

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATEVER DOTTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

No. 1,043.—VOL. XXI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1901. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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'LIGHT' AND THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

We beg to remind the Subscribers to 'Light,' and the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1901, which are payable *in advance*, that they should forward remittances at once to Mr. E. W. Wallis, 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Their kind attention to this matter will save much trouble in sending out accounts, booking, postage, &c.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have just read with true delight a pamphlet entitled 'A message from the old to the new century.' It is what it professes to be, and is a radiantly beautiful ideal of the Religion of Humanity. No author's name is given, but an advertisement at the back of the title states that copies will be sent post free, by Mr. John Freeman, 81, Wellesley-road, Croydon, for one penny each, or twelve for ninepence.

Mr. W. S. Berger, writing in 'The Suggester and Thinker,' is really suggestive and thoughtful. He and his friends enjoy 'spirit rapping' (O, happy mortals!) and get books full of messages. He gives a late specimen. Instead of choosing something conventionally pretty or elevated, he very usefully sends the following:—

I do not want to embellish or give you the cream of the communications that have been received, but will start right off and give you a message which is somewhat out of the ordinary, we having never previously received its equal. The message referred to is without varnish and veneer but at the same time it elucidates the fact that the departed have not forgotten the language of him who is considered lower down in the scale of being.

Mr. Berger gives specimens of the coarse and vulgar messages received, and then continues:—

Upon receiving this polite reply we immediately suggested that this spirit leave at once and return no more, as we did not care to communicate with one who had no respect. I also sharply said, 'We will get rid of you.' Answer: 'No, you won't, for I am here to stay, you miser.' Now upon receiving this I advised breaking up the séance for a short while, which was done, and we then went into an adjoining room for a chat, being absent about fifteen minutes.

We then resumed operation, thinking the spirit would return no more, but behold, the instant we touched the table the spirit rapped: 'You are all a pack of suckers,' and then the meeting terminated. This meeting did not occur at our regular quarters, but at another house where several ladies were present. Each and every one were shocked at the tone of the messages.

As a test, this is excellent. Thought-transference and suggestion seem excluded. But why this anxiety to get rid of so very real a person? Of course one would not care to

make of such a being a friend or a visitor: but, as a subject for experiment, he looks useful. Why not use him?

Perhaps 'Things to Come' will now understand why we do not seek or receive spirit messages as 'revelations' of assured and infallible truth.

Henry Gaze, Oakland, California, has started a 'Post Card Journal. A journal of bright suggestion,'—a clever and novel notion. He advocates conquering death by constant renewal of life here; and two of his methods are the cultivation of mental sunshine and the joyous habit of mental freedom. Whatever may be thought of the object, the methods are right enough. The following paragraphs can only do good. Whether they will serve to keep anyone from dying will be a matter of experiment. It is worth trying, any way:—

Every man and woman in the world should seek to become the very embodiment of sunshine. Give your body a chance to receive the vital rays of the sun, for it shines not merely on the outside, but reaches the most internal organs. This is even more true of your mental sun. Learn to think of your mind as a veritable sun, and every thought one of its glorious rays. The Sunny Mind radiates its quickening power to every atom in the being. Don't hide this sun behind a cloud of imaginary trouble. Let your light shine.

You must generate live thought if you want a live body. There is no purity but Truth. You cannot be a follower of Truth, unless your mind is open to change. The only unchangeable mind is a dead one. He who changes his mind least, dies soonest. Thought sculpts the flesh. Old thought produces old bodies. New and vitalising thought is essential to continual youthfulness.

'The Theosophical Review' for December shows a good deal of enterprise, and its clever editors, sparing of the scissors, have brought together a good assortment of acute and original work. On page 291 we notice a curious repudiation of the word 'astral':—

There are many terms current among theosophical writers which could easily be improved; of these we will instance only one, and from one we can learn to estimate the value of the rest. The term 'astral' is a literary abomination. It has no *raison d'être*; it is a mediæval invention tangled up with the misunderstood tradition of astrology. It has a precise meaning, you will say, and we must be precise in these scientific days. It *had* a precise meaning in the days of Paracelsus, for it designated the subtle envelope influenced by the stars. But nowadays there are thousands of people who accept the idea of the 'astral body,' but who are not prepared to ascribe any validity to the 'science of the stars.' They may be right or they may be wrong in their rejection of the claims of astrology, but it is unwise to tie round the neck of the doctrine of a psychic envelope in man what the majority regard as the millstone of astrology; and this is practically what is done by labelling it 'astral.'

This noticeable admission concerning the bankruptcy of theosophical terms may usefully be taken with a remark on the last page:—

In England the tendency of the leaders of *our* thought is to recognise how many difficulties remain still unsolved in what we thought—ten or twenty years ago—that we entirely understood.

Our regard and confidence increase in proportion as that is anywhere true. Nothing is so certain as our ignorance,

—unless it is the hopeless folly of imagining that we know all about anything. All things are possible, but no thing can be absolutely known. Some Psychical Researchers and many Theosophists have long needed that bit of practical wisdom.

'Christ in London,' by the Rev. R. C. Fillingham (Watts and Co.) is, of course, exaggerated—Mr. Fillingham strongly underscores everything he says and does—but it is a terribly fascinating work; and we are bound to say that, behind its exaggerations, there are keen thrusts of truth. It is good for us all to have our present notions and performances tested in the light which Christ might bring with him if he came.

Christ is represented as selecting the very poor cottage of a discarded schoolmaster for his residence while on his earthly mission. When he departs, he and the poor old schoolmaster are alone: and these are almost the last words in the book:—

Lord, I have seen the vision of Divine beauty; cannot I come with Thee now? It will be lonely when Thy presence is withdrawn, the schoolmaster said.

All life is loneliness, and no casting off of the fetters of the body even can make those who exist truly free, the Lord replied; but for thee work remains to be done on earth before thou again comest into my presence. Work, by the force of a beautiful example; work, by telling men to strive and be free; work, by telling men to fear no advance of knowledge, to shrink never from pursuing what may be the truth, since all truth comes from God. Work and wait, till the natural end, the final falling asleep of weary flesh, break down the barriers that must sunder us again for awhile. I go to prepare a place for thee.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.—Occasionally, 'The Express' (a London halfpenny shoeker) allows an ethical person a turn. Here is one of his latest, on education and the School Board:—

The Board is responsible not only for the education of the children committed to its care, but also for the training of these children as the citizens of the next generation. It has not only got to see that the elements of education have been duly imparted to them, it has to see that the good in them is duly brought out, and the evil duly repressed. It has got to make them truthful, honourable, courteous, cleanly-spoken, and of proper courage.

If it cannot do this it is no use doing the other. In fact, it would be very much better that the other should not be done at all, for, of all the bad citizens that ever were, the half-educated Hooligan is the worst. He is a liar and a thief, a coward and a bully.

Truth and honour, courtesy and clean speech, are a million times more important to the future citizen of the world than all the 'extra subjects' that educational faddists ever thought of. If we cannot have these taught, and taught thoroughly, then, in the name of good morals and common-sense, let us abolish the Board, dismiss the teachers, close the schools, and keep our millions in our pockets.

We have for many years advocated this as our ideal of real religious education.

'The Open Court,' for December, is even richer than usual in its illustrations of classical and early Christian subjects. The essay by the Editor on Greek Religion and Mythology, and the Review, also by the Editor, of Mr. Seymour's book on 'The Cross in Tradition, History, and Art,' are most interesting. The translation of a long passage from the Odyssey, describing Odysseus's adventures in the underworld, is fascinating in its very horribleness, but it only reminds us once more how far we have gone from the old Greek notions of the dead and their world.

A SPIRITUALIST, who has just moved to Poplar, would like to meet with a few ladies and gentlemen in order to form a 'circle' there. He can be addressed E., c/o the Editor of 'LIGHT.'

DO CLAIRVOYANTS SEE SPIRITS?

FROM 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

I am convinced from long experience that clairvoyants do see 'spirit entities,' and often converse with them; also that these spirit entities inform the sensitives with whom they come into *rappor*t of events and matters utterly unknown to the mediums, and which are often fully verified. This has happened in my experience scores of times. Let me give a few instances:—

1. At a séance in my house five or six years ago, two clairvoyants were present. One of them, a gentleman, said to me: 'I see here a young girl near you with very red cheeks, and she is far gone about the chest.' Simultaneously the other clairvoyant said to us: 'Lizzie B. is here.' Now, Lizzie B. had died at sea about six months previously. She had, when on earth, very red cheeks, and was 'far gone about the chest.' The male clairvoyant never knew her in earth life; the female clairvoyant had known her well, yet both recognised her at the same instant of time. I cannot doubt that it was Lizzie B., a spirit entity, who appeared, more especially as she has since that time written me two messages, clearly (by internal evidence) disclosing identity.

2. My clairvoyant relative was accosted in the street by a spiritual person with a venerable face, who gave his name and designation and the place where his remains were interred. She informed me that he wore a top-coat with Astrachan fur collar. With a great deal of trouble I found a portrait in a back number of the 'Graphic,' and which appeared at the date of his demise, a great many years ago. The portrait represented him as wearing a top-coat with an Astrachan fur collar, and was identified by the medium under test conditions. All other details were verified, and later on this same person controlled the medium, and wrote me a message having a distinct bearing on his first appearance, and full details of his earthly career, all of which, after some research, I verified *in omnibus*.

3. As showing what one may term the 'physical effect' which the sudden 'inrush' of a spirit entity has on a clairvoyant, I instance the following: Five years ago my clairvoyant relative and self were walking through a pine-wood, during the holidays, near L—, where there was a large militia encampment, when she suddenly started back, grew as 'white as a sheet,' and seemed likely to faint. In a moment she recovered, and smilingly said, 'That was Colonel B.' (a spirit entity who often 'came about her' at that time), 'and,' she said, 'he came out from behind a tree rather suddenly, and asked me to walk round the camp with him, and he would tell me all about the soldiers.' The sudden 'irruption' of this spirit entity, and its effect on the physical organisation of the medium, were to me one of the best evidences of spirit return ever witnessed.

4. Yet another incident I give. At a sitting at my house ten years ago the male and female clairvoyants above-mentioned were both present. The male sensitive said: 'I see a hand on the table and the middle finger has been diseased and been operated on.' At the same moment the lady clairvoyant said: 'Grandpa is here and his hand is on the table.' Now the grandpa in question had had an operation on his middle finger several years before the clairvoyant was born. She did not know of it, as all traces of the operation were gone and there was nothing particularly distinctive about the finger unless closely examined; and yet the hand and its former condition were seen by a male sensitive who never saw or heard of 'grandpa,' and simultaneously the whole body of this person was visible to the lady clairvoyant, who also saw the hand on the table.

These are only a few of the many instances coming under my observation, but I conclude with one which was to me one of the most striking experiences of spirit identity I ever had.

5. About seven years ago a message was written through the hand of my clairvoyant relative from a Major H. G. B., killed at Tel-el-Kebir. Certain details were to me very improbable; but the message was ultimately verified *in omnibus*. After a search I found a photo of the major, reproduced in the 'Illustrated News' of the date of his death in action, and took the clairvoyant to the library where the volume was

kept. She had never been there before. There were three portraits alongside, and the three names were covered by me. It was almost dusk at the time; but the clairvoyant at once said, 'That is Major B., but I don't see the dimple on his chin.' At this moment the electric light was turned on in the room, and sure enough the dimple was very plainly discernible. Comment seems superfluous.

I refrain from saying more as it will be better if other and similar experiences are forthcoming from some of your readers. My conviction simply is that at 'passing on' the spirit body is the counterpart of the physical; and that the soul is what has 'pervaded' or 'inhabited' the earthly tenement and goes into the unseen unchanged, *there*—if it has been pure and good *here*—to enter upon a period of unending spiritual effort and enjoyment; or, if it has been low, sordid, or wicked *here*, then to enter *there* on probation longer or shorter according to its condition or aspirations after 'better things.'

MRS. BATHE'S MEETINGS FOR INQUIRERS.

Owing to the success which has attended my social meetings for spiritualistic investigation by inquirers, I have decided to hold another series, during which Mr. Robert King will again most kindly undertake to answer questions of psychic interest, and Mr. Vango will continue to be the medium for clairvoyance.

The dates now fixed for my 'At Homes' are Tuesdays, January 15th and 29th; February 12th and 26th, at 8 p.m.; and it will give me the sincerest pleasure to receive again any of my former guests, without special invitation. Any others (introduced by friends or from 'LIGHT' office) who wish to attend, should in writing to me for a card of invitation, *without fail enclose a stamped and addressed envelope* to minimise as far as possible what must inevitably be a heavy correspondence.

I propose slightly altering the arrangements, the better to meet individual requirements; therefore, in future the séance will commence at 8.30 p.m., in one room, and at that hour in another room Mr. King will conduct the share of the work he has undertaken. Thus those who are most anxious for discussion and advanced psychic teaching can devote all the time to that branch of spiritualistic investigation; and those by whom the mediumship is most desired will be enabled to sit longer, and under more restful conditions, than is possible when the séance commences later. Tea will be served at 10 o'clock.

All the 'At Homes' have been so well attended and so much kindly sympathy has been expressed by many, who not only come again but bring friends with them, that I feel thereby encouraged to continue a work that appears to be so greatly needed and which to me is veritably a labour of love.

Hurstborne Lodge,
Ashchurch Park Villas,
Goldhawk Road, W.

EFFIE BATHE.

'LEST WE FORGET.'

The thrilling and striking story of the world's progress, of its revolutions and evolutions during the wonderful nineteenth century, is clearly and cleverly told in the 'Review of Reviews Annual' for 1901, entitled "'Lest we Forget," a Keepsake from the Nineteenth Century.' It is an attractive summary of the most marked characteristics, events, and personalities of the past hundred years, and it is illustrated with over two hundred and fifty portraits and maps. The splendid achievements of the thinkers and workers who have demonstrated the monarchy of mind, and have contributed to the 'stream of tendency which makes for righteousness,' are well and sympathetically treated. The developments which have been going on in national as well as individual life, that have tended to broaden and purify thought, to deepen and intensify the love of liberty, and, in spite of some discouraging signs and circumstances, to make for brotherhood, fellowship, culture and spiritual unfoldment, are clearly presented; not with the mere detail of the historian or the fact gatherer, but with the verve and charm of the witness and participant whose progressive humanitarian spirit is alive to, and on the watch for, the signs of advancement as the result of the transforming influences of the dominant ideas of the age.

'A SEA ROMANCE.'

The 'Daily Telegraph,' for December 18th, published the following account of a curious experience which befell Johannsen and his son, while on the high seas. It does not seem to have occurred, either to them, or to the correspondent who is responsible for the story, that there was anything '*uncanny*' about the sudden appearance and disappearance of the four mysterious strangers. And yet, the supposition that they were 'smugglers' who had contrived, after a long swim in a stormy sea, to board a small craft unperceived, and to have repeated the feat on the following day, with apparently no object in doing so, seems an absurdly improbable explanation.

We are told, too, that one of the strangers had an '*iron foot*,' and it is difficult to understand how he could have managed to swim at all. The story, if true, is a strange one, and I should much like to hear the opinions of some of your readers on the subject. The so-called 'supernatural' hypothesis, *i.e.*, that they were the wraiths of some shipwrecked crew who perished near that spot, seems a more probable solution of the mystery.

M. B. BADELEY.

Parkstone.

A SEA ROMANCE.

From Our Own Correspondent.

GIBRALTAR, Friday.

Captain Barnes Lawrence, Captain of the Port, has received extracts from the log-book of Peter Johannsen, who, it may be remembered, recently made a successful voyage from Gibraltar to Charlotte Harbour, United States, in an open boat, *Lotta*, being accompanied only by his son. In going through the Straits difficulty was experienced in keeping the boat from swamping, owing to heavy seas. On August 30th, at 6.30 p.m., when about thirty miles nor'-nor'-east of the Island of Grand Canary, whilst busy arranging the sailing gear, Johannsen noticed a strange man suddenly grasp the tiller, and on looking round found four men on board. Whilst changing clothes, which had become wet with the sea-water, two of the men became very affectionate to his son, helping him on with his dry clothes, &c., and speaking in a strange language. The third person sat down on the aft-thwart in front of Johannsen. He seemed about fifty-five years of age, tall, and muscular, with iron-grey hair. He was dressed in a white canvas cap, without peak, and had an iron foot on his left leg and dark worsted trousers, while over his shoulders and chest he wore a Moorish garment. The strangers shouted to people in the distance; but Johannsen could not discern any craft. The boat being hove-to, all lay down for the night, the visitors utilising the forward end of the boat for sleeping accommodation. On awaking in the morning Johannsen found his friend of the iron foot sitting astride of the bowsprit scanning the horizon. Falling asleep again, the two travellers awoke just after sunrise. On getting up, it was found the mysterious strangers had disappeared as quietly as they came. The weather having moderated, and after a cup of cocoa, sail was made with all speed possible. However, about 5 p.m. on the 31st, the strangers made a second appearance. Two of them kept swinging the jib from starboard to port for some fifteen minutes, as if a signal to someone astern. No craft or boat was seen following. At dusk they left. The usual entries as to weather follow in the log, but nothing more eventful happened. On October 18th the Florida coast was sighted, and Pine Island was reached on October 21st.

Johannsen and his son suffered no ailments on the voyage except sunburn. On arrival, ten pounds of biscuits, twenty gallons of water, and thirty-four ounces of preserved meat remained of the stores, but the personal effects had suffered much from sea water. The instruments of navigation escaped damage. Thus ends a sea romance exciting enough for the lover of the sensational. Doubtless the men were smugglers, or something akin, who had swum from their craft under cover of the night, and, finding no cargo or valuable booty on the *Lotta*, eventually returned to their vessel, kept purposely at a safe distance to prevent identification.

LET us not listen for a moment to a doctrine so irrational as that our present characters do not follow us into a future world. If we are to live again, let us settle it as a sure fact that we shall carry with us our present minds such as we now make them; that we shall reap good or ill, according to their improvement or corruption, and that every act thus affects character.—WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

OBEAH IN THE WEST INDIES.

BY DR. MARTYN WESTCOTT.

A few years ago the writer was fortunate enough to spend a winter in the West Indies. Those beautiful islands

. . . 'where the green
Which Nature wears was never seen
'Neath zone of Europe! where the hue
Of sea and heaven is such a blue
As England dreams not' . . .

have been, alas! decadent for many years now, and in spite of the strenuous efforts of our colonial statesmen, remain the least profitable of all the colonies of this great Empire. From the visitor's point of view, however, the Indies leave little to be desired. The scenery of them is wonderful in its tropical beauty, and the swarming negro populations are full of interest to the stranger. Nowadays the African negro is the representative native, but when Columbus, four hundred years ago, went cruising in these waters on voyages of discovery, he found the islands populated by a fierce, hardy, and warlike set of tribes—red-skinned or reddish-yellow, rather than black—who came presumably from the South American continent. These were the Caribs, once splendid fellows and good sportsmen. They are almost extinct now. Among the few traces that they have left behind are carvings on wood and stone, altars, axe-heads, conch-shell utensils and ground stone implements. Such were the aborigines of the Indies. The negroes of to-day are descended from those imported, as labourers and as slaves, from the West Coast of Africa two or three hundred years ago. These have little enough to recommend them in our eyes, and, merely veneered as they are with Western ideas of civilisation, would soon relapse into primitive barbarity if all the white people were to leave the West Indies. In Hayti, of course, there are no white people of any importance at all, and there is a republic of negroes left to themselves—and they are an exhibition of the 'most ridiculous caricature of civilisation in the world,' as Froude quotes for us. Our only reliable authority on matters concerning social life in the Haytian republic is Sir Spenser St. John, once British Consul there, and it would seem that Obeah flourishes in Hayti more than in any of the West Indian islands.

We know nothing of the ancient religion of the Caribs, and the present negroes seem to have been without religious belief altogether. But for all that they are firm believers in Obeah, which was imported with their forefathers from the coast of Africa. Deep down in the hearts and lives of them all, as any white employer, overseer, or planter can testify, is this belief in OBEAH, OBI, or WANGA, in spite of the teachings of missionaries of all denominations. Regular in his attendance at church or chapel, where he bawls the hymns and responses in sonorous tones, rolling his eyes the while, and smacking his lips, the 'coloured gentleman' would yet be rendered very uneasy, if not terrified, if a white-cock's head lay in his garden-path on his return home! Many Creoles, being questioned, pooh-pooh the whole thing. But there is something more than mere superstition in this Obeah, and in many islands this fact is well recognised, and there are special bye-laws in force dealing with the matter. No one need doubt that in Obeah we are face to face with an active, living claim to the possession of magical powers, in spite of the fact that every effort is being made to crush it out of existence. The magistrates in Trinidad and Jamaica have often to try cases of poisoning, petty theft, and even murder, in which the influence of the 'Obi-man' can be traced.

It is easier to say what Obeah is not than to describe just what it is. The word 'Obeah' is said to mean 'killing,' and 'Wanga' is the African word for a 'spell,' or 'incantation.' Obeah is considered to be quite distinct from 'Voodoo,' which is peculiar probably to the Dahoman and Yuruba tribes. Unlike Voodoo, in which there are fetishes and images, Obeah has no objects of veneration. The latter is certainly not a religion or a philosophy, but may perhaps justly be described as a magical cult or a sorcery. There are plenty of rascals among the Obi-men, no doubt, who trade on the ignorance and superstition of the masses. But besides the charlatans and quacks there are a few real 'Obeah Doctors,' who generally are not to be hired, or who refuse fees unless

they succeed in what they undertake. The cult of Obeah includes the use of spells, the infliction of diseases, communication with departed spirits, the art of healing by medicinal herbs and simples, rain-making, and the production of mantic frenzy. It is very difficult to write of the practice of Obeah in the West Indies without dealing to some extent with mere charlatany.

Instances of the use of spells are frequent. Obi-men are retained to cast spells over fields or gardens until the harvest—a precaution necessary indeed in a land where idleness and petty larceny are exceedingly common. A man's field is put under Obeah with the greatest ease. The Obi-man hangs a bottle full of red-tinted water, or a bag made of skin containing nails, beans, rags, and an egg, or else a triangular board covered on one side with black cloth, on a pole stuck upright in the field. A sort of incantation is uttered, and the thing is complete. None but the most sceptical and brazen negro would dare to steal from a field thus 'dressed,' as it is called.

Some natives will pay an Obi-man to cast a malign spell over an enemy. This is done by placing the severed head of a cock in the garden-path, with its beak towards his cottage, and muttering the necessary formula. Henceforward the wretched man is under OBI, and submits to exactions of food, eggs and fowls without hope of redress, and fearing to retaliate. Such is the abject fear entertained of the spell thus cast, that many negroes will not give evidence against the Obi-man, or even give the police information of his existence. A moment's reflection will show how ineffectual police regulations are against this sort of thing. Nevertheless, in the towns a great deal has been done by the detective force.

This is an instance of the rascally use of Obeah charms. The more abandoned impostors have recourse even to secret poisoning. Powdered glass is administered to the victim, mixed with his food. The poor fellow sinks and dies under what is supposed to be dysentery. The real Obeah practitioners also administer drugs—secretly nowadays, because their practice is disallowed—but their skill in medicines is undeniable. Sir Spenser St. John states that some of these 'Doctors' have an intimate knowledge of their herbs, and can calculate the effects of their administration to a day or an hour. Some of the English doctors in the Government Service in the West Indies have assured the writer that, occasionally, sores which had become chronic and had proved quite intractable to orthodox efforts of medical skill had been rapidly and thoroughly cured by the application of herbs, unknown to the English doctors, but recommended by some mysterious exponent of Obeah 'up country.'

The influence of the mind over the body is well-known. There have been people of strong will who have lived for years sustained by mere will-effort in the face of most trying physical disabilities. There have been others who, expecting, or having resolved, to die at such and such an age, have actually died at the age in question; life has ceased suddenly and without apparent reason.

Records of Indian mystics and conjurers go to prove that by sheer force of will they have suspended life for a given period, and at the end of the time have returned from the tomb alive and well. Some of the practitioners of Obeah also have been shown to be possessed of strange powers of will, or of 'suggestion.' Many records are extant of negroes who, having been told by Obi-men that they will die at a certain time, do actually die. In such cases medical skill will avail nothing. It may be that the native is frightened to death, or that he follows the 'suggestion' of a stronger will. The fact remains that he dies at the time appointed.

Père Labat and other Catholic priests have recorded instances of the above. Labat was a missionary, and a literary man of the highest culture of his time. He had splendid opportunities of studying Obeah, and, in fact, did study it, but in his own method, which consisted in flogging any native whom he caught practising it, as his own narratives prove. Of course, Labat went out as a missionary of religion, to teach, and not to study occult lore! It is doubtful whether he even recognised that some of the Obeah-doctors had a knowledge of the secrets of Nature that he himself had not. Still he had unique opportunities of learning the details of the cult, and might have added somewhat to the world's knowledge of the hidden forces of the universe

if he had attempted to learn of the negro instead of despising him. In Labat's writings are many accounts of the wonders worked by the Obi-men. The priest did not deny the performance of these marvels, but attributed them to direct intercourse with Satan!

One of the remarkable alleged powers of a few of the Obeah practitioners was that of rain-producing. Père Labat bears witness to an actual exhibition of the rain-making powers of a little African boy in Martinique. Four Dominican priests were present and made no attempt to deny the production of rain, in dry weather, by this little lad, who was allowed to make trial of his powers because he had not then been baptised. The Dominicans firmly believed that the rain had been brought by infernal assistance and hastened to baptise the little African. The finding of subterranean water by means of hazel ('divining') rods, is, of course, frequently and successfully practised in England to-day. Probably no one thinks of attributing this form of divination to the power of the devil. If the worthy Labat came to life again and were shown wireless telegraphy, one wonders whether he would not find Satanic influence at work there also.

The development of frenzy, for purposes of healing or of religious conversion, is common to all races. Even among ourselves there are occasional outbursts of this kind, especially among the 'soldiers' of the Salvation Army. These last have a method of procedure which is a type of what is meant. A circle of 'soldiers' is formed round some poor crippled invalid or other; noisy hymns are sung, and the band plays loud and wildly. Impassioned and eloquent prayers are recited, tambourines are beaten, and the whole party at last becomes breathless with frenzied excitement. Sometimes the invalid, stimulated by the wild abandon of those around him, rises up and joins the shouts of hymnal praise and thanksgiving. This is one of the processes of faith-curing. Obeah also furnishes examples of mantic frenzy. But the orgies of Obeah frenzy are frequently drunken, and are undertaken with a view of what we should call 'laying a ghost.'

The Creole knows nothing of the fairies, gnomes, imps, pixies, and will-o'-the-wisps of our folk-lore. He believes instead in 'jumbies' and 'duppies,' which are ghoulish beings that haunt corpses before their burial. Perhaps duppies are what we call the 'spirits of the departed.' Restless and uneasy, wandering lonely in the borderland, as it were, between this world and the next, the jumbies are supposed to be capable of doing injury to the living. A jumbi-dance is, therefore, undertaken to quiet the restless spirit. A large number of guests are invited, plentiful supplies of rum are forthcoming, and the orgie is kept up for hours, to the accompaniment of a long-drawn monotonous chant. The Irish 'wakes' are in the same style. There is no need to have an Obi-man present at such functions as jumbi-dances. But many of them undertake to insure their patients against all possible evils inflicted by jumbies, as well as those by hags or *souquaints*. 'Hags' are practically witches—or wizards, for they are not all women—and are credited with being able to leave their bodies at times and to roam about as temporarily disembodied spirits, working evil by charms and spells. 'Hagging' is thought to be hereditary, but at best is but a poor business, for any Obi-man can insure you against the evil influence.

In probably every island of the West Indies there are some ceibas, or silk-cotton trees—splendid denizens of forest and jungle, raising lofty branches towards the sky and throwing curious, buttress-like roots in all directions into the ground. In the niches and hollows of these ceibas dwell the jumbies and the duppies, while behind the tall, flying buttresses, hags leave their bodies when they go on their extraordinary excursions. The negroes, implicit in their belief of all this, will on no account approach a silk-cotton tree at night, and would suffer many a calamity rather than fell or help to cut down one of these trees. If a white man intends to employ negro labour to fell a ceiba, he must first allow a cock to be killed at the root of the tree. This is by way of a propitiatory sacrifice to the spirit or spirits within. In the French West Indies the spirit of a ceiba is called a 'Maman-dijou.' The felling must be done in daylight, and

the negroes, even after the sacrifice, will need to be well supplied with the 'Dutch courage' that comes of copious draughts of rum.

A few years ago the cult of Obeah had its headquarters in the isle of St. Vincent. Nowadays probably Trinidad, Jamaica, Hayti, and perhaps Cuba are the most usual seats of the practice.

A system of 'sorcery' such as Obeah would be incomplete indeed if no provision were found in it for the tender passion. The art of exciting 'Love' is a branch of the cult which is extensively practised, especially by the negro women, and it does not require the help of the Obi-man at all. The methods employed are of very great antiquity. The principle involved is the establishment of what modern Spiritualists would call a 'psychic rapport.' To excite the passion of love in a man, a woman steams some food intended for him in a cloth on which she sprinkles nine drops of blood from her pricked finger. A second method is to mingle a few drops of her perspiration in his food or drink from time to time. The first way is generally considered to be prompt and powerful in its effects! To retain the affection of one's wife or husband, and to insure conjugal fidelity, there is a much used method, which is this: A few hairs, plucked from the head, are burned, and the ash is then powdered between the fingers. A little of this powder is mixed from time to time with the food of the person to be affected. Negroes have the profoundest faith in this charm.

Some writers refer to 'kanji-stones' as being connected with the cult of Wanga or Obeah. They are white egg-shaped stones, very rare, and supposed to have talismanic properties. It is doubtful whether they have anything to do with Obeah at all.

'A MESSAGE FROM MARS.'

M. de Fonvielle, a well-known French astronomer, relates in the 'Matin' an event which, if true, strengthens the conviction held by some astronomers that the planet Mars is inhabited. He says the phenomenon recently observed is tantamount to a message from the planet. It was first noted by Mr. Douglas, a well-known astronomer, at the Harvard Observatory in Arizona, and subsequently signalled to the Central Astronomical Bureau at Kiel. From Kiel it was sent to the Paris Observatory, and, according to the notice, Mr. Douglas, while observing that portion of Mars known as the Icarian Sea, was struck by a strange fact. A series of bright lights appeared on a straight line extending for several hundred kilometres. These gigantic fires burnt without interruption for one hour and ten minutes, and then disappeared as suddenly as they had come. M. de Fonvielle evidently believes in a message from Mars. This rectilinear disposition, he thinks, would seem to indicate a voluntary action—a theory which is strengthened by their appearance and disappearance. M. de Fonvielle thinks that, as the planet Mars is under constant observation, any repetition of the supposed signals will certainly be noticed. If the inhabitants of Mars really lighted those fires, it is, he says, indispensable for the astronomers of this world to let them know that they have been understood, and that they count on their intelligence to succeed in understanding us, and in creating a special alphabet.

'SOME REMINISCENCES,' by Mr. Alfred Smedley, of Belper, is an unaffected, straightforward narrative of the principal incidents in the life of the author, with especial reference to his religious experiences and the incidents which transpired in the course of his investigations of Spiritualism, together with a clear presentation of the evidences of spirit presence, power, and identity which carried conviction to his mind of the actuality of spirit existence and the intercourse between the two states of being. The records of the remarkable experimental sêances with Miss Wood, which were held in Belper under stringent test conditions and were reported at the time by Mr. W. P. Adshead, are here reproduced, together with an account of Miss Wood's mediumship by the late T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and the work is illustrated with plans, and portraits of a number of well-known persons who were eye-witnesses of the manifestations. Mr. Smedley has done good service to Spiritualism by reproducing in this more permanent fashion this testimony to some of the most carefully attested and convincing phenomena which demonstrate the fact that spirits can appear in the physical form under fraud-proof test conditions. We can but regret that the work of the printer is not of equal merit with the contents of this valuable little book.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 5th, 1901.

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.'

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. To France, 13 francs 86 centimes.

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

APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library, should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

THE EMERGING OF MAN.

Tons of paper must have been used up in the writing and printing of summaries of the achievements of the nineteenth century: and almost every writer seems to be chiefly impressed with or interested in our clever contrivances to save time, to multiply comforts, to perform feats, to break records and to amass money. The very fewest contemplate man himself, in any effort to reckon him up, or to compare him with his great grandparents, as a living soul. And yet surely that is the greatest question: What is happening to the inventor? What he is inventing is a very inferior matter.

From the scientific side we have heard a vast deal concerning 'The origin of species' and the evolution of the superior animal we call 'a man.' We have counted and measured his bones and compared them with those of other animals; have noted his anatomical survivals and weighed his brain; and, having duly squared him up and ticketed him, we assigned him what we called his 'Place in Nature.' But we have had to go farther. Bones and muscles and brain are not everything. This is a very elusive and complex sort of animal, this 'Genus Homo.' He has developed longings and tastes and habits which beans and bacon and even venison and champagne do not seem to satisfy. He

looks before and after,
And pines for what is not.

He cannot 'live by bread alone.' He mutters such words as 'humanity,' 'conscience,' 'justice.' He is troubled with

obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings,
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised.

What does it all mean? This animal, who somehow has emerged from the slime, is mere animal no more. Something has happened to him; he knows not what. He may be disturbed by this new thing that has come to him; it may even drive him into fresh jungles of cruelty, and teach him new refinements of causes of quarrel; but it is there. Out of it may grow superstition, bigotry, persecution, Smithfield fires, the Inquisition, and an eternal Hell; but it is there. What does it mean?

Strange as it may seem, it means the process of the creation of man as a living soul, just as the feuds of clans, the tyranny of rulers, the uprising of rebels, the 'thousand wars of old,' the antagonism of nations, the conflicts of

classes, mean the political and social education of the human race, and its advance to the Ideal of a truly wise, seasoned and experienced Humanity.

The beginnings of the spiritual evolution were 'in the mud and slime of things'; but so were all our beginnings. It is God's way; Nature's way; the only possible way. The early speech of the human animal was little better than a growl or a snarl; but it advanced to the eloquence of a Gladstone and the song of a Trebelli, and it will climb higher presently. The first boat was a hollowed tree trunk or a contrivance as crude; but we have advanced, through countless evolutions, to the flying yacht and the masterful steamer. So all along the line; and the process is the creation of man; not by any bits of magic six thousand or six million years ago.

The evolution of the spirit follows precisely the same law. The rough rudiments of conscience and the sense of justice are discernible in the resentments of the lowest animals: so are even more than the rudiments of affection. We know little or nothing about their sense of reverence, their instinct of aspiration, their hope, their discernment of any inner meanings behind and within outward appearances. But man, out of the rough material of the beast, is creating a shrine for the saint; and, from the germs of 'brute' instincts and appetites in the sphere of sense, he is evolving divine longings and insights in the sphere of spirit or soul.

In relation to the God-consciousness, it is not necessary to take sides or to take any great interest in the controversy between Mr. Andrew Lang and the Folk Lore-ists. What does it matter whether the rudiments of the vision of God or ancestor-worship came first? whether prostration or magic began it? The main thing is the compelling emotion, feeling, instinct, sense. How this began to unfold, or the way in which it worked, is of no more real importance than the letters which make up the various names of God. It matters not what envelope you use: the main thing is what you have written inside.

What a wonderful, what a momentous event it was, when man first had a glimmering of the sense of the beautiful, whether in sea or earth or sky—or in some savage face like his own! What a momentous event it was when the consciousness of some unseen presence dawned! What a great day, in the world's history, when, even in imagination, man first differentiated matter and spirit,—when he felt what he could not explain,—when he loved or feared what he could not see! From that, all the Religions of the world have grown. Let any one think what that means, for evil or for good, and then think lightly of it if he can.

The end is not yet. Through the worship of ancestors, through loathsome or pathetic idolatries, through pantheism which threatened to lose the Gods and through fetichism which threatened to overwhelm us with millions of them, man has marched; and, with the help of the greatest minds and noblest hearts in every age, Nature, working through Religion, has been evolving man. A restive pupil! and even now, after 1900 years of Christ to help him, he is always in danger, or appears to be in danger, of reverting to the beast from which he sprang. But it must be a process, not a miracle. Miracle could not do it. Man must work out his own salvation; and he is doing it. Neither God, nor Nature, nor he will fail.

'LIGHT' SUSTENTATION FUND.

We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of the following contributions to 'LIGHT' Sustentation Fund:—

A Friend ...	...	...	...	...	£20	0	0
Mrs. S. ...	...	...	...	...	1	1	0

THE AURA.

In 'LIGHT' of December 22nd, in an article upon 'The French Psychic Press,' your correspondent, 'H. A. D.,' tells us that Monseigneur Elie Méric has lately written 'that the soul is the form of the body.' 'The soul,' he says, 'is the direct and immediate form of the body; no intermediary may be admitted as existing between the soul and the body; their union is substantial and personal.' 'H. A. D.' then proceeds to say: 'According to Monseigneur, there is thus no place for the "aura"; for that force the existence of which experimental Spiritism seems to affirm, which under different names is connoted by various Spiritists.' But is not this a somewhat premature conclusion, at which 'H. A. D.' has arrived? What is the 'aura'? Who would care to define, with anything like an assumption of authority, that subtle yet apparently potent emanation from the human body, which is both seen and photographed? And why should not the 'aura' be both psychical and physical in character, and not in any sense an 'intermediary'? The fumes from a heap of smouldering rubbish are generated by the life, or fire, within, but they take on something of the attributes of the substance through which they pass. The 'aura' of a sick person is known to differ both in colour and density from the 'aura' of one in good health, and there is reason to believe that it also reflects something of the moral and intellectual nature of the individual as well. What if the 'aura' be in a measure etheric—in a measure magnetic—what if it be the life principle? This is also at least 'a thinkable possibility,' and quite compatible with Monseigneur Méric's conception of the temporary union and identity of soul and body, and of his theory of a 'fluide universelle.' 'H. A. D.' says there is 'little doubt, if it (aura) exists, that it is in a sense deciduous, *i.e.*, gradually ceases to operate as the soul advances in its spiritual progress,' referring to a statement made through Mrs. Underwood to the effect that 'all sense perceptions will slowly die out of my new life.' The relevancy between this announcement and the existence of an 'aura' is not too clear, unless, indeed, the 'aura' is to be identified with 'sense perceptions.'

'Sense perceptions,' however, are commonly supposed to refer to functions and attributes purely physical, and would naturally die out sooner or later after the death of the physical body, while the 'aura,' if it be of the spirit, would still persist. Why else do some spirit people appear as shining lights, while others are seen as dark as night? It is true we *know* but little for certain, and it is not always profitable to roam in the realm of conjecture, but so far as our observations go, they seem to tend towards the confirmation of Monseigneur Méric's theories, rather than the contrary. At all events, it can scarcely be urged that they are irreconcilable.

BIDSTON.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

In the interest of Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance who find it impracticable or inconvenient to attend evening meetings, it has been decided to hold another

DRAWING ROOM MEETING.

in the French Room, St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, on Friday *next*, January 11th, 1901, from 3.30 p.m. to 5 p.m., for conversation and the answering of questions bearing upon subjects of mutual interest.

Afternoon tea at 4.30 p.m.

Admission will be by *ticket only*. Tickets are sent to all Members and Associates.

MR. HERBERT BURROWS

Will give an Address to the Members and Associates of the Alliance on

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY,
IN REPLY TO CERTAIN CRITICS.

on Friday, January 18th, at 7 for 7.30 p.m., in the French Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly).

'THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY.'

To the making of books dealing with Mental Science there is apparently no end. The latest claimant for public favour reaches us from Mr. Richard Harte, of Worthing, and is entitled 'The New Psychology, or the Secret of Happiness,' by 'D. C. K.' It aims to give *practical* instructions how to develop and employ *thought-power*, and consists of a series of 'lessons,' each one opening with an 'affirmation' which is elucidated in the 'remarks' that follow. It is based upon the idea that 'as a man thinketh in his heart so is he,' or, as the author puts it, 'that which you believe about your body or mind tends to become true.' He affirms that anything which is persistently asserted becomes believed; and when persistently believed becomes realised, as far as the possibilities of the case admit. 'Affirmations and denials' produce a much stronger effect in the first instance when made by another person. Referring to 'suggestion' or 'authoritative assertions—ideas which another person puts into your head—he claims that it is 'sufficient that the suggestion should be given in writing, like a prescription that the recipient can make up and administer to himself.' This, of course, becomes auto-suggestion, and the author points out that 'doctors instinctively know that any prescription they wrote for themselves would lack the authoritative element; so a doctor, when he gets ill, calls in another medical man to treat him.'

A few of the 'suggestions' which are made by 'D. C. K.' in his authoritative affirmations will give an idea of the line of his thought: 'You have the power, by an effort of thought or will, either to raise your mind into an active, positive, high-strung, masterful condition; or to lower it into a passive, receptive, negative, relaxed, unstrung condition.' Again, 'You have the power of drawing vitality, or strength of body and mind, from an invisible source by actively desiring it.' In other words, there is a bountiful supply of power, and if one knows how to turn on the tap, so to speak, he can obtain all he requires—and the author aims to teach his readers 'how to turn on the tap.'

The intrusion into the consciousness of unpleasant and disagreeable thoughts is a source of pain and perplexity to most folk, many of whom find it difficult to dislodge and expel their unwelcome guests. The reader is assured: 'You have the power of banishing an unpleasant or inconvenient thought from your mind,' and the method whereby the power can be successfully employed is portrayed. 'Hypnotic suggestions' and treatments are explained, and a number of 'affirmations' are given, which are capable of general application. The utility of thought-power in disease and for the maintenance of health, as also its employment by a 'healer' to give affirmative suggestions to a sufferer, are clearly explained.

The tendency of the teachings which are pointedly and lucidly presented in this book is in the direction of stimulating self-trust, self-unfoldment, self-expression. It is the antithesis of the morbid, introspective, pessimistic spirit which complainingly and weakly exclaims: 'I have no control over myself, I catch every disease that is going, people dislike me, nothing I undertake succeeds!'

It must be borne in mind that the student in this realm cannot reasonably expect to succeed at once. Perseverance is likely to be amply rewarded, but the dabbler will derive little benefit. The author points out with much truth that many people spend hours of their time, daily, in learning to play some musical instrument, and that, too, without the prospect of much benefit to themselves or others; whereas, a tenth of the time and energy thus expended would, if devoted to practical psychology, give them the command of the most useful power that they can possibly possess, the exercise of which will afford them lasting satisfaction throughout their lives. To those persons who desire to know how to cultivate and employ their thought-power to secure health, strength, and the joy of 'being and doing,' the ninety-three pages of practical instruction in this work will be of great service if they will patiently, perseveringly and confidently make their own experiments, with the determination and inward assurance of ultimate success.

To be sure the price is high—one guinea net; but that,

we presume, is to be regarded as the fee paid for his advice to an expert, and the book itself is to be accepted as the expert's prescription. Should that prescription be a means of removing some of the ills for which it is intended, it would be cheap at any price.

Since writing the above we have learned that, to meet the demand for a cheaper edition, which will not be ready for some little time, the book, which was published at a guinea, will be supplied to our readers for ten and sixpence *net*. An announcement appears in our advertising columns.

A LETTER FROM CHARLES DICKENS.

FROM 'SPIRITISTISCHE RUNDSCHAU.'

It is a great many years since I read Forster's 'Life of Dickens,' and, therefore, it is not wonderful that I have no recollection of the letter here mentioned. As it may also be unfamiliar to some other readers of 'LIGHT,' I translate it for their benefit from the German—only regretting that I have not the original in English to refer to—as it seems well worthy of note from a psychical point of view. The writer in the 'Spiritistische Rundschau' thus introduces it:—

'In confirmation of the view that even in this life it is possible for persons to receive impressions from the other world, a letter to John Forster, written by the celebrated English novelist, Charles Dickens, may be considered important. It relates to a strange incident in connection with the death of President Lincoln. The letter was written from Washington on February 4th, 1868, and is published in Forster's "Life of Dickens"; the German translation (from which this letter was taken) was published in Berlin, 1872':—

'... Last Sunday I dined with Charles Sumner, and as I had stipulated that there should be no party, with the exception of his secretary, the War Minister, Stanton, was the only other guest. Stanton is a man with an extraordinary memory. As he and Sumner were the two first public men who appeared at the deathbed of President Lincoln—shot on April 14th, 1865—and remained with him till he breathed his last, we fell after dinner into a very interesting conversation on the subject, about which Stanton told me the following extraordinary story. On the afternoon of the day on which the President was shot, a Ministerial Council was held, at which he presided. Stanton, who at that time was commandant of the Northern army concentrated at Washington, arrived rather late. In fact, they were waiting for him; and when he entered the room, the President broke off in the middle of a sentence and said: "Now, gentlemen, to business." Stanton noticed, to his astonishment, that the President sat still in his seat with dignified aspect, instead of, as his habit was, throwing himself about in the most extraordinary attitudes; and instead of relating aimless or ambiguous stories he remained quiet and serious and seemed like a different man. When Stanton left the Council with the "General fiscal" he remarked to the latter, "This is the most peaceful Cabinet sitting I have been present at for a long time; what an extraordinary change has come over Lincoln!" The General replied: "We all noticed it before you came. While we were waiting for you, Lincoln said, with his head on his breast: 'Gentlemen, something extraordinary will happen, and that very soon!' Whereupon the General had remarked: 'Something good, sir, I hope?' and the President had replied in an earnest manner: 'I don't know, I don't know; but happen it will, and shortly.' As everyone was struck by his appearance and manner, the General again took up the matter and said: 'Perhaps you have learnt something which is unknown to us?' "No," answered the President, "but I have had a dream; and this is the third time I have dreamt it. Once was on the night before the battle of Bull's Run; another time it was before that of —" (some other battle at which the Northerners were defeated). His chin sank down on his breast again, and he sat still, plunged in thought. "Might we ask what the dream was, sir?" said the General. The President replied, without raising his head or changing his position: "I am on a deep, broad, rolling river; I am in a boat, and I am falling in! I am falling in!—But this has nothing to do with our business, gentlemen!" As Stanton and the General went away together they remarked that it would be very interesting to see if anything really did happen, and agreed to take note of it. That same evening the President was shot.'

M. T.

SOME MATERIALISATIONS IN AMERICA.

In 'LIGHT,' for December 15th, 'M.T.,' reviewing Herr Dankmar's 'New Facts and Old Problems,' dismisses with a paragraph the German writer's séance with Mrs. Chamberlain, of Brooklyn, but devotes a page to a séance with Mrs. Stoddard-Grey and her stepson, Mr. De Witt Hough. Perhaps Herr Dankmar's article in 'Uebersinnliche Welt' justified the treatment. At any rate, 'M.T.,' who has 'never been in America,' deals fairly with the facts which he quotes. I, however, had I criticised Herr Dankmar's article (which I have not yet seen), would have reversed the proportions of space. For I have been in America, and, like Herr Dankmar, I have attended a séance given by Mrs. Stoddard-Grey and Mr. De Witt Hough. Unlike Herr Dankmar, I have never described that séance, because it did not seem worth the trouble. A single séance seldom gives evidence enough to justify publication, but the séance at the Stoddard-Grey's did at least justify me in concluding that it was not the sort of thing I cared for, the reason being that, as 'M.T.' wisely says, 'the controls of an imbecile, even if they are genuine, are not likely to be of a high order.'

But it is a different matter with regard to Mrs. Chamberlain. Like Herr Dankmar, I have been in her séance-room. But Herr Dankmar was there once and I have been there at least twenty times. 'M.T.' feels that what Herr Dankmar saw was 'not free from the suspicion that the supposed phenomena may have been pure pretension.' 'No precautions against imposture seem to have been taken.' I cannot speak for Herr Dankmar, but a brief narrative of my own experiences in Mrs. Chamberlain's séance-room may interest 'M.T.' and other readers.

Early in 1897, Mrs. Chamberlain (then Miss Nellie Barnes) lived in West 21st Street, New York, and held two, and sometimes three, public materialising séances each week. I went to her séance-room one Sunday evening, a sceptic on the subject of materialisation, and a stranger to the medium and to all of the other fifteen persons there present. The proceedings were more open and above-board than any I have seen in any other materialising séance-rooms, either in England or America. In England we are accustomed to join hands at a materialising séance; the sitters are carefully directed to their places, and they are even cautioned not to cross their legs. There were no such precautions at the séances of Mrs. Chamberlain.

The cabinet occupied one corner of the room, and it consisted merely of plain draperies of cotton flannel suspended by a cord. Everybody was invited to inspect the cabinet. Several persons took advantage of the opportunity, myself among the number. Once during the séance the cabinet was thrown open for inspection. This was after at least three 'forms' had appeared, and while the medium, still in her normal consciousness, sat *outside* the cabinet, where everyone could see her distinctly. There was sufficient light in the room to enable me to see everyone present. These circumstances were true of every public séance which I have attended at Mrs. Chamberlain's.

After the medium entered the cabinet she was said to become entranced. The manifestations were then more numerous; they were also stronger, and the light, from a red-shaded lamp at the far end of the room, opposite the cabinet, and regulated by a cord from the cabinet, was fuller or dimmer 'according to the strength of the spirit that held the form'—to quote the words of the control.

The medium is a large woman, amply built, and 'more than common tall.' The forms that appeared were short, medium in stature, tall, portly, slender, childlike, elderly, middle-aged, young, and, so it appeared, of both sexes. The males, with certain exceptions, were always dressed in black; the females were invariably dressed in flowing robes of white. The exceptions to the black dress of the men were a few 'ancient' spirits, as they were called, and an occasional American Indian.

The 'ancients,' and certain 'advanced' spirits of women, carried their own lights in the fashion of luminous traceries on their robes. To every one present a manifestation of some kind was given. Either a form appeared from the cabinet, or the medium, apparently entranced, came forth with a spoken message. All the forms were shown full

length. Several of them were very 'strong.' Some of them were veiled; with others the features were as clearly seen as those of any sitter. Nearly all the forms were recognised, so the respective sitters said. Most of the forms spoke, some did not. Some entered into conversation for a minute and more. One spoke in German, if the statement of a German sitter is to be believed.

I entered the séance-room a sceptic, as I have said; I left it not only sceptical, but determined to know how the trick was done. I never discovered the trick.

On many subsequent occasions I was present at Mrs. Chamberlain's public séances. There was never anything trivial, vulgar or repellant in any way. Always there were two, sometimes more, elevating, though brief, discourses from certain 'forms.'

But in addition to the public séances, I had several private ones with Mrs. Chamberlain; and I have, on a few occasions, sat with her in the cabinet. The private séances were far more remarkable than the public ones. At the private séances nobody except the medium and myself was present.

'M. T.' very naturally regrets that 'no precautions against imposture seem to have been taken' when Herr Dankmar attended Mrs. Chamberlain's séance. Before my private séances with Mrs. Chamberlain I took every possible precaution against imposture, from the minute examination of the walls, ceiling, and floor, to the locking of the door and taking possession of the key; and to the fastening of the windows, closing them with shutters, and barring them with iron rods. I can only give my own word for it that under these conditions the medium and I were alone in the room, that no one else entered it, or could by any possibility enter it, and yet not only did very remarkable and beautiful manifestations take place, but on one occasion two brilliant forms came simultaneously from the cabinet, accompanied by floating lights.

'M. T.' and others will doubtless ask if I was convinced of the genuineness of these materialisations. I can only reply that I have been unable to disprove that they were genuine.

Did I recognise them? No, not in any instance. No one purporting to be the spirit of any relative or friend ever appeared to me at Mrs. Chamberlain's. Three or four reputed 'ancients' appeared. They were very noble and striking figures. They were said to come to me as 'guides.' But I must take the 'control's' word for that. They did not speak. Others did speak, and always came to me at every public and private séance. One of these was a woman, in luminous robes. She always gave her Christian name, but would never reveal her identity. She claimed to be a guide of mine, and in a most important matter. But her repeated counsel was never justified by events. She has walked across the room, and on one occasion seated herself in a chair next to mine. She was a much smaller woman than the medium, and her voice was quite unlike Mrs. Chamberlain's.

Another figure that always came to me gave the name of one of England's great commoners, a man of very noble character and life, who died half a century before I was born. But the materialised form bore no resemblance whatever to that famous Englishman's statue in Westminster Abbey, nor to his portrait in the National Gallery.

All these forms, and others that claimed to be associated with them, and whose names I will not now intrude upon these columns, announced a very definite purpose in coming to me. It was a very worthy purpose, but it remains to be achieved. Proofs of their identity are still lacking, and their forms have never appeared to me in any other séance-room, nor have any messages from them been elsewhere given to me through any other medium.

I give the foregoing facts for what they are worth; it may be that they will prove nothing to the satisfaction of anyone else. I will add only this: During the past three years I have had many sittings with several mediums in England and America for materialisation, clairvoyance, and 'test.' In no case have I received any convincing evidence of the identity of communicating spirits. On the other hand, I have received abundant proof of trickery and malignity on their part. But I am still investigating. Thus

far my experiences have been rather out of the common order, if one may judge from a bulk of printed and spoken testimony. If they will be useful to the readers of 'LIGHT' I will cheerfully describe them whenever the Editor desires. Meanwhile, if any reader of 'LIGHT' knows a trustworthy medium in London who can efficiently develop the too fluent and erratic 'automatic writing' gift of a serious-minded friend of mine, who believes that he can do good work if he is shown the way, I have no doubt that the Editor will print the recommendation, or forward it in my care.

London.

GEORGE HAZEL.

A PLEASING NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

The following communication has reached us as a New Year's Greeting from a well-known literary lady in the United States. We tender to her our sincere thanks for her very kind and encouraging words of sympathy and appreciation:—

'In January, 1881, I sent my first subscription to London "LIGHT," and I now enclose my twenty-first subscription, the paper itself having completed its twentieth year. It is the handsomest, and probably the best edited spiritualistic sheet in the world, one that has always kept a level head, and has never had anything of a sensational order about it.

'Another special merit in "LIGHT" is that it has retained its original name and size through all these years. This is a merit worth recording, when so many publications are continually changing names and shapes—always a great annoyance.

'A friend of mine, himself an editor for some forty-five years, says it is always a pleasure to read "LIGHT," which cannot be approached in artistic beauty and editorial merit by any spiritualistic paper in this country. He has the eye of an artist, the taste of a poet, and the judgment of a well-balanced mind; consequently, his opinion on these matters is worth something. He has been a Spiritualist from the early "fifties," or for nearly fifty years, and never has a shadow of a doubt of a life hereafter. This belief is a great comfort to him now, for he is on the border of another world, and has been for some months, and he longs to go. But he still reads his London "LIGHT," and enjoys it, though suffering much pain. How those poor mortals make a stand for any sort of happiness who have no faith in a hereafter, is a problem I have never been able to solve. We know there are a few people in the world who claim to have no desire for immortal life, but it is well they are but few. Wishing you all happiness, &c.'

SPIRITUALISM AND THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

The 'Daily News' of January 1st printed 'A Talk with Mr. Haweis' in reference to the 'Church and the Twentieth Century.' The full report of a long interview is all worth reading, but we think the following passage will be of special interest to readers of 'LIGHT.' Mr. Haweis, always faithful to his convictions at whatever cost, said:—

'You can't insist too much on the fact that Culture is not religion; religion always means one and the same thing—the sense of a spiritual nature—and dependence upon a spiritual source external to ourselves. I hope the twentieth century will develop both. They run on parallel, not antagonistic lines, though it would not be fair to say they will never meet, for there is moral and psychic intercommunication between the two. The Church of the twentieth century will be deeply spiritual, even spiritualistic, I am sure, in a very wide sense of the word. Spiritualism, in all its many forms, however people may dislike it, does, nevertheless, stand as a stout protest on behalf of man's spiritual nature and his spiritual affinities, and the twentieth century Church will have to look very largely to the recognition and development and purification of these spiritual manifestations and beliefs. Spiritualism always has, in one form or another, been the very heart and soul of religions in every Church and creed whatever.'

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

'Tis as each year is ebbing to its close,
And Yule with tocsin sweet its requiem sings,
Ye can but feel decay and death impose
The mutability of earthly things:
Seek then the Truth which changeless doth remain,
Revealing through all time God's master-hand,
And thus with soul attun'd shall ye attain
To spirit life beyond the borderland.

EFFIE BATHIE.

January 1st, 1901.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

INTERCOURSE WITH DISCARNATE SPIRITS.

All labels are also limits. Truth is *universal*. Therefore as we come into Truth, we come into the spirit of the *whole*. Fences belong to the fields of earth. It is on the mountain tops that these arbitrary divisions, sections, cuttings off cease. 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,' said the Psalmist, '*whence cometh my help?*'

Fencing and hedging may be necessities of early stages of earth growth, but should be cast aside as we rise to higher and therefore more *universal* conceptions.

This applies to many of the present divisions between theosophic and spiritualistic tendencies of thought. The most catholic of Theosophists and the most catholic of Spiritualists can afford to drop their labels. They have outgrown their hedging and fencing and can 'lift up their eyes,' nay rather, stand together, on the hills of a common spiritual realisation of advancing Truth.

Even on the one point where they appear to differ most vitally, namely, the question of communicating with discarnate spirits, the difference probably arises from misconception, and failure to recognise that time and space are conditions belonging to phenomenal and not to essential or spirit life.

This train of thought has been impressed upon me by coming across an address of Countess Wachtmeister, entitled 'Spiritualism in the Light of Theosophy.'

She puts very forcibly the usual theosophical objections to such intercourse between incarnate and discarnate spirits, thus :—

'In your Spiritualism, you try to draw your loved ones down on to the physical plane of our existence; whereas, we in Theosophy, endeavour to draw ourselves upwards on to both the astral and spiritual planes. You think that you benefit your friends by bringing them back to earthly conditions; we maintain that as the law of evolution is continual progression, it is harmful to retard the progression of those who have left this earth, by inducing them to return; because every manifestation here causes them to imbibe a certain amount of magnetic vitality, which prevents their astral bodies from disintegrating as quickly as they otherwise would; and so Spiritualism retards instead of helping the loved ones.'

Surely this is a rather *materialistic* view of progress and a rather dogmatic view of consequences? A good deal of the confusion and looseness of thought in this passage seems to arise from the arbitrary use of the words 'up' and 'down.' What is 'up'? and what is 'down'? Evidently some idea of locality is involved in the Countess Wachtmeister's conception, since earth is considered of necessity as being *down*.

But as the highest we can conceive is Love, and the end and aim of all religions is to teach us more of the Omnipotent and Eternal Love, the only *real* 'up' is something that tends to this result; the only *real* 'down' is something that tends in the opposite direction. Judged by this standard, loving and helpful intercourse must always be 'up,' no matter where it takes place, and the greatest intellectual wisdom in the universe, communicated by the most ethereal of teachers to the most ethereal of pupils, must always be 'down' within the exact limits of its failure to teach more of the Perfect Love.

To imbibe magnetic vitality from earth and thus delay disintegration may be a super-physical or psychic evil and yet a spiritual progress and advantage; just as going into a London slum may be at the expense of inhaling very impure and undesirable magnetisms, bad for the body and mind alike, and yet may be fraught with the most essential and vital of all spiritual good, *i.e.*, some advance in the realisation of Eternal Love.

As Spiritualists and Theosophists alike become more truly spiritual in their conceptions, and are able to drop the limiting idea of time and locality belonging to our earth manifestation, these arbitrary arguments for and against communications with discarnate beings will fade away. We shall realise that *motive*, not magnetic vitality, is the supreme question.

That intercourse which develops the feeble offshoots from the Divine Love will be desirable; whether it takes place 'up' in astral spheres or 'down' on earth planes.

That which develops knowledge of methods (however true) apart from knowledge of Love the Source, will be considered imperfect and limited.

May the time come quickly when we shall all, Spiritualists and Theosophists alike, arrive at the perception that there is no 'up' and no 'down' in the Perfect Circle of the One Eternal Existence—Eternal Love!

E. KATHARINE BATES.

CREMATION.

The prospectus of the newly formed London Cremation Company, Limited, has just been issued. This company has been promoted by the members of the Cremation Society of England, for the purpose of establishing a crematorium within a convenient driving distance from Central London.

A freehold site has been purchased at about five miles from the Marble Arch. Upon this it is intended to erect crematoria on the most approved plans, and a chapel, waiting rooms, &c., and the land will be laid out in gardens.

All good citizens, who are not restrained by prejudice, can hardly fail to wish good speed to this venture, which should assist the improvement of sanitary conditions by making healthier modes of burial more accessible. At present the cost of cremation puts it out of the reach of the poor, but the increase in the number of cremations which have taken place within the last few years at Woking show that this cleaner and healthier mode of disposing of the body is gaining steadily on the acceptance of thinking people. In 1897 the number of cremations at Woking was 173; in 1900 (to November) it has been 283.

We venture to bring this matter before readers of 'LIGHT,' because among the majority of them it may be presumed that prejudices against cremation do not exist, and therefore it may be hoped that the company will find among them many supporters. Prospectuses and forms of application for shares can be obtained on application to the office of the company, 324, Regent-street, W.

H. A. D.

THE CREED OF ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

In response to the request of a correspondent, Ella Wheeler Wilcox said :—

'My creed is, Do as you would be done by, every day of every week of every year. This includes our relations with home, society, and the masses of people encountered in the daily walks of life. The simplicity of this creed renders it exceedingly difficult to follow. . . . My religion teaches me that it is demanded of us to be of constant assistance to one another in small ways, but that it is wrong to assume another's entire burden or to attempt to take all the difficulties from his path. That interferes with his development. It is for us to cheer, stimulate and encourage, but not to do the work given to another to perform.

'I believe that every act of yours and mine affects all humanity. There is no such thing as a separate life. We are all one. If you send out thoughts of despondency, hatred and envy, if you plan revenge or suicide, you are interfering with the harmony of the universe, besides inviting certain misfortune to yourself. If you think love, hope, and helpfulness, you are aiding the cause of universal happiness and success.

'Thoughts are things, full of electric force, and they go forth and produce their own kind. I believe that God is infinite wisdom, and that evil is only blind ignorance.'

MADAME AND MR. MONTAGUE have returned to London from America, and will resume their work immediately at 135, Gower-street. (See advertisements.)

'THE SPIRITUAL REVIEW.'—The main features of the January number of the 'Spiritual Review' are an interesting instalment of the diary by Mr. Jas. Robertson, of Glasgow, of his visit to America; some 'Reminiscences,' by Mr. Wm. Oxley; the Rev. C. Ware treats upon 'The Worst that the Bible can say against Spiritualism,' and promises to deal in the next issue with the *best* it can say in favour of Spiritualism; and Hudson Tuttle contributes a helpful article on 'The Promise of Hope.'

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.

Madame Zuleika.

SIR,—I, too, can speak of Madame Zuleika's marvellous power of prevision. I first called upon her in November, 1899, and for some reason or other I left without seeing her, saying I would call another time. I called again a week or so afterwards without making an appointment, and when the attendant returned from telling her, he told me that Madame had said she knew I was coming that day. During a consultation, among other things, she said: 'I see you upon the land. You will be engaged upon the land, will take up land, and that will be the means of your progress and development. Be patient, wait, and you will see these things will happen.'

About three months afterwards I went up to London to see a friend, a hygienic food specialist in East London. He began to talk to me about a correspondence he was having with some colonists and a farmer near Stroud, Gloucestershire, and he gave me some of the letters to read, and went on to say it was possible he might spend the summer there after some further correspondence, and he mentioned casually the possibility of my accompanying him. I called upon him again about May 1st, when he showed me some letters received since my last visit to him, and he said: 'You want somewhere to go this summer, don't you?' I replied, 'Yes.' He said: 'Well, are you keen on going? If so, I will let them know you are coming with me and that will be as good as settled.' I left him with the understanding that I should be up in town in about a fortnight's time, when I should stay with him a few days making certain preparations and then leave London for the farm near Stroud, Gloucestershire, with him.

When I reached Victoria, having about an hour to spare, I bought a newspaper and went in to have a cup of tea at the A.B.C. and look at my paper. When I opened it my glance lighted on the picture of Madame Zuleika, who had then fallen into the hands of the Philistines, and it at once flashed upon me that I had that morning unconsciously taken the first step leading up to the fulfilment of her prediction four months before.

JOHN GLOVER.

Broadwater, Worthing.

Do Clairvoyants See Spirits?

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to give my opinion regarding the question raised in a recent article in 'LIGHT': 'Do clairvoyants see spirits?'

When a real clairvoyant—not a person under auto-suggestion—declares that he sees a spirit of a person passed over, whom he has not been acquainted with in earth life, and when none of the persons present are bending their minds on the spirit described, then it becomes more than presumable that the described spirit is really present. In such a case it ought to be possible to fix it on a photographic plate, if it has materialised. Many a time I have tried to do this, having a good clairvoyant on hand, but without effect.

It is therefore my opinion that most of those spirits which clairvoyants claim to see, and even describe in a manner to be identified, are nothing but thought-transference on the part of the spirits, the latter not having the power or not knowing the way to materialise themselves sufficiently to impress the sensitive plate.

I believe this also to be the reason why spirit photos are so seldom obtained.

R. SETHEL, SEN.

Freiburg, Baden.

Spiritualism in Aberdeen.

SIR,—A psychological society has been lately formed in Aberdeen, Mr. Alexander Gall, 10, Hartington-road, being president. A successful social meeting was held on December 17th, when, among other attractions, a number of spirit photographs were shown on a screen by one of the members.

On the following evening a public meeting was held, when Mr. W. J. Leeder, of Blackpool, delivered an instructive trance address and also gave some clairvoyant descriptions, several of which were recognised. At the close of the meeting a number of new members joined the society.

We are, perhaps, too far north to have the services of public mediums often, but we shall be very pleased to see any Spiritualists who may visit Aberdeen and who might be able by their presence or advice to assist us in the efforts we are at present making to develop one or two local mediums.

204, Victoria-road,
Aberdeen.

J. MAC KAY,
Secretary.

'Too Intellectual.'

SIR,—I noticed in a recent issue of 'LIGHT' (p. 595) a query, 'Is "LIGHT" in fault?' reference being made to a statement that 'LIGHT' was 'too intellectual.'

It seems almost incredible that a friend who, from what was said of him, I should take to be an active worker in the cause, should deem any literature 'too intellectual'; and although it showed a praiseworthy humility to confess that 'LIGHT' was 'above him,' still I should have thought that the very realisation of that fact would have acted as an incentive to studious application rather than as a deterrent.

For my own part I rejoice at the splendid tone of 'LIGHT'; and I do not feel the slightest compunction in drawing very largely upon the matter submitted to the readers of our paper, week by week, for use in the addresses which from time to time I am privileged to deliver from one or other of our platforms.

I must, moreover, take the liberty of expressing it as my opinion that the investigator who is seeking for real spiritual elevation and sustenance can scarcely do better than secure a copy of 'Spirit Teachings' and read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the sublime messages therein contained. I have passed many a delightful evening perusing the pages of 'M. A. (Oxon's)' book; and I have lent it to a friend who is beginning to manifest an interest in occult matters, so that he may share in the benefit which I myself have derived from a study of 'The best book for a Christmas or New Year's Gift.'

I certainly do think that the individual who has studied 'M. A. (Oxon's)' works, and who regularly subscribes to, and assimilates, 'LIGHT,' is one who will be able, in the face of any or all opposing influences, to give a reason 'for the faith that is in him.' Therefore I cheerfully say to you, 'God speed you in your work.' May the high tone of 'LIGHT' be ever maintained; and may the conviction that good seed is being sown sustain, encourage, and stimulate you to continue the work now being carried on.

G. TAYLER GWINN.

The Recent Address by Mr. R. M. Theobald.

SIR,—I must demur to Mr. Theobald's interpretation of my letter which appeared in your issue of August 20th. He says 'Vir' 'has no sympathy with worship or any religious exercises whatever.' The letter itself shows, on the contrary, that I have a strong sympathy with a Rational Religion, and with (as a consequence) the worship and religious exercises thereof, and I say that all religions owe their origin to human reason. As Mr. Theobald opposes this, I must infer that the religion he approves is one that has its chief merits in being emotional and irrational. I know no such religion, and presume it is one at whose shrine he is the only worshipper.

Then he alleges that I say that the use of the terms 'Spiritual life,' 'Spiritually minded,' 'Spiritual uplifting,' are the currency of 'simple dishonesty.' I said nothing of the kind, and no reasonable person can possibly infer such a meaning from the words I use, which are plainly made to apply to those few and insignificant persons who allege that the so-called teachings of Spiritualism, such as progress in the spiritual world, &c., are original truths springing from the utterances of inspired mediums, whereas it is well-known that they are the speculations of men in the flesh. This is the very same kind of dishonesty which claims the doctrine of Love to have originated with Jesus Christ, when it is well-known that this doctrine is to be found in the Vedas, which were issued 5,000 years before Christ's advent. Even then they are not claimed by the Buddhist as being other than the product of human reason.

I think fairness and courtesy are essential to serious controversy, and I regret that Mr. Theobald should have failed in both respects. His reference to billiards is in very bad taste. I do not play the game; if I did I would wish to do so with one who played more fairly than Mr. Theobald reasons.

'VIR.'

[We give this letter from 'Vir' in order that he may have no reason to think that we treat him unfairly. But here the discussion must end in regard to the question whether Spiritualism is, or is not, a Religion. Other correspondents, also, will oblige by taking note of this decision.—Ed. 'LIGHT'.]

Tests for Death.

SIR,—I have not seen the following test for death mentioned in your correspondence:—

Apply the flame of a candle, match, or spirit lamp to any part of the skin. If the body is still alive a water blister is raised, but if dead the skin shrivels and burns. I believe this to be infallible, but of course not so satisfactory as decomposition, which latter, however, is not very agreeable.

London.

F. W. THATCHER.

Florence Marryat.

SIR,—It may interest 'Omega' to know that we have received two or three messages from Florence Marryat—the first on the day of her funeral, and others at different times since then, during our materialisation sances.

She stated that she hoped to communicate with us shortly, but that *she would never materialise*, as that was not a part of her work in the other life; but we understood that she would dictate a book to us of experiences since she crossed the river. She wished it taken down in shorthand, and we have made arrangements for this to be done.

She was extremely interested in the formation of this society (during earth life) and attended several of our sances, and we are hoping shortly to welcome her back to our midst once more.

HON. SECRETARY,
The Society of Spiritists, London.

'Conditional Immortality.'

SIR,—I cannot understand how anyone, believing in Divine goodness and wisdom, can hold such an opinion as that expressed by your correspondent, Mr. Hector Waylen, who seems to be firmly convinced that certain degraded souls are doomed to annihilation. Such a state of things would at once sweep away all the beauties of the idea of progression, and would indicate, without a doubt, that there was a blunder somewhere in the creation of human beings if even one has been brought into existence who is doomed to be ultimately a failure. Surely Divine omniscience would not be guilty of that!

I hope to hear the views of others on this subject. It seems to me that very probably the 'obsessing spirit' mentioned had only disappeared into another sphere, where it could not be seen.

G. W. BLYTHE.

SOCIETY WORK.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—The quarterly meetings of the London Union of Spiritualists will be held at the Workman's Hall, Stratford, on Sunday next, at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Mr. George T. Gwinn will preside. Tea at 5 p.m., 6d. each.—D. J. DAVIS, Secretary.

CAMBERWELL.—GROVE-LANE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—On Sunday last, Mrs. Holgate gave an interesting and intellectual address on 'Redeem the Time.' A circle was afterwards formed, when several tests were given. A public circle will be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday next.—H. WILLIAMS.

CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday last there was a very good attendance at the morning public circle. The evening 'Service of the Dead' was joined in by the audience in a very earnest manner. Next Sunday morning, at 11 a.m., a public circle will be held; at 3 p.m., children's school; and at 6.30 p.m., the guide of the leader will discourse upon 'Time and Eternity.'—J. C.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last, in the absence of the speaker announced for that date, short speeches were delivered by Messrs. Hurrell, Phipps, and W. Chaplin, and a circle was formed, and very satisfactory results were obtained. Next Sunday, January 6th, at 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Whimp. 'LIGHT' on sale.—C.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON.—Mr. Whyte's reading from Dickens' 'Christmas Carol' last Sunday evening, was greatly appreciated. Some part-singing by our choir, concluding with the hymn, 'Hark! the Herald Angels Sing,' added to the pleasure of the audience. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., a New Year's address will be delivered by the president on 'Spiritualism and the Twentieth Century.' On Wednesday, January 9th, at 8 p.m., a trance address will be delivered by Mr. E. W. Wallis, subject, 'Has, or is, Man a Soul?' On Sunday, January 13th, Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver a trance address.—A. CLEGG, Secretary, 18, Fleetwood-street, Stoke Newington, N.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, GLENDALE HALL, ST. ANN'S-ROAD, STAMFORD HILL, N.—The Inauguration Services of the South Tottenham Branch of the Spiritual Progressive Church will take place on Sunday, January 13th, at 7 p.m., at this hall. An address will be delivered by Mr. Edward Whyte, and clairvoyance will be given by Mr. Alfred Peters; chairman, Mr. H. Belstead. On Monday, January 14th, at 7.30 p.m., a lecture will be given by Mr. J. J. Morse on 'The Phenomena of Spiritualism: Its Marvels and Wonders,' illustrated by powerful limelight views. Admission free. Silver collection. Saturday, January 20th, address by Mr. Whyte. Monday, January 21st, social evening.—A. CLEGG, Secretary.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Ronald Brailey opened the meeting by reading and commenting upon a portion of St. John's Gospel. About a score of written questions were then handed to Mr. Brailey, who answered all fully and satisfactorily. Following this, many short psychometric readings were given in Mr. Brailey's able way; and every delineation was admitted to be correct. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. A. White will give an address and clairvoyance; on Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., the members' circle meets at 226, Dalston-lane, N.E.—O.H.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Mr. Alfred Peters was very successful in his clairvoyant descriptions at these rooms on Sunday last, only four spirit-people remaining unrecognised out of the twenty-seven described. Those friends who had braved the elements contributed to the success of the meeting by providing excellent conditions, which enabled convincing details to be given, astonishing strangers and pleasing all. Mr. Armstrong very kindly sang a solo 'Promises of Light' (John Carrington), this gentleman again securing the delighted appreciation of his hearers by his effective rendering of this excellent composition. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. J. Morse, trance address.—L. H.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, S.W.—On Sunday last an interesting time was spent, the following speakers giving brief addresses: Messrs. Thomas, Pascal, and Imison, Miss Morris and Mrs. Gould. Mr. Adams presided. Our 'Boxing Day' Social and Fancy Dress Cinderella was well attended and a great success; songs, recitations, and dancing supplying enjoyment for all. The following friends wore fancy dresses: Mrs. Boddington (poppy); Mr. Boddington (African Chief); Miss Spencer (basket of roses); Miss K. Spencer (buttercups and daisies); Miss Morris (sunflower); Miss Bussens (a butterfly); Miss Drisselman (forget-me-nots); Mr. A. Drisselman (Grace Darling); Mr. W. Boddington (Indian Prince); Mr. Roeder (puzzle); Miss Robinson (lily of the valley); Miss Bicksby (Spring). Our thanks are due to Mr. W. Boddington and Mr. Williams for the tasteful manner in which they decorated the hall. On Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., public discussion class; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., the usual workers. On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope. On Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., public circle. On Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.—YULE.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'The Humanitarian,' for January. London: Duckworth & Co., 3, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C. Price 6d.
- 'Modern Astrology,' for January. L. N. Fowler & Co., 7, Imperial Arcade, E.C. Price 1s.
- 'Catalogue of Books on Occult Sciences,' &c. London: J. M. Watkins, 53, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C.
- 'The Spiritual Review,' for January. London: 26, Osna-burgh-street, N.W. Price 4d., post free.
- 'Concentration.' By ARTHUR LOVELL. London: Nichols & Co., 23, Oxford-street, W. Price 2s.
- 'Four Lectures on Astrology,' Exoteric and Esoteric. By ALAN LEO. 9, Lyncroft-gardens, West Hampstead, N.W. Price 1s.
- 'The Book of the Future Life.' By PAULINE W. ROOSE, assisted by DAVID C. ROOSE. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. Price 6s.
- 'The True Christ and the False Christ.' By J. GARNIER. In two Volumes. London: George Allen, 156, Charing Cross-road, W.C. Price 5s. each volume nett.
- 'Physiognomy Explained in the Form of Question and Answer.' By FRANK ELLIS. The Ellis Family, Promenade, Blackpool. Price 1s.
- 'Inferences from Haunted Houses and Haunted Men.' By the Hon. JOHN HARRIS. London: Philip Wellby, 6, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C. Price 2s. 6d.
- 'Some Reminiscences and an Account of Startling Spiritual Manifestations.' By A. SMEDLEY. Cloth. Price 2s. 'LIGHT' Office, London.
- 'Mediumship Explained.' By E. W. and M. H. WALLIS. (Being the first part of 'A Guide to Mediumship.') Price 1s. 'LIGHT' Office, London.
- 'Notes on the Margins.' Being Suggestions of Thought and Inquiry. Five Essays, by CLIFFORD HARRISON. Cheaper Issue. London: Philip Wellby, 6, Henrietta-street, W.C. Price 3s. 6d.
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