only become aware of restriction when we disobey. In our social life the honest man is free; it is the transgressor against the law who is bound, whose thoughts and actions become restricted.

If we live according to Nature we instinctively obey the laws of our being. We can experiment, and enlarge our boundaries; or we may remove ourselves to another state. The term "freedom" is not perhaps a happy one; "power," as implying the ability to think and act, would be better. By judicious use of his power Man can enlarge the scope of his action. In one age his powers of transport are the horse, the sailing ship or the camel; in the next it is the steam locomotive, petrol engine, the turbine ship, the aeroplane; all of which have considerably enlarged Man's sphere of action; done much to alter the whole of his civilisation. The man of to-day has a wider measure of freedom than his ancestors, and a correspondingly larger responsibility. He cannot escape the moral implications involved in his discoveries. If his moral development does not keep pace with his intellectual unfoldment he will suffer, not because he is bound by the law, but because he is himself the administrator of it.

The fulfilment of a prophecy brings in other problems. Is the course of Individual Man mapped out? Does the fulfilment of a prophecy—and many have been fulfilled—

prove that a man or nation has been fated to a certain course of action? Or does the nation or individual simply fulfil the law, or reap the results of influences which it (or he) has put into operation? Emerson speaks of the child with pig-like eyes and low narrow brow as being fated to a certain line of conduct. It points out that as soon as he meets one of the opposite sex of like nature, these two are ripe for each other's undoing. A question arises, for here we have prophecy. Is that particular form of physical organism the determining factor? Or is it an expression of the real man who himself is the determining factor? If the latter, when, or where, did he initiate those influences which eventuated in that particular kind of organism? It seems to be unjust to make a man the victim of his body and it is this aspect which has driven many to accept the theory of reincarnation. From this point of view the body registers the state of development of the evolutionary spirit. We have the kinds of bodies we possess because we have generated the influences which produce them. This pushes the argument further back, but does not entirely remove our difficulty.

Even though our bodies are an expression, more or less, of our spiritual development, we have still to ask why it is so. How came we to start making "karma" in the first place? Do the bodies of animals indicate the standard of development reached by the inferior life? We see that the whole philosophy of Being is involved in our question.

The fact that Man transcends Death implies that he also transcends Birth: that is to say, our appearance in the flesh does not originate our existence; it is an expression of our being which subsisted in another state. For though, in essence, we are immortal, we have at present no recollection of our being prior to birth.

This seems to imply that self-awareness is the result of development; of a process. Our self-awareness may be but a fragmentary segment of a greater whole, but a spear-point of the shaft of Being which has pierced the crust of matter.

It does not follow that because we have no recollection of being prior to birth that we had no being: the argument is all against it. Even from a materialistic point of view, it is conceded that we subsisted in the forces which gave birth to our organism, and these forces have been from the very beginning of our planet and, if matter is a product of the ether, from that realm; so whichever way we look at it we have this background of pre-existence. Can we say that the fulfilment of our destiny is simply the garnering in of experiences—the forces which we initiated in some existence on a spiritual plane of being? Some hold this is so; others hold that we have a choice of conditions before we come here; but in either case we have no recollection of such existence. Theoretically both hypotheses are possible, but we are still in search of primal causes. These, however, are always in being: they are in us and not outside.

Any theory of immortality implies continuity of being that in turn implies continuity of consciousness. That is, personal identity depends for us upon memory. Break in recollection do not necessarily imply a break in memory. We have no recollection of our sleeping existence but we have memory of being; we know we existed even while we slept. Continuity of being and identity are assured in true memory, and this we carry with us when we leave our bodies behind at death. All this leads to one point; we but express the whole of Being in our various stages of development. Our freedom is conditioned by it, consequently Fate is but the outworking of forces with which we are in definite relation. That means we can, and do, give direction to them, and whether we have lived many times before on earth, or on various levels of spiritual existence, or whether this be our first and only appearance on this planet, what we meet in life

is our own and no other's. Law is the negation of chance. Whatever happens to us we are in a measure responsible for; we reap the results of the past in the circumstances of the present; and these conditions are our teachers, and by learning our lessons we may mould the future by making use of what talents we may possess. Thus, judgment is a continuous process; it meets us here and will meet us on the hither side of death. What then is expected of us? That we live up to the highest possible; do our duty in all stages of life's journey; face all circumstances manfully and without whining against fate. We are the embodiment of our own fate.

## ENVIRONMENT AND SELF-REALISATION

IN the minds of many persons one of the chief obstacles to the realisation of continued existence after death is the difficulty of self-realisation as a conscious being *apart from the familiar environment*. In this state of life we are conscious of ourselves in relation to external objects, and our activities are determined by this relation. How then can we realise self when the environment is unrealised?

It may be admitted that this inability offers no logical argument against survival; but convictions are not wholly the result of logical reasoning; they are partly due to just the sort of inability referred to. How can the difficulty be met?

When discussing this aspect of the subject it may be pointed out that here and now our relation to environment is in the last resort a *mental* relation, and due to our mode of interpretation. Of course, this does not imply that an objective *not I* does not exist. Mind is not in *vacuo*; there is an objective environment, subjectively apprehended. The objects which impress themselves on our consciousness are not identical with the interpretation by our minds, but the impression made on us is that which the object is fitted to make on minds such as ours, therefore it is not unreal; our interpretation is in harmony with the Order of the Universe. If men are assured by evidence that individual minds continue to exist after death and that Mind is the supreme factor in experience, and if they accept the indication of science that Matter, as we know it, is only one of many possible forms of objectivity, then it becomes easier to conceive of our conscious relation with another environment, an ethereal one in which the forces we come into contact with here still operate to produce impressions on our consciousness; impressions, which, as Sir Oliver Lodge has said, we may, at least, be likely first to interpret in accordance with past habits, until enhanced faculties enable us to form new interpretations.

The mistake made by many is that they think of the next stage as another world, and attempt impossibilities—that is to say, to realise self in no sort of relation with any environment; as if, perforce, spirit or mind must be conceived of as existing in a *vacuum*.

Sir Oliver's teaching about the ether and its present relation to atomic matter is of great assistance, enabling us to sweep away fallacious imaginations which have for long hindered the mind from contemplating continued existence in a rational way.

H. A. D.

**SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY.**—A series of open-air meetings in Regent's Park, London, has been arranged by the Spiritualist Community. These are being held every Wednesday, at 7.30 p.m. (weather permitting) until further notice. Full particulars are obtainable from the Secretary, Miss Vera Ray, 115, Wigmore Street, W.1. (Telephone Welbeck 6814.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### SIR THOMAS BROWNE AND SOME SPIRITS

Sir.—The quotation from Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici* in the article entitled "Spirit Influence in Every-day Life" in LIGHT of May 24th, calls our attention to the difficult question as to how far Sir Thomas Browne and like-minded men of his own day were spiritualists as we understand the term now.

Certainly his writings give us the impression that he knew more upon the subject than he cared to say. As the friend of Dr. Arthur Dee, the son and at one time the "scryer" or Medium for his father, the great Dr. Dee, he must have heard and seen a great deal which he could only refer to in an indirect way. In one of his many references to spirits he says, "I do think that they may assume, steal or continue a body," words which recall to our minds many of the "actions with spirits" recorded of Dr. Dee by his biographer, Dr. Meric Casaubon in his book *A True and Faithful Relation of what passed between Dr. John Dee and some spirits*.

It is in his *Religio Medici* again that he writes, "I have ever believed and do now know that there are witches," and thirty years later he was to use this knowledge with disastrous results at the famous witches' trial at Bury St. Edmunds before Sir Mathew Hales.

What was true of Sir Thomas Browne was equally true of many of his friends and contemporaries, notably Elias Ashmole and also of the generation previous to his, dominated by the vast and mysterious personality of Francis Bacon.

ROWLAND W. MAITLAND.

Norwich.

\* \* \*

### "GETTING TOGETHER"—A SUGGESTION

Sir.—In your issue of May 24th, the letter "Transmission Difficulties" gives one furiously to think. The writer says, "If we who are convinced about the actual process of survival can get together and act as if this new knowledge was standardised into truth, we should go far to prove to those who have not yet become 'aware' . . ." etc.

Exactly; why don't we?

The Spiritualist Community at Grottrian Hall is doing a mighty work by its bi-weekly meetings for enquirers. Surely another mighty and constructive piece of work would be the formation of (say) a monthly meeting of all the "heads" of the movement, in which all differences of outlook would be put on one side, deliberately sunk, to leave the gathering free to discuss three things:—

I. Propaganda—getting the knowledge of survival, with its many proofs, and its implications, over to the people.

II. Self development, not only psychic but spiritual. (May I humbly suggest that as yet we are infants in this department?)

III. Discussion of experience—and experiences—gained in the work.

Would not some such organisation, holding regular meetings (and perhaps admitting, on occasion, the representatives of that increasing band of the humbler workers to whom this truth means everything) be a great step forward on the path of progression?

God helps those who help themselves; and His ministers, who have the development of the race under their care, are surely watching to see how far we use the powers—time, money, love, wits—with which we have been endowed.

One of your contemporaries seems to think we are marking time—it is an opinion held by many—so why not experiment, anyhow?

ANNA E. MENZIES.

22, St. Luke's Road, W.11.

(Mrs. John Menzies)

## Light.

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## A RETROSPECT AND SOME REFLECTIONS

IN earlier days we were under a hot fire of criticism. Hardly a week passed without the appearance of some book, pamphlet, or tract denouncing psychical inquiry of every kind in the strongest terms. There was never much variation in the treatment of the theme. We were assailed by the same old texts, the same old warnings, the same old threats. This was, of course, when the attacks came from those opponents whose tendency was to try and "run with the hare and hold with the hounds," and who were concerned to show that there was a future life, but not *our* future life, a spiritual world but not *our* spiritual world. With the secularist or materialist opponent it was different, and the issue was simplified. There was no ambiguity about his views. He was contemptuous alike of the religionist's idea of another world and the spiritualist's presentation of the same theme; indeed his attack on the spiritualist conception was only a kind of variation in his general line of campaign against what he regarded as religious superstition. As time went on he devoted more and more of his attention to psychic science, shrewdly perceiving that it represented something more formidable and threatening to scepticism than systems of theology based on faith but wholly lacking in evidential facts.

The years passed, and the fire of hostility gradually died down. Looking back through our files, which give us a general abstract and epitome of the career of our subject, we can

trace the evolution of the controversy, from its early stages until to-day, when the ideas for which we stand have so worked themselves into the texture of human thought that such opposition as remains is mainly directed along philosophical lines. It is usually well informed. It accepts the idea of psychical or metapsychical activities in man, and the difference is merely one of interpretation. Blank denial is confined to a relatively small section of writers—the "last ditchers" or "whole hoggers" of Sadduceism who go beyond their predecessors of New Testament days by denying not only the existence of angels or spirits, but also the reality of any Supreme Being. They must be left to their own devices—"against stupidity the gods themselves contend in vain."

If we turn to the reasoned opposition, no matter how positive or how irreconcilable, our attitude to-day is very much as it was. We welcome all criticism, if it has any claim to be intelligent and instructed criticism; and as we have said, the old bigotry—the *odium theologicum*—has to-day largely died down. We have had the purging ordeal of the war, and our subject is now affirmatively presented by men and women of advanced intelligence and critical acumen. Those who oppose them are doing a useful work in sifting and clearing an area in which there are still some problems to be solved, still some doubtful points to be cleared up. It is not good that people should be left too much, or too long, to the fascinating belief that intercourse with the unseen is all beautiful and all simple, or to the dangerous idea that whatever comes from beyond the veil is necessarily true. In fact, one of our tasks is to loosen the minds of our readers from blind reliance on "revelation" whether of the past or the present, and to enforce the notion of personal responsibility, and the guidance of reason as well as of intuition and faith.

No one has ever yet gathered "the whole truth" about anything. No human, or even superhuman mind—and we refer here to those advanced intelligences whom we recognise as living and active in the world unseen—is large enough to hold it. So far as we ourselves have gone we have gained assurance of a Universe, intelligent in every part, divinely governed and divinely ordered, with space and purpose for every variety of mind. We affirm the idea that Man is a spirit, a part of a great unity of mind reaching from the highest to the lowest expressions of life. We stand for spirit communion and spirit communication, for a spiritual world of an infinite number of grades. We hold that whether our subject be examined scientifically, philosophically, or accepted as a matter of religious belief, there is an underlying consistency in all the essentials of the matter.

Time will test and destroy all illusions—whether they be the illusions of Materialism or the illusions of Spiritualism. That the process is often painful and tedious is due to the obstinate clinging to preconceptions and prejudices, and to the failure to discriminate between appearances and realities. But the end is sure—the victory of truth, for

..... as round and round we run  
Ever the truth comes uppermost and ever  
is justice done.

Let us close with the utterance of a man who after a large life of study, meditation and experience, said, "It is my conclusion that there is nothing too good to be true."

## "CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE"

SIR O. LODGE AT THE CHURCH HOUSE

At a crowded meeting of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, held on Wednesday, May 28th, at the Church House, Westminster, Sir Oliver Lodge spoke (as asked) on "Christianity and Science." He claimed that science deals only with the material part of Nature, physical surroundings and implications, while religion votes itself to the plan and purpose of the whole.

After a reference to the automatic and mechanical stems of some scientists, Sir Oliver spoke of the problem of evil when looked at from that point of view, that is to say, that machines are produced by minds, which design them and work them out slowly towards perfection. Science was beginning to recognise the action of mind behind all the seeming automatism of the universe and to recognise that what appeared to be a principle of evil was simply the result of imperfection of machinery in the making.

Christianity was the half-way house to a fuller understanding of the action of the divine mind and that also as evolutionary in its methods. We had moved beyond the idea of God as a despot. We saw Him rather as a fellow worker temporarily thwarted by the ignorance of His creatures. Although the scheme might present some elements that look like fatalism, there was no coercion; labour could be for God or against Him.

Speaking of the Incarnation, Sir Oliver referred to the incarnation of humanity in matter in order to express self and to enter upon a fuller life after individual experience gained and character evolved. Christ might be imagined as saying by His Incarnation, "I will show them that they have power to be good. I will live as man and suffer as man." In short, the Christ spirit, which was before the worlds, came down in the form of Jesus of Nazareth to express God to man, and Jesus showed himself to be no ascetic but a lover of man. To the conventional scientist this view was anathema; a science that went only as far as the brain and ignored mind could not be complete.

We were the heirs of all the ages, and, as spirits, in touch with the countless multitudes of those who had gone before, we should be able to feel their presence and gain their help. If we were unable to do this of ourselves then we must find someone who might possess the faculty we lacked.

Space was pulsating with life, and nothing was too high or too great to be true, for the physical world was the living garment of God.

S.

## SIDELIGHTS

MR. DAVID BELASCO, the veteran American playwright and producer, writing in *The Direct Voice* (a new magazine devoted to psychic phenomena and published in New York City) says, "Why did I write into my play 'The Return of Peter Grimm' the theory that the dead do return; that there is a very definite connection between this world of men and the spirit world? Because, if you please, I believe it firmly. Because in my understanding of the theory of life and being is the assurance that we are required to fight the good fight—well or ill as we may choose—but that The Plan requires us to continue, even through countless existences, until we have attained God-like perfection."

\* \* \*

Mr. Belasco (who, it may be noted in passing, is now in his 76th year), speaks of the death of his mother, between whom and himself there had existed "a perfect love and understanding, so complete as to be almost telepathic." Here is the account in his own words, "I did not need the telegram which came to me January 12, 1899, to know that my dear mother had passed through The Door, even though a continent separated us. For Mother had come to me in the morning hours; had stood beside me and bade me goodbye. Later I found that she had passed on at the very moment of her appearance to me.

\* \* \*

"My brothers and sisters who were at her bedside told me later that she smiled, murmured my name three times—and ceased to breathe.

\* \* \*

"I had fallen asleep, completely exhausted from a late rehearsal. Something awakened me. It was the voice of my Mother saying, 'Davie! Davie! Davie!' She smiled, stooped and kissed me goodbye. She told me to be happy—not to grieve. I could not stir, but I kept my eyes fixed on her as she moved into the shadows and out of my sight. Dazed, yet fully aware of the meaning of this experience, I donned a dressing gown and went downstairs to my sitting-room. I knew then that Death had claimed a beautiful soul.

\* \* \*

"Augusta, my younger daughter, came to coax me back to my bed," continues Mr. Belasco. "I went to my room but I could not sleep. It still seemed that I could sense my dear Mother's presence. When I told my family of the vision next morning they accounted for it on the theory that I was over-tired; that I had seen Mother in a dream." He goes on to describe a luncheon that day with a member of his staff who handed him a telegram. It told of the death of Mr. Belasco's mother, giving the hour of her transition. On computing the difference of time between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts it was found that the moment of her appearance to Mr. Belasco was the exact moment of her death in San Francisco.

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A TRIBUTE TO "LIGHT."—We offer our congratulations to LIGHT on its new form of production, which signifies conspicuous improvement, not that it has been other than creditable in appearance—as in aspects more important—from the first of its fifty volumes.—*The Occult Review* (June).

## CHARLATANISM IN THE STATES

By HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S.

ANYONE who has travelled from New York City to Los Angeles and from El Paso to Portland, Oregon, must have discovered that Americans are a sentimental people; not only those born in the United States, but those also who have adopted it as their country.

This type of sentimentality is turned to advantage by many charlatans who range the country, extracting from the inhabitants immense sums of money every year under the guise of teaching, for big fees, everything that is supposed to make a man efficient, wise and clever.

No race of people yearns for knowledge more than the inhabitants of the United States, where education is praised above all else, and where nobody is supposed to have a chance in the struggle for existence without it, notwithstanding that most of the rich folk are ignorant, in the classical sense.

When it is remembered that here is a nation of foreigners recruited largely from countries that never gave them a chance to learn, this desire for knowledge is easily understood. But learning is an art, the principal element of which is personal effort on the part of the student.

The charlatan's principal asset rests on the fact that most students are men and women fairly well advanced in life, anxious to hold their own with the younger generation who have had much better educational advantages; they cannot go to school, but they can learn and perhaps make up leeway. Legitimate university professors not offering "short cut" methods, others must be sought, and the demand is supplied.

A mighty crop of "professors" has sprung up at home while an equally imposing array come from abroad, offering to teach the aspirer all they know for certain sums of money.

Such a state of things must strike the European, seriously interested in the dissemination of knowledge, as astonishing. Science, however, has prepared the way by emphasising the importance of the *essence* of things. Why not, therefore, an essence of learning? The aspirant seeks to acquire only this essence; all the rest is unnecessary! Time is precious. At a proper university it takes at least seven years to qualify as a doctor, a period too long for the late-comer; he must therefore find an institution which will teach him therapeutics more quickly. Owing to the slipshod way in which State laws are fixed and administered there is no need for the would-be doctor to worry. Let him pay a sufficiently big fee and he can have the most imposing-looking diploma that ever graced the wall of a consulting room. I have actually seen two people who could not speak the king's English without mutilating it in an excruciating manner, sport a most impressive certificate with seals and ribbons complete, assuring the world that they had passed the requirements of a fully chartered institution in Therapeutical Psychology—although the possessors did not know what the cerebrum is!

In a less harmful but much more extensive way occultism plays a big part in exploiting these well-meaning people. Big advertising must be indulged in and a great deal of attractive "boosting." One of the most amusing and successful methods is the adoption of weird names and the wearing of eastern robes. Whatever may be the grounds for complaint of Hindus in India, they cannot grumble at the money their compatriots extract from the United States of America for teaching "mysticism."

In almost every great city will be seen huge posters depicting a turbaned head with piercing eyes and an impressive if meaningless name staring at one from public hoardings, announcing that Ali Ben This or Pundit Chatra That is willing and anxious to impart the secret of Good Health, Good Looks, Eternal Youth, Personal Magnetism, Concentration, Personal Efficiency and Infinite Wisdom, whereby any man, woman or child may control destiny and rise to become a millionaire without further trouble.

I met many of the victims of this imposture, most of whom would have gained more benefit by a few weeks' study at an elementary school. One young man in Minneapolis assured me that he had taken one of these courses for one hundred and fifty dollars, and, finding he had gained nothing, thought he must have missed the secret, or not had it imparted to him. So he paid the same instructor another hundred dollars on the assurance that he would surely show him how to become clever and make money. "He taught me only one thing," the greenhorn assured me. "He showed me that I was a fool and never revealed any money-making secret to me."

"You've missed the point entirely," revealed a listener. "He certainly showed you how to make money!"

Numerology and symbolism come in for a fair share of exploitation. One of the most pathetically amusing experiences I have had occurred in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, at a spiritualist meeting into which one of the charlatans had obtained a footing by offering his services (psychic phenomena and all) for nothing. This man deserves to be immortalised because of his consummate cheek. He walked boldly on to the platform and informed a delighted audience that he had one of the most important secrets in the universe to reveal to them. It was all connected with numbers. Thereupon he launched, with a vast flow of words, into a most extraordinary muddle of figures which, in some mysterious way, he associated with Moses and Joshua and Daniel, all of whose destinies had been associated with the mysterious number, sacred and for ever significant—three. After extracting Noah from the Ark and Daniel from the lion's den, he finished with a magnificent oration in which he assured his auditors that for the sum of twenty-five dollars he was willing to confer upon all an sundry the omnipotent power and significance of the remaining numbers up to ten. Seventy-five men and women enrolled! It is this type of person to which the intelligent Americans apply their most expressive terms of contempt.

Spiritualism suffers greatly from these mountebanks who, exploring every avenue from which to extract funds, find the individuals interested in mediumship easy prey, mainly because the average spiritualist pastor knows little or nothing about the scientific possibilities of the subject and the rationale of the development of supernormal powers.

One lady, who had travelled almost from the Antipodes, asked me for my opinion about a series of lessons supplied by one of these gentry—an Englishman who had adopted a Hindu-sounding name which was, I found, merely a modification of his own quite good English nomenclature. She had paid far more for the course than she could afford, but was pathetically anxious to become the possessor of "psychic gifts."

After some meaningless talk about the "power of thought" and its control, the instructor advised the adoption of a number of postures which anyone might do without harm or good befalling them. Yet upon them, he declared, rested the student's power to read the past, present or future and to know all her past reincarnations! Great stress was laid upon what was called "the active or self-mastery method of developing soul powers."

In connection with psychic science I have been in well over twenty different countries, including India, and have yet to find one person with supernormal powers who has not either been naturally endowed with them, or developed by the well-known method adopted by spiritualists, and which may be called the passive method.

It is devoutly to be wished that Europe will not become tainted with the notion prevalent in some parts of America, that other people can do our thinking for us. Psychology is a legitimate study and academic psychology does not comprise all there is to the subject. Abnormal psychology, including the study and development of supernormal powers, falls more correctly into the field in which the physical researcher and spiritualist work, more particularly the spiritualist. In addition to being interested in theories, spiritualists have been practical, and are, as far as I know, the only people that have attained any degree of utility in the exercise of them.

## "BEYOND PHYSICS"

SIR OLIVER LODGE'S published works would make a little library in themselves—there are nearly forty. Add to these an immense number of articles in newspapers and magazines, and we have an example of amazing energy, remembering that his literary work is but one department of his life and labours. This comment is provoked by the appearance of this his latest book\*, a study at once profound and luminous. One of the great pioneer minds of the day, Sir Oliver here enters on "a survey and attempted extension of Modern Physics in a philosophical and psychical direction." Someone has said that if Sir Oliver Lodge had not been a great scientist he would have been a great philosopher. To our mind he is actually both. His influence on the thought of our time in each direction sufficiently attests the fact. In his preface to the present volume he writes:—

Many times it must have been urged that physics and psychics were interlocked, at least to the extent that every psychic event has a physical concomitant, but hitherto no attempt has been made to imagine a mechanism or physical process for this interaction. The ether of space has not been a medium much attended to in philosophy; and if the ether contains the key to connection between mind and matter, that key has been effectively hidden.

"Groping amongst the intricacies of modern physics," Sir Oliver says that he had discovered "something that feels like a key." It would require some courage in the average reviewer to pronounce a positive verdict on a book so challenging. Properly to assess its value one would need to possess a very considerable acquaintance with both physics and psychics. Many writers might lay claim to one or the other, but an adequate knowledge of both must be very rare. It is a book to which we shall return when we have had time more carefully to digest its thesis. That will not be entirely new to many of his readers, for Sir Oliver has already in his articles and addresses touched suggestively on the question.

\*"BEYOND PHYSICS, OR THE IDEALISATION OF MECHANISM." By Sir Oliver Lodge. (George Allen & Unwin, 5s. net.)

## RAYS AND REFLECTIONS

The man who does not believe in ghosts but admits that he is afraid of them finds his intellectual equal in the other man who will tell you that he knows nothing about Spiritualism but is strongly opposed to it.

\* \* \*

The unbeliever is prone to scoff at the believer, but when the accounts are made up I think it will be found that the believer has made several small mistakes and scored one great success, while the unbeliever has had several small triumphs at the cost of one great failure.

\* \* \*

That the ancient oracles of the Greeks and Egyptians were given in veiled language, often capable of more than one meaning, is frequently quoted as an instance of cunning strategy designed to save the reputation of the oracle in any event. But although this charge would probably apply when spurious oracles were given in later days, under the influence of priestly and political schemers, I imagine the true oracles were "veiled" for genuine reasons. For one thing a too definite and outspoken prophecy tends to defeat itself, just as some blunt forms of counsel and criticism are apt to do. It is always good to see clearly—though it is not always good to proclaim all you see. In some cases a truth is better hinted at than blurted out.

\* \* \*

I was reading lately a new book dealing with the writings of Jacob Böhme, the German mystic, who, like some other notable mystics, was a shoe-maker. It is curious how the two vocations should go together; perhaps the combination has itself some mystical significance. I can think of an explanation in the light of occultism and astrology; but it is too speculative to set down here. Meantime I wish that the seer's followers would arrive at some consistent arrangement as to the spelling of his name. Böhme, Boehme, Bohmer, Behmen are amongst the variety of spellings adopted. Behmen seems to be the most usual. I found it of interest to learn that the name was probably derived from Bohemia, on the borders of which the Böhme (or Behmen) family lived. The mystic, by the way, was born in 1575 and died in 1624.

\* \* \*

It was from William Sharp, whose Celtic romances written under the pen-name of "Fiona Macleod" were so highly acclaimed, that I gained some of my training in literature, and I well remember the interest excited by the "Fiona Macleod" writings. They were so different from Sharp's normal work, in the way of essays, biographies and anthologies, that it was difficult to believe that the same mind was at work in both styles. In fact, there was much scepticism until after his death when the mystery was finally cleared up. But he was a mystic of a high type, and to him "Fiona Macleod" was an inspiring presence exalting him to write above a "mortal pitch" or at any rate a normal one. In times of ecstasy he seemed to enter a region beyond the earth; he called it "the Green Life." He was a Scot, and his Highland blood may well have accounted for this mystical strain in his nature.

D.G.

## "THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS"

From *LIGHT* of January 8th, 1881.

**SPIRITUALISTS** are paying at a costly rate for a lesson they sorely need to learn. They have got hold of the rudiments of an unspeakably great truth—are engaged in experimenting in a field which will probably turn out to be more fruitful of results than all other fields of investigation put together; and yet they are always in difficulties, always being baulked, discredited, persecuted as impostors, or derided as fools. How is it? The admission may be made frankly; and it will do their enemies no good beyond adding a little to their mirth or their conceit.

Many suggestions of a practically useful character could be made by any outspoken onlooker of ordinary intelligence; but there is one that would go to the root of the whole matter. Speaking to spiritualists generally, we can imagine such an onlooker saying: "If you are right at all about your facts, you have in hand the most amazing piece of work now being done on the whole face of the earth—nay, if the very simplest of your "phenomena" are genuine, you have, in these, more than enough to absorb the interest, the enthusiasm, and the hope of millions instead of hundreds. And yet what are you doing? Not content with establishing the reality of these elementary phenomena, and getting something like absolute control over them by means of a clear comprehension of the conditions and laws by which they are produced, you are hungry for new things; you are liable to feverish competitions in new and bigger wonders; you rush into philosophical and theological system-building; you not only cultivate "communion" with unseen persons and powers, but are apt to take their word for almost everything. Hence, conflicting schools and parties; hysterical eagerness for the reproduction of the latest fashions in "phenomena"; perilous giving-in to the anonymous "messages" from behind the veil; hasty forming of theories, reception of assertions, and acceptance of appearances; all leading up to disappointments, delusions, exposures, frauds, or betrayal into courses involving actions perilously like fraud, personal complications, social disruptions and the like. And all this the product of over-haste, of not sticking to the one thing needful in making the great elementary facts certain, indisputable, familiar. You have been acting like the layers of a cable who, instead of turning their attention to the one supreme fact of establishing and maintaining communications, enter into endless speculations about the subject-matter of messages, and the manners and customs of the people at the least-known end of the wire. What you need is an elementary school—and you have a rush for accomplishments. You ought to have asked for daily bread—and you have lived on confectionery; you should have worked at the keel—and you have busied yourselves with figure-heads and flags.

JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

### TESTIMONIAL TO MR. W. H. EVANS.

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

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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.

## NOTES AND REVIEWS

"BIBLE CAMEOS IN THE LIGHT OF TO-DAY." By H. Ernest Hunt. (Riders. 2/6).

Mr. Hunt's latest book has some qualities which are too often absent in more pretentious works. It is brief, simple and pointed. There is no straining after literary effects, but the author contrives to be graphic and effective in his task of interpreting Bible narrative in the light of to-day. Needless to say he draws upon those stores of new knowledge in psychic science which make the Bible stories not only intelligible but show them to be essentially true in spite of the destructive criticism of some modern scholarship unilluminated by any knowledge of the results of modern psychical research. It is a book which should be useful to inquirers especially by reason of its compendious form and its sane presentation of new ideas.

G.

\* \* \*

"YOUR LATENT POWERS," by Margaret V. Underhill. (Riders. 5/- net).

This book is a welcome change from many of that class which set out to instruct us about our inner being. The automatist claims it to be inspired by Prof. William James. It is full of wise sayings which reveal a deep knowledge of human nature, a subject always full of interest to William James.

In one of the appendices there is recorded a sitting held with Mrs. Osborne Leonard which bears out the claim that William James is the source of inspiration. I accept it because it bears internal evidence of its truth. The following excerpt is characteristic, and has a bearing upon some recent controversies.

Whatever you do, my friends, never give up your common sense; see straight and look into your work; prove its veracity and learn to be your own best critic. The work which will pass in your world as the work of an enlightened mind and a skilful artist is the only kind of work we want to do with you. There is enough mooning and muddling without our contributing any more rapid, foolish notions. You may be sure that no communicator capable of inspiring you would waste his time in stringing together words without meaning or in making futile pictures.

E.

WE acknowledge the first issue of *The Direct Voice*, a magazine "devoted to the Direct Voice and other phases of psychic phenomena." Published by the Sunshine Publishing Co., New York, at 25 cents a copy, it deals primarily with Voice Mediumship experiments. There is an illustrated article by Dr. M. W. Richardson on the "Voice Machine," as employed at the Margery seances, an account (with portrait) of Miss Maina L. Tafe, an American Voice Medium, and a Parable, "Immortal Memory," by Mr. Frederick Bligh Bond. Other articles are "What I Believe," by David Belasco, the famous playwright, "Voices Recorded in the Seance Room," by the Editor, and "The Philosophy of Mediumship" by Owen R. Washburn. The magazine impresses us by the reasonable and capable way in which it approaches its subject, and we wish it success.

### NEW BOOKS RECEIVED

- "IMMORTALITY VICTORIOUS." By J. R. Hermann. (Western States Publishing Co., Henry Building, Portland, Oregon)
- "WITHOUT PREJUDICE" By S. G. Dunn. (Luzac & Co.)
- "MAN'S HIGHEST PURPOSE." By Karel Weingartner. (Riders. 10s. 6d.)
- "MENTAL RADIO." By Upton Sinclair. (T. Werner Laurie. 8s. 6d.)
- "BIBLE CAMEOS." By H. Ernest Hunt. (Riders. 2s. 6d.)

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**WEEKLY MEETING.**  
 Wednesday, June 19th, at 8.15 p.m. Mr. W. J. WEST  
 "My Impressions of Psychic Photography."  
 Visitors 1/-  
 Thursday, June 19th, at 4 p.m. 1/3 MISS STEAD  
**GROUP CLAIRVOYANCE.**  
 (Limited to 10. Bookings must be made).  
 Friday, June 13th, at 5 p.m. MR. STIRLING CAMPBELL  
 Friday, June 20th, at 5 p.m. MISS LILY THOMAS

VOL. IX. No. 1. April, 1930.  
**"PSYCHIC SCIENCE"**  
 Frontispiece. Portrait of J. Arthur Hill,  
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 .. MISS CAMPBELL  
 Automatic Board and Automatic Writing .. MRS. HESTER DOWDEN  
 .. MRS. GREEN & MR. HARDING  
**CLASSES AND CIRCLES.**  
 Mondays, 9 p.m., Circle for Clairvoyance (June 18th) MRS. CAMPBELL  
 Mondays, 9 p.m., Class for Development  
 .. MISS EARLE AND MRS. LIVINGSTONE  
 Mondays, 5.30 p.m., Devotional Groups (Absent Healing) .. MISS STEAD  
 Mondays, 9 p.m., Class for Psychical Development MRS. CAMPBELL  
**SPECIAL NOTICE,**  
 Monday, June 27th. "At Home" Mrs. de Crespigny on "The Aims of  
 Spiritualism." Followed by Discussion.—Members Free. Non-Members 1/-  
 a 3d.

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 Monday, June 15th, 6.30 p.m. MRS. RUTH DARBY  
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 Wednesday, June 18th, 7.30 p.m. MRS. RUTH DARBY  
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 8 p.m., Wednesdays, 3 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

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Monday, June 15th, at 11 .. .. MR. ERNEST MEADS  
 Monday, June 15th, at 6.30 Answers to Questions MR. PERCY BEARD  
 Wednesday, June 18th, at 7.30. (Clairvoyance) MRS. L. E. SINGLETON

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**MEETINGS FOR PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE.**  
 Monday, June 16th at 3. Psychometry. .. MRS. CANNOCK  
 Tuesday, June 17th, at 7.30. Clairvoyance .. MRS. ESTA CASSEL  
 Thursday, June 19th, at 7.30. Clairvoyance .. MISS JOAN PROUD

**GROUP SEANCES.**  
 Tuesday, June 17th, at 7.30 .. MR. VOUT PETERS  
 Wednesday, June 18th, at 3 .. MRS. KINGSTONE  
 Thursday, June 19th, at 7.30 .. MRS. ESTA CASSEL  
 Friday, June 20th, at 7.30 .. MRS. ESTA CASSEL

**LECTURES.**  
 Monday, June 16th, at 7.30 "Red Cloud" the control of Mrs. Roberts will  
 give an address followed by questions and discussion on subject introduced.  
 Friday, June 20th, at 7.30 .. MR. FREDERICK HAINES

**PRIVATE SITTINGS** can be arranged with the following Mediums:  
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 Clairvoyante: Mrs. Hirst.  
 6.30 p.m.—*Speaker*: Mr. Horace Leaf.  
 Clairvoyant: Mr. Horace Leaf.  
 Sunday, June 22nd, 11 a.m., Mr. Harold Carpenter.  
 Clairvoyant: Mr. Glover Botham.  
 6.30 p.m., Mr. Maurice Barbanell.  
 Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas.

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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 17th. MISS FRANCES CAMPBELL.

**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 18th. Initiation.

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

Leader: Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT.

June 25th. Psychic Phenomena and the Astral.

## Thursday.

June 26th, at 8.30 p.m. At Queen's Gate Hall, Harrington Road, S.W.7.

Reception to Mr. Horace Leaf, F.R.G.S. on his return from America.

**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.

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## 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.

## RECEPTION TO MR. HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S.

ON HIS RETURN FROM AMERICA  
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