

Light

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research

Edited by DAVID GOW

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WHEN any of us has a new and startling piece of news to tell, we are, most of us, at least, apt to be annoyed when some one else springs up with a story that enters into competition with *our* story. When Brown tells of some supernatural experience, and Green "caps" the story with some still stranger adventure of his own, tempers are likely to be strained. We have seen the thing happen time and again. It usually ended in one of the rival narrators casting discredit on the narrative told by the other, or asserting that his particular experience had nothing in common with that of his rival. We can still recall with amusement a gathering of writers and artists nearly all of whom had some "uncanny" experience to relate; most of them made it clear that they did not believe in Spiritualism so that their particular experience had nothing whatever to do with it. And yet those experiences included ghosts, visions, spirit-warnings and, in one instance, a case of trance. It was observable, too, that when the first man had told his "ghost story," he was not over-pleased to find that others could tell equally strange or even stranger tales. In the end something like gloom settled on the company when a spiritualist present criticised some of the stories as not being up to psychical research standards of evidence! That was the unkindest cut of all, especially as coming from a quarter which should have accepted the various stories with gratitude and appreciation. Such episodes are amongst "life's little ironies," and help to cheer us on our way.

* * *

NOTES BY THE WAY

FROM time to time of late years we have admitted the question of reincarnation for a discussion that was as brief, and, as we noted with a mild surprise, as temperate. Time was, many years before the war when the subject was a kind of fire-brand in our correspondence columns. Tempers on both sides waxed and we gathered as the net result of the conflict of opinion that the upholder of the reincarnation doctrine was a superstitious and credulous person and that his opponent was a dogmatic ignoramus. It was all very picturesque and interesting, and occasionally not without humour. The editor (who in those days was not the present writer) had to suffer the proverbial fate of the moral, that is, to be "soused from above and singed from below." A resort to authorities in the unseen world did not assist matters, for there also, it seemed, a conflict of view prevailed—naturally enough, for the world beyond is a very human one. It was found that some communicators proclaimed reincarnation as a fact, others emphatically denied it, while a third body, of philosophical bent, simply returned a verdict of "Not Proven." They neither denied nor affirmed, but left it an open question, as we were compelled to do. We should imagine that in the great volume of discussion on the subject, probably every argument *pro* and *con* has been exhausted. Finally we find nothing new to say, nor have we ever regarded the question as one of cardinal importance. Our attitude remains that although in a world of mysteries we cannot always say what is or what is not, nevertheless whatever *is* is right."

WE have been reading of a woman "who has the mysterious power of making watches and clocks stop the moment she enters a room." The newspaper which reports the phenomenon gives some particulars of the effect of her presence in any room where there is a clock, and it will be interesting to learn what Science has to say on the subject. So far we are told of a theory concerning "the chemical properties of the skin" and its strange effects in the case of certain persons. Assuming the phenomenon to be correctly reported, it would point to some kind of radiation. We are reminded of the case of a lady who appeared to have a curious influence on photographic cameras. Whenever she was photographed her portrait came out as a vaporous mass in which the lady was only cloudily visible. So she shunned photography until, meeting that ardent psychic investigator, the late Felicia Scatcherd, she yielded reluctantly to Miss Scatcherd's solicitations and consented to face the camera in the interests of Science. The result was much the same as usual, and at a lantern lecture some years ago Miss Scatcherd described the case and threw the lady's portrait upon the screen. It was a weird spectacle and fully explained the lady's objection to have her photograph taken. Perhaps the report concerning the lady whose presence stops a clock may revive interest in these peculiar manifestations. If some alleged scientist sniffs his contempt, we would remind him of the French proverb that mediocre minds habitually condemn anything which is beyond their mental reach.

ANNA KINGSFORD—HER LIFE AND WORK

By SAMUEL HOPGOOD HART

ANNA KINGSFORD was born at Maryland Point, Stratford, in Essex, on the 16th September, 1846. It is now nearly forty-three years since she was with us—she having died on the 22nd February, 1888, at the comparatively early age of forty-one. But, during her short life, what a work she accomplished! The benefits of that work we are to-day reaping, although many know it not. There are few now living who intimately knew her. Fortunately, her friend and collaborator, the late Edward Maitland, has left for us, in his last and greatest work *The Life of Anna Kingsford*, which was published some few years after her death, a record of her life and teaching, the value and importance of which cannot be measured. It is the history of a soul, a book which Edward Maitland was assured "would educate the world more than all else, by shewing how the divine life can be led and the faculties opened to divine truth, and that to get that truth, the divine life must be led."

Of notable persons (other than Edward Maitland) who knew and have left records of Anna Kingsford, the late W. T. Stead who is well known to the readers of this Journal, in his *Review of Reviews* (15th January, 1896, p. 75) wrote as follows:—"I remember Anna Kingsford. Who that ever met her can forget that marvellous embodiment of a burning flame in the form of a woman, divinely tall and not less divinely fair! I think it is just about ten years since I first met her. It was at the office of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which I was editing in those days. She did not always relish the headings I put to her articles. She was as innocent as the author of *The Bohie of Toberna-Vuolich* of the necessity for labelling the goods in your shop-window in such a way as to attract attention, but we were always on good terms, being united by the strong tie of common antipathies. I saw her once at her own place, when, I remember, she wore a bright red flower—I thought it was a great gladiolus, but it may have been a cactus, which lay athwart her breast like a sword of flame. Her movements had somewhat of the grace and majesty that we associate with the Greek gods; and as for her speech—well, I have talked to many of the men and women who have in this generation had the greatest repute as conversationalists, but I never in my life met Anna Kingsford's equal. From her silver tongue as in a stream, 'strong without rage, without o'erflowing full,' her sentences flowed in one unending flood. She talked literature. Had an endless phonograph been fitted up before her so as to be constantly in action, the cylinders might have been carried to the printer, and the copy set up without transcription or alteration. Never was she at a loss for a word, never did she tangle her sentences or halt for an illustration. It was almost appalling after a time. It appeared impossible for her to run dry, for you seemed to feel that copious as was her speech it was but as a rivulet carrying off the overflow of an ocean that lay behind."

Anna Kingsford, the youngest of twelve children, and born long after her immediate predecessor, was the daughter of John Bonus, a prosperous merchant and shipowner in the City of London. Her mother, whose maiden name was Schroder, was of both Irish and German descent. She inherited from her father a constitution that was fragile from birth, but from no ancestor did she inherit the faculties, tendencies, or characteristics manifested by her. These, Edward Maitland says, were entirely her own, and were due "not to physical, but to spiritual heredity, that of her own former selves." In her childhood, which was one of loneliness and isolation, it was her chief delight to lose herself in the garden where, we are told, "she would associate with the flowers on

even terms, holding converse with them as sentient beings, and putting into their petals tiny notes addressed to the fairies with whom her fancy tenanted them, and with whom, in virtue of her own fairy-like form, rich golden hair, and deep-set hazel eyes, by turns eager and dreamy, she might well claim affinity. Indeed, in these early days she used to declare that she was really one of them, of fairy and not of human lineage, and to cherish a secret persuasion that only by adoption was she the child of her parents, her true home being in fairy land... She could even recall, she believed, her last interview with the queen of that lovely country, the prayers with which she had sought permission to visit the earth, and the solemn warnings she had received of the suffering and toil she would undergo by assuming a human body, which in her case, she was assured, would greatly exceed those ordinarily allotted to mortals. But she had persisted in coming, being impelled by an overpowering impression of some great and necessary work, on behalf both of herself and of others, which she alone could perform, to be accomplished by her. And her coming had not separated her from her fellow-fairies, for they were wont to visit her in dreams; and so real were they for her that, when taken for the first time to see a pantomime, the sight of the fairies in their airy costumes and floral abodes was the signal for her to declare aloud that they were her proper people, and she belonged to them, and to cry and struggle so vehemently to get to them that it was necessary to remove her from the theatre."

As she grew up, she read widely, but with this peculiarity—"all that she read struck her as already familiar to her, so that she seemed to herself to be recovering old recollections rather than acquiring fresh knowledge." The faculty of seership had manifested itself at a very early age, and had brought her into trouble with her parents who reproached her as though accountable for events she had foreseen, and "exhibitions of abnormal faculty entailed references to the family physician, with results at once disagreeable and injurious to her." Her aptitudes for music, singing, drawing, and painting were such as to procure from her teachers earnest recommendations to a professional career, but the only result was a discontinuance of her lessons, through a fear lest she should be induced by her consciousness of ability to adopt the suggestion. Under such adverse conditions her development as these, she turned her attention to writing, and it was in verse chiefly that she at first sought relief from uncongenial surroundings and expression for her ideas. The quality of her poems, while still a child, was such as to win for them admission into various magazines. Her first book was written at the age of thirteen. Her writing, she said, came to her ready-made, she had but to write it down. A small volume of her poems, all written before she was seventeen, was published soon after her father's death, which took place in 1865, and was dedicated to his memory.

Her girlhood does not appear to have been happier than her childhood. She was sent to a fashionable school at Brighton to "finish her education," where "they confounded the cravings of a large and highly vitalised nature for expansion and unfoldment with the wilfulness of a rebel against all the proprieties, and accordingly regarded her as one whose example could not fail to be detrimental to others." While she was strong of will and independent of judgment, she was "bent on the meanings of things as against their appearances" and was "heedless of persons where principles were concerned" and she keenly resented injustice and oppression. That while her talents were recognised, her character was

mistaken. We are told that "her curiosity respecting religious subjects was an especial cause of offence; and some of her severest school-impositions were incurred through her persistence in demanding from the clergyman who superintended that portion of the school curriculum explanations of the *rationale* of the doctrines inculcated. He could not be made to comprehend why the desire to understand, so laudable in respect of other subjects, would in the case of religion be accounted an impertinence and even a profanity." In after years, at a time of illness and great depression, realising what a life of incessant struggle, reproach and loneliness lay before her if she were to continue the fight against cruelty and injustice which she had devoted her life, and looking back to the time of her girlhood and childhood, she wrote, "I long for a little rest and peace. The world has grown viler after to me. I feel as if every one were dead. . . . And behind me, as I look back on the road by which I have come, all is storm and darkness. I fought my way through my lonely, sad-hearted childhood; I fought my way through my girlhood, misunderstood and mistrusted ways; and now, in my womanhood, I am fighting still. On every side of me are rebuke and suspicion, and bitter, biting sorrow. Pain and suffering of body and of spirit have hung on my steps all the years of my life. I have had no respite. Is there never to be peace? Never will be a time of sunlight that shall make me glad of my being?"

Some two years after her father's death, she had the good fortune to meet Miss Theobald, a well-known spiritualist who lived at Hastings, to which place the Yeats family had then moved, and through her she obtained an introduction to Spiritualism. In Miss Theobald she found one in whom she could confide, and she told her of the visions she had all her life had, and how the doctors had declared they were due to over-excitement of the brain; and how she had, like many others, suffered much from physicians, and received good from none. At last, she said, "I *know* it is no fancy. I am *sure* I see these things; and it is *not* caused by illness." The purpose of this meeting was that through Miss Theobald she became assured of the immortality of the soul which at that time she doubted. She had asked Miss Theobald if she could get a message for her, and a message came reporting to be from her father who said "how sorry was he to have brought her up in such erroneous ideas, and urged her to investigate Spiritualism, as it would give evidence of the future state, and of his power to help her and help her." Miss Theobald says that this sage "came to her with conviction. She believed it accepted it as genuine."

(To be continued)

LINE OF DISTINCTION.—An important distinction must be drawn between Spiritualism and psychic science. The former is communion with the dead and progressive development thereby of religious truth. Psychic science, on the other hand, includes the phenomenal aspects of Spiritualism as ectoplasmic metabolism, but it also comprises various fields of research dissociate from manifestations of the so-called dead. Among such are the perceptibility of the human aura; the incidence and potency of what Reichenbach called the odic force; the supernatural incongruous manifestations of subconscious memory or faculty; the physical effects—curative, degenerative or degenerative—of abnormal mental states; various phases of psychic sensitiveness, such as water-reading, hypnotism, thought-transference, natural clairvoyance and natural psychometry.

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"The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

FEW things seemed more unlikely than that a Sandhurst Cadet, detailed for duty in the North West Frontier in India in 1905, should find himself irresistibly drawn to seek for the pearl of Wisdom and spiritual satisfaction among the Hindu Yogis and their disciples. This is the tale that Francis Yeats-Brown (at a later period Assistant Editor of the *Spectator*) offers us in a book* fascinating as all well-told personal experiences are, and also soul-stirring to comrades intent on finding and treading the Path. Dissatisfied with his early religious training, he sought on his arrival in India to ascertain what Christian missionaries had to say of the religious ideas of the great multitudes among whom he found himself, and it is interesting to note that it was the unfairness of their criticism of Hinduism which led him to study Theosophical literature and, from that, the Vedantic philosophy.

He lost no opportunity of finding someone who could give him guidance, and was referred to a Guru who could be found in Benares; his counsellor spoke of the virtues that must be developed before the first steps in Yoga could be taken, and said no illumination could be given except to those who prepared themselves. Six years were to elapse before the author found himself in Benares seeking the teacher, years occupied in all the exacting details of military life, and full also of social excitements, polo matches, pig-sticking, etc., running the gamut of the sense-world, but shot through at times with moments of illumination when, as in the early morning, gazing at the Taj at Agra, he felt himself at one with the Universal Soul. Benares stirred him deeply; he felt he had been there before; he knew all the strangeness, all the offensiveness, as well as the real devotion and sacrifice which gathered by the sacred Ganges.

The Guru proved to be a cultivated Hindu, with excellent English, at once aware of the difficulties that such a pupil must overcome, and in no hurry to encourage him in undertaking definite breathing and concentration exercises. He was content to answer some questions and mildly to criticise defects in Western civilisation, as against Yeats-Brown's difficulties over some apparently depraved aspects of Hinduism. He foretold that his questioner would have much suffering to endure before he would be ready to begin a training that would be equivalent to the severe chelaship and mendicancy of Hindu aspirants. With this, and with a promise that some years ahead he would meet the Teacher again, Yeats-Brown had to be content.

Time passed: leave to England came, and with it the outbreak of the Great War. Service in France and then in the Flying Corps in Mesopotamia led to capture by the Turks and untellable misery for two years. Suffering had indeed become his, and it was during this period that in a sheer effort to transcend the miseries of the body, he began to practise some of the exercises in breathing of which he had read and heard, and to meditate daily. He found that it "worked," and that he was able to forget the body and its troubles, and occasionally to gain a glimpse of the meaning of Union with the One.

Following a daring escape from imprisonment, he returned to India after the Armistice; again he sought and found the Teacher, who assisted him further. The story is of great interest to psychic students, many of whom pass from a knowledge of super-normal faculties to a study of their own inner nature. But Hinduism

* *Bengal Lancer* by Francis Yeats-Brown. (Gollancz 9s. net.)

does not encourage, though it recognises, psychical activities; it considers them of the left-hand path, and only to be exercised by the one who has attained power over the senses.

"India Understood" is a sub-title on the jacket of *Bengal Lancer* and Yeats-Brown's task had been to make his readers understand, something of the hidden life, potent and devout, of "Mother India," which remains the same through all the comings and goings of conquering nations who depart, leaving something of their tradition behind them, while she herself remains at core the same.

"Would it be my work, I wondered," says the author, "to tell the West a little of what may be discovered there, and how Christ Himself threw the light of his Divinity upon the truths that were known in the childhood of the Vedas? The task was broad and big as these plains I travelled and my equipment scanty. Would anyone listen to the stammering of a soldier?"

MIMICRY IN MEDIUMSHIP

By W. H. EVANS

THOUGHTFUL observers of Mediums will have noticed the tendency amongst them to conform to certain standards. Amongst Mediums there is shewn the same lack of originality in the exercise of their powers as there is amongst people in other professions. This merely emphasises the naturalness of mediumship, but at the same time raises some curious questions. One can understand clairvoyants who in the early days of their development have come under the influence of some already developed Medium, moulding their methods upon the standard already set by one earlier in the field. But it would be well if the mimicry was of a more discriminating character, and not a blind adoption of bad as well as good mannerisms. The stressing of mannerisms is often mere affectation which becomes offensive to the listener and indicates the lack of critical faculty in those who adopt them. Still, this is understandable; what is more difficult to understand is the imposition upon the trance personalities of traits and mannerisms which the Medium has seen expressed through some other sensitive. The use of "pidgin" English by many Mediums illustrates this. I have listened to Mediums, presumably under control, the subject matter of whose addresses, together with traits of character, pet phrases, and method of delivery have been a repetition of what has come through some other Medium. Is this fraud? or is it sheer imitation? If the latter why does the conscious mind impose upon the utterances of a spirit-control, a certain form, which the Medium has observed when in a normal state?

Are such trance addresses really the utterances of spirits, or are they the vapourings of the Medium's sub-conscious mind, or a mixture of both? It is very difficult to determine. In all mediumistic utterances there is a proportion of the Medium's own mentality associated with the matter conveyed. But it is not merely this; it is the deliberate mimicry which one observes. It may be urged that it is the same control, but in the cases I have in mind there has been a definite claim from the spirit which does not support the idea that it is really the same spirit-control. It would seem that there is a kind of pseudo-mediumship which simulates the true gift and deceives some at least of the sitters.

The ability to go into trance may be self-generated; it is, I think, a power latent in all. The peculiar mental state associated with the condition of trance may also liberate the memories stored in the sub-conscious, and

these, emerging into the conscious mind, are expressed in the form in which they were first observed by the normal mind. Observation has shown me that the mimicry is confined to verbal expressions, and certain mannerisms and methods of delivery; there is rarely any depth of thought in what is said. Often it is merely a string of words which are indeed as the "sounding brass and clanging cymbal." It is not the philosophic speaker who is imitated but the skimmer of superficial ideas and mannerisms who is followed so closely. That is because the sciolist is generally more picturesque, and by his mannerisms gives an unreal importance to what he says. He depends on good "window dressing" for impressiveness. The shallow mind is impressed; the thinker sees through the trick and knows its worth.

It is not mannerisms alone which are simulated, but types of control. This, too, is rather puzzling to the student. A few years ago it was a comparatively rare thing to read that some great personages had claimed to communicate. They did, of course, but not, as now, when one hears of nearly every celebrity in history giving "messages" somewhere or another. I do not, as a general practice, question the validity or otherwise of messages coming from the great ones of earth; there is no reason why the great should not communicate as well as the lesser folks. That is not my point; I am not thinking of the multiplication of such claims as soon as the idea of messages from the famous becomes familiar.

Here again there seems to be mimicry due to the false importance given to the messages said to emanate from some great personality. All such messages must be judged on their merits. The importance of a message does not lie in the name appended, but in the matter given. A message without a name may be of greater value than one with some great name attached to it. The appending of a great name to a "piffing" message is its own condemnation. To the one who receives it may seem of vast import, for what comes through our personal psychic channels assumes the same importance as does the trivial nonsense we experience in the dream state. That is perhaps the key to it. The messages in some cases may emanate from the "dream self," and not at all from a spirit. It is the "dream self" which in some subtle way, is impressed by what it hears, reads and sees. Given the appropriate conditions it emerges into our life—a full-blown personality masquerading as some great one of a past age.

The intricacies of our personalities are many, and we are great strangers to the depths of our own being. One of them is this strange psychic mimicry which is so common and which one meets so often. This is not a condemnation of such messages and claims but an indication that they need intelligent study. It is a case for the psychologist. We can eliminate much without losing the pure and valuable residuum, the more to be prized because it has been purged of its worthless accretions.

THE PAST is stained with blood, because desire and selfishness have wielded the sceptre of power; and passion, not being well disciplined and subjugated to Reason's admonitions and Nature's immutable laws, has ruled the world instead of wisdom; and thus *feeling*, more than judgment, has guided the Kingdoms and nations of earth into a vast labyrinth of anarchy, superstition and mystery. Surely, it seems strange to affirm, and it is a thing heartily to be deplored, that mankind have been victims to an excess of *feeling*—especially, when almost always those in power are complained of as *wanting* in feeling.

—DR. A. J. DAVIS.

THE PROBLEMS OF A MATERIALIST

FROM Mr. A. M. Sterling of New York we have received a communication of unusual interest, inasmuch as it is the testimony of one who is sceptical of human survival and psychic phenomena. Mr. Sterling communicates by telling us that as a materialist he disbelieves in the idea of immortality, and he quotes Bertrand Russell's declaration: "I believe that when I die I shall rot, and nothing of my ego will survive. I am not young, and I love life—but I should scorn to shiver with terror at the thought of annihilation." Our correspondent considers all religions pitiful human delusions, while recognising their necessity for the great majority. He has some kind of belief in human survival; he thinks there is continuity of consciousness after death but not for everybody. As he well remarks, "the phenomena of life are too explicable, and there are forces too subtle to be understood. It is unreasonable," he adds, "to deny the possibility that the energy generated during life may continue to be expended for a time after death, until it is completely dissipated."

This is a question which we have dealt with fully in the past and we need not at the moment return to it.

Mr. Sterling describes two experiences which at the time astonished and confounded him. He could supply no other explanation than that they were instances of psychic phenomena. Describing them he says:—

"The two experiences I refer to took place in the room where my wife died—the first, about six weeks after her death, and the second a month later.

"This room is large. I slept on a couch between the front windows. My wife occupied a full-sized bed toward the back of the room; she did not die there, but on a hospital cot. This bed, covered with a light-weight material, and with cushions, had not been slept in since her death.

"On the first morning in question, I arose at the accustomed time and walked across the room into the dressing room and upon coming out was dumbfounded and that in that brief instant of time the covering of the bed had, as with a wide gesture, been thrown nearly over against the wall; my trousers, laid on the bed the night before, were on the floor at its foot, and my hat had been tossed out of the pocket.

"The second manifestation was even more mystifying. The centre of this room is a large davenport couch at its back a narrow library table of equal length. Centering the table top is a tapestry scarf upon which the objects occupy their accustomed places—a book, filled with reference books, dictionaries, and the like at one end; a pile of magazines at the other; an open bowl of Devonshire pottery for fruit; a lavender smelling-salts bottle, which was my wife's; and my watch which I always place there at night.

"On this morning, all these objects were in place, apparently undisturbed, except that my watch was face down, but the scarf was thrown, as though carelessly, on the davenport.

"In order to replace the scarf, I had to lift the several cushions off the table top separately, put them elsewhere, and the scarf in its accustomed spot, and return the cushions in five separate operations. I weighed them and totalled fourteen pounds.

"On this same night, our daughter, an only child, living in another part of the city with her husband, was going out a dress from a pattern her mother had made for her.

"This operation consisted in laying all the pieces of the pattern on top of the material and cutting round them. There were five pieces. When my daughter sought to connect the parts to baste them together, one was missing despite search that evening and the next day, was

never found. My wife had always protested to our daughter against her attempts to make her clothing—considering her unskilful.

"I arranged in my mind a simple test for a third manifestation, one requiring much less force than that demonstrated before, but this was unanswered. As my wife has been dead for nearly a year, I expect no more. Whatever force was operative to produce these phenomena, I believe has been exhausted and is now extinct."

It is a curious story, especially as coming from a materialist, but we cannot regard it as particularly evidential. Even if the strange happenings recorded were proved to be psychic manifestations, we could hardly base on them any theory of human survival. We suggest that our correspondent should pursue his inquiries, when he might gain results of real value.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A SOUTH AFRICAN APPEAL

Writing from St. Dunstan's Vicarage, Benoni, Transvaal, South Africa, Miss Isabelle M. Evans tells us of a message received in her circle on the 8th ulto. from one who is regarded as an advanced communicator, desiring that another communication purporting to come from Mr. F. W. H. Myers, be brought to the attention of Mr. Leonard Lloyd, President of the Spiritualist Union of South Africa. This was done and an effort made to give it publicity in the Press.

The last-mentioned communication, which we are desirous to publish, was as follows:

A friend of Arthur Conan Doyle requests that you will use any opportunity you may have to point out to the many who are calling to him mentally to communicate with them, in order that they may have the privilege of getting into touch with him, that he needs time to rest and to become accustomed to the new conditions of life and to be re-invigorated after a period of much stress on earth. Will you ask them to imagine that he has gone on a much-needed holiday and that he has entered a university where he is taking a course of study in order to become fitted to carry on his work in influencing their work. He will come, or speak to them, when those who are guiding and directing his studies so order it. Thank you. F.W.H.M.

EXPANSION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

MR. M. CROMPTON SMITH, (New Zealand), writes:—Listening recently to a lecturer who was dealing with the evolution of the human species, and had arrived at the emergence of speech, I was struck by the applicability, as it seemed to me, of a quotation he made, to the present "moment" of evolution in which communication with those in the next stage of life has become accepted. The quotation was from *Essays in Honour of Dr. Morton Prince*, in which Dr. Elliot Smith said: "The localised expansion of the acoustic territory which is revealed in the most primitive members of the human family, must imply that the biological significance of hearing was suddenly enhanced at the time of the emergence of the human family. In fact it seems a legitimate inference from the facts to assume that the acquisition of the power of communicating ideas and the fruits of experience from one individual to another by articulate speech may have been one of the factors, if not the fundamental factor, in converting an ape into a human being."

Have we not again acquired a new power, at a higher stage which will presently enable us to progress at a greater rate towards the goal of our creation, repeating that far-off experience of the race?

MATERIALISATIONS AND THE DIRECT VOICE COMBINED

AN EXPERIMENTAL SITTING.

By R. H. SAUNDERS

HITHERTO we have known Mrs. Roberts Johnson as a Direct Voice Medium, and one of the best we have in England, who during her thirty years of public work has given happiness and satisfaction to many thousands of sitters. Occasionally at her seances materialised forms manifested yet she never regarded herself as being gifted in any special way with this form of psychic power. But her guide, David Duguid, was of a different opinion, and suggested that she should sit specially for materialisation in order that he might ascertain to what extent this phase of phenomena could be carried.

A measure of power for materialisation is inseparable from Direct Voice mediumship, for the force used in constructing the organs for speaking—larynx, tongue, vocal chords, and so forth—is precisely the same as that used in building up the full figure; it is just a question of its amount.

A seance was arranged accordingly for the morning of August 20th, the sitters being Mrs. Law, Mrs. Moger, Mr. Hartley Knight, Mr. Lissenden, and myself. An improvised cabinet was formed from a narrow cupboard just large enough to hold a chair, with the Medium, and the tiny "dug-out" was enclosed with dark curtains.

The conditions were probably not such as would satisfy our scientific sceptics. No wire cage enclosed the Medium, nor was she handcuffed, or trussed up in any uncomfortable position. We all know that best results are always secured when the Medium is agreeably placed, so with locking the doors, fastening the windows, and securing the curtains we were content. But when we get materialised forms as solid as human beings, forms of men, women and children, issuing from the cabinet eight feet into the room, and exchanging remarks with the Medium in the cabinet, the voices of the spirit and the Medium often synchronising, then I back our senses, together with common sense, against any scientific apparatus in satisfaction that all was genuine.

The seance was an experimental one, and overwhelmingly successful. There were thirteen forms materialised, and on one occasion two at the same moment. It was the first time Mrs. Roberts Johnson had sat under these conditions, and she was somewhat nervous as to the result. One of the most curious features was the anxiety of the materialised forms to know how their building-up affected the Medium. Advice would come from inside the cabinet, high up towards the ceiling—"I'm going to build up—I've got my body nearly complete. Oh! I'm out—here I am complete. How do you feel, Mrs. Johnson?" By this time the form would be several feet in the room and Mrs. Johnson's muffled voice in the cabinet would be describing her sensations and the "drawing" feeling experienced in the solar plexus. There were several occasions when the spirit voices in the cabinet were heard discussing the best way of manifesting, and an interesting feature was that all the spirit voices were Direct Voices, as no trumpet was used. To get the marvel of the Direct Voice combined with the wonder of materialisation is to reach the high-water mark of psychic phenomena.

My nephew, Captain C. S. Saunders, who was shot at Hill 60 in 1915, materialised, and shook hands as naturally as ever he did when he was with us. I asked him if he was in uniform, "Oh no," he said, "just a lounge suit, but Eric here [a spirit who had manifested to his mother

previously] is in khaki." Then to the spirit, "I think you're taller than I am, Eric." "Well, we can measure," said Eric.

A niece of mine who had spoken with me scores of times by the Direct Voice then materialised. She grasped my hands, and lifted them to her face, and I felt every feature carefully and recognised one in particular, her nose being far more prominent than the Medium's. This fact (as indeed were scores of other facts incidental to the sitting) was unknown to Mrs. Johnson.

The feel of the "flesh" was just that of a human being but icy cold. In materialisations all the organs, muscles, nerves and blood vessels, function for a time, and, as David Duguid said, "If we could supply the power long enough we could maintain the form for quite a time, and the spirit could even eat and drink just as you do." With better "conditions" the temperature of the flesh would approximate to that of a living person, but it formed a capital test, for it would be impossible to fake the marble-like feeling, and yet preserve the softness, and yield, of flesh.

Dr. Ellis Powell said, "I'm materialising myself, and I hope I can sustain it. I shall get stronger, no doubt." But David said, regretfully, "We canna project him ay the curtain," and a little later he said, "D. D. Home helping us, but its lang syne he meddled wi' these things." We were told to bring illuminated cardboards next to us as being the best to reveal spirit forms. One spirit materialised all but the arms, and could not manage more.

The contrast between the traffic roaring by a few feet away in Holborn, and the astonishing wonders taking place in a little room where, for a time, our spirit friends took on bodily form again, was most striking, and not the least of the wonders was the fact of Mrs. Roberts Johnson blossoming out, after all these years, as a materialising Medium.

* * *

A letter reaches us from Mr. Hartley Knight confirming the account of the seance given by Mr. Saunders above. In the course of his letter Mr. Knight writes:

Early in the proceedings the control, David Duguid, explained that the purpose of the experiment was not to enable Mrs. Roberts Johnson to develop into a materialising Medium for public circles, but was for the special benefit of the chosen few, present on the occasion.

The Medium sat in a small, curtained cupboard, and during the proceedings, which lasted over an hour, some nine or ten spirits either fully or partly materialised. Unfortunately, the power was not sufficient to enable them to "generate" their own light, and as no illumined slates or discs were available the sitters did not actually see anything, though all were agreed that they "sensed" the presence of the various manifesting spirits. Some, indeed, were touched by materialised hands and one sitter declared he stroked the face of a materialised relative. I was not so favoured, as the spirit who came to me—the last of the manifestations—was unable to materialise her hands. I was, however, well satisfied as to her identity. Regret was expressed on both sides at the lack of lighting, with the promise from David Duguid that this would be remedied at the next sitting. More than once while a materialised being was addressing a sitter, I distinctly heard the Medium and her control conversing in the cabinet and the latter occasionally exchanging remarks with someone who had just dematerialised. I should like to add that on this occasion no fee was charged by the Medium.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. W. H. EVANS.—Mr. R. A. Bush of 8 Mostyn Road, Merton Park, S.W.19, as Treasurer, acknowledges with much appreciation the following sums: Sympathiser, 11s. 3d.; E.V., 2s. 6d.

Mr. R. A. Bush will gladly acknowledge in Letters further donations to this Testimonial.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

“CONCENTRATION AND RECEPTIVITY.”

Sir.—Why does Miss Gibbes object to my statement? Surely either “a white triangle” or the word “stillness” is extraneous matter relatively to the communication. I had not and have not the least wish to depreciate either of the books mentioned; I merely gave them as instances.

STANLEY DE BRATH.

London, W.

* * *

“PSYCHIC RESEARCH: SOME LARGER ASPECTS.”

Sir.—Mr. Arthur Goadby’s article in LIGHT of August 30th is one that should be read by everybody interested in our great movement.

We want much more than the inspirational and emotional side. That can be left to look after itself. We want hard thinking and that tabulating and co-ordinating of facts which is what we mean by science.

If the movement could, as Mr. Goadby suggests, co-ordinate those sides I believe great progress would immediately be made.

HECTOR MUNRO.

2, Park Crescent,
Portland Place, W.1.

* * *

“GHOST GOSSIP.”

Sir.—When my mother died in 1911 at Dungarven we had a dreadful time for a few days. I thought a drunken man or a lunatic had got into the kitchen I ran down stairs armed with my father’s black-thorn, and when I got to the kitchen door I saw the big kitchen shovel flying across the room and landing with a bang on the range. The old cook rushed in after me and pulled me away. It sounded as if everything in the place was smashed to bits. Is it not the sort of thing poltergeists do?

I think there is more general belief in the other world over here (Ireland) than you have in England. I don’t know about Scotland for I was never there. Lots of the folks here leave the fire in at night so the “good people” can sit there. There is a “foxy” woman (red-haired is always foxy here) seen in the village. She was a tramp and was murdered; and she is supposed to sit on the back of carts going up the long hill on the Cork road. (We are seven miles from the city). I have been told by many people that they have seen horses calling and straining at empty carts up this hill. And it is not very steep anywhere. There are several ghosts in this village, although I have only heard one. But I cannot get a maid to sleep in the house. They are too scared. None of us mind the ghosts much. I was never really frightened except one night. There is the usual black dog on the lawn, and the death-coach has been heard here too. My aunt lives in an old house, about twenty miles west of Cork, and it is haunted. I have heard bangs on the doors at night.

My eldest daughter often goes to stay with a well-known novelist, who lives near Limerick. The avenue is haunted by a knight in armour on a horse, and fifty years ago, while altering its course, they came on the skeletons of the man and horse with a complete set of armour.

Ireland.

I.P.B.

ECCLESIASTICISM AND THE FUTURE LIFE.

Sir,—May I call your attention to some remarks made by the Rev. J. C. Hardwick in an address given at “The Modern Church’s Conference” and quoted recently in the *Morning Post*? He said, “Only a minority of people nowadays have any strong belief in immortality. If Spiritualism ever comes to establish its doctrines we shall all be in a position of having to believe in survival while devoutly wishing it were not true.” This dictum is surely a curious one if the reverend gentleman has studied the subject. It would seem that even in the present day there is a strong ecclesiastical bias towards the medieval idea of a future life. Spiritualism at least gives us a reasonable faith in human progress both in this life and afterwards, and its study would remove that defect in the people which seems to have disturbed the lecturer.

F. C. LAING (Lt. Col. retired)

52, Earlsfield Road,
Hythe, Kent.

* * *

“MESSAGE TO THE SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY”

Sir,—The message addressed through Mrs. Osborne Leonard to the Spiritualist Community, and part of which appears in LIGHT of August 30th, is in reality a message to the whole movement. It was addressed to the Community because it is appropriate to them, and as I was speaking at the Grotrian Hall three days later, I was able to deliver it.

We all realise how appropriate it is to the fine work being done there: but it is also a message intended for every honest worker, in all branches of our movement.

In the light of this, I may quote two sentences from the earlier part of the message, for which you had not space:

“You have to get so far alone, on your own initiative, then we are allowed to come in.”

“Be sure we are supporting you right royally. So let us indeed push forward.”

The Spiritualist Community, Grotrian Hall, 115 Wigmore Street, W.1., have the whole message in leaflet form, for distribution.

ANNA E. MENZIES,
(Mrs. John Menzies).

London, W.

* * *

THE HAUNTINGS AT STANS

Sir,—I notice an article in LIGHT of August 30th by Mr. E. J. Dingwall in which he refers to the hauntings at Stans in 1860-62. This remarkable poltergeist disturbance created widespread interest at the time. I refer to it in my book *Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy* (p. 267), in which I also describe in detail many other no less curious cases of the same phenomenon. In describing the Stans disturbance I refer my readers to two articles in the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1862 and 1863. The first of these, a 7-page article, consists of extracts from Swiss newspapers describing the happenings as seen by journalists and others on the spot. The second is a 13-page article by William Howitt in which he describes the case in great detail and quotes largely from Mr. Joller’s book (*Darstellungselbsterlebter mystischer Erscheinungen*, Zurich, 1863).

The case was peculiarized by the cruel persistence of the haunting spirits, who finally drove Mr. Joller from his home after forty-four years of peaceful residence. As William Howitt said in 1863, “Certainly no more extraordinary case of supernatural persecution has yet been put on record.”

A. CAMPBELL HOLMS.

87, Holland Park, W.

Light

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FREEWILL AND PROPHECY

IT seems highly probable—to some it is self-evident—that man having the power of choice, is placed in a position in which he cannot justly arraign his Creator for wars and other tragedies to the extent that these are brought about by human folly. That the Universe is ruled by inexorable law, does not imply that man is an automaton, the subject of some fixed fate—he can obey the law or he can disregard it. The matter is in his own hands.

Now this consideration has a very direct bearing on the subject of prevision or prophecy, in which so many people are interested. The seer can perceive the future result of a train of consequences set up by some human action and makes his prediction accordingly, for his mind brings him into relation with the interior world and its lines of causation. Only when he is fully in touch with all the factors in the case can he prophesy accurately; but even then there is no question of fixed fate—all that is fixed is the action of the laws concerned. The free agency of man is never set aside. When a motorist, for instance, is warned that if he drives in a certain direction he must infallibly go over a precipice, there is no compulsion upon him to bring about the disaster. A chain of circumstances may lead to the tragedy, in spite of the motorist's desire and intention, but they are all in the human order. There was no predestined end, the result of some Divine fiat. If there *were* such an end then the seers could foretell future events with unerring accuracy. But there is no finality. As a recent writer on the question expressed

it, "There are no final results of any act or deed good or bad, that affects man." Every mistake can be corrected, every false direction rectified. But that is a consideration which takes us sometimes out of the Time order and the sphere of purely personal action on earth. The rigid Determinist is never able to admit the fact of human survival, for then his whole scheme would go by the board. One can "determine" the career of a mortal whose life on the earth is finally closed by death. Clearly such a creature would actually be the kind of automaton that the Determinist would make of a man—the helpless prey of blind forces which hem him in on every side. But a spiritual being is not to be so "determined," and it is the play of this spiritual element in man which gives him that liberty of action which the theologians describe as "Freewill," although they often go sadly astray over its meaning and its results.

There is no coercion of man by God anywhere in the Universe. In the spiritual world, as we are often told, a human spirit is free to remain in darkness and ignorance or to emerge from it. He can turn from the light, or he can walk in it. There is no compulsion. His power of choice is always respected. It is for this reason that we regard it as strange that any instructed spiritualist should consider the possibility of men being under the despotism of Fate, fixed and unalterable, simply because he has met with instances—there are many—of the accurate forecasting of the future by clairvoyants. That, as we have shewn, is a very flimsy basis on which to erect such an argument. If there is any "Fate" for mankind, it is progression and happiness. But even that will be a matter of free-will and choice, the same choice that—to take a very humble example—would lead an ass to turn its attention from a heap of stones to a bundle of fresh hay. It is not forced to do this, but it invariably will. For even the lower animals have some small spiritual element in their nature, and it gives them always that tendency to resist compulsion which is shewn at its highest in mankind.

TO SYLVIA IN SUMMERLAND

Ever the same, dear child of mine,
They see you standing close beside,
Clothed in your dainty robes divine,
Your own dear self, but beautified.

They hear your whispers gently fall,
Borne down to me on wings of love,
They hear you as you softly call
Me to those radiant heights above.

But I am blind, nor can I hear
The music from your purer state;
Let it suffice, to know you near,
And grant me patience, Lord, to wait.

F.S.H. (Natal)

SIDELIGHTS

"Of imposing stature, he had the stamp of the Empire builder. No man was ever more sincere," says the *Medical Press* of August 27th, in an appreciative reference to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

* * *

"Earthlife appears to be an episode of considerable importance in the history of a soul, and in many cases appears to be the beginning of an individual existence and personality. Certainly the individual continues thereafter, and carries with him his power, his memory and his affection." Thus said Sir Oliver Lodge in the course of an address at the David Thomas Memorial Church, Bristol, on the 7th inst., as reported in *The Morning Post* (September 8th).

* * *

Mr. Hannen Swaffer in *The Sunday Express* (August 1st) writes concerning the death of Elsie Janis' mother, "The great change that is taking place in the world in regard to death is proved by the printed card of thanks sent by Elsie Janis to all who condoled with her over her mother's death. 'Mother and I both thank you for your sympathy,' it reads. 'Dear Friend,' she wrote on the card sent to Macqueen Pope, 'This is to let you know that death is more with me than ever. Where we were two, we are now one, and will carry on.—Elsie and Mother.'"

* * *

Bishop Welldon (Dean of Durham) is quoted in the *Evening World* of August 28th as saying, "I am not a confessed spiritualist, but Spiritualism is, I think, in its nature, not the enemy but the ally of the Christian faith. Making for myself, I hold that the appearances of the dead at the time of death to friends who have known them in life are attested by such convincing evidence as to deserve general credence."

* * *

"I believe that despite the charlatanism that inevitably attaches to Spiritualism, there is more of real value in its movement, more vitality, more truth, than in any religion existing to-day in the Western world, at least," writes Margery Lawrence the well-known novelist in *Sunday Chronicle* of August 31st. She continues, "There seems to me nothing more surprising or abnormal than the possibility of talking through a Medium, who is merely an instrument, to a friend on the Other Side, than speaking through a telephone, also an instrument"

* * *

Mr. Leonard B. Lilly of Southsea says in the *Portsmouth Evening News* of August 28th, "I came into contact recently with a lady classing herself as a Medium, who proudly informed me that she had taken as much as £15 and £17 for a certain political organization and in her own words she 'did not do too badly out of it.' Charity apparently covers a multitude of sins, and the law is conveniently blind to the activities of such a person as this, but seeks out a poor working-class individual, and imposes a heavy fine. When a Medium is brought into contact with a few people realise the method that has been employed for bringing about the conviction, and I feel that it is time that the public knew. Mrs. A. has for years been practising as a Medium, many people have received help and consolation through her psychic gift. Unfortunately, however, Mrs. A., not having a private income, and devoting all her time to the cultivation of her gift, must find the means of sustaining her physical body, and so she charges a nominal fee. So she is a 'rogue and vagabond,' and must be brought to book. Policemen's wives readily comply with the request that they should visit the selected victim in English justice. The fee is paid, and the Medium, without doubt through the fluctuation of her psychic power, is unable to justify the fee paid. Then these *agents provocateurs* are the means of bringing Mrs. A. into court."

"UNCONSCIOUS SPIRITUALISM"

ADDRESS BY THE REV. TYSSUL DAVIS.

ON Sunday evening, 31st ulto., at the service held at Queen's Hall by the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, the Rev. Tyssul Davis spoke on "Unconscious Spiritualism."

He began by saying that we were living in the midst of a teeming, unseen world and constantly receiving influences of which we were, for the most part, quite unconscious. The word "invisible" entered far more deeply and constantly into our everyday life than most people suspected. We were all aware of the use of suggestion in business—the potent psychology of advertising—and against those influences we could guard ourselves. But against the more subtle influences from the unseen we could not so easily guard, because we are not aware of them, and they came to us through avenues that were closed to the appeal of things seen and heard. These influences might be either bad or good, but we offered an interior means of access to them all.

Proceeding, Mr. Tyssul Davis said:—"I remember once as a boy that in the village in which I lived there was an epidemic of suicide. I remember it specially, because a little cousin of mine fell a victim to it and committed suicide when he was only fourteen years of age; day after day people were committing suicide. Spiritualists know the reason very well. A man goes out of his body and keeps on mentally repeating his act, and his influence is felt by all weak-minded people in the neighbourhood. How often do we read in the papers of an epidemic of murders. Why should one murder lead to another, and that again to another? Spiritualists know, and they say that there should be no Home Secretary who has not a knowledge of these things. As for myself, I would compel every magistrate to go through an examination in psychic science before he sits upon the Bench.

"Take again the case of ill-luck. Those investigators into the occult world who have searched out these cases very often find that they are due to some ancient yearning for revenge on the part of a discarnate spirit, though this may not be specially directed against the person involved. Many of these people—the suicide, the murderer, the gambler, the drunkard, the voluptuary—when they pass hence are earthbound and carry with them their desires. Spiritualists try to teach the world a homely lesson of this kind: that when a man passes through the gates of death he does not change into an angel or immediately become a saint. He is just himself and will remain himself until he has learned the lesson of purgation and transmutation.

"I have only shown the bad side as an introduction to the good. Many of you know very well that not an hour passes without our receiving happy intimations and holy longings from beings more purified than we are, and who live in a more beautiful world.

"The last case of this kind I heard of was from a brother minister whom I met a few days ago. He does not believe in Spiritualism, or any 'nonsense' of that kind! He never writes his sermons, but he prepares his subjects and advertises them on the board outside his church. He had placed his notice on the church board, and was in the pulpit turning over the leaves of the New Testament to read the lesson when something seemed to stay his hand and he felt impelled to read another lesson which he had never thought about, on forgiveness. Not knowing what he was doing, and, feeling rather foolish, he went on reading this lesson. Then, after the prayers and the hymn, he got up to deliver his sermon, and putting aside what he had at first intended to preach, and feeling very much disconcerted, he preached on the duty of forgiveness, and of the mischief done by cherishing ill-will in the heart. Afterwards, when he had returned

to the vestry, feeling rather mortified by the experience, a stranger came to him and condemned the sermon in very strong language."

"What have I done to you?" asked the minister.

"The stranger replied: 'I was going out this morning on a rather sorry business when I came into your wretched church, and now you have spoilt everything; you have spoilt the plan on which I have been working for five years.' He went on to tell the minister a story of how a man had done a wrong to his family, and he (the visitor) had worked hard to get his revenge. At last all his plans were complete and on that Sunday morning he was on the way to execute the scheme he had fostered so long. But he was moved to go into that church, and it was not his own church. The man was actually a Catholic and my friend a Unitarian. But they came at last to an amicable understanding, and realized that they had been used as instruments in the hands of the unseen forces, although they had no particular belief in these forces. Such a case as that could only have arisen through someone in the unseen who loved that man and who wanted to save him from the terrible results of giving way to the desire for vengeance. Every speaker knows very well that there comes to him, unsought and unexpected, inspirations from another world. That is perhaps the best thing a man can hope for—to be a channel of the Divine grace. That kind of influence from the unseen world is a much more common thing than many of us have suspected."

Continuing, Mr. Tyssul Davis remarked that Mr. Hannen Swaffer had dealt with the matter in his little book *Adventures with Inspiration*, in which he has collected evidence from different writers and artists, and inspired others to follow up the search for cases. After reading his book [said Mr. Davis] I came to the conclusion that what we call imagination is a door opening into the psychic world. There was the case of Flora Annie Steel, the novelist, who was sitting down to her desk to write when she became aware with her mind's eye of a figure in a white uniform. She described the man and said she would recognise him anywhere. He gave his name as Craddock, and then she wrote his story. When she went down to tea she read the story. Her daughter asked, "Why didn't you write the story you went up to write?" "Well," she said, "someone came and told this one to me." That was only one instance out of many where literary people had become aware of the source of their inspiration.

In the course of his concluding remarks Mr. Davis said:—

"When we realize this truth, what a challenge it is to fit ourselves for the higher inspirations which are waiting to come into man's head and heart! When I think of that I think how dull and poor our life is, because we will not draw upon this great fund of wealth that lies around us and which is anxious to give itself to us. I leave that thought with you and myself: that we shall try to enlarge our capacity for receiving these inspirations from a higher world, make ourselves more sensitive, begin to take ourselves in hand and make Spiritualism not only a creed but a mode of life. In the future Spiritualism will be recognised by that sign. A spiritualist will be known as a man who takes himself in hand, who is transmuted by his faculties, who stands before the world as the pioneer of a new and higher race and the harbinger of a lovelier kind of life."

At the close of the address Mrs. Cannock gave several clairvoyant descriptions, all but one being acknowledged.

It seems unlikely that Spiritualism will act otherwise than by steady permeation and by modification—there will be no taking by storm. The shell and fabric of the churches will remain outwardly sound for centuries to come. This is not the age of violent change, and compromise is in the very blood of the race.—E. HARVEY.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE EXISTENCE OF SPIRITS

By GODFREY BURCHETT

HAS philosophy anything helpful to say about the right attitude of the scientific mind to the conclusions reached by psychic research, and especially to the most significant and hopeful of those conclusions? The answer is that philosophy can supply a corrective to a kind of dogmatic discredit to which the main truths of psychic research have been and still are—though not so widely as formerly—subjected on the alleged authority of science.

It is true that during the last fifty years the once paramount tradition of British philosophy has been deeply overclouded. The late Professor T. H. Green of Oxford in his memorable preface to Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature* showed that the great trio of British philosophers in the line of succession from Descartes—Locke, Berkeley, Hume—failed to fulfil the purposes which they laid down for themselves, and believed that they had achieved. Professor Green appealed in 1874 to "Englishmen under five-and-twenty" to become disciples of Kant and Hegel, and this exhortation, as Professor Sorley of Cambridge has reminded us in his very valuable *History of English Philosophy*, marks an epoch in English thought in the nineteenth century."

But time has hardly dealt more kindly with the German philosophers than with their British predecessors whose prestige Professor Green helped them to eclipse. And the German teachers were, in fact, no more flawless than the British thinkers to whom they were so deeply indebted. In two instances we need cite no British testimony in support of this judgment. Hegel wrote of Kant's system, "Plain minds have not unreasonably taken objection to this subjective idealism, with its reduction of the facts of consciousness to a purely personal world created by ourselves alone." Other censure by Hegel plainly implies the belief that Kant had misunderstood the proper mission of philosophy. Moreover, according to Hegel, "Kant, it is well known, did not put himself to much trouble in discovering the categories." Schopenhauer's unsparing condemnation of Hegel's method and doctrine is well known.

It has been shown that Kant's system makes the coincidence of experience in different individuals, which is one of the most familiar features of our daily life, seem miraculous. The same impediment is a stumbling-block in the case of Schopenhauer himself. For he retained the flaw in his adoption and development of Kant's teaching.

But if the leading philosophers of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries are thus open to challenge as founders of systems of thought, they did nevertheless by their searching inquiry into the faculties and powers of the human mind, establish a cardinal point about the nature of man's mentality. Chiefly and most directly the work of Locke and Kant demonstrated that the mind is a conditional and conditioning organ and that the scope of its valid operation is limited.

What is the bearing of this upon the results of psychic research? It is plain, and it is important in relation to conclusions from science. We have to admit that knowledge based on sensuous perception, though it suffices within its proper sphere, does not and cannot give us insight into the whole nature of the universe. The mental organ which man uses in the study of science enables him to *apprehend* a part, an aspect, of the universe. But it does not enable him to *comprehend* the universe as

RAY'S AND REFLECTIONS

Some very valuable work in the world is done by people who are apparently acting under a strong delusion.

* * *

It has been observed that whereas some spiritualists believe in the Spirit World others merely believe in the Spirit Theory. There is a difference.

* * *

It is a fine example of the almost impenetrable ignorance with which we have sometimes to contend that a provincial evening paper prints a letter from one of its readers who challenges the reality of psychic photography on the ground that, so far as his photographic knowledge extends, the camera cannot produce a picture of anything invisible to the eye. *Sancta simplicitas!* No doubt some competent photographer will instruct this inquirer by reference to elementary experiments in chemistry.

* * *

I have often noticed that some of the most capable investigators of psychic phenomena are found amongst engineers and lawyers—the former because of their exactitude of method and the latter because of their ability in judging evidence. It was very noticeable that these trained minds arrived very rapidly at just conclusions. They were not repelled by the many muddled presentations of the subject, or “put off” by the denials and contradictions of the critics and sceptics. The engineer experimented and recorded his results with precision; the lawyer sifted the facts from the mass of fictions and fallacies. In some instances they have expressed the view that the subject is in its very early stages—a sentiment with which I am in entire agreement. There is a whole new world to be discovered.

* * *

The vocal performances at seances, as I indicated on a former occasion, sometimes leave much to be desired. Probably it is for this reason that the gramophone supplies all the music that home experimenters deem desirable. An old friend (a spiritualist for forty years) has just been telling me of a seance at which he was recently sitting, and at which very good manifestations had been obtained; the singing was rather trying, although a professional musician who was there did not make any complaint—probably because he was one of the “choir.” But a lady clairvoyant who was present spoke of seeing in that room a male spirit who seemed so worried by the singing that, according to the seer, he departed holding his hands over his ears!

* * *

Although some well-authenticated messages have come from Conan Doyle, there has been a large proportion of alleged communications which were merely rubbishy. I recall the same sort of thing as happening after the death of W. T. Stead and other notabilities. Possibly some of the communications have some kind of psychic impulse behind them—they are not all the outcome of vanity or delusion—but it is clear enough that before such messages are published they should contain the clearest evidence of being authentic, showing distinct signs of their source. But some of them are merely vague generalisations carrying no significance and others are marked by errors of fact shewing that no mind but that of the Medium was concerned in their production. And it is too often forgotten that even the best mediumship is liable to variation. In short, mediumship, like some other dawning faculties of the human mind, is still in an elementary stage. In days to come it may be as regular and dependable as wireless telegraphy.

D.G.

EXPERIENCES ON THE OTHER SIDE

Mrs. B. Sanderson sends us a simple little communication received at a home circle. We use it because it agrees with so much that is coming through nowadays in various directions regarding the nature of supra-mundane life. These homely messages which come from people who are the beginnings of their experiences on the other side are always interesting even if they tell us none of those great cosmic truths which some people seem to think ought to form the content of all communications.

I spend much of my time tending flowers which whisper to me of earthly needs. They come right over after blooming on your plane and live with us, but they are not quite the same; they have a more distinctive life and their separate characters influence us in different ways. Many people here have never had the joy of flowers. They lived in towns or villages and had no opportunity of learning flower-lore and some were not able to appreciate it. Here my garden does its work for all. I go to a school as well as a garden and learn of things of which your scientists only dream. We understand a little about the majestic conception of the Universe. No one who comes to us from your plane suffers neglect; they all have education and opportunities of living a full and intensely happy life. Some day I may have courage to want an earthly experience. It seems to me that what we want we can always get. At present I see so much work ahead of me here that I have not yet screwed up my courage to face the dulness and the difficulties that I see surrounding you.

THE LATE MISS CLARISSA MILES

Mr Oliver Lodge writes:—

Miss Clarissa Miles was a great friend of my wife and myself. It was at her flat that the clairvoyante gave the description of a house that we were going to live in, some seven years before the time, when anything of the kind seemed highly improbable. Miss Miles was full of visions and of human kindness. She thought that wonderful things were going to happen: and now they have happened, to her at least. She had some psychic faculty, and her flat was given up, and no preparations made for her earthly future, almost to the day of her sudden death. The merciful termination of her earth-life: her many friends recognise this.

THE CONDUCT OF A DEVELOPING CIRCLE

AN EXERCISE IN PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT.

By IVAN COOKE

COMPARED with the attaining and retaining of the right mental attitude, the conditions, the number and placing of the sitters, and even the conduct of the circle seem relatively unimportant. Nevertheless, when sitting for the development of clairvoyance or trance mediumship, the number of sitters should be from four to eight as too big a circle is unwieldy; too small a one lacks power.

A word as to the room chosen. An upper room seems preferable; it is usually more secluded and therefore quieter; remarkable things have happened before in certain upper rooms. It should be small and sparsely furnished, the chairs not too luxurious. The lighting should be dimmed, but not darkened, and leaping flames from the fire are to be avoided, as they distract. It is helpful to observe all these points.

Once a week is neither too often nor too seldom to sit.

Is it too much to ask that all bathe and change before a sitting; that tobacco and flesh foods be abstained from for a few hours, and alcohol altogether?

Try to commence each seance with as little idle conversation or fuss as possible. Do not let the men all sit together, as they will instinctively try to do, but sort them out by placing a lady between each. Husbands and wives are, as a rule, best apart (by this I cast no slight on the institution of marriage). Before settling down ask if all feel comfortable and rightly placed. This is important, as sitters should occupy the same positions at all seances. Let all join hands, right over left; see that legs are uncrossed; then you are ready.

Commence with silence for a short time, then ask all to join in a hymn, to be followed by an invocation and the Lord's Prayer, spoken or sung. Let the Leader again remind his sitters that they are met for service, to give of themselves, to be used by those in the Beyond. Therefore their first thoughts must be of others in greater need than they—the sick, the broken in life. So, shall they all, in these early attempts at clairvoyance, try to create a Vision of healing for these others.

Let each in turn name the person he would like to aid, and try to visualise that person, to lift him—his spirit—upwards. Let all wait then in the silence each giving his power until conditions are felt to become tense, then break the silence by some gentle movement before speaking.

Remind your sitters that each is here to help the other to attain spiritual development, so each must put aside shyness and reserve, being sure of sympathy and understanding from the rest. And then ask that each one in turn will try to describe what has been "seen"—what vision was had of the healing work.

All the foregoing has a dual purpose: firstly, to benefit those in need of strength and health; secondly, to draw out and develop the vision of the sitters. But vision or clairvoyance benefits no one except the seer unless expression be also developed. This should always follow an exercise in clairvoyance.

And here you may be up against another difficulty. Assuming you have overcome your sitters' shyness, still will they be reluctant to speak, not because they have not seen anything, but because they attribute what they have seen to imagination.

In all this, maintain the right "atmosphere" in your circle; discourage useless chatter, but do not insist on

absolute silence. Never strive after solemnity—it is deadly. A circle is a happy place, a wonderful place where for once our cares and shadows are shed away, our shyness and reserve forgotten, where we meet in real harmony. Laughter is a golden thing when it springs from happy hearts, quickening vibrations, lightening conditions; nor should the time drag. You will probably be surprised that half your allotted hour or so has slipped away.

Remember how important it is to maintain that attitude of "giving." All must give of their power, their sympathy, their love to each other, and to those in the Beyond. In the measure you so give, and exactly in that measure, so will you receive the power of the Spirit, so will you develop.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

Mr. Hannen Swaffer, president of the Spiritualist Community, gives the following account of a visit he made to a country church a short time back, in order to address the congregation on present-day knowledge of survival.

"On a recent Sunday, I spoke in Northamptonshire in a village church, because the Vicar wanted his congregation informed of the proved facts of survival. In the afternoon he took me to a Bible Class of young men which had been run for two years by two Anglican ladies. They listened with respect and attention to the story of Margery Crandon and the story of Doyle. In the later hours of the night the vicar kept me up to discuss Spiritualism. He said that of recent years he had spoken in 600 Anglican pulpits, that he had discussed Spiritualism with all the clergy concerned, and that approximately 90 per cent. of those clergymen had had psychic experiences. He spoke of the way in which Spiritualism to-day is opening the eyes of the world. By gradual permeation we shall leaven the thought of humanity, but in the end it will not be called Spiritualism."

"DOES THE BIBLE CONDEMN SPIRITUALISM?" We have received from the Two Worlds Publishing Co. a pamphlet (price 6d.) containing the report of the debate held at the Rechabite Hall, Leicester, in April last, between the Rev. S. J. Hickson of Leicester and Mr. Maurice Barbanell of London. The debate arose from addresses delivered in Leicester in January last by Mr. Hannen Swaffer and Mr. Maurice Barbanell. The Rev. S. J. Hickson, Strict Baptist minister, challenged the statements in the address and offered to meet Mr. Swaffer on the public platform and maintain the position that the Bible condemns Spiritualism. Subsequently it was arranged that Mr. Maurice Barbanell should act in place of Mr. Swaffer, and the present pamphlet gives the addresses delivered by the controversialists. As an example of the literalist standing for the faith as once delivered, and the spiritualist contending for a spiritual nature of life and those larger views which are now being received and adopted even in the orthodox churches, the pamphlet is full of interest. Mr. Hickson maintains his position with dogged resolution, clinging tenaciously to the words of the Bible, and Mr. Barbanell makes a capable and pungent reply.

NEW BOOKS RECEIVED

"THE HEAVENS ARE RINGING," by Ivan Cooke. (Obtainable from the Author, "The Fifth House," Elmstead Avenue, Wembley Park, Middx.; post free, 1s. 2d.)

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 Tuesday, September 19th, at 5 p.m. MISS GEDDES

WEEKLY MEETING.

Wednesday, Sept. 24th, at 8.15 p.m. MR. WILLIAM HOPE (of Crewe)
 Lantern Lecture on "Psychic Photography."

VOL. IX. No. 2. July, 1930.

"PSYCHIC SCIENCE"

Frontispiece. Portrait of Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, (Co-Founder of the British College of Psychic Science.)
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Days: 3 p.m. Circle for Clairvoyance. (1st Circle Sept. 24th.) Mrs. Rous.
Days: 3 p.m. Open Circle for Instruction. Miss Earle and Mrs. Livingstone.
Days: 5.30, Devotional Group. Absent Healing. Miss Stead.
Days: 3 p.m. Class for Development. Mrs. Campbell. (1st Class Sept 19th.)

Syllabus on Application to Secretary.

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Day, Sept. 17th, 7.30 p.m. MR. H. J. OSBORN
 "Some Mysteries of the Seance Room."
Day, Sept. 21st, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. MR. A. VOUT PETERS
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 Tuesday, Sept. 16th at 7.30 Clairvoyance .. MRS. LIVINGSTONE
 Thursday, Sept. 18th at 7.30 Clairvoyance .. MR. AUSTIN
 Friday, Sept. 19th at 7.30 Clairvoyance .. MRS. GREGG

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HOURS: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Sats. 1 p.m.).

THE SECRETARY is at all times prepared to meet Enquirers. It is advisable that appointments be made.

LIBRARY RULES.

The annual fee of one guinea for Membership includes the use of the Circulating and Reference Libraries. There is no extra charge except for stamps when books are sent by post.

1. Members may have three books at one time, of which only one may be "new."
2. Books are reckoned as "new" for twelve months after publication.
3. Books must be returned within fourteen days from date of issue. A fine of 2d. per week per volume for books not returned to date will be charged. Renewal of issue for a second fortnight can be applied for by post card. If the books are not required by another Member, this permission can be assumed.
4. If Members repeatedly retain books after special application has been made for them, there will be the regrettable necessity of refusing such Members the further use of the Library.
5. Any Members bespeaking a special book not immediately available can have it forwarded later by sending or leaving 4d. with the Librarian to cover the cost of postage, or a post card will be sent when available.
6. A uniform charge of 9d. is made for each parcel of books, which amount must be forwarded preferably in stamps, each time a request for books is made. Parcels must be returned carriage paid.
7. Borrowers are requested to keep the books clean, and on no account to turn down the leaves or to *disfigure the pages by pencil or other marks*. They are also specially asked to see that the books are well wrapped with a *thick inside layer of paper* to protect them from injury in transit to the Librarian, as they will be held responsible for any damage which might with ordinary care have been prevented.