

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !"—*Goethe*.

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

NO. 990.—VOL. XIX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1899. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	613	Judge Kindly	619
Music and Painting ..	614	Spirit Identity and the Transvaal	
Good-Bye, Old Year !	616	War. By 'An Old Correspondent'	619
Spiritualism and Witchcraft. By		Some Personal Experiences	620
G. H. Bibbings	617	Society Work	620

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We write these paragraphs within sight of the last day of the year. The true Spiritualist will understand the significance of that day. It is for him a gentle whisper, a tender promise, a beautiful reminder. The years pass: the great hope remains; and 'shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.' The meditation for the day, in that choice little book, 'A Year-book of Good Counsel,' is well worth recalling:—

The pathos of all human beings is their mortality; do what we will, the anguish, the ecstasy, of love cannot make them ours for one single day beyond their appointed time. Of this our hope is born; we know, we feel within ourselves, we shall not wholly die. If earth were the compass of all love there would be no occasion to feign a hell hereafter, for to garner love here to perish with the dust were hell sufficient of itself. The breath of life breathed by God into man, the image of Himself, shall return to Him who gave it. This is the reality; the dress and trappings of mortality shall elude us as a shadow or a perfume; but death has no victory here, dust unto dust, and life unto the God it came from. Another year dies, and if we had not much to regret we should not be mortal; but if it brings us a clearer knowledge of all that cannot die it bears its lesson for us. If we but learn to separate the real from the unreal, to live more and more unto God and less unto the world, the years may run to waste as they may, for death itself shall be a transition rather than a change—the dust shall 'return to the earth and the spirit unto God who gave it.'

Mr. George Redway has just published Mrs. Murray Aynsley's learned and artistic book on 'Symbolism of the East and West.' The subjects dealt with are Sun Worship; Sun and Cup and Moon Symbols; The Svastika; Some connecting links between the TAU of Egypt, the CROSS as a heathen and a Christian Symbol, and the HAMMER of the Scandinavian God THOR; Sacred Stones; Ideas about a Future Life; Sacred Trees; Snake Worship; The Evil Eye; The Wild Huntsman of Northern Europe and his possible Asiatic origin; Architectural customs, &c.

The book contains a considerable number of important illustrations, and is in every respect an inviting one, whether for the specialist or the general reader.

The chapter on 'Some Ideas about a Future Life' is rather meagre, having the appearance of a series of notes or cuttings from a scrap-book. It contains, however, many curious glimpses of popular superstitions in many parts of the world, with a hint as to their similarity that might be usefully followed.

A late number of the 'Literary Guide' contained an amusing bit of criticism of Ingersoll's last poem, by George Jacob Holyoake. Ingersoll professed to be an agnostic,

but, in this poem, he seems to be as sure in his way as Dr. Parker is in his. Ingersoll says:—

When cyclones rend, when lightning blights,
'Tis naught but fate;
There is no god of wrath who strikes
In heartless hate.
Behind the things that injure man
There is no purpose, thought, or plan.

Mr. Holyoake says this will not do:—

The tumult of the skies may be 'naught but fate. That is more than we know. Though it is reasonable to suppose that no God of mercy sets cyclones going or directs the lightning to blight, it is not within the province of an Agnostic to be certain about it. Instead of saying, 'Tis naught but fate,' it would be consistent to say, 'It *seems* naught but fate.' Let us hope that there is no 'God of wrath.' Reason and Morality justify us in thinking so, but not in saying so.

Mr. Holyoake, however, strongly approves the concluding verses. To us they seem rather dreary, though there is a thin ray of hope at the end.

We do not pray, or weep, or wail;
We have no dread,
No fear to pass beyond the veil
That hides the dead.
And yet we question, dream, and guess,
But knowledge we do not possess.

Is there beyond the silent night
An endless day?
Is death a door that leads to light?—
We cannot say.
The tongueless secret locked in fate:
We do not know—we hope and wait.

We do not suggest that cheerlessness disproves a theory, but it certainly does not attract us.

Of course, any book by Lilian Whiting could not help being radiant, poetical and fresh. Her 'Study of Elizabeth Barrett Browning' (London: Gay and Bird) is not an exception. If anything, it is a stronger book than those we are already familiar with,—stronger, that is to say, on the solid ground of criticism and incident; but the criticism is so emotional, and the incident so tenderly gossipy, that it is, above all things, a book for the fireside, or the apple orchard, not for the study;—perhaps a perfect gift for a bright girl, aglow with the sunshine of dawning womanhood. The book contains a curiously vivid portrait.

Dr. Lyman Abbott, one of the shining lights of the United States and a man of extraordinary influence, is credited with every sort of advanced outlook and rational idea, but he is apparently wavering as to man's fate in the vast Unseen. He is not at all sure that God will win in the end, in all cases. He says, acutely enough:—

I know that I can choose the good, and therefore I can choose the evil. What I find true in myself I believe to be true in every other man; he can choose the good, and therefore he can choose the evil. And while I wistfully desire—yea, and sometimes devoutly hope—that when the great drama of life here and hereafter is ended, all God's creatures will have chosen the good—I do not know. If I were a Calvinist, I should be a Universalist. If I believed that God could make all men righteous, I should be sure that He would make all men righteous; otherwise He would

not be a righteous God. But I start from the other pole. I begin with my own absolute freedom. I recognise as a fact, in my life, in my philosophy, and in my preaching, that, in the last analysis, the destiny of every man is in his own hands. Father may persuade, mother may entice, influences may environ, God Himself may surround with all possible persuasions, but, in the last analysis, the destiny of every man is in his own hands. And what he will do with it I do not know.

That is the stumbling block with Dr. Abbott. With him, the ultimate fact in human life is the freedom of the individual will. We, on the other hand, hold that the ultimate fact in all life is the slowly conquering power of the Divine will. Error, folly, passion, uncleanness, wilfulness, will ultimately work their own cure—or destruction. The Universe, after all, is both sane and self-acting; and, picture 'God' as we will, His triumph is sure, simply on evolutionary lines.

'The Amateur Photographer' for December 15th, contained a letter from a practical and professional photographer on Spirit photographs. In this case, the writer professes to sometimes see the faces before they appear on his plates. The accounts he gives are as circumstantial as anything could be. We presume that our newly appointed Spirit-Photograph Committee will take note of his offer to receive communications.

The happy meetings of Christmas and the New Year are beautifully described and used in the following tender little poem by Mary Howe Totten:—

When dear friends, long by distance parted,
Meet once again to count the vanished years,
What joy is theirs, what eager, happy greeting,
What tender laughter, trembling close to tears!
How, stilled at last
The joyous tumult, fondly to the past
Their thoughts are turned; and, deep in converse, they
Sit quiet, while with beaming looks they say,
'Do you remember?'

I think 'twill be so when the morning,
The new world sunrise, melts the mists of this,
And loved, familiar faces throng about us
While we stand rapt and lost in purest bliss.
'What! you are here?
And you, old friend! And you, long lost and dear!'
And turning, radiant as a child at play,
To one and to another we shall say,
'Do you remember?'

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, January 12th, when

THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS

will deliver an Address on

DR. J. GARTH WILKINSON'S 'IMPROVISATIONS FROM THE SPIRIT.'

As the subject of Mr. Page Hopps's address is not likely to elicit a long discussion, the Council of the Alliance will avail themselves of the opportunity to ask the Members and Associates to express their views in regard to any measures which they may think calculated to promote the general interests of our Cause.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—At a meeting of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, held on Wednesday, the 20th inst., six new Members were elected and sixteen Associates. Four resignations were accepted with regret.

'HAZELL'S ANNUAL' for 1900 is a wonderful 'cyclopædic record of men and topics of the day.' It deals with almost everything, and records the events of the year, both at home and abroad, up to, and including, those occurring so recently as December 5th. A very fair article on Spiritualism is a credit to the Annual and should be of service to those of its readers who desire to investigate.

MUSIC AND PAINTING.

MESSAGES GIVEN AUTOMATICALLY THROUGH THE HAND OF
MISS E. KATHERINE BATES, AT BAYREUTH AND FONTAINE-
BLEAU, IN JULY AND AUGUST, 1896.

III.

'PAINTING AND COLOUR.

I am reversing the order because you wished first to hear of Wagner. Therefore we take 3—2—1 instead of 1—2—3, i.e., Sound—Colour—Form.

All these are rates of vibration, as you already know. Form is the outermost and, as you would call it, the lowest rate of vibration. It is the most obvious result (to be quite exact) of the highest form of vibration—the *spoken word*.

Further on (from Form) comes *Colour*, and finally *Sound*.

Let us call these three the Trinity of

} Body—Soul—Spirit
} Form—Colour—Sound

The Impressionist and Realistic schools of painting correspond to those operatic masters who preceded Wagner; and I take Watts as a type of the Wagner in Colour, but a far higher manifestation and personality, for Watts is far more capable of worshipping the ideal for its own sake and not merely for the personal glory accruing to himself from the popularity of his works.

The early painters—the Old Masters—were also idealists, but they were terribly 'cribbed, confined, and confined' by the everlasting necessity imposed by ecclesiastical tradition of painting nothing but historically religious pictures. They had not reached the idea of conveying general spiritual teaching through this symbolism. They painted every incident, historical or traditional, in the lives of the saints; in the life of Christ; of the Blessed Virgin; Madonnas, Annunciations, &c., *ad nauseam*; but they got no further.

Look again at Rubens with his two extremes—the excess of adoration, reverence, and purity in his religious subjects; the extreme of sensuality and sensuousness in his secular ones.

Those who were always pure and reverent in their art, painted only Christs and Madonnas. The two-sided men painted as Rubens did. Later, came *genre* pictures; interiors, domestic scenes, and so forth; some with more, some with less, soul in them, but all concerned with the material side of things—the body of things—the Form.

It was the first step in transferring Form to a more ethereal medium, namely Colour, in the place of plaster and marble.

But until William Blake, a little known and less considered artist, arose with his visions and attempts at depicting spiritual truth through the brush, no pictures of a purely spiritual symbolism had been painted. Visions? Yes; but visions of saints, angels, the Madonna, the Christ—personal *entities*. As, in the case of dramatic musical art, a racial step in evolution is taking place, so Blake inaugurated the same in painting. Watts has followed in his steps in many ways and with far more technical capacity; less of a pure visionary, and therefore more able to form the necessary link for popular perception.

A number of imitators have arisen. Some, without his genius, have merely succeeded in being eccentric where they had hoped to be original. Others, again, have caught something of the true divine fire and conveyed it to their canvasses. But the idea of employing Colour in spiritual symbolism as Form has already been employed, is *en l'air*, and all these attempts have a deep interest on this account.

Leighton, who spent most of his life in worshipping beauty of Form and Colour *per se*, was at last, just before his departure, able to rise to a higher conception of the truth of things. In his later pictures there is a hint of this here and there, notably in the 'Spirit of the Heights.' I do not recall the exact name, but I saw it through your interest in it. Had Leighton lived, he might also have done good work in this almost untrodden field.

Herkomer has also great natural capacity in this line, and might, if he would only let himself go, do some very great and wonderful work for the world; but like the young man in the Bible, he cannot 'sell all that he has' and give to those who are spiritually poorer than himself. To him

has been given the divine power of painting the *soul* of things.

You may see this in many of his portraits. Even in the most apparently common-place people he catches and fixes, again and again, this soul quality which is so rarely seen in the original—only peeping out now and then like a prisoner from behind his bars; yet he makes you feel it is a *truth*, and not merely an ideal of the painter's conception.

With such a gift as this, he might do so much—but alas! there is a cynical, self-conscious side to his genius which always holds him back. And again, the desire for gratifying expensive and eccentric tastes prevents his giving himself wholly to the guidance which would enable him to bring his best powers to fruition. But there is always a chance that some day he may work for the highest, which already he is capable of seeing.

But I am chiefly anxious to impress upon you to-night that, as in musical drama the loves and jealousies and intrigues of the old operas are being replaced by the beautifully symbolic operas of Richard Wagner's selection, so also in painting; the pure historical-Christian, the mere landscape of earth, interior home life of earth, the mere beautiful bodies of men and women of earth, are being replaced by the higher symbolism, through Blake, Watts, *almost* through Leighton, and it might one day be through Herkomer. Other names will suggest themselves to you.

Some of these pictures may be grotesque. I am not speaking of the *technique* but of the symbolism. I hope your friend in Cambridgeshire will be another on the list to use her talents in *Colour* in this way, and help to produce spiritual truth through its almost highest material medium. I say *almost*, because Sound transcends Colour as Colour transcends Form.

Note.—Here I (E. K. B.) asked some explanation of the earlier portion of this paper, and the following sentences were given:—

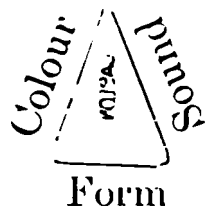
'His sound has gone forth into all the world and His words to the end of the earth.' This typifies Creation—Form.

The creative power is at the highest pitch of vibration, *i.e.*, Sound; but the outermost manifestation of Sound, namely, Form, is at the lowest rate of vibration; higher comes Colour; highest of all, *Sound*; when the outer becomes as the inner and *evolution* gives place to *involution*.

IV.

'FORM IN RELATION TO COLOUR AND SOUND.'

As you are well aware, Form is the base of the triangle the lowest plane of manifestation.



St. Thomas asked to be allowed to put his hands into the Saviour's side, to thrust his fingers into the wounds—to *feel* in order to be convinced.

Form answers to the childhood of the human race. All children and undeveloped beings, savages, &c., *feel* everything by way of testing it. This is the most primitive form of test, and even the most perfect statues are on this primal plane of sense perception. They are made to be *felt*. Of course, as sculptors grew more and more ideal, so they expressed more beautiful and ethereal ideas through the medium of their plastic art; but this is just as a master violinist may produce exquisite music from that which is in itself but a poor instrument.

Sculpture is the most limited in scope of the sister arts because it is the most *terre à terre*.

The exquisite friezes of the Parthenon represent scenes in real life; chariots, horses, processions, fights, hunting scenes, and other purely material matters. The inspiration came, with the marble, from the earth beneath their feet. The beautiful Vatican marbles are generally either what corresponds with portraiture in painting, or at best, an ideal conception of the human form, as in the numerous Venuses, Greek Gods, &c. It is the body, not the soul of things which is generally represented here, although of

course the highest amongst them did not fail to show some glimpses of the soul; but the earthly envelope is the most obvious part of their art.

It was not till later, till the *technical* excellence of sculpture was a thing of the past, that the higher *conception* in sculpture took place. This you will generally find. In a world of the comparative, the limited, as distinguished from the absolute, the unlimited, one excellence is always attained at the expense of some other quality.

Thus when all the care and attention and time are given to the outside of things, you are bound to find some lack within; just as in nine cases out of ten, a perfectly dressed and perfectly 'appointed' woman or man is pretty sure to be lacking in some of the more important qualities—such as brains, intellectual achievements, &c.

The human is always one-sided.

When the exquisite perfection of the human body was in constant contemplation and reproduction by the Greeks, there was little time, little perceptive faculty, left to devote to the far more important, the *only real* part of the human being—namely, the Soul. Therefore, Greek art, with all its pathetic beauty, leaves a feeling of sadness in the heart of the 'sensitive' who gazes at it.

Few understand the reason of this although so many have felt it. All the energy and beauty of execution have been expended on that which perishes. The much less technically gifted modern sculptors have in reality been *in advance* of the Greeks where they have touched upon the eternal verities in their conceptions and ideals.

And here again the link has been made between the pure earthly and the heavenly; but plaster and marble are not the true media for advanced idealism. Something more ethereal must be found and the sculptor must give place to the artist in *Colour*, and he in turn will yield to the artist in *Sound*; for as the Human reaches nearer and nearer to the Divine, comes into greater and greater consciousness of its Divine Birthright, so the sense of touch will yield to the sense of sight and that in turn to the still higher sense of Sound.

A great deal of nonsense has been talked and written about the beauty of *conventional* form, *conventional* flowers in place of natural ones, &c., but the germ of truth at the bottom in this case is simply the idea that the appeal should be less and less to the outer, crude, initial senses, and more and more to the imagination.

This was the primary intention with the masters of conventional art, but their followers have exaggerated without understanding this subtle idea, and so have brought ridicule and discredit upon their various schools.

And now abideth Form, Colour, Sound, these three; but the greatest of these is *Sound*. Form will perish, resolved once more into its primary elements; Colour may be re-absorbed into the Eternal Light; but Sound goes on ceaselessly, wherever there is vibration; which is movement; which is life.

Wagner was truly inspired with his one great idea, namely, that all three sides of the triangle must be completed, and that no true and full representation could take place on earth where

{ Form (Drama)
 Colour (Scenery)
 Sound (Music)

were not found together.

He has presented to the world the prism, the divided rays, the primary colours, the common chord, reduced to its original component parts.

This is truly the 'Lost Chord,' for the real chord is not Sound alone, nor Colour alone, nor Form alone; but the Sum of all these which together make the true music of the Spheres.

MUST HAVE THEIR GRUMBLE.—'Many men and women are positively unhappy unless they find something each day of which they can make complaint. If the sun rises brightly they are sure it will rain before night; if they receive some good news they are positive that bad news will follow within a few hours. If they feel well they decline to admit it, and if they are slightly indisposed they dwell upon their ailments until they make themselves sick in order to be able to continue their complaining. Mental science will do them good.' —'Banner of Light.'

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT, 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30th, 1899.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Office of 'LIGHT,' and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. E. W. Wallis, and should invariably be crossed '—— & Co.'

GOOD-BYE, OLD YEAR!

To one who thinks,—and thought alone causes us to differ from 'the brutes,'—there is something both solemn and touching in the closing of a year. It is so certain that the number of our years is limited, and very limited: it is now so obvious that one more is vanishing; it is so supremely important now that we have not wasted it and can look back not altogether with regret, that a man would be the veriest animal to whom one day would be as another. Besides, there is a strange pathos in this looking back upon a year, as the shrine or the sepulchre of past deeds and hopes, joys and sorrows, longings and loves. In the old year we have our memories, in the new our hopes; in the past there are our garlands or our graves, in the future our cherished dreams. In the quiet that nothing now disturbs, the old year closes upon spent realities and illusions; but still we dream.

To-day we have the added solemnity and sanctity that the year will close with the Sabbath,—to use an old word of special tenderness. On that day we are usually at our best. On that day, whatever is brightest and best in us comes forth to keep Holy Day. It is the day of spiritual recollection and restoration.

The couch of time; care's balm and bay;
The week were dark, but for thy light:
Thy torch doth show the way.

And now, when the last of these days of grace is passing, the devout spirit cannot but feel that a grave chapter of life is being closed—that a very serious thing is happening, and that it is now no light thing to say 'Good-bye' to the Sundays of a year. Such an one will say to himself, 'I have thought and heard enough of good this year to make me all I ought to be. If I had been true to my Sunday thoughts and resolves, if I had carried into active daily life the ideas and feelings of that one day, I should have been far better and happier than I am: and now, the committing these old Sundays to the dying year is like putting into the grave a dear but injured friend.'

We lately drove home the old refrain, 'Christians, awake!' But to-day that cry comes with penetrating power to all. The one fact which underlies the gravest and most touching thoughts of to-day is that so much of life seems to be a mere sleep or dream. The great master said: 'We are such stuff as dreams are made of.' Whether we are so or not, it is true that our real life is spent like a dream, and that the inmost self seems all the time to be half asleep. Judged by the true spiritual standard, the man who, to use the world's phrase, is most wide-awake, who never misses a chance, who never makes a bad bargain or loses a good one, who never passes a pleasure which ingenuity can create or money can buy, may be the least awake, may be very little more than a clever—perhaps a refined and pleasant—beast, wonderfully developed for

getting the most out of the fleshly life, but dead or asleep to all beyond,—who does not hate or revolt against the things of the higher life, but merely ignores them,—simply asleep, or dead. He is passing on into the Unseen, with no more preparation, perhaps with less preparation, than a barbarian or a babe.

This sleep of the soul relates first of all to itself. It is a very common condition. Even where a future life is said to be believed, the believer may be asleep, for an opinion and spiritual consciousness are two very different things: and of spiritual consciousness millions know nothing. They live the outward life, and are under the delusion that this is all. They are little better than the gnats or the butterflies that float in the sunshine: and multitudes do not rise even so high as that, for, even in simple enjoyment, mere existence in the sun, there is something admirable. But many of these sleepers give themselves but little joy. They toil early and late, as though they had a hundred years for hoarding and then a hundred years for enjoyment: they have nothing in common with those who work for the advance of any purely unselfish cause: they treat moral earnestness as fanaticism; or, if they fling the reformer a coin, they do it mainly to get rid of him: they have no faith in this anxiety to make the world so very different. Driven to an extreme, their theory of life is that we are all animals together; and that it is the proper policy of each one to get the largest bone or the most comfortable den. Then, some day, the poor fool's career is stopped, the hot haste is over, the grasping hand is powerless, the game is up, and the stakes become another's. What a programme for a life!

This is the fate of millions. It would be an insupportable sight if we did not firmly believe that on the other side there would be guidance and light. 'Show me a soul,' said one of these wide-awake sleepers to us once, 'Show me a soul. How big is it? Could I get it into my pocket?' Why did he not ask us to show him an ounce of love or life? The effects of life could alone be shown; and the soul can only be known by its manifestations in that sublime world of poetry and aspiration which has little enough to do with the flesh, except to combat it,—a world whence the heroes, the saints and the great world-lovers have come,—a world which has been the salvation of the fleshly world itself, so that even the poor fool who said, 'Show me a soul,' was himself better off, freer even to utter his folly, because of it.

To-day, then, that piercing cry of Paul finds us out, 'Now it is high time to awake out of sleep!' 'High time,' because this sleep is delusive. Men sleep and think they wake, and the years pass, and they are unaware that 'things are not what they seem.' So they pursue shadows and think they are realities, and, like the poor wretch who, on his straw, dreams he is a king, awake only to find they are hungry and miserable and cold. But this sleep is not only delusive, it is dangerous. Our Spiritualism teaches us that there is a truth in that terrible phrase,—'a lost soul': not lost for ever, but still lost. To lose the soul is to neglect it, to let it go starved and blind and dumb,—to laugh at the unseen things, or to ignore them, or trifle with them. To lose the soul is to have the divine leadings of the spirit suppressed in favour of the cravings of the senses,—is to be unprepared for the life that will depend entirely upon the mental and spiritual treasures of the inner self.

These are not entertaining thoughts. We know it. We did not start out to be entertaining. The passing of a year is not altogether entertaining. The ending of the year with the Sabbath's memories rather breeds thoughts 'too deep for tears.' But there is blessing in the pathos: and the pathos rather helps than hinders us in saying to all: GOD BLESS YOU! AND MAKE THIS THAT COMES, A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

SPIRITUALISM AND WITCHCRAFT.

BY MR. G. HORATIO BIBBINGS.

(Continued from page 610.)

In England as in other countries ecclesiastical law claimed cognizance of witchcraft as a crime against God. The Penitentials of Archbishops Theodore and Egbert, and the Confessional of Egbert, are full of condemnations of magic, divinations, diabolical incantations, &c. A distinction more curious than important was drawn between conjurers, witches, and sorcerers.

Conjurers, by force of magic words, endeavoured to raise the devil and compel him to execute their commands.

Witches, by way of friendly conference, bargained with an evil spirit that he should do what they desired of him.

Sorcerers, or charmers, by the use of superstitious forms of words, or by means of images or other representations of persons or things, produced strange effects above the ordinary course of nature.

Legislation on the subject began in the pre-Conquest codes—Ethelred and Canute especially, to wit. At the accession of James I., perhaps in compliment to the King's position as an expert and specialist in the matter, was passed 1 Jac. Cap. 1. Sec. 12, which continued to be the law for more than a century. The following is a section of the Act: 'If any person or persons shall use, practise, or exercise any invocation or conjuration of any evil or wicked spirit, or shall consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward any evil or wicked spirit to or for any intent or purpose, or take up any dead man, woman, or child out of his, her, or their grave, or any other place where the dead body resteth, or the skin, bone, or any part of any dead person, to be employed or used in any manner of witchcraft, sorcery, charm, or enchantment, or shall use, practise, or exercise any witchcraft, charm, enchantment, or sorcery, whereby any person shall be killed, destroyed, wasted, consumed, pined, or lamed in his or her body, or in any part thereof, every such offender is a felon without benefit of clergy.' This Act was repealed under George II., 1736.

In the present state of the law, pretended supernatural powers may be such as to bring those professing them under the criminal law, or to make void a transfer of property caused by a belief in their existence. The Act of 1736 enacted that any person pretending to use witchcraft, tell fortunes, or discover stolen goods, by skill in any occult or crafty science (the craftiness seems to be in the statement more than in the science), was to be imprisoned for a year, to stand in the pillory, and to find sureties for good behaviour. This is still in existence except as to the pillory; and even that exists in another form, seeing that every verdant junior reporter is encouraged to find, in everything connected with the occult, ready game for his embryo humour.

By the Vagrant Act of 1824, 5 Geo. IV., Cap. 83, Sec. 4, any person pretending or professing to tell fortunes or using any subtle craft, means, or device by palmistry or otherwise, to deceive and impose upon any of Her Majesty's subjects, is to be deemed a rogue and vagabond. Under this Act a person may be convicted for attempting to deceive by falsely pretending to have the supernatural faculty of obtaining from invisible agents, and the spirits of the dead, answers, messages, and manifestations of power, viz., noises, raps, and the winding up of a musical box. So may one who issues an advertisement professing to forecast the future, though no money is received and the future of a particular person is not told.

All this seems to me to establish the kinship of the old witchcraft with the Modern Spiritualism. To the 1824 Act which declares 'That a person might be convicted for falsely pretending to have the supernatural faculty of obtaining . . . from the spirits of the dead answers, messages and manifestations of power,' we should take no exception if emphasis were placed upon the adverb 'falsely' and action followed upon proof of mendacious pretence. But, as a matter of fact, the law, or rather its sage administrators, in every case recorded, have ignored 'falsely,' and insisted upon the word 'having.' I may not be a philosopher—nor, probably, shall I ever be considered by a

grateful country sufficiently foolish to join the ranks of an unpaid magistracy, and yet my mind seems to dictate that if a law is directed against *pretence* in some particular department, it immediately presupposes the existence of a healthy, genuine possession, whose interests the law should safeguard. The law does not even now state that persons *having* the supernatural faculty shall be convicted, but persons 'falsely pretending' to have the same. And yet, in cases—recent cases—coming under the notice of the Occultist Defence League, of which Mr. W. T. Stead is the president, occultists have been heavily fined, notwithstanding that the witnesses for the prosecution have testified to the accuracy of the statements made by the defendants. Now, if this happens in the closing decade of this wonderful nineteenth century, when newspapers multiply and indignation meetings can be not only easily organised but also have their resolutions flashed in a few minutes from land to land, we can see how easy a matter it was for the dreadful prosecutions and persecutions of the Middle Ages to go on without either protest or check. In the midst of appalling ignorance, in a time when no authority was recognised save that of monarch and priest, I firmly believe that evidences of the post-mortem life ever and again presented themselves through sensitives, who were as frightened at the phenomena as their companions were terrified and their spiritual masters enraged. Superstition—the normal fear inevitable to such general ignorance—was undoubtedly prolific in its inventiveness. It wrote devil, gnome, sprite, familiar spirit, &c., over everything it could not fathom, and peopled every unfamiliar occurrence with imaginary beings. But after setting aside a most substantial percentage on this account, I nevertheless claim justification in absolute evidence for the statement that

'God sends His teachers unto every age,
To every clime and every race of men.'

The words of Dr. Johnson are helpful when he says: 'That the dead are seen no more I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, amongst whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed.' This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers can very little weaken the general evidence. Again, Draper, in his 'Conflict of Religion and Science,' says (and for this and the preceding extract I am indebted to that sturdy Spiritualist, Mr. James Robertson, of Glasgow): 'That the spirits of the dead revisit the living, has been in all ages and in all European countries a fixed belief, not confined to rustics, but participated in by the intelligent. If human testimony can be of any value there is a body of testimony reaching from the remotest ages to the present time, as extensive and unimpeached as can be found in the support of anything whatever, that these shades of the dead do return.'

Again, in Tylor's 'Primitive Culture,' we read: 'Each man had his "genius natalis" associated with him from birth to death, influencing his action and his fate, standing represented by its proper image as a *lar* among the household gods, and at weddings and joyous times, and especially on the anniversary of the birthday when "genius" and man began their united career, worship was paid with song and dance to the divine image, adorned with garlands, and propitiated with incense and libations of wine. The demon or "genius" was, as it were, the man's companion soul.'

This will, of course, by the uninitiated, be described as witchcraft, but, making the fullest allowance for imagination and pseudo-conceptions, there is scarcely a Spiritualist to-day who would refuse to claim that the sweet 'communion of saints,' the realisation of the protective influence of 'guides,' is no distinct growth of modern acceptance, but rather a continuation and orderly development of a spirit communion known, but mostly feared, right away from man's earliest days in the bourne of Time and Sense.

In 'Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist,' by Richard G. Moulton, M.A., we are told that 'Supernatural agency has a degree of recognition in modern thought, and even Destiny

may still be utilised if it can be stripped of antagonism to the idea of a benevolent Providence. The characteristics which make the ancient conception of Fate dramatically impressive, its irresistibility, its unintelligibility, and its suggestion of personal hostility, he may still insinuate into the working of events; only the destiny must be rationalised—that is, the course of events must at the same time be explicable by natural causes.'

Besides destiny, the Shakesporean drama admits direct supernatural agencies, witches, ghosts, apparitions, as well as portents and violations of natural law. 'It appears to me,' Moulton continues, 'idle to contend that these in Shakespeare are not really supernatural, but must be interpreted as delusions of their victims. There may be single cases, such as the appearance of Banquo to Macbeth, where, as no eye sees it but his own, the apparition may be resolved into an hallucination. But to determine Shakespeare's general practice, it is enough to point to the Ghost in "Hamlet," which, as seen by three persons at once, and on separate occasions, is indisputably objective, and a single instance is sufficient to establish the assumption in the Shakesporean drama of supernatural beings with a real existence. Zeal for Shakespeare's rationality is a main source of the opposite view; but for the assumption of such supernatural existences the responsibility lies, not with Shakespeare but with the opinion of the age he is portraying.'

Again, the Rev. Thiselton Dyer, M.A., says: 'In Shakespeare's day it would seem that the belief in ghosts was specially prevalent, and ghost-tales were told by the firelight in nearly every household.' According to a popular notion, ghosts are generally supposed to assume the exact appearance by which they were usually known when in the material state. Thus Horatio tells Hamlet of 'a figure like your father.'

In the light of this ancient announcement, those who wonder at the statements made by our modern clairvoyants, that spirits present themselves in corduroy or broadcloth according to their earth-life custom, will see a similitude which may serve to lessen the astonishment. I may be told that it is late in the day to tell a London audience that witchcraft and Modern Spiritualism are related. My own opinion (and this audience will, I am sure, charitably regard my boldness), my opinion is that it is too soon and not too late. We are not yet sufficiently far removed from religious disability and coercion. Witchcraft is a horrible word to the crowd still, not because they have studied the record of the past, but because they are prepared, parrot-like, to repeat that which others have blindly determined upon. I yield to no man in my anxiety not to foist upon this century the crudities and superstitions of its predecessors. I burn with desire to overcome the influence of supernaturalism, and to demonstrate most clearly that psychic and physical phenomena have their chiefest virtue in their naturalism. But the accomplishment of all this is not made more possible or probable by refusing to sort important facts from accumulations of partly superstition and partly facts. This much I do know, this much is certain: Modern Spiritualism, defying the onslaughts of its stoutest foes, has, in about fifty years, become almost an universal organisation. Its advent seemed well-timed. Just when ecclesiastical power began to wane, just when the judges of the land refused to work the great machinery of the law in the interests of the persecutors of old women and helpless maidens, then Modern Spiritualism, in what to me seems to have been the fulness of time, made its appearance as a cloud, tiny and insignificant, but a cloud full of promise to humanity. The past, ever a faithful teacher, came to the assistance of its modern successor, and seemed to call with clarion voice 'Order! Order!' The disorderly, haphazard records of witchcraft must be changed into the orderly and code-governed Modern Spiritualism. The evil eye, as such, may never have existed, but modern legislation against the abuse of hypnotic power points to the existence of the same power, recognised by our forefathers, but wrongly denominated. The haunted house and ghostly apparition of the past fall into orderly sequence in the facts of to day's clairvoyant revelations or materialised forms; and, whilst with H. W. Longfellow we declare that: 'All houses wherein

men have lived and died are haunted houses,' we also extract the sting of fear which terrorised our forefathers, by encouraging the ghostly visitants not only to come but to enter into orderly communications by a simple but effective code. We discount the charms of a suicide's finger for the healing of disease, or the virtues of a serpent's tooth, or dragon's blood, or eye of a toad, but rescuing facts from beneath the *débris* of superstition, we place the healer's art upon a higher platform; we suggest mental and other conditions, whose sweet reasonableness commends them to the thinkers; and thus we re-establish the healer's art to the strength of which hundreds of erstwhile sufferers gladly bear testimony. Where disorderly witchcraft wrote 'divination' we now write 'psychometry,' and the strange phenomena that gained for so many poor creatures a bath in the village pond, or a rough time at the pillory, or death at the stake, are now pleasurably regarded as physical phenomena through sensitive mediums, who are hailed as benefactors by all save the religious bigot or the pseudo-scientist. The hands of the clock can never be put back. Our riches can only consist of what we have—really have. The greatest difficulty within the movement of Modern Spiritualism is to eliminate the crank, and reduce superstition to a very minimum. We can always afford to allow critics to denounce our facts as witchcraft, so long as we do our level best to establish and maintain a pure standard of intelligent and orderly phenomena. Cranks curse any movement, but they seem to multiply within our borders. Some announce divine revelations handing over to them the sole control of the weather; others have angel guides who can hypnotise even the horses upon the street. My greatest wonder is that the horses are not spared and the experiments made upon donkeys instead. In that case the crank would certainly be hypnotised into a very prolonged silence. Some, full of spirits, whose brand I know not, seem to be perpetually on the shiver and shake and gasp. You walk with them along the street and they bring themselves up with a sudden bang as if struck by a strolling meteor. In alarm you turn to ask what is the matter, and they look at you pityingly, and say reprovingly, 'Why! it's nothing, 'tis only the spirits!' Out of my love for intelligent Spiritualism, I repudiate these parodies, these horrid mimics. Spiritualism will revive the worst features of witchcraft unless the wise Spiritualist will insist upon controlling all spirits, both in and out of the physical body, who seem to be full up of foolish pretence.

Government, good government, will command attention to our claims. As yet we have hold of only the very fringe of the garment. But our work is important. Be it ours to accept its responsibilities. There will be for us, perhaps, at present, more combat than peace. Our especial work seems to lie in the direction of the establishment of order, of methods, of classification and systemisation. Our children in distant years will enjoy a pure Spiritualism—an intelligent Spiritualism—a Spiritualism wherein are no lingering forms or ceremonies of superstition and foolishness. Sturdy men and women in this century have toiled for us. From the battlements of Eternity they regard us to-night. Hail Brethren! across the ocean of never-ending life we give you praise. Your prophetic mantle is upon us; the fever of your enthusiasm surges in our veins. It was yours to point the way, it is ours to follow right along. Fact must win, *shall* win. We accept the sceptic's challenge. Ring it out, 'We fight to win!'

'So let it be; in God's own might
We gird us for the coming fight;
And strong in Him whose cause is ours,
In conflict with unholy powers,
We grasp the weapons He has given—
The Light, the Truth, the Love of Heaven.'

The address concluded amid hearty applause, and a cordial vote of thanks was passed to the lecturer.

PROGRESS IN LONDON.—In an interesting letter in the 'Banner of Light' for December 9th, Mr. W. J. Colville says: 'Every phase of Spiritualism, Theosophy, Mental Science and Occultism is attracting great attention in London at present, and I am glad to find that public opinion in England is rapidly becoming reasonable and friendly to all phases of psychical investigation.'

JUDGE KINDLY.

At this season of the year, when sweet reasonableness and good-will are in the air and the rugged asperities of daily life are toned down by the genial spirit of brotherly love, when feuds are, or should be, forgotten, and forgiveness and friendship prevail, the following extracts from a wise and weighty article by the Rev. Geo. H. Hepworth, of New York, will be especially appropriate and helpful. Mr. Hepworth says:—

‘One of the most important accessories to human happiness is to be found in a charitable judgment of those with whom you are brought into contact. To be kindly rather than harsh in criticism is an imperative duty which we most easily neglect. Charity may seem to be an insignificant virtue, but it is very wide in its results, and has a great deal to do with making your life sweet, fragrant and smooth.

‘The habit of finding a good motive wherever it is possible to do so is one of the noblest peculiarities of a true soul, and the habit of attributing a bad motive, or of searching for a bad motive, or of suspecting that an ordinary act may have a bad motive behind it, is just as discordant with the nature of things as a false note in an orchestra.

‘It is so much better to look on the bright side that I am inclined to say you cannot live a beautiful life without doing so. The most hateful and exasperating thing I know of is the tendency to see evil where you may just as well see good. Its effect on yourself is spiritually depressing, and its effect on others is disastrous. To cultivate suspicion is to force the heart, the affections, to take slow poison. You can find no happiness in it, and you loosen the golden bonds of friendship, for the everlasting law is that what you give to others you get for yourself.

‘It is impossible to love and trust without being loved and trusted in return. Cause and effect are no more sure than this statement of fact. It is equally impossible to distrust without being distrusted yourself. I would rather be disappointed nine times out of ten than to lack confidence in my friends the whole ten times.

‘In the first place, it is unchristian to judge people harshly. There is religion in confidence, but none in suspicion. I do not care what your creed is, or how earnest you are in your aspirations, or how diligent you may be in the performance of your duties—if you are a fault finder, or if you seek for the faults rather than for the virtues of your neighbours, you are as far removed from true religion as the stars are from the earth.

‘In the second place, you cannot afford to condemn, for the reactive influence on your own soul is as unfortunate as it is powerful. To cultivate the spirit of criticism is to discourage the upward tendency of mankind. To denounce a sinner is to give him a push along the downward path. He needs a helping hand instead of a curse. That is what God gives him, and that is what Christ has promised him. Are you greater than they, that you dare to refuse it? To habitually attribute an evil motive where perhaps no such motive exists is a crime against the mercy of Heaven and an extinction of that love which we are required to have for the whole earth.

‘In the third place, we are largely the result of circumstance and environment. I do not know what I should have been had I been born in different surroundings. When I see what temptations beset half the world I wonder that they are as good as they are. I do not blame as much as I pity. It is possible that if I had been rocked in another cradle and had been nursed in another mother’s arms I should not be what I am now. Temptations are strong and the power of resistance is weak. Let us take no pride to ourselves because we stand on a high level, but, on the contrary, let us be profoundly grateful that the right influences were round about us in our early days. We might be where they are who are in the depths if fortunate circumstances had not come our way.

‘Two duties lie before us—to be generous in our judgment of our friends, and to be kindly and helpful to all the world. Herein we find a hard task, but it is a task on which the growth of the soul depends. Look for the good side in

the character of your neighbours, and as far as possible make excuse for their weaknesses. Cultivate a spirit of love, judge gently rather than harshly, make the kindness of your own soul felt by all, and you will soon discover that you have entered upon a new and higher life. As to this seething world, which throbs with sorrow and guilt and remorse, be a noble influence, give of word and thought and deed into the great treasury of virtue, and so spend your days that no one of them will accuse you of neglect. That is the holy life to live, the only true life, the only Christian life.’

SPIRIT IDENTITY; AND THE TRANSVAAL WAR.

BY ‘AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.’

It is with considerable hesitation that I pen these lines. But there is an ‘inner consciousness’ which impels me to do so, and therefore, in the interests of the living and the dead, I deem it advisable to state that some of the gallant soldiers who have just fought and died for their country in the present bloody war have already appeared to my clairvoyante relative, and that their portraits, which have appeared in the public prints, have been recently identified by her. The cause of their reappearance on the scene is easily explained (to me at least) by the fact that in 1892 a series of sittings took place in my family circle, with the addition of a valued friend, a gallant officer in the — Highlanders. The result was a series of written communications received from about twenty of his former comrades in arms, and friends in other regiments, all of whom had passed on. These messages all disclosed identity and personality. A portrait of each communicator was got, and in every instance the face was identified under test conditions. Nothing in my long experience of automatic writing has exceeded the interest possessed by these communications, while their value as conclusive evidence of spirit return can hardly be over-estimated. On every subsequent occasion since 1892 when our military friend returned to this country and had a séance with us, several of his comrades ‘on the other side’ reappeared to the clairvoyante, and either wrote messages disclosing identity or verbally gave to her specific details of their earthly career which enabled me to verify the messages. The leading communicator of the whole circle was Lieut.-Colonel B., who was killed in one of our sanguinary battles in India, and under whom our military friend had served with much distinction for several years. In this way the ‘door was opened’ to the receipt of messages from military men who had been killed in fighting for the Crown in our colonies and dependencies during the last two decades. For the information of the Editor of ‘LIGHT,’ and in case of any inquiries as the result of this article, I have forwarded a list of the names of these officers who communicated with us in 1892, and other details which can be readily supplemented, if desired, by anyone having an interest; while at the same time I do not wish in any way to gratify the idle curiosity of outsiders.

Now, with the advent of the present crisis in South Africa, where the — Highlanders have again played a noble part and lost many gallant men, there has been a recrudescence of visits to the clairvoyante by officers who have recently passed on in some of the battles in Natal and Cape Colony. Last night, December 14th, the clairvoyante informs me, she was visited by Lieut.-Colonel B., who was accompanied by two officers of the — Highlanders recently killed. They gave their names and other details, and their portraits have since been identified, one from ‘Black and White,’ and the other from an evening paper; in both instances under test conditions. I enclose the names of these two officers, and it is my intention as each successive spiritual visitor reappears on the scene to forward the names to the Editor of ‘LIGHT.’ I do this simply because it may be that some bereaved relatives may be amongst your readers and may derive comfort from the knowledge that those they have loved and lost under such distressing circumstances have been able to come back and demonstrate their continued sentient existence after their mortal remains have

been buried on the blood-stained fields of Natal and Cape Colony. It is quite possible that the course now adopted may be open to criticism, and it may be that the scoffer and the sceptic may have 'cause to blaspheme' and say the whole thing is imposture; but in my humble judgment, if one solitary bereaved soul can get even a ray of comfort from any psychic gifts existing in this household we shall be amply repaid. It was Byron, I think, who, in the following words, sadly gave expression to the agnostic view of death which often recurs to many a sorrowing and doubting soul:—

'He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death has fled,
The first dark day of *nothingness*,
The last of danger and distress.'

To us Spiritualists there is no 'first dark day of nothingness,' but a bright noontide of welcome 'on the other shore' from our loved ones who are waiting for us, and where the Almighty, by His spiritual agents there, shall surely 'wipe away all tears from our eyes,' and where certainly the 'rough places shall be made smooth' and the 'crooked paths straight' to us for evermore.

SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

Psychic experiences are generally interesting; indeed, if we are ever to have a philosophy of life worth the name it will have to be based upon, and explain, the striking and strange phenomena, the many isolated and fugitive incidents, which, by themselves, are merely 'curious,' but which, when co-ordinated (as they will be some day), are extremely valuable. We are therefore glad to have been favoured by a valued correspondent in South Africa with the following details of her early clairvoyant experiences:—

My parents resided in London, and at the age of four I was sent to live with an old couple at a little village school near Nottingham. The name of the village was Holme Lane. How well I remember it all! The school house consisted of five rooms, two on the ground floor, and it is only with the common or living room—'the house' as the country people called it—that my story has to do. This room had two windows, one facing the front garden and the high road, and the other exactly opposite, looking into the back yard and fields; the back door, which was the one in common use, was beside this window. These windows were so placed that anyone outside in the garden could see right through. One day, when I was about six years of age, the old schoolmistress had gone into the market in Nottingham, and I was left in the old schoolmaster's charge. During the afternoon he went into his brother's house, which was separated from ours by a hedge and some ground. He left me with strict injunctions that I was not to go away. For some time I played by the back door, then I went into the front garden and climbing on the garden gate I looked through the 'house' windows, and there, standing leaning on the table and looking out of the back window, stood the old man! Child as I was I knew it could not possibly be he himself, and indeed he came in some time afterwards, passing me at the gate. I remember how frightened I felt and how I stood at the gate waiting for him to come, for I dared not go into the house alone. He died while I lived at the school house, but I could not say how long after my vision of him. At that time I believe he was in good health. I can see it all so plainly even now, just as I saw him stand there, the very attitude, the white linen jacket as it fell open as he leaned forward. It was many years before I spoke of this to any one; I was always afraid. Sensitive children keep many things and ponder over them in secret.

My next experience was when a girl about fourteen or so, my parents having removed to a large old house in Hackney. My room was a long attic at the very top of the house. Here I would often sit alone reading—I was at that time reading Scott's novels and a few of Dickens' works. I do not think they could be called morbid at all. I would become so absorbed in my book as to be quite unconscious of external affairs, yet there was one sound which never failed to rouse me, no matter how deep I might be in my

book; and that sound was that of the ticking of a watch—but not of an ordinary watch. You will know the difference of sound between the tick of a *watch* and the tick of a *clock*. Well, this tick was distinctly a *watch* tick but as loud as the tick of a clock. I always felt very nervous as soon as I heard it. Sometimes it would waken me in the night. But I heard it at all times, night or day, alone or in company. I once had one of our servants to sleep with me and I would sometimes say, 'Now listen, don't you hear it? You must hear it.' But she always said she heard nothing. It made no difference whether my watch was in the room or not, and there was no clock at all on the top storey of the house.

I told this story to a friend, and *after, not before*, we left the house, she told me the story of a murder which had been committed there by a boy who was jealous of his brother, who had received a *watch* from the grandfather. She also told me that former tenants had also heard noises. I knew absolutely nothing of this while we occupied the house in question. I was also very shy of speaking of the occurrences to anyone at the time. In after years, when I did mention them to my husband and one or two friends, I was told it was 'fancy,' 'optical illusion,' &c., none of which explanations ever satisfied me. Of course the sight of the old schoolmaster *might* have been so, but I don't believe it was. And the 'ticks,' is it possible for 'fancy' to disturb a girl time after time when deeply interested in reading, or when sound asleep? On the other hand, why did such useless and silly manifestations come to disturb me, supposing them to be the work of external influences?

SOCIETY WORK.

SHEPHERDS BUSH SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Boddington, of Battersea Society, will deliver an address, and a public circle will be held at the close of the meeting.—J.C.

WEST CROYDON.—On Sunday next, December 31st, Mr. E. W. Wallis will deliver a trance address in Dennett Hall, Dennett-road, Broad Green, West Croydon, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. Bullock in the chair. The subject of the address will be: 'The Real Gospel: What is it?' All Spiritualists and truth-seekers invited.—E. B.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—On Sunday next, December 31st, at 11.30 a.m., a public discussion will take place; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., the usual workers will conduct the service, to be followed by a Watch Night service. Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope; Thursday, at 8 p.m., public circle; Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.—YULE.

THE LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' CONFERENCE will be held at the Temperance Hall, White Post-lane, Manor Park, on Sunday, January 7th, 1900, at 3 p.m., when the report of the committee appointed by the November conference will be presented. Whilst visitors are cordially invited, and can enter into the discussion, only delegates can vote on this one question. Weather permitting, an open-air meeting will be held at the Fountain, at the corner of White Post-lane, as near 11 a.m. as possible. Tea will be provided by the Manor Park friends after the conference, at 6d. per head. Several speakers will occupy the platform at the evening meeting. The Martin-street String Band will be in attendance at the afternoon conference meeting.—M. CLEGG, Secretary.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESEADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—The concert on Wednesday, December 27th, surpassed all anticipations. Its success was due to the following accomplished artistes who generously contributed to the programme: Masters F. and C. Cattell, Mr. A. J. Cash, Miss Nellie Hauser, Madame Amy Rowbotham, Mr. R. J. Markham, Miss Kathleen M. Tempest, Miss L. Firth, Madame Nellie Cope, Messrs. P. Packman, J. Sharp, Ernest Cherry, Rowbotham, Clark, Chidley, and Colman, and Miss Florence Morse. Great credit is due to Mr. A. J. Cash for so efficiently organising this pleasing function. On Sunday last we were favoured by the controls of Mr. J. J. Morse with an address of great interest and power on three subjects chosen by the audience. A paragraph report is inadequate to do justice to such an address; everyone should make an effort to hear Mr. Morse when next he visits Stoke Newington. On Sunday next, 31st inst., at 7 p.m., clairvoyance will be given by Mr. J. A. White. The Lyceum will meet at 3 p.m. A circle will be held at 51, Bouverie-road, on Thursday, at 8 p.m.; medium, Mrs. Graddon.—Miss JOHNSTON, 81, Dunsmure-road, N., Hon. Sec.