

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

At a late gathering of the London Spiritualist Alliance a lady, addressing the meeting, said (if we heard aright, and, hearing such a statement, we could hardly trust our ears,) that the Alliance had become merely a circulating library. Our friend does not know all; but she ought to know that the Alliance arranges for the fortnightly meetings and the great social gatherings; and it is too early to forget that it organised, and carried successfully through, the International Congress, a most difficult undertaking, but accomplished with a completeness which won universal admiration.

But these are obvious services. Behind them, and necessarily hidden from public view, there are the constant, the absolutely unceasing, business and personal relations with individuals in all parts of the world. The stamp accounts of the offices of the Alliance and 'LIGHT' are themselves significant documents. Of course more might be done in ways which are perfectly obvious, especially in the direction of finding, encouraging, and guiding mediums, and also in the direction of bringing inquirers and mediums together; but there are grave difficulties; and one of these turns upon finance. The Alliance is not a wealthy society. If some of our friends will endow it with a steady £500 a year, or remember this good work in ordering their bequests, the Alliance could very speedily break new ground.

At a great Congress lately held in the United States, the Rev. C. St. John spoke on the question, 'How our Doctrine of Immortality helps to promote the Higher Life of Man.' The concluding sentences very well indicate the drift of his argument, and set forth a truth of great practical value. Commending the doctrine of Immortality, he said:—

Helped to see the truth about God and the soul, men are inspired to live by it. Taught to honour enduring ideals and think in far-reaching terms, they acquire thereby steadiness and force of character. Inasmuch as by our thinking we do not create truth, but only certain individual ways of expressing it, we strive always to remember that our doctrine about immortality is not the important thing. Life is what is important; and the doctrine is but a means of bringing the outer life, that wonderful reality, to bear upon the inner life of human souls for their uplifting. As the invisible ether serves to bring down to the growing things of earth the life-giving warmth and light of the sun, so must our doctrine transmit into human souls, from realms beyond earthly experience, the Life that is eternal. In so far as it fails in this, it is but empty words. In so far as it succeeds, it ministers to the higher life of man.

We desire to give a very cordial welcome to the first volume of the great 'Encyclopædia Biblica,' edited by Dr. T. K. Cheyne and Dr. J. V. Black, and published by

Messrs. A. and C. Black. The work is to be 'A Critical Dictionary of the literary, political, and religious History, the Archæology, Geography, and Natural History of the Bible.' One may safely say, not only that it will surpass anything of the kind now in existence, but that nothing like it has ever been published.

Dr. Cheyne, though a Canon of the Established Church and an Oxford University Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture, is a Master in the Israel of 'The Higher Criticism,' and we note that he has with him, as contributors, an army of advanced students and critics, gathered from nearly all the great centres of learning in Europe and America.

The present volume covers the ground from A. to D., and, so far as we have been able to test it, we gather that it is absolutely scholarly, free alike from conventional prejudices and clerical attempts at edification. If we might use such a word in such a connection, we would say that the scholars who are responsible for these Articles are excellent men of business,—'workmen who need not be ashamed.'

'The march of man.' What a noble phrase it is! But, when we remember what it means, how pathetic it also is!—not always a march with banners flying and head erect. Often, far otherwise. And the beginnings so frail and poor! But have there been any accidents? Very finely has this been dealt with lately by Samuel R. Calthrop, in an address on 'The Higher Nature of Man, historically considered.' This glimpse of it is suggestive:—

The evolution of the human race is absolutely continuous, and goes on from generation to generation without a single break. The ancient classic civilisations proceed on the lines the primitive man had laid down. The road keeps widening, the speed of march is greater, but the direction is still the same. Of old, the wild beasts forced their way from the Hudson River through the Mohawk Valley to Syracuse and the salt licks there; the Indians widened their track into a trail; the early white settlers widened it into a corduroy road, and later on into the old coach road between Albany and Buffalo; and now the great New York Central, with its four tracks, carries its passengers along the self-same route sixty miles an hour. It is a picture in little of the march of man's soul across the world.

In this same address Mr. Calthrop tackles the modern psychologists and occultists who are wriggling out of the grand hypothesis of God;—the psychologists who try to do without *psyche*, and the vibrationists who attempt to do without a vibrator. To these last he says, wittily:—

Vibration is not a thing. Vibration is always and everywhere a state of a given thing. The vibration of the E string of a violin is the vibration of the E string. All its different vibrations are each and all so many different states of the E string. Take away the E string, and you can no more have any vibration whatever of the E string than you can have the Cheshire cat's grin without the cat.

'God Himself,' says Stradivarius, in George Eliot's noble poem, 'cannot make Antonio Stradivarius's violins without Antonio.' Spiritual vibrations without the human spirit to vibrate are equally impossible.

'The Barry Herald' reports a lecture at the Barry Literary Society by Dr. Percy Smith, on 'Ghosts.' The

lecturer disowned Spiritualism, though he admitted we are not justified in concluding that there is nothing in it. He very fairly represents the honest and enlightened modern man who is getting somewhat tired of the old girding at us, and is prepared to acknowledge that there is truth in our testimony, after all. But he is, at present, content with that blessed word 'Thought-transference,' and with the half-way house of its preachers. We are well content with that; but does not Dr. Smith think the following conclusion rather weak?—

The suggestion is due to the Psychical Research Society that 'thought-transference' may ultimately prove to be the skeleton-key which fits and unlocks many of these weird puzzles. It has been demonstrated that simple sensations and thoughts may, under certain conditions, be transmitted with remarkable precision from one mind to another, especially when the percipient is in a state of hypnotism. Mental pictures have also been transferred, and finally successful experiments have also been made by investigators to transfer images of themselves to a distance, and to be seen by their friends; in short, to artificially produce a hallucination. It seems possible that in this remarkable power of thought-transference may be the solution of many a ghost.

We ought perhaps to sympathise with Lord Provost Hunter and the members of the Dundee Town Council who attended the Parish Church there lately. Instead of a wholesome practical discourse on the duties of citizenship, the preacher, Dr. Colin Campbell, indulged in a hot tirade against the sensationalism of the day, during which he fell foul of Spiritualism, as a 'miserable superstition' whose victims are 'doomed to be like wandering stars, going further and further from the knowledge of the truth.' We wonder what on earth moved the good Doctor to bear us in mind, and to give us such prominence on so important an occasion; but we are obliged to him, and take this opportunity of saying that we join heartily with him in deploring the silly and in some respects dangerous sensationalism of the day.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30 p.m., on Friday, December 15th, when

MR. G. H. BIBBINGS

has kindly promised to deliver an Address on
'SPIRITUALISM AND WITCHCRAFT.'

Mr. Bibbings is a clear thinker, a close reasoner, a clever speaker, and a well educated gentleman; and he may be trusted to deal efficiently with the important question which he has undertaken to discuss.

In accordance with Rule XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1900.

REINCARNATION.

Mr. Herbert Burrows, in his article in 'LIGHT' of November 25th, says, in regard to reincarnation: 'It may have been refuted, but I have never seen the refutation, &c.' Now, if he will consult 'A Spirit's View of Reincarnation,' a discourse by Tien Sien Tie, through the mediumship of Mr. J. J. Morse, at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, London, August 4th, 1895, I think he will find therein such an exposé of Reincarnation as he will not find it very easy to answer. Tien Sien Tie, it may be presumed, sees things in a light in which no one living on earth can.

W.G.

COMMUNION WITH THE INNER WORLD.

The Rev. Heber Newton, the distinguished Episcopal clergyman of New York, who is also widely known for his fearless avowals on behalf of spirit return, preached lately on the subject of communication with the inner world in his church, All Souls' Episcopal, in the course of which he said that all the world's great movements had been begun by persons who acted under the inspiration of spiritual communications, and cited the visions of St. Paul, the voices of Joan of Arc, and the mysterious guidances of Mohammed. If these things happened in the past, he said, why not in this century?

'My own mother,' he continued, 'had a curious experience when a young girl. She went south with an invalid brother, who grew rapidly worse after they had arrived at their destination. It was soon borne in upon her that he was about to die. Far from home, with a dying brother in her charge, she was overwhelmed with care and grief, and one day wandered into the garden to give vent to her tears unseen. As she seated herself under a tree, a bit of paper blown by the wind rustled at her feet. It was a scrap from a Philadelphia newspaper, and seeing the name of the city on it she picked it up. The slip of paper contained a poem of consolation which was balm to her soul. Was that accident, chance? Doubtless, if it stood alone, we should so term it, but it is one of a million cases.'

'People say that there is no scientific proof of communication between this world and the other. How should there have been thus far? The possibility of scientific investigation has come only with the recent advance of science. Already the great minds of science are renouncing the attitude of scepticism toward this great question. It is objected, too, that the conditions of spiritual communication are hard, even harsh. People ask why we must seek help to communicate with the loved ones who have passed away. That is one of the questions we cannot yet understand; but let us not dogmatically cast out this belief simply because there are some features of it that are hard of comprehension. To some minds nothing more puerile than spirit rappings can be imagined. Yet in my studies in criminology I found that prisoners immured in their solitary cells communicated by just such rappings. That may suggest a thought. All the movement of communication between mind and mind is from the material toward the less material. First, we have aboriginal man talking to his fellows with great gesticulation and sign language. Then comes writing, so that friends when far apart may communicate. Next comes the wonderful telegraph and telephone. Who can say that telepathy—mind speaking to mind without extraneous aid—is not merely a step forward? Swedenborg says that the angels do not speak—that with them thought is enough. When the angels wish to communicate with us, then, would it not be without speech?'

'As men grow in knowledge the increase of scope of the human mind prepares the way for the possibility of such communication by increasing our receptivity. I could tell you of many eminent thinkers to-day who believe implicitly that they receive communications from the other world. Daily there is an increasing consciousness among great minds of the truth which, aside from uncanny and dis-respectable surroundings and alleged interpretations, underlies this great question.'—'Light of Truth.'

MISS ABBY A. JUDSON'S WORKS.—In reference to our reply in last week's 'LIGHT' to 'W.Z.' regarding Miss Judson's book, 'The Bridge between Two Worlds,' our attention has been called to the fact that Mr. J. J. Morse supplies her works as well as all other American books upon psychical subjects. Mr. Morse's address is 26, Osnaburgh-street, London, N.W.

'THE SPHINX' for November reaches us too late for anything more than a passing notice. Among much that is interesting we note: 'The Horoscope of Mrs. Langtry' (with a charming portrait); 'The Character and Fortunes of Cancer'; 'The New Moon for November'; and 'Forecasts of the Wheat and Cotton Markets.' The number strikes us as being a remarkably good one. 'The Sphinx' is attractive in appearance, carefully edited, and bids fair to become the leading magazine of astrology in America.

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS.

BY 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

Into the merits of the discussion between Mr. Herbert Burrows and Mr. Thurstan it is not my province to enter ; but as the question of the use and abuse of physical phenomena has been raised, perhaps it may not be unprofitable to detail some experiences in that and other departments of psychology during the long period over which my investigations have extended. At the outset I may be permitted to remark that in my inquiries into the phenomena of Spiritualism I followed the advice of an American friend, one of the shrewdest and most level-headed men it has ever been my lot to meet, and who has for a quarter of a century been a confirmed Spiritualist, and who said to me : 'Have the medium in your own home, with no distractions, no sceptics or scoffers, and you will get results far more satisfactory than in a mixed circle.' This rule has been practically followed by me all through, with most successful results. True, I have sat in 'mixed circles' with many mediums of greater or less repute ; but that was chiefly in the initial stage of my investigations, and the comparison between the results obtained in the mixed circle and these got in the home, or with near friends, who are earnest believers, has for years past led me not to enter any circle unless I know personally everyone in it, and have the most perfect confidence in the harmony and good faith of the whole of the members thereof. At the same time I have to confess that my experience of physical phenomena, through divers mediums, has not been very extensive, because it has been my good fortune to have three good psychics in the household, and who, from looking very much askance at the whole thing when it was first broached in the family circle, are now, like myself, confirmed believers. The best of my home experiences, however, come under the category of automatic writing, clairvoyance, divination, spirit control, and palmistry ; but we have at the same time had a few physical manifestations sufficiently interesting to the student of psychology. Well do I remember the first 'tilt' of the table and the tiny sound of the first intelligent rap (always, however, with contact). These two events marked a new era in my religious belief, and gave me the first indications that I was in the way of receiving 'proof positive' of a future life. Next followed numerous instances of the table rushing across the room in the direction of a certain person or object. These were the most common of our primary manifestations of spirit power, and were followed up by such occurrences as the table keeping time to the music played on the piano for an hour at a stretch, while our hands rested lightly on the table ; once the table was tilted to an acute angle, with a flower pot on it remaining undisturbed instead of falling off. Again, the table was made so light as to be held in the air by the tip of the little finger of one member of the household, and again made so heavy as to be immovable. Still further, in full light I saw a large dining table, loaded with supper dishes, &c., lifted up at least a foot from the floor and gently dropped back into its former position. Perhaps the most remarkable phenomena of a physical kind witnessed by me, occurred about ten years since at a mixed circle, in a West End drawing-room, where a chair was precipitated through the air eight or ten feet, striking the medium in passing ; and then the top rail of it was slung over the arm of one of the sitters, whose hand was at the time tightly clasped by another member of our circle, and at the same instant the voice of one of the controls cried out 'I hope that will satisfy you.' The chair was found in this position at the close of the séance, and the gentleman admitted it had been slung on to his arm while his hand was locked in that of the next sitter.

Another good physical test of spirit power was afforded me about four years ago. A powerful medium was staying the week end with us for the purpose of conducting some experiments with me in his peculiar vocation which is not usually physical. He was somewhat exhausted on the second evening with the day's sittings, and not at all inclined for more ; but two professional friends and one lady (all of whom were Spiritualists) called

and were urgent with a request for a séance for physical phenomena, and the medium most reluctantly sat down with us. On that occasion we had raps loud and faint ; plenty of 'intelligent' movement of the table, but always with contact. Latterly, however, as the power got very strong, we suggested to the control (an Indian spirit) that he should try and raise the table without contact, and in reply to the suggestion the table three several times (with our hands now all detached from it) rose slowly, and by a series of gyrations, till it was in the air about three feet from the floor, thereafter subsiding gently back ; and on the third occasion it rested for a few moments on the head of my wife, who was in the circle.

At the same circle a small musical box, which was on the table, was wound up, and played out its six tunes at least half a dozen times, without any member of the circle touching it ; and next morning the medium (of whose probity I have the very highest opinion) told me his rest was much disturbed in the middle of the night by this same box floating all round the room, playing its selection of tunes, and in the morning he found it attached to, or 'sticking against,' one of the walls of the room and resting apparently on nothing, for it came away in his hands when he touched it. Again, at three of my séances with Mrs. Titford, about four years ago, a large musical box was played in the air over the heads of the circle for half an hour at a time, and on one occasion it came in contact with a glass fanlight above the door of the room and knocked a hole in it. I may also add that the box on one of these occasions was visible in the air by means of a luminous card affixed to it.

The above is shortly a *resumé* of the physical manifestations witnessed by me, either in the home circle or, what is almost as good, in meetings of close friends who have made Spiritualism their careful and earnest study ; and I need hardly say none of us at such gatherings felt 'degraded,' or were in the least degree ashamed that we had witnessed these abnormal occurrences. We took them as they came, and valued them as 'means' to the 'great end' in view,—the attaining of an absolute belief in personal continued existence, and as manifestations of the power of spirit entities to control material objects. Personally, to myself, automatic writing is the most perfect revelation from the unseen, because (1) I have had great experience of it, extending over many years ; and (2) because it to a greater or less degree gives tests of character or identity which the utterances of trance mediums usually fail to afford ; and also in some rare instances because the earthly script or signature is reproduced.

In conclusion, what I do plead for, however, on the part of inquirers engaged in the investigation of this class of phenomena, should be earnestness of purpose, an open mind, and as far as possible the family or confidential circle, where harmony reigns. Again and again at mixed circles which I have attended there have been nothing but feeble results, and consequently scoffing and disbelief from sitters, or worse still, accusations bandied about of fraud and imposture, all of which are 'not to edification.' Inquirers into Spiritualism should not go to a séance as they would go to a theatrical performance, but reverently and with a serious desire to commune with departed friends. If they did this the results would more frequently be more convincing. On the other hand, no medium should ever sit in a circle where his or her sensitive organisation clearly indicated that power was defective or harmony was wanting among the members. Better no sitting at all than one with feeble, or at best, unconvincing results from either of the above causes. The idea of giving people 'value for their money' should be the last in the mind of any medium, as money 'cannot buy' spirit manifestation, which only comes in at an 'open door' and cannot be turned on and off like a supply of water or a current of electricity.

I have been led to make these observations by the discussion recently raised in these columns over physical phenomena, and in the hope that other investigators may be led to give a record of similar results ; all with the view of showing that, given proper conditions, such manifestations are not to be despised as 'aids to conviction' that there is 'a spirit in man' which survives what we call death, which event is after all just the passage to a higher life of unending spiritual enjoyment.

LEAVING THE BODY.

Having seen in 'LIGHT' of October 21st the narrative of my friend 'Phygia' as to her leaving her body, I think it will interest your readers if I tell you of some of my own experiences in the same direction. As a boy and youth I was extremely 'dreamy,' and, much to the annoyance of my employer, used to lose myself for days, going through my work quite mechanically. I remember once being in Trafalgar-square, when I saw, standing beside me, a youth about my own age, very handsome and 'glorified.' I was not surprised or frightened, even when he significantly pointed to the fountains and said 'Remember'; but, curiously enough, in leaving my body I have invariably been accompanied by another spirit, and it was always this youth. I have since found out who this youth was, as I have met him in the flesh, but 'not glorified.' Years went on, and I became interested in Spiritualism, and in the course of time I met a gentleman with whom I became very intimate. He had not been long in London, when one day he and I were passing Trafalgar-square, and he suddenly stopped and said: 'We have been here before.' 'No,' said I, 'that could not have been, for this is the first time we have been here together.' 'Oh, yes, we have,' he replied, and then, after thinking a minute or two, he told me he remembered a vision which he had had while in Aberdeen of meeting me in that spot, and he described the dress which I was wearing at the time with perfect accuracy, and then I also was able to remember. As time went on we, as friends do, related our dreams to each other, and much to our surprise we found that we used to 'dream' of the same thing, and were able to remember the place in which we met. On one occasion when we were out together we met a friend of mine whom my other friend had not seen before in the body, but they both said that they were very familiar with each other, and suddenly remembered that they had met in the spirit world during the sleep of the physical body. I think that this phase of occult experience is rather more common than it is thought to be, for it has occurred to many of my friends. I knew a friend who once 'dreamed' that a certain personage came to him and said: 'I am M. B., and you are going to meet me soon, more closely; farewell.' Now this gentleman had not then been initiated into Spiritualism, and when he became so the first spirit who communicated was the individual of the dream, who said: 'I have come to fulfil my promise to you, I am M. B.'

Soon after the publication of Mr. Stead's 'Real Ghost Stories,' and reading of experiences of leaving the body, I had occasion to visit and stay in town, and I was anxious to see how the dear ones were at home. I thought: 'Is it possible to go there? If others can go, why not I?' and gradually I found myself leaving my body and travelling quickly in the direction of my home. On arriving I saw my wife and two children, with a lamp burning in the bedroom, which was very unusual. I also heard certain words, of which I told my wife, and I found that all was quite correct, for one of the children not being quite well, she had lighted the lamp and at the same time uttered the words which I had heard.

After I became a Spiritualist, my friend, of whom I have spoken, became, with myself, a medium and a student of the deeper and out-of-the-way side of the great subject. The process of leaving the body has not been studied very deeply, and my friend, being a clairvoyant, could watch the whole process. We wanted to know how and what it was like to die, and our spirit friends said that if we would prepare ourselves they would show us. We had to eat vegetable food, drink no alcohol, smoke no tobacco, and I had to wear flannel and have no metal of any sort upon me, not even the buttons on my clothes—all had to be non-metallic. I experienced the sensation of burning wherever the metal was. Why this was I have never discovered. One day I did not take off my wedding ring (which, by the way, I think all married men should wear), and the sensation was agonising to me, leaving a mark as if I had been burnt with fire. I wish some of our friends would or could throw a light upon this experience. I was entranced as usual, and the spirit friends told my friend to

watch, and as he had the gift of normal clairvoyance he could do so with ease. He told me what seemed to him to take place. Suddenly my face altered and the look of death was upon it; the breathing became laboured and then ceased; the heart action also appeared to stop; then from my left side came a mist which gradually shaped itself into my form, and presently the form took upon it a very life-like and animated countenance, and there were other spirits of my own family with me. As to my own experience, I felt that I was being controlled but was not in the dead trance state, for I could hear what my guides were saying. Suddenly I felt as though I was falling back, but the sensation was beautiful, as if I were in the arms of a person whose love overshadowed me; then unconsciousness came. Whether it was for a long or short time I could not tell, but I awoke seeing 'something' at my feet and my friend in his chair. Both he and the 'something' were misty, but clearly enough there were my mother, my father, and all my dear ones I had thought dead, living and moving. Then I saw that the 'something' was my body, and that from me to the body was a cord of light, which seemed attached to both. I felt so glad to be free, and the sensations of joy were so great that I cannot put them into words. Then my guide, whom I love with an exceeding great love, came to me, and I said farewell to my friend, and went away, far away, from earth. The effort of travelling brought with it nothing in the nature of fatigue. I went to a land where everything was exceedingly beautiful—how grand and glorious I cannot tell, for words fail to express what a spirit, as a spirit, feels when free from the trammels of the flesh. I then remember being told that I must return, and I felt that I was drawn back till I was again in the room with my friend. I stood by my body again, and my friend distinctly saw the two—the body and the spirit—which were alike, and yet not alike. Then a little period of unconsciousness followed, and once more I awoke to this earth life.

When the initial stage was once over, leaving the body became quite an easy and usual thing with us, but it rarely happened unless my friend was present. My friend once wanted me to try whether I could travel to a certain place and report what I saw. He sent me to a house to get a description of it, which was all right; but I described a lady, who was his sister (whom I did not know), in bed *alone*. He thought this was certainly wrong, but he said nothing to me. Judge his surprise to see his brother-in-law in London on the next afternoon, having to attend the funeral of a friend in town, which necessitated his sleeping away from his wife that night. A few words in closing: Practical men will doubtless ask, 'What's the use?' I reply that I received these experiences when I was saddened by sorrow, and I was shown the realms of beauty and light, of which I was as much an inhabitant as the spirits free from the flesh. The experience uplifted me and filled me with joy and gladness unspeakable; and if my recording of this is of any service to others, my work has been truly blessed by our Father God. 'DUKE.'

WAS IT A SPIRIT-VOICE?

The 'Daily Mail' published the following sad little story, on November 20th, as to the way in which the family of Captain Weldon, one of the ill-fated Royal Dublin Fusiliers, first heard of his death:—

'His mother had been feeling very anxious for several days, and refused to go to a dance which was given by her daughter, as a sense that something was wrong was weighing on her mind. That night she heard someone say, "Mother, mother," and got up and went into another son's room, but found him fast asleep. Next day, about tea-time, a blue official letter was brought to her, and on opening it she found that Messrs. Cox had heard of her son's death, and wanted to know what they were to do with his effects, and this was her first intimation of the sad loss she had sustained.'

If this is an accurate statement of the facts, the theory that the manifestation was due to telepathy, or the action of Captain Weldon's mind *before* death, will not apply.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—'LIGHT' is kept on sale by W. H. Robinson, 4, Nelson-street, and Book Market.

MR. HERBERT BURROWS' AND REINCARNATION.

In Mr. Burrows' reply to my criticisms on his paper, he infers that my theosophic views are derived from verbal teachings of mediums, but in this he is mistaken, for I have learned little from their verbal teaching.

But when, after years of experiment, I, thirteen years ago, had my iron ring, which could not be forced over Husk's hand, placed in an instant on his arm while I held the hand, I got an overwhelming demonstration that spirit was the supreme force in Nature, and thus I had the key to the mysteries of God, Nature, Christ, Man, Miracle, and Matter, as given in my 'Christo-Theosophy.'

When, therefore, Mr. Burrows says that my paper on Reincarnation in that book is 'the acme of childish non-reasoning,' he surprises me, as my own estimate of that paper is that it is severely truthful and logically unanswerable. My views on Reincarnation are expressed there and elsewhere briefly as follows :—

1. I assert that there is not one historic fact or one logical statement which proves the truth of the doctrine.

2. I say that the teaching is materialistic and immoral, because the permanent obsession of the bodies of infants by selfish spirits lusting for a continuance of earth life at the expense of these children, would be an outrageous burglary.

3. I say that the argument that thus only can even-handed justice, as to happiness and knowledge, be measured to all, is absurd, because spirits when they leave their earth bodies pass into their spiritual bodies and can at once begin gradually to enter into knowledge or happiness, or the reverse, in exact relation to their earth life and its desires, and can at once, according to our seers and saints, if worthy, obtain a happiness and knowledge which a thousand times makes amends for all the poverty, pain, and sorrow of a long human life; or if unworthy, they can go to their own place of reformation as by purgatorial fires.

4. But the one demonstration that the doctrine of Reincarnation is untrue, is arithmetical; for if we admit that the population of this planet is millions of times greater now than it was at an early period, I would ask whence came all this multiplication of souls, say, seven hundred millions of times the number which at an early period existed on our planet?

The only reply is that they may have come from other planets, but this is of course a pure assumption; and we might ask how these other planets manufactured all these millions of souls or what becomes of these depleted planets?

5. The doctrine of Reincarnation is not taught by Jesus Christ, the divine and miraculous man, or by any Christian seer, prophet, or saint, but its origin in the East is probably due to a materialistic love of an earth life and to the traditions connected with the universal prevalence of demon worship and obsession among all primitive savage races.

7, Westbourne-street, GEORGE WYLD, M.D.
Hyde Park.

PHOTOGRAPH OF A DOUBLE.

In the November number of 'Revue Scientifique et Morale du Spiritisme' an account is given by a writer who signs himself Major Péheim, of a photograph taken at 'Eaux-bonnés' by an American doctor, H. Draper Speakman. In this photograph an American lady (whose name is withheld) appears, holding a child by the hand. The peculiarity of the photograph is that she appears twice on the plate, in two different attitudes, and the two images of her and the child are apparently at a distance of twenty centimetres from each other. There is a note added from Mrs. Howard Speakman, in which she affirms, on behalf of her husband, that the photograph was taken instantaneously in broad daylight, and that Mr. Speakman undertakes himself all the work connected with his photographs; and makes himself responsible for the correctness of the fact related.

The addresses of Major Péheim and Mr. Speakman are not given, but perhaps they would be furnished by application to the editor of the 'Revue,' M. Gabriel Delanne, 40, Boulevard Exelmans, Paris, if anyone should think it desirable in the service of psychic science to obtain further evidence concerning this reported phenomenon.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

For some weeks past you have devoted many columns of your interesting journal to the consideration of some possible eirenicon between Theosophy and Spiritualism; yet, as it seems to me, the vital issues at stake have not been clearly set forth, and the discussion of what are rather side issues has prolonged the debate. The real issues seem to me to be as follows :—

1. Without wishing to fight about words, or elaborate theories of divine personality, I may affirm that the God whom true Spiritualists and truth-seeking Christians believe in as a veritable fact, becomes in Theosophy an indefinite abstraction.

2. Theosophy declares that when a medium sees, hears, or is inspired by a 'spirit,' that spirit is not a human soul, but some astral corpse.

3. Reincarnation is the pivot upon which the theosophic system turns. Spirits who are progressing through the spheres deny this doctrine, of which there are no scientific proofs, and which is teleologically unnecessary.

4. Progressive spirits affirm a moral government of the universe. The theosophic conception of Karma reduces the Cosmos to a vast machine.

5. Spiritualists believe that prayer is a function of the soul, and that when seen to be for the highest good, prayer for specific ends may be answered. Theosophy ridicules prayer in general.

6. Theosophy tends more and more to rest upon authority. Witness the adoration paid to 'H. P. B.' and now to Mrs. Tingley. Spiritualism teaches that there is no monopoly in these matters, and that advanced spirits do not confine their teachings and ministrations within the limits of any occult society.

These, sir, are a few of the essential points. I could suggest many more. The surest test is to observe its practical effect upon spiritual life among the adherents of Theosophy themselves. Only a few days ago, a prominent Theosophist told me that members who cultivated psychic tendencies 'soon dropped out of the society,' while another, the leader of a lodge, remarked to me, 'Pray! What can you pray to? You would not pray to your Higher Ego, and what else would there be but horrid elementals?'

3, Tennyson-road,
Mill Hill, N.W.

HECTOR WAYLEN.

TRANSMUTATION.

In days of old, when science scarce had wings,
And groped unwittingly where now it flies,
The Alchemist essayed from common things
To fashion what was precious in men's eyes.

Thus hundreds, full of greed, the secret sought
Of turning baser metals into gold;
Nor learned the lessons Nature ever taught
To those with minds more reverent than bold.

Old sightless avarice could never see
The loveliest touchstone ready to its hand,
With which to change the poorest ones that be,
Into the wealthiest of all the land!

The true Alchemy is that which can
Make weary lives their burdens rise above;
The secret lies within the heart of man,
And, failing other words, we call it *Love*.

R. O.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. H. BALDWIN.—Mr. R. Cooper's address is 48, Grove-road, Eastbourne. No doubt Mr. Cooper will be pleased to send you a supply of his 'Useful Leaflet' if you apply to him, enclosing a stamped directed wrapper for the return postage.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.—Mr. Herbert Burrows asks us to say that through extreme pressure of work he has been obliged to defer the second part of his reply till next week.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT, 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2nd, 1899.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

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THE MESSAGE OF ADVENT.

To-morrow is the first Sunday in Advent; and, whatever our opinions may be, from lowest church to highest, or beyond the churches altogether, it is impossible to disregard the significance of one of the greatest days in the Christian Year. Even though we admitted that the supposed historical Christ is largely mythical, and that a good half of our Christian rites and celebrations have been grafted on pagan stocks, we should still have to face the fact that the product is, on the whole, one of the wonders of the world. Accident or intention, chance or inspiration, man's good fortune or God's purpose, the thing is here.

But *what* is it that is here? We have no quarrel with conventional Christianity, and it is not our business to criticise its rituals, its ceremonies, its dogmas, its millinery or its priests: but this we do say that, at best, these are the body, and that elsewhere we find the soul: and it is very decidedly our business, here as elsewhere, to look beyond the body to the soul. What then is the soul of the Christian religion, and what is the real message of the venerable day which commemorates the advent of its founder?

For reply, we are content to appeal to the saying of the founder himself: 'If I cast out evil spirits by the spirit of God, then is the kingdom of God come unto you.' 'The kingdom of God,' then: *that* is Christianity's soul.

But what is 'The kingdom of God'? The Lord's Prayer indicates it, in the priceless words: 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.' For the kingdom of God to come, then, is for the will of God to be done: or, in other words, the kingdom of God is the rule of God over happy because obedient children; and, wherever men or angels ask for His will and seek to do it, there has that kingdom come. So then it is not at all a question of Church or priest or sacrament or creed, except as these may help. It is entirely a question of volition and temper and spirit and life.

It is no answer to this to say that the state of Christendom makes this definition ridiculous or desperate. So much the worse for so-called 'Christendom,' with its pagan brutality, its arrogance, its huge self-will. If Christ could have his way, all this would cease. The depressing inconsistency is *our* fault, not his. The glorious Ideal is there all the same. The heavenly guide is waiting for us: that is all we can say. It may take the poor animally-minded world another 1,900 years to come well within sight of him: but for Christ's sake do not blame him, or the kingdom he came to establish here.

It is highly worth our while, this Advent time, to ponder the little story in which this statement about the coming of the kingdom is imbedded. Jesus had been performing (so the story runs) that wonderful work so often

called the casting out of demons, or evil spirits: and what he claimed was that this casting out of evil, this restoration of the sweet bells, now 'jangled, out of tune and harsh,' was his proper work as the messenger of the Father in His kingdom. This is symbolical. The sweet bells of the world, of human nature, have never yet been fully heard. They have not yet emerged from the weltering chaos and snarling of the brute: but they *are* emerging; and the world's Christs bear witness to them, and give celestial anticipations of them, and teach us that they belong to the coming kingdom of God which is going to take the place of the kingdoms of the brute, the despot, the selfish, and the merely strong. That is the message of Advent, rightly understood.

Why does not all Christendom see it? It is so plain. Perhaps it is because we have forsaken the simple Gospels, with their 'green pastures' and 'still waters,' for the gaudy jungles of a rank and persistent paganism. The life of Jesus was a life of heavenly pitifulness. So far as we can trace it, he had no church, no ritual, no creed: and he wanted none. The life was perfect as it was: and, be they only legend or veritable history, his miracles, with scarcely an exception, were obvious works of mercy. In the cleansing of the leper, the opening of the eyes of the blind, the making of the lame to walk, the casting out of evil spirits, we find the same symbol: and everywhere it is the kingdom of God that has come; for in that ideal kingdom there is no uncleanness, no blindness, no decrepitude, no evil spirit to torment.

At every step, this great master of the music of the soul seems to say, 'This discord of the world is all wrong. Man is not here to be a captive to ignorance and passion and sin. He is God's subject and child, and God claims him and will rescue him. He must cease to be estranged from the Father, as an alien or a slave; to be the sport of passion; to carry about a heavy heart and hang his head for shame. He has long been miserable in the kingdom of evil, but is now called into the kingdom of the good, the beautiful and the true: and I have come to make this known,—The way, the truth, the life.'

So 'he went about doing good,' destroying the work of the devil, as John so bluntly put it, and rescuing God's children, held in his dreadful thrall. He became the champion of the miserable, the lover of the poor, the little children's friend. He proved that disease and strife had no business here, that love was the path of life and that a cross might be the shortest way to heaven. He fought the good fight, and showed that our miseries and the cause of them belonged to a kingdom he came to overturn. Here is the abject sinner, at his feet, with her repentant tears: and he brings all heaven into her sorry heart by his gracious words, and leads her into the Father's kingdom. Frantic and banished men, abandoned to the evil powers, know the master of the spirit's harmony, and submit to the hand which comes to restore the broken order of the soul: and, sitting at his feet, clothed and in their right minds, they pass into the kingdom. Blind beggars, sitting by the wayside, undeterred by the vulgar clamours and rebukes of mere sight-seers, cry to him, 'Lord! that we may receive our sight!' And he hears. And his Parables! Are they not full of the brother's tenderness, the champion's readiness, the rescuing angel's love?

There is the standard: and for no one shall it be lowered. It may rebuke us: it may shame us: it may, even while singing our Advent hymns, brand us as inconsistent and well-nigh impious: but there it is. And still, as of old, it is true that there is no other way out of our desert, no other way of salvation from our sins: and still that heart-breaking but unrelenting cry comes from the Unseen: 'Why call ye me *Lord, Lord*, and do not the things which I say?'

MEDIUMS: THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

BY MRS. J. STANNARD.

Address delivered before the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

(Continued from page 557.)

I feel the question is likely to arise, as to how we should propose to deal with the large majority of poor hardworking Spiritualists or seekers—people who have only the Sunday to devote to a meeting or séance. Are we to advise our mediums to keep on a lofty pedestal of exclusive introduction and only hold séances for a picked set? Not necessarily. We none of us want unreasonable measures. Still, Spiritualists must make up their minds to lay down some pretty hard and fast rules if they are to cope at all successfully with the unsatisfactory state of things to-day. Therefore, while all of us would gladly do anything that lay in our power to help the spread of Spiritualism among the poorer classes in a rational manner, it is also apparent to many of us that the time has arrived when something might be profitably attempted to check a tendency on the part of the more ignorant sitter to attend séances quite so frequently. It becomes something very like loafing on the medium's psychic conditions, besides engendering other undesirable elements.

We all know that there is a fairly large class of people who attend the inexpensive mixed circle week by week, or every other week, pretty nearly all the year round. Their object may be to help form sympathetic conditions round the medium—I should say *exhaust* would be nearer the truth; or they may be actuated by no higher motive than to while away a dull Sunday evening, exchanging a few genial platitudes with the controls for the delectability of the stray visitor. Very many of us know that this purposeless element is to be found round most mediums, and surely in the end cannot but be as harmful as it is useless. Are we not here shown something in the nature of a duty owed by mediums to their controls—that they use their best endeavours to keep the circles clear of these parasitical conditions? A medium should not feel the need of this sort of bolstering up on the part of a group of regular attendants. One friend, who can be relied on to see that the necessary test conditions are carried out, ought to be sufficient.

Admitting to a certain extent, as I think many must, that the purposeless sitter is too frequent an attendant at the public séance, I see no reason why a scheme cannot be tried which would give the poorer busy ones a chance for gathering at a séance now and then, and at the same time check some of the unnecessarily oft-repeated visits. Supposing, for instance, that a developing circle had been formed and was working with an undoubtedly powerful medium, and suppose that a sufficient stage of reliability had been reached to warrant the committee in introducing strangers, this would be done by gradually increasing the numbers until the conclusion was evident that the controls had enough power under ordinary circumstances to give large and successful séances. Therefore, while a series of séances at an adequate fee might be inaugurated for week days, could not another series of Sunday fortnightly meetings be managed for the poorer classes at the nominal price of 1s. per head?—these meetings to be held at the medium's house for the exclusive benefit of those who could not pay more, names and addresses to be sent in with application for places before the Sunday, and no sitter to be allowed to attend two consecutive séances when the demand for seats was sufficient.

In regard to these Sunday circles it might be as well to arrange that one member of the medium's developing circle should always be present to see things properly managed, the committee in return guaranteeing the medium from financial loss. For instance, supposing the number fixed on for admittance was ten or twelve and that only seven or eight persons came, and this occasioned the medium loss, the developing circle should be willing to make up the usual amount. But I feel that these séances would pay

their way and that the difficulty would be the other way about, from the too great demand for admission, while the satisfaction of knowing that these meetings were as scientifically important as the more exclusive gatherings would fully repay one for all trouble in the beginning. Of course, these are but ideas in the germ, which may contain some possibility for a working scheme. I can only hope to sketch them out quite roughly.

A recent discussion in this room, after the address given by our friend Mr. Herbert Burrows, showed, I think, pretty plainly, on the whole, how very necessary the séance room could be to all students in the various branches of psychical science. One cannot, therefore, help feeling additional regret when one realises how very unprogressive and stationary of late years physical mediumship has become; also that a cloud of discredit should still hang over séance work on its public side. But I fear that, with all the best will and energy in the world, to try and bring about a different phase of thought in this respect, and place the séance work on a more honourable footing, nothing can be achieved with any hope of success unless mediums themselves feel this desire for reformation as well, and show sufficient ambition and love of progression to meet us on their side and say, 'Let us think out a scheme together; we are willing to be tested and would like to hit on some method whereby we can work in co-operation with our friends and helpers.' Unless mediums do trouble in the future to keep up their reliability and prestige before the scientific world, paid séance work is bound to die out and become a thing of the past. The super-physical and psychical sciences have, in recent years, made such momentous strides in thought and discovery that mediums cannot hope to satisfy present-day inquiry with the declaration that spirits are manifesting to the best of their ability when objects are moved about in obscurity.

I am in full agreement with some lines written in an issue of 'LIGHT,' a few weeks ago, by our respected thinker, Dr. George Wyld. In a series of prophetic convictions he makes the following remark: 'I have no doubt whatever that Spiritualism, at present chaotic, will take a strictly scientific position and that the existence of man's double nature and his spiritual Ego will become as easily demonstrable as that water is a combination of two independent gases, oxygen and hydrogen.'

Now, taking an unbiassed, abstract view of Spiritualism on the whole, one is forced to acknowledge that a certain amount of chaotic condition is to be found amongst us. As the very nature of our facts and theories brings us in touch with so many lines of scientific and ethical thought, the marvel is that we are able to harmonise in our ideas and opinions as well as we do. But though divided opinions and thoughts can be the very breath of life to a progressive growing society, they would have a contrary effect when brought to bear upon the domain of scientifically attested facts, such as the séance room is supposed to be. Here, then, it is our duty to see that chaos has no place. In the realm of established truths order and harmony should reign, and we who are pioneers in psychical thought might attempt, I think, some scheme of organisation whereby a classification of mediumship and phenomena might be rendered practicable.

Passing on, before conclusion, to a few remarks which apply more to sitters and the obligations they owe to mediums, I would first of all like to sum up briefly and clearly what one might consider as the main outlines of some of the duties a public medium owes to his profession.

I would say: Duty No. 1. Self-education and training till a proper stage of development is reached for professional work. Duty No. 2. A cessation from public work directly the manifestations are spasmodically or fitfully obtained—in other words, have become unreliable. A temporary retirement from work would in all probability recuperate and restore the better psychic conditions. Duty No. 3. An endeavour, in conjunction with the controls, to produce more progressive forms of phenomena, and above all to develop for light séances. I consider a medium responsible when palpable fraud has been proved, as he or she should always insist on strict test conditions being applied.

This reminds me to touch on a matter extremely impor-

tant, and one which shows the necessity for a little more plain speaking if we are to arrive at any agreement on the subject. I put it interrogatively: How ought we to consider a case of distinctly-proved fraud against a professional medium? What is our rightful attitude in such a case?

I desire in all sincerity to hear the opinion of the majority; for there are some of us who would appreciate enlightenment on this question. Are we to judge by the correspondence which has usually followed the reports of glaring cases of proved fraud? If so, it seems to me that many were inclined to favour the theory that a fraudulent medium really means little more than fraudulent sitters; and that when mediums have been found in possession of paraphernalia introduced into the séance-room, we are to conclude that they were martyrs to a vindictive, malicious type of sitter. In all seriousness, this is tantamount to what has been recently said by quite a section of Spiritualists. I have tried to look this argument squarely in the face and I don't like it; in fact, I go further, and I protest against it. This fear of acknowledging the truth and apology for the medium is unworthy.

One or two of our best psychical thinkers and scientists, 'Quæstor Vitæ' among the number, demonstrated to us a deeply metaphysical theory, one which any scholarly mind is bound to acknowledge as perfectly scientific, though at the same time the complexities it offers are appalling and not to be lightly studied. Because experimental observation has shown us that it is possible occasionally for a medium to become impelled to fraud through a suspicious sitter, are we to have this theory hurled at our heads by the unscientific and the sentimentalist every time there is an exposure? Then I would ask, How are we going to gauge the exact amount of suspicion in any given sitter? Where are we going to draw the line?

I trust that those who have found a certain comfort in this argument will try and realise the great underlying danger of it; a danger far too real to allow of its glib repetition, especially when brought to bear on cases where practically no test conditions were applied. An abuse of this extremely complex idea can only have one effect, viz., that of terrorising a sincere investigator into an indignant silence if it does not succeed in banishing him from the séance room altogether. Of course we know there are cases where fraud on the part of the medium—under suggestion or trance—can be quite as interesting a phase of psychic study as genuine manifestations and fraud from the unseen, but that does not apply to many a case of exposure where fraud was proved to be deliberate and premeditated.

Cases, too, of intermittent mediumship require more study and attention from the thoughtful than has been hitherto given them, for I cannot think that mediumship of a fitful kind is suitable, or ought to be encouraged, for ordinary public work. I believe that this half-and-half mediumship (which probably means imperfect training and development) is responsible for more temptation to trickery than anything else. A sensitive who knows that people have come to see manifestations which really now and then *are* produced through him, will probably feel it no very heinous crime to assist a little on his side if circumstances and the occasion render it advisable, and specially if his visitors should happen to be of the kindly credulous order; and so the seed gets sown and grows (unconsciously almost at first) apace. Supposing we ever did get some committee formed to look after mediums, special arrangements might be made to study this particular type, and investigate the phenomena purely from the experimental scientific side, organising séances with that object only. I can imagine nothing, for instance, calculated to interest a Psychical Research Society member more than the study of one of these intermittent mediums. It would probably keep him busy for months!

Now, just as I imagine a society would do anything that was possible to protect and help the true psychic, so should it be uncompromising in its treatment of fraud, palpable and deliberate. Public opinion should be too strong after an unmistakable exposure to make it possible for any trickster to hold another public séance. Private work is quite another matter. To excuse or sympathise with a medium because he or she had been tempted to lie; or

depreciate a sitter because he or she was not sufficiently blind or lenient, is to me an unfair proceeding. We should not beg the question in this manner if we were discussing chronicled misdeeds on the part of an ordained priest or absconding trustee; yet both might have betrayed their trust, relatively, to exactly the same degree as a fraudulent medium. Allowing that a judicious investigation is brought to bear on alleged fraud, and proof makes it evident that intentional fraud has been committed, Spiritualists owe it to one another, and especially to their cause, that they prevent, by every means in their power, such a medium from holding another public séance.

I admit that this subject is not a pleasant one. It hurts me, quite as much as any one, to have to acknowledge that the position we are thrust into every time an exposure takes place is most humiliating and heart-rending. But there it is—and surely this haphazard way of treating fraud has lasted long enough. It is time a little determination were shown to tackle this question properly. By treating deliberate fraud with severity, and looking after the genuine mediums, we ought gradually to repress such weakness more successfully. That no organisation has ever been attempted to try and check it seems a pity, as the fact is at present constituting itself a very grave trouble and hindrance.

I should say it was quite possible that Spiritualists may have unwittingly fostered mental and spiritual enervation in mediums, by considering the séance room too much in the past as a sort of holy of holies where all must be received in a spirit of religion or sentiment. One thing is certain, that the attitude of mind which desires *hush! hush!* to be said directly the word fraud is whispered, will never be successful in stopping deceit, but will rather have the contrary effect; and I think it might be wiser, in view of modern thought and its progressive tendency, to give an exposure of fraud all the publicity possible, and to view the séance room in a more hard-headed fashion in the future. We could with advantage regard it more in the light of a laboratory or study which we enter for thought and experiment, considering the medium as an instrument of delicate mechanism, one capable of infinite variety in its power to demonstrate the presence of an unseen but intelligently-guided force.

This living machine (for an entranced medium is nothing else) almost reminds one, though in nobler degree, of the finely-suspended magnetic needle which vibrates and moves according to the auric emanations of the approaching observer. Now, I don't think our mediums have always had the most suitable treatment shown them. Had a little of that patience and thought which discovered the sensitive needle been expended on studying and looking after a good medium, higher and more far-reaching results might have been achieved. Of course there would always have been a certain amount of mediocrity to deal with in psychic work, but at the same time Spiritualists would have evolved one or two wonderful subjects. The French occult scientist has been more successful in this matter than ourselves, but then he treats his sensitives differently—more, as I say, like a delicate machine, considering that a medium cannot be expected to live his or her life like the ordinary unpsychic person. Therefore I think it may be quite possible that many wasted opportunities for directing these valuable psychic forces into broader, higher channels may have taken place within the last, say, fifteen years. Personal aims and egotistical desires have crept in, to narrow and almost swamp the efforts of controls who would willingly have tried for higher things had the chance been given them.

But this desire for the best that the unseen could do—this patience to wait, to develop, regardless of self and personal wishes—has not often been evident, and so the higher intelligences have found it impossible to resist the onward rush of lower, more material influences attracted round a circle where possibly every mind is vibrating with eagerness and desire to get personal messages or worldly advice. In this matter sitters are frequently unconscious projectors of the first elements for degeneration which may seize on a medium. I know there are séances where the more abstract spirit dominates the company—and delightful these more private circles are—but for one séance where you feel the personal element is in the background you will get twenty where the sitters have ostensibly come to exchange jokes and get

personal advice from the guides should conditions be sufficiently favourable. By a strange irony the very class of sitter which a hasty thinker might be inclined to suppose as most helpful to a medium and séance, is the one found in the long run to be the most inimical, and proves more frequently than not a barrier to lofty thought and work. When it has been my lot to see a séance gradually settle down into a narrow, petty groove, it has generally happened through a member of this type being present. That sitter I have hitherto styled the 'sentimentalist,' but Mr. Dawbarn, with whose writings in 'LIGHT' you are doubtless familiar, classifies this type of Spiritualist or inquirer far more aptly. He names him the 'emotional sitter.' In an article entitled 'Steps in Spiritual Experiences,' he says: 'The emotional believer does not stop to play the critic. He just caresses and enjoys, feeling secure in his own belief. If told that he is often only welcoming a shadow born of the mortal, he believes and asserts that personal experiences are sufficient proofs for every rational man.' Again: 'This is an era of progress, and unless emotional love can be lifted to a higher level it arrests true spirit growth.'

Now nobody would wish to check the warm-hearted glow of unselfishness or that love which feels it must have outlet and help others to realise the splendid reality of spirit communion; we can never have too much love in our souls or work too much for others; but let us reserve this for our homes and daily lives, and keep the actively emotional tendency as much in check as possible when we enter the public séance room. Here it brings another train of consequences with it, and we are likely to show more love and help to our mediums if we keep passive and stifle the personal curiosity or desire. Let us wish for the higher beneficent guidance rather than think longingly of sister, parent, friend, for in doing the latter we may be acting as opposing forces against what the medium's controls feel they could manage.

So I would say to all investigators at public circles, Don't go only with the wish that a departed loved one may be able to touch or tap three times, but rather that conditions may be strong and harmonious enough for the unseen to work as seems best and wisest to them. This attitude of mind is, I know, one difficult to attain at first, but verily, if persevered in, we have our reward, and that in many subtle ways. The true spirit growth and enlargement of mind have surely started when one can sink the personal and material for the higher, more spiritual desire—and at no time, in no place, can one bring this more usefully to bear than in the séance room.

May I in conclusion express the hope that what I have said to-night will be accepted in the spirit in which it is meant, viz., love and goodwill towards Spiritualism and Spiritualists generally? It is because I have the welfare of the cause so much at heart that I had the wish to try and rouse your attention on one or two matters which have struck some of us as deserving of critical notice, and, if possible, reformation. As a Spiritualist of certainly little over twelve years' standing but at any rate unaffiliated with any other occult society, I shall perhaps be forgiven for the very plain manner in which I have ventured to put one or two of my ideas; but if I have preached the necessity to cut down or pull up in our garden, I am also willing to assist in the work of replanting and tending. Our kind President knows that the greatest wish I have at heart is to see, sooner or later, some form of expert committee established, whereby mediums may be tested, and registered as valuable and reliable public workers for the cause; and failing this, or in conjunction with it, that we may one day secure something in the nature of a Psychical Institute such as our valued thinker, 'Quæstor Vitæ,' outlined this spring in the columns of 'LIGHT.' Some sort of nucleus of this kind for the bringing of psychical students together is urgently needed, and in a city like London it would be the means of bringing much valuable work to our notice as well as be instrumental in drawing our fellow-scientists abroad into closer touch and friendly co-operation.

Let us hope that before the new century has run many years this necessity and long-felt want will have been supplied. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT having intimated that the meeting was open for questions or remarks by the audience, a long and animated discussion followed, but we can only afford space for a very brief report.

MRS. MILLETT asked if it would not be better that there should be no money consideration in the exercise of mediumship.

THE PRESIDENT stated that Mr. D. D. Home never took payment, and Mrs. Everitt had generously given hundreds of free séances; but there were many mediums who could not afford to devote time and strength to the work without remuneration, and he asked, 'Why should not a medium be paid as well as a clergyman?'

MR. THURSTAN thanked Mrs. Stannard for her excellent address, and said he could corroborate almost all she had said from his own experience. He thought that the cure for all the evils of the present want of system in circle-holding was, to have only one object in our séances. Where mixed desires swayed the minds of the sitters, confusion resulted, or nothing happened, and in the physical séances which he had encouraged he only professed to show that invisible agents were present in the production of phenomena which were demonstrably not performed by the medium; at the same time it was necessary to devise means to eliminate all elements of suspicion. Any disturbance of the mind of the medium affected the conditions and prevented successful results; hence it was necessary that sitters should show the genuine spirit of investigation when scientific accuracy of observation was desired, and he thought that special meetings should be held for manifestations by personal friends.

MR. BERTRAM agreed that present methods of circle-holding could be improved, but he knew that many allegations of fraud rested on mere suspicion, not evidence, and in some cases the charges were made against the mediums out of sheer malice.

Replying to a question regarding the difficulty of obtaining phenomena in the light, MRS. STANNARD said she thought it was a matter of time and patience. Mediums started public work too soon—before they were sufficiently developed.

MRS. GRADDOX thought that public physical mediums might be needed, but more reliable physical manifestations were required for scientific investigators.

MR. A. PETERS suggested that mediums were too often left to struggle along alone. In the early days of his development he sought for advice from old Spiritualists, but he found they did not know how to help him. The majority of sitters were not concerned about scientific investigation or deep philosophy, but desired personal assistance and counsel, and mediums needed the co-operation of the sitters when they were willing to sit for the higher phases of manifestation. The present haphazard methods could only result in haphazard successes, and mediums should be set aside and protected from the bread-and-butter struggle of life if more scientific results were desired. He was glad to hear Mrs. Stannard suggest that 'gardeners' were needed, and appealed for a psychic institute.

THE REV. J. PAGE HORRS moved: 'That we give our entire thanks to Mrs. Stannard for her able and stimulating paper, the tone, spirit, and intention of which, from beginning to end, were good, and only good.' She had provided much food for thought, and even if we did not agree with everything, it was all the more probable that we needed to hear it. He did not object to the payment of mediums, but thought that the people who could only pay sixpence or one shilling required help just as much as those who paid five shillings, and were often quite as intelligent and capable of judging. He agreed as to the necessity for education, and said, 'get the mediums educated as much as you can'; but he had known a wonderful medium who was not educated, and when she tried to read a serious book spirit hands flicked it into the air; he thought that the spirits knew that if she got her mind filled with the thoughts of other people the power of the unseen operator would go. He believed that there was a great deal of 'intermittent mediumship' which was exceedingly valuable. A medium might be perfectly genuine on Monday, and yet the phenomena might look like fraud on

Tuesday—owing to conditions over which the medium might have had no control. Still, where fraud was distinctly proved, or the instrument was cracked, he agreed that such a medium should not engage in public work again—until, by prayer and private work, the fracture was mended.

MR. W. J. LUCKING seconded the resolution most heartily. There were, he thought, three classes of people to be provided for: The outsider, who wants to go to someone handy to 'see something'; the avowed Spiritualist, for whom the private circle, with friendly counsel from the other side, is needed; and the scientific investigator, for whom mediums of strong and well-developed powers for physical manifestations are requisite, to afford conclusive demonstrations of spirit existence; and, if we recognised the need for public mediumship, that could satisfy the claims of reasonable inquirers under scientific conditions, we should go a long way to meet the objections and difficulties which had been raised.

MRS. M. H. WALLIS supported the resolution. She had been deeply interested in Mrs. Stannard's very able paper, but she thought that too much stress had been laid upon scientific investigation, for the majority of the people were not scientific. She was thoroughly in sympathy with the desire for the education and scientific development of mediumship, but wished to emphasise the need of consideration for those of average abilities who were doing a useful and needed work.

MRS. GOODALL said she was greatly impressed with the need for an institute that would help investigators and test mediums. She thought, also, that a sort of Spiritualists' Club was needed, where members could meet and thresh out the subjects in which they were interested; and was of opinion that professional mediumship ought to be discouraged.

MRS. GRADDON referred to the fact that lawyers were compelled to pass examinations and to prove their qualifications as professional advisers, and she was of opinion that before professional mediums practised publicly they should be examined, and certified as qualified, by a board of examiners.

MR. HERBERT BURROWS was of opinion, if the Spiritualist's claim was true that mediums were the doorway, or bridge, between the physical and psychical realms, more care should be taken of them. It was the essence of every occult society that he was acquainted with that they took the greatest possible precautions to shield their sensitives from the turmoil and strife of the world. Mediumship ought to be prized as much as the most valuable china, or as a most delicate scientific instrument, would be; and it was due to mediums that the richer Spiritualists (and the poorer ones according to their means) should contribute to a fund which could be used to foster the development of mediums and place them above the bread-and-butter difficulties and at the disposal of sincere and scientific investigators. Mediums needed physical, ethical, and moral training, and psychical education, which would enable them to hold their own against antagonistic influences. Simple things were often as scientific as big things, and, while tests were needed to convince the hard-headed materialist, they need not necessarily be very wonderful. What was needed was classification of the facts and the adoption of the method of exhaustion so as to eliminate all other explanations than the spiritual.

MRS. HOWARD-NORTON thought that the commercial element ought to be kept out of consideration by the sitters, who should not *demand* to have *something* for their money. Mediums could not properly exercise their inexplicable gifts and engage in the ordinary business avocations of life at the same time, hence they should be recompensed generously—nothing could pay for the glorious and sacred revelation of spirit existence. She pleaded for more unity and sympathy and sociability.

THE PRESIDENT said that he regarded it as the primary object of the Alliance to give information and advice, and to bring friends together and let them consult and decide for themselves—not to dogmatise or direct. He was constantly being consulted, and his advice sought, by ladies and gentlemen, not only at home, but from all parts of the world; but he did not think it was wise that the Alliance

should be expected to sit in judgment upon any medium, though, of course, a committee might, with advantage, be appointed, or an institute founded, for the purpose of studying psychic phenomena among ourselves. The great difficulty was to find people, who were sufficiently interested, and who had the time, to take up the work. He was deeply grieved to know that some of the best people amongst us refrained from taking an active part in the movement because of the disrepute arising from fraudulent practices, and he was of opinion that it would be better to give up public séances altogether than afford any encouragement whatever to those who were known to be guilty of deliberate fraud. It was impossible to calculate the mischief that was done by fraudulent public mediums, but the difficulty was to know how to deal with the evil. He believed that a great deal could be done by moral suasion and by the steady persistence of Spiritualists in refusing to countenance questionable mediums.

MRS. STANNARD suitably acknowledged the vote of thanks, and said she believed that if we had but two mediums on whom we could thoroughly rely they would be worth all the half-and-half ones now before the public. By looking after the few who were capable of giving scientific proofs of the genuineness of the phenomena we should reach a higher standard of excellence, and could then go to the many non-scientific observers with improved and convincing evidence. She would greatly like to see something done in the way of a psychic institute. She was not in favour of *cheap* séances; better to give them free on charitable grounds, or to make people pay, and pay well. Mediums would then be more careful, and their mediumship would be more respected. She had been much interested in the discussion and felt that the subject needed to be looked at all round, but the time had come for something to be *done*.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'The Lamp.' No. 9. Albert E. S. Smythe, 18, North-street, Toronto, Canada. Price 10 cents.
 - 'The Sunflower.' No. 18. Published by W. H. Bach, Lily Dale, New York, U.S.A. Price 50 cents per annum.
 - 'The English Theosophist,' for December. London: H.P.B. Press, 141, Alderney-street, S.W. Price 1d.
 - 'The Sphinx,' for November. Boston, Mass., U.S.A.: Sphinx Publishing Company. Price 1s.
 - 'The Sermon.' No. 2. The Sermon Publishing Company, Toronto, Canada. Price 5 cents.
 - 'The Christmas Photogram.' Special seasonable issue. Extra pages full of illustrations. London: 6, Farringdon-avenue, E.C. Price 3d., postage 2d. extra.
 - 'Tora's Happy Day.' By FLORENCE PELTIER PERRY (Editor of Children's Department in 'Mind.') Illustrated by Gaingero Yeto. New York, U.S.A.: The Alliance Publishing Company, Life Building. Price 50 cents.
 - 'The Humanitarian,' for December, contains: 'The Origin and Cause of my English Sympathies,' by PROFESSOR ARMINIUS VAMBERY; 'The Intellectual Capacity of Women,' by PROFESSOR MANTEGAZZA; 'A Glimpse of Ireland,' by COUNTESS DE LA WARR; 'American Women and their Work,' by HON. STUART ERSKINE; 'Two Aspects of Hypnotism,' by ARTHUR HALLAM; 'The Materialist Facilis Decensus,' by A. O'NEIL DAUNT, &c. London: Duckworth & Co., 3, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C. Price 6d.
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'LIGHT FROM THE SUMMERLAND.'—Under this title a series of extremely interesting and outspoken articles upon Spiritualism have appeared in the last six issues of the 'West Lothian Courier,' a penny weekly newspaper published at 42, Hopetoun-street, Bathgate, N.B. The writer narrates some of his experiences and reports the utterances of a trance-speaking medium who has been developed in his own family circle.

IN 'FREE AMERICA' Too!—We cut the following interesting paragraph from the 'Light of Truth' for November 4th:—'The report of a committee appointed to define woman's position in the home and the church which was presented to the Presbyterian synod of Virginia at Huntington, last week, holds that woman is subordinate by divine interpretation, although the woman's rights movement seeks to deny it; that home is her sphere and she should remain there, meek and quiet. Her position in the church, it is held, should be a passive one. She should neither exhort nor preach. She is, however, allowed to sing in Sunday schools and aid societies.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Theosophy.

SIR,—Life is too short for endless explanations ; but, as Mr. Burrows seems anxious to know, and as some of your readers may be equally curious, it may be useful to say that I have been looking into old and new forms of Theosophy for forty years—probably before Mr. Burrows was in existence—and that the longer I look the more akin it seems to ‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland’ and ‘Through the Looking Glass.’

J. PAGE HOPPS.

Physical Manifestations.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me space in your valuable paper, as an old correspondent, to express my extreme admiration of, and entire accordance with, Mr. Thurstan’s letter in your issue of November 11th? It is so manly and straightforward, so creditable to both heart and head, and, moreover, so essentially true in its reasoning throughout, that all experienced Spiritualists must, I feel sure, acknowledge the value of such a testimony to the great assistance rendered by many a humble worker in the spirit realm in opening the door of communion between the two worlds.

I, for one, have much cause to be thankful for physical manifestations as stepping stones to higher communion ; and I know that the spirit friends have their reward for their faithful work in rising higher in spiritual life and progress.

‘LILY.’

SIR,—It always gives me great pleasure to read your valuable paper, and I have been specially interested in the articles on Physical Manifestations, by Messrs. ‘Bidston,’ Thurstan, and Cole.

So many critics, without any previous qualification, rush into print, making rash statements and pronouncing the medium a fraud and the investigators fools, that it is quite refreshing to read the opinions of the above named correspondents. I remember once attending a séance when a doctor was one of the company. We had sat about ten minutes when he jumped up and before any phenomena had taken place left the room, muttering that he had no time to waste on such foolery, and by his ridiculous impatience he missed one of the best séances in which I ever took part. I have sat with many such ‘investigators’ in my twenty-five years’ observations, and I am convinced that if they would humbly devote as many years as they have given hours to the inquiry, they would better understand the subject and acknowledge the great worth of the physical phenomena.

Liverpool.

H. J. E.

Physical Phenomena.

SIR,—In your edition of November 25th, under the above heading, you published a letter signed ‘E. D. G.’ in which it was said that Mr. Sinnett had stated in one of his books (the title of which ‘E. D. G.’ could not remember) that ‘each human soul was destined to pass a certain number of lives in each of the “Seven Planets”—of which the earth was one.’ In commenting upon this ‘E. D. G.’ implies that Mr. Sinnett had given the wrong number of the planets of the solar system. It is quite evident that ‘E. D. G.’ has not only forgotten the name of the book but also its contents, or that he did not correctly understand what was written. If he will take the trouble to again study what Mr. Sinnett really did say, he will find that the seven planets referred to are not all planets on the physical plane of existence, and that the chain of seven globes is quite a different thing from the planetary system known to astronomers. Mr. Sinnett is not a man likely to have overlooked such an elementary fact in astronomical science.

W. H. T.

Clairvoyance—Nuts to Crack.

SIR,—Your correspondent, ‘In the Dark,’ in ‘LIGHT’ for November 18th, asked some very important questions which, I trust, will be answered by some well-informed reader. Might I somewhat alter the form of one of the questions, thus : Is it true that persons born blind never see in their dreams and never become clairvoyant? Are there *any* blind mediums who are clairvoyant?

PUZZLED.

Advice Wanted.

SIR,—Can any of the readers of ‘LIGHT’ tell me how clairvoyance may be developed by one’s self? I have no friends sufficiently intimate with whom I can sit in a circle,

nor do I think it can be well always to go to a medium for information about those in the spirit world. It seems to me that it would be far better, if possible, to see consciously for one’s self. I have occasionally seen events foreshadowed in dreams, and once had a prophetic waking vision which has since been fulfilled, so that I think clairvoyance is latent though undeveloped.

T. A.

The Inlets of the Soul.

SIR,—I was glad to see Mr. Thurstan’s vigorous defence of the *objective* in Spiritualism, of the side of it that is presented to our senses of sight, hearing, and handling. We hear too much now-a-days about transcending our senses and thus reaching a superior realm of—shall I say?—nonsense ; and are tempted to forget the simple fact that all knowledge, and, what is much more important, all exalted feeling, reaches normally constituted people only through the senses, these chief inlets of the soul, as Blake calls them. I am well aware that abnormal conditions, both of knowledge and feeling, undoubtedly exist in individuals abnormally constituted, and are both interesting and valuable ; but many readers of ‘LIGHT’ will, I know, agree with me when I say that the private information vouchsafed to Jones is frequently untrustworthy while the surging emotion of Angelina occasionally resembles hysteria. Setting these oracles aside, let us never forget that every experience reflects itself within us according to our surrounding atmosphere of London fog or country sunshine—though even sunshine is lost upon some people. As a rule, however, we can always trust our hearts, and usually our wits, if we are living and working helpfully amidst simple folk in open air. Now the materialisation or dematerialisation of quite a simple and vulgar person, before our eyes and within our grasp, is an event more stupendous than the death of his body would be, more confounding to the poor little collection of systematic experiences which men now call Science, and more full of appeal to the unchanging powers of Life and Love and Awe within us, which some of them still call the Soul.

‘Supernatural’ events happening naturally amongst them have always been received in this right and reverent spirit by humble workers of all kinds, and are so to-day, in the happy and unspoiled places, still to be found on our desolated earth. If they present themselves to us under widely different aspects it is perhaps because we live in the breathless centre of what the ‘Daily Telegraph’ calls ‘the most stupendous and magnificent commercial civilisation that the world has yet seen.’

J. A. CAMPBELL.

Haslemere, Surrey.

Truth and Equity.

SIR,—Though primary education and the growth of co-operative industry are doing something for progress, what John Stuart Mill wrote years since may, in the main, be as truly repeated still ; ‘If the bulk of the human race are always to remain, as at present, slaves to toil in which they have no interest, and therefore *feel* no interest ; drudging from early morning till late at night for bare necessities, and with all the intellectual and moral deficiencies which that implies, I know not what there is which should make a person of any capacity of reason concern himself about the destinies of the human race.’

Those who realise the tragedy of the world, the true or inner spirit of life, and, therefore, how beautiful human nature would become under equitable and wise conditions, must intensely rejoice to learn, by a recent number of ‘LIGHT,’ that the National Association of Spiritualists of America have resolved to promote the growth of the reciprocal principle, in harmony with the laws of God.

All honour and success to them in striving to fulfil a duty so momentous to the world—a duty which so much the more pertains to those who know how far-reaching is the sin of preying upon the labour, fruits, and lives of their fellow-beings, as the state of everyone remains the same when he passes from this plane of life.

To the National Association of Spiritualists of America at least it may be desirable to state that the same basic principles of simple, life-guiding Truth which they now avow, are the cardinal ones of a system of Social and Religious Truth, published in 1850, and known as ‘Alpha ; or the First Principle of the Human Mind,’ by Edward N. Dennys. Since its first appearance it has passed through several editions, and received the highest commendations of the keenest intellects of England and America.

In an educational organisation presenting such thoroughness and beneficence to the world, success must depend on the adequate impersonal spirit and far-seeing wisdom of the elders who administer it, combined with the sound apprehension by its members of the only guiding principle and philosophic system of human life and progress. Ever remembering how largely the state of people is the result of the opposite system of society for so long a period, with some consequent weakness even among the most enlightened,

and that the natural law of Evolution insists on human ascent being only won by slowly sure steps, the greatest care has to be exercised between *non-voting* probationary associates and members. The spirit of humility, obedience, and reverence for truth has to be sedulously cultured and exemplified to prevent the fanciful delusions and idiosyncrasies of people from causing them to believe that they have higher enlightenment than they really have! Whilst Communism could not generally succeed on this plane of life, for obvious reasons, its universality of spirit should animate self-reliant co-operative industry and develop its best powers—recompense according to merit being a principle as vital as it is natural to sound progress. With such chief features of action, working for the abolition of oppressive monopolies, so that all have 'equal opportunities,' and at the same time teaching the young and others simply and essentially what their nature is, and therewith their main life purpose, a spiritual republic would gradually arise far away transcending anything the world has yet known.

A. C. SWINTON.

SOCIETY WORK.

SHEPHERDS BUSH SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last, Mr. Adams gave an able address on 'The Witch of Endor.' His logical replies to some questions that were put to him were much appreciated. A large public circle was held at the close of the service. On Sunday next Mr. Bradley will give an address and psychometry.—P.

CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Large audiences attended the services on Sunday last, when the guides of Mr. W. E. Long continued the series of addresses on 'Seers and Prophets.' The morning public circle meets each Sunday at 11 o'clock, the children's school at 3 p.m., and the evening service commences at 6.30 p.m.—W. E. LONG.

33, GROVE-LANE, CAMBERWELL, S.E.—On Sunday last an interesting address was given by Mr. Fawkes from the words: 'What I Know.' He also related his spiritualistic experiences. Mrs. Holgate, under control, gave a short address, and clairvoyant descriptions were given by 'Blue Bell.' Clairvoyance was given at the after circle by Mr. Lovett and a solo by Mrs. Holgate.—F. S. G.

THE LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' CONFERENCE will be held at Henley-street, Battersea Park-road, on Sunday afternoon, December 3rd. The committee appointed at the last Conference will report the progress they have made in their work regarding the amalgamation of London societies, and other important matters will be discussed. Battersea friends will provide tea for visitors. At night several speakers will occupy the platform. We shall be pleased if friends will all do their best to help the work for unity and harmony.—M. CLEGG, Secretary.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—On Sunday last we had a good meeting, Mr. Drake giving a stirring address, followed by able answers to questions. Our Sunday morning discussions are progressing favourably, great interest being manifested in the subjects dealt with. On Sunday, December 3rd, a public discussion at 11.30 a.m. Subject, to be opened by Mr. Laing, 'The Nature of the Christian Belief.' The conference will meet at 3 p.m., and during the evening several friends will address the meeting. On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope meeting. On Thursday, at 8 p.m., a public circle will be held; and on Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., a 'Social Evening' for members and friends. Volunteers are wanted to fill the intervals with songs, recitations, &c. On Thursday, December 7th, Mr. J. J. Morse will give an address for the benefit of our Lyceum.—YULE.

BRITISH SPIRITUALISTS' LYCEUM UNION.—Two propaganda meetings will be held in the Spiritual Church, Heber-street, Keighley, on December 17th, at 2.30 and 6 p.m., when the following well-known workers on the executive committee will deliver brief addresses on the importance of the Lyceum method of tuition: Mr. J. J. Morse, president, London; Mr. John Venables, past president, Walsall; Mr. S. S. Chiswell, Liverpool; Mr. Thomas O. Todd, Sunderland; Mr. A. Wilkinson, Nelson; Mrs. Mary H. Naylor, Middlesbrough; and Mr. A. Kitson, Dewsbury. The Lyceum will hold an open session in the above church at 10 a.m. The Executive will be present and briefly address the Lyceum and parents, who are hereby cordially invited. The Lyceum mode of tuition is founded upon a series of spiritual revelations of the system of education applied by the angel world to children who pass from earth life to the spirit life. Therefore, the movement appeals to all true Spiritualists as being most in harmony with the philosophy and teachings of Spiritualism. Collections in aid of the heavy travelling expenses.—ALFRED KITSON, Secretary, 2 Royd-street, Bromley-road, Hanging Heaton, near Dewsbury.

SHEFFIELD.—Mr. W. J. Colville gave three lectures to large audiences in the Vestry Hall, Attercliffe, Sheffield, on Sunday, November 26th. The morning address was on 'Rational Spiritualism and Universal Religion.' In the afternoon six subjects from the audience were dealt with, and in the evening, 'The Present Crisis: How to Meet It,' was the theme for a fine discourse. Mr. Colville also lectured on Monday, November 27th, at 8 p.m., upon the 'Joys and Sorrows of Satan.'—COR.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—On Sunday, November 19th, we were much pleased with a few words from Mr. James Robertson, of Glasgow, who unexpectedly visited us and was accorded a very hearty welcome. Mrs. Boddington gave a graphic account of her missionary labours at Battersea and elsewhere. Both were much appreciated. On Wednesday, November 22nd, Mr. Bibbings gave a brilliant oration on 'All-Conquering Spiritualism,' in which he pictured it as penetrating the dormitories of effete beliefs and arousing the slumberers by its radiating power. On Sunday last, Mr. Boddington gave us a brief address, which was highly appreciated. By a homely simile he portrayed the operation of spiritual light penetrating the material boundary of the senses and emerging into the spheres of extended vision beyond. Mr. J. A. White gave some most successful clairvoyance, his delineations being surprisingly accurate. On Sunday next, December 3rd, at 7 p.m., an address and clairvoyance by Mr. Alfred Peters, and on Wednesday, December 6th, at 8 p.m., Mr. J. J. Morse will occupy this platform.—J. H.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Mr. Thomas Everitt, the respected President of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, was warmly greeted on Sunday last by a numerous audience, who attentively listened to his address concerning 'Man and his Physical Body.' Mr. Everitt's long and remarkable experience in Spiritualism ever stands him in good stead when he is interesting his hearers with remarks relative to the philosophy of the subject, for by his ready reference to the phenomena observed by him, particularly through the mediumship of Mrs. Everitt (whom we were also delighted to meet again on this occasion), he can effectively illustrate the teachings he so zealously and so carefully propounds. And thus it was on this occasion. Once again our warmest thanks and loving respects go out to our President for his opportune address. Miss Samuel, although suffering from a cold, sang Liddell's setting of 'Abide with Me' with her customary ability, again earning the warm plaudits of the audience. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., 'Tien' will reply to written questions through the mediumship of our distinguished worker, Mr. J. J. Morse.—L. H.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—The lecture by Mr. G. H. Bibbings, on Monday, November 20th, was one of the finest expositions of the Spiritualist's position ever heard from the lips of that gifted medium. Spiritual gifts were shown to be perfectly natural, and it was insisted that their cultivation demanded pure lives and unselfish aspiration. The lecturer made an eloquent appeal to Spiritualists to see that their philosophy and phenomena were presented to the inquiring minds of the age by the best speakers and mediums obtainable; and urged that undeveloped mediums should remain in the 'nursery' until such time as they were able to meet the demands of the intelligent inquirer. The hearty thanks of the society were tendered to Mr. Bibbings for his services on this and previous occasions, and he was assured that in his new sphere of labour at Bootle he would have the best wishes of the Hackney friends. On Sunday last, Mr. D. J. Davis addressed the meeting, pointing out that Spiritualists were people apart—inasmuch as they were the only ones who had definite evidence of the continuity of life through death. He asked that all Spiritualists should bear this in mind and realise that as a body they exist for the purpose of spreading the knowledge of that evidence. Referring to society work, Mr. Davis suggested that each society should have some class or 'circle' to which inquirers could be directed, and at which evidence could be adduced by well-developed mediums. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Neander will address the meeting.—J. K.

A SECESSION.—The 'Light of Truth,' for November 4th, announces that 'The Church of the Soul, Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, pastor, "organised under the Illinois statutes as an independent Church, founded upon certain, expressed, basic principles, and having for its purpose the promulgation of a definite system of religion," has given the National Spiritualists' Federation of America 25dol. and seceded from that body in commendable style, saying that it cannot subordinate itself to any body not representing its principles in their fullest extent.'