

*Essentials in Architecture.* An Analysis of the Principles and Qualities to be Looked for in Buildings. By JOHN BELCHER, A.R.A., Fellow and Past President of the Royal Institute of British Architects. New York: Chas. Scribner Sons, 1907. 8vo. Pp. 171. Seventy-four illustrations. Price \$2.

Since Ruskin lighted his seven lamps we have had no new illumination on this subject till Mr. Belcher has taken the matter in hand. He tries to ascertain and to express the qualities which are essential to all good architecture, of whatever style it may be, and his position as one of the most eminent of English architects gives him the privilege of speaking as one having authority.

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TWO BOOKS ON PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

*Behind the Scenes with the Mediums.* By DAVID P. ABBOTT. Pp. 328. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. \$1.50.

This promises to be an interesting bit of reading for the numerous class of intelligent men and women who do not know whether to believe in Spiritualism or to laugh at it. Many who do not believe are content to say they do not understand. Here is the book which offers explanations of various phenomena—of cabinet tests, of flower materialization, of appearance of ghostly hands and faces, and so on—even to the composition of the luminous paint which has haloed so many an apparition in the tense silence of the dark-room seances." Mr. Abbott quotes a medium as authority for the statement that their best patrons are not the common people, but doctors, lawyers, merchants, teachers, and in general, the more intelligent part of the public. Mr. Abbott is not a medium himself, but a modern worker of magic, pure and simple. To get the other side of the question the reader may turn to:

*Psychic Forces.* By M. CAMILLE FLAMMARION. Messrs. Small, Maynard & Co., Boston.

M. Flammarion claims that unreasonable incredulity is as unscientific as unreasoning credulousness. He believes that no recognized physical force can account for some of the phenomena he has witnessed. He thinks that activities resident in space or in the mind or spirit may account for them. In brief, he claims that there exists in nature a myriad activity, a psychic element, the essential nature of which is still hidden from us.

A comparison of the two books ought to prove a valuable study to those interested in the question involved.

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FIVE NEW NOVELS (*Out of dozens.*)

*The Weavers.* By GILBERT PARKER. Harper & Co., New York. \$1.50.

This is variously estimated as "a novel that can be called truly great," and "a good old three-volume novel, a creation in the mid-Victorian taste." At any rate they all agree it is a worthy successor of the *Right of Way*.