

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.

In our leading article last week we drew attention to the singular failure of 'The Daily News' to insert a much-needed contradiction of the highly improper suggestion that 'De Rougemont' had joined the Board of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Since that article appeared, the contradiction has been inserted. So far good. But 'The Daily News' has, unfortunately, also made the further extraordinary statement that it never knew and did not believe that the Spiritualist Alliance had a Board, and yet it said that De Rougemont had joined it! The editor of 'The Daily News' is a keen and clever man, but there are evidently some things he or his leader writers do not know,—amongst them being the elementary desirability of telling the plain and simple truth.

Mr. Charles Voysey prints a vigorous sermon on 'The story of the Ascension of Jesus, and the Second Advent.' After reading his text (Acts i. 9-11) he says: 'Do you believe a word of all this? I say, I do not believe it.' The sermon that follows is as uncompromising as this striking key-note. Mr. Voysey finds it quite easy to show the absurdity of the ascension of a physical body into the heavens. But his elaborate and strenuous attack has all the force taken out of it by the simple reminder that the resurrection body of Jesus was not a physical body at all, but a spirit-self which was able at times to make itself visible. The story points to that more than to anything else. Mr. Voysey's attack is conclusive, as directed against those who still hold to the resurrection of the physical body: but it is not conclusive, as directed against the record in the New Testament, which, however, we must admit is somewhat hazy.

We took up Mr. R. E. Hutton's book on 'The Soul, here and hereafter,' with a good deal of hope; we put it down with a good deal of perplexity. It is the work of a High-churchman, intensely orthodox and entirely persuaded that hell yawns and that the sacraments alone can save. We must admit that a considerable amount of industry is indicated in the quotations old and new which abound in the work, but many of these are palpable padding, from one to nearly three pages long. The book is full of quaint or queer old-world suggestions and survivals, but is really valueless for the modern man.

'The Humanitarian' for December is a valuable number. We especially commend two Papers, teeming with information, and brilliantly thoughtful, on two such opposite subjects as 'The Chinese hypocrisy' and 'Some mysteries of the American continent.' The first seriously warns us against interfering with the people of China,

whatever we do with its government: the second gives a remarkably full account of the numerous, gigantic and beautiful leavings of past civilisations in America.

We transcribe one of the Notes of this excellent number:—

Dr. Baraduc, of Paris, has recently advanced the theory that man is a miniature sun. Man is surrounded by an incandescent atmosphere, and in proof of his theory Dr. Baraduc has taken several photographs of vibrations which emanated from human bodies. The photographs show the varying conditions very clearly. Thus the vibrations which emanated from the calm body are tranquil, those which emanated from the body in a state of cerebral or cardiac activity resemble the normal atmosphere of the sun, and those which emanated from a body in a state of fury or profound trouble resemble the solar tempests as they have been photographed by astronomers. Should Dr. Baraduc's theory prove correct, a simple explanation can be given of all the phenomena of sympathy, antipathy, telepathy and others of like order. Technically his theory is one concerning 'curved force and the vibrations of ether'; but in plain English it is based on the assumption that every human being is a miniature sun, and is not only influenced in the same manner as the sun, but also influences others around him as the sun influences the neighbouring celestial bodies. A wonderful fact, if true, and so it is believed to be by some eminent scientists. Unusual interest is being taken in the subject in Paris, and many agree with the French writer, who says: 'If the results reported by Dr. H. Baraduc can be obtained by other scientists who are equally trustworthy, we have at once before us the greatest discovery of the century, a discovery which is certainly more remarkable than that of the famous X-rays.'

There is a good deal of excitement in America, in certain circles, on account of the exodus of Rev. B. Fay Mills from one of the 'orthodox churches.' He is now preaching to immense audiences in a theatre in Boston, and stirs the waters mightily. A late sermon, we rejoice to say, presents him as a recruit on our side. He boldly said:—

I think the two great lines of progress are to be:

First, spiritual discovery—development. There are people who are afraid it will be discovered that certain men and women have the power to read the minds of certain others. They are fairly trembling before it! It may be that they are afraid that they will read their minds some time, and they do not want them to. I should like to come to the place where this stubborn, obtuse, opaque covering of the flesh might become transparent. I think we would all be better if we might see eye to eye and face to face.

I know some people who are afraid that it will be discovered that we can have communication with departed spirits! Well, why not? Why should you be afraid of it? . . . when three such men as Professor Hodgson, one of our most notable psychologists, and Professor Crookes, the President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and Professor Alfred Russel Wallace, who at the same time with Darwin discovered the world-transforming truth of Evolution—when these three men say that it is proved to them conclusively that the mind of man may have intercourse with other minds without speech, and that in all probability people in the flesh may communicate with people out of it—I say it is time for those who call themselves reasonable at least to give some honest attention to the study of these great questions. And I believe that the first man that gives back a rational ground of faith in personal immortality to the world, will stand in history greater than any man that ever trod this planet before. That is one line—the line of genuine spiritual discovery, that shall lead us better to know the Great Spirit who is before all and through all and in all.

We do not enjoy 'The Agnostic Annual' (London: Watts and Co.), but we very readily comply with Mr. F. J. Gould's pathetic challenge, first, to 'recognise the work and function of Freethinkers,' and to 'face the facts of (our) spiritual situation.' We express both thus: The Agnostics are excellent contractors for removing old buildings, but we hold that we have the plans for the new.

Mr. G. J. Holyoake's sunny-hearted Paper on Mr. Gladstone is very refreshing, and the following paragraph sounds a note that is very welcome:—

How wide and wonderful was the knowledge buried with him, so far as we know, in his Abbey grave! If men do not live hereafter—from the human point of view—they ought. Those waiting on the 'silent shore' (if any are waiting there) would rejoice at the arrival of Mr. Gladstone, who would enchant them and add to their information beyond that of any other visitant who has left this land since the philosopher of Ferney disembarked there. The 'silent shore' would cease to be silent, and inquiries would arise in the air like prayers.

'Mind,' for December, is a good number. 'Religion versus Theology,' by Hy. Frank; 'The Religion of Christ,' by C. B. Patterson; 'The power of gladness,' by C. B. Newcomb, are particularly good. 'Mind' is nearly always rich in pointed quotations. The following, by Theodore F. Seward, has health and strength in it:—

Thought is a force; but, because it has not been understood as such in the past, it has been sadly abused and misused. We help to form our neighbour's character by the thoughts we send out to him. If we impute nobility to him, we help him to be noble. If we hold him in our mind as mean, low, dishonest, or in any way unworthy, we help to confirm him in this condition and make it harder for him to escape from it. Jesus of Nazareth ever acted upon this principle. He recognised the divine element in an ignorant fisherman, in a self-seeking publican, in a sinful Magdalen, and by his faith in this higher nature helped to draw it forth and make it a controlling influence in the life. When the power of thought is better understood, printing in the daily papers descriptions of murders and suicides and attractive pictures of vice will be made a punishable crime.

That goes farther than we should care to go, or in a different direction: but the horror and infamy of much that is blazed forth by the press are undeniable. When men are wiser, they will shrink from the dread responsibility of doing what is now done with ready ignorance and selfish zeal.

'Is Spiritualism true?' (Leeds: J. W. Lowrey and Co.) is a report of a two-nights' debate between Mr. A. J. Waldron and Mr. G. H. Bibbings. It is badly 'got-up' and irritatingly 'wired,' but, when one has got beyond the unfriendly exterior, the contents are fairly attractive, though we are never impressed with the value of debates. The two gentlemen were praised by the press for their 'courtesy'—a noticeable good mark which is very seldom earned in such contests.

Helen Wilmans, in 'Freedom,' sets forth a notion concerning 'The pledge' which has often occurred to us. It comes in, with an excursion into the true uses of Mental Science. She says:—

A question more important than the temperance question is whether a person has the strength of character to master himself. If not, this strength should be developed in him. It seems to me that it would be the beginning of the true system to exterminate drunkenness. Taking stimulants away from a man does not strike at the root of the matter, but is simply a palliative remedy and a very weak one at that.

So many persons have asked me why I do not take up the temperance question. I have taken it up. Mental Science teaches man's complete powers of mastery in all things; over his appetite as well as everything else.

The fact is, mental science circumferences and includes all other reforms. It teaches individualism; it teaches self-mastery; self-mastery is enough. He who governs himself has the power to govern the world.

The new number of 'The Humanitarian League' series of pamphlets (London: William Reeves) is entitled 'The

cost of a seal-skin cloak.' It is by Mr. Collinson, and is a distressing revelation of the shocking cruelty practised in the pursuit of seal-skins. The savagery of man is the tragic problem of the world.

Mr. George Redway (G. Redway, Bellairs, and Co.) sends us a seasonable Illustrated Catalogue of Publications, containing particulars of books of a very varied character, and on subjects as far apart as sensational animal stories and sober mesmerism. Present-giving friends might do worse than call at 9, Hart-street, Bloomsbury.

'PAPUS' ON OCCULT SCIENCE.*

The activity of French writers who represent the transcendental interest, and of Dr. 'Papus' in particular, is almost prodigious, and one is glad to see that it does not go without its reward. The 'Elementary Treatise on Occult Science,' first published in 1888, is now in its fifth edition, and it has grown from very modest dimensions to the present portly volume, full of curious plates and diagrams, and extending to nearly five hundred pages. The increase which it has thus received represents the fuller knowledge and the more mature views of the writer, which are accompanied, one might even say illustrated and made evident, by a certain change of opinion, at once interesting and creditable. The original issue appeared under the auspices of the French branch of the Theosophical Society, and was one of its 'Isis' publications. Setting aside two or three pamphlets reprinted from the pages of 'Le Lotus,' it was the first contribution made by 'Papus' to the literature of occultism. Then, as now, it was addressed to non-initiated students, and inquirers assumed to have no acquaintance with the technical aspects of Hermetic science, but it must be confessed that it has lost something of its elementary aspect, and although the author describes it as a preface to his vast 'Traité Methodique,' regarded within or without, it is really an elaborate study. It may be described broadly as an attempt to methodise the various branches of transcendental knowledge, proceeding on the principle that there are fundamental bonds of identity between magic, theurgy, alchemy, astrology, and so forth. It is impossible to proceed far in the study of occult literature without recognising the truth of this position, but it has been defended in various ways by different writers, and perhaps still awaits its complete vindication. Dr. 'Papus' discusses the subject under the general disposition of Theory, Adaptation, and Realisation. The base of the theory is the old occult teaching that the visible is the manifestation of the invisible, which gives the law of analogy and correspondence. Adaptation concerns the analytical and synthetical expression of ideas, producing signs, language, symbolical history, analogical tables, pantacles, occult emblems, &c. Realisation deals with the positive body of occult science, and with the traditions through which it has been transmitted. The chapters treating of the earth and its secret history, founded on Fabre d'Olivet, contain curious speculations and hypotheses which will be new to English readers. The more advanced student will observe in the pneumatological portions derived from late Jewish theosophy a tendency to have recourse to the Kabalism of Isaac de Loria rather than to Zoharic doctrine. One of the most interesting sections is that dedicated to the occult orders of the nineteenth century, which approaches the question as to the existence of veritable adepts in Europe at the present day. It is answered in the affirmative, and Dr. 'Papus' gives pen portraits of two such personages. The appendix contains a fragment of 'intellectual autobiography,' addressed to Camille Flammarion, wherein the growth and warrant of the writer's transcendental convictions are described and defended with a zeal and directness which will command, I think, the sympathy of all his readers.

A. E. WAITE.

* 'Traité Élémentaire de Science Occulte, 5e édition, augmentée d'une 3e Partie sur l'Histoire Secrète de la Terre et de la Race Blanche, sur la Constitution de l'homme et le plan astral.' Par PAPUS. Paris: Chamuel, 5, Rue de Savoie, 1898.

THE SCIENCE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY PROFESSOR J. R. BUCHANAN.

'Westward the star of empire wends its way' were the striking words in which the profound philosopher Berkeley predicted, near two centuries ago, what the nineteenth century has shown to be true. But his wise words did not hinder his oblivious countrymen from attempting to capture and imprison the star when its rays were first visible on the horizon.

The stars that rise in the West always rise in darkness, clouds, and storms. The star of Liberty rose over France in storms and blood-showers, and grander still was the stormy blood-shower that brought liberty to American slaves. Light and liberty belong to the West, as darkness and slavery belong to the East, where the drowsy millions of the Celestial Empire fancy themselves a world with a few subordinate barbarians around their borders. I endeavoured to suggest something like this in 'LIGHT' as a sketch of the progress of true civilisation. The statement was complimentary to Great Britain, the most westerly of European nations, and was accepted; but whether 'LIGHT' will adhere to its motto and accept a far more critical view of civilisation remains to be seen, for the majority of editors prefer to accept nothing that does not harmonise with their own theories. But if Carlyle could be tolerated in suggesting that the thirty millions were 'mostly fools,' may not a Western scientist be tolerated in equal freedom of speech when he has been as long as Carlyle accustomed to denounce the very ancient ignorance, and very intolerant conservatism, that have always ruled the world, and also accustomed to use more of scientific demonstration than of denunciation, while saying, like Themistocles, 'Strike, but hear me.'

Mankind have always been accustomed to crush, without mercy, the writings and the authors that overturn the established opinions of the college, the church, the government, and the aristocracy. It is not the fashion now to burn the books and their authors, as in the time of Bruno and Servetus, but conservatism smiles in sweet self-complacency as it succeeds in preventing the free discussion and publication that demolish ancient falsehoods; and this essay will determine whether 'LIGHT' belongs to the party of free discussion and progress, or to the party that would rivet upon the human mind any of the falsehoods inherited from a very remote antiquity—which I am very unwilling to believe.

Impenetrability is one of the recognised properties of matter, and in proportion as matter predominates over mind in the human constitution, so does it resist the entrance of new ideas to-day as it has done for many thousand years, even though the new idea may be very simple and obvious, and may be demonstrated by all the tests of experimental science. This is well known to all who have attempted modestly to insinuate any of the demonstrated truths of psychic science into the popular mind. After fifty years of widespread demonstrations, the colleges, the churches, the governments, and the literary butterflies escaped from their college chrysalis, congratulate themselves on possessing that superb wisdom which feeds upon its own automatic ignorance, and knows how to shut its eyes and turn away its head when illumination is offered.

They who bring useful knowledge are generally innocent, honest, and enthusiastic enough to presume that the leaders of society are as honestly desirous of truth as themselves, and as willing to accept its demonstration. They cannot realise the amount of impenetrable stupidity inherent in the half-developed constitution of humanity, and when unfortunate Thomas Gray endeavoured to convince the people of Great Britain of the benefit of covering the land with railroads, he could not realise that so simple an idea would be beyond the intelligence of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, or Parliament, or Royal Societies, authors and editors; and he would have been still more astonished if he had lived to learn that a Committee of the New York Legislature undertook to prove the total impracticability of railroads. To conservatism such a proposition was essentially new, and therefore essentially false—and as ridiculous as telegraphy was pronounced in the American Congress, and when

demonstrated in Boston detected as a trick by a sapient Boston editor. Unfortunate Gray was ridiculed as a lunatic and no Cyclopædia remembers him.

Human nature does not essentially change in sixty or seventy years, and it is not at all probable that the learned bodies just mentioned, who have so often shown their inflexible and intolerant stupidity in the past, have any greater toleration now for any *essentially new* truth than when they were disgusted with the thought of railroads, locomotives, coal gas, and telegraphy. They know more, it is true, but they have not lost any aversion to novelty and unwillingness to listen to it, however well demonstrated; and it has not been practicable for me to visit England and enforce science by demonstration. The omnipotent foot of power may be induced to slide an inch forwards, but its omnipotent leg refuses always to take a manly step. The famous Harvey did not dare even to ask his contemporaries to take a step forward as to the circulation of the blood, for all the facts in the case had been fully demonstrated by his anatomical professor, and he only asked the learned doctors who relied solely on memory and never on reason, to recognise the anatomical demonstration, which they scornfully refused, and laughed at him unanimously. Many times indeed has the medical profession repeated the same folly, and American physicians have been obliged to rise in rebellion.

I might offer much more of the records of conservative folly if it would be acceptable, but my purpose is merely to ask if 'LIGHT' is willing to give a reception in its pages to an author whose life has been devoted to the cultivation of biology, therapeutics, mental philosophy, education, sociology and spiritual science, by researches *entirely original*, and who is well known among advanced thinkers as the author of 'Psychometry' 'The New Education,' 'System of Anthropology' and 'Therapeutic Sarcogenomy'—the application to practice of the science of the brain authentically demonstrated in 1842-43—and who fifty years ago stood at the head of the medical college which has largely revolutionised medical practice in America, and thereby won the hostility of the conservative majority.

It is very unpleasant to be under the necessity of stating my position thus, but as my sixty years of scientific investigation and *discovery* in America have been almost unanimously ignored and neglected in Great Britain, it seems to be incumbent on myself to state who Dr. Buchanan is, in going before a British audience. I proffered some time ago to send to 'LIGHT' an exposition in short essays of the science of the brain and the soul, as demonstrated in my writings and college lectures, which I shall do with pleasure when this is published and when I know that the Editor will allow me free exposition of sciences which introduce rational cerebral anatomy, rational education, rational religion, rational sociology, rational physiology, the fundamental laws of life in our two worlds, heretofore unknown, and the wisdom that rules in higher spheres.

I hesitate for a formal acceptance, as the absence of fraternal courtesy toward American science heretofore does not justify me in expecting it now. Yet I cannot see why a journal devoted to Spiritualism, and as intelligent as 'LIGHT' editorially appears, should be influenced by any reactionary policy. I hope it is not; but you would admit that my suspicions are excusable if I should state my experiences fully. It is unpleasant to me to speak thus, and if you can firmly or even indignantly repel my suspicions as unjust, our harmony and co-operation will be complete. But no modern scientist, neither Reichenbach nor Dr. Elliotson, has experienced so much of contemporary injustice as myself.

I do not propose to present statements sufficient to give a complete understanding of anthropology, which is based on the anatomy of the brain, giving both its psychic functions, now unknown in colleges, and its physiological functions, for which scores of vivisectionists have been hunting in animal brains with unsuccessful cruelty generally (but with valuable results shown in the writings of Professor Ferrier, which contradict none of mine). These voluminous sciences, though I have published eleven volumes, may require more than my remaining years for the record, and could not be properly offered to a journal of psychic science; but the matters under discussion now, such as clairvoyance, tele-

pathy, hypnotism, marvellous healing, transcorporeal action, suggestion, psychic sympathies, and the range of the human soul in transcendental communication, have long been discussed in a speculative and unscientific manner, never in connection with cerebral and anatomical science, and therefore in as inaccurate a manner as that in which medical science was handled in the time of Paracelsus, when so little was known of anatomy and physiology and their application in therapeutics.

The ignorance regarding the brain (the seat of all psychic functions) has been as damaging to psychic science as ignorance of anatomy was formerly to surgery. But as the medical profession to-day knows even less of the psychic character of the brain than it did in 1840, and as the cultivators of psychology accept the confessed ignorance of the colleges on the subject, much of our spiritual literature is simply a groping in the dark, as if entirely unconscious of the fact that the powers and operations of life depend upon the seat of conscious life in the brain and cannot be properly understood without a knowledge of the cerebral apparatus which makes the conscious life possible, and imposes upon that life laws of action unknown in collegiate science; and, in fact, determines the nature, laws, and interaction of the soul's faculties, making that completely scientific which in literature is vague and mystical. It was by such investigations that I originated the science of psychometry, and have ascertained the occult conditions that constitute insanity, the philosophy of Spiritualism, and the practical philosophy of education.

San Jose, California.

November 26th, 1898.

FATEFUL NUMBERS.

I recently met at Granov (Podolia), the Justice of the Peace, Mr. Victor Alexandrowitch Schafiroff, a highly educated gentleman, and one who has the courage to acknowledge any truth of which he has been rationally convinced. He said to me:—

I have read your article on fateful numbers ('LIGHT,' Vol. XVI., No. 812, 'Strange Facts about Figures'), in regard to the number seven, which played such an important rôle in the life of President Carnot, and also the remarkable incidents connected with the number fourteen in the life of King Henry IV., &c. I may tell you that the number seven plays also an important rôle in my own life. Thus every seven years a decisive event, or else a great misfortune, comes to me. I will recount to you an incident in my life in which the number thirteen and the number seven played a striking part. In 1894, in the month of October, I invited several friends to a small dance. At three o'clock in the morning supper was served; and as our dining-room is rather small the guests sat at two tables. Just as I was about to seat myself I remarked that we were thirteen at table. Without mentioning this, I rose and began walking around the table, talking with my guests. My wife remarked to me, 'Why don't you sit down! don't you feel well?' In a whisper I answered, 'We are thirteen at table!' 'How many are there,' she asked, 'at the second table?' I counted quickly the guests at the second table, and there again, to my astonishment, I also found thirteen persons. Informed of this, my wife suggested my sending for my secretary, M. Bilinsky, and asking him to sit at my table, and a Mr. X. at the other. This was done, and thus fourteen persons now sat at our table and also at the other one. But fourteen is the double of seven, and seven is a fatal number for me. This I communicated to my wife. 'Heavens!' she cried, 'is it possible to be so superstitious! Thirteen is bad, and now you discover that fourteen is no better.' I sat down in silence, but a strange and horrible feeling of dread and fear came over me; an undefined sensation for which I could find no apparent cause or reason. Supper over, all rose from table and danced till day. But, alas! misfortune was not long in arriving. My only daughter, Hélène, as you know, had been placed at a school for young girls at Niemirow; and seven days after our dance we received from the directress of the school the following telegram: 'Come quickly, your daughter is dying.' Instantly I hurried to Niemirow, but, as you are aware, all attempts to save the life of my beloved daughter were without avail. After a short but severe illness, she gave up her spirit to God.

Victor Alexandrowitch Schafiroff here relapsed into silence, his eyes filled with bitter tears at the memory of his beloved child.

JOSEPH DE KRONHELM.

Gajsin, Podolia.

PSYCHIC SCIENCE.

By H. JUNOR BROWNE,
Melbourne, Australia.

Author of 'The Holy Truth,' 'The Grand Reality,' 'Roman Catholicism B.C.' &c.

Written for the International Congress of Spiritualists,
held in London, June 19th to 24th, 1898.

Psychic Science, commonly called Spiritualism, is generally, but erroneously, viewed as a religion. It is no more a religion than is astronomy, although it has a religious phase. It is a science of observation, from which each investigator draws his own conclusions. It is the science of life here and hereafter, and the basis of all religion, for without its phenomena we possess no natural or rational evidence of a future life for man; all is mere speculation or conjecture. It is alone through its wonderful phenomena that we have a scientific basis for belief in a life beyond the grave. All the various systems of religion, as they are called, owe their inception to the proof of a continuity of life after physical dissolution, through the occurrence, at times, of psychic phenomena. The sacred books of the Hindoos, the Chinese, the Chaldeans, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans, are full of accounts of these phenomena, and they are also referred to in the writings of Herodotus, Pythagoras, Epimenides, Zeno, Plutarch, Jamblicus, Cicero, Plato, Socrates, and a host of other ancient authors. In our own day their occurrence is publicly attested, if not daily, at least monthly, in the numerous spiritual journals published in every civilised country of our globe, not by ignorant and superstitious people, but by many of those holding the highest literary and responsible appointments; so that the occurrence and reality of psychic phenomena are no longer matters of speculation, but are matters of fact to all, except to those who are blinded by prejudice or self-conceit in the presumption that they have bounded all Nature's laws, or in the assumption that all spiritual knowledge was vouchsafed to men in ancient times only, it being evidently assumed that the Almighty passed an amending act to prevent similar occurrences in modern days.

Owing to the records of psychic phenomena which occurred in ancient times having been disfigured and travestied by the admixture of a mass of mythological fable and superstitions, and to those taking place in our own day being mixed up with phenomena that are not spiritual though they are dependent on similar laws, psychic science, as a rule, is still in a very crude state. The mental phenomena I refer to comprise mesmerism, hypnotism, animal magnetism, hallucinations, somnambulism, mind-reading, telepathy or the influence of one mind on another, &c. Of the various psychic phenomena I may mention the following, namely, table-rapping; the movement of ponderable objects without physical contact, manifesting intelligence, in the same way as a message received through the telegraph demonstrates the presence of an intelligence at the other end of the wire; automatic writing on subjects and in languages unknown to the medium and to the sitters present at a circle; clairvoyance; clairaudience; inspirational speaking in trance or in the normal state; independent slate writing; partial and complete materialisation; the direct voice, &c.

Mediumship is a natural gift, like that of music, painting, or poetry, which can be developed by practice, and like these it is quite independent of the moral character of the individual, though it is greatly affected thereby. All possess this gift in a certain degree, though in some it is so slight as not to be perceptible; others have it so freely that they do not require to sit for development; while many have to cultivate their spiritual gifts by regular sittings for a longer or shorter time. Some possess this glorious gift of mediumship who, through erroneous teaching and the false conceptions thereby entertained regarding it, repel it. In Biblical times mediums were called seers and prophets; and were superstitiously considered to be divinely inspired; hence when a spirit communicated, his statement, however absurd, was received as divinely inspired, and was prefaced with 'thus saith the Lord.' Rational investigators of psychic

science in the present day only accept that which is communicated through a medium as far as it seems to them reasonable and probable. Even in the Bible it is written 'Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant,' 'Believe not every spirit,' 'Try the spirits,' 'Prove all things and hold fast that which is good.' As spirits are merely human beings divested of their animal bodies, consequently living under different conditions from what they did when on the mundane plane of existence, but with their individuality unchanged, all communications received from them should be passed through the sieve of reason, and all that will not stand a rational analysis be rejected; for God speaks to each only through the divine faculty of reason with which He has graciously endowed us, but which too many unfortunately trample under foot in matters spiritual.

The opponents of psychic science frequently ask very foolish questions, such as: 'Why cannot I see or hear spirits if such really exist?' The colour-blind man might as reasonably ask why he cannot distinguish the various shades of colour, or the short-sighted ask why he cannot see as far as one possessing long-sight. As to hearing, the deaf might as reasonably ask why they don't hear, like the generality of people. Some have their ears so organised that they can hear certain sounds, but are totally deaf to others. The waves of sound strike all tympanums alike; yet in these instances they are incapable of responding to certain waves. Another question sometimes asked by opponents is: 'Why are certain conditions required for the manifestation of psychic phenomena?' They might as reasonably ask why certain conditions are necessary before any of the physical phenomena can occur. A vessel cannot float without a liquid being present, a plant cannot grow without light and moisture, and a photographer cannot develop a photograph without a dark chamber. It is true that the requisite conditions for psychic phenomena differ from those necessary for physical phenomena, but this is only natural, for while the latter belong to the lower branches of science, the former, which are occult, belong to the higher branch. Both, however, are equally natural, though the one class are mundane and the other supermundane. All phenomena, whether psychic or physical, are produced through the immutable and eternal law of cause and effect, every effect having its antecedent and adequate cause. Physical science having proved that this world is a domain of law, there is no room for a miracle, and as God is the divine Author of Nature He alone is supernatural, or above Nature.

The generality of inquirers into psychic science being led thereto through mere curiosity, or in the hope of being able to turn its phenomena to profit for selfish ends, instead of for the spiritual enlightenment and the uplifting of mankind in general, its progress has in a great measure been thereby retarded. Had the facts disclosed by its phenomena confirmed popular scientific and theological theories, it would have been welcomed and received with open arms both by physical scientists and theologians. As these facts have, however, on the contrary disproved many of the popular theories of scientists and theologians, these prejudiced men have, as a rule, been the chief opponents of psychic science; consequently it has been systematically misrepresented and denounced both in the public Press and from the pulpit. Owing to this, psychic science has not become fashionable among the generality of the upper classes, and its development has been left chiefly to those in the humbler ranks of life. Notwithstanding the non-respectability popularly attached to this subject and to its upholders, many of the most learned and distinguished men in all countries, such as Professors Crookes, Wallace, Varley, Zollner, Agassiz, Hare, &c., have, however, had the nobility of soul to openly declare in its favour, irrespective of the sneers and ridicule their so doing was sure to call forth from their bigoted friends and *confrères*. This, however, has been the experience, in every age, of all reformers who have boldly upheld any newly discovered truth at variance with time-honoured and cherished falsities. The fact that man hath pre-eminence over the beasts of the field has been demonstrated by psychic phenomena, and through these the question asked of old, namely, 'If a man die shall he live again?' has been answered in the affirmative. Therefore, those who have realised the grand truths brought to light

through psychic phenomena can join with the poet in singing:

'Oh no! It is no flattering lure, no fancy weak or fond,
When hope would bid us rest secure in better life beyond.'

(To be continued.)

A LOFTY AND PURE IDEAL.

'Colonia Cosme' is a small settlement in Paraguay. The ideal is a brotherly Communion, based upon sympathy; and, with many struggles, it appears to be doing fairly well. At all events, the leading spirits and the majority seem to be very happy: one in particular, William Lane, must be a very choice and happy spirit. It is he who prepares a paper of four tiny pages, giving reports as to the fortunes of the Colony and, occasionally, a most engaging 'prose poem' on some great subject.

One of the late numbers contains a paper from which we extract the following deep and beautiful thoughts concerning Nature and Life:—

What is this Life of ours, of which we are apt to think so lightly? What is this world of ours, this society of ours, of which it is thought enough to say: 'It will last our time'? To me, of certain truth, Life is more than a tangle of senseless atoms, however cunningly joined together. To me, there is within us a living soul that wears its body as a garment and has this star-girt world of ours as a stage. To me, we come at birth from a Past that lies behind us, we go on at Death to a Future that lies before us; and this is a Law of Living, not to be escaped, sure as dying itself, fitting into each other one of the laws, which together are but one law, by which God holds and orders this wondrous universe in which we are. This is a truth, not to be doubted by any who have felt their soul stir in them, whose eyes have glistened with strange joy over the new-born, who have turned away from the lifeless body wherein one they love has dwelt. It is, to me, a truth more sure and certain than that the earth is round, as sure and certain as that there is no spot in all the starlit sky in which God's law does not hold sway. And it is only of late years that we have come to this glimpse of what we are and may be; always we have been on the verge of it, always we have been drawn aside from it by the delusions that ever bewilder the minds of fearful and ignorant men. For though humble of heart must we be, hushing the jangling of our prides and the tumult of our self-satisfactions, ere we can hear the soul within us faintly echoing the truths that God's laws trumpet forth, yet fearless also must we be and stout of heart and ruthless in our idol-breaking if we would follow, step by step, the call of truth through the maze of fancies and lies.

And as he is fool and mad who chooses selfish ease to-day at the price of pain and sorrow on the morrow, so is he still more fool and utterly mad who, when sense of law-abiding comes to him, in this Living of him, thrusts it aside as of little worth. Though all the wealth of the world came to him thereby, and all that his heart craves, and all the gratification of mind and body that the desires can fancy and lust for, yet is it bought too dearly by wrong-doing. Full measure of sorrow do we pay for sin, nor by any power nor any prayer nor any repentance can any man or woman escape full payment. For Justice lies in the innermost nature of things. Dying, men may say our lives were fortunate and happy, but if we have followed selfishness and wrong it were better for us that we had never left the arms of the mother who bore us. Fortunate is he alone who has striven to do rightly. Happy has he alone been who has felt Life to be good and done rightly in living. For still shall all reap what they have sown. Nor shall any escape the Law that watches and weighs us all.

Only to that short-sighted error which sees nothing beyond this little span of life does Justice fail in God's universe. Only in that error can we doubt the natural and inevitable. Only therewith does it seem possible to gain by doing wrongly or to lose—even though one dies therefor—by clinging fast to the keeping of God's laws.

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Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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COME BACK TO JESUS!

There are probably some, perhaps many, who will be surprised to find in 'LIGHT' a Christmas call to 'Come back to Jesus'; but, before we finish, we hope to secure the sympathy if not the entire agreement of every reader, whatever his theological opinions may be. For, in truth, our object is not theological at all, but purely social, religious, humanitarian. It would, indeed, be a poor case if Spiritualism had no welcome for its greatest explorer,—if it had no explanation to offer of Christendom's supreme spiritual fact.

But we frankly admit that our 'call' does convey a suggestion of reproach. 'Come back!' implies a wandering away; and there has been a wandering away. We say nothing as to opinion; we are thinking only of the personality of the great teacher. Is there, then,—can there be,—any doubt about it that nine-tenths of our Christmas-keeping will be entirely out of harmony with that personality? What had he to do with faring public-houses and fat cattle shows, the average 'Christmas number,' gorging and revelry, High Church celebrations and Drury Lane pantomimes! We do not write all these down as wrong; we only maintain that they are grossly incongruous.

But the truth is that the original is almost forgotten in the fancy portraits that are now the fashion. And yet the four little Gospels are, on the whole, so plain! From the manger which, for the babe, was borrowed from the oxen, to the sepulchre which was given to the dead Christ by a friend, what do we see! There is but little to blur the picture or to make it in any way difficult to see in it a harmony. We see a very gentle, humble, dependent being, whose whole life seemed absorbed with love to God and love to man—to the exclusion of all else. He was called 'the carpenter's son,' and he never seemed to care for anything out of harmony with that description of him. He went to lowly fishermen and despised taxgatherers for his disciples. He heeded not the blatant cries of welcome emitted by excited sight-seers, but heard the solitary cry of the blind beggar sitting by the wayside. He was the champion of the uncleaned, the shielder of the sinful, the friend of the little child. He had no home, and once there blended with his teachings the pathos of the reference to the birds and beasts who, with nests and holes, were better off than he. He was rejected by the rulers, hated by the priests, and voted a cross by the mob. And, dying on that cross, he forgot his misery, to bless with his pity and promise a dying thief. Ah, yes! we read the cry,—'Come back to Jesus!'

We ask for no novelty. In truth, we invite those who speak in the name of the founder of the feast to return to his own ideas concerning it,—before the over-curious and the over-zealous manipulated it; before splendid preludes and mighty kings got hold of it; before ambition and love of display carried the whole thing beyond the sphere of 'the carpenter's son'; before the cross was made of gold and set with pearls, or printed in pretty colours on dainty books of prayer. It is a thousand pities that Christians know so little of their beginnings. If they did, they might look with more interest upon 'Salvation Army barracks' and 'Little Bethels' which, in truth, bring us, in tone and spirit, much nearer to the early Christians than Westminster Abbey or St. Peter's at Rome.

And now what has come to pass is this, that we have changed the ardent, loving, unselfish reformer into the Christ of the artist, or the Christ of the poet, or the Christ of the theologian, or the Christ of the priest: and not one of these would be recognised by the mothers who brought their children to him that he might put his hands upon them and bless them: and it is pretty certain that if he were here it would puzzle him to even guess what some of these artists and poets, theologians and priests, could mean. We are not denying the value or the beauty of much that these have done. We may even admit that, by the outworking of laws of evolution, the work of artist and poet, theologian and priest, has been both inevitable and constructive: but the same may be said of the people who provide for the gratification of the merely animal expression of the universal joy. At the one end, the angels sing from Heaven: at the other end, men and women sing round their drink after their excessive feeding: and, in a sense, the one has truly been evolved from the other. That is a development on the plane of the animal, just as the dainty picture, the exultant poem, the subtle creed and the mysterious rite are developments on the æsthetic or intellectual planes. They differ enormously, as all things on the animal, the æsthetic and the intellectual planes must differ, but they agree in this,—that they are departures from the great but simple original;—departures more or less subversive or more or less valid,—but still departures.

Hence our call, 'Come back to Jesus!'—if only for one day. Let us at least remember him aright at Christmas. Come back to the Jesus who lived the life of a trustful and obedient son of God. Come back to the Jesus whose temple was the mountain-side or the street, whose pulpit was a mountain crag or a fisher's boat. Come back to the Jesus who lived with the people and for the people, who came to seek and save that which was lost,—and 'lost,' not because it had become base, but because it had become unreckoned and unconsidered. Come back to the Jesus who dared to put pardon on the only human ground, when he spoke the words of divine forgiveness for his Father, and gave the unheard-of explanation that 'she loved much.' Come back to the Jesus who gave to the world the great Beatitudes, and blessed the poor in spirit, the mourners, the gentle, the hungry and thirsty for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted in the path of God. Come back to the Jesus who lived in constant communion with the Unseen, who drew towards him the dear companionship of angels, and who left behind him the promise, 'I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again, and receive you to myself.'

Here is the true bond of union for Christendom,—a bond of union before which all rituals and creeds and compacts and consecrations are almost impertinences. In relation to this matter, external things and outward forms are as nothing. The great teacher was right: 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.' And this, we, of all people in the world, ought to comprehend.

'MOST ANXIOUS TO INVESTIGATE.'

By 'AN OLD INVESTIGATOR.'

We have frequently heard from scores of people, who have no knowledge of the phenomena connected with mediums, and on whom the evidence of those who have had vast experience produces not the slightest effect, that 'they are most anxious to investigate.'

In 'LIGHT,' of November 19th, Mr. E. W. Bennett, Assistant Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research, writes:—

'Your readers will see that the Society for Psychical Research was not neglectful of that alleged opportunity for obtaining "intelligence from the unseen." The Society is ready and anxious now, as it has ever been, in the words of Mr. Myers over thirteen years ago, for a thorough investigation of any spiritualistic phenomena which may be available.'

Here is an extraordinary thing! During more than thirteen years a number of gentlemen, most anxious 'for a thorough investigation of any spiritualistic phenomena which may be available,' have yet failed to be witnesses of any such phenomena.

If no one else had been witnesses of such phenomena, or had failed, as have these gentlemen, to obtain absolute proof of the possibility of those termed dead, communicating with those now termed living, we might reasonably conclude that no such things occurred.

When, however, there are thousands of persons who have witnessed phenomena utterly impossible by conjuring, and have been given information, and received communications from departed friends, which it was impossible that either the medium or anyone present could have known, we naturally ask why is it, that so many succeed where others utterly fail.

The explanation is very simple. The process adopted by some of those who assert that they are ready and anxious to make a thorough investigation, is childish, ridiculous, and unsound, and hence results in failure.

Men whose perception is so dense that, they cannot distinguish between a conjuring trick in their own room, and spiritual phenomena in their own room, had better not waste their time in trying to investigate spiritual phenomena.

For example, a few years ago, we and two others, a gentleman and his wife, the latter being the medium, were sitting in a dark room. The medium was in trance, and a spirit called 'P.' asked us if we were convinced that matter could pass through matter. We replied that we had seen this occur so often that we were quite familiar with it.

'You don't mind having another example!' said 'P.'

'Certainly not.'

'Feel in front of you on the table,' said 'P.'

We felt, and found a common wooden curtain ring.

'With your left hand hold the medium's right hand,' said 'P.'

In about half a minute we noticed a slight touch on our left wrist, and on feeling with our right hand, found a wooden ring on our left wrist.

'Now light the candle,' said 'P.,' 'examine the ring, and then take it off.'

We lighted the candle, made a thorough examination of the ring, and with a pocket knife made two marks on it. To slip this ring off our hand was impossible!

We were then told to extinguish the candle, and again hold the hand of the medium. In less than thirty seconds we heard a slight noise on the table, and on feeling our left wrist, found that the ring was gone, and we felt it on the table. Lighting the candle, we found the ring with the mark on it which we had made, and this ring we placed at once in our coat pocket, and it is now in our possession.

Some months after this, a gentleman 'most anxious to investigate' called and inquired if it were true that we believed we had experienced something remarkable connected with a ring. We related to him that which we have written above.

With a self-satisfied smile he said: 'But don't you know how that was done! It was a very simple trick. There were two rings; one was capable of being opened wide enough to pass your wrist through, and then to close again so neatly

that you could not see where it joined. You saw this ring on your wrist, but failed to perceive the join. Then when the candle was extinguished the hinge was opened, the ring taken off, and another solid ring placed on the table, which you believed was the same ring. It is a very common trick, and if it had been practised on me, I should at once have pronounced the medium to be a fraud.'

'But,' we remarked, 'we made a close examination of the ring, which was of wood, and to answer your description there must have been a hinge as also a part that opened, but there was not; and, moreover, we marked the ring with a knife.'

'Oh, your examination was merely superficial, and you missed seeing where the openings were made, and the medium imitated your marks on the second ring.'

We regarded this gentleman with interest, and thought, though we did not say, 'You are a conceited, ignorant jackan, who is no more competent to investigate such subtle phenomena as those connected with Spiritualism, than is a blacksmith to repair and adjust a chronometer.'

Here is one example of a person who is 'most anxious to investigate,' and who is fully convinced that he is quite competent to do so. Yet this person evades from his imagination baseless theories, and has not the slightest hesitation in asserting that he, who was not present, knows better what took place than did a man, with all his senses on the alert, who was present.

Another gentleman to whom we related our experience, and who was always most 'anxious to investigate,' at once asked us, 'Whether we had tied the medium's wrists behind her back. Whether we had tied her husband so that he could not possibly move. Whether we had struck a light the instant we felt our wrist touched; and whether we had examined the room with sufficient care to be certain there was not a trap-door somewhere.'

We replied that we had not done one of these things.

'Then,' said this gentleman, 'your evidence is valueless to us, as what you say occurred, did not take place under test conditions.'

Here we have two examples of what is termed 'scientific investigation,' and which seem to have been adopted by certain people. When we read the accounts of the methods practised towards Eusapia Paladino at Cambridge, we find that these were very similar to those suggested above.

Having during forty-two years investigated spiritual phenomena, with such mediums as D. D. Home, Squire, Foster, Mrs. Marshall, Katie Fox, and four private mediums, and during nearly every chance having obtained the most certain evidence of the fact that our departed friends can, and do, communicate with us, we can state that the system of so-called 'thorough investigation' usually practised by persons who claim to be scientific, is little short of childish, and is of a character to prevent any such manifestations or proofs from occurring.

When a man, gifted with perspicacity and common-sense, investigates any phenomenon in Nature, his first proceeding is to remain passive and observe the phenomenon. He is to remain passive and observe the phenomenon until he is certain continues to observe the phenomenon under what condition it repeatedly occurs. He remembers under what conditions it occurs, and he may then fairly assume that, given the conditions, the phenomenon will occur again. If he find in future trials that the phenomenon does not occur, he ought at once to consider whether the former conditions have been exactly repeated. It is excessively difficult when dealing with phenomena governed by very subtle laws, to obtain exactly similar conditions; but after long experience we may find what are the conditions essential to obtaining even feeble phenomena. If we do not fulfil these conditions we fail to obtain any phenomena, even though we are very 'anxious to investigate.'

When we have obtained remarkable phenomena hundreds of times, and have failed to do so only a dozen times, we have to consider what was done when the failures occurred different from that which was done when success was achieved, and by this means we may learn what are the essential conditions to obtain satisfactory results.

When we have obtained, in the presence of a medium, the most convincing proofs of the truth of spirit intercourse, and have repeated these scores of times, we know that the medium, if honestly and rightly treated, is reliable. When,

then, we hear that other persons (most anxious to investigate) have been to the same medium, and have come to the conclusion that the medium is a trickster and a fraud, we should not hesitate to form the opinion that, it is not the medium, but the investigators, who are frauds, because they are so ignorant of the laws which govern these phenomena, that they are utterly incompetent to carry out the investigation which they had undertaken.

We are acquainted with more than one medium whom we should no more think of trusting in the hands of certain 'investigators,' than we should trust our *Sèvres* china dessert service into the hands of a coalheaver to be washed.

When we know how rigidly the laws connected with obtaining spiritual phenomena must be carried out, and then note what certain investigators have considered it necessary to do as a commencement, and what they term 'test' conditions, we are not surprised that after many years they have not advanced beyond such Kindergarten theories as 'Telepathy,' 'The Subliminal Self,' 'Unconscious Cerebration,' and 'Shells.'

A WARNING VOICE.

The following communication from a highly-esteemed correspondent, Cav. Sebastiano Fenzi, resident in Leghorn (Livorno), will be read with interest:—

Having seen in your issue of November 19th a letter on 'Warning Voices,' I am tempted to send you an account of what happened to me in the spring of 1879 in the island of Ceylon, where I passed one month during my journey round the world, but which circumstance I did not mention at the time in my correspondence with our Florence journal, 'La Nazione' (founded a good many years before by my late and dearly-beloved brother, Senator Carlo Fenzi), for the obvious reason that people in general would have scorned my words, I being known as a convinced Spiritualist, which, at the time, was, with us, synonymous with dreamer—or worse!

Mr. Carson, a wealthy Englishman, and myself were taking a tour from Point de Galles to Kandy, he on foot and I on horseback, having six Indians for our escort. We passed round the middle slope of a high mountain, the ground being covered with sand far and wide, and, in fact, a perfect desert. As we strolled along, Mr. Carson, observing a 'pass' for people on foot over a mass of rocks and boulders, took a fancy for that route, and told me to go on round the flank of the mountain, saying that we would meet on the other side in about an hour. He asked me if I objected to his taking the six young Indians with him, and leaving me entirely alone. I consented readily, and so we parted for that short hour—an hour I shall never forget! As I rode on alone, looking down towards the valley beneath, I was surprised to see a large cloud which, without diminishing in width, was, rather quickly, *lengthening*, and I thought it a strange sight, not knowing how to account for it. Well, on I rode quietly, and thought no more about the cloud till, some minutes later, I felt a curiosity to see what my lengthening cloud was doing. I was at once amazed when I grasped what occasioned the curious, and now to me terrible, phenomenon. A herd of about two hundred buffaloes were rushing up the desert-like flank of the mountain in full haste and directly towards me, probably having caught a sight of my horse! The impression I received was that my last hour had already come, and that I must prepare to meet death as bravely as I could. 'Here am I,' I said to myself, 'full of health and vigour, doomed to die in this outlandish place like a dog, trampled on by these brutes! but I will die bravely'; and my idea of dying bravely was to place myself standing upright on the saddle—(I had stopped the horse, and the poor beast was trembling fearfully after having pricked up its ears and seen the terrible *codeado* of horned brutes advancing rapidly in a front line of about one hundred and fifty yards in length)—to stand erect on the saddle, as I have said, with the view of throwing myself on the first buffalo that came to gore me, and endeavour to seize it by the horns and vault on its back, hoping that, if I succeeded, he might perhaps, on account of my weight, lag behind the others and thus afford me a chance, though a poor one, of possibly escaping.

On, on, the awful herd was pressing, forcing up into the air that immense cloud of dust which had attracted my attention before I had yet caught a view of what produced it. On, on, they were rushing furiously; and when they were about a hundred yards from me, I had already placed my right foot on the saddle, so as to be ready when the awful moment came. But after a few seconds, and when they were seemingly about fifty paces from me, they all, to my great surprise, stopped suddenly as if they had received an order to that effect, and stared at me stupidly, breathing hard, but all of them motionless. I replaced my right foot in the stirrup, my horse meanwhile trembling to such a degree that I every moment expected him to fall. I stared at the immense row of horns, and though I had obtained a little breathing time from their sudden halt, I felt that my agony was only prolonged, as some of them would soon come forward and gore me, and I should, in spite of my pluck, have naturally to succumb! It was an awful moment! But unhopèd-for aid came from the 'unseen'; a sweet voice murmured quickly in my ear, 'Think of what you read in Gordon Cumming's book!' 'Thanks!' I cried out, 'I do not know who is talking to me, but I will act up to the advice.' I then remembered that Gordon Cumming says that if any hunter, in Africa or elsewhere, finds himself confronting some ferocious beasts, he should halloo out as loud as he can, 'for the human voice,' he adds, 'frightens even the lion!' I accordingly stood up in the stirrups, and whirling round a small cane, I halloo'd out as hard as I possibly could, 'Bestiace! canaglia! andate all'inferno! Cosa venite qui a rompermi la tasche!' and I continued to yell out all sorts of opprobrious words, of which, as a good Florentine, I possessed an innumerable stock! I have no idea how long this lasted—of course to me, under the circumstances, a minute seemed an hour—but the fact is that all these brutes turned towards their left side and went some two hundred yards from me, forming, when they stopped, a long line in the direction where I had to go—and there they all stood motionless as before. I, nothing daunted, tried to spur my trembling steed, but as he took no notice of it, I resorted to my fist and beat him so hard on the head that at length, tossing it convulsively up, he went on at his usual tolerably good pace, and passed down the whole of the immense line, I continuing still to scream and threaten the innumerable brutes, until I reached the end of their line; and even then, turning swiftly towards them, I continued to pelt them with my screams. After I had gone, say two hundred yards, I felt as if I had been allowed to come to life again, for again those numerous brutes, as if they had received another order, turned their backs towards me and quietly went in the opposite direction without even condescending to give me a last look!

I was saved. I thanked God as best I could, and I thanked also the dear little voice that had, with its timely suggestion, caused me to adopt perhaps the only proper mode of getting scatheless out of the scrape.

When I returned to Florence some six months afterwards, at a meeting of our then Psychological Society the table moved violently and a spirit spelled out these words in Italian, 'Emilia, tua moglie—"Sono io che ti dissi in quel momento terribile: Ricordati ciò che hai letto in Gordon Cumming!"' ('Emilia, your wife—"It is I who told you in that terrible moment: remember what you have read in Gordon Cumming."')

My dearly-beloved wife had died seven years before, and this took place in the spring of 1876, in the inner part of the island of Ceylon.

Of course I do not anticipate that outsiders will give much heed to my narrative; but I, to whom the voice audibly spoke, must needs look upon it as an abnormal event which only Spiritualists can appreciate, and as one of the phenomena which only Spiritualism knows how to explain.

With best and kindest regards, your old and affectionate subscriber,

SEBASTIANO FENZI.

PARIS.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mons. Leymarie 42, Rue St. Jacques.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S LANTERN LECTURE.

Our indefatigable friend, Mr. J. J. Morse, is doing good work in the provinces with his 'Lantern Lecture,' in the course of which he exhibits over a hundred slides, giving pictures of prominent workers and mediums, both in England and America; and other subjects of interest. Lantern Lectures are always attractive, and as there was accordingly a large gathering to greet Mr. Morse in the Co-operative Hall, Warrington, on the evening of the 13th inst., he availed himself of the opportunity to branch out a little beyond the promised programme. From a report which appeared in the 'Warrington Guardian,' we conclude that he must have astonished some of his hearers by his eloquent and lucid history of Spiritualism, and his graphic description of the position to which it has attained. In speaking of the literature of the movement, he modestly said but a word about the 'Lyceum Banner' which he himself edits so ably; he might have honestly added that of papers devoted to the interests of the children of Spiritualists, it is without a rival. Of 'LIGHT' he said that it is the ablest journal which Spiritualism has produced, while the London Spiritualist Alliance he described as a flourishing society, which included in its membership the élite of the movement. For all which we say, 'Thanks, good friend.'

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- 'Voices of Hope,' and other Messages from the Hills. A Series of Essays on the Problem of Life, Optimism and the Christ. By HORATIO W. DRESSER. Boston, U.S.A.: Geo. H. Ellis, Publisher, 141, Franklin-street. Price 7s. 6d. London agents: Gay & Bird, 22, Bedford-street, Strand, W.C.
- 'Maximus Homo: Outlines of a New Synthetic Philosophy.' By G. H. LOCK. Hull: Bromby, Gower & Co., Limited, Bond-street. Price 3s. 2d., post free.
- 'The Key to Psychology and Philosophy.' By WILLIAM M. STORRAE, L.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. Ed., &c. A paper read before the Southport Literary and Philosophical Society, November 25th, 1896. Southport: Hudson & Co., Printers, 133, Lord-street.
- 'The Temple,' No. 19. Contains: 'Out of the Darkness'; 'The Immortal Jesus'; 'Sound Vibration'; &c. Denver, Colorado, U.S.A.: Temple Publishing Co., 413, Barclay-block. Price 10 cents.
- 'Suggestion in the Cure of Diseases and the Correction of Vices.' By GEO. C. FITZER, M.D. St. Louis, Mo., U.S.A.: St. Louis School of Suggestive Therapeutics. Price 10d.
- 'Alexandra College Magazine,' for December. Contains: 'Ghosts,' by REV. CANON F. F. CARMICHAEL, LL.D.; 'Shakespeare or Bacon,' by M. C. FERGUSON; 'Dante's Women,' by H. M. HUTTON; &c. Dublin: William McGee, 18, Nassau-street. Price 6d.
- 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,' Part XXXIV. Contains: 'Part of Presidential Address of Sir William Crookes to British Association'; 'A Further Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance,' by PROFESSOR W. ROMAINE NEWBOLD; 'Trance Phenomena of Mrs. Piper,' by FRANK PODMORE; 'The British Medical Association and Hypnotism,' address by DR. J. MILNE BRAMWELL; 'The Psychology of Hypnotism,' by F. W. H. MYERS; &c., &c. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Limited, Charing Cross road, W.C. Price 3d.
- 'The Theosophical Review,' for December. Contains: 'The Fire Ceremony'; 'Clairvoyance'; 'The Development of Consciousness'; 'Prayer and Atonement'; 'Towards the Hidden Sources of Masonry'; 'The Shepherd of Men,' &c. London, 26, Charing Cross, S.W. Price 1s.
- 'The Lyceum Banner,' for December. London: J. J. Morse, 26, Osunaburgh-street, Euston road, N.W. Price 1d.
- 'The Theosophist,' for December. Contains: 'Doings of the Double'; 'Reincarnation Simply Put'; 'Remarks on Evolution'; 'Glimpses of Theosophical Christianity'; 'Mental Healing,' &c. London agents: 26, Charing Cross, S.W. Price 2s.
- 'Human Culture and Cure,' Part III., Mental and Psychological Forces including an Epitome of Philosophy, Mental Action, Phreno-Physiognomy, Psychology, Psychometry, Hypnotic Phenomena, and Clairvoyance. Part IV., The Nervous System and Insanity. By E. D. BABBIT, M.D., LL.D. Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.: College of Fine Forces; and London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co. Price 7s. 6d.
- 'The Coming Light,' for December. San Francisco, California, U.S.A.: 621, O'Farrell-street. Price 10 cents.

OUR PUBLIC MEDIUMS.

In reference to the question which has lately cropped up regarding the possibility of checking fraud among our public mediums or those developing as such, may I offer the following remarks?

Would it not be possible to organise in a practical, methodical way a scheme whereby the tone of public mediumship might be generally raised, and mediums forced to be more guarded in their assertions and claims to occult powers—a scheme which would in the end be the means of adding dignity to their profession, and compel them by a firm course of action to be more careful of themselves and their priceless gifts, so that a higher end be striven for, and better results attained?

Now I am quite aware that there are almost unsurmountable difficulties in the path of all such endeavours and of the successful carrying out of a plan of action which could satisfactorily cope with all the rampant carelessness and want of knowledge amongst many mediums in the United Kingdom. It is, however, more and more apparent that some sort of organisation ought to be at least attempted, whereby our more important and prominent mediums would be placed in a position above suspicion, and our less known developing public workers either encouraged to persevere and helped, or firmly told (warned) that they are for the present unfit to style themselves mediums and to accept money.

To this end, with all due deference, and painfully realising the difficulties which would rise, I roughly sketch the following ideas and methods of procedure.

Would it not be possible to form in London, in a North of England centre, and in a Scotch city, three different carefully selected committees, consisting of four, five or six men and women; cultured, sympathetic, scientific people, whose decisions would be considered above suspicion or reproach, whose judgment and efficiency could be relied on, and who, while giving mediums every kind of fair trial and respect, would be prepared to thoroughly examine into, and judge, the various results obtained through any given medium? These results, whether trivial or otherwise, provided they were proved genuine, should place the medium on the list of tested, accredited workers.

I cannot believe that a system of investigation taken up in an earnest, sympathetic spirit by competent judges would be barren of result. It would, I think, of necessity benefit the medium as well, in the long run, as there would be more endeavour shown to spare and guard his nervous system and occult powers, and a more serious attempt on the part of the medium to obtain fine reliable results.

In the event of a medium who takes public money forsaking the right path and resorting to fraud, the first suspicion of this would be referred to headquarters—one of the given committee centres—and when deemed necessary a further investigation would be held, matters looked into, and, at the discretion of the committee, permission to continue public work as an accredited medium of the society to be withdrawn. Cases of false charges of fraud could be also investigated, and the medium's character cleared.

In cases of genuine distress or ill health of mediums, the committees would feel empowered to ask for help and do all that lay in their power to alleviate the trouble in recognition of past services.

I venture to assert that no genuine medium ever objects to honest and sincere investigation into his or her claims to occult powers, and when this investigation is carried out in a methodical manner by the right sort of people, with the idea of being able to form a definite classified list of properly attested mediums, I think the mediums themselves would be the first to do all that was possible on their part to forward the scheme.

To prevent, if needful, the old complaint of 'unfavourable conditions,' I would suggest that in a case of investigation upon which the committee desires to report (séances for materialisation, for example), it should be willing to eliminate by mutual consent some of its members from the séance if this should be the explicit desire of the medium or medium's guides. In no case, however, should a private sitting with only one member of the committee be considered a *test* séance where phenomena are concerned.

It is, I am convinced, highly necessary that we Spirit-

ualists should show a little more desire to be thorough and systematic in our investigations of what is produced through paid mediums. It ought not to be possible for self-styled mediums to advertise their wares to the duping of the credulous and ignorant, without a published protest from one of the official headquarters. A self-styled medium, unwilling to be tested under reasonable but safe conditions, should not be given recognition or countenance by any members of the different committees. We should thus enable would-be investigators from outside to select their medium, according to the line of inquiry desired, from the list of names held by the society. A little more of the Dr. Hodgson spirit of inquiry would not do us any harm. His judicial attitude and tireless energy have shown us that strict systematic investigation does not destroy the possibility of obtaining tests concerning some of the most subtle phases of mediumship.

May I in conclusion put forward the following suggestion, that we Spiritualists should resolve to talk more guardedly, in a general way, of the phenomena side of our experiences to the outsider and non-investigator? Our ethical and religious teachings are quite true, and beautiful enough to be respectfully received, but I have known quite unnecessary harm done by a glib inaccurate statement by a Spiritualist, concerning phenomena witnessed, and how obtained. What is reasonable and satisfactory to the old investigator, can but be wholly unintelligible to the ignorant looker-on or listener.

26, Corsia Deák, Fiume,
Hungary.

J. STANNARD.

[We shall be glad to have the opinions of our readers on the important questions raised in the above communication. —ED. 'LIGHT'.]

'THE DESTINY OF THE SOUL.'

We think many of our readers will thank us for the following notification from 'The Christian Life':—

We are granted permission by the Rev. R. W. Alger, Boston, U.S., to print and sell, at 2s. 6d. per copy, his remarkable book,

'THE DESTINY OF THE SOUL: A CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.'

It is demy octavo, of 756 pages. We shall print it in long primer as a quarto volume. This will be the sixteenth edition. It was sold at 14s. per copy, and has been reduced to 10s. 6d. Our price will be less than one-fourth of this. To cover expense of printer, binder, and carriage, we need to sell 10,000 copies. If each and every reader of 'The Christian Life' subscribes for one copy each, we shall proceed with this business in January, 1899. After 10,000 copies are disposed of, the book will again be sold at half a guinea. This cheap edition, on good paper, will be revised by Mr. Alger. He says: 'I hasten to express my satisfaction with your proposal. I shall carefully revise the whole, and add a supplementary chapter of more importance, in my judgment, than anything else I have written.' No money need be sent till the subscribers are informed the book is ready for sending off; this will not be till Easter, 1899. They can send their orders on a postcard to Miss Hayward, 'The Christian Life' Office, Essex Hall, Essex-street, London, W.C.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The offices of 'LIGHT' and the London Spiritualist Alliance will be closed to callers on Monday and Tuesday but letters may be forwarded as usual.

ME. E. W. WALLIS.—Mr. and Mrs. Wallis have been doing a good deal of useful work in America, and their services have, we are glad to note, been everywhere greatly appreciated. But their sojourn in the United States is fast drawing to a close, and a welcome letter from Mr. Wallis informs us that they hope to reach Liverpool on January 28th by the ss. *Armenian*. Of late, we are sorry to learn, they have not been very well—so that they will no doubt be glad to be home again; and, as a matter of course, their many friends in Great Britain will be equally glad to see them.

REINCARNATION: ANOTHER THEOSOPHICAL CONTRADICTION.

In the 'Vahan,' December 1st, 1898, p. 4, the question is asked: 'Is anything known with regard to the law of sex? whether there is an alternation of sex, incarnation after incarnation, or whether there is a continuous series of incarnations in the same sex?' To this 'C. W. L.' (Mr. Leadbeater) replies:—

'We were told, long ago, that as a general rule an Ego took not less than three, and not more than seven, successive incarnations in one sex before changing to the other. Such investigations as have been made since then into the subject of reincarnation, confirm this teaching, though one or two exceptions to the rule have come under our notice. These latter, however, have so far been observed only in the cases of Egos already developed beyond the average, and can therefore hardly be considered as violations of what appears to be the rule for ordinary men. Though the laws governing reincarnation probably work, as it were, mechanically upon the vast majority of undeveloped Egos, it seems certain, from the instances observed, that as soon as any one Ego makes a little progress of any sort, and so becomes hopeful, from the evolutionary point of view, considerable elasticity is introduced into the arrangements, and within certain definite limits he would be likely to be born into the sex and race which were best suited to give him an opportunity of strengthening the weak points in his character.'

This last statement seems rather 'hard lines' for the undeveloped Egos, who require greater 'opportunity' than the advanced Egos, who can make opportunity for themselves. We suppose this is part of the mysterious law of 'Karma,' which—as, according to Mahatmic teaching, it has no God to guide it—occasionally seems to go wrong.

But what are we to say to the first part of this teaching when we compare it with that of Mrs. Besant only seven years ago! In 'Lucifer,' 1891, Vol. IX., p. 94, we find this editorial statement:—

'The human self is sexless, and incarnates successively in male and female bodies during the long cycle of incarnation.'

So on this point Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater, both acknowledged representatives of Theosophy, and both able (it is stated) to go into the astral plane and higher, flatly contradict each other. What is a benighted pilgrim like myself to believe?

By-the-way, if sex does not exist on every plane of existence in some form or other, how does it exist on the material plane? The ancient Hermetic axiom was 'As above, so below.' The late Dr. Anna Kingsford, in that most sublime of all her visions, quoted by 'Respiro' in 'T. L. Harris, the Seer,' fully recognised the two eternal principles even in Deity. T. L. Harris taught the same in the 'Arcana of Christianity,' 1858—nineteen years previously.

On p. 5 of the same number of the 'Vahan,' 'C. W. L.' quotes from 'The Secret Doctrine,' Vol. III., p. 590, concerning an alleged apple tree 'which does not blossom, but bears fruit from a kind of berry without any seeds,' and adds: 'It is brought in as an illustration of a method of reproduction which, it is stated, is likely in the future to become more general; and assuredly when that prophecy comes true for the human race, half the trouble and crime of the world will disappear.'

Perhaps we shall then realise Mr. Wells's imaginations of the Martians in the 'War of the Worlds'—human octopods, with gigantic brains, and tentacles instead of limbs, who propagated their species by budding! But in that case Mr. Sinnett must have been wrong in stating that the Martians were behind us in evolution.

I greatly fear that heresies are creeping into the theosophic fold!

Propagation by budding characterises the lowest forms of animal life; it may be theosophic, but it cannot be rational, to conclude that it will be characteristic of a human evolution still higher than our own.

E. W. BERRIDGE, M.D.

48, Sussex-gardens, Hyde Park, W.

Fortunes made in no time are like shirts made in no time; it's ten to one if they hang long together.—DOUGLAS JERROLD.

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.

Churchmen and Spiritualists.

SIR,—May I ask for a few lines of your valuable space, to reply to 'Ariel's' letter in 'LIGHT' of December 10th?

He asks, 'How does he know that the spirits with him were not also lying spirits?' Well, in the first place, if we find our friends in earth life scrupulously truthful in all they tell, we naturally give credence to *all* their statements, and as I have invariably found my spirit friends absolutely reliable in reference to events passing at the time elsewhere, of which I could not possibly have any ordinary knowledge, I believe them too on spiritual ones.

But for me there is a higher reason. I quoted in an answer to 'An English Catholic's' admirable and instructive letter, the advice of St. John. Strange to say, it occurs in our Church's Matins of to-day, December 11th, and with 'Ariel's' permission I will quote the passage more fully, as it contains not only a warning but a prophecy:—

'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God, every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist of which ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.'

This is why I put faith in my spirit friends.

Next, 'Ariel' says he has listened to controlling spirits of a high order of intelligence and exalted moral teaching, who are opposed to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Undoubtedly high moral teaching and exalted intelligence can exist where Christianity is unknown—witness Socrates and many ancient philosophers; but all must acknowledge, on the other side, that the highest intellects have in many cases been content to bow humbly before the cross of Christ.

I thank 'Ariel' for his explanation of the opposing statements of various spirits, but the belief in 'like attracts like' belongs so much to the alphabet of Spiritualism that I should not have mentioned it, but only wondered whether, in addition to those who were ignorant of the Christian faith, there were also some malicious spirits who wished evil to those on earth and so retarded their progress.

And lastly I must ask 'Ariel' to pardon my plain speaking—but we all wish for 'light,' do we not?—and to me and to many others there can be none apart from the 'Light of the World.'

ANOTHER ENGLISH CATHOLIC.

Supposed Jealousy amongst Mediums.

SIR,—I was present at the recent 'Experience Meeting' of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and enjoyed the varied experiences given by the friends present; but there was one note of disharmony which I regret. One of the speakers made a remark about the jealousy of mediums, and as there were some public and well-known mediums present the remark somewhat hurt our feelings. One hears a deal of this alleged jealousy, but I must say that I know very little of it. I am a public medium myself, and some of my most intimate and tried friends and helpers are mediums, both physical and mental; and I know that there is a comradeship amongst us that is so real and genuine that if at any time we want help our brother and sister mediums extend it towards us most willingly and cordially. In saying this, I speak from direct knowledge and from what I have proven in the past.

AN ASSOCIATE OF THE L.S.A. AND A PUBLIC MEDIUM.

'An Awful Example.'

SIR,—In a late issue of your paper, December 10th, you hold me up as an 'awful example,' as a Philistine, and as a type of resolute incredulity. Your readers, with your kind permission, may as well have a glimpse of the other side, and I judge accordingly as to the awfulness of my example.

Having a large circle of acquaintances I made it my business to inquire of about one hundred and fifty of them

whether they themselves had ever seen any 'visions' or had ever heard any unaccountable voices. In each case I urged that I was entirely indifferent as to theory, but extremely interested as to the precise facts. Does this suggest to you 'resolute incredulity'? Then I attended a considerable number of séances in various parts of London, and here again I was only interested in the facts. In every instance I noted carefully as much as possible, being guided entirely by scientific considerations which have nothing to do with either credulity or incredulity. Lastly, I undertook a long series of experiments; which is by no means yet concluded. These were extremely tedious, and even, I believe, dangerous to mind and body. Does this kind of work disqualify me from speaking out, or do you class everyone as resolutely incredulous who happens to differ from you?

G. SPILLER.

[We are glad to hear from Mr. Spiller, and are specially glad to hear that he is such a diligent inquirer. If he will kindly read our Note again, he will see that the point of our remark had nothing to do with agreeing with him. The report from which we quoted, and which he does not question or correct, stated that Mr. Spiller declared Sir William Crookes and Professor Oliver Lodge 'were not scientific in their dealings with the alleged facts of Telepathy'; and with reference to such unscientific people, he suggested that 'the human imagination could see anything it wished.' With such extraordinary perversity as that before us, we think we were lenient with Mr. Spiller.—Ed. 'LIGHT'.]

Reincarnation.

SIR,—I should like to be permitted to offer a few remarks upon a subject which has been frequently discussed in your columns of late, viz., reincarnation. Of this theory this much must be admitted, that it does give an answer to the riddle of existence. Whether the solution of the enigma thus offered be the true one or not is the debatable question. In the present state of our knowledge we are not justified in rejecting any hypothesis which logically accounts for the inequalities, anomalies, and iniquities abounding everywhere to-day. That man has been evolved from lower forms of being can scarcely now be doubted. Spiritualists must regard the gradual development of all life from an entirely different aspect to materialists, who deny the spiritual side of Nature altogether. The upward tendency of all things towards a more and more complete and complex structure must be considered by us as the result of a corresponding spiritual evolution. This amounts to an admission of a continuous succession of re-births of the souls of the different creatures which have inhabited the globe in past ages—again and again—for countless thousands of years, until at length higher forms were produced. This procedure must have continued—at least up to the point of man's appearance upon earth. If reincarnation is denied to occur now, then, it may be asked, why should a universal process of creation be suddenly suspended and cease to operate at any particular stage in the world's history? We are scarcely justified in assuming that any such deviation from Nature's ordered sequence of events took place; and this would seem to be the more unlikely when it is remembered how very near the brutes our first human ancestors must have been. Surely the anthropoid apes would require reincarnating—probably several times—before they became ape-like men, and these creatures in turn would also have to pass through the purifying process of many successive lives before arriving at the state of intellectual capability of a Socrates, a Shakespeare, a Ruskin, or a Gladstone. Some of the objections brought against the doctrine of 'successive lives' amount to little more than this: 'I do not like the idea, and therefore do not desire to believe in its truth.'

If this world is a school for all humanity, then it is quite possible some of us may not have learned all our lessons in one life's experience. Certainly many people in these days cannot be considered as fit to commence their progress through the spiritual spheres, on quitting this life.—

Grahamstown, South Africa.

W. H. SIMPSON.

Repressive Laws.

SIR,—With your kind permission, I should like to answer 'Spectator's' query, respecting the remedies for the state of things known to be associated with the higher forms of

Spiritualism. And first and foremost, higher culture. In Jackson Davis' words, 'All our knowledge is ourselves to know.' Do we know the said individual? Our eyes open but slowly to the fact that many of us are densely ignorant. The universe is under law, as 'Spectator' reminds us, and, as part of that universe, man likewise is under law. To which I answer yes, and being the latest and highest production, is still in a very unripe condition. But the promise remains the same, and is of great magnitude, *i.e.*, that we progress. Hence we gather courage, in the full assurance that latent powers within are great and but require development, and such development can be acquired by silent and sequestered prayer, withdrawing to a great extent from the noise of outer life, with the desire to study, and to strive after the training of the will power. Had I but space, I might give a few hints from Dr. Babbitt's 'Principle of Light and Colour,' as to how this can be accomplished. I can, however, remind you, in the doctor's own language, of our possibilities: 'The truth is that nearly all have untold treasures of power locked up in the inner being—in fact, are millionaires—but their priceless treasures will remain useless to them until someone informs them of their own possessions, and hands them a key with which to unlock.' That key the higher Spiritualists possess, and it would belong to all if we but made the effort for higher development.

'Spectator' further expresses bewilderment that 'repressive laws' should inspire interest. I suggest—kindly read between the lines, and you may catch a glimpse of the desire to see the great truth we are in possession of, in a better working order. I am no advocate of civil laws, and join in Ruskin's laugh when he quietly informs us: 'I think quite one of the most notablest historical events of this century (perhaps the very notablest) was that council of clergymen horror-struck at the idea of any diminution in our dread of hell, at which the last of English clergymen whom one would have expected to see in such a function, rose as the devil's advocate to tell us how impossible it was we could get on without him.' We need not follow that example, and cry impossible to manage without the interference of undeveloped man's laws—we must study to comprehend the Almighty and Nature's written laws.

Along with Mr. Bevan Harris, I likewise felt regret at the somewhat vague answer which W. H. Robinson gave to my query.

BEN-BEN.

The Misses Bangs.

SIR,—The statement of Dr. Hodgson that the Sisters Bangs 'had been unmasked, and that the experiences in question must be considered as trickery,' is either true or a gross libel. In the latter case the Misses Bangs can only clear their character by showing that they took legal proceedings against Dr. Hodgson for the libel, and obtained a verdict in their favour.

Unless this course was followed, or they can show good cause why it was not adopted, their presence in this country could not be beneficial to the cause which we have so much at heart.

C.A.M.

[If every medium whose reputation is wrongly traduced were to bring an action for libel, there would be an inconvenient pressure in the work of the Law Courts; and in the presence of so much ignorance and prejudice what hope could he have of a fair hearing and a just decision?—ED. 'LIGHT.']

WHERE thou findest ignorance, stupidity, brute-mindedness—attack it, I say: smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not while thou livest and it lives; but smite, smite in the name of God! The highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so command thee.—THOMAS CARLYLE.

SPIRITUALISM demands white lives, pure characters and high aspirations on the part of all of its adherents. Only by and through these can they earn respectable homes for themselves in the after life. There is no middleman in Spiritualism to supply them with heavenly manna. They must honestly earn and pay in full for everything they get.

To those who ask what is the use of seership, we boldly reply its utility consists pre-eminently in the one great certainty that it and it alone can feed the heart-hunger of humanity, eventually destroy despair and turn on such brilliant light where cimerian darkness now prevails that pessimism perforce will perish and glorious optimistic views of life make even earth a paradise.—W. J. COLVILLE.

SOCIETY WORK.

BRISTOL, 24, UPPER MAUDLIN-STREET.—On Sunday last an excellent address was delivered by Mr. S. F. Wayland, of Newport, on 'Revealed Religion and Scientific Religion.' Friends interested are requested to attend regularly. 'LIGHT' always on sale.—W. WEBBER.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday last both our meetings were thoroughly successful. On Christmas Day, public circle as usual; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long, 'The Song of the Angels.' On Saturday, December 31st, watch-night service. Doors open at 10 p.m., and closed at 10.15 till 12.15 a.m. 'LIGHT' always on sale.—VERAX.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. King delivered an address entitled 'After Death.' Mr. King, who claims to be a Theosophist, fully endorsed what every Spiritualist would say. Questions from the audience were successfully dealt with. Next Sunday, Mrs. Boddington. Friday, public debate.—J. MURRELL.

BELPER SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY AND LYCEUM.—On Sunday last, after an impassioned and impressive appeal and impeachment of war, through Mr. E. Marklew, the Belper Society of Spiritualists enthusiastically and unanimously adopted the resolution drawn up by Mr. Stead (as did also the Lyceum in the afternoon). The unseen powers which work for righteousness have inspired this desire and action. Let Spiritualists respond in earnest.—W. H. SHERBURN.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARK-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last our platform was occupied by Mr. W. O. Drake, who delivered an earnest address on 'The Value of Personal Evidence.' Afterwards several questions put by members of the audience were satisfactorily replied to. Many friends stayed to an after meeting, at which a lady member of the society kindly consented to give clairvoyance.—OSCAR HUDSON, Hon. Sec.

4, MERRINGTON-ROAD, ST. OSWALD'S-ROAD, WEST BROMPTON.—Drawing-room meeting. Last Sunday evening Mr. Sherwood gave a short address on the advantages and comfort that Spiritualism brought to those who pursued its study properly. Mrs. Mason's guides gave many excellent descriptions, the majority of which were recognised. Mr. Austin Herbert's fine voice was heard to great advantage in the songs, 'Nazareth,' and 'In passionate surrender.' Next Sunday (Christmas Day), at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Peters.—W.S.

GLASGOW.—Mr. J. W. Boulding, of London, has lectured on two successive Sundays for the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists. Mr. Boulding's style as a lecturer is unique in the movement. He possesses a rare combination of qualities—originality of thought, humour, a high degree of constructiveness, shown in the arrangement of his facts and arguments; great command of language and imagery, and a manner of expression that gives to the whole a charm and interest that holds his audience entranced from start to finish. Very large audiences were present at the evening services. Mr. Boulding's advent goes a long way to heighten the tone of our platform oratory.—J.S., Sec.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD (end of the passage).—On Sunday morning last Mr. Sutherland brought a report of an address given in his home circle, showing the difficulty the spirits find in giving expression to thoughts and teachings. On Sunday evening some questions from the audience were replied to by Messrs. Arthur, Brookes, Bailey, Jones, Hewitt, and Mills. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Tuesday, at 8 p.m. Wednesday, members only. The annual reunion and social gathering of Spiritualists and friends will take place in the large Wellington Hall, Upper-street, Islington, on Wednesday, January 4th, 1899. Doors open at 7 p.m., commence at 7.30 p.m. The programme includes New Year's greetings, music, songs, recitations, and a laughable farce, concluding with a Cinderella dance. Tickets, 1s. each, of the secretaries of the London societies, at the hall, or of Mr. Brooks, 72, St. Thomas-road, Finsbury Park.—T.B.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last, the subject of Mr. Bibbings' discourse was 'Death's Oasis in Life's Desert.' The lecturer's message was an encouraging and consolatory one, and in the delivering thereof the discussion of problems of life and of so-called death was, for the moment, laid aside in order that the beautiful messages of Spiritualism could be more clearly conveyed. That the lecturer succeeded in doing this was constantly evidenced by the warm applause of the numerous audience, who also keenly appreciated the several fine oratorical efforts and the piquant wit of the speaker. Miss Samuel ably rendered the solo, 'Consider the Lilies' (Stephen Glover). The next meeting of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists will take place at the above rooms on Sunday evening, January 1st, 1899, at 7 p.m., when a trance address will be delivered by Mr. J. J. Morse. (No meeting will be held NEXT Sunday, being Christmas Day).—L.H.

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