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A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research

Edited by DAVID GOW

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THERE can be little doubt that the deputation to the Home Secretary, headed by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, left a marked impression, for the case was ably presented and the disabilities of spiritualists made abundantly clear. As Mr. Ernest Oaten has pointed out, the injustice inflicted is not due simply to the operation of the two Acts—the Witchcraft and the Vagrancy Act—but to the "case law" arising out of various judicial decisions, some of them completely at variance, but each judgment being taken as a precedent in some subsequent prosecution. Now these old Acts, so barbarously misconstrued, came into force ages before Spiritualism and Psychical Research were existent, so that the Legislature could not have contemplated the uses to which these Statutes were later to be turned as engines of oppression, instigated sometimes, as one may suspect, by religious bigotry. Many years ago, despairing of any amendment of the law, we looked forward to the time when psychic facts would be so commonly accepted that these Statutes would, like so much other legislation out of harmony with public opinion, fall into desuetude. That time may not be far off now.

* * *

F. W. H. MYERS has given many evidential communications of late years; Sir Oliver Lodge has recorded some of them. But in the period immediately after his death, communication was evidently difficult and painful, as witness the following extract from the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. (Vol. XXIII, p. 223). It related to a seance with Miss Rawson (Kate Wingfield) when a message came, purporting to be given by Edmund Gurney which ran:—

I have come to warn you for my friend, to implore you not to let them call him. He gets no rest day or night. At every sitting "Call Myers! Bring Myers!" There's not a place in England where they don't ask for him; it disturbs him; it takes away his rest. For God's sake don't call him. It is all right for him to come of his own accord. You might send a letter to LIGHT to say that when a great person passes you mustn't call for him.

Don't mention Myers' name, our people wouldn't like it. . . .

His heart is tender and when he hears them call, he tries to come. If they leave him to rest, in time he'll come back again more strong, but if they call and call it will take away the power and help and everything else. . . .

This warning may not apply in the same degree to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, for the two men were of such entirely distinct temperaments. There is a wide difference between Doyle the orator and missionary who loved and laboured for the people at large, and Myers the sensitive scholar and poet. And yet the warning is one to which some attention should be paid. In the case of Myers, it should be mentioned that the sitting was held in February, 1901, a fortnight after his death.

NOTES BY THE WAY

WE read in an Indian journal of an American professor of physiology, Dr. Newton Harvey, who in an address before the American Institute on the subject of gaseous animals, referred to the firefly, mentioning that the glow of the insect is caused by the burning of an oil which is re-formed as it is consumed and so made ready to burn again. He is said to have predicted that chemists would be able to produce this oil by synthesis. This naturally suggested the "ever-burning lamps" found in ancient crypts and tombs and raised the question whether the sages of old time really knew the secret of making the form of inexhaustible fuel. As the matter seemed to be worth following up, we consulted an eminent chemist who replied to our question as follows: "I do not know what the American professor has discovered, but certainly the reduction of the burnt oil must involve the energy and this energy is obtained at the expense of the food of the creature. It is quite possible that an operation goes on in the living body that would not go on outside. What I am sure of is that you cannot get energy for nothing. The firefly light is a very economical source of energy; very little is consumed and accordingly very little need be put back by the vitality of the organism. At whatever it is it would have to be put back. A more economical source of light could be discovered than we have at present. That is the only novelty I see."

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AS I KNEW HIM

BY THE EDITOR.

NOW that the "tumult and the shouting" have died away and one of the "Captains" has departed (some-what to vary Kipling's well-known lines) I should like to offer some brief reminiscences of the great leader who has gone on.

My association with Conan Doyle began in 1916. I had reason to believe that he was interested in Spiritualism; I knew of a communication from him which had appeared in *LIGHT* many years before. I accordingly wrote him a letter which led to a correspondence that lasted up to the time of his death—his last letter to me is dated 3rd July, 1930, only four days before he passed away. It also seemed to lead, in a curious way, to that great campaign on which he afterwards embarked. At any rate, it may have contributed in some way to that result, for in *LIGHT* of November 4th, 1916, is an article entitled "The New Revelation," in which he responded to my request that he would say a few words in this journal concerning his views on Spiritualism. In that article he mentioned that he had been a reader of *LIGHT* since 1887. I think this must have been his first public pronouncement on the subject. That article was followed by contributions from Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir William Barrett, both of which appeared in *LIGHT* of November 11th, 1916. They were in the nature of cordial appreciations of Sir Arthur's article, and each of the distinguished writers made some interesting comments. Sir William Crookes, in a letter to me intimated that he would have written a statement for *LIGHT* supporting Sir Arthur; but he was in very poor health at the time and could not do more than express a desire that his name should be associated with those of Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir William Barrett as endorsing Conan Doyle's attitude.

On December 9th of the same year we published a letter from General Sir Alfred Turner, who had been Colonel Commandant of the Royal Artillery, and was known as an unflinching supporter of Spiritualism. In that letter he applauded the courage of Sir Arthur in making a declaration of his faith. Indeed, the interest excited was strong and widespread. It was a great event in our history.

I think it is only fair to this journal that these facts should be set forth now, for they show how Conan Doyle's great public activities in the subject began, and how what was at first a rivulet broadened afterwards to a wide and deep river.

On October 25th, 1917, Sir Arthur delivered an address, "The New Revelation" at a meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall; Sir Oliver Lodge presided and on the platform were some of the leading representatives of Spiritualism and Psychical Research, including the late Dr. Ellis T. Powell, at that time editor of the *Financial News*. I shall never forget that meeting; for an air-raid was hourly expected and all London was in a state of apprehension; but the importance of the occasion drew together a great audience, and although there was a good deal of nervous tension there was no panic; no bombs fell in the neighbourhood on that evening. Sir Arthur also delivered an address on the same lines at the residence at Queen Anne's Gate of the late Lady Grey of Fallodon; she was then Lady Glenconner. During the war Lady Grey held at her home a series of meetings which were addressed by several distinguished speakers (Sir Oliver Lodge was one) who took for their theme the subject of survival and psychic

evidences. In this good work I was able to assist by arranging for speakers and attending to the task of furnishing names and addresses and sending out invitations. The meetings were well attended, and frequently many people of note were present. Spiritualism was adequately represented, and much valuable work was accomplished the effects of which are traceable to-day. Our debt to the late Lady Grey of Fallodon may here be gratefully acknowledged.

At this point I may interpose a personal note. In those black days of the war, I was far from well, for the nervous strain of the time was almost intolerable. Sir Arthur invited me to his residence at Crowborough to stay for a few days and receive his attention as a physician. In that daily contact with him I gained a close insight into his mind and character, and of his many-sided personality I had some striking glimpses. I saw in action that extraordinary acuteness of perception which is shewn in his delineation of Sherlock Holmes. He was not only a man of great intellectual capacity and of a wonderful humanity, but he had also a great fund of humour, and in that respect we were especially in harmony. Many a good story did we exchange, and many a merry jest did we contrive and bandy to and fro in our letters. He could always see the droll side of things; and be assured that in this movement there is always sufficient material to nourish a sense of the comic. I recall how he would hit off any unusual character—the excited enthusiast or the self-complacent person—in a phrase at once genial and epigrammatic; I could give some amusing instances, but it would take up too much space. Incidentally, I was able to prove the truth of a statement made to him through a Medium in his earlier days. He had then been told that he had great healing power; apparently his thought little of it at the time for his interest in spiritual intercourse had not then developed. I observed that when he was in the house with me my health showed a marked improvement; when he was absent, as once when he went away for two days on a lecturing tour, I immediately felt a difference, a very subtle one. On his return he instantly responded; I felt much better. He had indeed a radiating quality of life, a "healing presence."

My association with him was chiefly that of adviser and assistant. We did not always agree on questions of policy, but that never disturbed our friendly relations. He was a man of immense breadth and tolerance; indeed it was because, as I sometimes thought, he was inclined to be too tolerant that our views diverged a little. I had no advantage over him, for I was a minnow beside his Triton. But at least I could claim that I had known the spiritualist movement at close quarters for many years, and was consequently aware of little "snags" and pitfalls of these, however, he made nothing, taking them, so to speak, in his stride.

When he went on his famous lecturing tours to Australia, to America, Canada and South Africa, it was clear that he was doing a work that only a man of the most heroic mould could have done. He was manifestly a child of destiny fulfilling a mission that had evidently been ordained for him in the plans of Providence. To his devoted wife and family were with him heart and soul in the work was no small part of the secret of his great success as a missionary of Spiritualism.

The many letters from him, written during the last fourteen years, which I hold as a treasure, revealed to me the workings of his mind in this subject. He was sometimes perplexed, and quite naturally. There were

ings which troubled him, but he never wavered, he never afraid, having a faith that could move mountains and withal a keen, critical mind. If he made a few mistakes, let him that is without fault cast the stone of censure; but it always seemed to me that such foibles he shewed served only to throw his magnificent qualities of mind and soul into higher relief; without them he could have been a supernatural being; with them he was human and a brother, although head and shoulders above those who followed his lead.

Let me say of him as Johnson said of Goldsmith: "He was a very great man." We shall not live to look like him again in this movement of ours. But the very essence of our faith is that he is not dead; rather he has enlarged his life and being and is still with us and for his successor in this mortal life we may look in him; not forgetting, however, the old saying that he buries his workers but carries on His work."

will conclude with some fine lines of James Russell Lowell, the American poet, which seem especially appropriate in any consideration of the career of Conan Doyle:—

"We see but half the causes of our deeds,
Seeking them wholly in the outer life,
And heedless of the encircling Spirit World
Which though unseen is felt and sows in us
All germs of pure and world-wide purposes."

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Only the palm triumphant would we render,
Or laurel from some height of cool, pure air;
Nor with a dirge his noble body bear
To that still spot where all his earthly splendour
shall find a shrine and sorrow, warm and tender,
Sweet like a dawn above earth's tributes there.
Great was his fame, greater his genius rare.
Yet he, untiring, knowing no surrender,
Was greatest in his love of human kind.
The sound of "Rachel weeping" moved his heart:
He broke anew the tomb where Christ was laid,
Saw risen again the Son of Man; had part
With Him; and as his soul took flight
Led on its path a flood of heavenly light.

He veil that in his spirit's temple hung
Was rent in twain; he passed beyond the night
With life renewed; with resurrection might
He entered where victorious songs were sung;
There for his coming temple bells were rung.
The peace of God was on him and his sight
Viewed, far beyond the shadows, each delight
Known to the valiant who, great hosts among,
Love gladly, glowing with Christ's perfect grace:
Beholding the wonders of the life to be;
Destined at last to meet Him face to face
Who also fought till death to set men free.
Bear we no willows, grudge we not the sod,
The earth-worn body of this Knight of God!

OWEN R. WASHBOURNE.

(By permission of the *Direct Voice Magazine*, N.Y.)

record with gratitude a donation of £10 from me, being £5 in memory of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and £5 in memory of "Albertina," to be used in the interest of Spiritualism in directions indicated by her.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE—IN MEMORIAM

I know that from all over the world tributes to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's noble life-work will pour in, and I do not wish to take up your space needlessly. But as my husband and I were so greatly privileged in having been allowed to accompany Sir Arthur on his last two lecture tours (South Africa and Scandinavia) I feel I must "tell the world" how deeply honoured we were in having had this experience of a close intimacy with that wonderful soul.

Sir Arthur was in very truth a "knight." He was the most generous hearted, open-handed, tolerant man I ever met, the most courteous opponent and the cleanest fighter. Because his faith was childlike in its beauty and simplicity, the unbelievers called him credulous, but we knew him to be keenly aware of all the pitfalls of psychic research and his analytical observant brain, from which sprang his marvellous "Sherlock Holmes" stories, gave the lie to the insinuation as to his easy credulity. Although a giant in many lines of achievement, he was the humblest and most modest of men; and although we as a body will feel the loss of his presence keenly, as spiritualists we realize that he has not left us and that our movement will be enriched rather than impoverished by his translation to another sphere, where his ardent, radiant spirit will gain re-inforcement and be an added source of inspiration to every spiritualist on this plane.

ETHEL ASHTON JONSON.

ADVENTURES OF THE SPIRIT

By THE REV. F. FIELDING-OULD, M.A.

[We reprint by special request the following article which first appeared in *LIGHT* in January 1920, under the title "The Tremendous Orchestra of Life." The lamented death of Mr. Fielding-Ould recently, gives it a special interest and poignancy.]

THERE are adventures of the spirit, momentary impressions, and passing phases of consciousness which are too deep for detailed analysis and which would elude expression in set phrases by the subtlest master of language. Who can tell all he feels so that another may understand, what prophet ever wrote an adequate account of his soul's vision, what artist's hand can set upon his canvas the glowing ideal which floats undefined before his delighted mind?

A few nights ago, just before waking, I seemed for one second of time to stand on the threshold of a higher world. Only two external phenomena were perceptible—an orange-coloured light and the pulsation of something which moved with immeasurable rapidity all around. But the arresting and never-to-be-forgotten thing was the momentary *intensifying of life*. I seemed for a brief instant to step into a vitalising fire. The mind searches in vain for fit analogies to illustrate the difference between ordinary life, the sluggish flow of mortal blood, and this new quality of enhanced vitality. It was as blends of harmonious colour compared with the faintest pencil outline, as pure mountain air after the stagnant vapours of a dungeon. Earth-life was in comparison poor, cold and thin as the notes of a tin whistle beside a tremendous orchestra.

The impression I received was that this life was in the throbbing atmosphere, and that if I were but to breathe it deeply into the lungs the whole personality would be

enriched beyond belief, and every struggling attribute, budding faculty and latent potentiality would be intensified, or unfolded as a tree puts forth its foliage in the smiling sun of spring.

Then a door shut, I was snatched back and found myself out again in the insipid, tepid environment of earth.

In this momentary experience seems to lie a real and important revelation; the significance of the existence in the beyond is not in the glorious surroundings of the emancipated spirit but rather lies in the quality of the life itself, where it may be keyed up to such a pitch that it must feel that it existed but never lived before. Death, then, may be a transforming and transfiguring event after all, and this in spite of the reiterated warning that character remains exactly what it was before the change. So a feeble invalid, scarce able to raise an emaciated hand, may contemplate a youth full of spirit and energy; so, dragging tired feet homewards, we may envy a dog running, turning and bounding into the air with an exuberance of life which it can hardly contain; so, a smoky candle, itself all unchanged, might be plunged into oxygen and burn like an electric torch. The "atmosphere" in which we live counts for much even here, and in uncongenial company the most brilliant and *spirituelle* will sit dumb and unremarked. The colours of sea-weeds fade when they are taken from the water, the pebbles which gleam like gems become dull and common stones. So a prince whose "kingdom is not of this world" may be mistaken for a village carpenter. (Matt. xiii., 55.)

MUTATIONS IN PSYCHIC STATES

IN considering the various states of *psychics* one is prone to forget that the ordinary state of consciousness is as truly a psychic state as any other: it is the psychic state common to mankind, established by Nature for the common uses and purposes of daily life here. Quite naturally this begets a prepossession in its favour as against other psychic states that are more or less strange to the "normal" mind—hence the prevalent scepticism concerning what we call psychic phenomena, and the familiar prejudice against the "psychic." Because we are in our normal state of consciousness *correlated* by Nature to one order of phenomena—that order which is co-ordinate with our physical sense—we are justly predisposed to classify all our sense-experiences according to that order. In this way came the concepts of modern materialism, a hemispherical truth that was by intellect promulgated as a whole truth. The world is now engaged correcting materialistic errors of many forms.

Comparing the psychic states of different seers, at first sight the phenomena connected with their induction may seem to be very different, while in essentials they are often the same. Swedenborg was brought into touch with the great centre of knowledge by means of mental concentration and a peculiar process of breathing. Davis was put into the clairvoyant state, which ultimated in his "Superior Condition," by means of magnetic passes. Hudson Tuttle reached a similar state while sitting in circles with others round a table, their minds expectant of occult phenomena. Jacob Böhme is said to have attained the clairvoyant state while gazing at a focus of light reflected from a metal surface. All those examples of psychic states have thousands of variants in the world's experience. Moreover those states may be misunderstood as something intrinsically different, like light and darkness; but they are more truly regarded as steps of a series, like the notes of a musical scale or the colours of the solar spectrum. Surely it is time that the psychical scale should be methodically studied.

B.P.

A NATIONAL FEDERATION OF BRITISH SPIRITUALISTS

By A. T. CONNOR, F.N.S.C.

THE names of the members of the recent deputation to the Home Secretary have demonstrated that, when any vital interests of Spiritualism are considered to be at stake British spiritualists of all sections and shades of personal belief and opinion can and do combine for common and concerted action. And it is to be hoped that the members of the deputation have not omitted to look ahead to the vital interests involved in the drafting of the projected Bill, and to problems that will arise if our dearest hopes are fulfilled and the long overdue Act, removing the present disabilities under which spiritualists suffer, is placed on the Statute Book. Their task will not be complete unless or until they have formed (if only provisionally) some scheme for dealing adequately, and nationally, with what may and probably will be a very difficult and delicate situation.

The interview with the Home Secretary, although a very necessary preliminary, is only a beginning, and the Royal assent to some kind of Emancipation Act can be no more than a further step towards our true goal—which is or should be the establishment of a really national body to direct and control all the activities of Spiritualism as a science, a philosophy and a religion, and to be entrusted with the administration of the Charter which it is authoritatively stated, must be the logical consequence of our legal emancipation.

The terms of this Charter, and the conditions and methods of administration on which it may insist, will give rise to problems of national importance and gravity—not the least of which would be the character and national status of the spiritualist organisation to which it would be granted. A Charter cannot be granted unless there is some representative body authorised and competent to receive it on behalf of the British Movement, and I do not think that even the most rabid of partisans would claim that any one of the sections into which British Spiritualism is at present divided could be regarded as representative of the whole Movement. If the Spiritualists' National Union does not represent anything like a majority of British spiritualists—and only solution to this problem would seem to lie in the formation of a national federation of British spiritualists which would comprise and be representative of all sections of our Movement, and to which a spiritual Charter could be granted by any Government, with confidence that there would be no narrow sectarianism of aim or outlook, and with every guarantee of safe and competent administration with only beneficial results in view.

Let us consider for a moment the effect on public (and legal) opinion of a federation containing, as its component parts, the National Union, the Lyceum Union, the Christian Spiritualist Federation, the London Spiritual Alliance, the Stead Bureau, Marylebone Spiritual Association, Spiritualist Community, and other organisations with national ideals and aspirations (even if not with national memberships). Gibbon suggests, as one of his five reasons for the triumph of Early Christianity, "the union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing State in the heart of the Roman empire." We claim that we have many things in common with these early Christians: can we not copy them in this example of loyalty to a central ideal, and in forming a body at the heart of the British empire strong enough to command the legal recognition which is granted in some of the outlying Dominions? In Canada and New Zealand, Spiritualism is legally recognised—in England to-day it is possible

age in the law courts, as a serious proof of an unsound mind, that a man is a spiritualist and believes in communion with the dead!

The chief difficulties in the way of establishing a national federation would be caused by conflicting interests and (in certain cases) antagonistic principles, such as have prevented the affiliation of some of the non-union bodies with the National Union. But combination for the pursuit of common interests, and harmony of co-operation, can be realised without any interference with vital or cherished principles. A joint committee composed of men and women of good will could draw up a list of the interests common to all the organisations represented, and adoption as the agreed aims and objects of the federation; also a resolution that each component part would retain its own individual independence, would have full control of its own business in accordance with its own constitution, and would adhere to its own declared principles—in addition to those agreed to be common to the Movement—without any attempt at interference, censure or criticism from any other component unit, or from the federation as a corporate body.

Let us glance at the tasks that await a National Federation. First, there is supervision of the drafting of our constitution, and then the outlining of a charter that would be acceptable and beneficial to the Movement as a whole. For these there are the many avenues of activity which only a united Movement can successfully follow—such as the establishment of a “Spiritualist Academy” on the lines of the French Academy (which I advocated in *LIGHT* some years ago), the appointment of a committee to consider and coordinate the preparation and issue of guaranteed textbooks for the information and instruction of inquirers and investigators; the friendly co-operation of the Spiritualist Press, which, with its array of weekly, monthly and quarterly journals, and its publishing firms, could be consolidated into a very powerful instrument of spiritualistic advancement (or defence) if it accepted a common ideal as a basis of its seemingly divergent policies; the possible amalgamation of all these publishing ventures into one strong and financially sound printing and publishing concern able to place Spiritualism, in all its phases with all its implications, before the public as it ought to be placed; the possible, and very desirable, co-operation with the British College of Psychic Science, the National Laboratory of Psychic Research and the National Spiritualist College (as federation members) in a really national scheme of education, training and certification (for which a federated body could have its own syllabus and its own examinations, with a minimum standard fixed by a National Education Committee of the Federation)—and many other activities which will readily suggest themselves as normal work of a truly progressive and national organisation.

Thus in brief outline I have suggested the inspiring possibilities open to a federated Movement in which all the sections (with their suggestion of division) will voluntarily change themselves into *component parts* (with their sense of a perfect whole into which they are designed and determined—to fit), and combine to build up a Spiritualism strong, self-reliant and self-respecting, and commanding the respectful regard of all with whom it comes into contact. But the early formation of the national body itself is of more importance than its possible activities under a problematical Emancipation Act, which, under the ten-minutes’ rule, may be denied even a second reading by the “I object” of a single hostile member. These activities do not and will not depend so much on a charter as on a recognised community of interests, on the will to fraternal co-operation, between spiritualists as well as between spiritualist organisations. Christianity had to wait three hundred years for State recognition, and it was the devoted corporate loyalty of the general body of Christians that compelled the govern-

ment of their day to recognise them—as we must compel this or some succeeding government: for we have no guarantee that the present Parliament will give us relief. And if we will but combine into a great spiritualist Commonwealth, fired with one great purpose, situated at the very centre of the British Empire, we shall form an asset of support or opposition that no politician would be able or willing to ignore; and we shall not have to wait anything like three hundred years for recognition, for, though a Charter might not result in a united spiritualist Movement, there can be no doubt that a loyally federated Movement will inevitably and irresistibly lead to a spiritualist Charter. Only the “big” organisations can originate such a movement; and all that is needed is for one of them to invite delegates from the bodies I have suggested, to a consultative conference on the general idea of a federation. That would be the laying of the foundation. It would then depend on the soundness of the Movement how grand or how ambitious the federal building should be.

A GENERATION AGO

(From *LIGHT* of August 4th, 1900).

I INVITED a medium to my house, a working man with clairvoyant gifts, who is content to work for Spiritualism in a humble and zealous way. I had not spoken to him two minutes before I became impressed with his deep earnestness and also with his ignorance of grammar and his anything but cultured acquaintance with the English language. However, in a very few minutes, whilst at tea, he began to tell me things about myself that astonished me. He assured me that I was a healing Medium, that I had great clairvoyant and psychometric gifts and others, and, above all, that I was to write a book on Spiritualism that would convert thousands. I told him that a most miraculous change must come over me to induce me to write a book on such a subject; that it seemed utterly impossible; and that I would certainly never write or say a word in its favour except from absolute conviction, an intellectual development that seemed to me, at the time, somewhat remote. But he assured me that I was destined to do it, and in a short time, too; that I would not be able to help myself; and he was so sure about it that I could only feel highly amused at him. My principal guide, he told me, was a great poet and dramatist, and this staggered me all the more because he was quite ignorant of my tastes and intellectual leanings, and of the fact that I was the author, under a pseudonym, of poetical and dramatic works. After tea a circle, or seance, was held, and then he began to tell me my secret thoughts, and of my characteristic actions and gestures when alone, and of which no one could have any knowledge unless they were closely intimate with me. This, to me, was truly wonderful for it could not be explained by any means known to science nor by thought reading, for I was conscious only of my curiosity at the time, and what he told me was far distant from my mind. Then suddenly this working man recited with perfect intonation and with captivating eloquence, a long selection of blank verse, and what was my astonishment, my utter amazement, to recognise, clothed in magnificent language, my own secret thoughts and aspirations, brought up, as it were, from the depths of my heart, but which I had never confessed to a human soul, not even to my wife. Although I had read extensively in English poetry I failed to recognise the author of this quotation; and no wonder, for on my saying so, the Medium’s wife told me, with a smile, that her husband had no knowledge of what he had been saying, that he had been “under control,” and that it was a spirit who had been speaking through him, and not himself.

WALTER W. HALL,

Fellow of the Institute of Journalists.

IRISH VISITATIONS

A correspondent in Ireland, I.P.B., writes:—

WE lived for a few years in a house about seven miles from Cork. The children were small, of four, five and six years, and I fixed up an empty room at the top of the house as a playroom or day nursery for them. But every time they were put there to play they either hurt themselves or got sick. So after about three weeks of this I changed them into another room. Then my maid and the children's nurse offered to sleep there instead of in their own room; but after a few days they came and told me the room used to get suddenly frightfully hot and then a horrid smell would come, lasting about half an hour. There was no fireplace in the room and the window was always kept open. I shut the room up after that.

One time, in that house, I was in bed and early in the morning my baby boy, who was sleeping beside me, rolled out of bed. I picked him up and soothed him to sleep again. Soon after I heard heavy footsteps tramping down the stairs from the top landing (where the maids slept and where the shut room was) and someone knocked loudly in an angry sort of way at my door. I thought it strange that Maggie, the nurse, who was a very gentle sort of girl, should knock like that, but I called out, "Its all right, Maggie, the baby has gone to sleep again, you need not bring his bottle till you bring the tea."

When she did come with my tea later on I mentioned this and she said, in an astonished way: "But ma'am, I didn't stir out of bed till I got up now—and I heard you coming up early this morning; you had boots or heavy shoes on and you thumped at our door. It was only after four then."

We often heard strange footsteps and knockings in that house, and one thing that frequently happened was our names being called. I have often heard myself being called by my husband or the children when I knew they were out or away, and several times the maids used to come and ask me did I want them as I had called them by name. The house as far as I knew was not supposed to be haunted.

My mother died in July 1911, and the day afterwards in the evening my aunt, who was staying in the house, called me into the drawing room. It was a big room with a wide expanse of black stained floor all round the carpet. The house was in a street—the windows of the room were open. She said, "Look at the floor." We saw there were marks of stockinged feet all over the staining in the dust. (The room had not been dusted or swept for a few days.) The prints were not continuous. There were marks under certain pictures, as if feet had just alighted there, and then others some distance away. They were all over the house, up to my room, which had a stained floor, in the landings and stairs, everywhere. My aunt said, "Your mother has stockings on in her coffin." And we tried one to her shoes and the marks just fitted.

OBITUARY: MR. WALTER APPELYARD, J.P.—
Information reaches us that this gentleman, a prominent citizen and former Lord Mayor of Sheffield, passed away peacefully on July 24th. Mr. Appleyard, who was author of the book *Au Revoir Not Good-Bye*, took an active part in the spiritualist movement in Sheffield. He was a man of vigorous courage, and his observations and utterances were characterised by much shrewdness, as well as kindness—a good friend and a good fighter. We understand he had reached his eightieth year. The funeral service was held at Sheffield Crematorium Chapel on Saturday the 26th inst., the officiating clergy being the Rev. Dr. Frank Ballard and the Rev. Alfred Hall, M.A., B.D.

FROM MY NOTE BOOK

By E. J. DINGWALL.

IT is curious that so little is known of Shaker history in England. The subject is of great interest to spiritualists, and many an hour have I spent on early Shaker books and manuscripts in the great libraries of the United States.

One of the most remarkable of these publications is *A Return of Departed Spirits . . . into the bodies of the "Shakers,"* which was issued five years before the rappings broke out in Hydesville.

The author, who was an eye-witness of the events described, was resident at Watervliet where a Shaker community had gathered. He narrates how both men and women believed themselves controlled by the spirits of the dead and how many of the mighty ones of the past came through and discoursed.

Napoleon and Mahomet honoured the company of their presence; George Washington and William the Conqueror manifested; St. Patrick returned and became a Shaker; and on one occasion an English officer came through and gave information on the battle of Queen's Heights, which was afterwards, it is said, verified and proved correct.

Similarly certain of the passengers of the steamer "President" which was lost in 1841, communicated and gave their names, which the simple Elders declared they had never heard before. The people of the earth came through. Indians and Mexicans; Welsh and Irish; Persians and Turks; and even the lowly Hottentots, were in the persons of their Mediums, "exhibited all their ignorance and disgusting habits characteristic of their race."

It was indeed a great time in Shaker history and illustrates the early period of development as nothing else can do. It shows the error of supposing that Spiritualism in America began suddenly in 1848. The seed had been sown long before that. The Fox family merely made the phenomena widely known. The Shakers had kept it secret. And the reason was not far to seek. Although they were in the world they were not of it. Had not Mother Ann turned her back for ever on the horrors of the flesh? The revelation of the spirit was not for vulgar eyes and ears. To tell the world was, in the words of one of them, to cast pearls before swine. And thus it is that these events are only to be found recorded in rare little pamphlets which were soon sold out and lost, and only a few found their way into the collections of students, and from there into a permanent resting-place on the shelves of the great American libraries.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. W. H. EVANS.

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

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Light.

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CONCERNING THE "MARGERY" MEDIUMSHIP

IN the course of the report on the "Margery" mediumship in *Psychic Research*, (June), the journal of the American S.P.R., of which we have lately given a summary, it is claimed that "the occurrence and supernormal quality of the physical phenomena are established" and that "real scientists who have studied them know that they occur and are not explicable by normal means."

When we consider this and other statements dealing with the results obtained by the "Margery" circle, the minds of some of the elder people amongst us are carried back by a natural transition to the past history of Spiritualism and its physical manifestations a generation and more ago.

We know that very much the same things happened in those days sometimes in private families, in circles of level-headed people, quite apart from professional mediumship.

It has taken a good many years for the manifestations to gain the scientific attestation they

are receiving to-day. There are still a few veterans amongst us who could tell even stranger stories of the physical phenomena obtained in old days than those which Dr. Crandon records, although the "Margery" phenomena are marvellous enough in all conscience. But even these with their scientific accompaniments have had to struggle for some seven years to obtain such recognition as they are now receiving. They had to fight against inertia and indifference as well as obstinate and deliberate obstruction. But the history of all discoveries has been very much the same. Steam locomotion, electric traction, electric lighting, wireless and the rest of the discoveries and inventions had a similar gauntlet to run. But in the case of these discoveries there were commercial uses to be served, large profits to be gained, and that, of course, made a considerable difference to the progress of the inventions, whatever they were. In the case of supernormal experiments, these allurments are wanting although it cannot be denied that some of them may hereafter be found to have practical uses.

The groundwork was laid by the old spiritualists, most of whom have in the meantime gone to their reward. We know of one or two survivors who can speak of the 'sixties and 'seventies and the things which happened then. But there are more who can tell of what happened in the later years, the 'eighties and 'nineties. In those days, of course, Spiritualism was a kind of Ishmael, "a voice crying in the wilderness." The founding of the S.P.R. represented the first attempt to tackle the question on purely scientific lines. Such institutions as the London Spiritualist Alliance and the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, both of which antedated the S.P.R., were avowedly spiritualist organizations and treated accordingly; although it should not be forgotten that there is little doubt that the S.P.R. arose indirectly out of the work of the L.S.A.

We have no complaint to make. The progress of the subject has been slow enough from one point of view, but from another we can only be grateful that so much has been accomplished in some seven or eight decades. Serious students of psychic phenomena who have consulted the literature of the subject will be able to trace the course of the matter from its early stages to the present time. They will find the story intensely interesting, a real epic of human endeavour, with its pioneers, its martyrs, indeed with all the scenes, characters and episodes of a great human comedy, and we use the word "comedy" in its classical sense, a drama to which there is a happy ending and fate is conquered, as opposed to a "tragedy" in which fate triumphs and the end is chaos and darkness.

SIDELIGHTS

The following extract is taken from the *Methodist Leader* July 17th: "Now that the great and splendid Conan Doyle has gone into the beyond of which he thought so shy and continuously, we are grateful not only for his wide witness to the hope of immortality, but none the less for his painstaking enquiry into its meaning and possibilities. It is well for any of us to try to damp down enquiry. We are not at the end of knowledge this or, for the matter of that, on any subject."

* * *

A correspondent of the *Daily Express* of July 18th, Robin Sanders-Clark, an air pilot, writes as follows: "I am one of many millions who have received these messages from the other side, I can claim that, during my flying career alone, I have been warned by the direct voice of a spirit not to fly a certain machine which was found to be defective. I have several times received messages while actually in the air during fog and low clouds, etc., that have been of inestimable value and help to me. I would add that on each occasion I have followed the advice given, and circumstances have proved that my course was justified. I have once, in the midlands, had the course given to me when lost in thick fog that has brought me bang over my destination. Are these messages trivial and valueless?"

* * *

Madame Flammarion, widow of the French astronomer Camille Flammarion, has told a British United Press representative that she has never received a direct message from her late husband, records the *Yorkshire Telegraph and Star* of July 14th. She is quoted in the following words: "My husband and I were both spiritualists. We lived in perfect accord. Our tastes, work and pleasures were the same, our souls one. Before his death we agreed to try and communicate with each other after his death. I believe that my husband has often been with me. I have felt that my soul has arranged my whole life since his death, but I have never received a direct message from him."

* * *

In *The Occult Review* for July, R. M. Sidgwick relates a number of personal psychic experiences, among them being the following: "On an afternoon in the winter I called on a friend, a Mrs. A—, who possessed remarkable psychic powers. I found her seated by a fire which was a glowing red, devoid of flames. There was very little light left and soon this vanished, leaving the room in darkness except for the small area illuminated by the glowing coals. Mrs. A. was sitting very close to the fire, her face brightly lighted by the red glow. We had been sitting for some time, when the inevitable pause came in our conversation. After a minute or two, I made some remark to which Mrs. A. did not reply. I had been staring at the fire; but on looking at my friend I saw that she was breathing heavily. As neither her breathing nor her facial expression were typical of normal sleep, I expected at some control was about to manifest. As so often happens, the manifestation was of a totally unexpected type. I watched Mrs. A. I saw that her face was slowly changing. There was something unfamiliar about the shape of her features. Then, quite suddenly, the final change took place, and instead of Mrs. A.'s aquiline features I saw the face of a man. I was, to my great astonishment, looking at a very excellent likeness of my grandfather. I was so amazed that I uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and in a flash the appearance had vanished.

There remained only Mrs. A., apologising for falling asleep. I did not enlighten her concerning the cause of her lapse into unconsciousness. I thought that any future phenomena would have a greater evidential value if she had no knowledge of the first manifestation.

* * *

"For some time I expected that some further development would take place. But after several years I gave up all hope of any sequel. Again the unexpected happened. This may have been due to the fact that the original conditions were exactly reproduced. Once more Mrs. A. and I were seated in a room lit by the red glow of a flameless fire. On this occasion Mrs. A.'s daughter was present, and before I had been long in the room I was conscious of abnormal conditions. A cold breeze blew steadily downward on to my head. That, and other sensations, made me observe Mrs. A. closely. It was then that I noticed that she was gazing at me with a somewhat puzzled expression. She then told me that my face had vanished, and in place of it was the face of a much older man, blue eyed, with a rosy complexion and a mass of very white hair. Mrs. A. was impressed with the idea that my grandfather was trying to demonstrate his presence. He was, she said, a man of remarkable characteristics, and a great influence for good. Miss A. then remarked that for some time she had been puzzled by a sort of halo round my head. It was, she said, rather like moonlight. As Miss A. was sitting behind me, she saw nothing of any facial change. Apparently that which appeared to Mrs. A. as white hair was to her daughter merely a luminous glow. I may say that Mrs. A. knew nothing about my grandfather, but her description of him was most accurate. I have related these incidents in detail not only because of their interesting character: in my opinion they show distinct evidence of a deliberate attempt to give proof of survival. First I was the witness, then Mrs. A. Thus there were two witnesses, and the evidential value of the phenomena was greatly increased. The repetition of the manifestation after several years on the first reproduction of the original conditions seems to indicate an intelligent operator who took the opportunity of confirming the manifestation in a manner which provided exactly the corroborative evidence I required."

 THE MEDIUMSHIP OF RUDI SCHNEIDER

Those who have read the more or less garbled reports in the general Press dealing with the mediumship of Rudi Schneider, when he gave sittings at the National Laboratory of Psychological Research in London, in 1929-30, can now obtain a full true and particular account of the experiments as conducted in the presence of several eminent scientists and other persons of intellectual note. It is contained in a volume *Rudi Schneider*, just published by Mr. Harry Price, Hon. Director of the National Laboratory (Methuen & Co.; 10s. 6d.). The experiments are held to have established the genuineness of the mediumship of Rudi and incidentally, of course, they confirm the reality of psycho-physical phenomena as first investigated scientifically by the late Sir William Crookes nearly sixty years ago. The various seances and the phenomenal happenings are minutely described, and the book, which runs to some 240 pages, contains twelve illustrations, including a frontispiece portrait of the Medium. In the long list of sitters, given in an Appendix, we note such names as Dr. Eugène Osty, Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, Lord Rayleigh and Professors Pollard, A. M. Low, A. O. Rankine and Nils von Hofsten. The book has an importance of its own, and a fuller notice will be given later.

FORESIGHT AND FATE

By R. H. SAUNDERS.

FROM something I have recently read I am moved to record some instances of that (to us) inexplicable power which can prognosticate events. It is difficult to reconcile the theory of Free Will with the apparently inevitable fate of a human being, however that will be exercised, but before pursuing this further I will refer to the case which has led me to this train of thought.

In *Some Rambles of a Sapper* (Arnold) a most interesting book by Brig.-General H. H. Austin, the author relates an incident of his early life, when he was working for Woolwich, the competition for which was then very severe. He had no intention of going up for the "exam." before another year, but when in 1885 the Penjdeh affair seemed likely to lead to war between Russia and England, all the officers of the Indian Army on leave were recalled and fifty cadetships were offered for competition. Austin's father thought his son might enter, as it would give him experience, even if he failed. The masters at his college held out little hope of the boy's success (he was only 16) but young Austin, a month before the examination, had a dream that he was travelling by train, and reading the *Standard* newspaper. Suddenly his eyes lighted upon the Woolwich list, and he saw his own name standing 48th, while directly below it was a name beginning with "H," but before he could decipher it, he awoke. He told his father and mother in the morning, and thought little more about it.

After the "exam" he returned to Clifton by train, having bought a copy of the *Standard* to read on the journey. In looking through the newspaper he found to his amazement that it contained a copy of the Woolwich list—he little imagined it would be published so soon—and included in it was his own name. He had passed, but his position was 48th, and immediately below was the name of "E. H. Haig"!

Now observe the sequence of the incident. He had dreamed that he was (1) in a train, (2) reading the *Standard* containing the Woolwich list, (3) that his name was 48th in the list, (4) and "H" below his own name. There can be no coincidence here; then how is it to be accounted for?

It is well known to us that coming events can be foreseen by spirit friends. Now, finding young Austin susceptible to spirit influence during sleep, his unseen friends may have impressed him by what he took to be a dream (although in my view it was no dream) and taken his spirit body over during sleep, as happens to us all at times. In his case the subconscious mind had been impressed with the event as it would happen, and by this mind was transmitted to the conscious mind. There are occasions when the two minds are in unison.

The cases I have personally known were given me mostly by the direct voice, where there could be no doubt of the meaning of what was said. I have on a dozen occasions been informed by a spirit whose special duty it is, together with many other spirits trained for the work, to receive into the spheres those unhappy human beings who commit suicide, or who have suffered a violent or sudden death, and such, I was told, I should hear of, or read of later at a definite time. The name of the suicide would be given, together with the nature of the death. Sometimes the spirit would say, "I await the soul, it is still on your earth, but will inevitably pass to us in a few minutes. You will see the notice in the paper tomorrow morning." It may have been one of gas-poisoning, or shooting, or hanging, and the form it took would be specified. The information may have

been given me as late as 10.30 p.m., when no paper could report it that night, at a period when wireless was unknown. Invariably I found confirmation the next day. In scores of homely items having no connection with death or disaster I have received overwhelming evidence of our spirit friends' ability to foresee the future, and if I add instances coming under my own observation at seances and directed to other sitters I could double the number.

Now how is this difficult problem to be viewed? Free Will, the greatest gift the Divine has bestowed upon humanity, appears to us, at times, to be of a limited character, if in whatever we do, Fate operates. We have the power of choosing from among different courses a certain line of conduct, but whatever the selection, it leads to the same end, if the fatalistic theory is accepted. Yet I have been told from spirit sources and by those whose position in the Spheres, I understand, justified their claim to knowledge, that a modification of Fate is possible under certain conditions. To me the puzzle is how to harmonise inevitable destiny with a possible variation or postponement of one's fate. I am not so much concerned at the moment with the ethical import of Free Will, or with its value as a factor in determining our actions, our duty to others, and so forth, but in its relation to some possible pre-ordained destiny for human-

I search Locke and Hume for enlightenment, and am faced with pages of verbiage, which leaves me bewildered. Brilliant authors like these, endowed with super-intelligence, do not write down to the level of less gifted mortals, and at the end of many an hour's perusal we rise—at least I do—more perplexed than ever.

Are we to leave this problem for solution, like many other intricate ones, until we enter the Spheres, and will it be clear to us even then? I wonder!

THE DREAM OF LIFE

He hath awakened from the Dream of Life.—*Shelley*.

When we awake to another world our terrestrial life may appear as grotesque a parody, as misleading a distortion of reality, as the most preposterous of dreams.—*F. C. S. Schiller*.

The greatest part of mankind may be said to be asleep, and that particular way of life which takes up each man's thoughts and actions, may very well be called his particular dream.—*William Law*.

IT is always interesting when a similar thought is put before us from different points of view. According to the cast of mind through which it comes, and according to our own cast of mind, we may look upon such a thought as an idea, or as an intuition, or as an inspiration. What the same fundamental conception can be traced in various external forms, it confirms our belief in a unity of cause at the back of the ever-changing variety of effects.

Some passages in a thoughtful essay by Mr. F. C. S. Schiller first published in Part XXXVI. of the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, illustrate this in a striking manner. Mr. Schiller's remarks send our minds back to a consideration of some of the most beautiful inspirations of Shelley, the poet, and what he says presents a singular analogy with the utterance of William Law, the mystic, in one of his finest passages.

Shelley, the poet, says:—

He has outsoared the shadow of our night.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead—not he.

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity
Until Death tramples it to fragments.

No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

RAY'S AND REFLECTIONS

I have thought of several quotations from the poets appropriate to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. But I think this from Shakespeare ("Julius Cæsar," Act V. sc. 5.) is singularly fitting:—

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

* * *

That was a refreshing statement made by Mr. Horace Leaf in a recent address. He said in his American tour he had noticed that in certain regions of the United States the weather was as variable as in Great Britain, and that in Detroit he was told by a native that there they recognised only two seasons, winter and August! Mr. Leaf's remarks on the electrical nature of the American climate and its effect in stimulating mediumship were distinctly interesting.

* * *

A correspondent tells me of messages purporting to come from the unhappy Oscar Wilde, and containing an allusion to himself as "Sebastian Melnotte." My correspondent could make nothing of it, nor could I. But a few days later, in the *Evening Standard*; I read that Wilde, when living in disguise in France, had adopted the pseudonym of "Sebastian Melmoth." Evidently this is the reference. Having mislaid my correspondent's letter I take this means of conveying the information.

* * *

I remember that in a fortune-telling case some years ago, the Judge who was trying the case (it was an appeal from a lower court) asked what palmistry was—whether it had to do with finger prints. If that question had been put to-day the Judge might have learned that although finger-prints have nothing to do with palmistry they have become an important part of psychic evidences, as shewn in the case of the "Margery" circle and the experiments of Dr. Crandon and his colleagues.

* * *

Highly superfine and scholastic ideas are quite useless in dealing with the masses. They are not to be touched in that way. The things that appeal to the common mind may appear barbaric to the man or woman of refined sensibilities. But minds of a broad and inclusive humanity will not be greatly disturbed, knowing that things are changing all the time and that there is a continual advance in popular understanding and intelligence. We have only to compare the standard of literature and journalism of forty years ago with that of to-day to see the progress which has been made even in that direction.

* * *

"Sinclair Descends to 'Mental Radio,'" is the strange heading of an article, dealing with Mr. Upton Sinclair's latest book on telepathy, in a certain labour journal. The reviewer evidently considers the author's book to be a "betrayal of the workers"—a dumbfounding conclusion! Says the reviewer, "Marxists can find an explanation for the existence of psychic research. It is simply one of the many roads down which the bourgeoisie slips to idealism, religion, and counter-revolution. . . . This is the road down which Upton Sinclair has taken the first steps in his latest book. He is but one more non-Marxist Socialist to tread the road to betrayal of the workers' cause. For in spite of his protestations to the contrary, this is the real meaning of his book." I purposely refrain from commenting upon these sublime remarks.

D.G.

Mr. Schiller, as a Philosopher, says, concerning what we call our "real" world:—

Hence we may conceive ourselves as passing through any number of worlds, separated from each other by (partial) discontinuities in our experience, each of which would be perfectly real while it lasted, and yet would have to be declared unreal from a higher and clearer point of view. Nor would this conception remain an empty form, which we could not find anything in our experience to illustrate. I venture to affirm that we are all of us perfectly familiar with what it feels like to pass from one world into another. When we fall asleep and *dream*, we pass into a new world, the space, time, persons and laws of which, *though they persist in principle*, have no very obvious connection with the corresponding characteristics of our waking life. It is true that the reality of each dream-world is very precarious; it is dissolved by every clumsy interruption from a more 'real' world, in the *ex post facto* judgment of which the dream-world is fleeting, chaotic and unmanageable. Hence the consensus of common-sense declares dream-experiences to be unreal—though, it may be noted, it has taken men a long time to arrive at this conclusion, and to disabuse themselves of the notion that, after all, there must be a literally veridical and inspired meaning in all their experiences. What has not been realised with equal clearness—probably because the observation seemed to have no direct practical bearing—is that the existence of unreal worlds of dream-experience casts an indelible slur on the claim of our present waking life to absolute reality. What has happened once may happen again, and when we wake to another world our terrestrial life may appear as grotesque a parody, as misleading a distortion of true reality, as the most posterous of dreams.

And Law, the Mystic, tells us that:—

The greatest part of mankind may be said to be asleep; and that particular way of life which takes up each man's mind, thoughts, and actions, may very well be called his particular dream. . . . The learned and the ignorant, the rich, and the poor, are all in the same state of slumber; only passing away a short life in a different kind of dream. But why so? It is because man has an eternity within him, is born into this world, not for the sake of living here, but only to have time and place to become an eternal partaker of a divine life. . . . A life devoted to the interests and enjoyments of this world, spent and wasted in the slavery of earthly desires, may be truly called a dream. . . . Do not suppose a man to know himself, that he comes into this world on no other errand, but to rise out of the vanity of time into the riches of eternity; . . . then . . . life and death are equally welcome, because equally parts of his way to eternity. . . . For heaven is as near to our souls as this world is to our bodies.

It has been said that "all roads lead to Rome." So in wider and truer sense, it may be that all roads along which the human mind travels, in attempting to search into the "essential and incurable philosophical ambiguity of death," will be found to lead to the same goal—to a conviction of the reality of a "common world" which will be found to "persist through death." Even the scientist is travelling in the same direction, and is daily being driven further from a belief that the "dream of life" affords a solution of all the phenomena which he finds himself compelled to accept.

NOTES AND REVIEWS

"Hands and Faces" By Katharine St. Hill. (Riders. 10s. 6d.)

This is the third and concluding volume of *The Book of the Hand*. The author, Katharine St. Hill (Mrs. Ashton St. Hill) is well-known as an authority on Scientific Palmistry, which includes the study of the hand in its medical aspects. Dedicated by permission to H.R.H. the Princess Helena Victoria, and containing a frontispiece and twenty-three other illustrations, the present volume is excellently produced. It is a study of temperaments as revealed by the face, taken in conjunction with the hands as being in themselves an important index to character. The temperaments are classified under planetary signs, and we read of the Jupiterian types, the Saturnian, Martian, Venusian, and so on. There is also a description of compound types as, for instance, Saturn-Jupiter, illustrated in this instance by a portrait of Darwin who it seems represented this combination of temperaments. The book goes into much detail along these lines, and is both interesting and suggestive as indicating the resources of palmistry when carried to applications outside the department of "fortune telling." LUCIUS.

* * *

"The Point Theory of Creation" By Mary Salter. (Riders, 3s.)

In his *Introduction to Science*, Professor Alex. Hill thus differentiates knowledge from Science: "Knowledge is a pile of bricks, Science is masonry." Miss Salter's little book resembles a small pile of good scientific bricks, which might be used in the making of some scientific masonry. Her main work was geological. Quite early she formed the theory of the mathematical solidity of the Universe and of the angular constitution of matter, two theorems of which the full significance is not yet understood. As stated in the prefatory Personal Note, the aim of this booklet is "to show the importance of geometry as the fundamental science of theodicy, physics and chemistry."

In these ninety-five pages there are chapters on Aether and Matter, Point and Line, Light, Heat and Electricity, Sound, Chemical Affinity, and Man the Measure of the Universe. The bearing on psychics may seem remote, but it is not so. After suggesting how certain "acute angled cells" in the cortex of the brain are probably connected with the human faculty of intuition, our author remarks:—"All wisdom and knowledge comes from above and is received by points in the brain."

B.P.

* * *

"The Natural Year, (June)" By Frederick Edwards. (James T. White & Co., New York.)

The Very Rev. Frederick Edwards, formerly of the American Society for Psychical Research, is a poet of some distinction and his latest volume under the above title contains some excellent verse. We may quote the following as an example of its quality:—

This vital air I breathe unconsciously,
And strain its substance through a silken mesh
Into the blood stream that sustains my flesh.
But there are other gifts it brings to me—
The beauty of its luminosity—
Voices and songs, the scent of flowers fresh,
Its soothing touch, and viewless tides that thresh
The foaming reaches of the aerial sea.
These are the finer forms of its largesse,
Essential parts of the stupendous whole
Sweeping forever into consciousness,
And bearing us towards the final goal,
Where man's first sign of transitoriness
Becomes the very essence of his soul.

L.

"The Temple Servant" By E. R. Morrough (Abu Nadaar). (Longmans Green & Co., 7s. 6d. net.)

In this collection of short stories there are three, or, if one include "Phronymos," four, which have a definite psychic interest. Mr. Morrough knows the Near East well, which is a real comfort to a reviewer, and he can produce atmosphere from experience instead of from a hand-book, and give his tales of Egypt and the lands about it, the colour and sense of life only obtainable by one who has had a living intimacy with it.

His psychology shows a less sure acquaintance. "The Temple Servant," which gives its title to the volume, deals with reincarnation; telling of a Syrian girl, daughter of a prosperous ship-chandler in Port Said, who has fleeting recollections of a past existence as a temple servant in the Siwa Oasis. Those recollections haunt her in the shape of a recurrent dream, which is somewhat unusual in reincarnated memories, but the manner of her end, by a wound, duplicating the dénouement of the dream, would be very upsetting to the ideas of a reincarnationist.

"The Cave of the Goddess" describes the amorous madness that took possession of a most unattractive American tourist, who having unearthed a specimen of antique carving in a cave on Mount Pentadaktylo, persisted against advice, in visiting it at midnight under the full moon, with results attributed to Cybele which forced the narrator, who was with her, to write an apologetic letter to his wife.

"The Fifth of November" varies a theme of Black Magic in which the death of the victim is brought about by the burning of an effigy, but, with every respect for Black Magic, it demands a good deal more contrivance to attain its ends than the author offers us.

"Phronymos" is the story of Theophraste the hermit, on whom, either as a favour or a punishment, a sort of immortality was conferred by the Archangel Michael. Here, even a hardened psychologist is out of his depth, and would not dare to pronounce on the likelihood of Michael's gift of thirteen hundred years being terminated by a current of three hundred volts. H.F.P.B.

Hartmann's International Dictionary of Psychic Science and Spiritualism, published at one dollar by The Occult Press, Jamaica, N.Y., U.S.A., is a treasury of information concerning the journals, societies and general institutional activities of Spiritualism in many different countries of the world. It also contains a useful bibliography of the subject. As a reference book it should be invaluable to those to whom a knowledge of our subject in these directions is essential. Indeed it is the most up-to-date compilation of the kind which has yet made its appearance.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

MISS M. CHARD (Worthing).—We agree with much that you say, but, following recognised journalistic practice, we do not usually print letters which are intended as replies to another journal's correspondents.

* * *

R. A. WEBB (Wellington, N.Z.).—Many thanks, but we are over-stocked at the moment.

* * *

L. J. RANSOME (New Zealand).—So sorry we cannot make use of your pleasant little parable.

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Friday, August 8th, at 7.30. Clairvoyance .. MISS JACQUELINE

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Thursday, August 7th, at 7.30 MRS. ESTA CASSEL

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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.

SUMMER ARRANGEMENTS.

The Alliance, including the Libraries, will be closed during the first three weeks of August (4th—23rd August inclusive.)

During the remainder of the summer there will be no further weekly Meetings, Classes, etc., until the Autumn Session commences; but, with the exception of the holiday period mentioned above, the Alliance will be open as usual for arrangement of sittings with Mediums and use of the Libraries.

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.

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The Attitude of the London Spiritualist Alliance towards Spiritualism and Psychical 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.

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.