

HUMAN SURVIVAL AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

.By
HELEN ALEX DALLAS

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every thought, word and deed.

That people, both in the physical body, and those who
have passed on to the unseen, influence each other for
good and for ill according to their individual thought
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"Count it crime to let a Truth slip."

BROWNING



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FOREWORD.

This is one of a series of five booklets, viz. :—

1. HUMAN SURVIVAL AND ITS IMPLICATIONS.
By Helen A. Dallas.
2. THE MENTAL PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.
By Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.
3. THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.
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By Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S.

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The Council of the L.S.A. records its thanks to the above writers for their co-operation, and to Mr. A. W. Trethewy for his care in editing the series in order to avoid accidental overlapping or omission of any essential points not exclusively belonging to any one of the series.

HUMAN SURVIVAL AND ITS IMPLICATIONS.

WHEN Professor Silvanus P. Thompson was speaking on the relation between Science and Religion he began by a definition of the term Religion which would express the common ground of all religions, passing over the variations by which religions differ; that is the only fair way in which to approach a subject which has multitudes of adherents who hold many different opinions. We must get down to the fundamental basis of Spiritualism, and have a clear definition of its essential principle, which no one claiming to be a spiritualist will hesitate to endorse.

Spiritualism proclaims a belief in the existence of the spirit apart from and independent of the material organism and in the reality and value of intelligent intercourse between spirits incarnate and spirits discarnate.

If Spiritualism implied no more than this it would be assented to by many who now object to it: an essential part of what is meant by the term, however, is the belief that through the faculties of certain specially gifted persons, called Mediums, survival of human personality after bodily death can be *proved*, and that messages from those who have departed this life have been received in this way. Moreover, whilst physical phenomena produced in the presence of Mediums have been recognised as indisputable facts by students who do not regard these phenomena as associated with the activity of discarnate spirits, spiritualists hold that in some cases—not in all—there is evidence that these effects are produced by discarnate agency. Thus, intercourse and inter-

action with a world of spirits, under certain conditions, is open to mankind in general through mediumship.

The messages received from the spirits of those who have lived on earth are facts furnishing evidence of survival. Facts constitute the ultimate court of appeal in all matters scientific or religious; all religions claim that facts of experience are an integral part of their systems; the Christian religion proclaims that it is founded upon historical facts, events which occurred two thousand years ago. One of the objections sometimes raised against Spiritualism is that it ought to be unnecessary for sincere Christians; that the historical facts on which the religion of Christendom was builded should suffice; that no further evidence of the reality of a spiritual world and human survival after death ought to be required. To which we would reply that we must accept things as they *are*; that it is futile to insist that certain kinds of evidence *ought* to suffice, if as a matter of experience they do *not* suffice. A wise philosopher should say to such doubters, as Virgil did to Dante, when his assurance failed to convince him: "If perchance thou thinkest that I beguile thee, get thee toward them and get credence with thy hands."* In other words: *Get proof*.

We might add that He who has been described as "the incomparable Pioneer of all wisdom that shall be learned concerning unseen things"† gave us an example of the wisest way in which to deal

* *Purgatorio*, Canto VII, line 25.

† 'Fragment of Prose and Poetry,' by F. W. H. Myers. p. 120.

with doubt. He recognized that, although "the child-like faith that asks not sight" is a happy condition, a different temperament requires to be satisfied in other ways, therefore He unhesitatingly offered the evidence desired and gave opportunity to test it.

It is indisputable that the mental atmosphere created by the scientific developments of the last three quarters of a century has evoked in many thoughtful minds a profound need for evidence of such a nature that it can be personally sifted and tested.

At the end of last century Myers wrote:—

"The influence of scientists is every year telling more strongly against belief in a future life. Inevitably so, since what science does not tend to prove, she in some sort tends to disprove." It is true that science has undergone considerable change since this was written, but it is still true that among scientific men there is widespread element of doubt as to the reality of a future life: in spite of the fact that "the tendency of science to-day is not to reduce everything to manifestations of matter—since matter now has only a minor place in the physical world—but to reduce it to the manifestations of the *operation* of natural law . . . It is this belief in the universal dominance of scientific law which is nowadays generally meant by materialism."†

The conclusions of scientific men, which have passed into current beliefs, are based on facts

† 'Science and the Unseen World,' by Prof. A. Stanley Eddington, F.R.S. p. 32.

which can be examined and tested and are capable of being interpreted by scientific principles.

Those whose knowledge of the universe has been acquired by these methods of careful research are not satisfied to accept, on authority alone, momentous beliefs which cannot be similarly scrutinized and which seem incapable of being thus interpreted.

Those who claim that the "existence of a world of spirits" and survival after death can be proved by facts of immediate experience are the allies of all who are loyal to truth, and the allies of philosophy and of every religion in so far as these witness to Truth.

MEANING OF TERMS.

It is desirable before proceeding further to state the sense in which the terms "a world of spirits" and "the individual spirit" are used, and definition is not easy, but we can at least indicate the character which differentiates spirit from other existence.

The word "Spirit," as here used, denotes an intelligent being who has potential capacity* to reason and think, and to cognize itself as a conscious ego, who can mentally affirm, "I am I," one who can will and choose, and purpose; who possesses a moral sense which can discriminate between right and wrong, and an aesthetic sense which can appreciate the beautiful; this discrimination and appreciation produce re-actions of love and hate, admiration and remorse.

* In an infant, an idiot and some other men and women these hall marks of spirit are latent only.

This definition, although inadequate, suffices to show that a "world of spirits," that is to say of beings possessing these qualifications, exists on this earth, whether it exists elsewhere or not.

Moreover, those who hold that the above mentioned qualities are a bye-product of material forces will nevertheless admit that they belong to a different category; they cannot be equated with physical phenomena: they have a superior value.

The study of evolution shows us that progressive development is attended by great complexity; increased complexity indicates advance: this is easily perceived in plant life. In the earlier stages of the earth plant life was extremely simple; it is in its latest stages that it has become highly complex, and no one can dispute the fact that the later stages are superior to the earlier.

This is, of course, equally indisputable in the evolution of animal species which has culminated in the appearance on this earth of mankind, that is to say of embodied spirits who manifest enormously increased complexity not only physically but more particularly in their mental and psychological development.

If spirits do not survive the dissolution of their partnership with physical forces and material bodies we are faced with the fact that the superior manifestation with all its complexities, the crown of the whole long series of creative processes, is as futile as it is fugitive. It is futile, for in all the other departments of life instinct and satisfaction correspond, but who can affirm that this is true for mankind if every struggling, aspiring, spirit,

desiring self-realisation, craving for knowledge and often enduring terrible sufferings in order to be loyal to its highest ideals goes out like a candle in a few brief years and is obliterated with all its experience, its affections and capacities? Then indeed Haeckel's pronouncement must be true: "The development of the universe is a process in which we discover no purpose at all—all is the result of chance."

Although the purpose of this booklet is not to discuss the philosophic reason for belief in human survival it is necessary thus briefly to indicate that the philosophic reasons for this belief are weighty.

It is not within the scope of this booklet to present the evidence on which so weighty a claim rests; that will be done in another pamphlet. It must suffice here to affirm that the facts which spiritualists claim as proven have been accepted, and accepted by competent investigators in numerous lands; they are men and women distinguished in every branch of science and almost every profession. They have repeatedly tested the results obtained with Mediums and affirmed them to be inexplicable by any *known* natural law.

This staggering fact, namely, that the phenomena cannot be explained by any known laws of nature, has sufficed to deter many from facing the evidence. But happily there are also many daring men imbued with a profound loyalty to truth, more deeply wedded to truth, indeed, than to any preconception as to the limits of possibility. One of these, Sir William Crookes, has said: "Having once satisfied himself that he is on the track of a 'new truth, that single object should animate

"him to pursue it without regarding whether the facts which occur before his eyes are naturally possible or impossible."

METHOD OF APPROACH.

Proof is obtainable; but no one should venture upon this quest without seeking the advice and guidance of experienced investigators, and without some careful previous study of the subject in *wisely selected* books. Those who plunge into experiments run considerable risk for they are dealing with forces they do not understand; even if they merely seek appointments with Mediums they are beginning at the wrong end: they are liable to believe too much, or too little, if they have no knowledge of the subject. One hardly knows which is most regrettable—that a man should believe too little, and fail to appreciate the significance of experience, or that he should believe too much and accept as a message from the Unseen that which may only be due to his own mental activity: in either case he will waste time and be misled. Therefore it is of importance that every one should read some good books on the subject before attempting to gain personal experience in any way. Two principles should be kept before us:

One is to "guard the purity of our belief lest in any time rest on anything unworthy."*

And the other is to "follow fearlessly wherever truth may lead and beware of pre-constructing

* Clifford.

from too few factors [our] formula for the sum of things."*

Perseverance is needful—the inquirer who, having failed with one or two Mediums to get good results, takes no trouble to make further attempts is obviously not qualified for the study of this important subject. The faint hearted and impatient will make no progress: the reward is for those who are deeply in earnest, and determined to seek until they find.

One of the difficulties to be encountered is that the effect of evidence does not solely depend upon its strength and cogency: there is another factor in the determination of what its effect will be, and that is the mind of the person who considers it. Every one is not equally capable of estimating the value of evidence, and many do not take a wide enough survey of the facts. Also there is in most minds an innate disinclination to accept new truth. "A new truth may wait a long time before it can make its way"† not always on account of wilful and conscious prejudice, but because the human mind is so constituted that new ideas do not readily retain their grip on the mind: they have, so to speak, to make a new rut for themselves.

Another obstacle to the reception of new truths is that sometimes they seem to confront us with impossibilities. We want to see *how* a fact can occur before we can believe in its occurrence. Mr. C. C. Massey has said: "When we see how a

* F. W. H. Myers.

† 'Conversations of Goethe': p. 47; quoted in 'On the Threshold of the Unseen': p. 1.

"thing can have happened we are much more ready to give a fair hearing to evidence that it *has* happened."*

WHAT SURVIVAL IMPLIES.

Spiritualism implies belief in something more than survival. That word standing alone might mean only the indestructibility of life. If we regard life, not as a product of material forces, but as a guiding power which comes "out of the Everywhere into Here," it is consistent to hold the view that it may be indestructible; the dissolution of the form through which life manifests in plant or animal liberates the animating power—life—which can then manifest again. Life survives: this is the view suggested by Sir Oliver Lodge. He says: "The life of an insect or a tree may in some sort—*must*, one would think, in some sort, persist; but surely not its personal character. Why not? Because presumably it has none."†

Whether this is so or not, it must be clearly understood that when spiritualists affirm that survival is proved they are not claiming that the life-force has been proved to be indestructible; but that *personality* survives the death of the body, or, in other words, that individual *persons* survive. Therefore it is necessary to define the sense in which the word *PERSON* is used in this connection.

The word Personality does not denote the *ego*, the self, the spirit, it is the outcome of the effect

* 'Conversations of Goethe': etc. p. 10.

† 'Man and the Universe': p. 177.

upon the ego of experience. It is the product of the spirit's reaction to the circumstances of its earthly sojourn; it is fashioned by its response to the whole gamut of experiences, to the multitude of influences to which it is exposed. Everything it encounters during life on earth, from the smallest physical contact with environment to the profoundest of all spiritual influences, plays its part in making personality, or, rather, supplies the conditions out of which the ego is gradually creating its own personality. It is this personality which spiritualists claim survives bodily death, a claim which they assert is based on well attested facts.

Professor W. G. de Burgh gave an illuminating address from the B.B.C. Studio in 1928* on this subject: "*What do we mean by Personality?*"

In this he said:—"We must look for the secret of personality, not in the past, not in the present, but in the future, in what may be and what ought to be rather than in what is. Our personal history is an endeavour after unity of selfhood. Personality is an ideal, not a *fait accompli*; it is for each the purpose he is marked out to fulfil, his unique part in the world drama, and each is free to play it well or badly or not at all." He adds that he would have us think of personality "first as social and inclusive,† then as something to be created for ourselves out of the proffered opportunities, and lastly as an ideal goal pointing beyond this present life. It may be that complete

* Part of this address was printed in the '*Radio Times*,' October 19th, 1928.

† His reason for this is given in the earlier part of the article.

"personality is found only in God, and in each man in so far as he realizes a divine purpose and achieves thereby union with God."

The affirmation that personality (thus defined) persists, and that every one carries with him at death the entire result of his life in this world, with all its memories, habits and affections, is so momentous that it should not be made unless it is supported by adequate and abundant evidence. That this evidence is both adequate and abundant, spiritualists are assured, but just because it is abundant it cannot be contained within the compass of one book; those who wish to acquaint themselves with it must be willing to take some trouble to "read, mark, learn" and "inwardly digest" what they have learned.

As Professor Sir A. Stanley Eddington has said we must "not treat knowledge as something secreted in the brain by the operation of unbreakable laws of nature.* Unless we pay attention to significances . . . we may miss the essential part of experience."

MEDIUMSHIP.

This leads us to the consideration that proof of the survival of human personality depends mainly on an extensive system of mediumship. For it is through mediumship that we discover *how* communications from a world of spirits can be effected, and it is these communications which afford positive proof of survival.

But we do not claim that mediumship affords the *only* proof of a spirit world and survival of

* Science and the Unseen World, pp. 37, 39.

personality. Conviction of these facts comes in other ways also. There are many spontaneous occurrences which have sufficed to convince those with whom they occur of the presence and activity of their friends who have passed out of the body. Sir William Barrett was preparing a book on *Deathbed Visions* when his summons came and the unfinished book was published after his death. In this he writes: "There are instances when the dying person was unaware of the previous death of the spirit-form he sees, and is therefore astonished to find in the vision of his, or her, deceased relative one whom the percipient believed to be still on earth. These cases form, perhaps, one of the most cogent arguments for survival after death." He quotes a remark by Professor Charles Richet in which the latter says: "Facts of this kind are very important. They are much more applicable by the spirit theory . . . Among all the facts adduced to prove survival these seem to me to be the most disquieting."*

Sometimes these visions have been seen by nurses and watchers by the dying. And sometimes they appear to friends at a distance a few hours, or a few days, after the death has taken place. These and many other spontaneous occurrences suffice for conviction for many persons. But it cannot be said that they are open to the world. The majority of mankind pass through life without having had such personal experiences, and they do not afford evidence which is accessible to

* That is to say from a materialistic standpoint; for as is well known Prof. Richet does not accept survival as *proven*.

scientific minds who are in search of proof of a less spasmodic kind, proof which they can test for themselves.

The questions are often asked: "Why should I not get into direct communication?" "If some one who has died can communicate with me why should he do so through a Medium?" A little reflection should make the answers to such questions quite clear.

Direct communication is possible and indeed it may constantly occur. Communications from the other side of death do not *only* come through those who are technically denoted as Mediums. There is reason to believe that communications through Mediums are specialized examples of what is constantly in operation.

This has been very forcibly expressed by Sir Oliver Lodge:—

"One thing that conspicuously suggests itself is that we are here made aware through these trivial but illuminating facts, of a process which by religious peoples has always been recognized and insisted on, namely the direct interaction of incarnate with discarnate mind—that is to say an intercourse between mind and mind in more than one grade of existence, by means apart from, and independent of, the temporary mechanism of the body. The facts indeed open the way to a perception of the influence of the spirit generally, as a guiding force in human and terrestrial affairs—active not under the exceptional circumstances of trance alone, but always and constantly and normally—so uniformly

"active in fact that by ordinary people its agency 'is undetected and unperceived.'"*

The experience of many will corroborate this statement, but it is obvious that this kind of intercourse of mind with mind does not afford the sort of proof which could convince a sceptic, in fact it cannot be said to afford *proof* at all ; although it may produce conviction. Conviction does not always depend on proof. It is sometimes effected by a subtle intuition, a perception of the soul which brings an assurance, which cannot be transmitted to another person, and which must not be confounded with "proof." These mystical experiences are of great value to the recipient, but they leave the doubter and the scientific inquirer untouched.

The evidence which is given through mediumship is different in character ; it is assessible to those who have no personal experiences of this nature and are unconscious of any intuitive apprehension of intercourse with a spirit world. It is capable of being critically examined and tested.

It is on this account that mediumship is of great value. We must bear in mind that most of the important things in life are mediated to us, and the term medium denotes the mode by which evidence of a world of spirits may be mediated to inquirers. It is unreasonable to object, as some do, to such mediation since it is in accord with other experiences in life. The whole of our existence, from birth to death, is interwoven with mediums : life itself comes to us all through the

* 'Proceedings' S.P.R. Vol. xxiii ; p. 284.

medium of our parents, it is sustained and mediated day by day through other channels. It is no exception to the laws of life that we should be indebted to certain gifted individuals for the kind of evidence which is specially needed in the present age.

When claiming that it is in line with the laws of interaction which permeate the whole of life, we do not mean that it is altogether a normal application of those laws. It is a *specialized* application to meet a special need.

It is not superfluous to stress the point that mediumship and communications are extensions of faculties already exercised here and now, and are in conformity with natural laws. As has been said above on page 11, Sir Arthur Eddington tells us that it is this "belief in the "universal dominance of scientific law which is "nowadays generally meant by materialism."* If we can show that natural laws extend into the unseen world of spirits, we are making a big step towards removing the difficulty which scientific men find in recognizing the existence of this sphere of activity. This does not imply, of course, that spiritualists admit the dominance of law either in this world or in that as implying a mechanical and uncontrollable predeterminism. As Sir Arthur Eddington says in the same lecture : "The mind "has an outlook which transcends the natural "law by which it functions both in this state and "in the next : we may recognize the beauty and "symmetry of law in the Universe everywhere "without ignoring the supremacy of controlling

* 'Science and the Unseen World' : p. 32.

"Will; laws ought to be kept but may be broken.
 "Dismiss the idea that natural law may swallow
 "up religion; it cannot even tackle the multi-
 "plication table single handed." In this sentence
 Sir Arthur Eddington safeguards the essential
 supremacy of the mind's control.*

There may be—there *must* be—laws operative
 in the after death state, which are at present un-
 known to us, but the observed continuity of
 nature leads us to anticipate that in the state
 immediately succeeding this we shall find many
 of the same laws in operation as those with which
 we are familiar now.

Mediumship is one of these: the mode of
 communication is another. The primitive men
 who initiated language, passing from mere sounds
 and signs to sentences were unaware that they
 were the pioneers of a great development; they
 could not guess that speech and writing would
 become the mediums for the genius of a Shakes-
 peare or a bond of fellowship between every
 portion of the human race: they simply applied
 the laws of nature to their own needs, controlling
 those laws by desire and will.

Similarly those who are attempting a wider
 extension of communication by using natural
 methods in a new adventure cannot venture to
 prophesy what the future outcome may be; but
 they perceive that since it has been ascertained
 that communication between mind and mind is
 possible by some direct action, other than the
 use of the senses a new departure has been made,
 and opportunities hitherto unrecognized for com-

* "Science and the Unseen World": p. 36.

munication with those who have passed out of
 the physical body, have been offered to mankind.

The word "telepathy" has passed into common
 speech: its real significance is perhaps grasped
 only by a minority of those who use it glibly.
 The word implies nothing more than the fact
 established by observation and experiment that
 thoughts can be transferred from one mind to
 another without using any of the ordinary channels
 of sense: the word affords no explanation as to
 how this is effected. If the fact is accepted, and if
 survival of personality is also accepted, it should
 not be difficult to believe that a spirit who has
 not a physical body can transmit thoughts to
 other spirits, both in the body and out of it.
 Whether this actually occurs must, of course, be
 proved by observation. We note that some
 persons' minds are more sensitive than others;
 with some telepathic impacts are frequent, by
 others they are rarely, or never experienced.

Mediums are sensitives naturally receptive; this
 receptivity can be cultivated: when it is only slight
 and spasmodic it is of little value; capable and
 powerful Mediums are not common; they should
 be protected and encouraged, for, as Dr. Maxwell
 has said, they are the *avant-coureurs* of the race,
 pioneers who may lead mankind into discoveries
 and developments of unknown extent and value.

The faculty, like all human faculties, is liable
 to be misused and exploited for unworthy ends.
 Sometimes it is fraudulently simulated for private
 gain; but there are less obvious ways in which
 mediumistic faculties may be degraded. Those
 who have recourse to Mediums for advice on

mundane affairs not only incur great risks, but they bring into disrepute the faculties which should be used for higher purposes. The risks are great because the faculties of mediumship cannot be relied upon for legal advice, they ought not to be treated as an asset in financial or domestic affairs. Such a travesty and misuse of mediumship has often ended badly—even disastrously. Unfortunately those who most need this warning are just the persons who are unlikely to heed it. Those who treat the Spirit world as if it were a financial Registry, or merely to satisfy an unhealthy desire to know the future, deserve what they will get, and the Mediums who pander to such unworthy aims should be avoided by all serious students. The most reliable Mediums are those who set high ideals before them and who refuse to minister to such unhealthy desires. In the course of a really notable communication advice of a sensible kind may be given; but if so it should always be carefully weighed, as it ought to be if given by a friend on earth, and acted upon, not blindly, but only if reason affirms it to be good. Occasionally the Medium may transmit some detail of a prophetic nature; this also should be similarly treated. Such prophecies have value of an evidential kind and are not to be regarded as in the same category with the futile attempts of a personal and often entirely egotistic character to pry into the future.

The law of the land, quite rightly seeks to check such undesirable abuses of mediumship, but unfortunately as it stands, it implicates gifted and honourable Mediums whose services the Law officers themselves occasionally have in requisition.

This should be amended. Both justice and research demand this.

Even when the object in view is legitimate consolation the opportunities afforded by mediumship should be used with moderation; they are means towards an end, not an end in themselves; they should produce a condition of mind which will enable a person at length to dispense with them. When death is recent this mode of intercourse is often desired on both sides. The one who has passed on is as eager to give, as the friend on earth is to receive, evidence of survival and continued memory; but when the assurance has been given and established by several experiences, the friend on the other side seems satisfied, knowing that a more intimate communion is available by direct telepathy, and that the friend on earth can realize this and will be receptive of direct impressions.

In this pamphlet we are considering only the elements in Spiritualism and the inferences therefrom which are generally accepted by spiritualists. There are, of course, differences of opinion and interpretation on other points. For instance, the detailed descriptions of the environment in the after-death state which are given by Mediums are regarded by some as literally true; others consider that they are symbolic, that no exact statement can be conveyed and that the language used is like a translation in which terms have to be selected, in order to give approximately some notion of the objective environment. Others hold that it is probable that these, sometimes elaborated descriptions originate largely if not wholly in the subliminal mentality of the Medium. They are

often elicited by *questions* on this side, and it is an observed fact that such questions are liable to disturb the passivity and receptivity of a Medium and to stimulate the subliminal activity of the mind.* Professor Hyslop has pointed out that "every word from another sets a train of thought in motion." "Every question may more or less disturb the equilibrium established by the communicator." Whichever view be adopted, all will agree that these descriptions are *not evidential*, that is to say they cannot be verified; and they should not be placed in the same category as the more spontaneous communications, often containing strong tests of identity and facts which can be verified. They often contain self-contradictory matter which indicates that the stream of thought from the unseen agent to the mediumistic instrument has become blurred and confused.

It is not unlikely that these three views are all *partly* correct. On one point all communicators agree. The environment is *as real* to those on the other side as ours is to us; and there are many different "spheres" or conditions over There, as also there are here. We need not conclude that the interference due to the Medium's imagination precludes our being able to form *any* reasonable notion as to the condition in which a spirit may find itself after death.

THE FUTURE ENVIRONMENT.

Let us consider what we know about our present environment. Science teaches us that we live

* It is sometimes worth while to run the risk of this disturbance, and when communication is established the results may be valuable.

among objects which act upon us in various ways; that the effect they produce on us is not solely the result of what they are, but also is determined by our physical organs and even more by our mental faculties. These objects which we regard as our environment are constantly related to us by the vibrations in the ether and in the air which they emit and we receive. For an infinitesimal moment the object may be said to reside in these vibrations. For instance: a Beethoven symphony is being performed by Sir Henry Wood's orchestra, but it is no part of *our* environment until it is conveyed to our ears and interpreted by our minds: it is conveyed by the atmosphere and sound takes a measurable time to travel, hence the music becomes for a moment a series of vibrations in the air. When it reaches the ears of an audience the effect varies according to the mental capacity of each individual. Although they may produce approximately similar effects, they are by no means quite similar. A man with developed musical faculties will hear much more, and will interpret more truly the vibrations which reach his ears than one whose faculties are not equally developed. The same applies to all our other senses.

When we consider the other living creatures who exist on the same planet with us, we realize to how great an extent our "world" is determined by the faculties of those who inhabit it. What sort of world or environment have the insects, or even the vertebrate creatures who most resemble us physically? We cannot tell: it must be very different from ours. Even those creatures whose eyes and ears are constituted on the same plan

cannot interpret just as we do. To use the simile we have just employed, a Beethoven symphony to a dog is just noise, and in the presence of Raphael's great picture "The Dresden Madonna" even the cleverest dog can only see a meaningless mixture of colour.

The inference we draw from this is that if, as we have reason to feel assured, the spirit carries into the next life the faculties it has developed in this, the conditions which will constitute its "world" will, to a great extent, depend on its interpretation of the impressions received from the environment in which it will find itself.

Sir Oliver Lodge has suggested that at first the habitual interpretation may persist and that this may account for the fact that many communicators tell us that their environment seems very much like that with which they were familiar, and that some do not even seem to be aware that they have passed through death and are not still living in a material world. But as mental faculties become enhanced and new faculties developed, perception will change; and it will become difficult and even impossible to convey to those who do not possess these faculties the impressions which the new interpretation which their environment may make on progressing spirits.

These reflections are of the nature of philosophic inferences, but they are inferences justified by facts of experience, and also by communications which have been received from the Other life.

One such communication may here be cited because the conditions under which it came are very remarkable; they seem to preclude the

interference of the mind of the instrument through whom they came, or at least to reduce this possibility to a minimum.

The instance will be found in Sir William Barrett's book: *On the Threshold of the Unseen*: P. 194.

The Medium, Mrs. E., was a lady in whose house Sir William was a guest; he describes her as a sensible, practical lady. Occasionally when she was occupied with household accounts or similar matters, she would pass into a dreamy state in which she was aware of a hand laid upon hers, and she would begin to write—not in the normal manner—but from right to left and upside down so that what she wrote could only be read by turning the page upside down.* The effect was as if the writing were produced by someone who sat opposite to her. She assured him that neither the matter nor the method could normally have been produced by her.

A brother of hers had died and on one occasion the following was written:—†

"I want you to believe your friends live still
"and can think of you . . . On opening the
"eyes of my spiritual body I found myself un-
"altered, no terror, only a strange feeling at
"first, then peace, a comforted heart, love, com-
"panionship, teaching. I am —— (giving
"here his full name), and have written this, but
"your brother —— (giving the name) is here
"and wants to speak to you."

* Not by holding it before a mirror.

† A friend of Mrs. E.'s brother had pre-deceased him. No thought of this friend was in her mind on the evening her hand wrote the above.

After an interval Mrs. E. felt her hand again impelled to write, and the following message came :—

“I am here (giving her brother’s name) and want to tell you about my awakening into spirit life. I was at first dimly conscious of figures moving in the room and round the bed. Then the door was closed and all was still. I then first perceived that I was not lying on the bed, but seemed to be floating in the air a little above it. I saw in the dim light the body stretched out straight and with the face covered. My first idea was that I might re-enter it, but all desire to do this soon left me—the ties were broken. I stood upon the floor, and looked round the room where I had been so ill and been so helpless, and where I could now once more move without restraint. The room was not empty. Close to me was my father’s father (giving the name correctly). He had been with me all through. There were others whom I love now, even if I did not know much of them then. I passed out of the room, through the next, where my mother and —— were (relatives still in this life). I tried to speak to them. My voice was plain to myself, and even loud, yet they took no notice of all I could say. I walked through the college rooms; much blackness but some light. Then I went out under the free heavens. I will write more another sitting —power too weak now. Good-night.” (His signature follows).

At another sitting, a night or two later, the same name was written, and the thread of the

preceding narrative was abruptly taken up without any preface :

“I saw the earth lying dark and cold under the stars in the first beginning of the wintry sunrise. It was the landscape I knew so well, and had looked at so often. Suddenly sight was born to me; my eyes became open. I saw the spiritual world dawn upon the actual, like the blossoming of a flower. For this I have no words. Nothing I could say would make any of you comprehend the wonder of that revelation, but it will be yours in time. I was drawn as if by affinity to the world which is now mine. But I am not fettered there. I am much drawn to earth, but by no unhappy chain. I am drawn to those I love; to the places much endeared.”

Sir William adds : “These messages are deeply interesting: some of them were written in my presence.”

This remarkable experience bears out Sir Oliver’s suggestion that after death, at first at all events, the environment is likely to be interpreted in the familiar way. How long this habit may last will probably vary considerably; but when the faculty of vision becomes extended and undergoes change it will be impossible to convey, except in symbols and by using analogies, the new impressions which will constitute the new world.

THE POTENCY OF THOUGHT.

There is yet another point on which all the communications agree and that is that the potency of Thought is greatly increased in that state. This world may be described as a world of physical

forces: but even here mind is the controlling power; it is mind that constructs and adapts the forces of nature to man's use. In the state which succeeds, this mental power seems to be freer from limitations and to act more directly. We make our own habitations here, we create out of matter works of art which express our thoughts and imaginations; we can even spasmodically convey our thoughts without words to each other. In that state telepathy may be the normal mode of communication. It is this fuller control of mental force which makes mediumship available for those who have left their material bodies. They can use the minds of the still incarnate, not without difficulty, but effectively, as a means of transmitting to us their messages.

The converse is also true, they can be aware of our thoughts, particularly when they are directed *towards* them. There is abundant evidence of this. It is the great principle underlying Prayer.

"Speak to Him, thou, for He hears

And Spirit with Spirit can meet."

Where there is the bond of love and sympathy thought can reach without words; and the force which can reach God in prayer can also reach in loving intercourse those who are eager to help and respond, and who are truly "ministers of His, who do His pleasure" in helpfulness and service to those they love on earth.

THE BEARING OF THE SUBJECT ON RELIGION.

It is, however, important to realize that the verified facts of Spiritualism have a profounder bearing and a wider import than these inferences

concerning conditions of the ego after death. The truths for which it stands are not for the bereaved alone, or for doubters alone; they touch human life and destiny, they have great practical value in the conduct of daily life.

Among the inferences universally accepted is that Spiritualism affords "the preamble for all religions."

It claims as proven certain facts without which no religion can be formulated; on which indeed the Christian Religion is entirely based.

How should we define Religion? What is its lowest common measure?

It denotes belief in a Divine Spirit (or spirits) related in some way to Humanity, and to whom Humanity has obligations, to whom it owes worship. It represents the bond between the soul of man and the Spirit of God.

In the address above referred to Professor Silvanus Thompson defines Religion in much the same terms. He asks: "What then is this common element, this Religion which is at the back of all religions? I take it they all pre-suppose this: In the first place the existence of Higher Powers than man; in the second place, though not quite universally, that there is a life beyond, an immortality of the soul; and thirdly, that there is an obligation of right conduct, of justice, of mercy, of obedience to duty." (And, we must add, an obligation to worship in some way, to render reverence and thanks).

There are some who will deny that the existence of God involves human survival: and we must

admit that it is conceivable that mankind might be the ephemeral product of a Creative Intelligence, but such an intelligence would not be worshipped by developed humanity. It might be feared, and offered sacrifices, as do the primitive races in Africa and elsewhere, but the worship of honour, admiration and love can only be rendered to a Being whose Character inspires these emotions.

It cannot be logically possible to worship an Intelligence who is not Good. A Being who could bring into existence countless human spirits and then annihilate them in a few years is not an Object capable of inspiring worship, admiration or love. F. W. H. Myers has said: "My sense of justice and mercy will not permit me to reverence a Being, or to admire a system of forces which brought into existence a world in which so many pure and sensitive creatures receive nothing but unmerited torture . . . All is plain if you once allow to love and virtue their continuance . . . only the glory of going on and still to be. I have come on many grounds to believe that this will be."

It is true that some have claimed that they can believe in God, and even trust Him, without having any assurance of survival; but that is due to the fact that many minds are not logical: the instinct of faith is stronger in them than the logical faculty. We may be thankful that when the latter is weak the former can be strong and can prevail, but such a faith is not reasonable, or securely based.

The existence of a mixed multitude in the unseen world is a bewildering fact. Men ask:

"How is it possible to conceive that *all those who have attained personality* still exist when they have left this material world?"

We are becoming accustomed to the idea proclaimed by science that millions of stars and star-clusters extend around our little globe and that in all directions the universe is of an immensity unrealizable. For the most part we do not attempt to *realize*, but we accept this discovery of science without question. We are not accustomed, however, to the conception of an equally vast spirit universe and we are disposed to question the possibility of the persistence of so great a multitude of spirits. Professor William James has reminded us that this inability to realize a spiritual universe is merely due to our own limitations:—

"Relative to the incredible, intolerable number of beings which, with our modern imagination, we must believe to be immortal, if immortality be true," he says, "I cannot but suspect that this is a stumbling block. . . . So, engulfing the whole subject in a sort of mental giddiness and nausea you drift along, first doubting that the mass can be immortal, then losing all assurance in the immortality of your own particular person, precious as you all the while feel and realize the latter to be."

"It is absurd to suppose, simply because our private power of sympathetic vibration with other lives gives out so soon, that in the heart of infinite being itself there can be such a thing as plethora, or glut, or supersaturation. It is not as if it were a bounded room where the minds in possession had to move up or make

"place and crowd together to accommodate new occupants. Each new mind brings its own edition of the universe of space along with it, its own room to inhabit; and these spaces never crowd each other—the space of my imagination, for example, in no way interferes with yours.

"God, we can then say, has so inexhaustible a capacity for love that His call and need is for a literally endless accumulation of created lives. He can never faint or grow weary, as we should, under the increasing supply. His scale is infinite in all things. His sympathy can never know satiety or glut . . . the tiresomeness of an over-peopled heaven is a purely subjective and illusory notion, a sign of human incapacity. . . .

"The heart of being can have no exclusions akin to those which our poor little hearts set up. The inner significance of other lives exceeds all our powers of sympathy and insight. If we feel a significance in our own life which would lead us spontaneously to claim its perpetuity, let us be at least tolerant of like claims made by other lives, however numerous, however unideal they may seem to us to be."*

Our inability to realize has to be accepted along with the fact which we fail to comprehend: both are true: the fact and our incapacity. The latter is certainly not a valid reason for rejecting the former.

If all exist who have reached personality, saints and heroes and sinners also, we have to reckon with this fact and with the influences which these living beings may have upon our present existence. It is doubtless a great power for good, but it may

* *Human Immortality*: pp. 61, 75, 78, 79, 82, 83, 86.

also be the reverse, according to the conditions and receptivity of those in this state.

Spiritualism bears directly on Religion; it also bears on science, but the religious aspect is the more fundamentally important. The intimate connection between the two is attested by the fact that all religions claim the reality of the phenomena which accompanies mediumship. In so far as these phenomena are genuinely super-normal they witness to the activity of spirits either incarnate or discarnate, and thus undermine the argument in favour of materialism. This aspect of the subject will be dealt with in another pamphlet and need not be enlarged on here. The ethical and religious inferences from Spiritualism are so essentially involved in the subject, however, that no answer to the question: *What is Spiritualism?* can be complete which does not include consideration of this aspect of the subject.

The last clause in Professor Silvanus Thompson's definition of Religion states that it involves "an obligation of right conduct" . . . "of obedience to duty." Every religion, even the less evolved, propose some standard of conduct, in the more highly-developed the ethical standard is proportionately raised. In the Christian Religion the standard is the highest conceivable: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father is perfect." "God is love." "This is my commandment that ye love one another."

Also every religion teaches that a man's future destiny will be affected by his conduct in this life. His future state will be one of retribution or of bliss, consequent upon his fulfilment, or non-

fulfilment, of his obligations and duties in this life.

THE PRACTICAL EFFECT.

What bearing has Spiritualism on this practical aspect of Religion? We saw that the essence of Spiritualism—the affirmation of the reality of a spiritual world and survival of human personality—strongly supports one essential aspect in all Religions, that is to say, belief in the trustworthiness of God, in His righteousness and love: does it also support this practical aspect? And how does it do so?

All students of Spiritualism, and all who have had any practical experience of communications through mediumship, will agree that these communications prove that every spirit carries through death its own personality, that is to say, the character it has made in this life. Death effects no miraculous change. The man is the same man when he has left his material body as he was before; his aims, his desires, his habits, his whole personality, in short, belong to him in that state, and this determines his condition and his associates. He goes "to his own place." There is nothing arbitrary in this, nothing merely imposed on him from without. He finds himself in the state for which he is fitted. He reaps what he has sown. He who has sown to the flesh reaps corruption. He who has sown to the spirit reaps life eternal. What does this mean? What is implied in sowing to the flesh and to the Spirit? A man who has lived a moral and respectable life may nevertheless have sown to the flesh. Anyone whose chief concern is with

material things and who has lived for his lower self has sown to the flesh. The men and women whose chief interests in life are money-making, or sport, or amusement, or the ambition to become social magnates, who think of their own pleasure rather than of service to others, are sowing to the flesh, as surely as those who indulge in grosser fleshly lusts. They are living for material things and when these are no longer within reach they reap the result of their sowing in spiritual poverty and isolation. The term "summerland" as applied to the after death life is apt to be misleading. If it is intended to suggest that in that state life-experiences are harvested and reaped this is true, but the harvest may be of tares as well as wheat; the term is too suggestive of holidays and leisure to be applicable to the next life. Even for those who have sown to the spirit there will be, after needed rest, much active work to be done.

What is meant by reaping corruption? What is corrupted? Not the mere material body which in every case returns to the dust. It is the personality which, as we have seen, is formed in this life, which goes with the spirit into the next life—it is this which either reaps life, full, abundant, progressive, or which is discovered to be corrupted. This is what the revelations from the other side disclose; but they also show that even for those with corrupted personalities there is hope. No one seems to be wholly bad. Even the selfish, earthly-minded and depraved exhibit in this life better qualities, and no germ of good is destructible. We may hope that there is always some wheat among the tares in human personalities.

Nevertheless the fact remains that those who have degraded their personalities in this life will have degraded personalities in the next.

Character is fate ;

"Men's dispositions do their dooms dictate."*

Could there be a more forcible corroboration of the teachings of Religion as to the importance of moral and spiritual life in this world, and its consequences hereafter ?

We must, however, add that the label "spiritualist" is no guarantee of spirituality. A man may call himself a spiritualist and yet be sowing to the flesh. It is fatally possible to materialize psychic faculties, to degrade them and exploit them for material ends. Many years ago an article appeared in a spiritualist journal under the heading "Beware." The writer knew that when a subject becomes popular it is likely to be tarred by the world's selfish brush. All earnest inquirers have discovered that contact with Spiritualism is a severe test ; if the aim is pure and selfless these experiences enrich the life, and strengthen the best in character. If the aim is low and the motive self-advantage, intercourse with the Unseen instead of elevating may degrade the soul, pandering to vanity and weakening the Will. The same applies to Religion itself. The canker of self may rob a "religious" man of spiritual insight, and he may find himself hemmed in by his own prejudices and narrow aims when the event of death removes the illusions which hindered his self-knowledge on earth. The conditions in which he will find himself and his associates in those conditions will

* Lord Lytton.

be those for which he has fitted himself. They may still appear to him to be "religious," but egotism is not the less to be deprecated when it is tintured with a religious flavour than without it.

The inferences bear practically on life here. The same spiritual laws prevail in that state as in this. Here it is by Will, and by effort that progress is made : the same is true there. Here it is by discovery of the consequences of certain lines of conduct that a man learns the lessons of experience, so it is also there. But there is this difference. In that state it is more obvious that **THOUGHT** is the greatest force ; it is more intensely a thought world than this world is. External conditions here are largely the result of actions ; in the next state they are determined by the trend of a man's thoughts, and any change in his condition must be the product of a change in the character of a man's thoughts and aims. This is, of course, true in many instances in this life ; it is more universally true in that life ; where the thought-force is liberated and more potent, and reveals the man to himself and his associates.

"We are ourselves

Our Heaven and Hell—the joy—the penalty
The yearning—the fruition ! Earth is hell
Or heaven, and yet not only earth ; but still
After the swift soul leaves the gates of death.
The pain grows deeper and less mixed—the joy
Purer and less alloyed, and we are damned.
Or blest,—as we have lived."*

This would be a depressing conclusion were it not true that Guidance and Help are ever ready to

* Lewis Morris.

encourage aspiration towards the Good, the True and the Beautiful, and that when egotistic clamour yields to the desire for Service, light shines into darkness and the heavy burden of self is lifted from a repentant spirit.*

BEARING ON THE SOCIAL ORDER.

This is a democratic age: democracy should be in the line of progress. Will it prove to be so? There are ominous signs that it may resolve itself into class-warfare and foster the spirit of grab. If it does so it is doomed; the degradation of democracy would involve the degradation of the social order.

A great pioneer in the principles of democracy, Joseph Mazzini, saw clearly the danger that attends the evolution of democracy and he warned society in trenchant terms. He wrote:—

“The theory of Rights may suffice to arouse men to overthrow the obstacles placed in their path . . . but it is impotent where the object in view is to create a noble and powerful har-

* The following extract from a book, *The Soul of Jack London*, by Ed. Byron Payne, aptly illustrates the above statements:—

“I am beginning all over again—starting at the lowest round and painfully dragging myself up from where I was.” Asked if he did not find help, the reply came: “Hands to guide but I had it myself to do. The way of the transgressor is hard. That was of no meaning to me when I was with you. My way was soft, soft in comparison; it sapped my soul. I was a roistering egotist outside and ever atheist within. The ‘me of me’ has been scourged, chastened and beaten into shape. I am in what is called a ‘palace of recovery’, where I view all existence at a truer angle. What successions of life, life sloughing death! What an experience! to rid oneself of finalities! I am not to be cut off as an amorphous lump of muddled brain and weakened body. No Death—no End! I am looking ahead—not back to Earth. My interests are ahead. All petty earthly ambitions are fading. All is well—my mind is labouring with the idea that there are no finalities. Whether I wish it or not, I am to be Jack London through all the infinitudes.” (pp. 124-126.)

“mony . . . With the theory of happiness as the primary aim of existence we shall only produce egotists . . . We must convince men that they are all the sons of one sole God and bound to fulfil and execute one sole law here on earth—that each of them is bound to live, not for himself, but for others; that the aim of existence is not to be more or less happy, but to make themselves and others more virtuous . . . Working men, brothers, understand me well, when I say that the consciousness of your rights will never suffice to produce an important and durable progress. I do not ask you to renounce those rights. I merely say that such rights can only exist as a consequence of duties fulfilled, and we must begin with fulfilling the last in order to achieve the first . . . A change of social organization is of little value while you yourselves remain with your present passions and egotisms . . . The source of your duties is in God . . . the earth is of God. God created it to be the medium through which we may ascend to Him . . . the life of a soul is sacred in every stage of its existence; as sacred in the earthly stage as in those that are to follow. Each stage must be made a preparation for the next, every temporary advance must aid the gradual ascending progress of that immortal life breathed into us all by God Himself . . . prove [to mankind] that the earthly duties to be fulfilled here below are an essential portion of their immortal life and all the calculations of the present will vanish before the grandeur of the future.”*

* *Life and Writings of Joseph Mazzini*: Vol. iv.; pp. 223-245.

The relation between essential Spiritualism and democracy could not be better indicated than in these words.

Social class distinctions disappear when we are in contact with the inhabitants of the Other life ; but profounder distinctions force themselves upon our attention. These are the result of what every man and woman has become, and they are vastly more important and trenchant than social distinctions on earth.

* * *

In this pamphlet we have avoided side-issues.

In all branches of study, except mathematics, there arise differences of opinion and interpretation. These different views are of unequal value ; some are of great importance ; some are almost inevitable conclusions ; others are highly speculative and others again are entirely fanciful. These side-issues are often confounded with the essential principles which the term "Spiritualism" has been adopted to express, with the result that the popular mind is confused and is apt either to accept too much or to reject it entirely.

Those who are keenly alive to the value of the truth for which the term stands, and of the hindrance this confusion causes to the spread of truth, would gladly drop the term if they could find another which would be more acceptable and which would better convey the essential fact for which so many brave pioneers have contended in the past : but it is difficult to do so without suggesting a breach with those who, through much difficulty and enduring much obloquy, have so gallantly

witnessed to the facts of survival and communication through mediumship.

The physical phenomena of Spiritualism seem to some inquirers to be one of the side-issues which has obscured the main question. This will be dealt with in another pamphlet. In so far as these well-authenticated facts support the assurance of the activity of a world of spirits and of the reality of the super-physical faculties of mankind, they constitute an important part of the subject : and this branch of study is of very great value in the present age, because physical phenomena appeal to scientific men who are mainly occupied with such phenomena in their ordinary work. Communication with a world of spirits may be provable apart from the phenomena in question, but undoubtedly mental phenomena are less capable of being tested by scientific methods ; hence physical Mediums in whose presence occur levitation, movements of objects without contact, and materialization, etc., are valuable instruments.

It should, however, be borne in mind that these phenomena are means to an end, their purpose is not to satisfy human curiosity and to entertain those who, like the Athenians of old, are intent to hear and see some new thing. They are of use only in so far as they enable mankind to gain a fuller knowledge of God's universe and the laws which prevail in it, and when they arrest the attention of those who would otherwise ignore the unseen, but ever present, activity of a world of spirits.

It should also be borne in mind that, as in this world there are both good and bad, both wise

and foolish, so in that unseen realm there are spirits of very various qualities, some are very undeveloped and ignorant, some are foolish, some are still self-centred and can only be described as bad, for they care only for themselves and are eager to get closer contact with that which gave them pleasure whilst they were incarnate. It is specially important to realize this in connection with physical phenomena.

It would be much better if seances for the study of physical phenomena were more restricted than they are. Everyone is not competent to deal wisely with these experiences. If they were always controlled by men and women with some scientific knowledge and the mere wonder-seeker was excluded, they would prove of far greater value than they are at present. The novice who discovers that such strange things happen plunges into experiments with a temerity which would be regarded as foolhardy in any chemical laboratory. The danger signal should be recognized and heeded. The motives may be innocent but the results may none the less be harmful. Ignorance leads to mishaps none the less because it is innocent ignorance.

In conclusion, there is a widespread complaint that the Churches of Christendom are losing their hold on the masses. This is often attributed to the rush of life—the rush for money and the rush for pleasure; no doubt this is one cause of the emptying of the places of worship; but may there not be another? May it not be due to the fact that belief in human survival, and hence in the reality of the present life and influence of the

Church's Founder is weakening? The first Christians went everywhere proclaiming "Jesus and the Resurrection": in other words, they gave assurance that He lives and has "brought life and immortality to light" for mankind. Their word was with power, for they could say "we speak that we do know": they were absolutely sure that He had proved this.

If the masses are not convinced, are the Church's teachers absolutely convinced? Do their congregations feel that they are quite sure, not only of survival in general, but that their Master is a living personal influence in the world, ever active? If not, may this not account for the loss of spiritual power?

There are many whose faith is assured and whose power is in proportion to their faith; but there are some who are unable to accept the narratives in the New Testament at their face value: who hesitate to assert as facts those manifestations which the evangelists record as *proofs* of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and their message is enfeebled by their doubts. The present generation is often condemned as shallow, not without reason; but it is neither as bad as pessimists would have us think, nor as good as optimists may assert; it has the defects of its qualities, it is hasty and impatient in its judgments; but it has this good characteristic, it demands Reality and is intolerant of shams. Its condemnations are too sweeping, but they are sometimes due to the fact that it thinks it detects unreality in its religious teachers: it thinks that they suppress and deny what they have not fully examined, that they

evade doubts instead of sifting them candidly. If the Church's teachers are to regain and maintain their influence with the rising generation they must evade no questions which are stirring in the minds of youth, and they must study the message they proclaim alongside of facts of present occurrence, and reject no light that modern research may throw upon their sacred records. Do the Church's teachers impartially examine modern Spiritualism?

The statement has been made that neither philosophy nor Religion alone suffice to meet the doubts of men and women in the present age. Does Spiritualism suffice?

Of course there are many who can accept with faith and apply to the conduct of their daily lives the truths they have learned from philosophy and Religion. But it is obvious that a large number of persons, who formerly would have accepted these teachings without question are now drifting into agnosticism, and although they may be too wise to deny, are quite unable honestly to affirm belief in the reality of a spiritual world and survival of human personality.

The serious and often painful doubts which were expressed with reticence and profound regret by students during last century, have now passed into the mental atmosphere of the world, and are widely accepted by the ignorant and by those who are either too busy or too thoughtless to sift the reasons for these doubts.*

* The following conversation illustrates the above. It is typical of the mental attitude of many.

Over twenty years ago I was seated near the driver of a horse-bus in London. We got into conversation on the subject of foreign travel and he remarked: "I should like to see those places but I never shall."

The appeal of those who accept Spiritualism as above defined, is to facts. Do facts show that this experimental method of "proving" "the preamble of all religions" and the deductions of philosophy justifies itself? What is its actual result upon the minds and lives of those who use it?

In attempting to answer this question, briefly, I must quote the testimony which has come under my personal observation. It has been my privilege during the last half of my life to get into touch with many doubters and inquirers, and thus to obtain an insight into their minds which would not have been vouchsafed to me if I had not been a close student of Spiritualism for many years.

These inquirers have told me frankly the effect which their knowledge of Spiritualism has had upon them and I here append a small selection of these testimonies.*

Many years ago Mr. Arthur Hill introduced to me a popular novelist† who, after twenty-five years of agnosticism had recently taken up the study of Psychical Research. I was able to assist

I replied "Perhaps you will after you have died." *Bus-driver*: "Oh, no one believes in that now!" *Myself*: "Yes, they do: you are driving buses all day and you do not know what is being discovered." *Bus-driver*: "No one has ever returned to tell us." *Myself*: "Yes: they have."

The man turned round and looked at me; I suppose he wanted to see whether I looked sane or not. At this point we reached the terminus. I was glad we did so, for I should have found it difficult to give details as to my psychic experiences under the circumstances and his next question would have involved a detailed reply—"You never saw any one who has died?" I murmured my reply, and got down from the bus.

* For further testimonies see Appendix.

† Mr. H. B. Marriott Watson.

his further studies and to obtain for him what proved to be convincing evidence. He wrote: "You know that I have been agnostic for a quarter of a century in regard to all matters connected with survival, and you know also how jealously I guard my convictions. Temperamentally, I am hard to convince. I have been led to accept the proofs of survival because their weight overbore my previous intellectual attitude." He added that he believed that only those who did not give sufficient consideration to the evidence would fail to be similarly convinced by it.

In reply to my inquiry as to the effect this conviction had upon his religious belief, he replied, "Now I can believe that love is at the root of the Universe."

A teacher in a Girls' College told me that she had completely ceased to believe in the miracles recorded in the Bible and had relegated the New Testament to the category of books of legend and fairy tale; she added "Psychical Research has given me back my New Testament."

Another man said to me that Spiritualism has "shown me that God is my Father." To the man who has no belief in survival the Fatherhood of God can have no meaning.

Sir Oliver Lodge's secretary put me into correspondence with a man who had suffered a severe bereavement. He is an artisan working, as he told me, among many who seemed to be thoroughgoing materialists. The knowledge which I was able to put within his reach completely changed his outlook. He wrote to me that it had opened "a new world" to him and his wife and had "led

them to God." He wrote: "I never imagined that such things happened in our material world."

Another correspondent wrote: that had he known these facts sooner his ideals in life would have been different much earlier. This was very significant to me for I knew that his moral standard had fallen with his faith in the reality of the Spiritual world.

A lay reader who, with his wife, took up this study and gained much practical experience of communication, wrote: [we wish] "to assure you that our Christian faith reinforced by our psychic experiences is of the greatest comfort and inspiration to us, as now we know what previously was believed only. Indeed I tell my friends that I am living in John Bunyan's 'Beulah Land' where, as he says, the sun is always shining, the birds always singing, the flowers always blooming, and *where the shining ones come from over the river to walk and talk with Christian*. So it is, and daily I thank my God that I am permitted such an experience of faith hope and love, though the last is the greatest of all.

R. BRERETON."

The following testimony is from a correspondent who has been studying carefully for two years and who wrote to me that the study had "helped him beyond the power of words to express."

"After a study of Spiritualism, extending over two years—in which time I have had a few experiences of my own—I am quite satisfied as

"to the reality of psychic phenomena under proper test conditions. As a result of my study I find my faith greatly strengthened. The phenomena in the sacred Scriptures which I used to find so perplexing, I have found to occur at seances to-day; and for some time past I have found it possible to be able to preach on the Gospel miracles. The materialistic details in the narrative of the Resurrection shook my faith in the central Fact of Christianity, till I saw that spirits to-day manifest themselves just as our Blessed Lord did after His Resurrection; and so for the first time, after consulting other books in vain, the reading of books by Sir O. Lodge and others has made the resurrection narrative intelligible to me. I find in consequence a new power in my teaching and preaching, and conviction, so lacking before, is now a very marked feature of my utterances.

"I read about half a dozen ecclesiastical papers every week, but I find no paper so helpful or so inspiring as *Light*. My debt to that little paper is incalculable.

GEORGE CATHCART PHAIR, M.A., B.D.,
Rector of Rathkeale and Rural Dean of
Newcastle West Diocese of Limerick."

It is true, of course, that the effect of new knowledge will not *necessarily* be good. As already emphatically stated, the motive of the inquirer and the attitude of mind in which the subject is approached is a factor of great importance in determining the result. The danger flag should be shown to the careless and specially to the self-

seeker; but the truth-lover, the man intent on discovering Reality, the man who believes in God and in the value of every fact in God's Universe, will not be deterred by the cry of danger from the pursuit of knowledge; neither should he be, for protection and guidance are granted to the single-hearted. The meaning of truth will not reveal itself to the man who does not care to reflect upon it: he may be the reader of many books and may store them in his memory, and yet remain to the end of his life incapable of drawing conclusions and arriving at convictions. Mr. Stanley Baldwin has said truly: "Ability to read is not synonymous with the ability to reflect on what is read. Better to doubt methodically than to think capriciously." The warning given by the greatest Teacher is not unnecessary for the student of this subject:

"Take heed how ye hear."

APPENDIX I.

In the definition of Spiritualism in the text reference is made to an extensive system of mediumship. This will be fully explained in other pamphlets in this series, but it may be useful to make a few comments here.

Mediumship is extensive inasmuch as it is found in all races, in all classes of society, and among persons of various grades of education.

Highly educated persons are sometimes endowed with this faculty. One of the most remarkable Mediums of last century, The Rev. Stainton Moses, was a lecturer at University College and was only able to find time for the development of his gift by rising at an early hour in the morning.

Those who are thus gifted are often too much occupied with intellectual studies to be able to devote much time to the exercise of this gift; but this is not always the case.

There are certain advantages in the exercise of mediumship by men and women who are highly educated, as it enables unseen intelligences to convey ideas for which less educated instruments would find no suitable language.

On the other hand, there are some advantages in the mediumship of persons whose minds are not stored with book-learning. They are often the more capable of receiving impressions for that very reason; there is liable to be less interference from the normal consciousness; moreover they are more likely to be able to give full time for development, they are less likely to suffer from brain fag, which is a condition very injurious to healthy mediumship.

Let it be definitely understood that it is quite erroneous to suppose, as some do, that Mediums are always uneducated or little educated; this is not true, as anyone well acquainted with the subject can testify.

Mediumship is also extensive in another way. It manifests in many different ways. Physical phenomena are perhaps its lowest manifestation, but such manifestations have great value for the present age. They afford the experiences which scientific men can study and which should claim their most careful attention, just because being "physical" they can be tested by physical methods and scientific apparatus.*

* As Sir William Crookes tested physical phenomena.

Mental phenomena range from simple messages containing evidence of the identity of the communicator, to utterances of lofty quality, containing instruction and guiding the minds of the receivers into new aspects of truth.

Sometimes this inspirational mediumship is received in trance and expressed automatically, more often it is received and expressed with full consciousness, being blended with the activity of the receiver's mind and engaging his normal powers, which are influenced and heightened beyond their ordinary capacity.

This inspirational influence is not always recognized, but it is in reality as truly mediumistic as any of the other manifestations. We say that a genius is inspired; if we mean what we say, we thereby recognize that the human mind has become a channel for the influx of some spiritual power—has, in fact, become a Medium.

APPENDIX II.

TRENCHANT TESTIMONIES

"It is a common, but I believe a mistaken, notion, that the conclusions of science are antagonistic to the alleged phenomena of Modern Spiritualism."

DR. ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, O.M.

"It seems to me now that the evidence for communication with the spirits of identified deceased persons through the trance utterances and writings of sensitives, apparently controlled by those spirits, is established beyond serious attack."

F. W. H. MYERS,
(in *Human Personality*)

"Spiritualism . . . can no longer be passed over with derision and almost indifference, because it is an hypothesis which commands the assent of intellects of the highest order."

PROFESSOR ENRICO MORSELLI.

"What we have to announce is the reception, by old but developing methods, of carefully constructed evidence of identity more exact and more nearly complete than perhaps ever before."

SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S.

"The persons who are really foolish and incredulously credulous are those who fail to perceive the enormous importance of the investigation to which Sir Oliver Lodge has applied his powerful mind."

"LIVERPOOL MERCURY."

"I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent."

I. H. FICHTE.

"We have acquired proof of the existence of an invisible world which can enter into relations with humanity."

J. C. F. ZOLLNER
(Professor Physical Astronomy, University of Leipsic).

"I know and rejoice in the blessing Spiritualism has been to my own faith and to that of several dear friends of mine."

SIR WILLIAM BARRETT, F.R.S.

"I am ashamed and grieved at having opposed with so much tenacity the possibility of the so-called spiritualistic facts—the facts exist and I boast of being a slave to facts. There can be no doubt that genuine spiritualistic phenomena are produced by intelligences totally independent of the Medium and the parties present at the seances."

PROFESSOR LOMBROSO.

"Having tried the hypothesis of telepathy from the living for several years, I have no hesitation in affirming, with the most absolute assurance, that the 'spirit' hypothesis is justified by its fruits, and the other hypothesis is not . . ."

DR. RICHARD HODGSON, LL.D.

"Thirty years have passed since I published an account of experiments tending to show that outside our scientific knowledge there exists a force exercised by intelligence differing from the

ordinary intelligence common to mortals . . . I have nothing to retract. I adhere to my already published statements. Indeed, I might add much thereto."

SIR WILLIAM CROOKES, F.R.S.,
(At the British Association
of Science at Bristol, 1898).

"I have the best evidence of my senses to know that spirits do exist and that they communicate in the best manner that their new state will admit with the friends they have left on earth."

ROBERT OWEN.

"The time will come when it will be proved that the human soul is already during its life on earth, in a close and indissoluble connexion with the world of spirits, that their world influences ours and impresses it profoundly."

EMMANUEL KANT.

"I began as a young man to interest myself in the manifestation of psychic forces in matter. I began as a sceptic, as most people do. Soon I discovered that by holding a pen my hand would write without any effort on my part, and I began to make sketches, of which I was incapable by myself. I have seen and touched materialized bodies, hands and hair and on one occasion, when I was sitting before my table, a bunch of white roses, fresh and fragrant as if just culled, fell from above down on the table before me."

VICTORIEN SARDOU.

"Spiritualism demonstrates by direct evidence, as conclusive as the nature of the case admits, that the so-called dead are still alive; that our friends are often with us, though unseen, and give direct proof of a future life—proof which so many crave, but for want of which so many live and die in anxious doubt."

DR. ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, O.M.

"I was a confirmed philosophical sceptic. I was so thorough and confirmed a materialist, that I could not find a place in my mind for the conception of spiritual existence, or for any other agencies in the universe than matter and force. But the *facts beat me*. They compelled me to accept them *as facts* long before I could accept the spiritual explanation of them; there was at that time no place in my fabric of thought into which it could be fitted. By slow degrees a place was made, but it was made not by any preconceived or theoretical opinions, but by the continuous action of fact after fact, which could not be got rid of in any other way."

DR. ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, O.M.

"I have assisted at a hundred experiments and have observed and reflected for nearly thirty years, and can only say that I believe there is no escape from the tremendous conclusion that just beyond the thin hiding veil of what we call 'the senses' there is a new or undiscovered world, where all the subtle forces are, and where the myriads upon myriads of God's children who have vanished—live and love, and think and work."

REV. J. PAGE HOPPS.

"Use your Bible and your brains when the facts of Spiritualism come before you, for they all fit in, in a very extraordinary manner, with the general mechanism and theory of the Christian religion. With this caution and with a God-fearing spirit of desire to reap that which is good only, they cannot fail to bring you comfort and blessing. All the Bible is full of spiritual manifestations, mighty rushing winds and tongues of fire, trances, automatic writings, visions and appearances of the dead, moments of high inspiration, powers of healing, divine impulses which made people act with a strength and ability beyond their ordinary capacity."

REV. R. H. HAWES.

"For me the problem is solved, the truth is established, and I am glad to have this opportunity of testifying publicly to all the world that, so far as I am concerned, doubt on this subject is henceforth impossible."

W. T. STEAD.

"I have been most careful to believe nothing until unbelief became impossible; I firmly believe from the facts I have alluded to that we are not our bodies, that when we die we exist just as much as before, and that under certain conditions we are able to hold communication with those on earth."

CROMWELL VARLEY, F.R.S.

"Spirit communication is the only explanation which fits all the facts."

DR. JAMES H. HYSLOP.

"I do not believe, I know, that the intellectual principle of man survives the death of the body."

DR. PAUL GIBIER.
Formerly Director of
the Bacterio-logical
Institute, New York.

"I am a spiritualist, an impassioned one, and I am anxious to confound Materialism in the name of science and good sense."

M. THIERS.
Ex-President of France.

"It is all very well for you, who have probably never seen any spiritual manifestations, to talk as you do; but if you had seen what I have witnessed you would hold a different opinion."

W. M. THACKERAY.

"I have long, carefully, and conscientiously, studied spiritual phenomena. Not only am I convinced of their irrefutable reality, but I have also a profound assurance that they are produced by the spirits of those who have left the earth; and further, that they only could produce them."

M. LEON FAURE.
Consul-General of France.

"All I can say is this; that I regard many of the manifestations as genuine and undeniable, and inexplicable by any known law, or collusion, arrangement or deception of the senses; and that

I conceive it to be the duty and interest of men of science and sense to examine and prosecute the inquiry as one that has fairly passed from the regions of ridicule."

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

"I have been driven to the favourable consideration of the spiritualistic hypothesis. When I look over the whole field of the phenomena and consider the suppositions that must be made to escape Spiritualism, which not only one aspect of the case, but every incidental feature of it strengthens, such as the dramatic interplay of different personalities, the personal traits of the communicator, the emotional tone that was natural to the same, the proper appreciation of a situation or a question, and the unity of the consciousness displayed throughout, I see no reason, except the suspicions of my neighbours, for withholding assent."

DR. JAMES H. HYSLOP.

"I do not know of any other one subject on the face of the earth that can for one moment compare with Spiritualism in importance."

REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE.

"I am satisfied, as well satisfied as I am of anything, that death so-called is not the end of human life, but a transition to another stage and condition."

F. B. UNDERWOOD (At one time one of America's foremost and most capable agnostics).

TESTIMONY FROM A MEDICAL MAN.

Dr. Emerson Arnold, a physician and surgeon residing in London, says:—

"As one who has completely overcome his 'scientific' prejudices and become a convinced believer after patient experiment and careful study of the evidence, I have long deplored the ignorance and apathy of my profession in a matter which so vitally concerns them. After thirty-five years' experience in many lands I am deeply impressed in my daily professional work with the importance to both doctor and patient of an appreciation and practical application of psychical and spiritualistic facts, the complete ignorance of which, on the part of the leaders of my profession, is deplorable.

"Is it not, then, a matter of reproach to Medical Science, and especially to physiologists and pathologists that these phenomena are ignored and their investigation left almost entirely in lay hands?

"Certainly, they are elusive, variable and inconstant, and their investigation is beset with subtle difficulties. It is above all essential that it should be entered upon with an open mind free from all prejudices. We must, as the late Professor Huxley enjoined, sit down before these facts with the open mind of a little child and humbly follow wherever Truth may lead; however iconoclastic and disturbing to preconceived theories and cherished beliefs, and, one may add, to reputations and to vested interests, the journey may prove.

"The truth cannot be ignored with impunity, and if scientists and medical men and women obstinately cling to their scepticism, and persist in their refusal to accept and investigate these phenomena, I venture to prophesy that the time is not far distant when they will be proved as foolish as the astronomers and ecclesiastics in the past, who refused to look through the telescope of Galileo."

ROBERT BLATCHFORD'S CHANGE OF VIEW.

Writing in the *Hawick News* recently on the subject of Mr. Robert Blatchford and Psychic Phenomena, the Rev. Dr. Cathels made the following interesting remarks on the famous journalist and leader of thought :—

"For many years Materialism had no more powerful advocate than he. Week by week, in the pages of *The Clarion*, he gave forth his message in eloquent and persuasive words. He was an 'Unbeliever,' and he gloried in the fact. He was an atheist by conviction, and he was not ashamed to be known as such. There was no God. There was no future life. There was no mind apart from a material brain. Man was the outcome of matter and force. Beyond this world there was no other world for him. He was born in time, and in time he died. And death was final. This was the basis of 'Nunquam's' message to his tens of thousands of readers.

"For him Religion in any form had no legitimate place in human life. It had its origin in Super-

stition. Reason discounted it, and Science disproved it. With such a creed it followed that short shrift was given to sin, and all that sin involved. And moral responsibility also vanished. Materialism, when it is as thorough as Robert Blatchford's was, has room for neither. Matter and Force are non-moral. The human machine—man, woman or child—being the creation of Matter and Force, can not 'sin.' And because human freedom was denied as a thing impossible and incredible, therefore human responsibility was a delusion and a snare. This was the creed, hopeless in its outlook, and tragic in its implications, that for years controlled Robert Blatchford's mind.

"No man spoke to a wider audience. (No living man was guide, philosopher and friend to a greater number of his fellow countrymen. No man delivered his message with greater eloquence and earnestness and honesty). And no man took the cause of the poor, and the oppressed—the 'under-dog' in the battle of life—more warmly and more powerfully to heart. But the Robert Blatchford of the past is not the Robert Blatchford of the present. The old honesty, and earnestness, and courage remain. The old keenness and alertness of mind are there. And the old passion for truth and justice is not abated. But the old creed is no longer his. For him Materialism has been found wanting. It cannot meet the facts of life.

"There are things that Matter and Force are powerless to explain. Mind and brain are *not* identical; they are *not* interchangeable terms.

There is a realm of human experience where indisputable spiritual forces are ever active. And there are a multitude of supernormal facts, psychic phenomena, mysterious happenings, to which orthodox science, like orthodox religion, has hitherto been fatuously blind. To all this Robert Blatchford has become keenly alive. And to all this is due the very interesting and significant fact that to-day he can no longer be ranked with his old colleagues of the materialistic faith. With these 'vociferous Sadducees' he has parted company. His face is turned in another direction than theirs. Their faith—if faith it can be called—is no longer his. The last word of their creed is—Death. He is the seeker of a creed, the last word of which shall be—Life."

In a personal letter Mr. Robert Blatchford wrote to me as follows with permission to print his words :—

"Some six or seven years ago I went to a Medium and got results which convinced me of human survival of physical death. Since then I have made no attempts to confirm my conviction. If sometimes the promise seems too good to be true, I still hold fast to my hope and the evidence for survival is unshaken."

* * *

"I have no objection to re-affirm my position on the subject of what are known as psychical phenomena, and to state once more as I stated in my Presidential address to the British Association in 1898, that in regard to the investigations first

entered upon by me more than forty years ago I adhere to my published statements and I have nothing to retract . . . In my opinion they substantiate the claims which have been made for them by several of my colleagues and friends in the Society for Psychical Research, viz., that they point to the existence of another order of human life continuous with this, and demonstrate the possibility in certain circumstances of communication between this world and the next."

Statement made by SIR
WILLIAM CROOKES, F.R.S.,
November 28th, 1916.

As many persons have taken the responsibility of expressing their opinions on psychic phenomena after very slight study, the following extract from an article by Professor Richet should be considered. It is well known that the Professor had studied the subject for upwards of thirty years; and also that he has not committed himself to any hypothesis as an explanation of all the facts. His opinion here stated is that of a scientific man of European reputation who is not a spiritualist.

"There is nothing to be found in the facts of Spiritism which formally contradicts data established by science . . . Without examination we have no right to put aside an experience as soon as it occurs under conditions which differ from the ordinary conditions with which we are familiar . . . When I speak of the study of Spiritism I do not mean merely the hasty perusal of one or two

volumes chosen at haphazard, with the object of discovering absurdities; neither is this a question of assisting during twenty minutes or even during two hours at what is called a *seance* . . . many weeks of patient study must be devoted to these delicate and perplexing phenomena and that without allowing ourselves to be disconcerted by repeated checks and fruitless attempts. We must read, we must reflect, we must converse seriously with men who throughout their lives have profoundly studied spiritistic facts . . . Let me not be misunderstood . . . The reasons for doubting the facts of Spiritism are very strong, I admit them fully, and the more readily inasmuch as it has been only after many years and owing to particularly favourable circumstances that I have been able to form a conviction. All I claim is that if a man has the right to doubt after investigation, he most certainly has not the right to deny without examination."

"Should Spiritism be Seriously Studied" an article by PROFESSOR RICHEL, in *"The Annals of Psychical Science."*

The Attitude of the London Spiritualist Alliance towards Spiritualism & 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 recognizes 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 realizes that while some psychic phenomena emanate from the discarnate, others do not.
- (7) It recommends that every communication be subjected to critical examination.

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