

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

The highly original author of 'Anticipations' has just given us 'The Discovery of the Future' (London: T. Fisher Unwin), possibly as some justification for his prophetic assumptions or forecasts in that startling book. We must needs admire Mr. Wells' immense ability as a shocker, both as thinker and writer, but we have our doubts about his function as fortune-teller, though he has some of the characteristics of one,—noticeably this, that he is a confirmed evolutionist: and surely if anyone could tell poor Humanity's fortune it would be a perfect master of the ways of evolution.

Mr. Wells grips hard the central fact that the human animal is on the march. He says: 'The distance we have travelled gives us some earnest of the way we have yet to go. Why should things cease at man? Why should not this rising curve rise yet more steeply and swiftly? . . . We are getting (only getting!) into marching order. We have struck our camp for ever, and we are out upon the roads. . . All this world is heavy with the promise of greater things, and a day will come . . . when beings will stand upon this earth as one stands upon a footstool, and laugh, and reach out their hands amidst the stars.'

We think it very likely; but we also think it likely that 'this rising curve' belongs to a circle which goes far beyond the stars.

'A Dream of Realms beyond us,' by Adair Welcher (San Francisco: Cubery and Co.), is a trifle eccentric, especially in its quaint reference to its circulation and to certain schools of learning, but there is imaginative power in it. It is only a fragment, however, and scarcely invites criticism. The idea is a good one:—the discovery of our squalid earth by higher and purer beings, whose ideas concerning us are by no means flattering to our vanity. One 'gentle spirit, whose bright face bespeaks knowledge,' says:—

To learn if these odd beings of the earth  
Were real beings, and intelligent,  
Called I a mighty host of brighter spirits  
From all the corners of the universe  
And found, among them, some that saw this earth.  
They told me that these beings ne'er rose from it,  
But moved through shade and light upon its face.  
That all their actions showed fantastic thoughts,  
Showing these beings  
As very infants in the grades of life,  
With zephyr thoughts but granite prejudices.  
That they were blind and dumb to other worlds,  
And knew not even that they were themselves.  
Their eyes are flesh, and through that flesh they look,  
Yet know they not themselves that have looked through it.

Another says:—

Since this is, then, a real race indeed,  
And not—what once we thought—but plants that move,  
'Twere well for us to better their condition.

And a third, pityingly, remarks:—

Methinks 'twould be a pleasant thing, indeed,  
To help them lift such clouds as hide their light  
And hold them blind and dead.

We have looked carefully through Mr. Allen Clarke's book on 'The Eternal Question: Shall a man live again?' and find it worthy of serious attention. We cannot doubt its absolute sincerity, and no one who looks at it could possibly doubt its ability. It is a plain but deeply thoughtful and keenly emotional story of personal experiences, with some most original meditations on Life, Destiny, The Universe and God. The blend of simple homeliness in his narrative and thoughtful speculation in relation to these great subjects we find very interesting,—barring his notions on reincarnation. The book is published by Pendlebury and Sons, Bolton, but Mr. Clarke offers to send it from the office of his paper, 'The Northern Weekly,' Bolton.

Is it possible to believe in God? A startling question, but one that needs relentless pushing home. Unfortunately the reply in the affirmative seems easiest to those who picture Him as a kind of exaggerated man; and yet it is precisely this picture which is fading, and must fade. But that will be no loss: it will be a gain. The really spiritual thought may seem more vague but it has infinite staying power in it,—the thought which does not picture God at all, but holds by Him as the inmost secret of all things,—as the basis of all Reality, the security of all Law, the vital force of all Life. In that direction lies salvation for body and soul; for this Ideal God is the Lord of both.

A modern-minded minister, the Rev. C. F. Dole, lately set forth this thought of the all-pervading God, with a good deal of practical insight:—

At every point we discover that the finite human life depends upon the actual and present God. Bind the body, impede the circulation, sit down in idleness and let the blood stagnate, and the physical life runs low and death threatens. Shut off the mind from the sight of truth, fill it with its own conceits, close it from the free sunshine, and, lo! there is no intellectual health in us. Cease to listen to conscience, throw the tiny life off the trolley of duty, isolate yourself, seek your small personal will, and all the life in you drains down to that of the beast. It is hell when no fresh currents of good-will invigorate the soul of man. God's life is that which quickens the nerves of the body. His life is that which constitutes thought: this life, welcomed within us, fills our souls with joy as of heaven. Shall we not, then, believe the most beautiful fact, the innermost law of our being? Shall we not, then, joyously do what the good law commands? Shall we not open our hearts to the inflow of the loving Life of the universe?

With reference to the grossly unfair suggestion that Spiritualists hush up the dangerous and unpleasant side of spirit-communion, the following, from the Introduction to Stainton Moses' book on 'Spirit-Identity,' is important.

The first edition was published twenty-three years ago, and was republished early in the present year:—

'THE GATES BEING AJAR A MOTLEY CROWD RUSHES IN.

'The world from which disembodied spirit returns to us is very much like our own. The denizens of it are of varying degrees of progression: and those, unfortunately for us, who are least progressive, least developed, least spiritual, and most material and earthly, hover around the confines, and rush in when the gates are set ajar.

'We have small reason to complain of this. It is our own option to seek intercourse with the world of spirit; and we are certainly doing our best to keep up the supply of unprogressed and undeveloped spirits who are perpetually passing from our state to that with which we voluntarily open communication. Of course we reap what we have sown: that is an eternal law.'

Messrs. Hampton and Co. (London: Cursitor-street) send us a small collection of Sonnets by Percy Russell, entitled, 'The Two Births and other Sonnets.' They teach Immortality, attack Murder, Vivisection and War, and sing tenderly or wholesomely of The Politician, The Wife, The Poet, &c. The writer strongly centres his highest hope in Christ. Here is his hammering 'Against War':—

Who takes the sword, shall perish by the same.  
But has the world now entered on a time,  
When with the arts of peace grown to their prime,  
The light of Progress is to be the flame  
Of war Religion was invoked to tame?  
Shall industry be rendered desolate  
Beneath the tyranny of death and hate,  
Till Christian love becomes an idle name?  
Let nations pause before they madly rush  
On devil's paths of ruin and of woe;  
Humanity for glory can but blush;  
And what are laurels if they only grow  
From strife begetting strife to all men's loss?  
Was it for this Christ died upon the Cross?

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

In the interest of Members and Associates of the Alliance who find it impracticable or inconvenient to attend the Afternoon Drawing Room Meetings,

#### A SOCIAL GATHERING

will be held in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall, Regent-street, on

THE EVENING OF THURSDAY, APRIL 3RD,

for conversation and the interchange of thoughts upon subjects of mutual interest. The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock. Tea and Coffee will be served at 8.30 p.m. Admission will be by tickets only, which will be forwarded to all Members and Associates.

April 17.—MR. MORSE in reply to written questions.

May 1.—MR. J. BRUCE WALLACE, M.A., on 'What is Man?'

May 15.—Address by MR. W. J. COLVILLE, on 'The Evidence for Spirit Identity—Some Personal Experiences.'

May 29.—Conversazione.

#### GOOD FRIDAY.

In consequence of the recurrence of Good Friday, next week's 'Light' will—in order to meet the business requirements of the Newsagents—be sent to press on Tuesday, so that any communication intended for that issue must reach us by Monday morning.

The offices of 'Light' and the London Spiritualist Alliance will be closed from Thursday evening, the 27th inst., until the following Tuesday morning.

#### THE FEAR OF DEATH.

An esteemed correspondent sends us the following interesting communication, on a question which probably occupies men's minds very frequently, though it is not so often openly expressed:—

Why do so many good and sensible people feel a horror of death? It is not the old-fashioned fear of Hell that now troubles us, so much as a dread of annihilation, which expresses itself in a search for proof of the bare fact of continued conscious existence after death. This comprehensive doubt about another world was rarely felt until recent times; and when it did exist, it was regarded as a bad kind of infidelity. Indeed, one of the arguments that were formerly used against Spiritualism was that if we believe in God's promises to Christians, we need no further assurance of a future life, and that therefore the desire for 'proof palpable of immortality' is little better than Atheism in disguise. Unfortunately, that assurance contains the promise of Hell, as well as the promise of Heaven—a fact which Christ Himself is believed to have emphasised, when He pictured God as saying, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.' It is this part of God's promise of a future life that causes most of latter-day scepticism, for the world is ceasing to believe that a just God would punish human beings so mercilessly for deeds which we now perceive to be in large part the results of heredity and environment; and, since the belief in the Christian Heaven rests upon the same foundation as the belief in the Christian Hell, when the truth of the latter is doubted, belief in the former is necessarily shaken; the consequence of which is, the uncertainty and uneasiness which so many people feel, as to what will happen to them when they die.

Paradoxical as it may seem, this doubt about a future life shows truer religious feeling than the former certainty concerning it; for, to doubt God's goodness is the worst kind of irreligion, and it used to be thought a virulent heresy to believe that all men would be saved. Men fancied, in fact, that to believe in God's hatred and cruelty showed greater piety than to believe in His mercy and love. Nevertheless, there is truth in the idea that to doubt a future life is irreligious; for true religion implies a perfect faith in God; and since life is good, its continuance after death is guaranteed to us by God's love for His creatures; and this guarantee is better than 'proof palpable,' for that can at most give us the certainty of mere continued existence for a time, while 'immortality'—that our individual lives will never end—depends upon the will of God, and must always remain a matter of Faith; for Faith is, after all, the rock-bottom upon which all our reasonings stand.

It is often said, however, that the fear of death is not a matter of religious belief, but of character or temperament: for many religious people stand in great terror of death, while many notorious criminals and sinners face it without a tremor. The fear of death is affirmed to be instinctive, for it is necessary for the preservation of the species. Every living thing, it is said, manifests that fear, and fights instinctively for its life; but it cannot be supposed that any animal but man thinks what it is to be dead, and the instinct of the lower animals in this respect cannot be more than an instinctive resistance to injury, and flying from pain. That this fear of death in man is instinctive, and is not the result of reason or emotion, is said to be proved by the fact that when there ceases to be any prospect of escape from death, dying loses its terrors, and even a coward meets death bravely. But the fear of death, like all fear, is enervating and devitalising, whereas an instinct is always conducive to life and vigour; so the question arises whether, after all, the fear of death is a true instinct.

It is always taken for granted that the fear of death and the love of life are complementary manifestations of the same instinct; and many think the fear of death may be conquered by killing out the love of life. This is an immense mistake. Both fear and desire create a belief that the thing dreaded or longed for will be realised. Each strives to get possession of the mind, and to drive the other out. The fear of death and the love of life are in reality in direct conflict, and cannot both be true instincts; for the one says,



'You will die,' and the other, 'You will live.' Now it is a psychological fact, as well as a religious postulate, that 'perfect love casteth out fear.' In other words, that complete trust in God makes any doubt about a happy future life an absurdity. It is this trust in God that is reflected in the love of life, and is the true instinct; and it is eminently conducive to happiness, while the fear of death makes life a misery. And since that is so, the fear of death must be an artificial and unnatural thing, which would vanish—like the nightmare that it is—were trust in God to allow the true instinct of the love of life to awaken once again in mankind. For there was a time when no one doubted that, by the goodness of God, those who die are happy: that they go to the abode of the Gods, or to some 'happy hunting ground,' or to the beautiful 'kingdom of Yama,' and of the devas about which Max Müller tells us; there to forget the sorrows and sins of this world. That was in the long distant past, in 'pre-vedic' days, before there existed temples and priests, and rituals, and dogmas; all of which, as they developed, changed the benevolent Yama—the first man who died, and the ruler of the world of the departed—into a hideous torturer of the dead; and turned the devas, the 'bright ones' and friends of men, into malevolent demons. Dogma conquered the instinct of a future life, and killed it. But dogma itself to-day is dying; and instead of our lost instinct, we now have intuition. And intuition is giving back to us our trust in God, and our belief in a beautiful 'kingdom of the departed,' and in 'bright ones' who are our guides and helpers. That this blessed intuition can never be disturbed by hideous imagining and cunning sophism is guaranteed to us by the wonderful fact of spirit intercourse, as well as by the development of the human intelligence; for 'the indestructibility of consciousness' is an idea that is quickly taking possession of the human mind; and to him who grasps that conception, annihilation is as unthinkable as now the destructibility of matter is to everyone. And at the same time, the horrible fancies of 'God's hatred' and 'God's wrath' are dying out of the world, and the certainty of His supreme goodness is coming back to us with increased power; and so we well may do more than hope that it will not be long before all men will once more smile when they speak of death.

#### THE PSYCHICAL BODY AND ITS POWERS.

Miss Lilian Whiting, writing in the 'Banner of Light,' says: 'As the eye penetrates through the telescope distances undreamed of by ordinary means, so the trained psychic faculties can, and do, undoubtedly, penetrate the ethereal realm and observe with something like accuracy, the conditions. There is nothing in the least inherently impossible in this. If the ethereal world in which man dwells after death, for a period before advancing to some other definite stage beyond—if this world is in space, just outside the five miles or so of the atmosphere surrounding the earth, it reduces the question of the locality of the future life to a very definite one, and one that brings it within the pale of scientific observation. Many known facts go to support this theory. The individual organisation is two-fold, consisting of the physical and the ethereal body. Death is simply the process of slipping out of the physical body. As Stephen Phillips phrases it in one of his immortal lines:

"We shed the body and upward flutter to freedom."

But another fact bearing closely on this theory is that of the dual nature of man, formed to live, here and now, in both worlds; related to the earth by means of the physical organism and to the ethereal realm by means of his psychic body. Moreover, it is in his own power to develop the one or the other; to live the mere existence of the physical world, or to live, unceasingly, day by day, and year by year, the life of the spirit.

'Nor are the two so much mutually exclusive as they are in evolutionary relation and sequence. The spiritual power dominates the physical world. To live the life of the spirit is not a matter of turning away from progress, from the higher onward march of civilisation, to live the life of a medieval monk, but it is, instead, the life of the highest intellectual activity dominated by spiritual insight and power.'

#### 'THE DANGERS OF SPIRITUALISM.'

To the Editor of 'LIGHT.'

MY DEAR SIR,—When I first heard that my recent little book, 'The Dangers of Spiritualism,' was to receive public notice on the part of the London Spiritualist Alliance, I was not without hope that the very important aspect of the subject urged in the book would at last receive careful consideration, and that the difficulties to which I had drawn attention would be fully and fairly weighed and met. I regret to find from the printed reports that this hope has not been fulfilled. I cannot look upon Mr. Page Hopps's remarks as in any sense a criticism of my book. He does not deal with any one of the really weighty points which I have urged as being (in my opinion) fatal to the spiritualistic theory, but merely re-asserts the spiritistic view of things with which we are all acquainted. It would be useless for me, therefore, to attempt any lengthy reply to his statements; I could but reiterate what I have already said in my book.

In justice, however, to myself and to the cause of truth which, I am persuaded, both you and I have at heart, you will, I hope, allow me to make a few comments upon several statements contained in Mr. Hopps's address and made by those who took part in the subsequent discussion.

1. It was not a generous thing on Mr. Page Hopps's part to repeat the silly statement made by Dr. Lodge, and thus to prejudice the minds of his hearers against the book at the outset. The remark might be justifiable from the standpoint of a scientific man, who does not admit the religious element into a consideration of the meaning of phenomena and who is used to the purely scientific method. It was uncalled for in a meeting of Spiritualists. The book does not pretend to be a scientific treatise, as you will see from the Introduction. It is addressed to persons who admit the phenomena; but who put upon them an interpretation which prolonged observation and careful scrutiny of all the facts do not seem to me to warrant.

If Professor Lodge means to imply that powerful statements are to be looked for from the Society for Psychical Research, he will not, I think, find himself in agreement with the majority of those who heard his address. Allowing for its classic form and for some striking speculations, there is nothing in it of any particular value to scientific students of the subject, and the casual reader might well ask himself whether there is after all anything very definite for the Society to investigate. To look in the address for ascertained scientific results would not be unlike looking for a needle in a bundle of straw. At any rate I can assure both the Professor and Mr. Hopps that my little 'weakling' is doing a very powerful work and that my daily growing correspondence on the subject is affording me an undreamt of insight into the whole matter.

2. You will, I am confident, acquit me of any want of courage in not attaching my name to the book. I could not very well do otherwise (for the present—at least) on the ground of occurrences related in the book, which might easily have led to identification of the persons concerned, whose feeling in the matter I was bound to respect. All my personal friends have known of a considerable change in my views, in consequence of prolonged and fuller research, for many years past.

3. I still maintain that my book presents an aspect of the subject 'which is not very readily and willingly exposed to view by Spiritualists'—not because of any deliberate dishonesty on their part, but because of that mental bias in favour of a theory to which they stand committed. I will mention an instance in point. For many years past I have heard accounts of the astounding phenomena reported to have occurred in the presence of a once celebrated medium, and I have tried in vain to obtain his address or to ascertain why so excellent a medium so suddenly and persistently severed his connection with so great and important a cause. A gentleman, for many years connected with Psychical Research, now writes to me that the medium referred to had told him that he would have no more to do with Spiritualism because his 'guides' had deceived him. A lady client of his was in the habit of getting communications from 'V,' a great friend of hers 'on the other side,' through the medium's 'guides,' who vouched for the genuine character of the communications. After this had been going on for years, 'V' was arrested in Paris (or somewhere); he had never died, as supposed by the lady, and asserted by the 'guides,' but had disappeared in such a way as to induce an insurance company to pay the insurance on his life to some friend with whom he shared the money. Here, too, then, we have deception on the part of the spirits, and that in the case of one of the best mediums living, and in spite of all his experience. Have these facts been unknown to Spiritualists all these years? If not, why were they not fully and explicitly stated, as the interests of truth would most surely seem to demand? The experience of so great a medium, and of one so well

acquainted with the intricacies of mediumship, would surely be admitted to be of the most vital importance to all thoughtful inquirers.

4. My remark that the influences of the séance room are, on the whole, debasing, is based upon personal experience and upon documents received from Spiritualists now in my possession, and its truth is confirmed by communications reaching me almost daily. Only last week I received a letter in which a correspondent implores me to have nothing to do with the matter, and tells me that after devoting to the study and spread of Spiritualism the best years of his life, he had abandoned it all, finding that he had been following a will-o'-the-wisp. The members of the London Spiritualist Alliance are not, it must be borne in mind, the only Spiritualists in England.

5. It is to me a source of astonishment that an experienced Spiritualist should attach importance to the request of a spirit (who has deceived and who has been found out) that prayers should be made for him. This surely is a very common and well-known trick with which the merest beginner in experimental research is acquainted, and which experience proves again and again to be a mere ruse resorted to with a view to a continuation of the experiment and to the re-awakening of confidence in the integrity of the communicating intelligence.

6. Respecting the dangers to which attention is drawn in my book, Mr. Page Hopps is simply distorting my statements and, by divorcing them from their context, is causing the references to appear contradictory. My book clearly indicates the grounds on which I believe certain dangers to attend experimental investigation. That these dangers are greater still when the presence and action of intelligence in connection with them is ignored and the phenomena are ascribed to 'natural causes,' must surely be obvious to the most ordinary understanding, since the mind is thus laid open to influences and impressions from without, of which it is unconscious, and against which it cannot in consequence guard itself. It is for this reason that I think it better on the whole that the results of recent research on this subject should be fully known by intending experimenters as well as by the general public.

7. Mr. Page Hopps's insinuations respecting the influence of my creed upon my present views as to the character of the phenomena are both unfair and unfounded. He has drawn, in fact, upon his own imagination and has put the cart before the horse. It is well-known to all my personal friends that, in consequence of new facts constantly coming to my notice, my views on the subject underwent considerable change years before I became a Catholic, and that it was this changed view, in consequence of renewed and careful study, which was not without its influence in determining my course. His quotation of the popular shibboleth respecting the mental status of Catholics I consider quite unworthy of notice. In an age like ours, when some of the best and noblest and most educated of men and women are, after years of thoughtful research, passing into the Catholic Church, such a remark calls for no comment. Imagine a man like Lord Brampton (Sir Henry Hawkins), admittedly one of the acutest lawyers that ever sat on the English Bench, and now constantly a member of important Parliamentary Committees, ceasing to think for himself!

8. Without entering into the question of the authorship of the book to which you refer, it will answer the present purpose if I state at once that the extracts quoted from it accurately present my once state of mind on the subject. It is the attitude of mind at first adopted by most persons who are brought face to face with the actualities of the phenomena. To the liberally religious mind, dominated by modern philosophic thought and never for a moment conceiving the possibility of the existence of evil in the unseen, the spiritistic theory is the only possible and conceivable one. Such a mind is bound to see in it a great and glorious truth, and in its first enthusiasm is apt to be uncritical and to overlook some serious arguments that might be urged against it. It discovers numerous analogies between the modern phenomena and those recorded in the sacred Scriptures. It is only after prolonged and persistent research, and after the most thorough-going scrutiny of the statements of the spirits, that suspicions are apt to be aroused, and that the flaws in the spiritistic theory become more distinctly apparent. It is only then that the whole subject is once more thoroughly overhauled and examined, and that the verdict is, in so many instances, an entirely different one.

Many of my earlier conclusions, moreover, were built up upon misstatements made to me on the part of mediums, and upon my own imperfect acquaintance with the true character of mediumship. I know now that the phenomena (in the spiritualistic sense) never occur spontaneously as I had at one time supposed, and had been led to believe, but that some kind of 'development' always precedes their manifestation. I also know now that identity can never be satisfactorily established, since recent research has shown

that there are various ways by which the operating intelligences may have access to the information required, and that personations are of constant occurrence.

I further know that the beneficial influences at first exercised upon the sceptical mind by spirit phenomena are hardly ever maintained, but that in most instances they lead to a mere craving for further phenomena; that the spirit creed is inconsistent and self-contradictory; and that the tendency of the entire spiritistic philosophy is distinctly anti-Christian in the true and historical meaning of that term.

It was this better and fuller knowledge of the subject, verified over and over again, which ultimately caused me to considerably modify my views, and there is nothing illogical or inconsistent in this process of thought. Numbers of highly intelligent persons have passed, and are constantly passing, through it. It is a rule in science to adopt that hypothesis which best covers the known facts, and to abandon it when additional knowledge and new facts make it untenable. This is what has taken place in my own case. I adopted the conventional spiritistic theory when the degree of my knowledge and of my acquaintance with the facts seemed to warrant it. I abandoned it when years of further research and additional facts rendered that theory impossible for me.

And that this may be the final conclusion of those members of the Alliance for whom I entertain personally the sincerest respect, and whose friendship I shall, I hope, be allowed to continue to enjoy, and that they may see their way to making this admission before their earthly life closes, is my very earnest hope and my constant prayer.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

THE AUTHOR OF 'THE DANGERS OF SPIRITUALISM.'

#### THE PROBLEM OF BEING.

'Professor Bixby well says: "Evolution is not itself a cause. It is no force in itself. It has no originating power. It is simply a method and law of the occurrence of things."

'Atheistic science is dumb upon the problem of causation, and only as Spiritualism, with its attendant phenomena, is sought after and investigated, do we come any nearer the solution of the unknown. The great array of facts and data appertaining to mind and its potency is the workshop of the future scientist. And the study must start from the understanding of the powers of the spirit. When man has solved the problem of his own being; when he can tell what it is which, through and by his will, moves his hand and foot; what it is which, through the wonderful mechanism of the eye, sees and comprehends and apprehends, then he has grasped the purpose which, through laws and forces, projects the form of things.

'There is just as much of a secret to be uncovered in the marvels of telepathy, psychometry, and mesmerism as there is in the nebular hypothesis. These marvels of the human mind have been where the energies of the nebula have been—in the great storehouse of intelligence, wisdom, and love—and the same old admonition is being given every day: "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." Happily, with all the scoffs and jeers there is an effort being made to understand, at least, what the admonition means, if not to embark just yet upon the wide and pathless vistas which open up before us.—'Light of Truth.'

#### DO SPIRITS MATERIALISE?

At the close of one of his lectures in Melbourne, Dr. J. M. Peebles dealt with a number of questions from the audience. In response to the inquiry, 'Do you believe that spirits materialise, and if so, how?' he said: 'Pure, essential spirit never becomes matter—is never seen either by the physical or clairvoyant eye, while the spiritual body is often clairvoyantly seen, within which dwells the divine Ego, the higher self, the God incarnate. This spiritual, or astral body, as the old occultists called it, constitutes the framework over, or on, which the materialised form, through the manipulations of immortal chemists, becomes temporarily visible. Invisible steam may become solid, ponderable ice a sample of the unseen, materialised. So spiritual substances manipulated, polarised and chemically compacted, may become visible; in this way, we may see the materialised forms of our departed friends.—'Harbinger of Light.'



## A 'ROTHE' MEETING IN BERLIN.

The unfortunate Rothe affair seems to have entered on a new phase, and whatever the result of the police arrest mentioned in 'LIGHT,' of March 8th, and of the other recent disclosures may be, it cannot but be a relief if the real truth in favour of or against Frau Rothe and her manager—or accomplice—Herr Jentsch, is made public.

The 'Spiritistische Rundschau' has hitherto been a persistent and enthusiastic believer in the genuineness of Frau Rothe's mediumship; I was therefore rather surprised, on opening the March number, to read the heading of the first paper, which is as follows: 'The Exposure of the Flower Medium, Anna Rothe, and the Fraud in Spiritism.' The article in question describes a public meeting on January 29th, at a hall in Berlin, holding six hundred persons, which was filled to overflowing. Herr Reinhold Gerling, of Oranienburg, was the principal speaker. Only an abstract of the speeches is given, with no comments, and the paper is signed 'Sabellicus.' I see from another notice of the meeting in 'Psychische Studien,' that the report first appeared in the 'Tägliche Rundschau' ('Daily News') of January 30th.

Herr Gerling commenced by saying that he felt much pain in coming forward to speak on this subject, as he had been one of the most enthusiastic believers in Frau Rothe, and had sharply attacked her opponents. But he had to confess with shame that he had been duped, and he wished publicly to apologise for the insults he had offered to his adversaries. He then went on to describe how his suspicions had been aroused at a séance with Frau Rothe, and how he and his friends had laid traps for her, into which she readily fell, until at last, after some weeks of constant observation, the proofs of fraud were to them complete. The dénouement took place at a séance at his own house (date not given), at which Frau Rothe was publicly accused of cheating by a lady present. This lady had to leave the room, but others were on the watch; and Herr Gerling positively affirms that Frau Rothe seized the flowers and fruit from underneath her dress, and that at the end of the séance, which broke up in some confusion, she then threw all those she had left on her person behind a lady of ample proportions sitting next her.

It is impossible in the space at my disposal to give further details. I will only say that during the discussion, five gentlemen and one lady, who had been present at the séance, came forward to bear witness to the truth of Herr Gerling's account.

The conclusion of his speech was satisfactory, for he declared that even if he discovered that he had been duped by ten mediums it would make no difference to his belief in Spiritism, and that he was, and remains, a convinced Spiritist.

Among the speakers in favour of Frau Rothe was Herr Jentsch, whose speech, however, did not make much impression; he attributed the ill-success of the séance to the disharmony which prevailed in the circle, and declared that he himself was firmly convinced of the genuineness of Frau Rothe's mediumship.

The second article is by Herr Kuhaupt in answer to Herr Gerling's attack, and is (it seems to me) rather a feeble attempt at vindication. After describing a very successful séance, he writes: 'It may be that Frau Rothe has few séances so entirely free from suspicion. At later séances which I had with her, there was certainly occasional room for doubt.' Herr Kuhaupt adds to his paper some letters from 'Witnesses for the medium Rothe.' These are from three ladies from Hamburg, who were present at the séance at Herr Gerling's house, and who write very enthusiastically about Frau Rothe. They are a mother and daughter, named Winter, and a sister of the former, and, according to what they say, had never been present at a séance with Frau Rothe before; in fact, they seem to be quite novices, and their testimony cannot be looked upon as very valuable.

Before closing this subject, I will mention that in 'Psychische Studien' for this month Luise Hitze gives a somewhat abridged translation of the account given in 'LIGHT' some months ago, by Madame d'Espérance, of the séance she had with Frau Rothe in Berlin, and it is at the end

of this paper that the editor, in a footnote of nearly two pages of small print, briefly describes the 'Gerling' meeting. Dr. Maier has always maintained a neutral attitude in regard to the Rothe question, and he expresses his regret that it is impossible for him to form any decisive judgment on the subject till Frau Rothe consents to submit to scientific tests.

Dr. Maier's account, as well as that in 'Spiritistische Rundschau,' was evidently published before the arrest by the police. M. T.

## 'THE OUTLOOK BEAUTIFUL.'

Under the above heading Miss Lilian Whiting is writing a series of interesting articles in the 'Banner of Light,' from one of which we take the following extract, fairly presenting what may be called 'the larger Spiritualism.' Miss Whiting says:—

'Spiritualism has not come to destroy, but to fulfil. It has come to fulfil the hopes and longings of human life and to inform them with the vitality of faith and conviction. It has come to transform the present. Has not the time arrived when we must all be "strenuous" in our unceasing combat of the idea that the faith of Spiritualism begins and ends with a belief in communication between those in the Seen and in the Unseen? That is but one fact in a chain of noble and comprehensive philosophy and a philosophy that holds in solution the entire eternal processes of life. It is as if one regarded conversation, or the writing of letters, or the sending of telegrams, as comprehending the entire life of humanity, whereas mutual communication is one fact only in a complicated system of living. Now Spiritualism, in its true and entire sense, includes all economic and social advance of the race; all the inventions and discoveries of science; all the higher truth that may be embodied in literary and in ethical expression; because the initial condition of all these various trends of expression that make up progress is that of a true conception of the nature of man and his relation to the visible universe. When we realise the absolute oneness of existence; that death is no break, no crisis, but merely an event in life; when we realise the nature of the process,—

"Eternal process moving on;  
From state to state the spirit walks,"—

we find in its new encouragement to activity, a new stimulus for all important acquirement, and a new discrimination of values regarding the significant and insignificant pursuits of life.'

## PROGRESS.

Let there be many windows to your soul,  
That all the glory of the universe  
May beautify it. Not the narrow pane  
Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays  
That shine from countless sources. Tear away  
The blinds of superstition; let the light  
Pour through fair windows broad as Truth itself  
And high as God.

Why should the spirit peer  
Through some priest-curtained orifice and grope  
Along dim corridors of doubt, when all  
The splendour from unfathomed seas of space  
Might bathe it with the golden waves of Love?  
Sweep up the debris of decaying faiths;  
Sweep down the cobwebs of worn-out beliefs,  
And throw your soul wide open to the light  
Of Reason and of Knowledge. Tune your ear  
To all the wordless music of the stars,  
And to the voice of Nature, and your heart  
Shall turn to Truth and Goodness, as the plant  
Turns to the sun; a thousand unseen hands  
Reach down to help you to their peace-crowned heights;  
And all the forces of the firmament  
Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid  
To thrust aside half-truths, and grasp the whole.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

MRS. EFFIE BATHE desires us to announce that her next 'At Home' for inquirers will be held at her house, 15, Ashchurch-terrace, Shepherd's Bush, W., on Tuesday, March 25th, at 8 p.m. punctually, when Mr. Robert King will answer questions upon any subject of psychic interest. An invitation card will be sent to any earnest inquirer complying with the requirements stated in 'LIGHT,' January 18th.



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SATURDAY, MARCH 22nd, 1902.

## Light,

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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### 'THINK FOR YOURSELF.'

Everything wants thinking about; even the excellent advice, 'Think for yourself'; for, upon reflection, that is not as simple and as easy as it appears to be. Keen observers always knew that our thinking was apt to get mixed with the thinking of other people, and that the man who read his morning paper while he took his breakfast imbibed opinions with his coffee, and nourished his prejudices with paragraphs just as he nourished his body with eggs. Men have even been known to catch beliefs as well as colds in railway carriages: and have all along been imagining they were thinking for themselves.

Our thoughts, opinions, prejudices, sympathies and antipathies are, for the most part, determined for us by the cradle we were rocked in, the chum we hooked on to at school, the teacher or minister or priest or scoffer who first got hold of us, the particular suburb in which we live or the 'set' to which we drift and which determines for us the cut of our collar, the style of our hat, the disposal of our vote, and the cadence of our drawl. And yet we pride ourselves on thinking for ourselves!

There are exceptions: but not many; and the exceptions are not generally 'nice' people. They say 'No': they pass by the lovely gothic door: they don't wear gloves in warm weather: they read serious books and scoff at ping-pong: they have been known to smile at curates: they are heretics, radicals, spiritualists, all sorts of things out in the open: and they have an unfortunate habit of making everything drift their way, and producing a general feeling of unsettlement: and then, when other people at last agree, they do not settle down, but begin all over again, pegging out fresh claims, and keeping everybody in a state of suspense as to what will happen next:—most annoying!

Now the most serious thing is that this excellent piece of advice, 'Think for yourself,' is very seldom allowed to intervene in relation to the greatest subject of all:—Religion: and that, when one comes to ponder it, is strange. In business, in politics, in the choice of friends, even in relation to the choice of a husband or a wife, the world more or less kindly, or more or less reluctantly, bids us think for ourselves: but when it comes to Religion,—the matter which is supposed to determine an eternal destiny,—there are ominous provisos, warnings, or there is dead silence.

That is extremely strange: but let anyone try it; lay traps there for 'Think for yourself'; and see the result. Quite a bright and accomplished lady, a few days ago, when challenged with her professed belief in certain damaged old dogmas, replied with an amusing mixture of arch humour and timid hedging: 'It is best to be safe, you know, and to rather believe in too much than too little!' It reminds us of a lately published confession by an anxious Catholic who, at last, had to bolt from the fold. Explaining his painful indecision, he hit the mark with the naïve confession: 'I was looking over the fence, and longing that it were possible to breathe the fresh air of the desert without losing the safe shelter of the fold.'

How humiliating! Not at all. It is extremely natural,

and it indicates the state of mind of millions, poor things! But, of course, it is far, far away from the ideal state of mind. The world does not know it yet, but it is a fact that the highest characteristic of man is his ability to think—to think any way—merely to think;—and that the measure of the man (or of the woman) is the measure of freedom of thought—of personality in thinking: and it seems to follow from this that man's highest duty is to think for himself—to be honest with himself: so much so that it is spiritually better for him to think his way into error than lazily stumble into truth by accident: and, indeed, it is an open question whether a thoughtful and honest unbeliever, who bravely takes his chance, is not nearer and dearer to God than a mind-repressing receiver of a creed that promises to save him if he will but give in.

The liberated Catholic, just mentioned, put his case in a most pungent way. He had gone through the agonising process of emerging from his fears. His sense and conscience pulled him one way: and his fears and hopes pulled him another. And yet, he said, there was no real alternative. He placed himself, in imagination, at the point of death, and:—but he shall tell it in his own way:—

Every time I place myself in imagination (and it is very often I do it) at the point of death, it grows harder and harder to fancy myself forcing out an 'I believe what the Church believes' just to save myself from hell fire; it would be a useless mockery if it were needed.

But I am told it is my duty to give up this rebel reason to faith! How would my account of myself to God sound on this view? 'My God, I did not on earth believe this or that doctrine of the Church; but as the theology-books taught it, and I was afraid of hell, I said I did, and taught so to others. Give me my reward for subjecting my reason to faith!'

Well, perhaps this is too roughly expressed and hardly a fair statement of the case. Put it then in its most respectful shape:—

'My God, I was so much more sure that your revelation was infallible than that I was right—I knew I might be mistaken, but your Church could not be, that I forced myself, bullied myself, into saying, *Credo quia impossibile!*'

This man, dowered with the fatal gift of thought and honesty, was of course 'doomed to be saved,' though only in the open: but equally, of course, others could rest in the fold without sin: and perhaps, at the present stage of human development, the dwellers in the fold must needs be the majority, just as in some homes the majority are in the nursery; and just as, for one who walks, three may need the family coach: but it would go hard with the world, and with us, if we clung too long to the nursery, and, shrinking from the hills, hankered after the family coach.

There is something breezy and refreshing in that old Bible verse: 'Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.' One thinks of it as a kind of symbol of the best part of the history of the world, and the never-ceasing call of God to the world's virile thinkers. Obedience to that call may count us out, make us singular, make us, in a way, outcasts; but that is actually implied in the call. God does not deceive His Abrahams. 'Leave your country,' He says, 'part company with your kindred: give up your father's house, and go':—simply go: led by the brain-thought and the heart-hunger, and borne up by the promise of the Spirit. That, in brief, is the history of the world: for the history of the world is the history of its Abrahams who listen and obey.

Of course this means sacrifice, and sacrifice requires courage and faith, as many Spiritualists know. But what a glorious other side there is to it! How inspiring the sense of owning one's self! how delightful the taste of the fresh air! how sweet the bread of freedom! Then, if we add the thought that it is the free soul which is likeliest to help make a path through the jungle, ought not the joy of the advancing thinker to be complete? And surely, amongst these helpers of the laggards and gropers in the rear, Spiritualists are by no means the least helpful or the last.

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF PSYCHICAL EXPERIENCES.

ADDRESS BY  
W. J. COLVILLE.

Delivered on March 6th before the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall. Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, the President of the Alliance, in the chair.

MR. COLVILLE said: The twenty-fifth anniversary of my first introduction to public life having occurred on the 4th of this present month, I have been particularly requested to give some definite account of my connection with psychic problems during a quarter of a century. If I am to relate faithfully, even in barest outline, my experiences with 'unseen helpers,' I must go back to my very early childhood, when my 'mediumship' originally declared itself. I was practically an orphan from birth. My mother passed to spirit life in my infancy and my father was called by important business to travel in lands remote from England, where I was left in charge of a guardian. My childhood was singularly unchildlike, as I was separated from children altogether, and compelled to associate exclusively with persons of thoroughly mature age.

How I first came to see my mother clairvoyantly I do not know, but I distinctly remember becoming vividly conscious at frequent intervals of the gentle, loving presence of a beautiful young woman, who invariably appeared to my vision gracefully attired in light garments of singular beauty. The head of this charming lady was adorned with golden ringlets; her eyes were intensely blue; she was tall and of rather slender build, and manifested many attributes of almost ideal womanhood. I cannot recall to mind any occasion when this lady spoke to me as one ordinary human being on earth converses with another, but I distinctly recollect that when I saw her most plainly and felt her presence most distinctly, I was intensely conscious of information flowing into me. I can only liken my experience to some memorable statements of Swedenborg concerning influx of knowledge into the interiors of human understanding.

### The Problem of Clairvoyance.

I should probably never in those early days have thought of such a problem as clairvoyance, had it not been for the surprising fact that what I saw perfectly other people did not see at all. I was first led to realise the unusual character of my vision when I mentioned the presence of the 'beautiful lady in white' to two persons who were with me when I saw her very distinctly, and they declared that we three were the only occupants of the apartment. The mystery of the fourth inmate was for me greatly intensified when it appeared to me that the other two persons, besides her and myself, could pass through her and she through them, while they appeared completely unconscious of each other's presence. An elderly lady with whom I was living, who was a devoted Churchwoman, summed up all my singular visions, when I related them to her, in the following words: 'Well, I can't account for it but it must either be the work of God or Satan.' Though not many months over five years of age at the time to which I am now referring, I had already heard Satan called the 'father of lies' and had also been taught that truth belonged to God and came from heaven; so my youthful intellect was not perturbed with dread of any power of darkness, as I found that all the information which flowed into me when this beautiful spiritual being manifested to me was correct in every particular. I was, therefore, quite content to believe, with simple faith supported by reasoning, that my dear mother was watching over me as a guardian spirit. I often heard of guardian angels, and I was sometimes taken to a children's service in a church where a favourite hymn before the catechising began with the following invocation: -

'Dear angel ever at my side!  
How loving must thou be  
To leave thy home in heaven to guard  
A little child like me.'

Instead of conjecturing angels as well-nigh incomprehensible beings belonging to an order in the creation entirely different from ourselves, I rested satisfied with the simple, reasonable conviction that the messenger from unseen spheres who watched over me most intimately, was the dear mother whose physical presence had been withdrawn from earth long before I had reached an age when I could have consciously appreciated it. I do not forget the strange shock I felt when someone said to me: 'It is impossible that you should see your mother; you have no mother; she is dead.' Such vulgar, brutal words made no other impression on me than to set me thinking along psychic lines, far more often pursued by little children than adults generally suppose.

### A Gift or a Natural Endowment?

It must be borne in mind that I was an isolated and often a lonely child, thrown very largely upon my own resources for amusement and enjoyment. This circumstance may suffice to suggest instructive thoughts regarding conditions singularly favourable to mediumistic development. Is mediumship a gift or a natural endowment? is a query often raised. To answer this inquiry it is surely necessary to recall the two distinct senses in which the word 'gift' is commonly employed. We speak of natural gifts, of the universal gifts of God to humanity, as well as of particular bestowments vouchsafed to those who are sometimes segregated in our philosophy from the 'common herd,' and designated a 'chosen few.' Having used the term 'clairvoyance' in connection with my own earliest spiritual experiences, I wish to define it in my own case as applying to extended vision of three distinctly different, though closely allied, varieties. The first evidence of my own clear vision, which came to me so spontaneously and unexpectedly that for a considerable season it caused me no astonishment whatever, related to beholding a form of real, consistent substantiality, existing on another plane of being than the one usually termed terrestrial. This form was completely and symmetrically human in every detail of outline, and was attired in artistic dress, not foreign to ordinary worldly convention, but vastly more beautiful and graceful than the customary mortal dress fashionable in the sixties of the nineteenth century, which included the crinoline and the chignon. The second evidence of clairvoyance did not refer to sight, even on the psychic or astral plane, as sight is ordinarily understood, but to mental enlightenment or intellectual illumination, and this, not only of a general but also of a particular character, as the knowledge which entered into my understanding related not only to topics of usual information, but went deeply and precisely into manifold details of private family history, and included many revelations which brought great consternation to the hearers when I reported my experiences, seeing that the people among whom I was being reared were very desirous of hiding from me many facts connected with my parents of which my spirit mother undoubtedly wished me to become aware. The third feature in my clairvoyance was the actual predicting of coming events, and I use the term 'coming' in the precise possible manner for the very events I was led to foretell had, in many instances, actually occurred in one sense, and were on their way to occurring in yet another. A single example will illustrate.

### The Mystery of Prognostication.

My grandmother's sister in Lincolnshire had decided to visit Sussex, but had not communicated her intention to anyone, though her mind was fully made up. Though I had never seen my great-aunt, and had rarely heard her mentioned, I distinctly saw her in the house where I was then living, and accurately described her appearance, even to the strings of the cap which she actually wore a few weeks later when paying her sister a visit. Two questions naturally arise at this point: First, how is it that we can see people who may be thinking of us, or perhaps only of a place we are inhabiting, when they are not consciously or deliberately projecting their thought, or an astral likeness of themselves, to us? Second, how is it that we see articles of wearing apparel which those persons may not be actually wearing at the time when we behold them? The following



reply may serve to elucidate, at least in part, the foregoing mystery. When Herbert Spencer many years ago criticised somewhat adversely the notion of clothing as pertaining to the spirit world, he evidently overlooked a very important consideration, to the effect that our clothing is all mentally designed before it can be physically confectioned. A new fashion in dress is impossible except as an outcome of a new mental concept of apparel. Not only Swedenborg, but Shakespeare also, clearly illustrates the close connection which must ever logically exist between the wearer and the garment worn; and in no case do we find the suggestive doctrine more clearly taught by inference than in the play of 'Hamlet,' where the father of the Prince of Denmark appears in spirit, clad in armour, at the very time when he is seeking to inspire his son to make war against an uncle who has incurred the fierce displeasure of the discarnate king. Not only do we clothe ourselves psychically in such raiment as becomes our immediate mental state, but we often unconsciously supply, gratuitously, portraits of ourselves doing things we intend to do, things, indeed, which we have spiritually already done, and which we shall certainly ultimately materially unless our plans are unexpectedly frustrated. It greatly simplifies the mystery of prognostication if we do but consider that seership is a faculty which enables a seer or secess to actually behold what exists on a plane of ultimatum prior to the physical.

#### An Eventful Day.

As I grew from earliest childhood to rather riper age, and in the meantime attended schools and became interested in many external pursuits and objects, my singularly spontaneous mediumship became less prominent, and with the exception of an occasional prophetic dream of rare lucidity, which always came as a needed warning, I gradually drifted into a more prosaic state of life, from which I was suddenly aroused by the presence of the world-renowned Cora L. V. Richmond (then Mrs. Tappan) in England during the seventies of the last century. When I was nearly fourteen years of age, and a member of a church choir, Mrs. Tappan greatly excited the population of Brighton, where I was then residing, by her marvellous discourses and poems, and singularly erudite replies to all kinds of questions, which she claimed were not due to her own erudition, of which she made no boast and to which she laid no claim, but to the action through her instrumentality of a band of guides who were ready to speak through her whenever their services were in demand. May 24th, 1874, was, indeed, an eventful day in my history, for though my public career as a lecturer and globe-trotter did not begin till nearly three years later, it was on the evening of that beautiful Whit-Sunday that I experienced the first thrill of consciousness that it was my principal lifework to travel nearly all over the earth, guided by *unseen* but not *unknown* inspirers, who would carry me safely over all tempestuous oceans and protect me from all dangers by land if I would but be faithful to the mission entrusted to me by wise and kindly helpers. I have always greatly disliked the word 'control,' and I dislike it still, for in my ears it savours of coercion, and I have never been coerced by my inspirers, who have ever proved themselves faithful teachers, counsellors, and guides—veritable 'invisible helpers,' to use Leadbeater's felicitous expression, a title we may well apply to those numberless assistants who render multifold services to us of which we are often quite unconscious, but from which we derive inestimable benefit.

The record of my original introduction to the work of inspirational speaking is now an oft-told tale; in brief, I may sum it up as follows: When I was walking home after greatly enjoying Mrs. Tappan's wonderful eloquence, I registered a vow that if any good and wise intelligences in the unseen state would inspire me as they were wont to inspire the marvellous lady who styled herself their 'instrument,' I would most gladly take service with them and go whithersoever their counsels led me. I earnestly desired and confidently expected that inspiration would come to me if it were genuine at all, and come it did that very evening and within an hour from the time when I invoked it. Had no obstacles been placed in my way, I should have darted forth meteorically as a speaker before my fourteenth birth anniversary, but my legal guardian refused to grant

permission until I was at least two years older, though she did not prevent my occasionally appearing at private gatherings, nor was she able to deprive me of some wonderful experiences of a mesmeric or hypnotic character, which opened my eyes in my early teens to many of the marvels of psychology which are now demanding and receiving attention from distinguished *savants* the wide world over.

#### Hypnotic Influence and Spirit Control.

Hypnotism and its dangers, like Spiritualism and its dangers, is now being discussed at every turn, and I am often greatly interested to hear discussions on these recondite themes, when the debaters are people of experience, but whose experiences have been largely unlike my own. I do not presume to settle any question for my neighbours, I merely speak in the first person singular when I declare that I was never hypnotised against or even without the full consent of my own will; and as spiritualistic literature abounds with references to the virtual identity of *hypnotic influence* with *spirit control*, I deem it advisable to bear personal testimony in this connection. Shortly after my discovery that I could speak inspirationally, and even be spoken through by an unseen intelligence, to whose words, uttered through my lips, I could attend as a quiet, interested listener, I made the acquaintance of a brilliant young nobleman who was both an operatic singer and a practising psychologist. This young 'star' was introduced to me as desiring to conduct some delicate mesmeric experiments for which he needed the services of a *lucule*, or natural clairvoyant; or failing to discover anyone who would entirely answer to the above description, he considered it highly probable that his experimentation would be successful if he could meet a sensitive young person who was thoroughly willing to yield to his suggestive influence. My first ejaculation when the subject was broached to me that I might serve for the experiments, was 'I should be delighted, and feel sure they will be successful.' Though all the experiments were conducted in strict privacy, so far as the general public were concerned, many distinguished persons high in the learned professions took active part in many of the most satisfactory of them. It is not usually supposed, at least by the uninitiated into psychic mysteries, that the words *passive* and *negative* are quite as correctly qualified by the terms *wilfully* and *willingly* as are *positive* and *active*. We are frequently told that mediumship is impossible without passivity, and such is doubtless the case, but voluntary rather than involuntary passivity or negativity conduces to the most reliable results. Operator and subject are terms of doubtful import, but such terms as sender and receiver or transmitter and recipient are clearly not open to valid objection, seeing that they in no way imply enforced surrender of one individual to another. During the nearly three years which intervened between my first insight into my capabilities as an inspired lecturer and my *début* before a London audience, I had many opportunities for witnessing extraordinary phenomena, as I became well-acquainted with many prominent Spiritualists, who treated me with great kindness and consideration and placed many exceptional advantages at my disposal for witnessing manifestations of all varieties. Some of these appealed strongly to me, others did not. I had many opportunities for sitting in circles with Williams, Herne, Monck, Eglinton, and other extraordinary mediums, who, at about that time, were either in the inception or at the zenith of their fame. Though I was told repeatedly that I was a physical medium, and though I sat in many séances where tables moved and furniture in general behaved grotesquely, I never knowingly officiated as a physical medium, though planchette has worked for me repeatedly and automatic writing has been often with me quite an every-day occurrence. During the greater part of 1877-8, I was privileged to investigate the evidences of phenomenal Spiritualism all over England. The most private gatherings were open to me, and I was times without number privileged to sit with the most distinguished mediums under thoroughly satisfactory test conditions; but though I saw enough to convince me a thousand times over that some mysterious occult force was operating, and the spiritualistic hypothesis always seemed to me more reasonable than any other, I do not think, with my peculiar



and naturally sceptical cast of mind, that I could ever have been completely convinced of the truth of spirit-communion had it not been for experiences of my own which absolutely forced me as a rational individual to accept the only sane conclusion.

#### On the Public Platform.

When I first took the platform I felt very much as I had often felt in more private places when voluntarily obeying the silently expressed dictation of the talented psychologist who could transmit to and through me any information he desired to convey when I was in a susceptible condition; but though he declared that I was perfectly his 'subject,' and I was quite willing to be such, I could not be induced by any professional mesmerist or practising physician, who was engaged in the conduct of hypnotic experiments, to receive or transmit anything, simply because I did not choose to make myself passive or susceptible. I remember well sitting on the platform in old Doughty Hall (a Masonic edifice no longer in existence) on Sunday evening, March 4th, 1877, and gazing out upon a large concourse of people gathered to hear the 'kitten orator,' as I had been called because of my youth, discourse on a subject to be selected by their own vote. A hymn was sung to open a semi-religious service, and then I rose and offered a prayer, the words of which formed themselves in my mouth without forethought or conscious volition of my own. After a second hymn the presiding officer—the then celebrated James Burns, editor of the 'Medium and Daybreak'—announced in my hearing that the youthful occupant of the platform was prepared to discourse under inspiration on any theme the audience might think proper to select. I heard this without the slightest internal trepidation. I had become tense, callous, self-assured, but completely confident that an intelligence beyond my normal own would certainly render me entirely equal to the occasion. A subject was quickly decided upon by show of hands, and I rose to lecture. I spoke unfalteringly for fully an hour, and resumed my seat unexcited and unfatigued. A third hymn was sung, and then Mr. Burns called upon the audience to mention topics for an impromptu poem. Three or four subjects were given, and no sooner was a decision reached by the chairman as to which topic had received the greatest show of hands, than I rose for the third and last time that evening, and heard myself reel off a number of verses as easily and fluently as though I had them well committed to memory, though I am certain they were nowhere in print, and I was listening to them for the first time. The report of that memorable meeting created a great sensation twenty-five years ago; but events crowd thickly upon each other in these days, and a new generation has arisen since I was a 'youthful prodigy,' 'one of the marvels of the nineteenth century,' and much else, according to the newspapers, which I have long since forgotten.

Immediately after my appearance in London I was called to all parts of England. I went as an inexperienced child to places rough and smooth, aristocratic and uncouth, clean and dirty, refined and vulgar, religious and atheistic; and wherever I went I found my unseen prompters ready to help me in all emergencies and to pilot me safely over many difficult and unpleasant places from which I should certainly have shrunk had I seen beforehand what awaited me. During the nineteen months of my touring as a lecturer in England, between March, 1877, and October, 1878, I certainly saw the world in a large number of its varied phases, and though many episodes in my career during that eventful period were extremely enjoyable, as I met kind and true friends almost everywhere, I could, without the slightest difficulty or exaggeration, unfold many a tale which might amuse or startle more than it would edify the listeners. My constitution was not considered naturally robust and I had to encounter many hardships from which many a stronger person would have fled in dismay, but though I cannot say that I quite enjoyed all the harsher features of my travels in all weathers to all sorts of places, instead of succumbing I grew steadily stronger physically as well as mentally, so that when I left England for America near the close of October, 1878, my constitution was quite equal to endure the strain of a singularly tempestuous, though not

dangerous, ocean passage and the rigours of a New England winter, to the severity of which the fickle climate of Albion had never subjected me. I well remember my departure from Liverpool for unknown Boston across the wide Atlantic, whither I was journeying entirely alone save for the clearly distinguished presence of those faithful unseen helpers who never deserted me.

#### Clear Visions.

One of the clearest visions of my life attended me during the night prior to my departure from Liverpool. I fell asleep about 3 a.m., apparently as a result of fatigue following upon intense excitement, but my seership asserted itself triumphantly in a manner which I was soon able to verify, even to the minutest detail. I saw myself standing on a wide platform which was covered with thick red carpet, in a great hall, with high windows on either side. There were an organ and choir gallery over the entrance to this audience room, and surmounting the rostrum on which I stood was a fine bust of the great New England preacher, the famous Theodore Parker. In that hall I saw a very large audience numbering from 600 to 800 persons; and in the midst of the assembly the dignified figure of Dr. J. M. Peebles, whom I had met in London some months previously, loomed large before me. The vision impressed itself indelibly on the tablet of my memory; then I fell into a dreamless slumber, which continued until I was called to partake of my last breakfast in England for many a year to come. On reaching America I found that not only had my advent been heralded in the columns of the 'Banner of Light,' the oldest spiritualistic paper in the world, but the friend who met me at the landing stage (Robert Cooper, of Eastbourne, who was then a prominent worker in America) informed me that Dr. Peebles had just completed a lecture engagement in Parker Memorial Hall, and that he had announced me as his successor, the committee having accepted me for that large and prominent position on the good doctor's kindly recommendation, though I was only eighteen years of age and entirely unknown to the directors of the Parker Hall lectureship. No sooner had I landed in America than I was quite at home on what was in no sense to me a foreign soil, for there I heard the same language spoken, and, with minor exceptions of no definite importance, soon discovered that England and America are at least first cousins, if not still nearer relatives. In Boston my work quickly grew apace; then I was called to New York, Philadelphia, and other mighty cities, not excepting Chicago, where I filled Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond's platform for an extended period, while she was filling an engagement in Boston. Nearly five busy years had sped their course when, in 1883, I found myself again in England, taking up afresh the work which I never laid down, but only temporarily suspended when I was led to cross the ocean and become a prominent worker in America. In 1884 I returned to the United States, and in 1885 again revisited England. During those years I accomplished a large amount of literary work in addition to extensive travelling and constant lecturing. In 1886 I visited California for the first time, and spent five delightful months on the sunny Pacific slope, in which charming country I addressed daily audiences often numbering many hundred persons, and saw wonderful results from the practice of mental healing, of which I had by that time become, and of which I still am, an uncompromising, though I trust not a fanatical, advocate and exponent.

#### A 'Miracle' of Healing.

At the close of a lecture which I delivered on a spiritualistic camp ground bordering on Lake Merritt, adjacent to the city of Oakland, California, a lady who had long been a cripple handed her crutches to her husband, walked home, and did not resume the use of artificial support subsequently. This 'miracle' of healing took place unconsciously to me, for I did not know there was a crippled woman in the assembly. I do not claim any part in the accomplishment of this marvel further than to declare that I was led to say before I concluded my exposition of the philosophy of healing, 'You can use your limbs if you determine to use them, no matter how long they may have failed to serve you.' I had no idea that I was addressing anybody in particular, and no

member of the audience was more greatly astonished than myself when the 'miracle' occurred. My explanation of it is twofold; I firmly believe that there was an influence at work with that afflicted woman beyond my consciousness, and I feel also convinced that through her own auto-suggestive act she greatly facilitated her recovery. This case is thoroughly authenticated, and is now in print in the supplement to my old standard work, 'The Spiritual Science of Health and Healing,' under the heading, 'Testimony of Mrs. Lily Bothwell.'

During that marvellous summer of 1886, which was in some respects the most astounding in my whole career, I received pressing invitations to visit Australia, from which far-distant land cablegrams came to me in quick succession. Nine years previously, at the very outset of my public work, I had been assured by my unseen preceptors that there was a great work for me to accomplish at the Antipodes after I had crossed America, and I may here mention that I had daringly announced in a London paper, in 1885, that I was going to California in consequence of a communication to that effect having been written through my hand when I had no earthly prospect of pursuing my westward way further than New York and Boston. My disappointment was singularly keen when obstacles arose, mountain high, to forbid my leaving America on the completion of my first season in California. Duty called me back to Boston, and reluctantly I obeyed its call, with heavy heart and doubtful mind, for I was beginning to suspect that my unseen directors had been in some way thwarted in their plans for me, I having been solemnly assured by them that I had a mission to fulfil in Australasia; and now that the way had plainly opened, the door had been ruthlessly closed and by no voluntary act of mine. On the way back across the American continent, when I paused to lecture in St. Louis, a message came to me with unmistakable clearness, 'You are going to Australia and New Zealand but not just yet; plans are ripening but not yet matured; have perfect confidence in your inspirers, for though there is a seeming delay there has been no hitch in the arrangements.' 'But when shall I go?' I inquired eagerly. 'We cannot tell you just now; you would think the time too long did you foreknow its duration; but rest content; you are going and you will fill a large place while you reside there.' With that assurance I had to remain content, for I could receive nothing further concerning the Southern Hemisphere though many directions were given me concerning my continuous work in the Northern. For ten years I saw nothing of England, and it was through the joint instrumentality of Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar in Paris, and the special excursion of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union from New York, in June, 1895, that I revisited Europe after ten years' unbroken residence in America. Those ten years had been very busy and highly eventful ones; my singular experiences during their highly chequered course would fill many a bulky volume. I had scoured America from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, and had met with warm receptions and enthusiastic audiences everywhere, though let no one imagine that a prominent public life means constant resting on a bed of roses; roses abound but thorns are often their intimate neighbours. I had produced a number of books, edited several periodicals, and contributed many hundreds of articles to magazines, besides having written thousands of letters to newspapers, in addition to musical work, before I again set foot in England after my departure in 1885.

#### A Telepathic Incident.

What first led me to turn my attention back to Europe during the winter of 1891 was a psychic or telepathic incident well worth repeating, though it has been previously recorded. I well remember December 8th, 1891. On that day, between 2.30 p.m. and 3 p.m., I was seated at a desk in New York writing an article for a periodical which demanded 'copy' at short notice. I was scribbling away at full speed writing 'against time' as literary hacks describe the process, when I was suddenly arrested by a vision of Lady Caithness, whom I had not seen for over nine years, seated at an escritoire in a sumptuously furnished boudoir, the most con-

spicuous feature in which was a magnificent painting covering nearly the whole of one side of the wall. This painting, which I saw distinctly in my vision, represented 'Jacob's Ladder,' and I remember being particularly impressed with the singular beauty of the faces of the angels. Lady Caithness was elaborately dressed, and engaged in writing to me; it seemed as though I could see ink falling from her pen on to the paper, while she informed me of many interesting events connected with the erection of her ducal palace, 'Holyrood,' to which she had recently moved from the fine old house in an older quarter of Paris, where she had hospitably entertained me and where I had held several conferences during 1884-5. The letter she was then writing embodied the request that I should without delay contribute an article for a periodical she was then editing, and it also expressed a fervent hope that I should see my way clear to accept her offer of an engagement to deliver a course of lectures at 'Holyrood' during the ensuing June. For nearly thirty minutes this vision continued with me, and then, before the letter appeared finished, it suddenly vanished, and I resumed my interrupted article. I went to Boston for Christmas, and while there, on December 21th, I received, among other letters from New York, the identical letter from Lady Caithness, dated 'Paris, December 8th,' which I had beheld in my extremely vivid vision. In the course of the letter I learned that it was indited between 7.30 and 8 p.m., Paris time, which is five hours ahead of New York, and therefore the time coincidence was as nearly exact as it well could be.

#### Thomson Jay Hudson's Theory.

I have been repeatedly asked to describe the difference between telepathic and spiritual messages, and I frankly confess that I have rarely been able to clearly distinguish between them. And this statement suffices to introduce a consideration which is in my opinion a matter of great importance. Take, for example, Thomson Jay Hudson's much-discussed theory of two minds and two memories. Hudson avers that the subjective mind is the sole seat of the telepathic faculty, and in his three celebrated books, 'The Law of Psychic Phenomena,' 'A Scientific Demonstration of the Future Life,' and 'The Divine Pedigree of Man,' he industriously undertakes to prove that, though the objective mind with its memory may perish with the decease of the physical organism, the subjective mind with its memory continues to live on in the life of immortality. If this premiss is sound, then Hudson's conclusion, as put forth in his recent article (February, 1902) in the 'Era,' a well-known American monthly, is quite unwarranted; and it is the height of absurdity on his part to declare that Spiritualists are 'fighting in the last ditch,' because recent experiments in the ample field of psychical discovery have abundantly proved the reliability of just such telepathy as Hudson and many others intelligently vouch for. My own experiences in numberless instances have completely satisfied me that in nine out of any average ten instances when psychic communion between friends can be clearly demonstrated, it is almost impossible to discriminate exactly between a message received from a communicant on earth and from one who has passed to the other side of existence. What, indeed, is that 'other side' but the side to which telepathy is indigenous? And can we afford to be sure that when we are functioning telepathically we are not behaving just as we should continue to behave were we suddenly divested of our material envelopes? If the physical frame be but a sheath or vehicle of the abiding entity, which is the true individual, then all these fascinating evidences of thought transference, or mental telegraphy or telephony, accumulating everywhere, are but so many convincing proofs of the reality of our spiritual nature in the here and now, which will prove continuous in the hereafter and the future. Evidences of psychic presence and spiritual guidance having attended my steps from infancy, I cannot specialise any particular season when I have enjoyed the greatest number of distinct proofs of super-terrestrial guidance, but such have always been most distinct and multiple when the need for them has been greatest.

I will now select, almost at random, a few notably striking instances of warning, guidance, and simply interesting seer-



ship, which stand forth prominently in my recollection as my thoughts revert to days gone by.

#### A Warning Voice.

Once in California, when I had arranged to lecture in a theatre in Los Angeles while I was yet in San Francisco, I purchased a ticket and secured a berth on a steamer leaving on a Thursday, and due at San Pedro, the port of Los Angeles, by noon next Saturday. It was summer weather and the coast steamers were almost invariably punctual to schedule time. Feeling perfectly sure that I should reach Los Angeles at least twenty-four hours before I needed to appear in the theatre, I felt no apprehension, after securing my tickets, as to fulfilling my engagement, and therefore I was greatly surprised when, while walking up Market-street, I heard a voice saying distinctly beside me, 'Change your ticket; go by train: boat will not arrive till Monday.' At first I paid no attention to this strange admonition, and was simply perplexed to account for its origin; but after it had been twice repeated I resolved to run no risk of disregarding a necessary counsel, and I therefore returned to the office where I had secured my passage and changed my tickets from boat to rail, despite the positive declaration of the booking agent that the boats were always on time, and that I could rely on meeting my engagement if I adhered to my first intention. Having procured a railway ticket in compliance with the urgent request of the unseen monitor, I mentally asked, 'What will cause the delay?' to which I received an answer, clairaudiently, with great distinctness, 'Accident to propeller; no danger, but vessel will have to return for repairs; it will arrive safely on Monday.' On arrival in Los Angeles on the Saturday morning, friends remonstrated with me for having forfeited a pleasant water journey at a season when boats were far preferable to trains in that vicinity; but I insisted that as it was announced to deliver two lectures on the following day it was imperatively necessary for me to arrive before the steamer, which I was certain would be belated. Saturday and Sunday both passed and no steamer arrived. I addressed two great audiences before the boat finally got in on the Monday morning, telling a tale of broken propeller and return to port of departure for repairs.

Another incident of quite a different character, but none the less phenomenal, even though less practically useful, concerned an acquaintance I formed in London in 1895, during a course of private midnight sances I was privileged to attend at which conditions were exceptionally fine. To accommodate the several professionals who were members of the circle, we assembled twice a week at midnight and continued our sittings till from 2 a.m. to 3 a.m. Our chief centre of attraction was a huge crystal placed in the centre of a large library table. The crystal was as large as an ordinary globe for containing goldfish, and into this brilliant object we all quietly but intently gazed, with a view to increasing concentratedness of thought and vision. After we had become susceptible to psychic vision we let our eyes close if they seemed so disposed, and we described whatever came before us. Among a multiplicity of telling incidents connected with that circle, I remember describing accurately scenes then being enacted in a house in Brighton occupied by the parents and other relatives of a young army officer whose regiment was soon afterwards ordered to India. Some months later, when this gentleman was in Calcutta and I in New York, I saw him as plainly as though he were physically beside me, and on the occasion of his birthday, when some friends presented him with a handsome pair of ivory-backed military hair brushes on which his monogram was richly chased in blue and gold, I saw those articles as plainly as though he and I had been actually in a room together, inspecting the birthday presents. A letter which came to me from him a few weeks later described those brushes precisely and contained the words, 'I am sure you are receiving a telepathic despatch from me at this instant.'

#### Spiritualism Based on Truth.

Though I have narratives to relate which would fill many a volume, all illustrative of the great question of psychic intercourse between friends yet on earth and those who

have 'passed over,' as well as manifold descriptions of most convincing telepathy where both parties have been still incarnate, I must reserve for future opportunities the narration of other striking incidents. But now that I have just rounded out a full twenty-five years of public service, I feel it a solemn duty as well as a high privilege to bear unequivocal testimony to the always beneficial effect which mediumship such as I have developed has had on me from all stand-points. Mentally and physically I owe immensely much to those very endowments and experiences which mistaken people imagine are weakening to mind and body. That there are dangers and drawbacks I do not deny, but through all my varied and protracted experiences on and off the platform, for more than a quarter of a century, I have invariably found that the directions given me from unseen helpers have been sound, elevating, and truthful to the letter in all particulars; while the telepathic incidents, at which I have scarcely more than hinted, have been always interesting, never mischievous, and invariably calculated to throw bright light on many a mystic problem. During the nearly two years which I recently spent below the Equator I have pursued my way unflaggingly and untiringly in all varieties of climate and in a great variety of surroundings. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to friends, seen and unseen, for the many tokens of their care and kindness which have brightened all my journeyings and rendered possible of accomplishment the widely extended mission which took me to the Southern Hemisphere. Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Newcastle, and many smaller places in great Australia, I shall ever feel united with as centres of work which I know has already borne good fruit in numerous ways. Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch in picturesque New Zealand will always remain equally sacred in my memory. During all my Antipodean wanderings I found my psychic faculties fully as clear and as much in evidence as in other lands where the Southern Cross is an unseen constellation. I am now assured that my travelling days are not yet over, and that I still have oceans to cross, and continents to traverse, before I can honorably retire from active service, if such retirement shall ever be my portion. The dangers of Spiritualism are in my judgment greatly overrated, while its blessings are often minimised; for though I have been since 1890 a member of the Theosophical Society, and my acquaintance and connection with the Mental Science movement is a matter of public knowledge, I wish publicly, emphatically, and irrevocably to bear my testimony to the irrefutable truth of spirit communion. With the peculiar theories advocated by some Spiritualists I have no sympathy; and I daresay there are tricky spirits, as well as unreliable people on this side the mystic border; but though I must remain the 'free lance' I have ever been, and work wherever I am called to operate, and therefore cannot pose as *exclusively* a Spiritualist, *inclusively* I am as thorough-going an advocate of Spiritualism as any of its most enthusiastic representatives. I owe nothing to developing circles, and comparatively little to spiritualistic literature, or to phenomenal mediumship of an objective type; therefore my assurance of Spiritualism's central claim can never be weakened by any controversy which may rage concerning dubious phenomena. I have seen the unmistakably genuine, the ambiguous, and the fraudulent, and having seen so much I am prepared to testify to this effect, irrevocably—that Spiritualism is based on truth, and no matter how many barnacles may have to be swept from such institutions as are devoted to its special advocacy, the twentieth century must and will witness a spiritual revealing for which all the wonders of the nineteenth, stupendous though they have been, have only paved the way. (Applause.)

At the close of the Address a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Colville on the motion of the President, who said he had noticed with pleasure the evident gratification with which the company had, throughout, listened to the speaker's interesting narrative, and he had no doubt that the friends would be glad if arrangements could be made for Mr. Colville to continue his narrative at an early date. This suggestion was received with manifestations of cordial approval.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

## Lost and Found—A Good Test.

SIR,—The following little story may probably interest some of the readers of 'LIGHT':—

Some weeks ago, upon returning from an excursion, I missed a penknife which I greatly prized, it having belonged to one very dear to me, now in spiritland. This knife I always carried about with me, and felt convinced that upon this occasion also I had had it upon my person. So grieved was I at the loss that I took the trouble to return to the hotel where my friends and I had stayed the previous week in order to ascertain whether the porter or chambermaid had found it; but, alas! there were no traces of it, and I was reluctantly obliged to dismiss it from my mind as altogether lost. A fortnight ago I went on a visit to Berne, leaving *my trunk* and heavy luggage behind me in Lucerne, and taking with me a small trunk lent by a friend for the occasion. As is my custom every Tuesday and Friday evening, I hold a private séance for development, the circle consisting only of spirit friends and myself. Upon this particular day, however, the conditions were not very good, and after being informed, through automatic writing, by the communicating Intelligences, that I should receive better phenomena in my old room in Lucerne, the following was written, but without any signature, which was unusual: 'Your knife is in your trunk in something else.' I should state here that I had not been thinking of the knife, in fact I may say I had long given it up as lost. At the close of the séance I proceeded eagerly to turn out the contents of the trunk I had with me (not my trunk), forgetting that it was a borrowed one. I searched diligently in everything into which the lost knife might by chance have slipped, but all to no purpose—it was not there. Needless to say what feelings of disappointment I experienced, thinking my spirit-friend had played me false and raised hopes only doomed to recall the loss which I had before banished from my mind. Next day, Wednesday, I left Berne and returned to Lucerne, and on Thursday I proceeded to unpack *my trunk* (the one I had left behind), and after doing so I changed the skirt I was wearing for one just taken from the trunk, when, upon putting my hand into my pocket, I drew out my lost knife. 'Your knife is in your trunk in something else,' wrote my friend across the frontier, and so it was. Thus the message and information received by me in Berne was verified in Lucerne two days later; and bitterly have I reproached myself for having so hastily and unjustly accused my benefactor of deception. I consider the above a good test, added to the many already received, of the powers possessed by the great crowd of invisible, though ever-present, witnesses to our acts in earth life, and yet another proof of the ability of the spirits to help and befriend us.

ADELINE STOCKS.

## Prediction of a British Reverse.

SIR,—At a public séance given at 24, South Molton-street, by Mrs. William Paulet, on the 4th inst., at which I was present, she gave us a very interesting prevision of the British reverse in South Africa.

Towards the end of the séance Mrs. Paulet asked if there was any one present who had friends in South Africa, 'because,' she said, 'there is an influence here that tells me there will be a severe British reverse and an English officer of high rank will be wounded.'

A day or two afterwards I mentioned this incident to some friends, who were not present at the séance, and we were all somewhat startled when the news of Lord Methuen's capture was reported on the 10th inst.

This statement can be verified by all those present at the séance.

L. B.

Bedford-street, Strand.

## Union of London Spiritualists.

SIR,—It is proposed, under the auspices of the Union of London Spiritualists, to have a 'May Meeting' of Spiritualists in London, at one of the large halls in the Metropolis. With this object in view I have been requested to communicate, through the medium of 'LIGHT,' 'The Two Worlds,' and 'Psyche,' with the adherents of our cause, in order to secure the financial support necessary to the efficient carrying out of the proposition. Any offers of assistance should be addressed to me, as soon as possible, so that the details of the programme may be completed with the least possible delay.

GEO. TAYLER GWINN.

63, Carnarvon-road, Stratford, E.

## 'Dangers,' or 'Blessings,' of Spiritualism.

SIR,—The exceedingly impartial and effective way in which Mr. Page Hopps disposed of the recent book should induce the writer to revise his premises, and if he will do so he will probably discover that he has been only on the fringe of the subject; that he has not taken a tithe of the evidence he might have done, but has constituted himself judge and jury, and has passed sentence on an entirely *ex parte* statement.

On the question of 'dangers' or 'blessings' I would recommend the author—or anyone in a similarly wavering condition—to take note of some of the very remarkable cures by Dr. Edward Silva (a British subject) in Brazil and elsewhere—to some of which you have once or twice alluded in 'LIGHT.' I mention this gentleman because so many of his extraordinary cures are certified by Cabinet Ministers, doctors, clergymen, and the Press generally, and come as nearly under the term 'miracles' as it is possible to arrive in the present day.

Is it a 'danger' or a 'blessing' that a military officer whose left arm was shattered by a shot and rendered useless, and after a year and a half in that condition was about to be amputated, recovered the use of this arm after *four minutes'* treatment, and is now perfectly well?

Is it a 'danger' or a 'blessing' that a lady who had been blind eighteen years was restored to sight in *six minutes'*? Or that another who had had a wen on the neck twenty-six years was perfectly cured in nineteen days?

These things are not 'hearsay.' There are 'chapter and verse' in every instance, and there are many hundreds of such cases. Fortunately the best are attested by certificates from members of Parliament, doctors, clergymen, &c., and are in some instances accompanied by photographs. Over 200,000 cures have been effected, and such was the interest created in Brazil that the daily papers had their own reporters in attendance to investigate the truth and record it.

Mr. Silva is now in London (27, Lillie-road, S.W.) for a short time, previous to his return to Brazil, and is always pleased to show the proofs of the marvellous results of the 'laying on of hands.' He does not make use of 'medicines' in any form.

W. P.

## SOCIETY WORK.

ISLINGTON.—111, ST. THOMAS'S-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK, N. —On Sunday last Mrs. Brenchley spoke earnestly on 'Good and Evil Spirits.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Brenchley on 'The Church and Spiritualism.'—E. COATES.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD. —On Sunday last Mrs. Holgate's address on 'Spiritualism' was thoroughly appreciated. Good clairvoyance and psychometry was given by Mrs. Miller. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Holgate; Thursday, at 8 p.m., séance.—A. MILLER.

HACKNEY.—MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD. —On Sunday last, Mr. John C. Kenworthy, after giving lucid explanations of the first verse of St. John i., and also of Psalm i., conducted a developing circle. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. D. J. Davis. On Good Friday, tea at 5 p.m., and social evening. Members and friends are cordially invited.—N. RIST.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD (NEAR SEVEN SISTERS CORNER). —On Sunday last, Mr. J. Kinsman gave a thoughtful address on 'Spiritualism as a Religion,' showing that Spiritualism was at the foundation of all religious systems, and that its philosophy contained all that was necessary to meet the highest spiritual needs of man. On Sunday next, Mr. E. Whyte will give an address.—W.F.L.

PECKHAM.—THE SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION, QUEEN'S HALL, 1, QUEEN'S-ROAD. —On Sunday last, Mr. J. A. Butcher gave a lucid address on 'Is Spiritualism True?' which was listened to with close attention. On Sunday next, at 6.45 p.m., Mrs. H. Cheeketts; at 8 p.m., public circle. Everything in connection with this mission is absolutely free. Service books provided.—VERAX.

CAMBERWELL-NEW-ROAD.—CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, S.E.—The 'Spiritual Communion' proved an interesting study to all in attendance on Sunday last. Public circle on Sunday next, at 11 a.m., and evening service at 6.30 p.m. Anniversary Floral Service on Easter Sunday, at 6.30 p.m. Social party on Monday, April 7th, at 8 p.m. Tickets, 1s. each. Proceeds to Benevolent Fund.—W.E. LONG.

LONDON PSYCHIC SOCIETY.—On Friday evening last, at headquarters, 30, Hyde Park-mansions, Mr. W. J. Colville addressed a full audience on 'Seership' with great eloquence and power, followed by a beautiful impromptu poem on 'The Coronation.' On Sunday evening last Mr. Bender presented an inspired interpretation of 'The Book of Job,' with great force and brilliancy. Mrs. Brindley sang with a pure soprano voice, 'The Holy City.' For next Sunday see front page.—E. J., Hon. Sec.