

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

"The Splendid Paupers: A Tale of the Coming Plutocracy" is the title of Mr. Stead's Christmas number of the "Review of Reviews." It is almost beyond analysis or description;—a hot-pot of all the topics of the day,—from women-bicyclists to bimetallism. Mr. Stead himself speaks of it as "heterogeneous." It is brimful of gossip and "thinly-disguised" confidences, and, of course, abounds in clever hits at men and morals in this "naughty world." The whole is cast in the form of a story, not very much as a story, but all alive with shrewd glimpses of the seething mill in which men and women push and plot, rise and fall, live and die. Mr. Stead knows a good deal about it, and his Christmas number will prove a useful and entertaining "eye opener" to his readers, with a fair amount of nightmare, to the good.

There is a pathetic article on Death in a late number of the "Agnostic Journal." It is by "Saladin," and we detect in it a note not seldom found in his writings,—the longing for *proof* of life beyond the veil. He says:—

There always have been those, and now they are more numerous than ever, who maintain that the dead do return. Far be it from me to dogmatically negative the assertions of honest and earnest men engaged in the study of a subject so awful, so reverent, so solemn, where the student stands with a foot on each side of the boundary line between two worlds. We know a little of the hither, can we know aught of the thither world? "How pure in heart, how sound in head, with what affections bold," should be the explorer on a voyage so sublime! Never from "peak of Darien" did the flag of exploration fly over the opening up of a realm so mighty. How stale and trite the fleet of a Magellan to the adventurous soul who would circumnavigate the archipelagoes of the dead! How commonplace Pizarro to him who would launch forth on that black and trackless Pacific across the expanse of which has ever lain the dread and the hope of our race!

They know little who are robed in university gowns. What know they who are robed in shrouds? We gather but little from the platform; what can we learn from the grave? The wisdom of the press is foolishness; is there no voice from the sepulchre? It is we, not you, who are in darkness, O ye dead. The splendour of the iris of eternity has flashed on your plane of vision; but our heavy eyelids droop in the shadow of the nimbus of time. Can you tell us naught? Can we never know your secret till, in the dust, we lay down our bones with yours? We are here in the care, the poverty, the sin, and, above all, in the darkness. Oh, if ye can, have mercy on us; shed a ray from your shekinah-light athwart the wilderness of our desolation. We are trodden down by our brothers among the Living. Help us, our fathers, from the Dead!

Agnostics are often made by honesty and the desire for facts. It follows that anxious Agnostics might easily become happy Spiritualists.

Mr. Savage, writing in "The Arena," cleverly indicates the two main lines of Emerson's thought. He says:—

Let us see what it was that Emerson gave to his audience—his version of "the everlasting gospel" of religion and life. He taught, in the first place, that this universe is a spiritual universe, a manifestation of God.

Ever fresh, the broad creation,
A divine improvisation,
From the heart of God proceeds.

There is, he said to his fellows, no such thing as "dead matter," no such thing as a world outside God, made by Him as a carpenter builds a house, and then cursed by Him for a bad job when it was finished.

All things, from atoms to sidereal systems, from the springing grass to the soul of man, are

By one music enchanted,
One Deity stirred.

And this one Deity is the Eternal Goodness.

Love works at the centre,
Heart-heaving away;
Forth speed the strong pulses
To the borders of day.

Think of Ralph Waldo Emerson standing, sweet-faced as a seraph, and as calmly audacious, in the valley of dry bones and proclaiming such a message as that! The dry bones declared, with an infinite amount of clatter and dust-raising, that it was rank paganism. But he said it, and the gentle nature that he invoked made answer in rain and dew; and now the clover blooms, and children play, where ghosts sat in council and dreamed that God was dead.

A second point in the new doctrine was this: The soul of man lives and moves and has its being in and from this Soul of the Universe. This, to be sure, is good Bible doctrine, having Paul to stand its sponsor. The trouble was that Emerson believed it and the Churches did not. To him it was a fact; to them it was a phrase.

As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God; he is nourished by unfailing fountains, and draws at need inexhaustible power. . . . Once inhale the upper air, being admitted to behold the absolute nature of justice and truth, and we learn that man has access to the entire mind of the Creator, is himself the creator in the finite.

A few weeks ago everybody was praising Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes,—as much for his shrewd knowledge of the world as for his brilliant work as poet and essayist. Did one in ten of his praisers know what he wrote about Spiritualism, in his famous book, "The Professor at the Breakfast Table"? Yes, they all knew it well enough, but not one of them, so far as we know, ever referred to the subject. But Spiritualists must pass it round. Here it is:—

You don't know what plague has fallen on the practitioners of theology. I will tell you, then. It is *Spiritualism*. . . . Spiritualism is quietly undermining the traditional ideas of the future state, which have been and still are accepted—not merely in those who believe in it, but in the general sentiment of the community—to a larger extent than most good people seem to be aware of. . . . The Nemesis of the pulpit comes in a shape it little thought of . . . ending with such a crack of old beliefs that the roar of it is heard in all the ministers' studies in Christendom. You cannot have people of cultivation, of pure character, sensible enough in common things, large-hearted women, grave judges, shrewd business men, men of science, professing to be in communication with the spiritual world, and keeping up constant intercourse with it, without its gradually reacting on the whole conception of that other life.

SPIRITUAL SOLUTIONS OF PRESENT PROBLEMS.

By J. PAGE HOPPS.

ONE of the hardest things to believe in everywhere is—Purpose. To an enormous extent, life is made up of the clash and struggle of opposites—even apart from human volition, and thinking only of what we call “inanimate nature.” No wonder the old seekers believed in “Lords many and Gods many.” They had much to build upon in coming to that faith—and so have we. And yet, somehow, the brightest spirits who go into the big fight we call “life” get out of it the conviction that there is *Someone* behind the scenes who knows all about it, and moves all slowly but assuredly on.

It was not an idler—a person who had never borne the cross—who said :—

As Haydn's *Creation* or Handel's *Messiah* is music to the ear of man, so is the progressive development of the human race music to the ear of the Most High. As no musical composition can be understood until it be completed, so, likewise, is the music of the world unintelligent to man, and must be so, until God's purpose in that part of His creation be fulfilled : but, to Him, before whom Time shrinks into nothing, all His countless worlds are ever sounding together in one eternal harmony.

It is a delightful and consoling faith, and there is much to warrant intelligent conviction on the subject.

The history of the globe itself, as a planet, apart altogether from the life that has been developed upon it, is a luminous example of the kind of purpose we can attribute to God. Science carries us back to a roaring, chaotic mass of gaseous and metallic matter, surging and rolling on, under its awful canopy of furious fire-mist. Who, standing by, could have foreseen in it the slow development, through millions of years, of this enchanting world? It takes us back to days when only creatures that crawled, or monstrous and hideous types of life, possessed the habitable globe. What a bright angel it must have been who could see the far-off arrival, by slow stages, of the ideal man represented by Jesus Christ! Not less difficult would it have been to see at work, in the first rude forms of aggregated life in savage communities, the great social rights and institutions that have led on to our complex modern civilisation, and to the dream of a civilisation with our modern callous brutalities removed; for the splendid process is going on; there is not even a halt; and what is most significant is that, in these very days, the ideals of the few are becoming the resolves of the many. The kingdom will come.

Precisely the same thing is true of Religion. The resistless force of evolution, like the force of gravitation, leaves nothing uninfluenced, nothing unchanged; and that far-reaching force of evolution we identify with the purpose of God—none the less a purpose of God because a force, reaching forward through myriads of ages, and accomplishing its subtle will.

These facts concerning the past, present, continuous, and progressive creation of the world and man are being singularly confirmed by the very men who are being mistaken for the enemies of Religion, and who have been themselves half persuaded by “the orthodox” that they are enemies. But such men as Tyndall, Haeckel, Huxley, and Spencer have really built for us the new temple in which presently we shall all be glad enough to take shelter for the perpetuation of the worship of God.

Many must have read with pleasure the letter written by Mr. Spencer to a minister, thanking him for applying to Religion the great scientific doctrine and method of evolution; and it was with special delight we noticed that when the American friends of Mr. Spencer bade him farewell, one of the foremost speakers took up this very subject, and

showed with how much advantage to Religion his great doctrines could be applied to faith and hope.

Addressing the master, and showing him the full effect of his own splendid scientific doctrines, this thoughtful speaker said :—

What says the doctrine of evolution with regard to the ethical side of the twofold assertion that lies at the bottom of all religion? Though we cannot fathom the nature of the inscrutable Power that animates the world, we know, nevertheless, a great many things that it does. Does this eternal Power, then, work for righteousness? Is there a divine sanction for holiness and a divine condemnation for sin? Are the principles of right living really connected with the intimate constitution of the universe? If the answer of science to these questions be affirmative, then the agreement with religion is complete, both on the speculative and on the practical sides; and that phantom which has been the abiding terror of timid and superficial minds, that phantom of the hostility between religion and science, is exorcised now and for ever. Now, science began to return a decisively affirmative answer to such questions as these, when it began to explain moral beliefs and moral sentiments as products of evolution. For, clearly, when you say of a moral belief or a moral sentiment that it is a product of evolution, you imply that it is something which the universe, through untold ages, has been labouring to bring forth, and you ascribe to it a value proportionate to the enormous effort that it has cost to produce it. Still more, when with Mr. Spencer we study the principles of right living as part and parcel of the whole doctrine of the development of life upon the earth; when we see that, in an ultimate analysis, that is right which tends to enhance fulness of life, and that is wrong which tends to detract from fulness of life, we then see that the distinction between right and wrong is rooted in the deepest foundation of the universe; we see that the very same forces, subtle and exquisite and profound, which brought upon the scene the primal germs of life, and caused them to unfold, which through countless ages of struggle and death have cherished the life that could live more perfectly, and destroyed the life that could only live less perfectly, while humanity, with all its hopes and fears and aspirations, has come into being as the crown of all this stupendous work,—we see that these very same subtle and exquisite forces have wrought into the very fibres of the universe those principles of right living which it is man's highest function to put into practice. The theoretical sanction thus given to right living is incomparably the most powerful that has ever been assigned in any philosophy of ethics. Human responsibility is made more strict and solemn than ever, when the eternal Power that lives in every event of the universe is thus seen to be in the deepest possible sense the author of the moral law that should guide our lives, and in obedience to which lies our only guarantee of the happiness which is incorruptible, which neither inevitable misfortune nor unmerited obloquy can ever take away.

And so, blessed be God! the delightful truth comes out every way and everywhere, that there is really a purpose,—a purpose that never palls, never hastes, never fails,—a purpose that works by law, not by miracle, through slow processes, not by sudden interventions, but always in harmony with the personality and freedom of man.

It is wonderfully consoling and encouraging! Nothing is in vain: no age is isolated,—no experience unrelated to the general whole. The past and the present are one,—nay! the future, unattained, unborn, unknown, is also one with us: and above us all, beneath us all, around us all, before us all, is that eternal unity of power, that undying purpose, that irresistible will, which nothing can hinder, nothing thwart,—bearing us all on, even against our will. What shall I do before that mighty Power but wonder, reverence, listen, obey, and adore? What shall I do but make glad my heart to see how, “through all the ages, one increasing purpose runs”? What shall I do but resign myself to it—to Him—and say: Let Thy will be done, O my God, who workest all things after the counsel of Thy will?

SERMONS FOR OUR DAY. By John Page Hopps.—Suitable for Spiritualist meetings. In parts, 2d. each. Each part contains two sermons. Post free from Oak Tree House, South Norwood Hill, London. Twenty Sermons, bound in handsome cloth, 2s.

PROFESSOR BARRETT'S PAPER ON "SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM."

The confidence which, notwithstanding some discouragements, a few Spiritualists have all along felt in the essential tendency of the Society for Psychical Research has in the course of the present year received rich justification. In January we had the notable address by Mr. Frederic Myers. It was followed by the explicit avowal of scientific conclusions by Professor Oliver Lodge, and the year closes with the full publication of the comprehensive and impressive lecture committing the high authority of Professor Barrett to a position which is substantially our own. Personally, I should find it difficult to define that position exactly. Certainly, I should feel myself out of place in our Association if more representative Spiritualists adopted a statement closing the door against the "supposition" adverted to by Professor Barrett as "worthy of consideration." The truth is we have been all fighting together the battle for evidence and fact, and some of us, entering the ranks with this view, and after the designation of the army had been fixed, accepted it with regard to the general tendency of results, but without preconceptions opposed to the utmost freedom of interpretation by the light of deeper study and more critical research. It is not too much to say that nearly all to whom the facts of "modern" Spiritualism first arrived were in the blindest ignorance of the historical antecedents of the subject, and even failed to correlate it with the comparatively recent experience of mesmerism and now-called "subliminal" states. It is not surprising if the average Spiritualist could see nothing in the phenomena he witnessed but his "proof palpable of immortality," and ignored, as far as possible, whatever was of ambiguous import, or threatened to disturb the simplicity of his assurance. The "yes" of science has seldom quite the immediacy and self-contained brevity which the man in the street wants for his conclusions. Nor can a psychical science decline to admit the limitations of an empirical position, or that ultimate problems lie beyond our evidential field. The wider the knowledge of that field, the readier, I think, will be assent to the cautionary parts of Professor Barrett's address.

We are not, indeed, now to rejoice over a new convert in the ranks of science. In the day when the phenomena "called Spiritualistic" come to be reckoned, as matter of common information, among the many truths of nature which have prevailed at length over prejudice, misconception, authority, and apathy, Professor Barrett will be numbered among the few men of distinguished attainments in science who were from the first true to its ostensible ideal of open-mindedness and docility. Some of us remember that he was to the front with this subject at the time of its deepest disrepute, and from 1875 to the present he has called public attention to it on several important occasions. To have been the scientific co-founder of the Psychical Society will itself be a title to fame when the work of that Society, in which he has had so large a share, comes to be extended and recognised. The present address is likely to be as influential as anything published on our side for many years past. The experience adduced is impressive, the information shown extensive, the view of the duty of science in relation to the subject, and the exposure of fallacies by which that duty has been misrepresented, are lucid and convincing; the whole argument is weighty. I do not propose to review the address, and willingly forego criticism of two or three minor propositions which I venture to think open to exception. The main thing to be said is that anyone wishing to have at hand a scientific view of the case for Spiritualism, in brief general form, at its best and up to date, may be confidently advised to procure this contribution of Professor Barrett to the literature of the subject.

C. C. M.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DREAMS.

On Monday evening, the 3rd inst., the REV. J. PAGE HOPPS discoursed on dreams, to a gathering of the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke street, Adelphi, W.C., the President of the Alliance, MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, occupying the chair.

The speaker said that in fulfilment of a promise, he was there that evening to open a conversation on dreams, a theme in which he was deeply interested. A friend had expressed some surprise that he (Mr. Hopps) should concern himself with such apparently trivial and evanescent things as dreams; but he felt that the difficulty was that although he might cease to trouble himself about dreams they would not leave off troubling themselves about him. He had recently been reading a very remarkable book by Mr. Stinson Jarvis, entitled "The Ascent of Life," in which a very curious and subtle theory about dreams was set forth. The author had traced the intimate connection existing between dreams (whether occurring in a state of partial somnolence or in the profound slumbers in which the faculty of prevision is sometimes exercised) and the phenomenon of hypnotism. He could not endorse that theory from his own experience, but he could claim to be a great dreamer, and to have dreamt every kind of dream that he had ever heard of, from the most fantastic and preposterous to the most tragic. One of the most remarkable peculiarities in connection with his dreams was the frequency with which he stood aside, as it were, as a mere spectator, and watched the drama being enacted, knowing all the time that he was dreaming, and having a keen interest in the unexpected developments of the dream, which were often of a character that he felt he could not himself have originated. Many times he had undergone the experience of dreaming an ordinary, matter-of-fact dream, which, after proceeding coherently for a while, was interrupted by some incident so outrageously incongruous and unexpected that the shock caused him to awake with an impression on his mind which remained for a considerable time afterwards. He wanted to know who really dreamed that dream, and who was responsible for the unexpected.

MR. HOPPS here gave some instances of his experiences, which very fully illustrated his remarks, and lent colour to his contention that the incidents of some of his "visions of the night" were not such as might be supposed to be the production of his own mind. Continuing, the speaker said that it was within his experience, and that of many people he had known (including William and Mary Howitt, with whom he had conversed on the subject), that future events were foreshadowed in dreams in such a manner that the idea of coincidence was entirely inadequate as an explanation. Of this he was absolutely convinced, for he had himself personally dreamt of matters that were afterwards fulfilled to the very minutest detail; one dream alone was "so absolutely and overwhelmingly clear" that it was in itself sufficient to settle the question for him beyond all doubt. He had thus obtained incontrovertible proof of the fact of prevision in dreams. More on the surface than these dreams of prevision or foreknowledge, one came to a stratum of dreams, very improbable, but exceedingly coherent, and almost partaking of the nature of prophecy. These were exemplified in cases where people got hints, during sleep, of inventions which were subsequently given to the world. Then there was that agreeable dream, very generally experienced, in which the dreamer had the sensation of flying through the air. In the lecturer's case, such dreams were peculiarly vivid, and did not partake of the frequent feature of such dreams, where the person flying has a disagreeable fall. In his case, it was always a pleasant dream, and with delightful surroundings. On one occasion, it occurred to him that it was a dream, but, after careful looking round upon the park in which he was, the trees, the people, the very garden seats, the distant hills, he concluded it was real enough, and took another flight—away over a church spire in the park. It was just possible that this dream of aerial flight had in it a prophetic significance of some yet-to-be-evolved faculty of the human being, or it might be an intimation of the freedom of the spirit when it had discarded this "muddy vesture of decay."

As regarded dreams of the extravaganza type, in which the incidents were wild, disconnected, altogether absurd, and sometimes exceedingly unpleasant, he always regarded these as mere freaks of the imagination when no longer under the control of the judgment. During waking hours, one's judgment was

sufficient to hold the imagination in check; but, during sleep, the imaginative element of the mind often had an uncontrolled sway. He believed that, if a man cared to do so, he could so regulate his dream-senses, will, and judgment that he could take notice of his dreams, and remember and record them when he awoke. Such a practice might result in the most useful discoveries, and he felt that the subject formed a legitimate field for exploration. There were many indications that the dream, whether inconsequent and frivolous, or deep and coherent, belonged to an interior self. What that interior self was he had no means of knowing, although he knew what the Psychical Research Society and the Occultists thought about it. Many dreams, although they were the offspring of imagination, were entirely unrelated to anything in actual life. He had had much experience of dreams that did not appear to be suggested by anything he had ever heard or read, and which were entirely unconnected with everything in his own life. They often suggested to him that he himself was not dreaming at all, but was, so to speak, being "dreamt through." Such a dream suggested the presence of a dreamer who was not himself. It had frequently occurred to him that there was, in his case, a special significance about this class of dreams. It seemed as though they were sent to him by some outside intelligence as a test or proof of the suggestion that his (the speaker's) mind was not the only mind at work. Of such a type were the dreams in which occurred the grotesque and startling interruptions already referred to. Such incidents frequently took the shape of sudden tricks, freaks that amused, shocked, or surprised the dreamer (who all the time had a dim sense of being awake and merely an observer of the dream), subtle jokes the meaning of which came later as a surprise, and remarks of an extraordinary character made apparently by somebody who was quite invisible. "Now, I want to know," said the lecturer, "how I could invent in dreams something which I who invented it could not understand and had to wait in order to get the explanation of. One would suppose that if I were the author of it I should at least know what it meant, what it was, and should not have to wait for the explanation." The object seemed to be to demonstrate by incidents, however absurd, that someone else than the dreamer was at work.

MR. HOPPS here cited a dream of an allegorical character that he had once dreamt, the obvious meaning of which related to a part taken by him in a public matter. The singularity of the dream, apart from its intrinsic peculiarity, was its lurking satire upon the action he had taken, and a sort of covert, but withal humorous, reproof which it conveyed; but a reproof which suddenly came, with the key of the allegory, when the dream was over. It was a sort of sermon preached to him, but the difficulty was to ascertain who the preacher was. It was not he himself. Either someone other than the dreamer was concerned with that dream, or they must fall back upon the theory of a dual self. The difficulty in the latter case was that if he (the speaker) were in reality two people, one of them was a Radical and the other was a Tory; and he could not say he liked the partnership. In concluding, Mr. Hopps remarked that in dealing with so prolific a subject he had not endeavoured to do more than offer some remarks which might afford material for conversation and profitable discussion.

MR. THOMAS EVERITT then related some remarkable dreams in the line of his experiences in phenomenal Spiritualism. He did not appear to be afflicted by the tricky sprites and elves of dreamland to any such extent as in the case of Mr. Page Hopps. His visions were rather allegorical and instructive, and if we may judge by some of the examples he related, they were sometimes extremely pleasant, as indicating an occasional trip to the better country beyond the gates. The most striking example which he cited, however, was a dream the subject matter of which came to both himself and a friend, unknown to one another. Sitting at a seance some time afterwards, the spirit "John Watt," associated with Mrs. Everitt's mediumship, introduced the subject, inquiring why Mr. Everitt's friend had not disclosed his dream. As both the friends had until then kept their dreams secret even from one another, this reference to it from a disembodied intelligence was at once suggestive and significant. It seemed to indicate that the experience of the two friends had probably been "a dream that was not all a dream."

MR. THOMAS SHORTER said the subject was a large and comprehensive one. His own dreams were mostly of the kind referred to by Mr. Hopps—filmy, fragmentary, and full of

fantastic and incongruous elements, in which it was impossible to find any trace of meaning. Still, he quite agreed with Mr. Hopps in believing that there were some dreams which conveyed a meaning. It was necessary to classify dreams, since they were of different kinds, proceeded from different sources, and had different applications to different persons. The phenomenon of duplication in dreams was a very curious one. It brought to mind the anecdote of Dr. Johnson, who said he dreamed one night that he had a heated argument with some person, who completely confuted him, which to a person of the Doctor's temperament must have been exceedingly humiliating. However, he consoled himself by the reflection that he himself must have invented the arguments used by his opponent against him. Doubtless, many dreams had their origin in physical causes, and might be safely attributed to a "blot of mustard or a fragment of underdone potato," or it might be some disturbance of the ganglionic nerves or the solar plexus. There were other dreams in which some of the moral faculties seemed to be in complete abeyance, and the dream experiences seemed to bear no relation to the normal character and disposition of the dreamer. Thus it was difficult to account for the fact that, although himself a man of pacific intentions, he should so frequently dream of being engaged in the thick of a battle, and that without the slightest sensation of fear. There were again other dreams, such as those referred to by Mr. Everitt, where the dreamer seemed to come into actual contact with the spirit-plane. One of the most singular dreams on record was that of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who dreamt that someone communicated to him a poem. On awaking he proceeded to write it out from memory, but owing to being interrupted, he was only partially successful; still the result was a poem strangely rich in imagery and musical in diction, "Kubla Khan." Mr. Shorter concluded his remarks by giving an example of a dream of spiritual significance of which he had been himself the recipient.

MISS MACK WALL gave an account of prophetic dreams which Mr. Spurgeon and his wife had dreamt simultaneously. Not only were the dreams identical, but they were afterwards literally fulfilled. Referring to those dreams which seem to foreshadow a new invention (alluded to by Mr. Hopps), she quoted the statement made to her by a spirit-being, explanatory of the fact that these dreams are frequently given to persons who were totally unable to carry into effect the idea foreshadowed in the dream. It appeared from this statement that when the spirit world is desirous of communicating to the inhabitants of this world an idea for an invention in the direction of mechanics, it is frequently unable to project the conception into the mind of a human being who is, in all other respects, suitable for its purpose. The difficulty is largely overcome, however, if the new idea can be introduced into the earth sphere in a less direct fashion, and this is accomplished by the communication of the idea to some receptive mind, which, although unable to clothe it in material form, yet renders its ultimate realisation less remote and difficult. Alluding to the sudden introduction of an idea entirely foreign to the train of thought previously passing through the mind, Miss Mackwall could quite endorse Mr. Hopps' theory that it suggested the intervention of some outside intelligence. The same thing had occurred to her in her experience of inspirational writing, and frequently with convincing effect.

MR. J. J. MORSE thought that Mr. Page Hopps deserved the gratitude of those present for his able handling of a difficult topic. The subject of "Dreams" was not one upon which people as a rule cared to make their thoughts known in public, but when the task was undertaken by one in Mr. Hopps' position it encouraged the rank and file to say something about their experiences. The dream of flying had been one of his own experiences. This dream had a somewhat important significance for him, since it always presaged some definite change in his affairs. Mr. Morse quoted other instances in which his dreams had been even more definitely prophetic. It seemed to him that dreams were to be classified under certain heads, and two important points were to be borne in mind—first, the time when the dream was dreamt, and second, whether the dreamer was sleeping in company with another person. The first consideration might determine whether the dream was caused by any slight derangement of the digestive functions, which were frequently at work for a certain time after the dreamer retired to bed. The second point involved considerations of telepathy. The mental disturbances of one person might be reflected in the mental sphere of another sleeping in

the same chamber, and result in a dream having no reference to any of the inner conditions of the dreamer. He thought it probable that the sudden disturbances of otherwise normal dreams referred to by Mr. Hopps might be due to spirit intervention. He knew a gentleman—Dr. Wm. Sharpe—whose dreams were particularly vivid, and sometimes symbolical of events of European importance.

Mr. W. H. EDWARDS was inclined to regard dreams with more than ordinary respect since his experiences in connection with them had been the means of making him a Spiritualist. He had received what was to him the most satisfactory evidence that dreams were sometimes due to the influence of unseen powers and intelligences. He narrated some striking instances in which the dreams of his wife and himself were of a prophetic and clairvoyant character.

Mr. LUCKING felt that the physiological aspect of the subject was worthy of attention. When we thought, the mental process was associated with some motion, wave, or vibrations of the brain, and if in any way the brain were disturbed during sleep or partial sleep we got those sensations called dreams. The disturbance might arise from indigestion or other and more subtle causes might set up a vibration in the brain which might produce a mental picture.

THE PRESIDENT, in concluding the proceedings, said that Mr. Hopps seemed inclined to lay the onus of his bad dreams upon someone else. He (the President) wished he could satisfy himself in his own case that this was a correct and justifiable mode of procedure. He said this because he was subject to a class of dreams to which no allusion had been made. He (the President) was sorry to say that he himself frequently dreamt of doing very wrong things—such as he should never think of doing in his waking hours. He did not attempt to account for this on Mr. Hopps' or any other theory. He had discussed the subject with a spirit-friend, who had explained the phenomenon by asserting that this class of dream was due in his case to the animal instincts having greater freedom of play during sleep. That appeared to him to be a fair explanation, if it were carried out far enough. One could understand that these lower faculties would have a more unrestrained exercise when the powers of ratiocination, thought and judgment were no longer controlling them. Referring to the suggestion that it might be profitable for persons interested in the inquiry to keep records of their dreams, the President mentioned the case of a friend who stated that he could always recall his dreams completely. This was the result of a painstaking and methodical practice, whereby he had obtained great control over his memory and was thus enabled to retain the impressions gained during sleep. This was an example by which those who desired to pursue an investigation of the kind might profit. He then moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Hopps, who, in acknowledging the compliment, said that he came there as a student to talk to those present as to fellow students. He would not consider his remarks as suitable for presentation to the world at large. He felt very much as though he had been conducting an experiment in surgery. If he had come there to be poetical he could have told them any number of beautiful dreams; but this would not have advanced the inquiry, hence he had been compelled to deal with a less attractive phase of the subject. He then narrated some further examples of his dreams, after which the proceedings closed.

RECEIVED.

"Yule Tide," with plates. (London: Cassell and Co. 1s.)

"The Queen," Christmas number, with two large and beautiful coloured pictures. (London: Bream's-buildings, E.C. 1s.)

"Merrie England." By ROBERT BLATCHFORD ("Nonquam," Editor of the "Clarion"). 206pp. (London: 4, Bouverie-street, E.C. 1d.)

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.—We have printed, in a convenient form, suitable for enclosure in letters or for distribution at public meetings, "M.A. (Oxon.'s)" "Advice to Inquirers, for the Conduct of Circles." We shall be pleased to supply copies free to all friends who will undertake to make good use of them. The only charge will be for postage—25, 4d.; 50, 1d.; 100, 2d.; 200, 3d.; 400, 4½d.; 600, 6d., &c.

I SEE the vision of a weak soul striving after good. It was not cut short; and in the end it learned through tears and much pain, that holiness is an infinite compassion for others; that greatness is to take the common things of life and walk truly among them; that happiness is a great love and a great serving.
—OLIVE SCHREINER.

"LET THE DEAD BURY THEIR DEAD."

In our New Testament (Matt. viii, 22) there occurs a difficulty which has never been satisfactorily explained, and not even noticed by the revisors in the New Version. It is that sentence supposed to have been uttered by our Lord, "Let the dead bury their dead," which, doubtless, is a correct and literal translation of the received Greek text—thus:—

ἀφες τοὺς νεκροὺς θάψαι τοὺς ζῶντας νεκροίς.

What is the meaning of this passage? As it stands, is it not absolute nonsense? The ordinary explanation is, "Let those who are spiritually dead bury the physically dead." It appears to me that this interpretation is an aggravation of the absurdity of the original utterance. Why should the poor grave-digger be considered spiritually dead? Surely this lowly servant may be as spiritually endowed and exalted as the priests who officiate in the temple under the shadow of which he works.

We may be quite certain that our Saviour never intended to cast a stigma on the useful and humble sexton, whose avocation is so worthy of our respect and sympathy.

Now, what is the real elucidation of the difficulty here stated? It is very simple when you know it. The early scribe in copying the original text evidently omitted two letters, and their restoration makes sense of the whole passage. The missing letters are *ω* and *ο*, and the word thus amended is *νεκρόποις*, meaning warden, sexton, or keeper of the temple.

The passage ought, therefore, to stand:

ἀφες τοὺς νεκρόποις θάψαι τοὺς ζῶντας νεκροίς.

"Let the sextons bury their dead." In other words, "Let those whose duty it is to perform a task do it"; a piece of wise advice of universal application and utility.

I am indebted for this emendation to a professor of Greek at Athens; nevertheless in spite of its clearness and good sense, the stupid public will go on repeating the gibberish, "Let the dead bury their dead"; and nothing short of a spiritual surgical operation will exterminate the misreading from their dense understandings.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

THE RELIGION OF SPIRITUALISM.

Spiritualism, while inhering in and originating from God, does not centre alone in and rest entirely upon phenomena, but upon spirit—upon the spiritual and moral constitution of man, which constitution requires such spiritual sustenance as inspiration, prayer, faith, vision, trance, clairvoyance, and heavenly impressions from the Christ-sphere of love and wisdom. Spiritualists, like the primitive Christians, believe in God the Father, and in the brotherhood of the races. They acknowledge Christ; they feel the influx of the Holy Spirit; they converse with angels; they cultivate the religious emotions; they exercise charity and the other Christian graces; they open their séances with prayer. They are richly blessed with visions and calm uplifting ministrations from angelic homes. They see in every pure crystal stream a Jordan, in every verdure-clad mountain a present Olivet, and in every well-cultivated prairie a Canaan flowing with milk and honey; and they teach salvation by character, or by the life, as did Paul, who said, "Being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."—DR. J. M. PEEBLES, in "The Arena."

PROFESSOR BARRETT'S ADDRESS.—The publication of the Appendix to Professor Barrett's Address is necessarily deferred till next week.

A NOTABLE TREATISE.—We take the following from the "Boston Daily Globe": "Rev. Edward R. Knowles, LL.D., of Worcester, will soon publish in convenient form his famous brochure of two years ago, 'The Supremacy of the Spiritual,' together with a supplementary letter on 'Electricity.' This pamphlet marked a great advance in philosophic research, and is extremely original and clear, and much after the style of Cousin. The supplement on 'Electricity' is designed to carry the reader as close as possible to a true and rational theory of electricity as a mode of transformation of energy. The 'Catholic School and Home Magazine' said of the treatise of Dr. Knowles: 'The Supremacy of the Spiritual' is the most recent work of Mr. Edward Randall Knowles, of Worcester, who is acquiring fame as a philosopher and poet. In this pamphlet he deals with the spiritual as the key to all known phenomena, and hence shows that God is necessary to the support of all those things that seem strange in the material world about us. We need to have the spiritual spoken of more frequently, and impressed upon the thought of to-day, which tends so much to the merely material and human."

OFFICE OF "LIGHT," 2, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15th, 1894.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS,
Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

Light.

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.
PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "— & Co."

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT—AND AFTER.

The sane portion of Society, which thinks from causes and consequences, has had to endure as best it could the reeking newspaper Press of the past few weeks with its "ghastly details" of murders, trials for murder, and executions. It is, perhaps, necessary that some publicity should be given to these emanations from the hells, but publicity is being grossly overdone. The streets of London are almost daily made sickening with its glaring newspaper bills, which seem to exist for no other purpose than to gloat over the latest horror. If we were really civilised, or in a truly sane state of mind, should we select for constant supreme notice our murders, and fill our daily contents bill with such lines as these: "Another stabbing case": "horrible details": "portrait of the knife"?

Next to a murder, an execution appears to be the leading object of interest. Not many days ago, from early morning to late night, London was treated as though its one morbid concern was to know how a callous murderer had been, in his turn, murdered:—every syllable recorded, every movement chronicled, every button watched, every mouthful of food or drink registered, every "ghastly detail" of the ending set down for our—delight! What will the more spiritual men and women of some distant day think of it,—when the chroniclers turn up our musty records, and peruse with horror and disgust the columns that, with such zeal, were compiled for our amusement!

But now, as to this judicial murder, what is our testimony? Has Society any right to retaliate upon the murderer, and murder *him*? Or, if it has that right, is a judicial murder a prudent or profitable thing? It may be a doubtful matter; and wise and good men and women may, at present, differ as to the right, the prudence, and the profit. But everyone must admit that taking human life is a queer way of asserting its sanctity; nor can we see that the matter is mended by the plea that Society taking life is a very different thing from an individual taking life. It is different certainly, but not different so far as asserting the sanctity of life is concerned. The sanctity of life can only be asserted and maintained by abstaining from taking it; and Society only breaks down its testimony as to the sanctity of life when it retaliates, and pays back the murderer in kind.

It may be said that the deterring effect of an execution is Society's justification for violating the sanctity of life: but that is surely a very bad case of doing evil that good may come, and setting a very bad example of just the wrong kind. And then the question arises whether a hanging does really deter. In the "good old times" when George IV. was King, hanging was almost one of our national sports. As many as 2,000 victims were put on the ghastly stage in one year. With what result? Such a lowering and brutalising of the people that the sport had to be classified with bull-baiting, and given up: and now, the survival of it is done in secret, for very shame. Deterrent! why a schoolmaster at Newgate, in the old days,

declared that he had seen his pupils, before the bodies were taken down, play the scene over again, one acting the convict and another playing hangman. Volney recorded how, during the French Revolution, he saw children amuse themselves with chopping off the heads of cats and chickens, in imitation of the dreadful scenes of the familiar guillotine.

But what about Society itself? Is Society, then, so free from complicity in the causes of murder? Every ignorant, ill-regulated, vicious, callous life is a product of the age, and the circumstances of the age. We are more solid than we sometimes imagine. The lines of connection are very subtle, but they are very real: and Society has as much need to be ashamed as it has right to be angry or to retaliate. Many a poor wretch whom Society has execrated, hanged and damned, might with justice have turned round, even on the scaffold, and said: "And from you,—pushing, selfish, pleasure-loving, grasping herd,—I came; and you made me what I am!"

But Society does its retaliation and murdering badly. It gives the sinner space for repentance, sends to him a "man of God" who does all he knows to get the poor wretch to "make his peace with heaven." And, when he succeeds, he assures him of God's forgiveness and speeds him safely off to Paradise by way of the gallows! What a hideous farce! Well might an indignant satirist say of it: "We pray to the common Father of us all to 'forgive us our trespasses,' while we have no mercy on His disobedient children. In the name of justice we strangle penitent sinners whom God is said to have forgiven."

Then, having done it, what follows? We dismiss, as we think, the murderer, penitent or impenitent, from Society, and what have we done? To speak with brutal but necessary frankness, we think we have sent him to heaven or hell. If that were true it would be shocking: but is it true? The Spiritualist could tell Society something about it if Society would listen. He might say something like this: You think you have stopped that callous seducer, liar, murderer. What if you have only let him loose? When you turned him out of his body, you by no means got rid of him: and, for all you know, he is at work already not far from the place where you hanged him. On your own showing, you were terribly cruel; for you deliberately sent a man to hell: but, on my showing, you were as terribly foolish; for you let loose a demon on the earth. "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do!"

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of members and friends of the Alliance will be held at 2, Duke street, Adelphi, at 7 o'clock on Monday evening next, when Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Manchester, Editor of "The Two Worlds," will give a trance address on "Life Problems in the Light of Spiritualism," followed by answers to questions.

MRS. MELLON.—We learn from the "Melbourne Argus" that the differences of opinion amongst the Sydney Spiritualists are so acute that the meeting of the local association on November 4th broke up in disorder consequent upon the hostile attitude towards Mrs. Mellon taken by the president, Mrs. Edwards. Some of the company present on the occasion of the eventful séance declare that certain disguises were seen, but they differ as to what those disguises were; others, who had the same opportunities of observation, assert as confidently that there were no such disguises; while all agree that at any rate no disguises whatever were captured. Under the circumstances, it seems fair to give Mrs. Mellon the benefit of the doubt and to return a verdict of "Not guilty—but don't do it again."

WRITTEN by John Page Hopps. Christmas Presents, beautifully printed and bound.—"PILGRIM SONGS," written during 40 years. With two portraits of the author. 3s.—"THE LIFE OF JESUS," for young disciples. 1s.—London: Williams and Norgate; or post free from 216, South Norwood Hill, S.E.

THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

MISS FLORRIE COOK.

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

I should not like to say how many summers have gone by since Miss Florrie Cook played the part of a comet in the Spiritualistic firmament. Appearing unexpectedly on the horizon of popular attention, for three short years she blazed with dazzling and unrivalled radiance—unrivalled at a period even when good physical mediums were plentiful—and then vanished from public view as suddenly as she had come; got behind a corner somewhere, and was lost to view. Still in her teens at this notable period, she is now the proud mother of daughters as old as she was then; a woman of charming manner and kindly heart, and, whilst a little out of practice, probably as good a medium as ever.



MISS FLORRIE COOK.

(From a photograph by Sadler, of Cardiff.)

Although the name has been discarded for a couple of decades, it is as Florrie Cook she is better known among Spiritualists, and I propose here to so describe her.

Miss Cook's home lies not a hundred miles from Wales, in one of the most charming valleys it has been my fortune to visit. The surrounding hills are clad with rich woods, and on the crest of one stands a ruined ivy-covered castle, a noted stronghold when the centuries were young. Ruined castles are thick as blackberries in this romantic district, famed in history, and the scene of many a Round Table legend. The house itself stands on a pleasant green mead, within a hundred yards of a broad placid river, beloved of salmon fishers, with many a deep and shady pool overhung by the spreading branches of beech and aspen and willow. It was from this river that Miss Cook, ever resourceful and original, obtained her supplies when during the droughty summer of last year she hired the town fire-engine and enlisted the services of a dozen lusty lads to water her garden and lawn, thereby providing the good townsfolk with matter for nine days' amused gossip. The district is not only known for its salmon and trout fishing, but it is also a famous hunting country. Everybody from parson to plough-boy hunts, and there are three packs maintained in the neighbourhood. My hostess pointed out to me the town butcher, who one day was cutting her some chops when the tally-ho sounded outside. In a moment he flung down the knife, and with the hurried words, "The missus will finish the chops," rushed round to the stable, and was on his steed and away in a trice.

Strolling leisurely up and down the common, along the path by the river side, and talking over old times with my hostess, I noticed with pleasure that all the animals seemed to know and love her. Her beautiful horse (Miss Cook rides with the rest)

ran up with a neigh and a toss of his sleek head for a pat and a kindly word; the shaggy village donkeys were almost embarrassing in their claims to attention, the sheep ran up and rubbed their heads fearlessly in the folds of her dress, and even the stupid geese looked up and seemed in their contented clacks to greet a familiar friend. After this, had the swallows that were circling in the air perched on her shoulders, and a salmon risen and claimed the privilege of shaking fins, I think I should hardly have been surprised. A nice old lady, who is aunt and companion to Miss Cook, explained to me in confidence subsequently that the secret of all this affectionate good understanding between her niece and the dumb inhabitants of the common was sugar; but I declined to believe her, and preferred to come away with the sweet illusion (if illusion it be) that some recognition of the sympathetic good-heartedness of their kind friend was the explanation of the touching confidence and regard exhibited by them.

"I suppose, Miss Cook," I remarked, "you have almost lost touch with the Spiritualist world during all these years of retirement?"

"With the Spiritualist world, yes," she replied, "but not with the spirit world. There I am on the same intimate terms as ever."

"Then your mediumistic faculties have not been allowed to rust with disuse. I thought you had given up sitting altogether since your retirement?"

"Oh, dear no. I sometimes sit to oblige my friends. But quite privately. There are reasons, indeed, for more reticence in the matter than it is in my nature to observe. For some years until recently I have not sat at all."

"It would be too much to expect, I suppose, that your powers, after lying so long dormant, should be up to the high level of twenty years ago?"

"Yes, they have deteriorated a bit from lying by so long, but I believe I am really as good a medium as ever, and that regular sittings alone are required to restore manifestations to the old standard."

"Well, to begin at the beginning, how did you begin in the line?"

"The mediumistic faculty has run in our family as far back as we can trace. My grandmother used to see spirits, and once was in a trance for three whole weeks. A few hours before she died she again fell into an entranced state, during which her face bore an angelic expression, and she sang and prayed beautifully, saying, on coming into the normal state, that she had been in heaven. When I was quite a little child, I was sent away to a friend's house because at home another baby was expected. Returning late and tired out one night from a picnic, I went to bed, and awoke at five in the morning to find the bright moonlight streaming between the curtains into the room, and showing me the time clearly by the grandfather clock in the corner. I was thinking how white and beautiful the moon looked, when suddenly I saw my mother looking at me. She said, 'Come, Florrie,' and disappeared. When I went downstairs I asked why I had not been told that mamma had come. At noon there was a telegram to say, 'Tell Florrie she has a little sister.' I was afterwards informed that, following the birth of my sister, my mother had a series of fainting fits, and, thinking she was going to die, she expressed a strong wish to see me. She fell into a comatose state, and on awaking said she had seen and spoken to me, and described exactly the room in which I slept. The hour that this occurred was the same that I had noted by the clock."

"That was pretty good for a beginning. When was your mediumship first recognised by your family?"

"It was at about the age of fourteen that I began to fall into trances. My mother, who did not understand them, thought that I was lazy and shamming, but she could never wake me, and sometimes I would lie unconscious for a day. If I had not done my lessons before lapsing into this state, I invariably knew them well on waking up."

"If this sort of testimony is so often repeated—for every medium tells me the same thing—we shall have the rising generation all hankering after mediumship and its scholastic advantages."

"They would find the disadvantages greatly outweigh the gain, and would soon begin to wish they hadn't. Well, time went on, until one day I went to tea with a schoolfellow, and she and I, with her father and mother—who had been experimenting—had a sitting. The table soon moved, and raps were heard. I got up and walked away, and the raps followed me. My

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[December 15, 1894.]

friend's father said the raps must be through me, and the alphabet being brought into use, a message purporting to come from a deceased aunt of mine was spelled out. She gave her name, and I said I had never had an aunt of that name, though I afterwards found that I had. She told me I was a medium, and that great things were in store for me. The table rose four feet in the air, with no one near it but myself. I went home and told these wonders to my mother, who accompanied me to the same house a few days later. We got some excellent tests of identity, and then we were told that if we would put out the light I should be carried about the room. Soon I was lifted up in my chair until I touched the ceiling, and carried gently about, too frightened to scream, over the heads of the sitters, who could all see me plainly by the light that came in at the window. After this we hardly had a minute's peace at home for some time. Tables and chairs were smashed, books were flung about, chairs took walks on their own account, the table jumped about at meal-times, and great noises resounded through the house at night. All this was because mamma and I had made up our minds not to sit again. At last we were driven to do so, and were told to go to a certain address in Dalston and ask for a Spiritualist who lived there and would help us. This seemed such a queer quest that we hesitated a long time before undertaking it, and when we did go we passed and repassed the house several times before summoning up courage enough to knock at the door. But it was all right. A rather cross old lady answered our knock, and, in response to our timid inquiries, told us she was not a Spiritualist, and not likely to be; but her son was, and, if we wished, would come round and see us in the evening. The young man was Thomas Blyton, secretary of the Dalston Spiritualists' Association, and subsequently of the British National Association of Spiritualists, and from that day to this he has been one of my best friends, and a constant correspondent."

"I have heard that story. Your unseen friends sent you to the right quarter there."

"Yes. Under Mr. Blyton's guidance my development from that date was rapid. I always used to say that mediumship was catching, like a fever. There was a period when I never went to a séance without coming away with a fresh development; I have gone through the whole string of phenomena associated with all the mediumship I have ever heard of, and if there is a phase you can mention that I have not at one time or other passed through, I shall be glad to know it."

"I won't venture, then. Tell me about Katie King, whose name is a household word among Spiritualists still."

"She appeared on the scene at a very early stage, and very soon began to materialise. At first appearing only in a very dim light, and complaining that both that and the gaze of sitters hurt her, Katie gradually was able to bear a stronger and stronger light, until at last she could stand in the full glare of a magnesium flame to be photographed, a most successful series of portraits being the result. After a few months, Katie and most of the spirits that materialised would permit their features to be examined in the full glare of lamp or gas light for several minutes at a time. A peculiarity in many cases was the fixed and glassy stare of the eyes—like the eyes of sleep-walkers. In this state the spirits could not see with them, but plenty of singing and laughter would have the effect of making them sparkle and dance with life and intelligence. Then the spirits could see well enough."

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.—Spiritualism has proceeded by a process of permeation, and has rendered unique service to the cause of religion by adding to faith knowledge. There is nothing in the broad truths which we are taught that is incompatible with what the Church requires us to believe. Indeed, there is nothing in what I have learned that conflicts with the simple teaching of the Christ, so far as it has been preserved to us. It is something to know that the whole fabric of religion, so far as it affects man, receives its sanction and stimulus from the doctrines of the higher Spiritualism with which so many of us have made acquaintance. And in days when it is the fashion to bring up every time-honoured truth for proof anew, when man has largely lost his hold on the ancient faith, when religion as a binding power is losing so much of its vitalising influence, it is something to feel that by the mercy of that God who never fails to respond to the prayer of His creatures, we are being brought face to face with the reality of our spiritual existence by experimental evidence adapted to our understanding. I see in Spiritualism no contradiction to that which I know of the teaching of the Christ.—"M.A. (OXON.);" quoted by Dr. PEEBLES.

DR. OLIVER LODGE AND EUSAPIA PALADINO.

The current number of the "Journal of the Society for Psychical Research" gives, in full, Dr. Oliver Lodge's Report of his observations of "unusual physical phenomena, occurring in the presence of an entranced person (Eusapia Paladino)." The "Journal" is printed for private circulation amongst members and associates only, but the Editor has courteously accorded us permission to make use of it for the information of our readers. Of this permission we shall avail ourselves freely; *first*, because the scientific reputation of Dr. Lodge gives his Report a special value, as helpful to those who, otherwise ready to believe, fear to trust their own powers of reasoning and investigation; *secondly*, because his Report is accompanied by suggestive reflections, which even fully convinced

Spiritualists may find eminently deserving of careful and unprejudiced consideration; and, *thirdly*, because, recognising his commendable courage and candour, we cannot doubt that he is fairly on the way to a full conversion, and therefore think it well that these, his first steps in that direction, should be duly noted in our pages. There was a time, not long since, as he readily admits, when he did not know what he now knows; and there will surely come a time, not far distant, when he will know more than he knows now.

Acting upon an invitation from Professor Charles Richet, Dr. Lodge visited his island in the Mediterranean (the smallest of the group off the coast near Hyères), in order to witness the physical phenomena asserted to occur "in the presence of an uneducated Neapolitan woman, Eusapia Paladino"; and he remained there six days, viz., from 21st to 27th July, 1894, in company with his friend Mr. F. W. H. Myers, and another guest of Professor Richet, viz., Dr. J. Ochorowicz, of Warsaw, known for his researches and writings on hypnotism and allied conditions. There was also staying in the house, part of the time, a private secretary of Professor Richet's, a Mons. Bellier, who took down the contemporary notes of the séances as dictated to him through a window, but who was not in the room at the time and took no part in the observations or control. After his departure his place as note-taker was occupied by Dr. Ochorowicz. At this visit four sittings were held, as nearly as possible on alternate

days, each lasting about three or four hours on the average. The result Dr. Lodge sums up thus:—

I went in a state of scepticism as to the reality of physical movements produced without apparent contact, but this scepticism has been overborne by facts.

I have now definitely to state my conviction that certain phenomena of this class, may, under certain conditions, have a real and objective existence.

The Report practically commences with a number of preliminary details describing the room in which the sittings were held, and the conditions observed. These it is unnecessary to repeat here; but it is only fair to give the Doctor's own definition of the following terms, as he uses them in the course of his Report:—

Medium.—Name used in speaking of the person without whose presence none of the phenomena occurred. The name itself may be objectionable as implying some hypothesis, but it is here used merely as a term in common use which it is difficult to avoid.

Trance.—Condition of the medium when the phenomena are best developed, a condition not unlike the more obvious trance of Mrs. Piper, and involving some sort of different memory and different personality to the ordinary one. When thoroughly in this state she is found to answer best to the name of "John" instead of to her ordinary name; but she still speaks only Italian, whenever she does speak, in the trance. There are various grades of this trance, and unless it is thorough the phenomena are liable to be elementary and not fully satisfactory.

Contact.—When things are said to be moved without contact it is intended to assert that there is no contact with them of any ordinary part of the medium's body, nor any part of the bodies of sitters, nor of any instrument or apparatus controlled by them. But that there may be some kind of abnormal or unusual contact or link of connection between moved bodies and the body of the medium seems to me at present most probable. The phrase "without contact" never means to exclude these hypothetical and abnormal kinds of contact.

Hand.—The phrase "grasped, or pinched, or pressed, or touched, or struck by the hand" is intended to convey the idea of a sensation experienced freely by the sitters, even before the trance fully comes on; especially by those nearest Eusapia and controlling her limbs. Sometimes the thing which produces the sensation is invisible, sometimes it has been seen, and described as more or less like a hand, with more or less of a forearm attached to it. Sometimes the grasps or pats are audible to other persons. Sometimes they are strong enough to be painful. It is not easy to describe them scientifically, but a human hand, or a pair of hands, can imitate and reproduce all these sensations with perfect ease.

Châlet.—Means a cigar-holding musical box, in shape of a little house, which must be wound up from below, and can be started to play by twisting its chimney; its doors then flap open, and it continues to play till they are shut or till it runs down. It was a toy that happened to be there.

Dr. Lodge gives the following as a summary of the things which he experienced. Of course there are very many Spiritualists to whom similar experiences are matters of familiar occurrence:—

PHENOMENA OBSERVED.

I have been pushed, and also pinched or compressed, on the head and on the back, on the arm and on the knees, while both the "medium's" hands were in my grasp, and her feet and head well controlled.

Under the same conditions I have had my hands grasped momentarily by something resembling a distinct-feeling bare hand, giving a clear impression of a thumb and finger and of nails.

I have seen a large "hand" and other vaguer moving objects outlined against the dim light of the night sky; the medium being in all cases carefully and completely held.

I have seen a chair in the window several feet behind the completely controlled medium, and with no one near it, move several times horizontally, and also rise and knock on the floor.

In the total absence of wind I have seen the window-curtain (a curtain of heavy stuff with thick fringe) bulge out across the nearly closed window as if someone were inside it, and continue bulged and occasionally moving for some time; the position of

the medium at the table, five feet away, being plainly obvious all the time, and nobody being concealed behind the curtain. On another occasion I have felt the curtain hung over the table and sitters.

I have seen the rude outline of a large face against the window background, and a thing like a rough attempt at a hand move up to the said face; "the medium" being under perfect control and sufficiently visible elsewhere. It appeared to me that the curtain and its fringe were being used to make this imitation face; and perhaps the simplest assumption in every case is that the visible appearances are mere re-arrangements of already existing materials; but that there was a purposive arrangement of matter was clear.

I have heard a heavy table at which we were not sitting, and which no one was touching, move about many times, and then be turned bodily over, and when light was struck shortly afterwards have found it thus inverted on the floor. It was the "large table," weighing forty-eight pounds, and we were sitting at a small table. It was overturned without undue violence, and so as not to break a voltaic battery and other things on the floor near it. The gradual inversion of the table could be seen by Dr. Ochorowicz, who was more favourably situated for catching the faint light from the window on this occasion, but it was too dark for me to see.

The medium being under control as usual, I have several times heard "the châlet" being wound up at distances varying from one to five feet away from the medium, and have heard and dimly seen it moving through the air, playing as it came. I have also felt it deposited on my chest, and removed thence on to the table without contact.

I have heard some notes of "the accordion" sounded while it was lying on the round table, no one touching it, the position of both the medium's hands being known to me, and not being anywhere near it. More recently (viz., during a second series of sittings) I have heard a sequence of several notes thus struck on a piano; hands, arms, feet, head, and mouth of medium being under perfect control, and the nearest point of her body being two feet from the piano. The keyboard was visible but there was not enough light to see the depression of the keys.

I have heard raps on an untouched table, and once not only raps, but bangs of excessive violence, as if made with a strongly-wielded mallet of an abnormally strong hand.

I have seen little lights like glow-worms flit about for a short time (others seeing them too).

I have heard a sound as of the key being turned in the lock of the room door, several feet distant, and with clear empty space between us and it. The key then arrived on our table, and, after having been touched by me, again entered the door, turned in the lock, once more came into our hands and stayed there.

I have seen writing in blue pencil done with a clean finger-nail on paper, in candle light.

I have also seen sharply defined blue marks on a table surface previously blank, no one having touched the table meanwhile, but the medium's finger having been blued over purposely and moved appropriately near, but not touching, the other side of the table.

I have twice seen a heavy table (forty-eight pounds) raised completely a foot from the ground, all standing round it—hands and feet of the medium held, both her hands on top of the table, not near the edge; the fingers of one hand barely touching, the fingers of the other lightly pressing, the top of the table. It was normally impossible for the medium, even if released, to raise this table in her then position, viz., standing at one corner, with her hands on the top; as may be verified by any one who will have a table made of the same dimensions. It does not seem to me feasible for her to raise the table in that position when controlled, even granting such hysterical increase of her normal strength as we have some ground for conceding.

I have heard her drinking as from a water bottle, which had been previously on the sideboard, and have afterwards felt the bottle deposited on the table, all standing round table, and all hands held.

(To be continued.)

God has a fatherly mind towards good men, and loves them stoutly; and saith He, let them be harassed with toils, with pains, with losses, that they may gather true strength.—SENECA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.]

Spiritualism in Australia—Mrs. Mellon.

SIR,—For the last month there has been quite a boom in Australia generally, and in Sydney particularly, touching matters having a psychological bearing, and never before in this part of the world has there been such an ebullition of interest in occult subjects. Some months ago Dr. MacCarthy, a Sydney medico, having discovered that a servant in his employ was mediumistically endowed, obtained physical phenomena, such as table movements, concussive sounds, and levitations. What the Doctor calls his "door test" was perhaps the manifestation of psychic force best known, or most heard of, outside his circle. This test consisted in the medium (Maggie), just referred to, and some other person, holding their upturned hands a few inches from an unbolted and unopened door, when it would tremble and vibrate, and presently fly open without perceptible contact. This attracted the attention of a representative of the "Sunday Times" (Sydney), who has since been attending regular sésances at Dr. MacCarthy's house, and this paper has, from week to week, published accounts of sittings, testifying to the genuineness of the physical phenomena. Latterly, however, the sittings at the Doctor's have taken the form of materialisation sésances, through the mediumship of Mrs. Mellon, who came out to Australia a few years ago from England. Probably one of the most interesting sésances at which Mrs. Mellon has displayed her alleged psychical powers was that given at Dr. MacCarthy's house in Sydney on the 30th ult., when Mrs. Besant, the famous lectress and apostle of Theosophy, was present, as also was her daughter, Mrs. Besant-Scott, two doctors besides the host, and other reputable citizens. A detailed account of the sitting appears in the "Sunday Times" (Sydney), of the 7th inst. The proceedings commenced about three o'clock in the afternoon, and although the room was darkened, the reporter says that at no time during the sésance was the semi-darkness too great to prevent reading the time by the dial of an ordinary watch. The following is an epitome of the "Sunday Times" report:—

[We omit our correspondent's summary of the proceedings at this sésance, as the "Sunday Times" report has already appeared in our pages.—ED. "LIGHT."]

The genuineness of the phenomena, however, does not appear to have been established to the satisfaction of at least some of the sitters, for a Mr. T. S. Henry (described as an architect), who was one of those present at the above-mentioned sésance, adopted violent means to test the reality of the manifestations at a private sésance given by Mrs. Mellon, at her own house, on October 12th. It would appear that Mr. Henry was to have written a book for Mrs. Mellon to be entitled "Miracles in our Midst," in which was to be given an account of the materialisation phenomena, and although he says he has frequently asked that tests should be applied to his satisfaction, Mrs. Mellon has as often refused. Thus pained in his mind he attended at Mrs. Mellon's house on October 12th, when a company of eighteen formed the circle, and the form known as "Cissie" appeared at the curtains. "Someone on my left," says Mr. Henry, "went over and handed the so-called 'Cissie' the usual box of chocolates, which 'Cissie' rattled and proceeded to eat. . . . I went over on the pretext of picking up the pencils (dropped by the form), seized the form of the so-called 'Cissie' and found that I had hold of Mrs. Mellon, and that she was on her knees, and had a white material, like muslin, round her head and shoulders. . . . Someone struck matches, and I then saw that Mrs. Mellon had a mask of black material over her face, the aforesaid white drapery round her shoulders, her sleeves drawn up above the elbows, the skirt of her dress turned up, and her feet bare. She was on her knees, and I held her in the position in which I had caught her. I never let go my hold of Mrs. Mellon until the gas was lit and turned full on." The editor of the "Sunday Times," who was present, says he picked up a false beard in the cabinet immediately after the seizure, but the medium came in and snatched it from him. Several of the other sitters noticed other articles in the cabinet suggestive of trickery, but the medium gathered them up and sat on them. The evidence of the witnesses as to the drapery, mask, and beard is somewhat conflicting, and the presence of these articles at the sésance is denied by Mrs. Mellon, and she explains being in Mr. Henry's

grasp by saying that when he seized the form she fell off her seat in the cabinet, and it seemed as if she was shot into the form and absorbed by it. The medium says the drapery dematerialised, and she accounts for her shoes and stockings being off by saying that the forms on this occasion drew only from the lower parts of her body, and her legs became so shrunk that her shoes and stockings fell off. With the view of setting at rest the question which naturally arose as to the mediumistic ability of Mrs. Mellon, a test sésance was arranged for, at the office of the "Sunday Times," on the 17th inst. The previous sitters attended, as did also Mrs. Mellon, the latter being placed in a specially-constructed cage, but there were no developments on this occasion. Raps, however, indicated that something was wrong, and upon two doctors, who were present, going to the medium, they found she had fainted, and so the circle broke up after the lapse of half an hour. A further sitting under test conditions is promised as soon as the medium is well enough.

It need scarcely be said that the above proceedings have brought discredit, not only upon Mrs. Mellon, but upon Spiritualism generally, and the newspapers of both Sydney and Melbourne have not been slow in slating Spiritualists and the "spooks." However, as no intelligent person expects that the universe is going to collapse when a thunderstorm takes place, so it may be reasonably anticipated that, so far from harm resulting from the psychological hurricane which is now upon us, it will clear the air of much that is objectionable and unhealthy in Spiritualistic circles. Those who have the cause of Spiritualism at heart, so much as to desire that its higher aspects should be brought more prominently forward, will not feel sorry to hear of exposures, or attempted exposures, of physical mediums, who will not consent to sit under all reasonable safeguards against fraudulent phenomena. The refusal of a materialisation medium to sit under test conditions is, in itself, presumptive evidence of fraud and consequent untrustworthiness of the phenomena that attend such a sésance. It is of the greatest importance for the progress of Spiritualism that all physical manifestations at circles should be above suspicion of treachery, and the only way to ensure this is for sitters to insist upon test conditions under any and all circumstances. Why should they (whether Spiritualists or sceptics, whether the sésance is private or public, and whether the medium has or has not sat before under crucial tests) neglect to observe conditions which absolutely shut out all reasonable explanation of the phenomena except upon the basis upon which the experiment is entered? There is a moral responsibility attaching to Spiritualists in this matter, and it is for them to elect whether they will serve the cause by helping to raise mediums above suspicion of trickery, or whether they will be parties to proceedings that may serve as the entering wedge to fraud and deceit, helping to bring into contempt and ridicule that which is intended as the most sublime revelation of nature to mortal man. The case above referred to well illustrates the point in question. Any unbiassed mind reading the statements, *pro* and *con*, of the seizure of Mrs. Mellon by Mr. Henry must, in the name of truth, admit that the medium does not, and cannot, altogether clear herself of the charge of fraud. And see what this involves with the public, viz., that the very cogent evidence furnished by "Geordie" against Theosophy to its chief exponent is seriously depreciated by the unreliability of Mrs. Mellon's mediumship! The writer has never attended but one materialisation sésance, and that was in England about four years ago. One or two faces materialised, and, by the aid of luminous slates used by the forms, became visible to the sitters; but the sésance was a dark one, and the absence of test conditions simply deprived the manifestations of what might have been a highly valuable proof of spirit materialisation.

Mrs. Wallace, a blind lady, who has been practising as a clairvoyant for some years in Sydney, is now being prosecuted for telling fortunes. She has used her faculty mostly for medical purposes, but she has also given advice upon business matters to her patrons, and upon this latter exercise of her gift the police have, in pursuance of an Act passed in England one hundred and fifty years ago or more, set a trap for her upon which they have based a charge of fortune telling. The evidence called in defence of Mrs. Wallace shows an undoubted clairvoyant capacity which has benefited many of her patrons, but, unfortunately, that is not likely to be of much avail when the case comes before the Higher Court. The Act in question is mandatory; there is no discretion vested in the judge, and as the

Act has been held to be in force in this Colony there is very little chance of Mrs. Wallace escaping from the clutches of the law. The punishment is twelve months' imprisonment, without the option of a fine, but, of course, the executive authorities can mitigate the sentence of the Court. This is probably what will have to be done.

Colonel Bell, the American Consul in Sydney, has just delivered a very able lecture on Theosophy, in reply to Mrs. Besant. The Colonel is quite Ingersollian in his style, and his position is that of an Agnostic, but he has a perceptible leaning towards Spiritualism. The lecture was delivered in the Unitarian Church here, and the building was just packed; the chair being occupied by the Rev. George Walters, who is the officiating minister there, and himself a Spiritualist.

Glen-street, Paddington, Sydney, C. J. JOHNSON.
New South Wales.

Is Spiritualism a Religion?

SIR,—Mr. J Fraser Hewes, in your issue of December 8th, says: "As I am one of the many millions who believe that Spiritualism is religion pure and simple, I should earnestly like to be informed what reason your contributors have for saying it is not." The answer might be given succinctly thus: The belief of millions is no proof of the truth of any proposition; and it is time enough to begin to show why Spiritualism is not a religion when any proof is advanced that it is one.

It is a singular thing that, although Modern Spiritualism is now fifty years old, the advocates of its being a religion have never advanced a single argument to show that it is so; and in replying to such a query as that of Mr. Hewes, one has to state what ideas the religious Spiritualist is guided by, and then to indicate their transparent fallacy.

The New Testament defines religion thus: "Pure religion and undefiled is to visit the widows and fatherless and keep oneself unspotted from the world."

This definition, be it observed, says nothing about belief in God, angels, or a future state. Nor does it inculcate belief in the saving efficacy of any system or proposition. Its simple meaning is: Do your duty, that is religion, for all must recognise the duty of kindness and benevolence, however few may practise them.

Now, to do our duty, we must learn first what is our duty, and then cultivate our will power so that we can do it, even when its performance is unpleasant in some respects. The duties of each man are determined by his circumstances, and have wholly to do with his relations to his fellows in this present condition of being, and require for their performance as thorough a knowledge as possible of the world, and as earnest a desire as can be attained to assist in the amelioration of the conditions that at present prevail. You may have all the knowledge at present attainable of the world's conditions, including your own, and the most earnest desire to improve these conditions, without having any belief in a future state, in God, in the ministry of angels, in the advantage of meeting in rooms and singing illiterate hymns, and listening to oracular utterances of entranced persons. Indeed, it is difficult to see what advantage a man has, in the performance of his duties here, from believing that he and his fellows survive death. On the other hand, a narrow religious Spiritualist might reasonably say, "I believe that in the future life full compensation will be given for the losses and trials of this," and content himself by doing nothing to help his fellows. But the fear that death ends all is to many a direct incentive to make the present condition of life a Heaven rather than wait for a problematical Heaven in the skies. Hence it is, to-day, that the most earnest social reformers are agnostics, and it is difficult to find a single agnostic who is not a social reformer, and, therefore (if we trust to the New Testament definition), a truly religious man. Only for the enlightened is the knowledge of a future state a blessing. It is often a curse to the ignorant.

Probably Mr. Hewes, and those who think with him, would say that all evil consequences of belief in a future state are obviated by the direct teaching of spirit guides, controls, &c. Some even go so far as to indicate that all our knowledge of duty comes from associating with, and trusting to the guidance of, spirits. I ask, give us some evidence of this guidance and teaching. The reply is feeble in the extreme in all cases where this demand is made. Not one single truth known to man has ever been shown to come from any source except his own reason, exercised on the proven facts of human existence.

Another thing it would be well for Mr. Hewes and the religious Spiritualists to ponder is the enormous harm to the Cause they do by confining Spiritualism to a narrow sect, with an equally narrow creed. Are we to tell the world, you cannot be Spiritualists unless you cease to be Church of England members, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Agnostics, &c.? Is this not handicapping us with a vengeance, and confining Spiritualism to a few instead of giving it to all, whatever their religious beliefs may be? It is this exclusive and dogmatic spirit that has made our journals so small in their circulation, and has sent so many who believe in and know of a future life as we do, either to give up all association with Spiritualists, or to become Theosophists or members of the Psychical Research Society, and leave Spiritualism severely alone. The advocates of this suicidal course, in their lectures, quote great names of science and literature as proving the facts of Spiritualism, but they are disingenuous enough never to tell their hearers that these lights of science entirely ignore Spiritualism as a religion.

Religion in the future will be a *personal* thing for enlightened men, and not a social function as it has been in the past. Each man will believe and practise what his intellect and sense of duty dictate—will keep himself free from the dictation of all outside agencies, whatever these may be, Bibles, creeds, Church authorities, angels, spirits, controls, &c., &c.

Especially is it necessary to guard against the delusion that a spirit *must* know what is best for you, better than you can know by your own reason. This is the fallacy of fallacies among religious Spiritualists. They fail to recognise that we are spirits here and now, just as those others are, and that our surroundings must be our guide and not theirs. Nay, their sense of moral truth is suited to their condition, but has no relevancy to this condition of being. I quote a passage I once heard a lecturer deliver:—

If a million of the very highest and the most elevated of the departed stood around me and chanted with united voice the truths that to them were absolutely and impreguably true, these truths would be their truths, but must not be mine.

And why? Because their knowledge was derived from their experience and study of life, just as ours must be. We may have a much lower conception of truth and duty than theirs, but still we must be guided by it, lower as it is, rather than trust to what is derived from an experience that cannot now be ours. If we make mistakes we know we have ourselves to blame, but if we empty our heads and have them filled with ideas supposed to come from another state of being, will the spirit controls, &c., take the responsibility of our being misled? Of course not.

The evolution of man goes on by regular progression, following a natural law as sure as gravitation. At first the brute man with small intelligence and little, if any, sense of duty; then comes the feeling of ascendance over the lower animals, and a desire to provide for his own children, which previously he had not done; then, little by little, does love of his children expand into love of his tribe, of his nation and countrymen, of his race, and, at last, of all people and tribes. All this advance is the product of his natural growth, and his experience of life, and can be traced directly thereto, but cannot be traced to any so-called spirit except the spirit which is his real self. No more useful subject for discussion has ever been suggested for the pages of "LIGHT." If it puts an end once for all to the dominance of ignorant persons who believe they are mediums, but who give no proof of the fact, and who waste the time of the audiences who have the misfortune to listen to them, while they are uttering the most obvious platitudes or the most transparent fallacies with an amplitude and lack of coherence truly phenomenal, it will have done real service. By all means let us have more religion; but it must be a personal one, not one that endeavours to make all people think alike. Differing experience will lead each man his own way to his own discernment of truth and his own sense of duty. Some will be higher than others; but the higher thoughts and action will just be the result of the experience of the recipient as in the lower, and each must claim for himself the right to work out his own salvation in his own way in spite of all the dogmatists either of this state of being or of any other. VIR.

THE supreme necessity of life is misrepresented. It is not the perfect security of physical support. It is strict conformity to the highest, purest impulses of the spirit within. That is the supreme and all important secret of human worth and success.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

245, KENTISH TOWN-ROAD, N.W.—Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Ashton Bingham; Thursday, at 8 p.m., seance, Mrs. Mason.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Veitch gave an interesting address on "The Progress of Spiritualism," which was highly appreciated by the audience. On Sunday next Mr. Bradley will give an address.—W. MARSH.

MISS FLORENCE MARRYAT.—Miss Marryat's next lecture in London will take place at Peckham Public Hall, Rye-lane, S.E., on behalf of the Peckham Society of Spiritualists of Chepstow Hall. Further particulars next week.—W. H. EDWARDS, Hon. Sec.

NEWCASTLE.—The executive of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Spiritual Evidence Society regret the unavoidable necessity of postponing their Sunday services and week night séances until they can procure suitable premises for the purpose.—E. ELLISON, Sec.

72, ST. THOMAS-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK.—On Sunday next a meeting will be held to consider the revival of a Spiritual service on Sunday evenings during the winter months in North London. Meeting to commence at 7 p.m. Hearty invitation to all interested.—THOS. BROOKS.

45, MARKHAM-SQUARE, KING'S-ROAD, CHELSEA, S.W.—On Sunday a select and harmonious séance was held, each sitter realising the power of spiritual communion with personal advantage. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., clairvoyant séance; Monday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mr. Coote; Tuesday and Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing circle, Mrs. Perry.—W. G. COOTE.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY.—On Tuesday next at 8 p.m., at 113, Edgware-road (one minute from Marble Arch), we shall hold an experimental séance. This will be the last meeting in the present year. Members wishing to join the society may apply by letter to me.—A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L., President, 15, Lanark Villas, Maida Vale.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—The controls of Mrs. Bliss were very successful on Thursday last in giving clairvoyant descriptions. We should be pleased to receive the names of mediums who would occasionally take a circle on Wednesday or Thursday evening. On Sunday, Mr. C. Hardingham gave a very instructive address on "True Catholicity," which was much appreciated by those present. Sunday next, Mr. J. Dale, at 7 p.m.—J. B.

111, CLARENDON-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.—Our meeting on Sunday last was well attended. Mrs. Ashton Bingham addressed us upon "Moral Philosophy," directing our special attention to the many wonders in nature in support of our truths. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. B. Astbury; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; Saturday, open circle. Our first social gathering will take place on Boxing night, from 7 p.m. till 12 p.m., with concert and dance. Mrs. A. Bingham will appear as Old Mother Shipton, in costume, and as a Gipsy for palmistry, in aid of our fund to extend our Spiritual work in our new Hall. Tickets 1s., of Mr. Mason.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday Mr. Payne opened by reading a portion of the first Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, and commented upon the frequent references to prophets, seers, healers, &c., showing that in the early and admittedly true Church the spiritual gifts were in full operation, while the so-called Christian Churches of to-day not only dispense with these spiritual powers, but anathematise those who endeavour to cultivate and use these God-given powers. Mr. Long's guide, "Wilson," summed up the Spiritualists' gospel as a proclamation of the principle of "Through Death to Life," in opposition to the Materialists' position of "Through Life to Death." Sunday next, "Spiritual Assembly."—C. N. PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Tuesday, owing to the superior attractions at Stratford we were left very much to our own resources. Mr. Robson gave a trance address and Mr. Edwards clairvoyance, and treated magnetically nine patients. As we more than cleared expenses we were well satisfied, especially as so many of our members had gone to hear Miss Florence Marryat. On Sunday Mr. Stokes occupied the platform, his subject, "A Scientific Basis for Immortality," being for the most part read from the book, and afterwards dealt with. Questions were invited and answered. On Sunday next, at 6.45 p.m., Mr. James Burns will occupy our platform. His subject will be "Man as a Model of the Spiritual Universe." On Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m., circle, and magnetic healing by Mr. Edwards.—W. H. E.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Mrs. Bliss and Mr. Long will take our platform on Sunday next, and on Friday Mr. E. Wallis, of "The Two Worlds," has kindly consented to come to our hall, when we hope our friends will give him a hearty welcome. Miss Florence Marryat's lecture was a great

success, and our building fund profited to the extent of about £15. We know not how to thank Miss Marryat for her kindness, and if we can engage her again next winter we shall be glad to do so. Mr. Butcher gave a grand address here on the "Sermon on the Mount" on Sunday evening last, the hall being crowded as usual. He also sang a beautiful solo, which was highly appreciated. Donations for the building fund thankfully received by any of the committee, or by me, at 23, Keogh-road, Stratford, E.—THOS. MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

BRIGHTON.—Although there is no public propaganda of Spiritualism in this town, yet, thanks to the quiet labours of Mrs. Walter Acton, aided by Mrs. Bliss, the seeds of Spiritual truth have been widely sown, and some of the results of their work was in evidence on Monday last, when a public meeting was held in the Athenaeum Hall, North-street. The audience attentively followed and intelligently questioned the writer at the close of an hour's address on the "Gospel according to Spiritualism," and, at the request of the chairman, an almost unanimous desire was publicly expressed (in the "usual manner") to hear a course of explanatory addresses which will be given in the New Year. Many private inquiries were made, and a promising field of labour is opening in Brighton, but the labourers are at present few.—W. E. LONG.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. W. T. Cooper delivered a short address followed by very successful clairvoyant delineations by Miss MacCreadie, who gave some twenty descriptions of the spirit friends of various members of the audience, the delineations being accompanied in some instances by messages and names. That all the delineations were not recognised will surprise no one with any knowledge of the subject, but it is gratifying to record that most of them were identified, details in some cases being so graphic and categorical as to excite something like amazement in the minds of many of those for whom in particular the descriptions were intended. On Sunday evening next, Mr. E. W. Wallis will speak on "The Power, Purposes, and Principles of Spiritualism"; and on Sunday evening, 23rd inst., Miss Rowan Vincent will deliver an address.—D. G.

FUNERAL.

On Thursday, December 6th, the earthly body of Dr. Thomas Wilson was buried in the London Necropolis, Woking. Mrs. Wilson was accompanied by Mr. A. M. Rodger, Mr. Smiles, Mr. David Duguid (of Glasgow), and Mr. Glendinning. Mr. James Burns was invited to conduct the service at the cemetery, but was unable to attend. The coffin was taken direct from the train to the open grave, where Mr. A. M. Rodger conducted the service in a very able manner. In his extempore address he spoke of the sweet consolation which Spiritualism gives to mourners, in the certain knowledge that those who have been removed from them still live, and that the change called death is to the departed a great gain. He bore strong testimony to the noble character of Dr. Wilson, who had been his near neighbour for many years, and concluded with the very emphatic declaration, "He was a good man—he was a good man." Mr. Rodger then read a beautiful hymn, and offered up prayer, imploring the blessing and guidance of the Divine Father for the aged and lonely widow. After the coffin was lowered white flowers were strewn upon it, and a wreath of roses placed above the grave, emblematic of the singular simplicity, tenderheartedness, sterling honesty, and purity of the good man's life. Dr. and Mrs. Wilson have lived together in harmony and happiness for fifty years, twenty-four of which have been spent at 103, Caledonian-road, King's Cross, where, for the present, Mrs. Wilson can still be found by those who desire to help her in her extremity. If a few persons were to join in contributing sixpence or a shilling each, weekly, it would be a boon to her whose wants are few.—On Sunday night, at Cavendish Rooms, amongst the twenty descriptive tests given by Miss MacCreadie, there was one with a message to Mrs. Wilson, who was at the further end of the crowded hall. The widow is an entire stranger to the medium, who will only become aware of the circumstance when she reads this.—A. G.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WE desire to acknowledge the receipt of communications from Mrs. Hardinge Britten, "Edina," Mr. Thos. Blyton, Mr. Bevan Harris, "G. R.," and other friends, and to express regret that we are unable to make use of them in our present issue.

REJOICE AND BE GLAD.—Spiritualism does not say "good night" in the hour of death, but rather gives the glad assurance of a most welcome "good morning" just across the crystal river. It does not drape the mourner's home in gloom, but lifts the grim curtain, permitting us to hear responsive words of undying affection from those we love. Oh, let us rejoice, then, and be glad in these Easter years of Spiritualism, for they give life a new meaning. They put new courage, new strength, new intelligence, new religious aspirations, into our daily duties.—DR. J. M. PEEBLES, in "The Arena."