

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—*Goethe.*

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

No. 887.—VOL. XVIII.

[Registered as]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1898.

[a Newspaper.]

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	13	Mediumship: and 'Work in the Spirit World'	21
'The Sleep of the Soul'	14	After-Death States	21
Mr. Podmore's New Book	15	Our London Papers	21
Miss 'X' on Hauntings	16	The Cerebral Light	22
A Dream Fulfilled	17	Can any Soul be Lost?	23
The 'Spectator's' 'New Trend'	18	Society Work	24
Ministering Spirits	19		

NOTES BY THE WAY.

'Letters from Julia, or Light from the Borderland.' A series of Messages as to the Life beyond the grave received by automatic writing from one who has gone before' (London: Grant Richards), is, of course, a republication of the celebrated letters so well known in connection with Mr. Stead. A striking Preface tells us much that is important concerning Julia and the Letters, and concludes with the remark that even if the Letters were written solely by Mr. Stead's sub-conscious self 'that would in no way impair the truth or diminish the force of these eloquent and touching pleas for the Higher Life.' This is, in a sense, true, but surely they would, in that case, lack the evidential value that a dweller in the Unseen would give to them. We entirely agree, however, that the Letters are intrinsically valuable. It need hardly be said that they are unspeakably curious. The little book is a document of great significance, any way.

'The Light of Truth' prints a very lively sermon by a Unitarian minister, in reply to an Address by a gentleman who took the usual line, by attributing all spiritual manifestations to the devil. The lively Unitarian has an amusing time with him. 'Why, do you know,' he says, 'that the Church has been using this pathetically inane argument for 1,500 years?'

There never was the discovery of a new principle or a better method of accomplishing results, but the charge was made by the Church that it was the work of the Devil. Like a great scarecrow stuffed with straw, this institution has stood in the way of progress and held aloft its death-head of anathema. When Galileo took a pipe from an old church organ and constructed a telescope with which to verify the discoveries of Copernicus, the Church said he was possessed of the Devil and tried to murder him. Read the stories of Copernicus, Kepler, Tycho Brahe, Bruno and Galileo, and you get a fair idea of how much the opinions of the orthodox priesthood are really worth.

Think of it! A man in this age of telephones, and electric lights, and trolley cars, and submarine cables, and women lecturers, standing before a civilised audience and asserting that twenty millions of his neighbours are possessed of devils! Is not that a unique commentary on orthodox theology? And Brother Plummer actually fancies that he stated a new fact. He seems to have forgotten, if he ever knew, that men of his profession have always been saying the same thing about all the prophets that God has sent into the world. It almost seems that a man had to be possessed of a devil in order to discover any truth that was worth the trouble.

Our ally then winds up by aptly citing the spirit-appearances of the Old Testament. Were they all of the devil?

Friend Plummer seems to think so: at all events, the spirit raised by the Endor medium was, in his opinion, a demon playing the part of Samuel. But this is a mere assertion, as arbitrary as it is repugnant to the Bible story. 'The man who wrote that narrative,' says our preacher, 'told it for a fact.' Of course he did; and every suggestion in it strongly supposes the genuineness of Samuel's appearance. But if Samuel really appeared in the way described, why should not others appear under similar conditions? 'A Christian who believes his Bible literally has no right to question a modern phase of a Biblical doctrine.'

In a late number of 'The Agnostic Journal,' R. G. Ingersoll makes the following quaintly original remark, in an Essay on Shakspeare:—

The dramatist lives the lives of others, and in order to delineate character must not only have imagination but sympathy with the character delineated. The great dramatist thinks of a character as an entirety, as an individual.

I once had a dream, and in this dream I was discussing a subject with another man. It occurred to me that I was dreaming, and I then said to myself: If this is a dream, I am doing the talking for both sides—consequently, I ought to know in advance what the other man is going to say. In my dream, I tried the experiment. I then asked the other man a question, and before he answered made up my mind what the answer was to be. To my surprise, the man did not say what I expected he would say, and so great was my astonishment that I awoke.

It then occurred to me that I had discovered the secret of Shakspeare. He did, when awake, what I did when asleep—that is, he threw off a character so perfect that it acted independently of him.

A certain Count Karnice-Karnicke has invented a signal for the giving an alarm by a person who wakes only to find himself buried alive. It is a gruesome suggestion—and a rather absurd one. If the danger is great enough for letting down a signal tube into the grave, it would be surely better to make sure that a person is dead before we buried him. But, so far as the unspeakable horror of recovering consciousness in a coffin is concerned, the remedy is, of course, cremation.

Someone has sent us 'Isban-Israel: A South African Story,' by George Cossins (London: Gay & Bird); we know not why. We are not Commissioners in Lunacy. Rider Haggard and the sixpenny monthlies, with their half insane exaggerations and atrocities, have much to answer for, in vitiating and misdirecting the public taste. The book is not without ability, but its wild impossibilities and copious blood-shedding ought to be too much for any self-respecting reader.

It was surely a beautiful idea, to devote the Sunday before Christmas Day to the subject of Peace. About five thousand ministers of various kinds accepted the invitation to preach a Peace Sermon on that day. But all the replies to the invitation were not quite in harmony with the Church's glorifying of 'The Prince of Peace.' Several

replies in another sense were sent. Here are some specimens, —'awful examples,' indeed! —

The Rev. F. T. Wethered, of Hurley, near Marlow, writes: 'I consider that I have done my share in this world to promote peace, viz., by educating *three* sons for the British Army, in which they are now commissioned officers.' The Rev. N. G. Armytage, St. Aidan's, Boston, replies: 'I take my orders from my Bishop, not from the irresponsible schismatical leaders of a godless undenominationalism.' The Rev. G. W. Adams, of Stow, Downham Market, after condemning the Bishops for their agreement with the Peace Society in advocating International Arbitration, and expressing his opinion that 'the admission of the principle involved in Universal Arbitration, implies the sacrifice, more or less complete, of moral conviction,' concludes his letter by saying: 'This effort of yours and of others to bring in the principles of the millennium, and to make wars to cease, before God's time, before the Day of the Lord, is (pardon me for saying it) no help to religion, or to goodness, or to the great struggle of the sinful and sorrowing human family towards the light.' The Rev. J. Fraser, Rector of Banchory-Ternan, replies: 'So far as I understand either, I have no sympathy with your methods or your objects, and I trust that none of the clergy of the Church will be "drawn" by such appeals to a weak sentimentalism and spurious Christianity.'

We are thankful to believe that there is not a true Spiritualist in all the world who would talk like these teachers of religion.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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- 'The Vegetarian Messenger and Review,' for January. No. 1. London: National Temperance Publication Department, 33, Paternoster-row, E.C. Price 2d.
- 'The Way of the Soul; or, the Vocation of Human Life.' Viewed in Thoughts of a Septuagenarian on the Prospect of Rebirth. London: Williams & Norgate. Price 1d.
- 'The New Testament of Jesus'; or, Theist's Compilation of Selected Passages, freely arranged without Note or Comment, for Practical Religious Use. London: Williams & Norgate, 14, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C. Price 1s.
- 'Star Lore and Future Events,' for January. Amongst the contents are: The New Year; The Star of Bethlehem; The Great Storm and Its Lesson; Total Eclipse of the Sun; Looking Forward, &c. London: Glen & Co., 328, Strand, W.C. Price 3d.
- 'Mind,' for January. Among the contents are: A Psychic Law in Student Work; Heredity—True and False; What is Mediumship? The Microbe as a Blessing; The Gentle Voice of Stillness, &c. New York, U.S.A.: The Alliance Publishing Company, Life Building, 19 and 21, West 31st-street. Price 20c.

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'THE SLEEP OF THE SOUL.'

I have read with some interest the discussions in 'LIGHT' on the state of existence into which the soul enters immediately after death. In the number for October 16th last, in an article entitled 'A Curious Survival,' amongst others, the question is raised of the mysterious silence maintained by Lazarus, and other resuscitated saints of the New Testament, on the 'life of the world to come.' May I be allowed to suggest a view of the case which seems to me to be often overlooked in this connection? I do not pretend to any technical knowledge of the subject, but the teaching of the Bible and the accounts given by Spiritualists have led me to believe that the popular idea of an *active* state of existence immediately after death is a fallacy. Before referring to these sources of information let me point to the analogy to be found between the phenomenon of life and death and the phenomenon of our waking and sleeping life which composes our earthly existence. Unconsciousness is the inevitable complement of consciousness, and rest is necessary adjunct to work. If, therefore, after a day of toil we must lie down to sleep, how much more after the strain of a lifetime must we enjoy a period of repose? Clearly, rest must be our portion, and the worn-out soul must fall asleep at last.

Are there not times when to all of us, though we may be but 'in the mid-journey of our life below,' the thought of the long sleep in store for us, which we call death, comes as a cheering vision; when we can look forward to another active state of existence only with a sense of oppression; when we do not even long for the meeting with those who have gone before, nor desire the solution of those problems which we have spent most of our lives to know; when we crave only for the ending of life's struggles and the closing of the eyes of the soul upon its perplexities? As Mrs. Browning has beautifully expressed it:—

'For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show
That sees through tears the mummings leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on His love repose
Who giveth His beloved sleep.'

We want no rapturous greetings on the further shore; we ask no higher sphere of action, we only wish to cease. If ever the young are sometimes visited with this weariness of soul, how much more so the aged, who have come to that state of mind so pathetically described in the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, when 'desire fails' and life becomes a burden. Is it not probable that we shall find at last the rest we crave?

And does not the testimony of the Bible lead us to this conclusion? From the cry of the tired spirit of Samuel, awakened from its sleep by the witch of Endor, 'Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?' to the saying of the Spirit in the Revelation; 'Yea, . . . they rest from their labours'; we find the same idea of a period of post-mortem unconsciousness.

In the case of Lazarus we have the words of Jesus to this effect: 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.' And at the bidding of Christ the spirit of Lazarus awoke from its state of 'coma,' and took up its abode once more in the discarded body. Here it is that the question is raised concerning his reticence on the existence after death, and it has often surprised me that Browning in his 'Epistle' should have completely overlooked the probable solution of the puzzle, which I believe to be a very simple one. I am convinced that if Lazarus told nothing about it, it was because he had nothing to tell. If anyone were to ask me what my sleep had been like during a night when I was not conscious of having dreamt, how could I possibly describe it? The first thing I should remember about it would be closing my eyes, and the next thing would be opening them again; of the period that intervened I should not have the faintest recollection. So with Lazarus. He could recall his death—the mere severing of soul and body—and then came unconsciousness, and he knew nothing more until the Master's voice broke in upon the silence crying, 'Lazarus, come forth!'

If this were not the case, then the miracles of Jesus raising the dead cannot fail to appear to us in the light of

hideous cruelty. If the people had gone straight from earth into a state of bliss, such as the hymns describe, or Mrs. Oliphant shows us in her 'Little Pilgrim,' how could they even return with resignation to the weary life of earth? It would be like taking a slum child to the Crystal Palace and then expecting it to enjoy its garret when it got home.

Obviously they must have spent the interval between death and resurrection in a state of more or less complete unconsciousness. That this sleep of the soul may vary just in the same way as the sleep of the body I do not doubt, for, as when we fall asleep at night we sometimes do not, as far as we can tell, dream at all, and sometimes are attended by pleasant dreams and sometimes haunted by hideous nightmares, so the sleep of the soul may be peaceful or the reverse. There may be the dreamless sleep of the tired soul which has done its work well and earned its rest; there may be the restless, fitful slumber of the unquiet soul, which dreams of its life's tasks left undone, or is haunted by the nightmares of its misdeeds; and lastly, there is no doubt the poor soul whose sleep is broken by the memory of a crime, and who must needs hover about the scene with which it is connected until it has passed through the fierce purgatory of remorse.

And now in this connection may I make a few remarks on the subject of consulting our departed friends in our difficulties? I cannot help feeling very strongly at present that we have no right to awake the poor tired souls from their well-earned sleep. If they come to us uncalled then it is that they are burdened with a message so important that it will not let them sleep, but to arouse them oneself seems to me an act not only useless but of gross inconsiderateness. One correspondent of 'LIGHT' asked if it was wrong for him to 'pray to his mother,' by which I suppose he meant invoke her aid in his daily life. To such a question I would answer that it is not in the least probable his mother's spirit would awake merely by his addressing it without the aid of a medium, but that if it did it could probably tell him little or nothing that he did not know before. To my mind it is so utterly illogical to suppose that those who are 'on the other side' should have been, immediately upon their arrival, initiated into all the mysteries of life. We spend our time on earth slowly and painfully learning the lessons which experience has to teach us, and I see no reason to believe that by some gigantic conjuring-trick the soul suddenly leaps to a complete apprehension of those things the primary elements of which it passed its earthly life in acquiring.

The simile of the soul emerging into the next life like a butterfly from a chrysalis may be a very pretty one but I fail to see why this very peculiar natural phenomenon should have been adopted in this connection; besides which the analogy between the two is not even preserved, as the period during which the grub sleeps in the chrysalis is usually overlooked, and it is that period, if any, in the life of the worm which should exemplify the state of the soul immediately after death. Of the state of awakened consciousness which follows I do not propose treating—it does not come into the question under discussion and everybody has his own theory about it. For my own part, therefore, I do not believe the soul of a departed friend is necessarily in a better position to instruct us than when it was on earth. To consult it, therefore, seems to me in the first place absurd because useless, and in the second place inconsiderate. If your correspondent's mother when alive had become ill through overwork and been ordered abroad for change of air, would he be so thoughtless as to trouble her with letters about home worries? Would he not leave her to recover her strength in peace? Much more so, then, should he leave her to rest after the strain of her life on earth. It may be very comforting to ourselves to imagine the spirits of those we love, who have died, continually hovering about us still, but is it not a little bit selfish and rather weak-minded? We must all learn in time to stand alone and not to depend on others for support, for 'the race is run by one and one, and never by two and two.'

So when our friends pass into the state which we call 'death,' let us be willing to relinquish them utterly, glad that they sleep well, though we must journey on without them. Now that they are gone we must stumble on alone, and one day, when we too are worn-out and weary, rest shall

come to us in our turn. Death is not a black shadow that awaits us but a kind and loving friend ready to receive us. Thus, though the thought of losing consciousness is always more or less alarming and the dread of the unknown is strong in the human heart, let us have no fears, but as we have all our lives sunk confidently into the arms of sleep let us go forward gladly into the night which shall bring us rest after the long day's work.

'Ah! the silence at last!
Life's dissonance past,
And only pure sleep
In the night.'

Cannes, France.

N. H. B.

MR. PODMORE'S NEW BOOK.

I have just seen Mr. Podmore's new work on the table of a public library. Doubtless it will, as a work of the day, be seen on many public tables.

I think I may venture a very simple and easy prophecy. The author, before many years are over, will deeply regret having published so infantile a work. Any really 'higher criticism' would speedily annihilate it; for as a work of psychical philosophy it can hold no position. Only utterly illogical minds would receive the negative conclusions as affirmative ones.

If ever Mr. Podmore sincerely desires to raise the veil of Isis, after so vainly striving to deny that 'great Goddess,' he will find he requires a far more perfect equipment for the 'inquiry' than he at present surmises, judging all things, as he does, from surface and circumference. Theosophists and Spiritualists may, however, take heart of grace. Every one who considers the signs of the times will not be slow to perceive that the *renaissance* of true psychical inquiry is at hand. I note, as doubtless do many of my generation, with the deepest satisfaction, that the most intellectual and thoughtful minds of the day at the universities of Great Britain and on the Continent are sounding a deep note of inquiry, and asking with ever-increasing earnestness if there has not been a *terrible mistake* made by 'leading minds' and their followers for several generations. Is it not possible there may be some *readjustment* of heroes now on the pedestals in the Valhalla of public estimation?

Right and truth, as we all know, will prevail; but we often are not inclined to think, after all, that truisms *are* true, and many will be surprised at the consequences.

But they undoubtedly will, and it will astonish many to learn that the really great minds who have leavened the thought of all generations have all been Initiated men—initiated into what has been called that spurious charlatantry, *Occultism*, that king of sciences and synthesis of all.

It will be found by the truthfully searching student that from Geber to Paracelsus, or from Plotinus to Jacob Boehme, or from Thales and Pythagoras to Leibnitz, Newton, and so on, views have been entertained regarding these great souls that will certainly have to be readjusted. We may even live soon to see fresh 'Lives of the Alchemists,' or 'Hours with the Mystics,' dealing with them from another point of view. We may live to see the translation of Plato by the Master of Balliol put out of court altogether. We may live to find that Dr. Dee was not a cheat and a fraud. We may learn to believe that the magistrates who believed in witchcraft were *not* greater fools than the respected gentlemen who hold that honourable position to-day. We may learn to believe (here the Spiritualist proper must excuse me) that the 'Rochester rappings' were not the first inauguration of psychical inquiry to the world; and we may live to see Mr. Podmore and his band of students relegated to the position always supposed to be held by the 'man in the street,' *i.e.*, of being quite in the rear as regards the intellectual march of time.

Edinburgh.

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S.

A FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath unto the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, the sum of £ , to be applied to the purposes of that Society; and I direct that the said sum shall be paid free from Legacy Duty, out of such part of my personal estate as may legally be devoted by will to charitable purposes, and in preference to other legacies and bequests thereof.

'HAUNTINGS.'

By Miss GOODRICH-FREER ('X').

ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES
OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.*(Continued from page 8.)*

Miss Freer next referred to the well-known case of 'Silverton Abbey,' the tenant of which was compelled to abandon it owing to the impossibility of getting servants to stay there, the place being regarded as haunted. It would be remembered that she, with Colonel Taylor and other friends, had visited the house to inquire into the case. They had no experiences worth mentioning. Some rather odd things happened, but nothing that was conclusive. They heard some strange stories from people who lived in the vicinity. These bore chiefly on the appearance of a dark woman with remarkable eyebrows who was frequently seen about the house. The evidence for this apparition was about as good as the evidence usually is in such cases. And it was found afterwards that the description given of the apparition tallied with that of the owner of the house, to whose life (she was still living) rumour had attached a somewhat melancholy history. The husband of this lady had died in the house, and after his death it was said she found it for some reason impossible to live there. She therefore endeavoured to let the place, an attempt which was for some time unsuccessful, owing partly to her insistence that the lease should contain a clause giving her power to enter the house at any time she saw fit. Finally, it was let to the gentleman who wrote to the papers and whose complaints brought the house, under the pseudonym of 'Silverton Abbey,' into the notoriety it subsequently attained. 'My theory,' said Miss Freer, 'so far as one can have any hypothesis in a case of this kind, is that she herself had at some time seen what is described as a "rehearsal haunting," and that in her fear that those who afterwards occupied the house should see the same thing, she was constantly returning in thought and memory to the house in the hope of remaining in possession of all the facts concerning it, and her anxiety regarding the house, her thought and emotion concerning it, were apparently transmitted to entire strangers.'

This case, said the lecturer, might appear to be an example of the theory that hauntings of this kind are connected with the operation of the will, and she herself had so regarded it until a subsequent experience had led her to feel that such hasty conclusions were dangerous. Briefly it was as follows: In a remote place in the far North there were two young men—two bank clerks—not natives of the place, and with no special interest in it, nor any intention of remaining there permanently. They were walking by the seashore about nine o'clock one night, when one of them was startled to see a figure which appeared to hover about them. Not only was he perplexed by the appearance of the figure, which seemed to follow them, but also because it was invisible to his companion. They hurried home in a state of distress and disturbance, but on a subsequent evening the two young men (who, for convenience, may be called Donald and Norman) happening to be in the same part where Donald had previously seen the mysterious figure, they were again the subjects of a similar experience. But on this occasion Donald was addressed by the strange being, which requested him to make an appointment for another evening. This appointment he kept, and had a long conversation with the apparition, who on this occasion was accompanied by another. Norman, at a little distance, could hear Donald speak, but heard no answering voices. The first apparition was that of a woman who claimed to have been murdered on that spot some thirty years before, and to be anxious that the right person should be accused of the murder. No one had paid the penalty: but the wrong person had fallen under suspicion and she was anxious to right the wrong. She declared that the person who committed the crime was still living in the very neighbourhood. The second apparition was that of a man, who, however, took no part in the conversation. When Donald rejoined his companion they returned to the village and went directly to the residence of a doctor, where Donald fell into a dead faint. I asked the doctor (said Miss Freer)

to assure me, on his professional reputation, that that faint was absolutely genuine, and he assured me that it did not require professional skill to see that the man was suffering from exhaustion produced by absolute terror. However, the most extraordinary chapter in the story is this: Donald and Norman were, on another occasion, together in the doctor's surgery, when the former suddenly exhibited great alarm. This was caused by the entrance of a man into the surgery, seeking something to relieve an aching tooth; a man who, strange to say, Donald afterwards declared was the same man whom he had seen with the woman on the evening of the apparitions, and that it was this man whom the woman accused of her murder. Donald became very unpopular in that village, and the person accused found himself obliged to remove to a distance. Yet the vision was found to possess some substantial foundations. Thus, inquiry showed that a woman had been murdered on the spot where the apparition was seen, and at about the time stated, *i.e.*, thirty years before, and a certain fisherman had been suspected of the crime. So far as can be discovered, the story of the murder and the identity of the fisherman were absolutely unknown to Donald at the time. A case like this presented some unique features, one of the figures being that of a person long dead, while the other was still living. If one tried to explain the case by will power, one had to face the problem of the will of the dead complicated with the will of the living; and certainly no one would want gratuitously to accuse himself of murder. It seemed impossible, however, to arrive at a definite conclusion on these cases of haunting, because one story was perpetually turning up to contradict the other.

Continuing, Miss Freer said, 'I need not relate to you stories of "rehearsal ghosts," since these are the commonest kind of all. I daresay you may remember a story of mine about my visit to Hampton Court. Others may remember the story of my visit to Clandon House. In both of these cases, so far as my senses can be relied upon, I saw figures which in one case, at least, I took to be normal and human. In these cases there seemed to be absolutely no dramatic reason for any such rehearsal. It seems rather as if what I saw were a mere image produced by the thoughts and emotions of those who had once lived in the places; and it may be that persons sensitive to such things have the power of picking up such impressions and materialising them or giving them a sort of visual actuality. But it seems extremely difficult to arrive at any conclusion. There is no doubt the spiritualistic hypothesis is much simpler; but it is so simple and easy that there is a danger of falling into it without sufficient evidence. Of course there is only one way of arriving at a solution of these problems. What we want is more evidence and yet more evidence, and in the case of so-called haunted houses there are permanent difficulties in the way which, so far, have militated against suitable observation.'

Miss Freer then referred to the case which, in company with Colonel Taylor and other friends, she had recently had under investigation. The scene of the haunting was a house in the North, and by staying there some months they had succeeded in obtaining the evidence of some thirty persons (who had stayed in the house at different periods) to the occurrence of various kinds of phenomena. These persons did not include the domestic servants, and, in this connection, Miss Freer remarked that she did not regard the evidence of a servant as necessarily less honest and intelligent than that of any other person, although it was frequently the custom to do so. As a matter of fact, uneducated persons, like children, were often more observant than persons of culture, whose minds had other distractions. The associates of Miss Freer who were chosen for the surveillance of the house in question were invariably persons of education, intelligence, and observation. There was absolutely no other criterion of fitness. They did not choose people who were likely to see ghosts, because that would have rendered the evidence of little value. The details, said Miss Freer, would be laid before the public shortly, and she had no doubt they would prove interesting and instructive. She had over and over again seen three different figures, and was herself but one of many witnesses. They had been seen by other persons (who knew nothing of what she had seen), both in her presence and separately. One curious detail was this: that two witnesses heard voices but could not see the figures

from which they proceeded, while others, present at the same time, both saw and heard. The house was taken for three months by a distinguished member of the Society for Psychical Research, as one with the most complete and best authenticated record of alleged haunting which it was possible to obtain. All expenses were to be paid, and everything possible done to make the period of continuous observation and record as agreeable as possible. As the opportunity was officially ignored by the Society, and as one so unique and so costly was unlikely to occur again, Miss Goodrich-Freer, at very considerable inconvenience, had herself given up three months to the investigation, assisted by Colonel Taylor and other friends. The Council of the Society for Psychical Research had explained that Mr. F. W. Myers had not brought the matter to their notice, but he had himself been there for a few days with Professor Lodge, and had been rewarded for the effort by interesting experiences. It was, she observed, a matter of the deepest regret that a Society which existed for the purpose of investigation should have neglected such an opportunity as this.

In conclusion, Miss Freer said: I suppose I might go on talking for ever—you either believe these things or you do not believe them. Many reject the evidence merely from prejudice, and it is extraordinary how prejudice will make you deaf and blind, and sometimes imbecile; and in spite of any amount of record, observation, philosophy, and experience, there will remain those who are ready to say, like the immortal Tom Sawyer, 'Ghosts, you gander! they ain't nothing but air, and heat, and thirstiness pasted together by a person's imagination.' Air, and heat, and thirstiness! This suggests yet one more observation. I have dwelt to-night upon those points upon which I find it possible to be in sympathy with the Spiritualist Alliance. There is one point, however, upon which I most emphatically differ. So far as I know, it originated with your esteemed President. At all events, to-night it has been countenanced by my friend the Chairman, Colonel Taylor—I refer to your most reprehensible and pernicious habit of coming here to talk at an hour when you ought to dine. I think after that observation you will thank me for sitting down. (Laughter and applause.)

MR. GILBERT ELLIOT offered some observations on the necessity for the classification of the facts connected with the various orders of phenomena. What was needed, he thought, were large groupings of facts and phenomena, so that they might reason from generalities to particulars; but, so far, it seemed to him that little or nothing had been done in this direction. He narrated two cases of supernatural appearances, one of which had come within his personal experience, while the other had been related to him by a friend.

MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS (the President of the Alliance), in the course of some remarks appreciative of the address of the evening, said: I rise to discharge the very pleasing duty of thanking Miss Goodrich-Freer for her admirable and interesting address, and I do so with the greater pleasure because of my conviction that nothing she has said is at variance with the spiritualistic hypothesis, and that everything she has said rather backs up our experiences. Miss Freer does not think herself a Spiritualist, but I fancy, after this lecture, everybody else will think she is. One is rather interested in the particular stress that she laid on the idea of thought-forms—that some of these so-called apparitions may be thought-forms, 'ultimated,' as we should say. But the question is, whose thought-forms? The very supposition that they are thought-forms supposes an individual of whose thoughts they are forms. Well, that is all we want. And whether they are deceased persons or not does not affect our question, because we know, as a matter of fact, in our experience, that there are cases where the spirit forms of people, still in the flesh, have appeared at séances and communicated. That is a fact, and therefore the theory does not in any way upset our experiences. The President concluded by bespeaking the thanks of the audience to Miss Freer for her able address, and to Colonel Taylor for his kindness in taking the chair.

The Rev. JOHN PAGE HOPES seconded the proposition. He felt that the perplexity which Miss Freer expressed in regard to the experiences she narrated was not at all a matter for regret. It seemed to him that the longer such

matters remained in the position of open questions the better. They should gather in as many facts as possible; but beware of being in a hurry to draw conclusions concerning them.

DR. A. WALLACE testified to the great value of mediums in connection with cases of haunting. They all knew Miss Freer's keen critical ability, and he was disappointed not to have heard a little more of her experiences. He was sure she would be willing to go over the experience of any Spiritualist who had knowledge of cases of haunting.

MISS FREER, in some concluding remarks, thanked the meeting for the patient hearing which it had accorded to her. Referring to Dr. Wallace's observations, she found it quite possible to examine cases of haunting without the assistance of mediums. One of the particulars in which she most strongly dissented from the methods of the London Spiritualist Alliance was in the employment of professional mediums, a class with which she had no sympathy whatever, and for which she wished to express an entire lack of toleration.

The meeting then terminated.

[As our readers will have seen from our Leading Article in last week's 'LIGHT' we have no sympathy with the remarks of Miss Goodrich-Freer in disparagement of 'professional' mediums, and we cordially concur with the criticisms of our esteemed correspondent 'Bidston' in the same issue. We recur to the subject, however, for the purpose of pointing out that 'Bidston' was in error in suggesting that Miss Goodrich-Freer is herself a 'professional' journalist. We happen to know that she is not so, and, fortunately or unfortunately, does not need to be; but we should esteem her work no less highly if she were.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

A DREAM FULFILLED.

A correspondent kindly sends us the following interesting paragraph from the 'Worcestershire Echo':—A few days ago Mr. Clark, of Kidderminster, who has for many years been a disciple of Izaak Walton, obtained permission of Mr. Jobson to fish for pike in Hurcott Pool. His companion was Mr. Frank Stone, carpet merchant; and Mr. Lewis, the keeper, was also present. Before the lines were thrown into the water Mr. Lewis made a singular remark, which was very soon literally fulfilled. He told Mr. Clark that his wife had dreamt on the previous night that the largest pike ever caught in the pool had been pulled out by two visitors, and he confidently told Mr. Clark that the dream would be fulfilled. Mr. Clark smilingly remarked that he was not a believer in dreams, to which Mr. Lewis humorously retorted, 'Ah, well, we shall see.' Lines were thrown out, and Mr. Clark pulled out a few small fish, and then caught one several pounds in weight. Mr. Stone, who is not an experienced angler, had many 'bites,' but did not succeed in hooking his fish. Mr. Clark gave him instruction in the back-handed pull, and in a few minutes Mr. Stone had another bite. He put into practice the directions given and hooked his fish. It was at once evident that a large and powerful pike had been hooked. In a few minutes this impression was confirmed by the monster coming to the surface for an instant and then disappearing. It required skilful manipulation to keep the fish under control, and a considerable period to overpower and land it with the net into the boat. The prize was something to be proud of. The pike measured forty-five inches in length, and weighed just over twenty-six pounds. This was the hour of Mr. Lewis's triumph. Looking at the fish, then at Mr. Clark, he said, 'There, you see; that's the largest fish I have ever seen taken out of Hurcott Pool. What about the dream now?' The fish has been sent to a London taxidermist for preservation.

'CHRISTIAN SCIENCE' AND 'DIVINE HEALING'.—We give the following extract from a letter which we have received from Mr. Allan Fisher:—'I have received so very many letters from kind friends protesting against the unjust attacks made upon me that I am now endeavouring to arrange for a visit to London in a few weeks, if time permits (prior to my return visit to the States, to obtain at the hands of one of the most influential bodies of men honours and degrees in recognition of my services for the good of humanity), when I shall endeavour, with God's blessing and the help of the spirit world, to demonstrate that wondrous gift of healing which I really do possess.'

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EDITOR E DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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THE 'SPECTATOR'S' 'NEW TREND.'

What are we to do with 'The Spectator'? With an air of judicial seriousness, it is, if anything, more moony than 'The Telegraph,' and more aggravating than 'The Chronicle': for 'The Telegraph' and 'The Chronicle' only grin at us, but 'The Spectator' marches into court with the severest gravity possible, but ends by toddling out with the most vacant giggle imaginable. When will these respectable papers begin to take the trouble to think the thing out, or let it alone! We tell them plainly, that, for all their moaning and jesting, they convey to us the impression that they are strongly attracted to the subject, as those who know more than they have the courage to confess.

A curious Article in 'The Spectator' has led us on to these remarks. The Article is entitled 'The new trend of Psychological Research,' and is a review of Mr. Podmore's recent book, already noticed by us. 'The Spectator' is deeply impressed with this book, especially with the 'new trend in psychological research' which it reveals. And what is this 'new trend'? Put briefly it is this,—that the psychicalists now see that the evidence is strongest where they thought it was weakest; in other words, that, as compared with the evidence for physical manifestations, 'a closer and more impartial examination of the evidence seems to show that instead of the testimony being weakest on "the spiritual side of the problem," it is really stronger and more able to meet the strain of examination.'

But it ought to be stated at once, that, by 'the spiritual side of the problem,' 'The Spectator' does not mean the spirit-communication side of the problem. It only means that the evidence is now stronger for mysterious happenings on the mental side than for such happenings on the physical side of life. By 'the spiritual side, therefore, it only means the side on which there may be thought-transferences and hallucinations (whatever that damaged word may now mean).

If 'The Spectator' is right, and we think it is, 'the new trend' is a distinct step in our direction. A moving table might mean any one of a dozen things, but a well recorded and well attested appearance at the moment of death, to a friend hundreds of miles away, is capable of only one explanation. 'The Spectator' does not say this: but we do. It does not matter a bit whether the spirit of the dead man stands there before his friend, or whether the intense thought of the dead man, in dying, externalised itself in a wraith, or whether such intense thought was able to produce spectral impressions on a receptive brain. The point is that people think they see the spirits of the dead unexpectedly, and at a time afterwards found to coincide

with the time of death; and whether this happens frequently enough to remove it from the category of coincidence. On this point, happily, 'The Spectator' is, to begin with, clear. It says, quite frankly:—

If, as in the best instances quoted, the person who sees the vision communicates the fact of the vision or puts it on record, and then hears that the death has actually occurred, the evidence for the 'facts' is practically unchangeable. We do not want to know that A did actually see the figure of a man. We only want to know that he thought he did,—i.e., had the impression in his mind. If that fact is established, and also the death, there is little possibility of challenging the evidence as due to a mistake or to an hallucination. The whole transaction moves in the spiritual field, and to establish hallucination establishes nothing damaging to the story.

It is true that 'The Spectator' immediately adds: 'Of course, to say this is not to say that the facts show that there was a communication with a disembodied spirit.' Perhaps not, but, as it admits, 'the whole transaction moves in the spiritual field': and, as it also admits, it does not matter whether an actual spirit is present or not when the vision is seen. One explanation of the vision is almost as good as another. The main and vital point is that at death there may be instant or almost instant communication of some kind from the 'dead' to the living, irrespective of space. Admit that, and the actual presence of the spirit is not a whit more difficult of belief than the presence of a 'hallucination.' In fact, there are some who would find it easier to believe in the rapid transit of a thinking spirit than the equally rapid transit of a disembodied and dispirited thought.

Now it is just here that 'The Spectator' loses its grip, and becomes a trifle silly,—if we may venture to so express 'the compliments of the season': for it is at this point that it allows its hopeful road to end up a tree. Quite granting that coincidence will not account for these visions or hallucinations, it offers the alternative of thought-transference. 'We are agreed,' it says, 'that the theory of coincidence cannot account for all the stories of wraiths and telepathic hallucinations'; but the alternative is by no means 'the theory of communion with the spirit-world.' Oh no, certainly not!—not while 'that blessed word' *Telepathy* is uncremated. So, then, 'The Spectator' ends, as we said, by giggling into that refuge for the destitute, with these remarkable sentences:—

A dies in Australia, and B sees a vision of his death. But C or D knew of the death, and possibly thought or dreamt of B in connection with the death, and his thought may have been transferred to B. To avoid this hypothesis entirely, one wants A to die alone in the desert, and B to see the vision before any live human being can have known or guessed the death. We want also to be sure that A was really dead and not alive, though moribund, and so still able to transfer a mundane thought into B's mind. As yet no sound recorded story fulfils these conditions completely.

And never will, for the simple reason that, happen what will, human ingenuity, if it makes up its mind to do it, will always be able to invent an alternative to any 'how' or 'why.'

But now, to return to 'the new trend,' and the difference between the value of testimony in favour of physical manifestations and manifestations 'in the spiritual field.' 'The Spectator,' as we have said, thinks 'the spiritual field' is winning. That is good news, whatever we or anyone else may mean by 'the spiritual field.' Even when the evidence for the physical manifestations was undeniable, it was always open to the gainsayer to tell us that 'any number of new forces might any day be discovered,' and therefore the force at the back of these manifestations might only be one of them, even if we grant that the medium is not a conjurer and a liar. But refuges in 'the

spiritual field' are not quite so numerous or accessible; though 'that blessed word' *Telepathy* seems at present, sufficient. But, where *Telepathy* fails, *Hypnotism* steps gaily in: and 'The Spectator' quotes Mr. Podmore here, in a passage which it would indeed be hard to beat. With reference to Mr. Home's levitation, and passage from window to window, unsupported, outside of a house, 'witnessed by three men of the highest character,' 'The Spectator' tells us, Mr. Podmore says:—

It may be conjectured that Home probably supplied certain material data, and guided the imagination of the percipients to complete the picture which he suggested to them. That, for instance, he really took live coals out of the fire, and possibly on some occasions held them in his hand, protected by some non-conducting substance; that he really stretched himself to his full height, and thus produced that breach of continuity between waistcoat and trousers referred to by one of the witnesses to the phenomenon of elongation; that when levitated as described in Chapter III., p. 52, he at least thrust his head and shoulders out of the window.

This blend of special-pleading and trifling is too much even for 'The Spectator,' which mildly says: 'Very possibly this is not the true explanation of the phenomenon.' But, having said this, it seems exhausted, and ends with astonishing limps, even to the point-blank contradicting itself; for, having commenced by saying that 'the theory of coincidence cannot account for all the stories of wraiths,' it concludes by saying that premonitions need not be dwelt upon, for they, 'like the wraith-stories, are no doubt capable of being explained by the theory of coincidence'! Did two people write this curious Article? or did the writer of it end in a general fog? That last seems the likeliest, for, with a helpless movement or two, and a weak fling at mediums 'who throw tables about,' and at Mrs. Piper, who has not yet 'been found out,' the writer concludes: and goes up his tree.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of Members, Associates, and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m., on Friday, January 21st, when Mrs. M. H. Wallis will give an address on 'Spiritual Realities.' Mrs. Wallis is one of our best speakers, and we hope that she will have a cordial reception.

THE GLASGOW BAZAAR.—We are asked to mention that, by request of Mr. J. Stevenson, Miss MacCreddie, 8, Oxford and Cambridge Mansions, London, W., will be pleased to receive gifts of work and other contributions for the bazaar to be held in Crown Halls, Glasgow, in March next. The assistance of Scottish Spiritualists in London, and others interested in the progress of the movement across the border, will be gratefully received.

MINISTERING SPIRITS.—Under this title Mrs. Russell-Davies has issued a little book, designed to meet the wants of the children of Spiritualists, whose interests she thinks have hitherto been sadly neglected in the way of Christmas and New Year's books. Of course, the stories which she tells for the little ones are not of the old familiar pattern. Instead of fiction, pure and simple, she seeks to make them fully realise the presence and beneficent work of unseen friends—as facts. Living herself in the every-day consciousness, not only of the personal presence of so-called 'departed' friends, but also of their deep and abiding interest in all that concerns us, she has drawn on her own experiences for her *matériel*, and has used it with admirable effect. The book is priced at eightpence, and may be obtained by direct application to Mrs. Russell-Davies, Arundel House, Balham Park road, Balham, S.W. It is a sad pity that it has not been so well printed as it deserved to be.

The Subscription to 'LIGHT' is 10s. 10d. per annum, post free to any part of the world.

MEDIUMSHIP: AND 'WORK IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.'

At the fortnightly gatherings of the London Spiritualist Alliance, considerable emphasis has of late been laid on the want of 'experience meetings.' It has been contended that our great need is for more and more phenomena, and for public report and discussion of the same. Unlimited psychical 'facts' are in demand, apparently on the assumption that by sufficient multiplication of these there will the sooner be evolved a clear understanding of them. I have not one word to say in discouragement of the collocation and discussion of experiences. On the contrary, I think the more we have of them the better. But it seems to me at least as essential that the complementary half of the subject should be kept well in view. As a matter of fact the world has had thousands of years of psychical experiences, which for thousands of years have been of the same general character, repeated *ad infinitum*. Why, then, is the world at this late day racking its brain over the difficulties of the psychic alphabet? Not from lack of experiences, surely! The point of interrogation is, by the more advanced, placed to-day just where it has been placed again and again, times innumerable, during the centuries of the past.

Let us limit our present view of this mundane movement—say to the period of what is called Modern Spiritualism.

After a few decades, rich in experiences of every known psychical variety, there is still heard the insatiable cry, 'Give us more experiences—any kind of experiences, only more and ever more experiences, till everybody is satisfied.' As if satisfaction to all could possibly come that way in an eternity!

Experiences are good and necessary; publication and discussion of them are also good and necessary—*ceteris paribus*. But the real, the clamant need of our time is not of more experiences, of more phenomena; it is urgent need of true interpretation of the experiences which we have had already. 'All things seek—not report, but—interpretation,' is an axiom that the advanced Spiritualist should brand on his brain.

Our dire need is not more facts of Spiritualism; it is more knowledge of the principles of Nature that Spiritualism peculiarly illustrates, and this alone can ever vivify and unify those bewildering facts.

If Modern Spiritualism be the specific work of the spirit world, as we are told it is, we should, with reason, expect to find that not only were we in this world provided with largesse of psychic facts—were given abundance of spiritualistic experiences—but likewise were recipients of knowledge adequate to render these facts and experiences intelligible. Such an expectation would certainly be reasonable, on the assumption that Spiritualism is really a heaven-directed movement. Without this one thing needful, how could the positive action of the spirit world on this movement be rationally affirmed at all!

Further, the impartation of such necessary knowledge should, in reason, be looked for about the time of the earth's perihelion towards the spirit world, so to speak; not near the stage of aphelion. That we are nearer to the latter than the former is tacitly admitted everywhere, in the general complaint with regard to the comparative scarcity of good mediums and notable phenomena; yet it is to the present and the immediate future—to the aphelion instead of the perihelion period—that we nearly all look for conclusive experiences and an illuminated understanding of them.

Is it, then, to the past of Modern Spiritualism more than to its present and near future, that we should look for the grandest manifestations of the action of the spirit world on mankind during the present cycle? I have no hesitation in answering for myself emphatically in the affirmative. But the demand in these days is for *tests*; let us here institute one.

Readers of 'LIGHT' have recently had presented for their serious consideration a very remarkable paper by Mr. Thomas Atwood, entitled, 'My Work in the Spirit World.' Those of us who heard the paper read by Mr. Atwood could have no doubt of his sincerity—of the genuineness of his belief in the experiences as reported. Everyone would admit that Mr. Atwood was frank to a fault, fearless to the

time mankind is capable. This is a principle that no true thinker could question. As a practical application of it to the matter in hand, I deliberately affirm that the best solutions ever given of the problems of mediumship generally are those offered to the world by Andrew Jackson Davis, as by and through him, also, more than by or through any other mortal, has the universe been rendered intelligible—and lovable.

W. BUIST PICKEN.

AFTER-DEATH STATES.

BY 'QUESTOR VITÆ'

IV.—IDENTIFICATION.

A further transition entails ingress into the state of identity. But the recognition of each other by the two aspects of the dual selves and their re-uniting is the precondition of their identification of, and with, the particular source and hierarchy whence they emanated in germic state in the Solar-Self. Personal consciousness can identify itself as being a particularisation of the universal consciousness; but that is not real identification; it is a logical apprehension merely and does not carry an enlargement of cognition or expanded comprising. The identification of the other part of ourselves is, however, followed by the identification of our position in the integral whole; of the function we represent in the Solar-Self.

Personal cognition is limited to the *a posteriori* relating of the without (and that within a limited radius). Real identification implies conscious ingress, *i.e.*, the expansion of consciousness, along the vital circuit which constitutes *a priori*, precedential mediation, as well as egress, or perception of the without by exteriorised relatings. Recognition of individuality is the precondition of this higher mode of consciousness. Individual identification and completion of the parts in themselves is the precursory condition of identification of the whole. Individual selves then cognise, and consequently comprise the within as well as the without of the Solar-Self. In other words, dual identification is followed by identification with the life-process of the Solar-Self. This life circuit of the Solar-Self flows through every integral unit comprised in His-Her system, thus constituting their reality; the basis in which they rest; as our personal life flows through every cell in our organisms in subordinate illustration of that process. It is this transcendent circuit that flows through man's heart, communicating the pulsation of propulsion and attraction, or ebb and flow, that constitutes his living; it is the action communicated in this circuit that builds up his organism, and that determines his egress and indrawal to inner states. Thus is man comprised in the unity of the Solar-Self, even during his external life in the appearance of separate personal existence, though he knows it not.

Our personal consciousness may be compared to that of the cells in our organisms, who do not know that they are dependent on and in the unity of our selfhood; whose awareness is limited to their own experiences. Identification with the Solar-Self carries identification, with that life-circuit. The consciousness of each dual-unit then extends along this mediated vital internal relation, from plane to plane, from centre to circumference, thus comprising each plane in their cognition.

The whole of the memories of their experiences both in the descending, outward circuit of becoming, and in their re-ascend inwards, is then gathered up into their perception. They relate and distinguish, and, consequently, share in the experiences of every self through whom that circuit flows in each successive plane; though the subordinate, derivative selves so related and comprised, living on a lower level, know it not (as our own vitality flows through and comprises all the cells in our organism, though the latter know it not). These dual selves need not 'return' here, therefore, to see how the world they once lived on progresses and how we, their children, fare. They need only to project their consciousness along that inner circuit and comprise us and their other children here, to know far more about our world than our personal cognition ever include. Yet if they so desire they can exteriorise and project some of their vitality to this plane and build up a representative apparition, which, however, is conditioned by the laws pertaining to this plane and must assume the configuration pertaining to this plane,

though that is not the configuration pertaining to their real state.

The expansion of consciousness along the *inner* life circuit which accompanies identification entails cognising and comprising from *within* and is a mode of cognition unknown in personal divided states, in which we can only cognise from without, by exteriorisation. We cannot even volitionally project our consciousness along our own nervous system and direct the integral cells of our organisms. This occurs because, living in the most external state, our consciousness functions coincidently in external mode and even in a relatively external organ; the brain. The discretising that exists between man's higher and lower self, while in personal states, is subordinately represented in his organism. His personal consciousness, functioning through the brain, is discretised from his individual consciousness, which functions through the heart, and from his consciousness of identity, which expands along the interrelating life process uniting integral selves in unity. But the reunion of the dual aspects of true selfhood in individuality, entailing, as it does, the transcending of this divided state, is accompanied by the transcending of the limited mode of cognition pertaining to personal states, and concomitantly, by cognition of the within, as well as of the without. The heart is then no longer discretised from the head, but unified in consciousness; or, in other words, wisdom is equilibrated by love and love by wisdom.

It is by this internal mode of cognition so unfolded, by this relating of and interpenetrating of all the 'others' in the same circuit, that they become the 'own' in cognition and in love. It is this inner mode of cognition that constitutes the concrete solidarity of each dual-unit with the integral whole of all the other units in the Solar-Self. Each thus shares, participates, and co-associates in and comprises the experience of all. This is consequent on identification with the Reality of all through whom that Reality 'appears.'

It must again be pointed out that this vital circuit of the dual Solar-Self is precedentially received by that Self from and through Solar-Selves prior in logical order. It is the process of the Infinite Life, and ever transcends all the derivative selves whom it constitutes by communication. Flowing through the latter, and giving itself away, it constitutes the not-self, which is subsequently not only related and distinguished, but actually taken again into the organisms or forms of selves, and thus actually and really comprised in Self. And ultimately, indeed, the not-self is nucleated and polarised, and given forth from selves as germic selves. Thus does the Universal Life flow forth in eternal flux, from Self to not-self, and back again into selves comprised in Self.

But these integral dual-selves in the Solar-Self, not only relate from within by expansion of consciousness along the vital process with which they are identified, but they also relate the without, by exteriorised radiation; of which process our aura is a subordinate representation and of which the visible sun rays are the most external macrocosmic aspect. Thus they comprise and cognise from within and relate the without, of all contained in our solar system.

(To be continued.)

OUR LONDON PAPERS.—We quote the following piquant paragraph from the January number of 'The Coming Day': 'Mr. H. V. Sweringen must be the champion vituperator. In 'The Progressive Thinker,' he says: "I have been endeavouring for a long time to work out by logic, arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, morality, Christianity, reason, and common sense, why it is that many so-called newspapers—moral, Christian, decent, respectable, pure, goody-goody newspapers—will most emphatically refuse, with an air of insulted intelligence and injured piety, to print anything upon the subject of Spiritualism, and yet admit to their papers and publish column after column, such low, nasty, grovelling, debasing, degrading, brutal, uncivilised, cruel, beastly, heathenish, inhuman, drunken, gambling, barbarous, wicked, hellish stuff as a description of a prize-fight, in which two sloggers batter each other for money and the test of which one of the two is the greater brute." . . . Of course, this is a very bad case of swearing, and is scarcely endurable; but the odd thing is that every word of it is true.'

* This mode of co-associative existence and experience displays the utter utility of the re-incarnation theory, and shows that that speculation is based upon teachings emanating from personal states; that the schools maintaining it have no knowledge of or relation with higher states than those of personality.

THE CEREBRAL LIGHT.

Events seem moving very quickly towards a great outbreak of spiritual energy in the New Year. Signs of it are not wanting upon all hands; and in papers like the 'Spectator,' through a whole gamut of papers like the 'Daily Chronicle,' the 'Christian World,' to the 'Referee,' mention is being made of the crying need of some expected outbreak of spiritual energy, or some new revelation of the will of 'The Spirit.' The 'Spectator' recently had a notable article, entitled 'Prophet Fools,' dealing mainly with the astonishing personal influence of the late Henry George, but incidentally pointing out that the time seemed ripe for a world-stirring movement in religious directions, and venturing the opinion that this movement would come from either Russia or America. The 'Daily Chronicle,' during the Græco-Turkish war, sighed for 'a prophet.' The 'Christian World' is seemingly endeavouring to change the whole attitude of Christian believers, from the personal attachment to a historic Christ, to a deep belief in the spiritual and inward nature of the Christ spirit. G. R. Sims in 'The Referee' very recently deplored the 'Silence of God,' and asked whether the time was not ripe for some plain speaking from the Divine. All this is a significant sign of the times, and there are other signs not less noticeable. The spread of Theosophy in England and America, the visit of learned and high-minded Hindus, such as the Swami Vivekananda—ambassadors of the 'Kings of the East'; the great sub-excitement among the Society of Friends (the believers in the direct inspiration of the 'Inner Light') at Scarborough last summer over the New Criticism—are other signs of an inner movement that must and will soon break forth. A further and very suggestive matter is the attention that is being directed to the physical aspect of the thought process in the human mind. In America Professor Scripture, of Yale, has drawn attention to the nature of phosphorescent rings to be noticed in the dark within the eyelids, and suggested their connection, not with chemical changes on the retina, but with the higher imagination and to the visions of seers and those under the influence of hashish. Edison, amongst others, is credited with having succeeded in 'photographing thought,' how far rightly we are not yet in a position to say. With a super-sensitive photographic plate, a man with a concentrated will thought steadily of a coin, and the image of this coin was faintly but distinctly photographed on the sensitised plate, without a material object to create the image. Such, at any rate, was the news cabled over here a few days ago. Other experiments of a sequent and scientific nature have been carried on by Mr. Howard Swan, of Arundel-street, Strand, lately on the staff of 'The Electrical Engineer,' and now engaged in organising language teaching. Mr. Swan has, it is said, discovered that the faint, slow-moving phosphorescent appearances to be seen under certain conditions in a dark room are subject to certain regular movements of a rotatory, vibratory and vortex nature; that they affect the strength of the imagination, making the power of seeing well-lighted and coloured scenes greater or less according to the direction of the movement; that the apparent 'character' of the observer is thereby changed, raised, or lowered, according to the direction of these vortex rings in the eyeballs, or optic nerve; that the power of using words in expression is largely dependent upon the state and direction of this nervous vortex action; and that the phosphorescent films are sensitive to sound, being thrown by sounds into states of vibration—musical notes producing the greatest effect, and words bearing definite meanings 'throwing the films into forms more or less geometric' ('Electrical Engineer,' December 17th, 1897, quoted in the 'Daily News,' December 18th). He finds, he has explained later, that the forms are usually quite unexpected; but in many cases, as, for instance, with the words kind, honourable, upright, true, wrong, right, bad, good, simple, just, worthy, uplifting, spirit, &c., the geometric patterns to be perceived with concentration and total absence of other thought, seem to a certain extent connected with the idea. For instance, the pattern seen for 'upright' had two sets of lines streaming upwards, leaving a central bare upright space; 'right' had straight lines converging to the right; 'wrong,' spiral twisted lines moving to the left; 'just,' two blunt triangles on their sides, exactly oppo-

site to each other, and so forth. Some of the forms, such as for 'man, woman, child, God,' &c., bore in his experiments considerable resemblance to Masonic signs. These forms were not expected by the observer, who was often, he remarks, astonished at the forms taken by the filmy, moving rings of light, which, under favourable conditions of dark and quiet, could be watched much as electric radiation experiments. The fact that the movement, as well as the form, seemed under the direction of the will through the agency of sounds, either uttered aloud or quietly, gives a suggested connection between physical forces, thought, and even moral and psychic action hitherto lacking in the views of scientific men. The force seems to be a nervous force of some higher kind of vibratory energy, seemingly phosphorescent, when moving through the eyeballs and the optic nerve. When the eye is in action in daylight these forms are, of course, not seen. At night the conscious attention can be directed to the inner side of the retina, and even possibly to the interior of the optic nerve. A vortex film, rotatory and moving in various directions, can be watched as if objective, and seems to pass before the eyes, probably being within the eyeball or the optic nerve itself. This, it is suggested, may prove to be the effect of 'a circulation in the nervous system,' suspected by physiologists but not hitherto observed or tested. This nervous force, according to the experiments of Mr. Swan, seems to be drawn from the lower or automatic (vegetative) nervous force in the lower nervous centres and to be raised in quality and vibratory energy—'transformed up'—to a high form of phosphorescent light, which, passing before or through the eyeballs may, in daytime, register the sights before the eyes; and being effected by sound vibration will register the sounds; and being affected by the emotional effect, registers an increase or decrease of this phosphorescent energy; and, therefore, the effect of mental or moral feelings. All this is, of course, still far from being in a state to be absolutely accepted, but if it can be proved that a connection exists between the vegetative force which comes from the vital and digestive processes, and so from the chemical and light energy of the universe—up to the imaginative and registering function of the mind, and thus to the moral and spiritual action of the 'Ego acting through the steadfast Will' (of the 'divine Self' within)—it is evident that a great advance in understanding the inner workings of the mind in man may be accomplished. Having seen that certain words and sounds produce results with the steadiness of a law, Mr. Swan proposes, we understand, as an experiment in this force, to use these words as he discovers them, to affect the spiritual energy, or the steadiness and direction of will, in a useful direction in other individuals, by writing pieces of literature in which these laws are utilised. He considers that many old writers, such as the Hebrew prophets, consciously or unconsciously employed these laws: that certain passages of the Bible owe their strong stimulating power to these actions in the 'cerebral light,' and, therefore, that one way of demonstrating the action of this 'vril' force, would be to translate passages of the Bible into ordinary modern English style, and this, for certain literary passages, he has done, and hopes to publish them in the early months of the present year. He has also attempted original work, written to embody, and use in definite form, these sub-conscious actions of the brain in certain literary works of different styles. He has made numerous drawings of the various patterns that the phosphorescent films assume under the actions of various sounds, which he intends to publish with a treatise on the sub-conscious self, and the interrelation of light and thought; and he expresses the hope that any competent observers, who may notice any action of this kind, may communicate their results, either privately or through this paper, for comparison. It is probable that the exact forms taken by the thought-patterns, as the sound of words, may depend upon the personality of the individual; but on the other hand, if it be a sub-conscious action handed down from generation to generation, as (he suggests) it might possibly turn out to be, then, in this case, the forms would by this time have tended to assume a more or less conventional shape, which would be much the same for everyone living under similar conditions; and if so, not only would the discovery prove to be one of the circulation of nervous force, but also of a fundamental symbolical

language which may have its influence upon the study of language and literature; while the purely physiological and scientific aspect may raise many points of interest to electricians, medical men and physiologists. The prevalent general idea that a new 'spiritual' development may soon occur seems, therefore, to have some considerable encouragement from the adherents of the more physical side of scientific research. The experiments of Crookes, Röntgen and others have long tended in this direction, and if the experiments of Mr. Howard Swan can direct attention to the possibility of the scientific study of the action of the living brain, it will be a long step in the direction, so much desired, of obtaining a definite link, acknowledged as such by both sides, between physical and psychic science.

'Lux.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Mrs. and Miss Read.

SIR,—All arrangements for the visit of Mrs. and Miss Read to London are now concluded, and Saturday, the 29th inst., is the date fixed for their arrival at 5, Nottingham-terrace, Marylebone-road.

As previously intimated, Mrs. Graddon has kindly placed rooms in her house at the disposal of Mrs. Read, and all Spiritualists will understand that the 'psychical climate,' as Professor Barrett has well termed it, and which is so essential to good phenomena, is in this way likely to be secured.

Applications for private sances to be given during the week beginning February 7th can be made direct to Mrs. Read at 49, Robert-road, Handsworth, Birmingham. There are still a few vacancies for the afternoon sance of February 5th; tickets, 2s. 6d. each.

E. BROWNE.

Can Any Soul be Eternally Lost?

SIR,—In your issue of November 6th last, under the head of 'Spirit Teachings' occurred the following question, put by Mr. Stainton Moses, and its remarkable answer:—

'Then as to the spirit that grows worse instead of better—what of it?'

We have told you before. The downward course is correspondent. The spirit that has developed the bodily tastes and neglected the spiritual, grows more and more earthly; the guardians are less and less able to approach it, and it gravitates further and further from light. We have said that there are six spheres below this earth, though we have never penetrated below the fourth. Below that are the miserable abandoned spirits who sink down deeper and deeper, who become unable to rise, and who gradually lose their personality, even as the purified when they near the presence of the Supreme. Such undergo what your sacred records name the Second Death. They do not emerge from the hell which they have created. They are lost.'

I have been expecting each week to find some comments on the above by some of your able correspondents, for it clashes with my experience of the teachings of Spiritualism during the last twenty-five years, and no doubt many of your readers will agree with me that the philosophy, as taught by most writers and speakers—many of whom, being the instruments of 'intelligences,' whose close reasoning and intelligent handling of a wide range of subjects dealing with life here and hereafter should give their utterances considerable weight—is that no soul is eternally lost, that it is impossible that it could be, that *all* will eventually outlive the effects of misused earth lives, and ultimately arrive at a state of happiness, though it may be by an inconceivably long period of progression.

It would be most interesting to hear the opinion of 'Questor Vitas' and others of your learned contributors on the above remarkable paragraph for the enlightenment of your numerous readers—the Second Death as I have always understood it being quite another thing.

Fulham Cross, W.

W. J. BARNIKEL.

Works of the Mystics.

SIR,—Can any of the readers of 'LIGHT' kindly inform me where I can see the works of the mystic, Michael de Molinos; 'Life and Spiritual Guide'; and also 'Jacob Boehme,' in four quarto volumes?

81, Hawkins-street, Liverpool.

J. EWING.

Advice Wanted.

SIR,—May I say in answer to the inquiry in 'LIGHT' by 'N.G.J.' with reference to unreliable automatic writings, that he will bring higher influences if he approaches the subject in a devout spirit, and at the outset of every manifestation requires the communicant to declare whether or not the same is there 'in God's name'? Having now volumes of the most elevating communications we do not need to propound this inquiry, because the writing and signatures at once attached are as good as the sign manual to the banker. Prayer for Divine guidance in spirit communication, as in everything else, is most desirable. 'S.M.' too, is dubious as to the verity of communications through the 'Ouija.' That is natural at first, so strange does it seem; but with the foregoing remarks also applied there may be tests given that will soon bring conviction. 'Prove all things.' I went away on a two days' mission to verify a test so given, the communicant being a sister who had passed on. Confidence once established, the inter-communication would not be lost for the world.

H. C.

The Widow of Mr. J. M. Dale.

SIR,—I should be glad if you would allow me to call the attention of those of your readers who knew the late Mr. J. M. Dale, of Marylebone, to the fact that his widow is struggling bravely along in straightened circumstances, the result of her husband's over-willingness to be of service to humanity. I am sure that some of those who knew our departed friend and valued his work, if they were aware of the fact that those whom he left behind were suffering through his anxiety to help our Cause, would gladly give a subscription, which more especially at this time of the year would gladden the hearts of those whom he loved. It would not only be rendering substantial help, which is sorely needed, but would give them the comforting assurance that the efforts of the husband and father are not forgotten. I shall be most happy to supply Mrs. Dale's address to anyone who would like to send a small donation or call upon her.

228, Old Christchurch-road,
Bournemouth.

W. L. HULL.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

'H.A.D.,' 'J.G.O.,' 'A.B.,' AND OTHERS.—Next week, if possible. H.R.—Thanks; but it is too incoherent to be quite intelligible.

W.Y.—We are afraid we shall not be able to find space for your contribution, as we have others already in hand, awaiting publication, on the same subject.

POETRY.—We hope those of our friends who are poetically inclined will not misunderstand us if we beg of them to show us a little mercy. Original rhymed effusions—good, bad, and indifferent—are showered upon us in such profuse abundance that we cannot even spare the requisite time for their perusal, and even if we could we should hesitate to accept the invidious task of selection for publication. And so they accumulate till we have sufficient for a respectable, if not an altogether acceptable, volume.

MR. W. H. PHILLIPS.—Mrs. Bliss writes: Kindly allow me to record the great pleasure with which I listened to the inspirational addresses delivered at the South London Mission and at my own home through Mr. W. H. Phillips, of Nottingham (formerly of Bridgwater). At Camberwell a large audience expressed great delight with the earnest and eloquent utterances of this medium, whom they welcomed to London for the first time, and on Wednesday evening several of my personal friends attended a sance at my house, and all expressed their pleasure in listening to an excellent discourse on 'The Evidences of Spiritualism,' after which I had the pleasure of giving clairvoyance and psychometry, thus combining philosophy and evidence. I write you, feeling that a speaker like Mr. Phillips should receive support from all Spiritualist societies, believing that the cause will receive valuable assistance from his ardent and cultured advocacy.—ALICE BLISS, 23, Devonshire-road, Forest Hill, S.E.

WHEREVER I find a great deal of gratitude in a poor man, I take it for granted there would be as much generosity if he were a rich man.—POPE.

SOCIETY WORK.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, TEMPERANCE HALL, DODDINGTON GROVE.—On Sunday last Mr. Boddington delivered a New Year's address. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., local speakers.—W. S.

72, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Drake occupied our platform, and was much appreciated. Next Sunday, Mrs. Boddington.—W. CHAPLIN.

BOW, 193, BOW-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss Findlay's guide gave an address on the necessity of prayer in approaching the sacred shrine of spirit communion. Miss Findlay also gave some very successful psychometry.—H. H.

BRISTOL.—On Sunday last we had two special meetings, conducted by Miss Marsh, of London, who gave numerous clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening the room was packed. On Sunday, January 16th, we hope to have Mr. Harris, of Cardiff, a good trance medium, and trust the room will be again filled.—W. WEBBER, Sec.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, UPPER-STREET, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Brenchley gave an address on 'Spiritualism and the Working Classes, and Socialism.' Mrs. Brenchley gave convincing clairvoyance. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Dalley, trance address. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., circle, for members only; medium, Mrs. Brenchley.—C.D.C.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK.—On Sunday last we were delighted to welcome back Mr. A. W. Jones, who conducted the meeting. The subject, 'A Happy New Year,' was ably dealt with by him and the inspirers of Mr. W. Walker, who also gave psychometry and clairvoyance. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Tuesday, at 8 p.m.; and Wednesday, at 8 p.m., circle for members.—T.B.

WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday last we had a good meeting, which was conducted by Mr. W. Linsdell. Mr. Stevens, a friend from Birmingham, also gave his experience in an able manner. A circle was held after the meeting which had some very good results, several strangers being present. Sunday next, open meeting and circle, at 6.30 p.m. Thursday, the 13th inst., members' circle, at 8 p.m.—E. FLINT, Sec.

EAST LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' ASSOCIATION (formerly Stratford Society of Spiritualists) WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Messrs. Whyte ('Evangel') and Peters commenced their series of services, which will be continued throughout January, next Sunday excepted. Mr. Whyte took for his subject, 'The Past and Future,' which he dealt with in his usual eloquent manner. The clairvoyance of Mr. Peters was very clear. Next Sunday Mr. J. J. Morse will give a lantern lecture on 'The Wonderful Phenomena of Spiritualism.'—THOS. MCCALLUM.

BRIDGWATER.—Bridgwater friends were on Sunday privileged by a visit from Mrs. Dowdall, of Cardiff, through whom kindly and helpful counsel was given by spirit friends, and accurate descriptions by 'Snowflake.' On New Year's Eve we had a capital trance address from the guides of Mr. G. H. Bibbings, which was listened to with intense interest. Convincing psychometrical descriptions were given by Mrs. Dowdall, whose gift in this direction is very remarkable, and is most helpful in arresting the attention of the otherwise sceptical mind.—H.W.C.

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—On Sunday evening last the service was conducted by Mr. George Harris, whose control gave an excellent address, the subject being, 'Come, Drink at the Fountain!' Emphasising the solid character of the teachings of Spiritualism, its consolations and incentives, the control also gave some encouraging and helpful thoughts appropriate to this season of fresh resolutions. On Wednesday, the 29th ult., a Lyceum entertainment took place, the members enjoying an excellent tea and making merry under the prize-laden branches of a Christmas tree. Recitations, songs, piano solos, &c., followed, the whole being under the able supervision of the worthy conductor, Mr. G. Harris.—E.A.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MAKE-STEET, N.E.—The opening of our new premises on Sunday last was a great success. Mrs. Russell-Davies' address on 'Unity' was well delivered, and was full of sound advice to the seeker after truth. Mr. J. Adams, of Battersea, spoke on 'Prove all things,' and related how he was led into Spiritualism. Miss Atkinson kindly sang, 'O, rest in the Lord,' and pianoforte solos were given by Mr. E. S. Rist. Mr. Craig's remarks on 'Enthusiasm' were well received. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Webb, of Stratford, address and clairvoyance. Circle for members at the old address on Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.—H. BROOKS, Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL.—Our morning public circle continues to be well attended. On Sunday evening last our leader's

guide gave us a splendid address on 'Prayers for the Dead,' maintaining that prayers were helpful, and that no circle should be held without earnest prayers as a means of bringing good spirits into communion. Our 'Old Year Out and New Year In' social meeting was a great success, and brought to a close the best year of the mission's work. We shall hold our anniversary meeting on the 23rd inst., when Mrs. Bliss has kindly consented to preside. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle, doors closed at 11.15 a.m.; at 3 p.m., children's Lyceum; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long, 'Prayers with the Dead'; at 8 p.m., annual meeting of members and election of candidates for membership. 'LIGHT' always on sale.—VERAX.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Mr. J. J. Morse's inspirers held the close attention of a numerous audience on Sunday evening last while dealing with the subject announced, viz., 'The Modern Spiritual Phenomena and their Relations to Natural Law.' We have never listened to a more able elucidation of the physical phenomena which take the form of raps and lights. The time at the disposal of the lecturer being limited, the same subject will be continued on February 6th, when other phases of phenomena will be dealt with. Mr. Appleyard, of Sheffield, occupied the chair, and made some interesting remarks. Miss Florence Morse sang, 'Ye that are weary' (Leonard Kane). By an oversight in last week's report of Miss Rowan Vincent's kind services on Sunday, the 26th ult., we omitted to notice the clairvoyance given. We, therefore, wish to state that all of the descriptions have now been recognised, and that they were most clearly and concisely given. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss MacCreadie, address and clairvoyance; doors open at 6.30 p.m.

BELFAST.—A few friends and myself are about to make an attempt to start a Spiritualist association in Belfast, on similar lines to those in London and elsewhere, for the dissemination of the truth of spirit communion, and we wish all friends and sympathisers who happen to be in Belfast or whereabouts to communicate with the undersigned, who will be glad to give them the date and place of our first meeting. Belfast offers a wide field for a work like this, crammed full as it is with universities, colleges, churches, &c., the majority of whose adherents profess to believe in a future life, but have no conception or proof of such a life beyond the fact that certain phenomena occurred nineteen hundred years ago, and that since then all such phenomena have ceased, or, if they do occur, are due to the devil or his myrmidons. I have been a constant reader of your helpful and suggestive paper for a long time past, and can only say that I feel I owe a deep debt of gratitude to yourself and the various contributors to 'LIGHT' for the sparkling beams they have shed upon my darkness, and for the deep and abiding trust they have given me in the beneficent and intelligent Author of the universe. All suggestions from those who have experience in starting organisations of this nature, will be thankfully received by—WILLIAM GEORGE KANE, 40, Old Park-avenue, Belfast.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MARTIN-STREET HALL, STRATFORD.—On Christmas morning, about twenty ladies and gentlemen entertained our Lyceum children, who had a most enjoyable time. There were over eighty children present, and they were presented by Santa Claus with numerous presents, very kindly provided by the members and other interested friends. The Sunlight Soap Company also kindly sent us one hundred models, which were distributed to each child, and we intend offering prizes for the best models made up during January. Recitations, singing, and games were gone through in a spirit of cheerfulness, after which they had cake, oranges, &c.; the adults expressing their delight in being present at such a pleasant gathering. We thank our friends very much for their liberality and assistance. On Sunday last, Mr. Atwood in the chair, Mrs. Barrell conducted a floral service in memory of our respected friend, Mr. Gardener, whose remains we buried last Thursday at West Ham Cemetery. The control gave a very impressive address, and sang beautifully some appropriate words. In closing, 'Sunbeam' gave some good clairvoyance; afterwards, Mrs. Bran sang 'The Holy City' very effectively. On Thursday in last week we had an open meeting, and Mrs. Phillips' controls spoke at some length. Mrs. Tarrant gave some clairvoyance. Mr. Landridge presided. Next Sunday Miss Constance will be with us, and will give an address and clairvoyance. On Thursday, the 6th, Mr. Savage will take the meeting with clairvoyance and psychometry. Lyceum on Sunday, at 11 a.m., Mr. Wrench conductor.—WM. A. RENFREE, Sec.

If we are ever in doubt what to do, it is a good rule to ask ourselves what we shall wish on the morrow that we had done.—SIR J. LUBBOCK.

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