

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !" — Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

The Emperor of Germany is also with us. At the unveiling of the monument to the 1st Regiment of the Guards, at Privet, he made a speech which concluded with the following reference to the French and German soldiers who lost their lives in the great war:—

When our flags are lowered in greeting before this bronze statue, and flutter mournfully over the graves of our dear comrades, so may they also wave over the tombs of our foes, and whisper to them that we think with sorrowing regard of their brave dead. With deep thanks and with an upward glance to the Lord of Hosts for the guidance mercifully vouchsafed to our Great Sovereign, we will recall to mind that the countless souls of all those who once stood face to face in hot encounter look down upon us this day from where they stand round the throne of the Supreme Judge, united in the eternal peace of God.

Any one who can talk like that, and mean it, is more than half a Spiritualist.

We are not often attracted by published sermons. As a rule, they appear to us to be the least real and the most artificial outputs of literature; if, indeed, they are literature at all. There are happy exceptions, but they only make prominent the rule. Even the sermon which has this moment attracted our attention is only partly an exception, but we feel the truth and timeliness of its concluding words. They were lately spoken by the Bishop of Manchester, at a meeting of 'The Incorporated Association of Head Masters':—

It is clear that the attempt to form human character without conscious trust in God must be a dismal failure. And what conclusion can have a more momentous lesson for you, my brothers, whose great office it is to form the character of the coming generation? I say to form its *character*, for after all it is the formation of character, far more even than the calling forth of intellectual capacity, which should be the great aim of your endeavours.

Why is poor France reduced to-day to a chaotic heap of warring and irreconcilable parties? Why is her arm palsied and her future dark and uncertain? Because she cannot trust the character of those who aspire to govern her. Why did the failure of a financial enterprise shake the whole fabric of her national existence? Because it revealed the shameful truth that so many of those who sat in the high places of civic authority had sold their support to the Panama managers. And why again to-day has the condemnation of a simple captain on the staff precipitated a national crisis of which even yet we see not the end? Because his trial has revealed such treachery, and even worse, among many of the leaders of her army that she knows not where to look for an honest man. Character—that is the main element as well in individual worth as in national greatness; and if then the formation and maintenance of character depends, as the Preacher teaches, upon living faith in a wise, just and loving Father, the God of Heaven and earth, may I not confidently ask you to take as the central truth of your teaching—'This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard; fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.'

'The Educational Review' has the following shot at a proposal by Sir John Gorst:—

A REMEDY FOR WHITE SLAVERY.—Sir John Gorst is full of surprises, and the educational world is much indebted to him for relieving the tedium of educational controversy with sudden flashes of startling suggestion. Writing in the 'Nineteenth Century' he proposes two effectual remedies for the white slavery of school children—an Act to invest all municipal authorities with the powers now possessed under a private Act for the regulation of the traffic of children plying their trade in the street; and secondly, an Act to make it an offence against the law, for parents to send their children to school starving, or wet through, or insufficiently clad, or exhausted by labour. What Conservative after this will be able to throw the old gibes of 'Socialism' and 'grand-motherly legislation' in the teeth of the Radical and Progressive parties? Unhappily our Conservative Vice-Minister of Education—if we may coin a title—has out-Heroded Herod and propounded a remedy which even a Radical Parliament would find it difficult to enforce.

We call this a 'shot' at Sir John Gorst's proposal; but are not sure. There is a note of half sympathy in it, or do we speak as we wish? If the law cannot be made and enforced in Sir John Gorst's sense, we are sorry for the law makers and administrators. The proposal comes not a day too soon. But the law suggested would need to be supplemented by a new department of Board of Guardians or Charity Organisation work.

We can quite well understand what it is that has led so many of our speakers, all over the world, to strike out against Bibliolatry and Christolatry. They have found freedom, and, in finding freedom, they found out the causes of their bondage. But we all need to remember the parable of the tares and the wheat. If some no longer believe that the Bible is all alike inspired and infallible, that is no reason why they should have done with it; and if Jesus Christ is no longer to them the *only* religious guide and saviour, that is no reason why they should not value, love and follow him for what he is.

We very much agree with a writer in a late number of 'The Banner of Light,' who said:—

A few weeks ago I heard a man speak in a trance state. He seemed to be controlled by some spirit who said, with other things, that we must let the old Book, the ready-made angels and the Nazarene, all go, and take what the spirits give us instead.

Now, why should we let the old Book go? I am no worshiper of the Bible, but it contains some of the grandest thoughts I have ever read in any book, and it contains more accounts of spirit manifestations than any other one book in existence. For that reason alone I think Spiritualists should not let it go.

No doubt there were many other worlds in existence long before this one on which we live was peopled by the human race. Is it not reasonable to suppose that some of them, at least, were inhabited by highly enlightened beings who very properly might be called angels? Perhaps they visited this earth at times to instruct its inhabitants. Why should we let them go?

As for the Nazarene, was there ever any other being who lived on this earth more worthy of our praise, who set us a better example? Can we, as lovers of truth, justice and humanity, refuse to profit by the influence of his life upon the world?

'The Theosophical Review' introduces us to a new society or guild for young people. It has been started in

the United States by an energetic Theosophist, but 'it is proposed that this Children's Order shall spread all over the world.' 'The Theosophical Review' says:—

The name of this Society is 'The Golden Chain,' a pretty conceit, and in this Chain every child-member is a Link. Each child on admission will sign the following:

THE GOLDEN CHAIN.

I am a Link in a Golden Chain of Love that stretches round the world, and must keep my Link bright and strong.

So I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing I meet, and to protect and help all who are weaker than myself.

And I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts, to speak pure and beautiful words, and to do pure and beautiful actions.

May every Link in the Golden Chain become bright and strong!

The child will receive a card bearing these words, and will read it aloud every morning. He will thus be insensibly led towards the Good and the Beautiful, and his character will be sweetened and strengthened. He will learn to look on all that is harsh and impure in life as unworthy of a member of the Order to which he belongs, and will have the support of association with others in his efforts—the greatest of helps to a child.

We heartily agree. In these blessed human endeavours we can all unite.

This same number of 'The Theosophical Review' takes Miss Goodrich-Freer to task in a slightly satirical way; but the lesson is not altogether unnecessary:—

Miss Freer, as our readers doubtless know, has a most aggravating way of parading scepticism in the face of her own visions, and there is no doubt that she most seriously interferes with her development by the attitude—real or assumed—of her mind. When she sees a 'phantasm' she will remark: 'The fact of voices being heard by two persons [herself and a friend] while one alone [herself] saw the figures, seems a clear proof that the figures were hallucinatory. It seems probable that the sounds also were hallucinatory, but were what is called in the vocabulary of the S.P.R. the "collective" hallucination of two persons.' One might wonder whether an investigation of Miss Freer's bodily existence would be facilitated, if everyone who saw her or heard her speak were registered as being probably under a 'collective hallucination.' Poor ghosts! if people only knew how annoyed they feel when treated in this discourteous way! Against such theories the unhappy 'phantasms' fight in vain.

'The Christian World' very usefully says:—

A general impression exists that if a person is of unsound mind and incapable of managing his own affairs the proper place for him is a lunatic asylum. This impression, like many others on legal matters, is wrong, as the proceedings in the case of Miss Eleanor Jackson, decided this week, proved. Although that lady had been confined by her relatives—ostensibly in her own interests—in private asylums for more than two years, she was found on inquiry by a jury to be 'not dangerous to herself or dangerous to others,' and this finding the Master in Lunacy declared to entitle her to be discharged from confinement. The jury, he it remarked, had also declared that Miss Jackson was 'of unsound mind and incapable of managing her own affairs.' The test of eligibility for an asylum is not, therefore, unsoundness of mind, but whether the patient is dangerous to herself or to others.

We have long held that this view of the law is as sound as it is sensible. Incarceration in a lunatic asylum is imprisonment; and only danger to the public could justify it. We regret that, in another part of the paper, 'The Christian World' deprecates the disinclination of friends to put the afflicted into asylums. We are sorry to say that the tendency is too strongly the other way, so far as our observation goes. The so-called 'increase of insanity' is probably, to a considerable extent, only increase of readiness to assume insanity and to put 'the insane' out of the way into 'the very nice places' now open to them.

We have received from Messrs. Gay and Bird a copy of a new and cheaper edition of Mr. Horatio W. Dresser's

'Voices of Hope, and other messages from the hills. A series of essays on the Problem of Life, Optimism, and the Christ.' The book is cleverly printed on thin but pleasant paper, and with good readable type. It may be useful to remind our readers that these eleven essays are on such subjects as, 'The Basis of Optimism,' 'The Omnipresent Spirit,' 'The Problem of Evil,' 'The Escape from Subjectivity,' 'The Progressing God.' There is deep and subtle thinking here.

THOMAS SHORTER.

I should like to say a few words by way of paying a slight tribute to the memory of my old friend Thomas Shorter, who was one of my earliest spiritual acquaintances. I was at the time a complete novice in the matter, and I sat at his feet to learn. He was always ready to answer my queries and remove my doubts. He gave me his excellent little book to read, 'Confessions of a Truthseeker,' one of the first published in this country on the subject, which detailed the results of his own early experience. At the time I refer to, Mr. Shorter held the position of secretary of the Working Men's College in Great Ormond-street, where I used to call and see him; and there I occasionally saw the Rev. F. Maurice, who was an active member of the committee.

It was at this time that Mr. Shorter was engaged on his principal work, 'The Two Worlds,' which necessitated a great deal of reading and research, and it was this, done principally by gaslight, that laid the foundation of his eye trouble, which was not amenable to the skill of the oculist, nor benefited by the healing treatment of Dr. J. R. Newton, the celebrated American healer, who visited this country at the time.

Spiritualism was then being mainly propagated by the literary efforts of Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, Mr. William Howitt, and Mr. Shorter, through the 'Spiritual Magazine,' and by the active exertions of Mr. Benjamin Coleman, whose principal instrument was his tongue. For the first few years, Mr. Wilkinson was editor of the 'Magazine,' but in course of time Mr. Shorter undertook it, and held it till the proprietorship passed into the hands of Dr. Sexton, who had become a zealous convert to Spiritualism. It will be seen, therefore, that Mr. Shorter was engaged in writing on Spiritualism for many years, which he did without remuneration and at the expense of his eyesight, although his financial circumstances were by no means affluent. I consider it mainly due to the labours of Mr. Howitt and Mr. Shorter, who were intimate friends, that we are indebted for the sound, sensible Spiritualism that prevails in this country, free from the vagaries that abound elsewhere.

Mr. Shorter possessed fine literary talent, had an excellent memory, and, like the good man he was, devoted them to the best of purposes. I used to consider him a sort of walking encyclopædia, for there was nothing you could ask him about but he seemed to know something of it, and it was fortunate that his mental resources were such as to enable him in his later years to occupy himself, though blind, in composing poetry of considerable merit, and I suggest, as a tribute to his memory, that we should make an effort to more widely circulate his latest poetical composition, 'Later Autumn Leaves.'

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

MISS READ AND THE STUFFED GLOVE.

We had intended to close the discussion on this question in the present issue, but we have received several letters from correspondents who think it only fair that they should be allowed to deal with some of the points raised in last week's 'LIGHT.' We cannot afford space, however, for all the letters at length, and therefore hold them over till next week, by which time we hope to have found an opportunity for preparing a careful summary of their salient features. The subject must then be regarded as closed.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Mr. W. H. Terry, Austral Buildings, Collins-street, E.

## TRANCE AND INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKING.

WHAT THE SPEAKERS THEMSELVES SAY.

X.

BY MR. H. A. TERRY.

In response to your kind invitation to contribute my experiences while under the influence of my spirit guides, and during my inspirational addresses, I submit the following :—

I do not sit for automatic writing until I feel the spirit presence, which usually occurs when I am *alone*, or when with my wife, who is also a medium. The spirit influence is then manifested by a sudden calmness of my mind, accompanied, at times, by a tingling sensation, which commences in the centre of my right hand, and passing up the arm, is followed by a creeping sensation or tremour down my back. Then I know someone is desirous of writing, and I take up a pen or pencil, and await the communication. If it is purely automatic (as in the early stages of my development), my arm becomes stiff and I do not know what word is about to be written. I think independently during the process of writing, and words entirely opposite to my expectations have been written. These facts prove to me that I receive words direct from the guides in so far as purely automatic writing is concerned. I have waited for the names of the writing controls, and have been surprised when they have been written, as in numerous cases I have never known of the existence of the individuals whose names have been given. But someone may say : 'You at least knew the name when they commenced to write it.' I answer that where the name has been an uncommon one I have not known it until I have read it over afterwards. In regard to my experiences in impressional writing, the case is very different. I suddenly become conscious of a desire to write, although a moment before I may not have had a single thought of doing so. Usually I feel as though I wished to yawn, and in fact yawn for a minute or two, and then, becoming passive, and taking up my pen, a subject will occur to me, and a beautiful flow of thoughts will rapidly run through my mind, but I have to give expression to those thoughts in my own words in writing, in which process they lose their grandeur and beauty. While under this influence I feel transported to higher planes of thought and am scarcely conscious of what is passing around me. The influence leaves me as suddenly as it takes possession, and I usually feel dazed for a few minutes afterwards.

As regards my public addresses I term myself an inspirational medium, as I cannot, I think, be called a trance speaker in the strict sense of the term. The usual mode of procedure taken by my guides is to give answers to questions from, or to speak upon subjects chosen by, the audience, and occasionally my guides give an address, the title of which is given to me by means of automatic writing.

I do not know, in the least, what questions will be submitted, and moreover, when subjects have been given to me I make it a rule never to let my mind dwell upon them, or to read anything in any way bearing on the matter, so that I can conscientiously say I make no preparation whatever, and ascend the platform without knowledge of the subject-matter.

My experience of going under control is as follows : I feel a calm and peaceful sensation steal over me and become drowsy, my eyes close and remain fast closed, and I feel my individuality changing in a way that to me is very remarkable, especially when under the influence of one particular spirit. I then feel taller and stouter ; my mind becomes clearer ; and I become conscious of a great determination of character. I feel competent to cope with whatever question arises. My voice changes, assuming in sound the voice so well known to those who knew the spirit when he preached in earth life. I am told that the whole demeanour of the control is manifested during the address, and the phraseology, too, is very marked. I feel myself to be the individual for the time being. In proof of the foregoing let me here say that when under the influence of this particular guide several non-Spiritualists have, at different times, recognised my voice, manner, and general bearing as being characteristic of the spirit, and have asked me afterwards if it was not R. who spoke through

me, as they could not mistake his style and mode of argument. On one occasion a gentleman in the audience, who had known the control in earth life, asked the chairman (a clairvoyant) if he saw the controlling spirit. The chairman replied that he did. He described the spirit and the circumstances connected with his passing on, given him by the spirit, all of which was beyond cavil. The clairvoyant had never seen, or heard, the spirit in earth life.

Here, then, we have mannerisms and phraseology reproduced, identity demonstrated, and my own feeling of the individuality of the spirit corroborated. In regard to the ideas conveyed through me, I do not think while under control. In fact, I listen and at times feel as though I were standing *above* my own head, listening to myself speaking. The thoughts and ideas are expressed so quickly that when I come to my normal state I do not know what has been said or what questions have been answered, although I am conscious while speaking. At other times, if the guide happens to be slow in delivery, when I regain my normal state of mind I remember most of what has been said.

In each case of control my individuality seems to me to change, and, although conscious, I am not myself. This to me is a proof of the individual spirit action. We now come to the most important part, namely : 'How are we to know how much of the subject matter emanates from the spirit control?' One of my proofs lies in clairaudience. I have a daughter who is clairvoyant and clairaudient, and also a friend who has the same gifts, and on many occasions this friend has heard the spirit's voice, and then my voice repeating the words uttered by the spirit. I have asked my guides to tell me their modes of procedure and how they use me, as regards my knowledge and theirs. The explanation given to me is as follows : 'When a question is given to us, and the answer is within the sphere of your own knowledge, and we can corroborate it by our researches, we simply inspire or prompt you to give the answer, but we never fail to supplement such answers with additional power and force. But when subjects are given which are above your plane of knowledge, then we control in words as well as in ideas and thoughts, as is proved by the clairaudient, who hears our voices in addition to yours.'

During the delivery of the addresses my whole being seems lifted up. I seem to leave all things earthly, for the time being. My mind becomes expanded and I feel full of joy, and they are to me some of the happiest moments of my life, for I listen with delight to the words I hear uttered, almost beyond my own comprehension. I believe that a great deal depends upon the power of the controlling spirits as to how much we receive direct from them ; and very much also depends on the instrument used by the controls ; there must be perfect trust and affinity. One of my guides can come so closely in *rapport* with me that his peculiarities are re-presented by me ; but there are two other guides who simply change my voice and individuality, and supplement my knowledge by their own. Therefore the evidence for the identity of these is less striking. These spirits have 'passed on' longer and are more advanced.

I am not able to give a normal address of any value without making preparation and speaking from notes. The amount of additional thought and superior knowledge received from the spirit control by the medium is, I think, known only to the medium, who, of course, is aware of the extent of his own knowledge. But I do not think it is very difficult for others to learn the extent of the medium's knowledge on a given subject, and then put questions on kindred subjects, while the said medium is under spirit influence. To myself the proof is most patent, because I know that the thoughts expressed when I am under control far exceed my normal powers of delivery.

To put my experiences in a nutshell, I may say : 1. I am *conscious* during the delivery of addresses, and *experience a change of individuality*. 2. I am fully aware when the subject matter exceeds my normal knowledge, as I am usually as much a listener as any one of the audience during the discourse. But in most cases, when I return to my normal condition I remember but little of what has been given—in fact, in most cases the addresses last from fifty to sixty minutes, and to me the time does not seem more than five or ten minutes at the longest. 3. Strangers have recognised the *mannerisms and phraseology* of the control (I never

say in public who my guides are). 4. My guides inform me that they supplement my knowledge with their higher knowledge, even using their own words when necessary. 5. This has been proved by other mediums possessing clair-audience and clairvoyance. One guide (a minister) has been seen by five separate clairvoyants, and to one he gave his name in full; and others have heard the spirit speak and then have heard me repeat what had been said.

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#### A SEANCE WITH MRS. CORNER.

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Recognising the keen interest taken in materialisation, by Spiritualists and inquirers alike, I have much pleasure in sending you an account of a most convincing materialised form obtained here quite unexpectedly through the mediumship of Mrs. Corner. On Thursday evening, August 17th, in company with two other friends, Mrs. Lisle and Mr. Knowles, Mrs. Corner and I were sitting chatting in the twilight, and the conversation drifted round (as it usually does with people interested in psychic phenomena) to the spirit people and their manifestations; and I described to her the sundry knocks and bangs we have *all* heard in various rooms since I moved into this house about a month ago. I also narrated the extraordinary tragedy which is slowly unfolding, about many things alleged by the spirits to have happened here over fifty years ago, when the old part of the house was a small cottage standing in the midst of luxuriant orchards. I suggested, as we sat chatting, that we should lower the lights and see if any manifestation occurred. Mrs. Corner readily entered into my suggestion, and even went so far as to offer to sit in a cabinet if I could improvise one! It is almost unnecessary to say I availed myself with alacrity of such an unexpected offer, and fetching a cane-seated bedroom chair I set it against the shutters of a large bay window in the dining-room, behind the wide plush curtains. I then placed an open screen in the centre, drawing the curtains outwards over it, leaving a slight aperture in the centre at the top for ventilation. One side of the curtains afforded no egress because my grand piano was against the opening, and I left the other side hanging loosely to the floor for the forms to use.

In a few moments everything necessary was ready, and at the further end of the room I turned one gas jet low, which remained burning during the sitting. The medium was thus in complete darkness, the dim light falling upon the left side of the cabinet as we sat facing it. Mrs. Corner (highly amused at my impromptu preparations) took her seat within the curtains and was speedily entranced, and the little circle, consisting of Mrs. Lisle, Mr. Knowles, my son, and myself, drew up our chairs in front of the cabinet.

I may here mention that Mr. Knowles possesses strong mediumistic powers, and by sitting daily with me since Christmas has developed steadily, step by step, both trance mediumship and clairvoyance, and it may be interesting to some other mediumistic people to read my method of procedure.

In September last I found out that I could mesmerise him, and frequently did so with great success to alleviate severe pain in his head from which he was then suffering, and it is interesting to note that this terrible pain has completely ceased since his mediumship has definitely developed. When in the condition of mental passivity induced by mesmerism, *without suggestion on my part*, he appeared to possess a psychic faculty which he could not exercise normally, namely, that he could apparently converse with unseen intelligences. I observed that he would grasp violently at times some object near him, and shake it, whilst manifesting intense emotion, and the tears would roll down his cheeks. Greatly perplexed, I asked Mrs. Hawkins to come and sit with us, and when this distress on his part occurred, she described, clairvoyantly, his brother standing by his side, and grasping his hand in return. She also saw other spirits, all of whom were recognised by him or me.

This determined me to sit regularly with him for development, and the next stage was that I could get intelligent answers through Mr. Knowles, when mesmerised (without suggestion), by means of automatic writing, each spirit respectively signing the communications given, which dealt with personal and private matters. Greatly

encouraged with my success, I determined to sit with him for the mediumship known as 'control,' and, day by day, as we patiently sat, I mesmerised him a little less, and the spirit influence became stronger and could *grip* him better. Thus we plodded on, until one day, quite unexpectedly, they gave me a surprise by suddenly controlling him, much to the alarm of a non-spiritualistic lady who was present and who turned and fled. Since then he has advanced rapidly, and as we still continue our daily sittings, and his mediumship is now firmly established, I feel very hopeful about the future, and I shall ever be grateful to Mrs. Hawkins, whom I have known many years, and who I believe to be one of the most gifted and upright mediums working in the cause of Spiritualism; she has throughout taken the kindest interest in my efforts, and frequently sat with us in her free time, refusing to accept any fee.

On Thursday, 17th, by Mr. Knowles being able to see *through* the curtains clairvoyantly, he was enabled to follow the spirits' work within closely, and watch the arms and forms building up and dissipating. It is needless to dwell upon the usual phenomena obtained by Mrs. Corner's cabinet spirits, except to mention that 'Marie' came out several times considerably taller and bigger than the medium herself; but the chief interest to me was the partial materialisation of this dearly loved brother of Mr. Knowles, who passed over a year ago last July. He was called into spirit life in the prime of his manhood, almost without warning, sinking under an imperative operation performed on one side of his face. After sitting some time Mr. Knowles suddenly became greatly agitated and exclaimed: 'I see Jack just behind the curtain,' and almost as he spoke a large hand, with somewhat pointed fingers, and unmistakably a *man's*, came out from the side of the curtain, materialised to the shoulder. With fingers outstretched it beckoned towards Mr. Knowles, who rose to grasp it; as he did so (he subsequently informed us), he mentally entreated his brother to prove his identity doubly by giving him a personal test of such a nature as to be beyond the knowledge of anyone else present; and it appears that on grasping the spirit hand it gave him the first and third Masonic signs.

We were then told to sit quietly, and Mr. Knowles could see his brother's form (assisted by 'Marie') trying to build up just behind the curtain. Suddenly the curtain was pulled back, and there in front of us, as if rising out of the floor, was the upper part of a form materialised. The face had the features clearly defined, but presenting a vapoury, transparent appearance, and on the right cheek was a small, dense white patch covering the exact place of the disfigurement caused by the operation. The jaws moved rapidly, making a weird gasping sound. We all saw, and we all heard; and Mr. Knowles recognised his brother's face. This form appeared subsequently, and it was for us extremely painful to witness the terrible efforts made by the spirit to articulate, and after the sitting he (controlling Mr. Knowles) explained certain difficulties he could not surmount the first time, but appeared very happy to think he had accomplished what he had.

I understand that Mrs. Corner has been having a rest lately, and certainly did not come to my house with any idea of giving a séance. She seemed in good health and spirits, and in her proximity we 'sensed' her magnetism unusually strong, and as there seems a good deal of physical power in this house I am going to form a little circle of friends to sit here regularly in September.

In conclusion, I cannot express my unutterable thankfulness in being permitted to witness the materialisation (in recognisable form) of one of our own friends, in my own house; and this valuable test can but deepen the ever-growing conviction that spirit return is a *reality* and that communion can, and does, exist between us and those we love: 'Not lost but gone before.'

EFFIE BATHE.  
Hurstborne Lodge, Ashchurch Park Villas,  
Goldhawk-road, W.

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ILLNESS OF MRS. J. VENABLES, OF WALSTALL.—The many friends of Mrs. J. Venables, of Walsall, will regret to know that she has been seriously ill. On Saturday last she had to undergo a severe surgical operation, which, we rejoice to learn, was performed successfully and her present condition is as favourable as can be expected. We trust that she will be fully restored to health and strength.

## THE GERMAN PSYCHICAL JOURNALS.

'Psychische Studien,' for August, has a short paper contributed by the Editor, Dr. Friedrich Maier, with an account of a 'haunting,' which should be interesting to some of our psychical researchers. This account is contained in a letter to the Editor from his friend and collaborateur, Herr Illig; and is introduced by a few words in which Dr. Maier explains that his friend, for years an ardent student of the occult, has become recently very sceptical, on account of the exposure of a medium in whose honesty he had believed. I will translate the account of the haunting as given in the letter:—

Göppingen,  
May 21th,

MY ESTEEMED FRIEND,—You will see by this that in spite of what has happened I cannot remain at rest; and now I have a new experience to relate to you, about which I am desirous of asking your advice. A few days since, a friend who knew of my interest in occultism, called on me and asked if I would allow a poor woman to come and see me, who believed herself to be haunted by the spirit of her deceased husband. I assented and the woman came. She is about fifty years of age, appears a sensible sort of person, and has hitherto had no supernormal experiences of any kind. She informed me that she had already consulted the 'deacon,' who said, 'It was all from the nerves!' She had likewise been to Blumhardt (a trance medium in Boll), who laid his hands on her and prayed with her. But this had no effect on the ghost. The facts she told me are as follow: Since about two years ago, she has been disturbed at night by a singular noise in her room, which she occupies alone, as though someone was rubbing the wall with paper. This was repeated so often that she looked upon it as 'ghostly.' Some weeks after the noise had begun, she learnt that her husband, who had long ago deserted her and had gone with another woman to America, had first shot his mistress and had then committed suicide by shooting himself; and she firmly believed that the noise was made by her husband's ghost. Soon the phenomena changed. Rappings, knocks, and other noises were heard, and the woman was so frightened that she changed her abode. In her new lodging she was for some weeks undisturbed, and she hoped 'he had not found her out.' But after she had been there for about three weeks, a woman who occupied the room next hers said to her, 'Don't you see it is close upon Christmas? what a noise the spirits make in my room at night!' She immediately thought of her 'old man,' but was careful to say nothing. A few days after, however, she herself began to hear the noises again. It sounded as though sand, peas, or suchlike things were being thrown down, but nothing was to be seen. She heard knockings too at the foot of her bed, and once there came such a rush of cold air that her teeth chattered. Since then she has several times heard a voice, which she recognised as that of her husband. Among other things he said once: 'Do stay with me, I am in such terror.' Then another spirit came with him and became a regular visitor. This one said, 'We shall soon finish her off and then she will come to us.' But the husband replied: 'No, not to us; she will be elsewhere.' She was too terrified to say anything herself, and she never saw anything except once, when she saw something not bigger than a wasp, with her husband's face, in a sort of swing flying round about her light as though trying to extinguish it. For the last four weeks he had come to her when she was in bed, not visibly, but she felt he was there; he pushed her till she was hurt, pulled her hair, and once he burnt her so that she bore the mark for a fortnight. Altogether she was tormented beyond bearing, and now she burnt a light all night long, as she had heard that ghosts could not bear light.

Herr Illig proceeds to ask the Editor's opinion and advice in the matter, as to how it would be possible to help the poor woman. He says he is fully satisfied that at least some of the phenomena are of an objective character, such as the noises, cold blasts, &c., while the voices, pinching and other things may possibly be subjective hallucinations, but certain proof could only be obtained by personal observation, and how is this to be had? The woman occupies one room only in a house with many other lodgers, and it would be impossible to interview her at night without attracting attention, and she is afraid of getting turned out if the facts become known. Besides which, he says he stands quite alone, as Herr S., in consequence of the aforesaid exposure, has lost all interest in occult matters, and Herr Schenk, another comrade, has broken his foot when cycling. He says he has experimented with her at his own house for automatic writing, but she has no power in that direction, and now he begs for his friend's advice. This Dr. Maier seems to have great difficulty in

giving. He, however, recommends him to make further inquiries of the woman, who is evidently a medium, and suggests that possibly a séance with a spiritualistic circle might do good; though, he says, that according to his personal experience such spontaneous manifestations by relatives are usually of a very private character, and seldom are elicited in a circle of strangers. How the poor woman is to be helped seems indeed a very difficult question.

'Psyche' has many interesting short articles, with accounts of séances, trance addresses, &c.; but the most important paper is the first, entitled 'The Relation between Hypnotism and Spiritism.' This is the report of an address delivered by Herr Reinhold Gerling at a meeting of the Magnetic Society in Berlin, on May 2nd last. In his introduction he says:—

'I belong to a movement with which Spiritism has little in common. This movement will have nothing to do with Spiritism, simply because it knows nothing whatever about it. I have been reproached with occupying myself with Spiritism. I have been begged recently not to let it be known that I am a Spiritist, and have been even asked to dissemble. In consequence of this attack, I have determined now to deliver an address on Spiritism, on purpose to again openly declare that I hold the same standpoint that I did in 1887. I am a Spiritist, and shall remain a Spiritist!'

The Editor in a footnote expresses his gratification at reading these words, as he says he had been told that Herr Gerling had quite abandoned Spiritism; he is (he adds) one of the leaders of the movement for 'nature healing' in Germany, and after Hansen has done more than anyone to make hypnotism popular by experimental lectures. He looks upon hypnotism as introductory to Spiritism, and as forming a bridge leading direct to the latter.

There are so many good articles in the 'Uebersinnliche Welt' for August, that it is difficult to make a selection. Mrs. Annie Besant's address on the proofs of the soul's immortality is concluded. Among articles more especially interesting to Spiritualists are the following: 'The Spook in Nienadowka,' a very long account of phenomena which took place at that village in 1897 and the beginning of 1898, occupying twenty pages and not yet finished; a short article is given entitled, 'How a Severe Illness was Cured by a Spirit.' This was through Mrs. Espérance's healing mediumship and is very interesting. I hope to be able to translate it later on, as it is not very lengthy. Then there is 'A Berlin Spirit Séance,' rather a mocking description by one of the 'funny' writers of the Frankfort 'General Anzeiger,' a notice of which has already appeared in 'LIGHT.' There is likewise an account of 'Direct Writing by a Dead Person Unknown to the Experimenters,' communicated by M. Rouillon ('Annales des Sciences Psychiques'), and translated into German by Dr. L. Nagel. This is very remarkable, as the two gentlemen who vouch for the facts had met only for a friendly chat; they were sitting by the light of a lamp and blazing fire, beside a little table with a bottle and plate upon it, thinking of nothing less than table turning, when suddenly the table began to move, and gave intelligent answers to questions. Afterwards it asked for a slate and several words were written between two slates fastened together and laid upon the table, the gentlemen having been previously requested to move their hands from it. The communicating intelligence gave her name as 'Demi-Syphon' and some details of her death. The gentlemen were completely puzzled, but the next day, when talking over the séance with a friend, they learnt from him that the death of a dancer at the Moulin Rouge who bore that nickname was recently spoken of in the 'Temps.' M. T.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of communications from 'D. G.,' 'Claude T.,' James MacBeth, 'J. F. S.,' and others. All will have attention in due course. A summary of the letters to hand on the Read case will be given in our next week's issue.

'H. H.' We fear that the publication of your letter would give rise to an acrimonious theological discussion—which is very undesirable.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2nd, 1899.

EDITOR ... .. E. DAWSON ROGERS.

*Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.*

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## Light,

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'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

### A STRANGE SURVIVAL.

An Essay in the August number of 'The Open Court' on 'Death and Resurrection,' gives an excellent summary of certain Pagan, semi-Pagan, and Christian ideas of 'the last enemy,' the general effect of which is to somewhat sustain Mr. Jacobs' contention that we are cleaning the old pictures of Death from the common work-a-day slate of the world. Two photographs of a silver cup found at Boscorcaire present a Dance of Death, hideous enough but not altogether without suggestions of natural beauty: and the meaning is obvious. Several skeletons, fully two-thirds the height of the cup, make their condition obtrusively plain: and they are named,—Epicurus, Zeno, Anacreon, Sophocles, Moschus, Euripides and Menander. 'The Open Court' gives the following explanation:—

The skeletons represented on this cup are not genii of death, but represent certain sages and poets who have now passed away, and whose present condition would admonish the merry revellers to pluck the rose while it is in bloom, and to enjoy life while it lasts.

And this explanation is pushed home by the writer with a thoroughness which many would deprecate. He says:—

It is well known that in Egypt the figure of a mummy was passed around on festive occasions, with the words, 'eat and drink and be merry, for soon you will be like this.' The mummy represented to them the transiency of life, and, far from inciting the revellers to ponder over the problem of death, it was interpreted in the sense of Omar Khayyam as a lesson to enjoy life, and to drain the cup of pleasure to the lees.

The skeleton among the Greeks had the same significance as the Egyptian mummy at carousals. Far from making men serious, it was intended to dispel all gloomy thoughts.

But that concluding sentence carries with it its own doubt; for surely the oddest way 'to dispel all gloomy thoughts' would be to pass round a mummy or a skull! We very much doubt whether the old world was such a riotously merry world after all: and if the memorial of death were passed round it would probably be as much for pathos in stoicism as for abandonment in revelry. The memorials of ancient Greece blend, in a most touching way, the symbols of sorrow and joy, beauty and decay; and those of ancient Egypt suggest that death and the judgment blended with their daily thoughts, not to excite excess of reckless mirth but to season all with thoughts of what was coming, quite in the spirit of that profound saying of the Book of Ecclesiastes: 'Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart,

and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.'

But, apart from any direct intention, whether related to revelry or restraint, the intrusion of Death, as a personification, may be said to be universal, in one form or another. 'Memento mori!' is the one text upon which the human race, in sunshine or in shade, has preached its own unending sermon; and, because Death does intrude, as the inexorable marplot of this pathetic play, he is represented as hideous, himself like the sorry thing he brings us to: and, even into Christian times, the skull and cross bones persisted, in spite of the beautiful faith which, at the beginning, gently banished Death, and put instead the simple couch or cross, the wreath, the palm, or the shepherd and the lamb.

But, as this writer shows, the early Christians were strangely absorbed in the idea of a bodily resurrection: this probably accounting for their preference of burial to cremation. That they misunderstood the story of the resurrection of Christ is certain: but how natural the misunderstanding was! Even to this day, the majority of Christians half cling to the bodily, the physical, resurrection, and find it very difficult to separate themselves unreservedly from the body, and accept the Spiritualist's elementary truth, that the true self is not the body at all, but that radiant inner self which uses the body as a tabernacle for awhile.

The passage quoted from Maitland's 'Church in the Catacombs' is very emphatic as to the early Christian view of the physical resurrection. It is Prudentius who speaks:—

There will soon come a time when genial warmth shall revisit these bones, and the soul will resume its former tabernacle, animated with living blood. The inert corpses, long since corrupted in the tomb, shall be borne through the ether [*auras*], in company with the souls. For this reason is such care bestowed upon the sepulchre: such honour paid to the motionless limbs—such luxury displayed in funerals. We spread the linen cloth of spotless white—myrrh and frankincense embalm the body. What do these excavated rocks signify? What these fair monuments? What, but that the object intrusted to them is sleeping, and not dead. . . . But now death itself is blessed, since through its pangs a path is thrown open to the just, a way from sorrow to the stars.

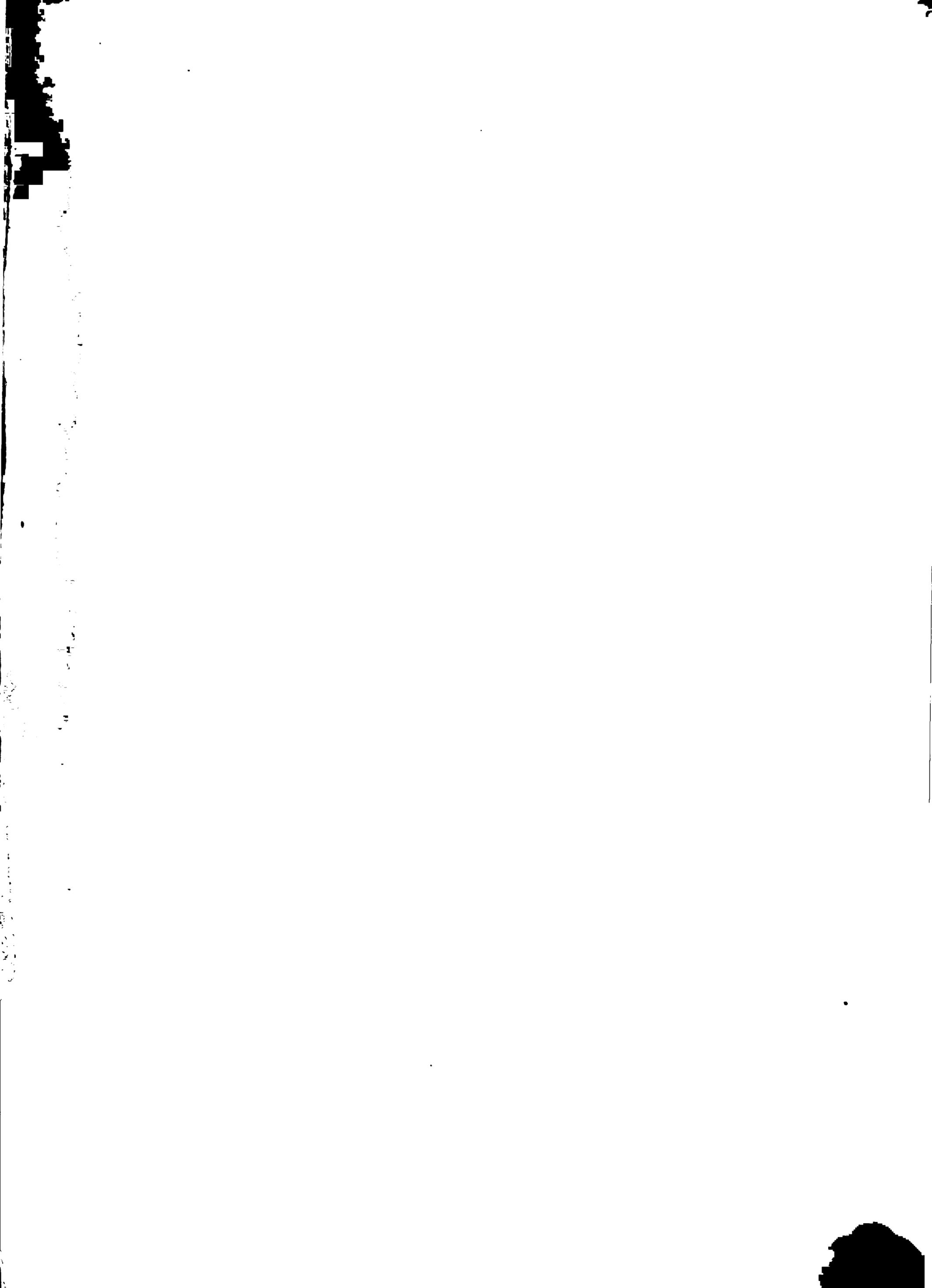
The closing words, apart from their connection, are as purely spiritual as anything could be. What could be better? 'Death itself is blessed, since, through its pangs, a path is thrown open to the just, a way from sorrow to the stars.' But the earlier sentences are only too plain. The inconsistency is great; and the explanation is difficult. The writer who could set down the truth that the buried one was not dead, and that death had opened a way to joy and light, had small need of the grotesque theory that the old tabernacle would be wanted again, and that it was necessary or becoming to decorate that tumble-down house or keep its débris in repair.

But that queer contradiction persists. Until lately, even the hymn books of Christendom abounded in grossly matter-of-fact descriptions of the resurrection of the body, and it made no difference that in other parts of these books the dead were described as risen already, as those who had entered into 'the joy of their Lord.' One favourite hymn book, before us at this moment, contains a hymn with this as its climax:—

My flesh shall slumber in the ground,  
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,  
Then burst its chains with sweet surprise,  
And in my Saviour's image rise.

But another hymn in the same book begins thus:—

And let this feeble body fail!  
And let it faint or die!  
My soul shall quit this mortal vale,  
And soar to worlds on high;—



Leni... Tolison  
Fields return.



*Lenora E. Pipes*

Shall join the disembodied saints,  
And find its long-sought rest,  
That only rest for which it pants,  
In my Redeemer's breast.

We submit that these hymns are mutually destructive. Both cannot be true. It may be said that after getting rid of the 'feeble body,' the soul which has 'soared to worlds on high' to join 'the disembodied saints' and find the only rest it needs, with Christ, *might* possibly have restored to it its body, after, say, a million years. Is it conceivable? What could the happy spirit do with it?

But the grotesque notion has strange life in it. 'The Open Court' quotes from the writings of the once famous Robert Pollok, a passage which is as good an instance as could be given of the intensely crude nature of this strange belief;—it is a picture of the resurrection:—

The doors of death were opened, and in the dark  
And loathsome vault and silent charnel-house,  
Moving were heard the mould'ring bones that sought  
Their proper place. Instinctive every soul  
Flew to its clayey part: from grass-grown mould  
The nameless spirit took its ashes up. . . .  
Wherever slept one grain of human dust—  
Essential organ of a human soul,  
Wherever tossed—obedient to the call  
Of God's omnipotence, it hurried on  
To meet its fellow particles, revived,  
Rebuilt, in union indestructible.  
No atom of his spoils remained to death.

It adds:—

The most favourite German funeral hymn begins with the words:—

Auferstehn, ja auferstehn  
Sollst du mein Staub nach kurzer Ruh.

The hymns of the English-speaking world give expression to the same hope. American Christians sing:—

Thus shall they guard my sleeping dust  
And, as the Saviour rose,  
The grave again shall yield her trust  
And end my deep repose.

Well, of course, it is our happy duty to make an end of all this, so far as we can, and to put our own precious faith in its place. In this effort we wish we could have the help of 'The Open Court'; but it halts. It adopts indeed a good deal of our vocabulary, but it does not mean what we mean. It says truly:—

The crudeness of the old conception of immortality need not blind us to the germs of truth which are contained in it. We no longer believe in a reawakening to life of the corpse, but we know that there is a preservation of the soul.

But its 'preservation of the soul' seems to mean only continuity of influence; for it goes on to say:—

The body dies and is doomed to disintegration; but the significance of a man, his life-work, his soul, the new formations which he has called into being, are not annihilated in death; they remain a living factor with the living and a real presence the bliss of which continues in its individual and personal significance according to the worth of each individual soul.

We are afraid that this means only what Mr. Frederic Harrison means by such language,—that the spirit lives only in the influence it leaves behind, but that the self is utterly and for ever dead.

We can agree, however, with this writer up to the grave itself, and we are very much with him in the following somewhat novel concluding recommendations:—

Our funerals still show traces of the old belief in the resurrection of the body and are not yet free from the superstition of corpse-worship. We should replace the funeral ceremony by a memorial festival. The funeral should be arranged in the simplest possible manner, not with a showy parade of flowers and music, but let it simply be a disposing of the remains, perhaps in the presence of a few witnesses, but not as the last official occasion at which the sympathy of friends should be revealed. This, now so prominent a feature of funerals, should be reserved for a memorial which might be celebrated on the first birthday of

the deceased after his death, or on memorial day, or on some other appropriate occasion, and it should not be a day of wailing over the deceased's death, but a day of thanks for his life and the good he has accomplished, in a word, not a lugubrious day of lamentation, but a memorial day, a thanksgiving, a harvest festival. If there are tears, let them be tears of gladness in remembrance of the blessings which the survivors enjoyed while he lived among them and which in part they still enjoy after his bodily form has been taken away.

#### MRS. LEONORA E. PIPER.

We give as a supplement to this week's 'LIGHT,' a portrait of Mrs. Leonora E. Piper, of Arlington Heights, Mass., U.S.A., the now well-known trance medium who has had the privilege of converting Dr. Richard Hodgson—after twelve years' close investigation—to a belief in the continued conscious existence of the personality after death. She has also been instrumental in convincing Professor James H. Hyslop, of the Columbia University, U.S.A., that immortality can be scientifically demonstrated; and the spirit communications through her mediumship have also been striking enough to secure the respectful attention of Professor James, of Harvard University, who bears testimony to the fact that 'the hypothesis of fraud cannot be seriously entertained.' While there have been many other mediums whose revelations have been equally as remarkable and convincing, we are happy to give honour where it is due, and have, therefore, the pleasure of including Mrs. Piper in our portrait gallery.

#### DR. HODGSON'S TESTIMONY.

An interview with Dr. Hodgson is thus reported in the August number of 'Le Journal d'Etudes Psychologiques':—

'During a period of twelve years,' said Professor Hodgson, 'I have had, through the mediumship of Mrs. Piper, communications with the spirits of those who have been for some time dead. During the first few years I absolutely disbelieved in her power. I had but one object, to discover fraud and trickery, and I had had plenty of experience with Madame Blavatsky and with the crowds that gathered round her when she was alive. Frankly, I went to Mrs. Piper, with Professor James, about twelve years ago, with the object of unmasking her. To-day I am prepared to say that I believe in the possibility of receiving messages from what is called the world of spirits. I entered the house profoundly materialist, not believing in the continuance of life after death, and to-day I simply say, "*I believe.*" The proof has been given to me in such a way as to remove from me the possibility of a doubt.

'The influence which guides Mrs. Piper now, announced that in the future its action would be exercised in such a way as to diminish the distance which separates the two states, the state before death and the state subsequent to death. The change took place in June, 1897. The earlier guides, "Phinuit," "Pelham," and others, quitted in effect the circle of Mrs. Piper's influence, and their places were taken by two individuals in particular, who actually direct the communications which she receives. We recognise the first, who communicates by the voice, under the name of "Imperator," and the second, who writes, is known as "Rector." I have received from the first innumerable communications, especially on the relations which exist between Man and the Infinite.'

We hope that we shall not be long kept in ignorance of the import of these communications of which Dr. Hodgson has been made the depository, the subject being of such universal interest; and in this same journal there is a paragraph which gives us good reason to believe that we shall *not* have long to wait. It gives in inverted commas the following as the expressed opinion and intention of Dr. Hodgson:—

'The world is on the eve of great developments. In two years' time, or perhaps sooner, by means of the most remarkable woman who has appeared in the world's history, I will publish to the world a new interpretation of the laws of humanity, of that great primitive universal religion which no dogma and no sect of to-day can contradict. It will be a new revelation, a new faith. To suffering humanity, tortured for centuries with doubts, wavering first this way and then that, it will need no explanation. The new and yet ever old truths need only the re-stating—they compel belief.'

We have not, as a rule, very much faith in the correctness of reported 'interviews,' but we sincerely trust that

Dr. Hodgson will be able to give us the assurance that in this case his words have been accurately recorded.

#### PROFESSOR JAMES' VIEWS.

Professor James, of Harvard, says of Mrs. Piper :—

'We have repeatedly heard from Mrs. Piper in trance things of which we were not at the moment aware. On my mother-in-law's second visit to the medium, she was told that one of her daughters was suffering from a severe pain in the back that day. This altogether unusual occurrence, unknown to the sitter, proved to be true.

'My wife and brother received from Mrs. Piper the announcement of my aunt's death in New York before we had received the telegram breaking the news to us.

'The most convincing things said about my own immediate household were either very intimate or very trivial. Unfortunately, the former things are private and personal. She told of my killing a grey and white cat with ether, and described how it had spun around and around before dying. She told how my New York aunt had written a letter to my wife, warning her against all mediums, and then went off on a most amusing criticism full of traits of the excellent woman's character.

'She was strong on the events in our nursery, and gave striking advice during our first visit to her about the way to deal with certain "tantrums" of our second child, "little Billy boy," as she called him, reproducing his nursery name. She told how the crib creaked at night, how a certain rocking-chair creaked mysteriously, how my wife had heard footsteps on the staircase, &c. Insignificant as these things sound when read, the accumulation of a large number of them has an irresistible effect.'

#### THE REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE'S EXPERIENCE.

The New York 'Journal' quotes the Rev. Minot J. Savage as follows regarding his experience with Mrs. Piper :—

'My first sitting with Mrs. Piper was a surprising one. She was then living on Pinckney-street, in Boston.

'Immediately on becoming entranced her control, Dr. Phinuit, said there were many spirit friends present. Among them, he said, was an old man, whom he described, but only in a general way. Then he said : "He is your father, and he calls you Judson."

'Attention was also called to the fact that he had a peculiar bare spot on his head, and Mrs. Piper put her hand on the corresponding place on her own head.

'Now for the facts that give these two apparently simple points whatever significance they possess. My father had died during the preceding summer, aged ninety years and six months. He had never lived in Boston, and Mrs. Piper, I am quite sure, had never seen him nor been in any way interested in him. He wasn't at all bald, but when quite young had been burned so that there was a bare spot on the right side of the top of his head, perhaps an inch wide and three inches long, running from the forehead back toward the crown. This he covered by combing his hair over it. This was the spot that Mrs. Piper indicated.

'Now as to the name by which he addressed me : I was given the middle name Judson at the request of a half-sister, my father's daughter, who died soon after I was born. Out of tenderness for her memory father always used, when I was a boy, to call me Judson, though all the rest of the family called me by my first name, Minot. In his later life father also got to calling me by my first name.

'No one, therefore, had called me by my second name for many years. I was, therefore, naturally struck and surprised by suddenly hearing one who claimed to be my father giving me once more my old boyhood name. During this same sitting Mrs. Piper's control also said :

"Here is somebody who says his name is John. He was your brother. No, not your brother, your half-brother." Then, pressing her hand on the base of her brain, she moaned as she swayed to and fro. Then she continued :

"He said it was so hard to die away off there all alone. How he did want to see mother."

'She then went on to explain that he died from a fall, striking the back of his head. Her whole account of this was realistic in the extreme. My half-brother, John, the son of my mother—for both father and mother had been twice married—died several years previous to this sitting. While building a mill in Michigan he fell, striking the back of his head on a piece of timber. He was far from friends, and was a most tender lover of his mother.'

How many sighs and tears might be averted if kindness of hand, kindness of heart, and kindness of speech were general !

SOMNAMEULISM is a condition of transition between two lives, a condition in which the soul employs simultaneously, but imperfectly, the two bodies which ordinarily it only uses alternatively.—'Journal du Magnétisme.'

### MISS ROWAN VINCENT.

#### AN APPEAL BY THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

As most of our readers must be aware, Miss Rowan Vincent has for several years rendered zealous and efficient services to Spiritualists and inquirers, both publicly and privately, as a speaker and clairvoyant ; while her cheerful and gratuitous devotion to the cause has been of great value in promoting and sustaining an interest in the work of the London Spiritualist Alliance, the Marylebone Spiritualists' Association, and various societies in the provinces.

During the past two years Miss Vincent has unfortunately been the subject of much worry, pecuniary loss, and great mental strain ; her health has gradually failed ; and it was at last discovered that she was suffering from a very serious disease which necessitated a surgical operation of a most grave description—so grave, indeed, that the percentage of recoveries from operations of this particular character is at present lamentably small.

We are pleased to learn that the operation has been successfully performed, and that Miss Vincent is progressing favourably towards ultimate recovery, but it must of necessity be a long time before she will be sufficiently well to resume her work.

Under these painful circumstances the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance decided at their last meeting to invite the Members and Associates, and friends of Spiritualism generally, to assist Miss Vincent during her illness and the long and tedious period of convalescence, by subscribing to a fund in recognition of her valuable services to the Alliance and other Spiritualist bodies, the Council being confident that they will have the pleasure and satisfaction of receiving ready and generous responses from all those who have learnt to esteem Miss Vincent, both for her personal worth and for her unselfish labours.

Subscriptions, which should be sent to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, will be duly acknowledged in the columns of 'LIGHT.'

#### 'SCIENCE.'

'The Christian Life' gives a good example of the retort courteous in answer to a correspondent who wrote :—

"I am a Christian Scientist, and do not approve of your methods. Your recognition of evil serves to promote, preserve, and propagate it."

'The foregoing is the substance of several communications received. We have profound respect for the conscientious belief of every individual ; in common with the "scientists" we hold many opinions as vital truth.

'In reply to the accusation that we "recognise evil," we say : "As good scientists it is decidedly unscientific of *you* to *recognise* our recognition of evil !" According to "science" it only exists in the minds of those who so recognise it.'

#### THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF DIVINE NEARNESS.

In such a realisation as this, that we blend in consciousness and in love with the ever renewing Life, that we reveal more and more of the Divine nature as we ascend in the scale of being, lies a real way of escape from morbid self-interest, introspection, self-consciousness, want of confidence and the feeling of one's own insignificance. To know that our highest love, our deepest thought, our truest self, is not wholly our own, but, in so far as it is unselfish, is divine—this it is to have something in which we can trust and on which we can rely, which shows us what we are, not as weak human beings which we vainly try to understand by self-analysis, but what we are as particles of the Divine nature. Thus the painful thought is lost in the consciousness of Divine nearness, just as though a particle of sunlight should become aware of its relation to all sunlight and to the sun. And what a pleasure it is to view nature and human life with an ever deepening consciousness of this Divine background ! Truly there is no time for complaint, nor even for suffering, if we dwell in this pure region of thought where we look upon the good and true as an outburst of the Divine and all else as slowly evolving towards this realm of goodness, where the landscape suggests the beauty which it so well typifies, and where our hardships lead us, not into the realm of complaint, but into the land of inquiry, of genuine desire to know what God is doing with us.—'The Power of Silence,' by H. W. DRESSER, p. 28.

## IS SPIRITUALISM TRUE ?

## A TWO NIGHTS' DEBATE.

On Tuesday evening, August 22nd, the Sigdon-road School Board School-room, Dalston-lane, London, was crowded with an animated, and at times somewhat excited, audience, to listen to speeches by Messrs. G. H. Bibbings and A. J. Waldron upon the question, 'Is Spiritualism True?'

THE CHAIRMAN, Mr. Cohen, remarked that he was not afraid for truth and falsehood to come into opposition, as it was advantageous to truth that it should be fully discussed. He had no doubt of the ability of the speakers, and bespoke for them an impartial hearing.

MR. G. H. BIBBINGS, in an able address, opened the discussion by defining the word Spiritualism to mean 'the science of communication between incarnate and discarnate beings,' the latter retaining their identity, traits, and characteristics. He had no apology to make for the unpopularity of the subject, but would remind his hearers that all great movements were unpopular in their early stages; but one man and the truth constituted a majority. Whatever might be advanced during the debate, no one at the close would be able to say, merely from what they heard, that Spiritualism was true or untrue, because it was a branch of science that required personal investigation. It would be his duty to offer the testimony of those who had carefully investigated. When the testimony of individuals grew into that of masses of people, it then became increasingly convincing, and he would remind his hearers that the whole of the religions of the world were based upon testimony. He regretted that his testimony was not five thousand years old, as it might then be acceptable to his friend Mr. Waldron, but it was the testimony of men of science and ability of recent years, and ought therefore to carry more weight. He quoted from the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' which recently said, 'Common-sense or candour, or both, compel us to admit that Spiritualism has gained very largely in this nineteenth century by the adherence of intelligent men and woman—mostly scientists. . . if the evidence of Spiritualists be unreliable, then all attempts to prove anything by testimony must be abandoned.' From the 'Rock' of August 19th, 1898, he quoted the passages, 'Ridicule alone is useless against the Spiritualists, because the Spiritualist is sure of his facts.' Mr. Bibbings gladly pleaded guilty to being 'sure of his facts' and urged that the Spiritualism of to-day was in line with that of all ages. 'If this century stands without any spiritualism it is a wonderful exception to all that have preceded it!' Canon Fausset had admitted that the facts of Spiritualism proved the existence of a spiritual world as opposed to materialism, and one would think, said Mr. Bibbings, that Christians would be glad to avail themselves of that evidence in their fight against materialism. After quoting a passage from Professor Barrett, the speaker related how the chaplain of Hull Prison had informed him that he had listened to an ignorant miner in Durham, who, when under influence, spoke fluently in German and French, and he contended that no theory but the spiritualistic one would account for such a fact as that. He cited the Rev. Heber Newton's statement that Professor Newbold had admitted to him that Spiritualism had dispelled his materialism, and also Dr. Gibier's statement that he did not believe but *knew* that spirit-communication was a fact. Mr. Bibbings contended that it was the common experience of those who went into the investigation in a fair and impartial spirit that they were won over to admit the reality of the phenomena. In support of this contention he cited Dr. Richard Hodgson's changed attitude, as also Alfred R. Wallace's memorable affirmation that the facts beat him, and Professor Hyslop's statement that immortality could be scientifically demonstrated. It was impossible in thirty minutes to adequately present the evidence or do justice to this subject, but if testimony was worth anything Modern Spiritualism demanded consideration by all truth-seekers of the fact that many prominent thinkers and scientists had been won from materialism, by the evidence they themselves had observed, to a state of absolute certainty of conviction of continued existence; 'where once they said "I know not," now they say "I know!"' If Spiritualism was not

true the blank was too awful to contemplate—but it was better to go out into silence than live in a state where love made no claim and paid no tribute.

MR. A. J. WALDRON, in reply, urged that Mr. Bibbings had quoted eleven pieces of testimony, but had only given one piece of evidence, if it could be called evidence; the nameless, ignorant boy, spoken of by a nameless parson, who lived in a nameless place in the county of Durham, and spoke French and German. Mr. Bibbings had spoken of science as fact; but the ancients had the same facts that we have and misunderstood them—we have classified them, and the classification of facts makes science. He said that Mr. Bibbings had hidden behind a galaxy of names; but, if names proved anything, they could be quoted in support of, and to prove, almost every delusion the mind was capable of conceiving. Mr. Bibbings had given the names of people who supported Spiritualism, but he had not proved it to be true. Referring to Dr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Waldron said he was great in *one* department. A man might be a clever architect, but a duffer in making boots. He contended that Dr. Wallace had not been sufficiently careful, and in proof referred to a quotation made by him in his 'Miracles and Modern Spiritualism' from Dr. Sexton, in which the latter alleged that Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Charles Watts had witnessed genuine phenomena with the Davenport Brothers. He (Mr. Waldron) had shown the passage to Mr. Watts, who denied its accuracy and asserted that the Davenports confessed that they had practised trickery that very evening after the séance. Referring to Dr. Hodgson's testimony, he quoted an admission by that gentleman that Mrs. Piper's French doctor, Phinuit, had forgotten his French, and said that he had drawn the attention of Mr. Myers at Oxford to the passages, and Mr. Myers replied that it wasn't exactly a spirit, but that Mrs. Piper had a sort of 'double consciousness'; and yet, said Mr. Waldron, this is the case that is cited as the finest evidence of 'telepathy from the dead'! He demanded that evidence should be produced, that the ghost should be shown in that hall, or that a hand should write upon the wall that all might see it. This, of course, was received with loud applause and laughter. Mr. Waldron quoted from the Seybert Commission report to the effect that Slade 'acted fraudulently throughout' the séances he held with the members of that commission. He refused to believe extraordinary phenomena without extraordinary evidence. Neither trance mediumship nor automatic writing afforded evidence of spirit action; the brain was like a great phonograph that received and repeated impressions from all sources. He would not urge that all was fraud; there was, he believed, a slight residuum of facts, but those facts could be explained scientifically on other grounds than by calling in the aid of spirits. There was a force—he would call it, with Sir W. Crookes, 'psychic force'—and he would urge all to 'wait,' as there might be some other interpretation. He said Canon Fausset believed that the phenomena were due to evil spirits, and the 'Rock' had affirmed that demons were behind the facts. One writer in the 'Pall Mall Gazette' merely admitted that Spiritualism was gaining ground, but that did not prove it to be true; no *evidence* had been adduced, in his opinion, by Mr. Bibbings, and he called upon him for facts that could be examined.

In his second speech Mr. BIBBINGS said Mr. Waldron had complained of his hiding behind a galaxy of names, yet Mr. Waldron had done the same thing. He (Mr. Bibbings) had cited the testimony of eminent men—not to *settle* the question but because it would be an aid to those who investigated; their testimony was not to faith but *fact*. Counterfeits could not alter facts, and when a man had been trained to observe facts in one department, as Dr. Alfred R. Wallace had been, it was only natural that he would employ the same care in the examination of phenomena in other directions. He concluded by reading Lillian Whiting's testimony to the striking evidence she had received of the presence and power of her friend Kate Field after her decease.

MR. WALDRON, in reply, asked 'How did he know that Miss Whiting was telling the truth?' She came forward as a Spiritualist to prove Spiritualism. Referring to the testimony of Bellachini, the German Court conjurer, which had been cited by Mr. Bibbings, he suggested that he was on a par with the Whitechapel-road men 'who had performed

before all the crowned heads of Europe,' and asked 'How do we know that this man wasn't paid?' Speaking of Slade's prosecution and release at Bow-street, because of a flaw in the indictment, he said 'This rogue knew his case was so weak, he let the people in who had gone bail for him, went to the Continent and never came back.' Every society that had investigated the claims of mediums had come to a conclusion diametrically opposed to that of Mr. Bibbings. When a person had an abnormal development on one side there was sure to be a degeneration on the other, and he would rather trust a Bow-street runner, or Mr. Maskelyne, to discover the truth in these matters than he would Dr. A. R. Wallace. Referring to the chaplain of Hull Prison, he could only conclude that he knew so much of the gullibility of mankind and of Spiritualists, that he had landed the story of the nameless boy upon his friend Mr. Bibbings.

In his last speech, Mr. Bibbings twitted Mr. Waldron on the score of gullibility, and said that he must have attained such an 'abnormal development' of oratory that he had 'mentally degenerated' on the side of argument and logic. He had thought to dispose of the whole subject by making light dismissals and talking of rogues in league with rogues, and sought to discredit the witnesses by talking of their being paid, and of their gullibility; he (Mr. Bibbings) resented and protested against such methods—they were not fair. Spiritualists had done what Mr. Waldron said he would do if the facts came before him—they had examined the phenomena and were convinced of their reality and their spirit origin, and the facts would remain facts.

Mr. Waldron's closing speech mainly consisted of a repetition of the previous objections, the most important statement being that he did not agree with those who said Spiritualism was due to evil spirits, and that so far as it was based upon facts he admitted the facts, but differed from the interpretation put upon them by Spiritualists.

On Wednesday evening MR. E. W. WALLIS, Secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance, presided, at the request of the Hackney Spiritualist Society, and having reminded the audience of the very serious nature of the issues involved, bespoke a fair and impartial hearing for both speakers. There was again a crowded audience.

MR. WALDRON opened by expressing the opinion that the importance of a future life had been grossly exaggerated; he thought it was more important to know how to live rightly in the present life, which would be a good preparation for the future if man lived after death, but if death ended all, we should have done our best here and know no more. He characterised the Hydesville 'rappings' as a 'Foxy story,' and declared that a committee of doctors had certified that the bones found in the cellar were sheep bones and not human. He repeated his demand that phenomena should be produced upon the open platform, and characterised Slade as 'the arch villain' and 'one of the biggest frauds that darkened the nineteenth century.' One sub-committee of the Dialectical Society testified to table movements, but did not say that they were caused by spirits. 'Suppose tables do move,' said he, 'are you bound to say that spirits move them?' He contended that we ought not to be like our ignorant ancestors, who attributed what they did not understand to spirit agency. Almost every public medium had some time or other been detected, and had 'turned out to be the greatest frauds that have darkened the earth.' He again admitted there was 'an element of actual fact' in Spiritualism, but claimed that hypnotism, illusion, hallucination, dreams, and the activity of the subliminal self would account for the facts. Referring to 'healing,' he said the healer who would let people suffer when he could heal them, was ten million times worse than a blackguard. But he declared of himself that he 'loved the truth better than everything.' In a calmer moment he affirmed that it was not wise to dogmatise where you did not know—a sentiment which was approved on both sides—and said we were like children picking up pebbles on the shore of the infinite ocean of truth. We could be deluded through our ears and could not trust our eyes, and he wanted to know how Spiritualists could get their facts; 'in the dark, of course,' said he, and raised a laugh. He grew denunciatory over trance mediumship, which he

characterised in no measured terms as a seduction of the intellect by surrendering it to the control of elementals—little devils—and declared that the teachings of Spiritualism were grossly immoral, and that Spiritualism had bred some of the foulest abominations that had ever darkened human life.

MR. BIBBINGS, in reply, said his friend had relied on the charge of fraud—he held no brief for fraud and would condemn it in or out of Spiritualism. Spiritualists had done their best to see that the course of frauds should be immediately stopped—when fraud was proved to have taken place—and no honourable man or woman could be asked to do more. He was not prepared to condemn all Baptists because of the frauds of Jabez Balfour, nor Christianity because of immoral preachers, defaulting Churchmen, or fraudulent Sunday-school superintendents. All he could ask of Christians was: 'If you know of such people in your ranks do your best to get them out,' and that was what Spiritualists had done, and were doing; but fraudulent practices did not alter the facts nor the truth of the philosophy of Spiritualism, and he would remind them that it was easy to *charge* mediums with fraud, but because a charge of fraud was made that did not prove that fraud had been practised. He cited several newspaper canards regarding Spiritualism in proof of the necessity for discrimination, and urged that we ought to be sure of all the facts before we condemn. He charged Mr. Waldron with inaccuracy in saying that Slade escheated his bail and demanded proof for the assertion that a committee of doctors had decided that the bones found at Hydesville were sheep bones. He said that the 'Rock' and Canon Fausset admitted the *facts*—that was enough for him; he cared not who labelled the facts 'diabolical,' for theologians in all ages had branded every good man and every system that they did not approve as diabolical; we had to thank the scientist and not the theologian for our present liberties. He cited Professor Huxley's challenge to theologians to prove the power of prayer to heal the sick, and said the churches rang with protests against Huxley's unfairness; the preachers said, 'Prayer is too sacred to be made the subject of wrangles in the Press or be brought down into the gambling arena.' He asked them to be fair and recognise that spiritual phenomena ought to be calmly observed under proper scientific conditions. The objection to Huxley's test applied to Mr. Waldron's demand for phenomena upon the platform. Mr. Waldron had made much of the 'nameless boy,' yet Mr. Waldron had himself spoken of a nameless medium in Belfast. Where is the house and who is the medium? demanded Mr. Bibbings. He had spoken of a nameless committee of doctors. Who were they? When did they meet and decide on the sheep bones? He had told us of a nameless surgeon in London who practises hypnotism and performs operations with no other anæsthetic. Where is he? Who is he? With regard to healing, Mr. Bibbings cited the case of Alderman Riley Lord, of Newcastle, and his wife. Both were suffering, and came to London to a specialist, who assured Mr. Lord that his case was hopeless, but said that Mrs. Lord might recover. Mr. Lord returned to Newcastle and consulted a medium, a blacksmith, who went under control, and his spirit friend said that the specialist's diagnosis was wrong—that Mr. Lord could be cured, but Mrs. Lord's case would terminate fatally. Acting upon the advice of the spirit through the medium, Mr. Lord recovered; the cancer (in the throat) was brought away, and he is still alive, but Mrs. Lord has passed into the spirit world. He then proceeded to show that Mr. Waldron had been inaccurate in several of his statements, notably in speaking of 'Mind' as a spiritualistic paper, and in affirming that Spiritualists believed in elementaries—little devils—and as for his assertion that Spiritualists preached, and that Spiritualism breeds, the foulest immorality, there was only one word he could use—write across that statement 'lie'! He ridiculed Mr. Waldron's inadequate theories of hypnotism and subliminal consciousness, for, said he, almost every careful and patient observer has ultimately been compelled to admit that they do not cover all the facts. He asked Mr. Waldron, if he could not trust his eyes or his ears, and if he could be so easily deluded and hallucinated, what could he trust? Mr. Waldron had admitted a residuum of fact. All right, for, as Mr. John Page Hopps had said, he cared not if only a match

moved, that fact wanted explaining, and Spiritualism afforded the only satisfactory explanation of the observed phenomena. After citing Sir W. Crookes' testimony to phenomena in the light and Trill Taylor's conclusive testimony to the reality of psychic photography, he contended that if Mr. Waldron desired to get at the truth and do the Spiritualists justice, he ought to read up on both sides and admit the force of the facts. He urged his hearers to investigate calmly and see if they too could not stand upon the rock of demonstrated truth in the knowledge of a future life, and then they would be better able to know how to rightly use and enjoy the present life and be fitted for the next.

The speeches which followed were largely a repetition of what had gone before. Mr. Waldron admitted that his authority for the 'sheep bones' story was the 'Freethinker'! Passages taken from their context, quotations from the 'Healing of the Nations,' and works by Mr. Podmore, Thomson Jay Hudson, Mr. Maskelyne, and assertions by Dr. Hatch, were cited as 'proofs,' yet Mr. Waldron rejected Miss Whiting's testimony because, as he asserted, she was paid for writing it and was a Spiritualist! Considerable feeling was displayed at times and the partisans were delighted at the palpable hits made by their especial friend, but complained of as 'sarcasm' and 'sneer' by the speaker on the other side. On both nights the audience listened attentively and in the main with intelligent appreciation. Possibly some of them may be prompted to investigate for themselves, but we may perhaps be permitted to suggest that Spiritualism is hardly a subject to be discussed in this fashion and we doubt whether, on sober second thoughts, the level-headed listeners will feel that the cause of truth is greatly benefited thereby, however much the lovers of sensation may have been delighted by the efforts of the respective champions.

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#### BETWEEN THE ANIMALS AND THE ANGELS.

'The Arena' for July contained an inspiring article from the pen of Benjamin Fay Mills on the power and possibilities of the soul. The article is entitled, 'Between the Animals and the Angels.' It is full of elevating thoughts, from which we cull the following:—

'I shall not be satisfied until I can consciously create the form in which I please to live. If we use our possibilities to the greatest limit, we shall acquire the power to make forms and circumstances to be appropriate, and to suit our pleasure. Form is really created out of spirit, as a spider spins his web out of himself. And the most reasonable thing I can think about myself is that right now I am what I choose to be. It is learning this that will make a man an angel rather than an animal. We have learned this to some extent. We say that we control our bodies and create our circumstances; but we shall find that it is just as easy to create our bodies and control our circumstances. If this body does not suit my purposes, I will learn to create one. If these circumstances are not appropriate, the one thing we are here for is to make them appropriate.

'Electricity was in the world for some millions of years before man found it out. He did not learn how to run an electric car until twelve or fifteen years ago. He was not able to send his thought around the world. Electricity is the greatest thing we have discovered, but it is not the greatest thing we ever shall discover.

'Now, apply this to what we call sin and suffering in life. There is a great deal of suffering that is caused by misapprehension, just as an animal suffers because he does not really see things in their true relations. Sin and suffering are precisely alike in the last analysis, and they are caused by allowing our bodies and our circumstances to master us, rather than our mastering them. The real difficulties that confront us are glorious, and they are stones in building the world structure, and essential elements in forming personal and social character. All desirable things might come to us better by the experience of the opposite of pain and evil, if we know how to use the divinest law. Nothing is ever accomplished by punishment that might not better be accomplished by perfect kindness wisely applied. The evil and the pain are divine expedients, and they only exist in order that men may learn to live without them.

'We have the power to give the necessary inspiration, and the great ambition of humanity from this point of view should be to provide "a social body for the soul of God." We see the process going on in the individual and in the race. How may we accelerate it? By intelligent recognition; by living in it, and feeling on it. I cannot stand upon the street and see the tree blossom without realising that there is the same life that is pulsing through my brain and inspiring my heart. At the heart of everything is the same spirit that makes you yourself—the inspiration that ought to bring peace and health and purity and power.

'So I shall not cease to call and knock and demand and plead, to thunder in the tones of law, to whisper with the voice of tenderness, to stagger you with arguments, to melt you with sweet influences of love, until you, spirits of men, divine eternal spirits, sparks out of the great infinite universal Life-Spirit, come forth from your self-built houses of clay, divest yourselves of your swaddling bands, your sleeping garments or your grave clothes, and stand erect and conscious in the integrity, the beauty, and the power of your real being.

'Know! know! I beseech you; know, I command you, that you are divine. You are not "poor weak mortals," as you have called yourselves. You are not bodies that may be preyed upon by disease, and broken and destroyed by other forces of Nature; minds with wills not yet sufficiently strong to withstand certain great forms of temptation; hearts that must suffer and break. You are *souls*: souls that are one with me, the great Universal, Eternal, Omnipotent Soul of Life. Know that the resources of Infinity are your resources! Know that your body and your mind are but instruments for your use—nay, more, that they are but expressions of your spirit, your real life, that you may control and adapt them, and farther on you may create them at your will. Why should they ever be weak? Why should you ever be ill, unless you choose? You shall learn the meaning of the words of that great Master of the art of living, when he said, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again."

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#### 'LIGHT.'

As an inducement to new and casual readers to become subscribers, we will supply 'LIGHT' for thirteen weeks, post free, for 2s., as a 'trial' subscription, feeling assured that at the termination of that period they will feel that 'they cannot do without it,' and will then subscribe at the usual rates. May we at the same time suggest to those of our regular readers who have friends to whom they would like to introduce the paper, that they should avail themselves of this offer, and forward to us the names and addresses of such friends, upon receipt of which, together with the requisite postal order, we shall be pleased to forward 'LIGHT' to them by post, as stated above?

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#### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- 'The Harbinger of Dawn.' A Monthly Review of Occult, Psychical, Spiritual, and Metaphysical Reviews. Ernest S. Green, Editor. No. 1. Published at 1,801, Market-street, San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A. Price 10 cents.
- 'Prabuddha Bharata, or Awakened India,' for August. Published by the Prabuddha Bharata Press, Mayavati, Kumaon (Himalayas), India. Price 4d.
- 'An Apocalypse of Life.' By W. T. CHENEY. Published by W. T. Cheney, Rome, Georgia, U.S.A. Price 5s.
- 'Our Places in the Universal Zodiac.' By W. J. COLVILLE. European agent: George Osmond, Scintor House, Devonport, Devon. Price 2s. 6d.

'THE PALMIST'S REVIEW.'—The July issue of this quarterly magazine will be especially interesting to astrologers as well as to palmists, as it contains the first instalment of a new serial by George Wilde, entitled 'Chaldean Astrology Up to Date,' which is prefaced with an interesting introductory note by A. G. Trent, of an explanatory character regarding the nature and claims of astrology. An able article on 'Ceremonial Witchcraft,' by E. Marsh Stiles, is well worth reading, the conclusion arrived at being that 'the whole system of witchcraft and ceremonial magic may be summed up in one word—hypnotism! The 'Review' is on sale at W. H. Smith and Son's bookstalls, price 1s. 3d.

NEW YORK, U.S.A.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Messrs. Brentano, 31, Union-square.

## A STRANGE EXPERIENCE.

We have had an opportunity of witnessing a spiritualistic manifestation which may be of interest to your readers, being, as we believe, an experience of a very uncommon character. Some little time ago, in 'LIGHT' of December 10th, 1898, we wrote of the observations our small circle has been able to make in its investigations of Spiritualism. Since then we have continued regular sittings, and have witnessed much which gave us food for thought and often wonderment. On one occasion, when in Paris, we had barely commenced our sitting when 'Phygia,' our medium, became entranced, and controlled to repeat, with all the mannerisms of speech, intonation and action, the words of an address which, we heard a week afterwards, was at that moment being given before an audience in London by a London medium. She ended abruptly, and, still in the trance, appeared to become in a sense herself, and carried on a conversation with someone invisible to us, asking why certain expressions were used by the medium, and expostulating that she should be made to deliver the same as though it were he speaking through her organism. Apparently she was calmed; then after a few more questions of her invisible friend, during which it seemed as though she were in another world, she became controlled by the spirit who guides and directs our sittings, and to whom we owe more than we can say.

A little later, a member of our circle having occasion to visit London, 'Phygia' in Paris was frequently able to follow consciously her movements, and upon two occasions when the friend attended a séance of Mr. Peters', in London, she was able to follow her to the séance room, enumerate the people present, and hear some of the spirits who controlled. This led us to try the experiment which is our excuse for this communication. Our circle had occasion to visit London, 'Phygia' remaining there for a few weeks. When returning to Paris, she promised, if it were possible, to come to us through the medium, Mr. Peters, when we sat in séance with him; he, of course, being unaware of the promise. A certain sentence was agreed upon, of which only two of our circle knew, and which 'Phygia' was to utter through Mr. Peters as a sign of her control. Within a week after 'Phygia's' return to Paris, the promise was accomplished, and since then, on four separate occasions, Mr. Peters has been controlled by her: and all who know her have been unanimous in declaring it was 'Phygia's' own self speaking; her mannerisms were there; things were said of which only she had cognisance, and when tests were agreed upon beforehand in the shape of certain phrases to be uttered, they were invariably used. At the fourth séance, being our last for some time in London, following the wishes of the presiding spirits of Mr. Peters we told him of this control, which has been unknown to him. It is not only an uncommon experience that an incarnate spirit should control another body, but at the same time a test of great value to the medium through whom it was done, as proving the genuineness of his control by an entity other than his own, even if it taught no other lesson. This should refute the idea that control is an act of one's own organism. If any of the members of the Psychological Research Society should care to question us concerning this occurrence, we should be very happy to answer them, and write more fully than we are justified in doing in this article.

AGNES C. MORGAN.  
MARY LONGLANDS.

## LETTER 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.*

O.P.S. Sick and Benefit and Pension Funds.

SIR,—Kindly allow me to acknowledge with thanks from S.E., 2s.; Birkenhead, 3s.; Miss E. M. Hodges, 2s.; and Plymouth Society, per Mr. R. Forbes, for Mr. Ware, 3s.; and to earnestly urge kind friends to send in their subscriptions. The amounts received this month are not nearly sufficient to make the usual monthly payments, and as our reserve fund is very small, may I appeal to all who can spare a donation, even though it be but a small one, to send on at once to

MRS. M. H. WALLIS.

62, Station-road, Church End, Finchley, London, N.

## SPIRITUALISM A LEAVEN, NOT A SECT.

In that excellent monthly, 'The Harbinger of Light,' published in Melbourne, Australia, by Mr. W. H. Terry, we find a very timely and thoughtful article from which we make the following extracts:—

'The spiritualistic wave, which took its rise at Rochester fifty-one years since, has travelled all over the civilised world, making manifest to millions of earth's inhabitants the reality, nearness, and means of communion with the spirit world. But it has been a militant era; we have been fighting first for the phenomenal facts, and subsequently against the numerous theories other than the spiritual, put forward to account for these; and so absorbed have the masses been in the struggle that they have failed to co-ordinate the facts and realise their full meaning. Those who have done so, however, have formulated the philosophy, and both the science and ethics of Spiritualism, with such good effect that a marked impulse has been given to religious thought, and all the most liberal Churches influenced by the leaven have approached nearer to the spiritualistic belief. This seems to have been one of the greatest achievements of Spiritualism; the awakening of the spiritual faculties of humanity: not only in the Churches, but in the various metaphysical bodies, Christian Scientists, faith healers, and occult schools. All over the world it is being asserted and largely accepted that spirit is above matter, and capable of controlling and moulding it. All this is indicative of a preparatory era; the time has not yet come, though it is approaching, when organisation on a large scale for the promulgation of the higher Spiritualism will be possible; all attempts at international organisation or authoritative leadership, though often well meant and disinterested, have been failures, and it has seemed to us that the spirit-world, or those who direct the organised movement from that side, has frustrated all efforts in that direction beyond local combinations for the more efficient promulgation of its facts and philosophy. . . .

'The wave which started at Rochester has spent its force, but is only receding to gather new strength; the tide is flowing and the next wave will reach a higher level. Dr. Peebles looks with prophetic eye upon the scene when he says "that the modern spiritualistic movement—as a force in society—has, besides demonstrating a future existence, only a provisional office to perform, marking a transition from an old and effete societary state to a new and renaescent state, wherein all things will become more spiritual, harmonial, and vitally organic." . . . Spiritualism cannot stand still, much less retrogress, as a whole; to the superficial observer it may seem to do so, but to those who look beneath the surface it is always moving there and diffusing its vitalising influence in the minds of mankind. There are thousands, aye, millions, susceptible to this influence who have no knowledge of spiritual intercourse, such are ready for that knowledge when it comes in their way. But with many this is not of primary importance, the spiritual *man*, in fact, is better than the *Spiritualist* in name; the growth of a cult is of small moment, but the growth of spirituality and the diffusion of harmonial principles are ideals worthy of our highest efforts. No matter how small the results may seem, this is certain—no earnest, well-directed effort to uplift humanity is ever thrown away. Let Spiritualists, one and all, realise this, and most of them will live to realise its truth.'

## SOCIETY WORK.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—Last Sunday evening, in the absence of Mr. Alfred Peters, our president opened the meeting with a brief address, and another member related some experiences. On Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., a meeting will be held in Victoria Park; at 7 p.m., in the hall, Mr. Ronald Brailey will deliver an address.—O.H.

CAMBERWELL, 33, GROVE-LANE, S.E.—On Sunday last the control of Mrs. Holgate delivered a very interesting address upon the words, 'Though I speak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels and have not Charity, I am Nothing.' Good clairvoyance was given at the after circle. The audience appreciated the tent which has been provided. Will friends kindly note that we now have accommodation for a larger number of people?—F.S.G.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK.—Open-air Mission.—On Sunday last Mr. Emms spoke on 'Hypnotism and Mesmerism.' Much interest was aroused and some opposition was displayed. Messrs. Jones, Brooks, and other friends took part. At 14, Stroud Green-road, Mr. Jones presiding, Mr. Hewitt gave a paper on the 'Gospel of Spiritualism.' Mrs. Jones gave an address under influence, also clairvoyance. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., in the park; at 7 p.m., in the hall. On Wednesday, at 8 p.m., lecture.—T.B.