

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 flutterings and heart-searchings occasioned by the proposal to introduce, into a St. Paul's memorial service, prayers for 'the dead,' will, we think, do good. With the rights or the duties of the National Church we have here nothing to do: but we have a great deal to do with the subject that has made so many good people excited, and even bad tempered. For the life of us we cannot understand this indignation against praying for 'the dead'; though the explanation is easy enough.

The good old Protestants of the Reformation could not consent to give up their beloved eternal Hell; and Purgatory was therefore a rank offence to the soul of the true believer. But there was a better reason for his burning zeal against prayers for 'the dead.' The trade in pardons and the huckstering about Purgatory had become an infamy, and the reformers did well to fight it. It is a survival of that old fight which warms up the ultra-Protestants of to-day. But for that, praying for 'the dead' might at least be let alone.

This being how the case stands, we were certainly surprised to see the following editorial note in 'The Daily News':—

When we find that the Church of England at the Reformation deliberately changed the service of Burial for the Dead from one of Intercession for the Departed to one of instruction and edification for the living, that in her Article she specifically condemns purgatory, that in her Homily on Prayer she asserts 'neither let us dream any more that the souls of the dead are anything at all holpen by our prayers,' and that 'if the purgation of the blood of Christ will not serve men, let them never hope to be released by other men's prayers,' we can only conclude that those who try to find authority for Masses for the dead, even under the title of memorial communions, are compelled to resort to very queer devices.

We are afraid the bias here is in favour of the cruel old Article of the Church, which pushes back the suffering soul into its Hell, and bars out the kindly soul which would fain plead for it upon the earth, and leaves 'the lost' only to the merits, whatever they may be, of 'the purgation of the blood of Christ.' Our own opinion is that if these sturdy Protestants push things too far, and make Hell too hopeless, God too implacable, and the human heart too hard, they will drive multitudes into the arms of the very Church they hate.

Mr. E. T. Bennett, through Mr. Brimley Johnson, publishes a useful summary of the aims and work done by the Society for Psychical Research. The ground it covers is indicated by the table of Contents, which is as

follows: 'The Society for Psychical Research; its use and progress'; 'Thought-Transference or Telepathy'; 'Suggestion—Hypnotism—Psychic Healing'; 'The Subliminal Self'; 'Apparitions and Hauntings'; 'Evidence of the existence of Intelligences other than "the living," and of the reality of Intercommunion'; 'Conclusions.'

The pamphlet gives an excellent summary of the Society's proceedings, brief but quite sufficient to indicate the main lines of its operations and the general scope of its results. The following extract from the closing chapter might be useful to the editor of the 'Liverpool Daily Post,' who might possibly be induced to read this summary if he will not tackle Mr. Myers' book:—

In attempting to sum up the work which the Society for Psychical Research has accomplished during the first twenty years of its existence, it may be claimed:—

1. That proof is afforded that there are other means than the 'five senses' by which knowledge can be acquired by the human mind; in other words, that Telepathy is a Fact.
2. That one human mind has the power of influencing other human minds in ways not heretofore recognised by science; in other words, that the effects of Suggestion, Hypnotism and Psychic Healing represent groups of actual Phenomena.
3. That there is a realm of undeveloped and unrecognised Faculty in Man, provisionally termed the Subliminal Self.
4. That there is a basis of fact in many stories of Hauntings and Apparitions of various kinds.
5. That in Psychical Research the inquirer does meet with Intelligences other than human beings in the flesh. And that there is evidence—small though it be in amount—which is sufficient to prove the continuity of individual life after death, and that communication does take place between those in this and in another condition of life.

It is claimed that the small selection of evidence presented in the preceding five chapters is sufficient to establish these propositions. Even in regard to the last, the evidence cannot be set aside. If it is ignored, the objector must be prepared to deny the value of human testimony altogether, even if he is not driven to question the objective reality of all external phenomena.

The two entertaining lectures given in London by Mrs. Beauchamp, at the Conference Hall, Eccleston-street, on the Chinese, revealed an almost childlike prejudice or prepossession. It is well-known that the Chinese have, for many centuries, practised spirit-communication in various ways, specially with the help of modifications of the planchette. But the good lady calls it 'Demonism,' and talks about 'Demonology' instead of Spiritualism, for all the world like an Old Testament denouncer of other people's methods of coming into contact with the unseen people. The phrase 'evil spirits' occurs continually in the report of her lectures.

What an odd thing it is that Christianity and this bland arrogance and pious egotism should so persistently go together!

Someone asked Mrs. Beauchamp whether she thought that these 'evil spirits' are equally operative here. 'Well, no,' she replied, 'the Christian atmosphere prevailing here prevents their being equally rampant; but in China the devil goes almost unchallenged.'

After that, the reader will be prepared for the disclosure that this lovely egotist was a missionary in China. And yet the Chinese do not love missionaries!

'The Banner of Light' reports an exceptionally full and beautiful funeral service in memory of a very good and gracious woman. The service was conducted by a Boston (U.S.) Unitarian Minister, and it is interesting to note that departures from the old dismal forms, and strong approaches to our freer and happier ideals, are very frequent now with Unitarians.

It is difficult to quote from such a service, but two things specially touched us,—a beautiful and pathetic little poem and portions of a truly noble prayer. The poem is by F. A. Kemble:—

What shall I do with all the days and hours
That must be counted ere I see thy face?
How shall I charm the interval that lowers
Between this time and that sweet time of grace?
I'll tell thee; for thy sake, I will lay hold
Of all good aims, and consecrate to thee,
In worthy deeds, each moment that is told
While thou, beloved one, art far from me.
For thee, I will arouse my thoughts to try
All heavenward flights, all high and holy strains;
For thy dear sake, I will walk patiently
Through these long hours, nor call their minutes pains.
I will this weary blank of absence make
A noble task time, and will therein strive
To follow excellence, and to o'ertake
More good than I have won since yet I live.
So may this darksome time build up in me
A thousand graces which shall thus be thine;
So may thy love and longing hallowed be,
And thy dear thought an influence divine.

The following passages from the prayer are simple enough, but, like so many simple things, they get very near the great realities:—

Thou art not far from any one of us; yea, even at this moment, when out of the midst of our griefs we cry out, Where is our God? He is here with us by our side. It is He who speaks to us in the trembling voices of our friends. It is He who shines upon us in the tears that are shed for us. It is He who beats with His own life in the hearts which sympathise with us. Grant, therefore, that whatever may happen unto us, whatever dear ones may be taken from us, our hearts may be kept steadfast in our faith and grounded upon our trust in Thee. We know not how near to us those who have gone before us may be; we almost hear the whisper of their voices, but help us to welcome the hour when they shall come, when the thin veil of sense that has dropped between them and us may fall entirely away, and we shall see as we are seen by them, and know them even as we are known by them, and so shall memory turn into fact, and all the things that have been shall come back again glorified and transfigured in a great and beautiful reality.

The 'Riddle of the Universe' is not yet solved, in spite of the confident assertions of certain writers; and the late Professor Tyndall, who was far too frequently spoken of as a 'Materialist' and 'Atheist,' was, perhaps, much nearer the true solution of the mystery than Haeckel and his school of thinkers, when he said:—

We are surrounded by wonders and mysteries everywhere. I have often in the spring-time watched the advance of the sprouting leaves and of grass and flowers, and observed the general joy of opening life in Nature, and I have asked myself this question: Can it be that there is no being in Nature that knows more about these things than I do? Do I, in my ignorance, represent the highest knowledge of these things existing in this Universe? The man who puts that question fairly to himself, if he be not a shallow man, if he be a man capable of being penetrated by profound thought, will never answer the question by professing that creed of Atheism which has been so lightly attributed to me,

'WEIGHTS THAT HINDER US.'

Address by MR. J. W. BOULDING to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall, on the evening of April 16th; THE PRESIDENT OF THE ALLIANCE, MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, in the chair.

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What a weight our own importance becomes if we permit the self within us to master our lives. There is no weight like 'self-importance'—none so overpowering, none so fatal to our own true interests and lasting peace. The great secret of happiness is self-forgetfulness. Jesus saw this law very clearly when He said: '*He that seeketh his life shall lose it.*' And if we want to see a really lost man—a man who has lost his life, his true life, and the secret of true living—we shall find him in that man who is always seeking after his life—always thinking of himself—how he may benefit himself, how he may exalt himself, how he may 'air' himself, and how he may enjoy himself. When all the roads of life lead to the capital 'I' there is such a congestion of the traffic that happiness is squeezed, and scrouged, and suffocated in the attempt to get along. When a man is his own centre he becomes a sort of 'Catherine wheel,' he revolves at a tremendous rate, with a great deal of firework crackling and display, but he gives out with a puff and all that remains of him is an exploded attempt. There he is, fixed on his pin and his 'fussiness' has worn him out at last and done good to nobody. I can conceive no greater misery than to be unable to get away from one's self. Talk of prisons and solitary confinement, there's no prison like that, no solitary confinement like that. Why, the happiness of life consists in getting free of these prison-bars that shut us in with ourselves, and being made welcome to other habitations, receiving the freedom of the many cities of Man-soul, and ranging over the varied estates of human circumstance; becoming a guest in these many mansions of the Father's Human House, and obtaining the Charter of the Liberty of our common manhood, and the privilege of oneness with the Universal Soul. But the self-important man builds himself up and walls himself in, and makes himself his own prison warder, and his living tomb. To contemplate himself, to commune with himself, to be surrounded, closed in, closeted with himself—that is the condition of the self-important man. Why, it would be a dreadful torment if we were compelled to have even a looking-glass fixed to our person, so adjusted that we were forced to be always looking at ourselves. But that is what these people are really doing—always looking at themselves in a circumambient looking-glass, always admiring themselves, and never able to escape from themselves, or—in that happiest of all obliviousness—to forget for a little while what manner of men they are. And the curious thing is that it is the least important people that are the most self-important. The great souls seldom talk about themselves. They make no capital out of the capital 'I.' You will have a difficulty by ordinary acquaintance to discover their greatness. Their own kindred will probably never discover it at all; and if anybody else reveals it to them they will almost certainly deny it. Take Immanuel Kant for instance, the great German philosopher. Who, in that old German city where he lived his regular, prosaic, and apparently mechanical life; rising at the same time, writing at the same time, dining at the same time, walking at the same time—doing everything so calmly, methodically, punctually that all the citizens could have regulated their watches by him,—who in that old German city that saw the undistinguished and self-unrevealing man strolling down the street, in his grey coat, with his unobtrusive little cane, suspected in him the great intellectual revolutioniser of mankind, whose thoughts were cannon to bombard the fortresses of the ignorance called 'knowledge,' and to shake from their foundations the philosophies of the world? The neighbours, and brothers and sisters also, of the most remarkable being that ever lived in our world, Jesus of Nazareth, could not see anything in Him; some of them even went to lay hold on Him, for they said '*He is beside*

himself.' So that all He got from them was, not an opinion that He was the greatest man of that age and country, but that He was a lesser man than their little selves—in fact, *no man at all*, unless a *mad-man* can be called so.

Of Shakespeare too—what do you hear from Shakespeare about himself? Absolutely nothing! He is as silent—the great, eloquent, myriad-tongued Shakespeare—as silent about himself as any clown or ignoramus in Stratford-on-Avon. But little Jack Horner thinks his corner is the Hub of the Universe, and is viewed and interviewed and self-boomed and puffed till he has attracted universal attention and inquiry; though he is doing nothing all the while but picking plums out of his pie; and most likely out of *other people's pies*, and crying with a big voice and a little brain, '*What a brave boy am I.*' Yes, it is these unimportant people that are the most self-important. They go about weighed down with a sense of their greatness. They cannot be light-hearted, they are so laden. As for 'running the race,' they cannot run, they are so impeded and loaded with this imaginary 'bigness.' Their chief occupation is to 'air' that bigness, and the 'airing' of it becomes such an anxiety and the failure to 'air' it is such a disappointment that they are literally crushed by the double load. They are trying to do intellectually what physically they could not do; taking themselves up in their own arms, lifting themselves up on their own shoulders, and, to use Carlyle's words, 'Begging everybody for God's sake to stop and take some notice of them.' No wonder they are weighted and weighed down when they are thus carrying and loading themselves with themselves. If any man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself, says the apostle. Of course he does. It is a mere truism. But truism though it is, it is more difficult to get it into men's heads than the hardest problem in Euclid. And any man who has really learnt it is a master of arts in the science of moral mathematics.

Now the great art of life is to sink yourself. To realise that singular paradox—to get out of yourself—to get away from yourself and to leave yourself behind. How can I perform that strange feat of spiritual legerdemain? you ask. I will tell you. Just drop yourself and take up somebody else; carry somebody else instead of yourself, and you will be astonished to find how light is your step and how easy is your burden. (Applause.) To take another person up in the spirit of helpfulness is to carry his load and lose your own. People talk about being burdened by their existence. That is because they exist for themselves; because they have isolated themselves and cut themselves adrift from true life, which is not an unparticipating selfhood, but a co-operative system of universal love. The greatest Being in the Universe is the greatest burden-bearer. He carries all the worlds in His great selfless heart, and is never weary and never weighted. You try His plan—carry this one world or the little sphere in which you move, and which is your world; carry this in your helpful love, and you will find that carrying the world in sympathy is lighter than carrying yourself in selfishness, and will in some measure enter into the life of Him who bears the Universe but is never burdened, because He bears it on His heart, and His heart is Love. (Applause.)

It is almost impossible to enumerate all the weights that our lives are liable to; they are so many in number, and so subtly intermingled one with another; but one of the greatest of all weights is that thing called *No-thing*. Without parts and without dimensions, without length or breadth or thickness, without substance altogether; yet that imponderable, intangible, invisible, and unsubstantial *No-thing* is, to some, the heaviest of every weight. I was visiting a friend the other day, and while I was there the family doctor called to see the lady's maid. I casually asked him what was the matter with her. 'Nothing,' he replied. 'That seems rather a common disease nowadays,' said I. 'Yes,' said he, 'and if it weren't for that "*No-thing*" we doctors would all starve.' And it is just the same in moral matters. There is a frightful disease from which all the world is suffering, and the name of that disease is '*No-thing*'! A vacant mind, a vacant heart, no object in life, nothing to think of, nothing to care for, nothing to live for, nothing to love! Oh! what a heavy weight is that!

To be burdened with *No-thing*! What a burden is life to that man! Have not you seen the lustreless eye, the listless air, the limp movement, the shambling step that marks the man who is the bearer of that awful load of '*No-thing*'? How heavy hangs the time! How long are the days! How interminable the nights! Nothing to think of—nothing to be interested in—nothing—nothing!

I know a man myself who is of this type. He believes in nothing, he does nothing, he loves nothing; he walks—walks—walks—only walks; he has been walking all his life—walking to nowhere, walking for nothing; walking only to relieve the monotony of existence and to hide from himself the nothing that he carries on his empty heart, and which, were it not for this perpetual motion, this peripatetic lunacy, would crush him beneath its weight into conscious despair. Be very careful, therefore, to avoid this weight. Better have mountains of anxiety heaped upon you, better to have a thousand business worries and domestic cares, better to be like Atlas himself, and with your unassisted strength prop up some expansive heaven of human interest, some vast, complicated system of human enterprise, even though your shoulders groan with the burden, than be that contemptible, hollow wind-bag of a thing who sinks into the mire of his stagnant life, crushed by the weight of that immovable *No-thing*.

I was speaking just now of the weight called *Self-importance*, but there is an opposite weight that is quite as heavy and quite as fatal, viz., the weight called *No Importance*; a false humility, a mistaken modesty, a morbid feeling of uselessness, worthlessness, inability—a sense of *being* nothing, and being *able to do nothing* that is worth the doing. To think too little of yourself is as grave an error as to think too much. You have an example of this condition of mind in the man with the one talent in the parable of Jesus. He saw the man who had ten flashing his coins about, and the man who had five doing the same, and both putting them out to interest by industrious activity and commercial application; but having only received one he turned it about in his idle hand and said with a false idea of his unimportance, 'Now what can I do with that? Only one! It isn't worth doing anything at all with. If I had the ten or even the five it might be some good: but one—a poor miserable do-it like that—why it's no good even trying to do anything with *that*. So I shall just go and bury it and forget all about it, and when the Master comes back I shall exhume it, dig it up out of its grave and hand it back to him, and tell him that I knew it was no good to try to make capital out of such a ridiculously small investment as *that*.' And that is just what *you* are doing who make your *no* importance an excuse for your inefficiency. You are turning your one talent into a weight which is heavier and more fatally crushing to your soul than the many gifts of the much talented and distinguished worker. *No importance*! Why, there is nothing in God's Universe that is of *no* importance. Every blade of grass, every leaf, every straw, every grain of dust, every atom, is of importance, and it is the aggregation of these myriad things of *no* importance that make up the magnitude and might, the greatness and glory, of this *most* important system of universal life. Take, therefore, a just measure of yourself, a right estimation, a proportionate and equalised survey of your gifts, your place, your relations to others, your relations to the whole; so that instead of sinking into a spiritual *no-er-do-well*—a spiritual nobody, a spiritual nothing, burdened and crushed by a sense of your uselessness, your worthlessness, your insignificance, you may claim your part in the totality of forces, the aggregation of utilities that compose the world of efficiency and power; and may realise that instead of being a dead and useless weight to the universe and yourself, you are strong with the strength and serviceable in the service, of the magnificent whole, which has its place for the angel that stands in the sun, and equally for the worm that pulverises the sod.

And closely allied to this character is the man who is weighted with a sense of his failure—the man who has tried to do something and not succeeded—and whose non-success lies upon him like a heavy weight, paralysing his energies and preventing all attempts to do anything again. Oh! the men

that are doing nothing but carrying about their failures—half the world is comprised of these! They made an effort, the effort failed—and the abortive effort is the burden of their life. They spent a great deal of thought, time, and trouble in working out some plan or accomplishing some purpose, and because it did not turn out as they expected, they cherished the disappointment like an old broken-down friend, and so the project that failed is still the idol of their soul's worship, though their worship of it is only a life-long sigh. They put me in mind of a man who has spent a long period in making some article for common use, and finding it unfit for the contemplated end dooms himself, as a penalty, to carry the useless thing about with him, till he sinks into the grave through sheer exhaustion. Don't we often hear people say, 'If that project of mine had turned out all right how different things would have been'? and they go on repeating that all their life, as if it were some offended and angry god who, they were hoping, might relent and give them the success he had so long withheld. This is '*failure worship*,' and it is commoner than some people think. The old Hindoos, you know, used to fling themselves in a fanatical frenzy beneath the wheels of the great car of Juggernaut; and there are lots of Hindoos amongst us who cast themselves in despair beneath the wheels of this god called 'Failure.' I often say when I am crossing the road and watching the vehicles that prevent my progress, 'If I am to be run over, I hope it will be by some fine blood horses and a gilded chariot; not by a lumbering dust-cart or a noxious dung cart, or what is worse, a silly donkey cart.' My advice to you, therefore, is 'Don't worship your failures! Don't prostrate yourselves before them! Don't let them prostrate you. Treat them as what they are, things that do not exist, that never *did* exist, that were only seeds that did not shoot, children that were never born, thoughts that never materialised, dreams of the night that faded with the dawn.' It may have been your *fault*—what if it is? Life is a long series of mistakes and blunders. It is only by our mistakes that we learn wisdom, it is only by our blunders that we reach perfection. What is it that Tennyson says about making stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things? What are these dead selves but the successive blunders, the accumulated mistakes of our perished past? Don't we hear everybody saying, 'If I had my time over again I should do very differently.' *Exactly so!* Everybody says that—everybody in the world. But that by-gone time is the dead self which you are not to mourn over with a self-idolatry of useless tears, but to tread beneath your conquering feet and to ascend by it to higher life; not to make a *weight* of it, but a *step* of it; a staircase of its long succession of errors and blunders; a ladder of light like Jacob's ladder, and to climb by it upward from the dead stone to the living stars.

We must forget, as Paul says, the things that are behind, and reach forth to the things that are before. We must not walk about the haunted chambers of our past mistakes or even our misdeeds, like Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare's tragedy. We must not fix our eyes upon our failures or even upon our sins, as she looked at her blood-stained hand in her guilty sleep, saying as she paced the Castle through the weary night, 'Out damned spot! Out, I say! Here's the smell of the blood still! All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand!' We must learn, on the contrary, to say, 'What's done cannot be undone,' or with Pilate, 'What I have written I have written,' and the page must live un erased and unblotted from the everlasting Chronicle. And, therefore, tears are vain, and all is vain, except a noble purpose and a self-redeeming, that is, a better life.

We must not let our moral failures weigh us down any more than our material failures. We must not sit by the tombstones of our sins. There are nothing but ghosts there to haunt our eyes and freeze our blood. We must let the Night enshroud them, and Silence take them to her oblivious bosom, and having bewailed them and forsaken them, leave them behind while we march on to the things which are before, that are standing ready in their unsoiled beauty to drop their white and spotless mantles over all the past, and robe us in the glory of a brighter day.

And what some do with their old sins others do with their old sorrows. They received some hard blow which stunned them, and they have never recovered their mental balance. They live for ever afterwards in a kind of daze. They have it for a saying which they perpetually repeat, 'I shall never get over it—never, never!' Their grief has become a basilisk which fascinates them always with its cruel eyes. Instead of charming the serpent, the serpent charms them. They make a fetish of their trouble and sit and worship it. They look at it so long that at last they love it; and if you bereaved them of the darling companion you would take away the only pleasure of their lives. Like Constance in 'King John,' they say, 'Here I and sorrow sit.' And they sit and sit till sorrow grows there a rooted thing, and the place becomes to them holy ground. Not only has their back become used to the burden, but the burden has become a part of their back; they have grown into camels, and their hump is a natural portion of their being. As for forgetting that awful thing which *once* happened to them, why they *wouldn't forget it* for all the world. They would lose their identity if they did. It is the only link that joins them to life; the only bond that unites them to themselves. They would forget *themselves* if they had not that label on their mortal luggage; if they had not that brand upon their mortal brow. They would think their last claim on the Universe was gone; and even God Himself would no longer exist for them if they could not show Him that wound in their hearts which they will not heal or suffer to be healed because then they must cease their comfortable howling and dry for ever their precious tears. But let me remind you that you are losing the grand ideal by nursing, and petting, and homeing yourselves with your sorrow. It is one of the things that are behind, and that you are to leave behind, and not only to leave behind but to forget that it is there. It was intended that you should get all the good out of it when it fastened on you, and then, having suffered by it and slain it by your victorious strength, that you should drop its skeleton in your onward march, and leave it behind you to be silted over by the desert sands. You are not to make a tombstone of it, and pay periodical visits to it, so that people say as the Jews said of Mary, 'She goeth to the grave to weep there,' but you are to make a *milestone* of it to register another stretch of wilderness passed through, and a stone of Ebenzer to the grace that has cheered and helped you on. You are to forget it as a sorrow, and think of it as a blessing; to forget it as a hindrance, and think of it as a help; and thus change its relations to you, and its attitude, and its character; and then, instead of seeing it among the things that are behind you will be surprised to see it among the things that are before—a dead sorrow that has become a living joy; a vanished cross that has become a visible crown. (Applause.)

And the attitude we take towards the things that pained us we must take not less towards the things that pleased us, for there is a tendency in all of us to linger round our past happiness; to sit and ponder over the bright days that are no more; to live over again the happy life that is gone, and in the tender moonlight of memory that silvers every incident with a delusive charm, to brood over dead and vanished years, and let the moments that should be filled with activity slip away in a pleasant but a useless dream. I am not saying a word against the habit of reflection, for it is wise, as Young says, to talk with our past hours—that is, if we talk with them as 'friends in council,' and not as watchers by the dead. Neither would I for a moment attempt to lessen the pleasures of memory, which are among the sweetest and dearest pleasures of the soul. For the soul has two angels; one is Hope, that shines upon the veil of the future with its half-penetrating light; the other is Memory that drops over the past the veil of a half-concealing but transforming glory. And it is an exquisite enjoyment to sit in the calm and quiet gloaming and let the dear dead past, with its precious memories of childhood or youth, and all their scenes of happy innocence or happier love, glide before us in the light they have borrowed from the grave in which they sank to live, and in which there are no dead incidents, even as there are no dead men. But you must be careful against its *misuse* and *abuse*; for a danger lies in this as in all life's

sweetest joys—the danger of brooding when you should be doing ; of looking backward when you should be looking forward ; and of spending your life in sentimental regrets when it should be devoted to earnest endeavours, and to the beggar-ing of the wealth and glory of the past by a richer present and a brighter future. So that while you remember the things that are behind in the love that lingers round each lovely scene, you forget them so far as they make a tender chain to enslave your hearts, or burden your minds, or detain your feet in their onward way. And you will easily do so if you fix in your minds the certain truth that there are no things behind like the things that are before ; none so sweet with all their sweetness, none so dear with all their love. Your chief interests are before you ; your chief treasures are before you ; your hopes and joys, nay, your life itself, is all before you—all before you.

Accustom yourselves, therefore, to think of your life as *future*. You may be old but don't say with a sigh, 'Life lies behind me.' It doesn't. It's a small fraction of it that is there. You may be nearing the grave, but don't say, 'I am near the end.' You are not. You are only just at the beginning. Your pleasures in life may be nearly gone ; relatives that once were with you have passed away ; friends that were dear to you have dropped from your side ; the avenues of enjoyment are closing up ; the pleasures of the senses are getting dull and few ; even the pleasures of the mind are over-clouded and obscured, and there seems little now but to wait and endure, and be only a spectator of the joys of others, which can no longer be any joy to you : but don't say with a sigh, 'Life is withered now and dead ; everything that made it life has passed away.' It *hasn't*. Life is all before you ; a Promised Land that widens and brightens on your vision as you gaze ; and all the things that are behind—all that were valuable, all that were dear, all that make memory sweet, and the past a sad but beautiful retrospect—all are mustering and gathering before you, with heightened beauty and deepening love ; and as you reach towards them with expectant hands, they reach towards you with hands of welcome ; you will find them, and receive them, and be received by them, and realise, to your utter astonishment and delight, that life is never *behind*, but always, and eternally and gloriously *before* !

I have one more remark to make—only one, and that is that there are some who are not weighed down with their failures, or their mistakes, or their sorrows, or even their regrets for vanished joys, because life has been to them an uninterrupted happiness, a triumphant march in a material sense, in fact a long, unbroken and easy success. Their faults, therefore, do not loom up so largely on their horizon. The soothing influence of prosperity has lulled them to sleep and made them extremely comfortable, and contented with themselves. So what do some of these do but set themselves to work to pick *out* and pick *up* and carry about the faults and follies of others ? And that is the most undesirable and disagreeable 'weight' of all. It's heavy enough to carry one's own faults but to carry other people's—oh dear ! These individuals go about raking in the dustbins, and bringing out all the rubbish they can find, everything broken and mouldy and rotten ; and, putting it into the baskets of their tenacious memory, they carry it home and sort it out, and fill their own houses with the malodorous smell of it ; and the next day they set off with their noxious load of human garbage and burden somebody else with it ; and so others are weighted with the nasty stuff ; and I need not add the obvious moral that their own spiritual life is hindered, and other people's too ; and they are all alike choked, suffocated, and buried under the mountains of refuse which they have so industriously heaped up. Well, there's no progress possible to souls like these. Talk of *running* the race set before them, how can they *run* when they are only accumulating dust heaps and sniffing over old bones ? How can they get on their heavenward way when they are sitting in the ashes of corrupt humanity and stirring up all the filth of the dregs of human life ? They are like the dogs of Eastern cities, they wander out in search of offal, and they live upon it, and starve upon it, and finally die upon it. And, besides all this, a great deal of what they gather they bring there themselves.

They empty out the refuse of their own hearts and then think and say they found it at their neighbour's back doors. Human nature is very deceitful, and it deceives itself quite as often as it deceives others. It will never paint itself in its true colours. It is like the black African king who, when Major Bowditch, our Ambassador at his swartly Court, was painting his portrait, was seen to be terribly anxious about something connected with it. And when Major Bowditch asked his sable majesty what was the matter with the portrait, the black king, in a very low and petitionary voice, asked whether it was not possible that he might be painted *white*. And that is what we are all doing in different forms and degrees—asking that we may be painted white. And when we paint our own portraits, having the brush and colours in our own power, *we do paint* ourselves white. The blackest of men will paint himself white, and those of us who are not quite black manage somehow to whiten the smudges, and make bright and beautiful saints of ourselves ; though with the same brush we daub our neighbours with a different colour, and very often paint their white faces exceedingly black. And what makes the matter worse is that we very often think they *are* black, and that we are really painting black people—painting their portraits from the life. We believe that all the bad qualities we have attributed to them are really *theirs*, when they are very often only the projections of our own evil-thinking and evil-making minds. So that, to return to our earlier metaphor, we first shake out the dust at our neighbour's door, and then find it there ; and do not even know that it is our own dust after all. Many of the faults we find in people are quite imaginary, and when we gather them up and carry them about we are burdening ourselves with bundles of *fancies* which, let me tell you, are usually much heavier than bundles of facts. As for myself, I think I may honestly claim to be free from these weights, whatever others I may be burdened with—and I am sure that like all God's dear defective creatures, I have many faults ; some that I know, many more that I don't know. But I do not go about looking for people's faults, and consequently I seldom see any. I find good in everybody, and more good than evil. Therefore the world has always been very beautiful to me, and human nature a delightful and exhilarating study. Now and then one gets a shock certainly, but the shock doesn't disturb me long. I see so much genuine kindness and goodness that the equilibrium is soon restored. I am not even like Hamlet, who said he could count himself king of infinite space were it not that he had bad dreams, for I do not even have the bad dreams. I find men and women in an ordinary way are not half so black as people's imaginations paint them. There are abnormal specimens of course, but the average human being is delightful and lovable. There is paradise everywhere if we will only look for it. Angels are walking the groves and alleys of this beautiful world both in the heat of the noon and the cool of the day, if we have eyes to detect their presence, and ears to hear their voices. Nay, even the serpent is not past redemption if we are true serpent charmers, and have that heavenly magic which overcomes evil with good. Therefore let us cultivate a divine enthusiasm for humanity ; let us cast aside the weights which suspicion and mistrust load us with in our course. With free hands and free hearts let us join our brethren in their heavenly race. Let us remember that not a competition of conflicting interests, a contest of antagonistic claims ; that if we win an immortal prize we do not deprive another of his reward, but by helping him to his good we increase our own ; that in the words of Paul we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but are co-wrestlers with it, helpful and co-operative, in a community of interest and a fellowship of good ; and that if we assist one weary, weak, or wandering soul to run the race that is the privilege of all, we lighten our own hearts as well as his, and lay aside one of our greatest weights—the weight of a selfish heart and a selfish life, which is the heaviest, most hindering, and most fatal weight of all. (Applause.)

At the close of his address a cordial vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Boulding, on the motion of Mr. W. J. Colville, seconded by Mr. G. Brown.

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

SATURDAY, MAY 9th, 1903.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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

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

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

PATHETIC PREJUDICE.

We have naturally been watching with some anxiety, and we may say with a good deal of pleasure, the treatment of Mr. Myers' book by the newspapers and reviews. On the whole it has compelled more than respect: it has won the admission, from the large majority of reviewers, that it has laid before the world a mass of evidence, a masterly argument, and a massive appeal, to which all serious-minded persons must give heed.

There have been exceptions. Not every mountebank has got off his cart, not every dreary jester has hung up his cap and bells, not every rampant scoffer has changed for once his tone; and we regret to say that it is to 'The Liverpool Daily Post' that we must award the fool's cap for bad behaviour over this business. That usually intelligent paper has nothing but a kind of snorting contempt for the whole thing. The best thing it can say of Mr. Myers' great work is that it is 'a most pathetic production,' as a 'welter of extravagance': and the writer is 'poor Myers.' To make the matter worse, that 'Daniel come to judgment,' Mr. Podmore, is brought in with bays and trumpets, and hailed as 'the greatest living authority on the subject.' This is indeed 'pathetic,' or would be if it were not so grotesquely juvenile.

Sir Oliver Lodge probably knows a thousand times more about the matter than the writer of this 'pathetic' nonsense; and, in addition, he is an expert in the weighing of evidence. It will suffice to put his weighty judgment into the scale on the other side. He confirms Professor Wm. James in the opinion that Mr. Myers wove together a mass of detached and discontinuous phenomena that had worried or offended the world of science for generations, for centuries—that he 'made a system of them, stringing them continually upon a perfectly legitimate objective hypothesis verified in some cases, and extended to others by analogy.' 'That,' said Sir Oliver Lodge, 'is what Frederic Myers was really doing, all through this last quarter of a century. He was laying the foundation for a cosmic philosophy, a scheme of existence as large and comprehensive and well founded as any that has appeared.' And this melancholy Liverpool 'Post' simply—snorts!

But it does more. It shows its ignorance and its animus. It actually allows itself to describe Dr. Hodgson's experiences, and the experiences of other trained observers, with Mrs. Piper, as 'the grotesque

performances of an American servant girl.' It has not even taken the trouble to find out who Mrs. Piper is. It proceeds to say that Mr. Podmore has given us 'a merciless exposure of this notorious medium,' a remark which makes us almost certain that this writer has not even read his Podmore, for, in truth, with all his desire to play 'devil's advocate' through thick and thin and to the end, Mr. Podmore seems half inclined to think that Mrs. Piper holds the winning cards. 'Merciless exposure' is monstrously absurd, even for a man who confesses he is 'angry.'

The 'Post' quotes Mr. Podmore as testifying that 'if there are honest mediums, we don't know by what signs to distinguish them from dishonest ones,' which seems about as reasonable as saying,—If there are people who tell the truth, we don't know how to distinguish them from liars: or, indeed, he might as well say, If there are such things as roses, we don't know how to distinguish them from thistles: or even, If there are such things as thistles, we don't know how to distinguish them from the asses that eat them.

Mr. Podmore is also quoted as the author of the astute remark that by the poor hallucinated psychologists and Spiritualists 'faint sights and sounds are liable to be interpreted according to the wishes or beliefs of the percipient.' Perhaps so: it is a very common case; but, with the change of a word or two, this exactly describes Mr. Podmore, for, in very truth, no man known to us interprets things according to his wishes so resolutely and so readily. But this is going a trifle out of our way. It is all useful, however, as taking the measure of 'The Liverpool Post.'

There are other means of accomplishing that,—its assertion, for instance, that Mr. Myers 'failed to produce any satisfactory evidence' as regards a subliminal consciousness, telepathy, and spirit manifestations. 'Satisfactory' to whom? We certainly thought that every educated publicist knew that telepathy at all events was proved—as satisfactorily proved, though not as commercially demonstrated, as (may we say?) Marconigrams. Why, fifteen years ago, one of the shrewdest of our shrewd Scotch scientists, on being asked what the psychical researchers had settled, replied: 'They have proved Telepathy'; and here, in Mr. Myers' book, is an avalanche of classified evidence; and yet we are told—well, it does not matter what we are told, except as showing how confident ignorance can be.

This instructor of the unfortunate people of Liverpool does not, however, leave them completely in the dark. He tells them how the knowledge of what life is, and what death is, will come. 'When it comes it will flash suddenly from the physical laboratory.' In plain English—mud will reveal it, not mind—and suddenly! All Mr. Myers' psychological experiments have been dabbings with the dead; but what he sought will not be found 'amid the tomfooleries of the séance, out of the weird insight of hysteria, or through the babblings of the madhouse.' This is the genial and discriminating way in which the 'Post' refers to the studies and experiments of men and women it does not in the least understand. All these studies and experiments are lumped together and labelled 'morbid psychology,' and once more we are referred to the laboratory—and mud. If that contents Liverpool, it has our sincerest sympathy. That would be 'pathetic' indeed.

This is not a very edifying 'Lesson for the Day,' but it at all events shows us, what we sometimes need to be reminded of:—the work we have to do.

'STRANGE EXPERIENCES.'

While desirous of redeeming the implied promise on page 171, that I would send a reply to 'Lucem Spero' ('LIGHT' for March 21st, page 137), I must explain that the consideration of this subject has led me into an extended train of thought, which would afford matter for a series of articles, but which is rich with suggestions towards an explanation of many occurrences of ordinary life, as well as of trance-mediumship, adeptship, and other psychic experiences. It is a theory at once animistic, spiritistic, and transcendental, harmonising the three conceptions of existence, and bringing them into accord with the phenomena of everyday life, exhibiting Nature as a progressive scale of consciousness, ascending through various planes of manifestation. The theory is not yet completely developed, and I do not yet know to what comprehensive view of the Cosmos it will ultimately lead me.

In the meantime I will briefly reply to the question about this lady who is laughed at for being in 'dreamland.' What is dreamland? Simply a higher means of self-manifestation, to which the consciousness retires at certain times, during which it partially or wholly ceases to manifest on the external or physical plane. The ordinary consciousness of outward affairs is but one plane on which the self-consciousness (let us say briefly 'the self') can function (say 'act'). When it acts on the external plane and is manifest on that plane we are said to be 'conscious.' When the self is conscious on a higher plane and ceases to act on the external plane, we are said to be 'unconscious.' We may be dead, or asleep, or in trance.

A lesser degree of withdrawal from the material plane, and we are said to be day-dreaming, or in a 'brown study.' We walk along a familiar road, and the foreman-self that presides over the automatic movement of our limbs carries us safely to our destination, perhaps omitting to make some stop on the road which we failed to impress upon him before our self retired to higher planes, and we do not find out the mistake until we return to the physical plane at our own door. But we have not been unconscious all this time; no, we have been very conscious indeed of some thought that has absorbed our whole attention and kept the self busy on the mental plane. At other times the mental faculties may work semi-automatically while our self is engrossed on the material plane, or on a supra-mental one. But the body-foreman and the mind-foreman are not individual entities or selves, they are only deputies who work automatically in carrying out what they know to be our wishes, by a kind of reflex action, just as they withdraw a hand or wink an eye at the suggestion of pain or danger, without waiting for orders from the conscious master-self.

Hence we may be conscious on the physical and mental planes at the same time, or we may give our whole attention to one (be conscious on that one), and withdraw our self-consciousness from the other. Now extend this reasoning to the psychic plane, and suppose the self to act primarily on that plane, and only indirectly on the lower ones, and we have the phenomena of trance and sleep. Each higher plane gives a more abstract view and wider range to the consciousness, and soon we reach a power of communication with other entities, incorporate or discarnate, by telepathy or mediumship. Sometimes another individuality can impose his will on the foreman of one of the planes from which our self has withdrawn, and we get the phenomena of spirit-control, and, if the foreign entity be a low one, obsession. Above the psychic plane is the true spiritual plane, reached by transcendental seers, where the individual develops a 'cosmic consciousness.' But we are on the heights again, and must descend to earth.

The consciousness of the lady mentioned by 'Lucem Spero' evidently oscillates between various planes. The best advice I can give is that she exercise her will to retain consciousness on the plane required for the moment. At other times let her allow it free range, endeavouring to recall the experiences she has passed through when in the superior state. Let her invite this state on falling to sleep at night, and remember as much as possible when she wakes. She will perhaps find that her recollection grows clearer and clearer, so that her dreams will appear to take more definite and rational form. This may lead to striking and very pleasant experiences, as the higher senses develop, and the recollection is retained on waking.

J. B. S.

LETTER FROM SIR WILLIAM CROOKES.

We learn from an article written by Hudson Tuttle in his capacity of Editor-at-Large for the National Spiritualist Association of America, and contributed by him to the Spiritualist Press, that it has been recently asserted in the American newspapers that: 'Sir William Crookes no longer stands for spirit and an open door to the unseen. He frankly confesses that the chase in that direction has led him to a brick wall.' Mr. Tuttle says:—

'This wicked libel has been widely circulated and used as an effective argument against Spiritualism. . . Hence I wrote to Sir William Crookes,* stating the report, and asking if he had changed his views. The following is his reply:—

'Hudson Tuttle,

'Editor-at-Large, N.S. Association.

'MY DEAR SIR,—In reply to your inquiry of the 11th inst., I beg leave to say that there is no truth in the report you mention.

'WILLIAM CROOKES.'

'Every scientific man, and everyone of mental ability, who has investigated Spiritualism, has become its advocate, and once an advocate, has remained steadfast. There is not one instance of "retraction."'

*Mr. Tuttle does not mention the date of his letter, but as Sir William Crookes speaks of 'the 11th inst.' it must have been the 11th of March last.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—Mr. Alfred Peters gives illustrations of clairvoyance at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., every Tuesday, at 3 p.m. No one is admitted after three. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; to friends introduced by them 2s. each.

DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES.—Mr. Spriggs will be out of town and unable to attend at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Thursdays, May 14th and 21st, but expects to resume on the 28th of May.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—Arrangements have been made with Mrs. M. H. Wallis for a series of meetings at the rooms of the Alliance, at which pleasant and instructive talks may be had with one of her intelligent controls. These séances will be held every Thursday during May, at 3 p.m., prompt. The fee is one shilling each, and any Member or Associate may introduce a friend at the same rate of payment. Friends who desire to put questions upon all matters connected with Spiritualism—or life here and hereafter—would do well to bring them already written.

MEETINGS FOR PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT.—The last meeting before the recess, for the encouragement and direction of the cultivation of private mediumship will be held in the rooms of the Alliance, at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on May 21st, from 4.30 to 5.30 p.m. No person admitted after 4.30. The proceedings are under the direction of Mr. Frederic Thurstan, who has devoted much time to a special study of the subject. Any Member or Associate of the Alliance earnestly desirous of self-development is welcome to attend, and more especially any promising psychic. There is no fee or subscription.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE lectures on Spiritualism and Occultism in the Lecture Room of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 3 p.m. General topic, 'East Indian Yoga Practice and its Western Equivalents.' Questions will be answered after each lecture. Admission 1s.

MADAME MONTAGUE.

Madame Montague's many friends will be glad to learn that she is again in London, but they will at the same time hear with regret that circumstances have arisen which may necessitate her leaving us again, for a little while, almost immediately. She has accordingly determined not to resume the acceptance of professional engagements for the present.

OUR ATTITUDE.

To-day we know that Life is what we make it. It takes its colour and tone for each of us from our outlook; there is no such thing as vicarious responsibility.

If I begin the day with a smile upon my lips, and within my heart, I shall find that the day will smile back upon me. If I meet my brother with the outstretched hand of love and trust, I shall find that the world is full of my brothers holding out their hands in like manner to me. We receive what we give—never less.

To awake with a song in my heart, and to ask of God: 'Lord, what is Thy gift for me to-day?' is to open for myself, and for others, the pathway to heaven. For 'Heaven lies all about us.' It is for me to seek it in the trials of my brother; in the sorrows of my sister; in the nakedness of the stranger—my unknown kinsman on the road; in the cries of little children; in the weakness of age, and in the tender frailty of youth; in the wounds of the sick; in the tears of tired mothers; in the anguish of the bereft; in the mute appeal of the misunderstood; in the darkness of those who doubt; in the silent needs of the helpless; in the dumb weariness of the worker; in the sighs of the sin-sick; in the faces of all them that pass me in the way; and in the simple, silent, always beautiful (no matter who sees otherwise) lives of the poor. Here shall I find heaven, for each of these needs Love, and

'Love is Heaven, and Heaven is Love.'

To this you and I are called. Let us obey. Let us be diligent, pitiful, swayed only by Love, craving only the patience and blessing of God, and we shall be no more tossed about; we shall have found our anchorage—God's heaven within and about us.

To keep the eyes of Soul for ever towards the sun-rising; to see only good in all; to desire little, but to give much; to believe in the everlasting presence and power of Spirit; to stay the tongue of censure, and to spread the wings of hope—the hands of help; to believe in the triumph of Good; to seek no rewards and no compensations; to be true and of single heart; to be as much as we can in God's garden, whose roof is the sunlit sky; to fret neither against time, nor weather; condition, nor any bodily estate; to be simple; to hold all our material possessions with a loose hand; to be afraid of none, and to be the friend of all; to turn the heart often to God, and to delight in His immanence and beauty—this be our attitude towards Life, from NOW.

M. BUTLER.

SAVED FROM AN EVIL INFLUENCE.

On Easter Monday evening my wife and self, accompanied by a friend, attended a religious meeting, and as the night was bright and frosty we decided to walk home, a distance of two and a-half miles. Leaving town about 10.30, we had to go through an undesirable part of the city, and as we were passing a large licensed house a drunken man emerged and slightly brushed against us. My friend, who is an excellent medium and a very sensitive man, almost immediately said, 'I feel awfully tipsy,' and began to get unsteady in his gait, the feeling remaining with him for the rest of our journey. Directly he reached the house he drank a glass of cold water. Still the awful influence clung to him (I should here state that neither of us had that day tasted any stimulant whatever). We sat down to supper and my friend took some bread and was about to help himself to fruit (being a strict vegetarian), when he was suddenly and firmly entranced. The control gave his name, asked us not to be alarmed, and said that he was the medium's guide, and was obliged to take possession in order to keep the drunken spirit away and prevent a 'row.' The control then explained how that the spirit influencing the drunken man who had touched the medium, finding that no more drink could be had at the public-house, had clung to the sensitive, crying, 'Now I can get more drink,' which remark he repeated over and over again. I said, 'The medium wants his supper.' The control replied, 'Very well, put some butter on his bread and the medium will have a good supper,' and he did, enjoying fruit, bread and butter, and a glass of water, the control conversing

the whole time upon private matters of our own entirely unknown to our visitor friend. After finishing supper this control wished us good night, saying someone else desired to speak. Our friend remained in a deep trance for an hour and a half, with eyes firmly closed; he moved about the room, sat in several chairs, squatted as a Hindu on the floor with legs crossed, &c., while we enjoyed an intellectual treat from four different controls.

Our friend, when he returned to his normal condition, was not aware that he had had his supper, yet he wanted no food. He remembered nothing of what had transpired. He was surprised to find himself in a different part of the room, and at the fact of his having been under control so long. The drunken influence had vanished, leaving our friend 'himself again' and none the worse. This incident is a convincing proof that our spirit friends know how to take care of those in whom they are interested on the earth plane. I should like to know from your readers whether it is common or otherwise for an entranced person to participate in food just as though he were in his normal condition?

F. L.

Birmingham.

'A CELESTIAL MESSAGE.'

A very beautiful book bearing the above attractive title has been printed in America for private circulation by Erastus C. Gaffield, a gentleman well and favourably known in Boston, U.S.A., both in business and literary circles. Mr. Gaffield has placed in my hands fifty copies, some of which are now on sale (price 2s. 3d. post free) at the office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane. This beautiful volume is as attractive in outward appearance as it is delightful in its contents. Being handsomely bound in blue and silver, gilt edges, it makes a most attractive gift book. It purports to be the message of an arisen philosopher, through the instrumentality of Mr. Gaffield, who is an inspirational writer through whom unseen intelligences seem able, with great facility, to convey extremely useful and ennobling truths. The work is described as 'A Revelation of the Observations and Experiences of a Philosopher and Poet in the Spirit World.' Though the style of the entire 'message' is positive, descriptive, and elucidatory of actual conditions of existence in the unseen spheres, there is nothing dogmatical from beginning to end; on the contrary, every proposition presented, or fact recorded, is graciously submitted in a purely suggestive manner to the reason and conscience of the reader. 'No one gains access to higher spheres except through obedience to the intuitions of the higher self, which, properly defined, are modes of the law for individual guidance,' is a characteristic excerpt. The style is Emersonian in many particulars, and though no name is given it has been conjectured by many readers that Ralph Waldo Emerson is the spiritual entity whose special experiences are recorded. This charming book seems specially adapted to fulfil a twofold purpose—to enlist the sympathy of intelligent inquirers into spiritual philosophy, and to suggest, on the basis of definite spiritual experiences, some very helpful answers to the ever-recurring question, How does our life on earth really affect our condition in the Great Beyond? Such life in the spiritual spheres as this treatise enlarges upon is certainly noble, useful, beautiful, and in every way delightful to contemplate. There is nothing morbid or sensational either in style or matter, but very much to harmonise with great ideals, and to aid in their actualisation.

W. J. COLVILLE.

MRS. LYDIA H. MANKS asks us to direct attention to the fact of her removal from Bickenhall Mansions to 166, Marylebone-road, N.W., as announced in our advertising columns. It is gratifying to learn that Mrs. Manks has found so congenial a field of labour in London that she has been again induced to defer returning to her American home.

THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—The closing Conversation of the London Spiritualist Alliance, which was held on Thursday evening, April 30th, in the Banqueting Room, St. James's Hall, was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by the members and friends. We shall give a report of the proceedings, and the addresses which were delivered, in our next issue.

RELATED TO A HIGHER WORLD.—'There are two things which fill me with awe and wonder: the starry heavens above, and the moral law within me. The starry heavens above me teach that my body is related to vast spheres of matter which roll beyond my ken, and the moral law within me teaches that my soul is related to a universe of truth, goodness, and beauty, which needs another heaven than the one above me, and a higher world than our sun warms.'—KANT.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Spirit Photography.

SIR,—I have read with interest, and with some pain, the various letters that have appeared in 'LIGHT' in reference to Spirit Photography, and those taken by Mr. Bournsell. I have been to him twice, and both times have taken my own plates. Each time I have examined the camera, opened the packet of plates in the dark room, and signed those used with my initials in the corner. After the photograph was taken I have seen the plates developed in the dark room, and on one of them appeared my first wife, and on the other my second wife, both unmistakable, the spirit drapery appearing over my arm. I think it fair to record this, my mite of evidence, in favour of one whom I consider a most genuine spirit photographer.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, LONDON.

SIR,—In the letter written by Mr. J. Fraser Hewes he says: 'In all the accounts I have since read of sittings with Mr. Bournsell I do not remember one in which the writer stated that he had entered the dark room to see the plates developed in addition to other tests. I know of at least one who was allowed the usual privileges of bringing his own plates and examining the camera, but on attempting to see the plates developed in the dark room was positively and persistently refused admittance.'

Now I really cannot read this without asserting most positively that Mr. Bournsell has, in many cases when he has taken my photograph and obtained psychic photos, been most particular about my bringing my own plates, marking them myself, and being present in the dark room when he developed some of them, and allowing me to develop some as well. In many cases he has accurately described the spirits before they have been photographed. I have many of the negatives, and I have one which contains a likeness of my father and which alone is absolute proof of the genuineness of spirit photography. I have also letters from his relations affirming the likeness. And I may add that Mr. Bournsell had no idea what my father was like, nor was my father ever photographed in life in the way in which he appears.

Chester.

MELVILLE HOLMES.

SIR,—As I have had considerable experience of Mr. Bournsell's séances, having been present on over twenty-five occasions, I feel it is my duty to state the results. I attended for the special purpose of taking notes of the spirit friends whom I saw clairvoyantly as they appeared by the side of the sitter, who has devoted considerable time to this question. Frequently they were surrounded by an aura or spirit drapery, and the negatives when developed bore out what I had seen and noted down during the sitting. In many cases I recognised the personality of the spirit visitors and frequently saw them move to take up a fresh position. Sometimes there was not sufficient power to retain his or her form and the result was shown by a white cloudy appearance.

Clairvoyants differ considerably in their powers of vision, and one may see the spirit draped, while another may not see the drapery at all. In the same way there may be two clairvoyants in a room and a spirit visible to the one may be invisible to the other, and *vice-versâ*.

EVA WAITE.

SIR,—In following the controversy on Spirit Photography and Mr. Bournsell, my sense of fairness compels me to send you an experience of my own. In the first place I would state that I have known Mr. Bournsell for some years, and have a very great respect for him; in the second that I am absolutely ignorant as to the laws of photography. I mention these two facts to show why I feel prompted to speak, and to disclaim at once any pretension of being an authority on the question, or of referring to photographs taken under *test conditions*.

Some time ago a friend (whom I will call Mr. L.) and myself arranged for a sitting with Mr. Bournsell. He insisted on our bringing our own plates, though I did not wish to do so, having no desire to *test* the result. Mr. Bournsell then instructed us to carry the plate (wrapped up in brown paper) always with us during the day time, and at night to place it under our pillows, for three days. These directions I faithfully carried out, and I have no doubt that Mr. L. also did so. On the day appointed we met at Mr. Bournsell's studio, and at once each gave him the plate. After this no 'test conditions' existed, our photo-

graphs being taken in the ordinary manner, each one separately, nor did we ask to see the semi-developed plates before leaving, the prints being sent to us respectively in due course. On the print of myself appeared the figure of a girl, whom I did not in the least recognise; but when I next saw Mr. L. I showed it to him, he also showing me the print of himself, on which appeared the form of a man. I at once saw in this figure a great resemblance to someone whom I had known, and who had passed over some two years previously, his place of secretary being now filled by the brother of Mr. L., though neither of the Mr. L.'s had ever seen him. I could not *identify* this form, but I saw a likeness, and when shown to the office boy by Mr. L. he at once admitted the same thing—having no idea that he was looking at a spirit photograph. I lent my photograph to Mr. L., who took it down into the country to show his mother, who is interested in all phenomena, and she said the person appeared to her to be her niece.

I make no comment whatever on this experience, only it seems strange that someone apparently connected with Mr. L. should appear on my photograph, and someone connected with myself on his, it being quite impossible that Mr. Bournsell should have known of either. This surely appears as though, by mistake, Mr. Bournsell had changed the plates, using for myself the plate impregnated with the personal fluid of Mr. L., and *vice-versâ*. Should this be the case it would seem that an *unconscious* test had been employed. I give the experience for what it is worth, and each one must draw his own conclusion. I would add that the charge was not exorbitant, being 2s. 6d. each.

(MRS.) J. GIFFORD-SWEETLAND.

Membre Actif Société des Conférences Spiritualistes, Paris.

'The Thin Red Line of Heroes.'

SIR,—In reply to many letters, may I say through your columns that nothing whatever against Spiritualism is meant in my novel, 'The Thin Red Line of Heroes'?

I am a *Spiritualist*. It has been my greatest comfort in the greatest sorrow of my life, and the dedication of my book proves it, for the spiritual presence of my child is the 'presence' there referred to. The book, which is not meant to be taken seriously (except in certain recognisable passages), was mostly written before I lost my child. I never thought to take up my pen again. A year ago I revised the tale, and it appeared as a serial, and now in book-form. But I can truly say that, but for the knowledge that Spiritualism gave me (that the child I had thought dead was ever near me), the story would never have seen daylight. I felt I could smile, and even joke again, once I knew that my boy was safe and happy.

As for my 'Hero,' 'Wee-Wee,' we have all met the artless amateur who attempts clairvoyance and mind-reading. 'Wee-Wee' is merely meant to be, what one reviewer calls him, 'A delightful humbug.'

The sacred side of Spiritualism is to me very real, and almost too tender for publicity. But I can always see the humorous side of things; and Spiritualism, I am sorry to say, has a comical side, which I hope in time will disappear. I refer to some séances, a phase of Spiritualism I think most of us approach with mingled feelings, even when conducted in our own homes.

EDITH MATURIN.

South Africa.

'Strange Experiences.'

SIR,—In reply to a letter signed 'Lucem Spero,' which I read a short time ago in 'LIGHT,' I should like to say that I have, very frequently, the same experiences as the young lady to whom he refers. I should imagine that she and I have very much the same temperament, neither hysterical nor very imaginative. I frequently feel, as it were, out of myself. As a child I expressed it as 'feeling not real.' The feeling comes on gradually, and while it lasts my mind seems like that of another person, inasmuch as I have, sometimes dim, sometimes clear, remembrance of places and people unknown to me, and of conversations which I myself certainly never held, and I walk and move as in a dream, with a curious feeling of being uplifted. No one to whom I have tried to explain my feelings has ever experienced the like, so I was very glad to read 'Lucem Spero's' letter. However, a spiritualistic friend tells me that I am mediumistic, and now I believe this to be the explanation of these strange feelings which, until he gave me his opinion on the subject, often caused me distress and worry. I should suggest that the young lady should consult an earnest Spiritualist, and I venture to say she will, like myself, derive much comfort thereby.—Yours, &c.,

MARIE.

Frau Rothe.

SIR,—The observations of 'Fair Play' apply to a hypothetical case and not to the real one at issue.

If Frau Rothe had prefaced her séances by explaining that she procured the flowers in the ordinary way, and hid them under her dress for the convenience of the spirits who could not otherwise obtain them, then 'Fair Play's' comments would have been perfectly relevant, but the medium did nothing of the sort, but always asserted that the flowers were mysteriously brought to her by the spirits, and to carry out this deception hid them under her dress, where they were found by the official searcher.

This completed the case against her, and nothing that she did or could do at that, or any other, séance could possibly affect the result.

The presiding judge specially commented on the assertion of the medium that the flowers were brought to her by spirits, and asked how she happened to get none while in prison awaiting her trial.

C. A. M.

SIR,—In the Frau Rothe case I think the Fatherland has given a striking example of what in Ireland is pleasantly called 'indifferently administering justice.' If the sworn testimony of so many witnesses of intelligence, culture, and position can be so coolly set aside, one begins to wonder if human evidence is of any value at all; and if so, what becomes of our time-honoured system of trial by jury, which has sent (perhaps wrongfully) so many poor wretches to their doom? The truth is there is nothing stronger than ignorant prejudice; it blinds the eyes and warps the judgment, and against it equity has no chance. Out of this fiasco, however, good will come. As in the old religion, so in what may be called the new, 'the blood of the martyrs will prove the seed of the Church.' Through this trial world-wide attention has been called to the subject; the spirit of inquiry has been aroused, and the effects will be far-reaching and beneficial to the cause of Spiritualism.

But I cannot help thinking that the judge not only committed a blunder, but that he lost a unique occasion of delivering a judgment worthy to take a place beside that of Solomon or Portia! Suppose he had addressed the accused somewhat in this strain:—

'Prisoner at the bar, we have not the smallest doubt that you are a fraud and a humbug; it would be an insult alike to our reason and common-sense even to give you the benefit of a doubt, for the simple reason that such things cannot be; they are impossible. Nevertheless, as you have got together a number of witnesses whose trustworthiness on any other point we would not dream of questioning, that "our moderation may be known of all men" we give you a chance. You shall have three séances, the room to be chosen by ourselves, and the strictest test conditions to be employed. If, then, you can produce flowers and fruits, woven out of air, that can be seen and touched, well and good. Your innocence shall be proclaimed, and there will be nothing for it but that the judge, jury, and officials should become Spiritualists! If not, you shall be declared a rogue and an impostor, and shall be banished to South Africa to keep company with Hottentots and Kaffirs, and such like superstitious savages.'

INDIGNANT SYMPATHISER.

SIR,—In all the heated controversy about Frau Rothe, no one seems to have hit upon the solution that she was once a genuine, remarkably gifted medium, but that her power had been taken from her. Perhaps she may have used it unworthily, making gain the chief end, after her connection with Jentsch, who was certainly an unscrupulous person. He had been a traveller in brandy before exchanging that trade for another sort of spirits which promised to be more lucrative. Personally I thought the reports by the lady in Paris, published in 'LIGHT' some weeks before the crisis in Berlin, were conclusive as to Frau Rothe's mediumship being fraudulent; they were so reasonable and impartial, with an evident desire to be just and kind, and it is only the evidence at the trial that leads me to think it was once otherwise. The most striking testimony in her favour was that of a clairvoyante who had seen the flowers formed slowly out of a cloudy mist which moved downwards towards the medium's extended hand. I do not know when this occurred. The most distinguished witness was the President of the Court of Appeal at Zurich; but he was so convinced of her good faith that, after it had been proved that she bought the flowers at a shop, he accepted the theory of the astral body making the purchase rather than believe her a cheat; and this seems to me like a counterpart on our side to the Podmore attitude, with its telepathy and subliminal self, rather than the simple explanation that things are what they seem.

On the other hand, a secretary of a spiritualist society deposed that he was sceptical after a visit from her, and found afterwards that her edifying trance address was taken verbatim from an old book.

The 'Grazer Tagblatt' published an interview with a gentleman who had seen many of her flowers and written communications. He observed that the latter were all spelt, as she and all her controls speak, in Saxon, *i.e.*, *ai* for *ei*. (Example: 'Will my son pass his examination?' 'With distinction. Mit auszeichnung.') One lady wished to know if Shakespeare had really lived (I suppose she meant had really written), and how he employed himself in the spheres. The great poet graciously sent her a hyacinth (I don't know whether it was wired), and said he was now busy remodelling his favourite play 'Kabale und Liebe' (a frequently-acted play of Schiller's).

Though one would, of course, be glad to help anyone coming out of prison to start a new and better life, yet it does seem to me that a public subscription is too much like a testimonial to character, and would appear to the world as if Spiritualists were not as anxious to discover and put down fraud as they profess to be. If Frau Rothe is still 'a powerful medium of singularly refined and potent magnetism,' as her chivalrous defender, Mr. Lucas, asserts, why do not her spirit friends send a shower of blossoms into the prison? That might open the eyes of even the German Emperor.

JESSIE VESEL.

St. Veit bei Sittich.

Onomatology.

SIR,—The paragraph in 'LIGHT' written by 'Astra' has much interested me, but the writer has, in my opinion, quite underestimated the power of letters, when he does not recognise that *u*, being a vowel, has a much more potent force for good than the consonant *w*. Both in America and here the science of letters is being demonstrated. Swedenborg says, 'By a name the ancients understood nothing else than the essence of a thing,' and that name designates qualities. Hence in Biblical narrative names were often changed, as Jacob to Israel. And in my own family I have a corroboration of the influence of names on the life of an individual. My only sister was named, in direct opposition to my mother, after my father's eldest sister, who died under very sad circumstances in India, before she (my sister) was born. My only sister died under exactly similar circumstances in the West Indies, and I did everything in my power to avert it. I was given a Christian name of a great grandmother of mine who was poisoned, and that the poisoner escaped hanging was by a fluke. He used arsenic as Chapman did, and not one male relative of his bears his name to-day, so God is just. His sons realised he was a poisoner and acknowledged it. I as a child was always angry with my mother about my Christian names, and it was the only thing on which I had a discussion with her. As far as I can I have obliterated the first, but it has had its tragic effect upon my life, as I can prove and corroborate. With regard to personages of the same name who have played a very unfortunate part in English history, I would like to mention the enormous importance of vowels either in the surname or Christian name, but am afraid it would make my letter too lengthy.

BELL LEWIS.

22, University-street, W.C.

A Correction.

SIR,—Through some strange inadvertence, possibly by my own omission in the MS. of the word 'not,' the meaning of my third proposition in a letter to 'LIGHT,' on 'The Pains and Perplexities of Life,' published in the issue dated May 2nd, is entirely reversed. I daresay many kind and thoughtful readers, judging by the context and general tone of the communication, have supplied the missing word to their own satisfaction, but as this letter is part of a vital controversy in which decided views are expressed on both sides concerning the main issue, I trust you will kindly publish this apology for an unintentional error either on the part of the writer or compositor.

The unhappily mutilated sentence should read: 'Is it not utterly beyond proof, as it is to many Theists also beyond credence, that the means God is employing for the education of His dearly-loved children are not the very best possible for their ultimate perfection?' As my own unflinching faith is that they decidedly are the best possible or they would not be in operation, I lose no opportunity for promulgating and enforcing this cheering, comforting, and inspiring theory of the Universe.

W. J. COLVILLE.

Spiritualism in Reading.

SIR,—Would you kindly permit me to inquire through your valuable columns whether any circle exists at present in the town of Reading or the neighbourhood? A friend and myself, both of us ardent Spiritualists, find ourselves somewhat cut off from our like-thinking brothers and sisters, and, if no circle exists to receive us in or near Reading—and we know of none—we are quite prepared to do all that lies in our power to make the omission good. Possibly, with due assistance, we might even be able to form a branch of the L.S.A. in our county town. There are sure to be a number of Spiritualists in Reading; they are everywhere, but many are so backward in coming forward to confess themselves true disciples. I should be very glad to hear from any of them, and I am sure, sir, you will gladly forward any letters which are addressed to me at the office of 'LIGHT.'

ERNEST G. HENHAM.

The Pains and Perplexities of Life.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Vernon Leftwich, in his observations regarding 'The Supreme' or 'Omnipotent,' appears to me to be utterly irrational, inasmuch as he endeavours to estimate God by his exceedingly limited powers of comparison. He says, 'If He (God) be omnipotent, then I cannot possibly conceive Him to be a God of Love.' We are taught by angels that God the Creator is a trinity of three great principles, viz., justice, love, and truth. Therefore, He (God) must be God of Love. As to His methods of compelling humanity to learn wisdom, either in the mortal or spiritual state of being, it is not for any to judge or understand—but it is wise to have faith that the Omnipotent knows what is best for us. Spiritualism is sent to us to clear up these very perplexities and to show how these things work out hereafter. I have just been reading a discourse on God between Satans and Angels in Swedenborg's 'Conjugal Love' (p. 415), where your correspondent will find a true interpretation of God by illustrations. If, further, he will read that valuable book 'A Wanderer in Spirit Lands,' he will find a remarkable record of the responsibilities of mortal life and also how Almighty God in His wisdom leaves us to do as we please, but will hereafter exact an inexorable account of the stewardship of our life here on earth. I have had many remarkable experiences with spirits; and if only mediums would take heed of the temptations and resist evil spirits sent purposely to try their strength to resist temptations, we should not hear so much of fraudulent mediums.

It is impossible for me to understand on what grounds your correspondent imagines the Creator to be a God of limited capacity. He surely cannot imagine that he knows all the requirements that created beings need for their progression in wisdom. How does he know that the pain and suffering he sees around him, are not the result of ignorance in some form or other? That 'the sins of the father shall be visited on the children unto the third and fourth generation,' has been proved to work out in a multitude of ways, with suffering as the inevitable result. If the life on earth were the beginning and end of the spirits' attainments, there might be some grounds for the idea of a limited Creator; but as we know well that the life beyond is one vast growth of spiritual wisdom by experiences—whether gained through the hells or the spirit lands—and that society there is governed by those entrusted with authority and a power to enforce it which nothing can withstand, then we also know by that fact that a Supreme Power has invested those so endowed. As to the presumption of man in his elementary condition trying to understand God—other than by trying to carry out His great principles of justice, love and truth—only disaster can be apprehended from such experiments. All kinds of ideas to justify all such illogical speculations will be urged by spirits, and often some small successes even permitted to justify such reasoning, but whenever true knowledge is desired and God is approached in faith for it, it is never long withheld.

W. H. EDWARDS.

SIR,—In the excellent letter of Mr. Leftwich I think he has the best of the argument. We are inclined, however, to think in that way when the opinion coincides with our own. It has always seemed to me that there are imperfect views on this subject, that the general idea of omnipotence is dangerously near to what may be called the conjurer's 'Hey, presto!' and the immediate change; whereas the deepest consideration shows the very opposite of this. How true is that inspired saying of the poet, 'The mills of God grind slowly.' This idea of slowness should be kept steadily in view. Then the next idea is that of Law. God works, and seemingly only works, through law; hence some metaphysicians have said that God is Law. The next point is that God works, not immediately and visibly by miraculous means, but *mediately* through human beings, which necessarily determines the fact of slowness, as these human

beings have to be first impressed before carrying out God's will.

To give a vivid idea of the *slowness* we have only to consider the state of this world at present and the way it has carried out its idea of Christianity, as expressed in the words of Jesus uttered nearly two thousand years ago. I suspect no idea can have any real power over humanity unless it is, as it were, bitten into it; that it must have experienced, through several generations, its powers, pleasures, and penalties, and under every condition; so that it must have become incorporated and part of its nature, not of its opinion only.

To take an instance of what God cannot do, is to take a human being who has spent a sensual, brutal, and ignoble life and change it immediately into its opposite, to do which God would break His own inexorable law—'As ye sow so shall ye reap.' And yet, to take the above instance in its largest and deepest sense, God's will and omnipotence can be worked out if we allow Him *time*, for in the course of the life here or hereafter, this degraded human being can, through remorse for its past life and the help of the higher powers, be raised to the condition of the one who spent his life here in goodness and purity.

There is still, however, a force, though unseen, that we have to take into consideration, the power of prayer, which may work, as far as we know, against the extreme carrying out of the law, in modifying it; not that force hides itself in mystery that we cannot penetrate when we look at things as a whole, but we may have a glimpse of in one's own personal experience.

J. A.

Haslemere.

SIR,—May I trespass upon your space to try to answer Mr. Vernon Leftwich? In the first place I cannot agree with him that it is a mistake to be too explicit in our way of propounding our views, for if our opinions are worth holding then they are worth stating plainly and boldly, or not at all. Mr. Leftwich says that the Creator is almighty as to the ends but not as to the means. Here we are certainly face to face with a paradox. Does Mr. Leftwich mean by this that man is to a limited extent a free agent; or does he mean that up to a certain point the Creator has only a limited power, but later on in evolution develops more power and ultimately assumes almighty power just to finish His work? One might imagine so many things from Mr. Leftwich's statement and yet not get to know what he really means.

If my first query is correct, I quite agree that man has a certain amount of free will, but to me this does not in the least make it necessary for us to assume that the Creator is not almighty. As to God making man in His own image, and Mr. Leftwich returning the compliment, I thought I had made myself quite clear. My meaning is, that Mr. Leftwich makes God into the likeness of man as we know him with his limited capacities.

Regarding my presumption, as Mr. Leftwich terms it, of postulating an almighty God, surely my presumption falls far short of his in postulating one non-almighty. If Mr. Leftwich can really reap any consolation from imagining this, well I for one would be very sorry to rob him of it. He is undoubtedly quite justified in holding this view, but I think such a view would drive many thinkers into an asylum. I do not admit that in my mind any confusion exists, but I think a great deal does exist in Mr. Leftwich's. Fancy a Creator bringing into existence a world with all its varied forms of life, and yet not being able to control it. Surely no more definite statement of confusion could be imagined. As to the supposition of some noble, unselfish being with his glorious kingdom, wishing to create beings to participate in the joys of his kingdom, here Mr. Leftwich is to my mind imagining a God, and I should, of course, say an almighty one. I certainly should not care to hazard an opinion as to how He would, in His divine mind, order the evolution of His people. As far as I, with my finite mind, can imagine, the creature who had learnt all the lessons, from the lowest to the highest, would be infinitely better in every way than one made into a demi-God straight away. But to deal fully with the question would require too much space of your valuable paper.

JNO. MONGER.

National Union, Ltd., Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Through your kindness I wish to acknowledge, on behalf of my committee, the following subscriptions to the Fund of Benevolence received during April, and while heartily thanking all subscribers, to express our deep appreciation of the kindness and interest in this fund of the London Spiritualist Alliance, also the Junior Spiritualists' Club, and the efforts in its behalf of Mrs. Kate Taylor-Robinson, of Manchester, who desires me to state that the 10s. sent by her is for the difference

in value of a diamond lace-pin that was given to her some time ago by Mr. J. Trego Gill for the benefit of the Fund of Benevolence, and that the 20s. is from the sale of artificial posies at the Good Friday celebration in Manchester (by kind permission of the celebrations committee), and at the Junction-street Rooms (by kind permission of Mr. Lamb and the committee). Half of the flowers were made by a Unitarian friend, and the rest by the Star Lyceum Workers' Guild.

Kindly permit me to add that Mr. James Macbeth has very kindly presented five volumes of his poems entitled 'The Song of the Cross and the Chant of the Labour of Satan,' price 3s. 6d. post free, to be sold for the benefit of the Fund of Benevolence. I shall be very pleased to receive applications, accompanied by postal order, for these books, and so fulfil the wish of the generous donor.

Faithfully yours,

(MRS.) M. H. WALLIS,
Hon. Financial Secretary.

'Morveen,'
6, Station-road, Church End,
Finchley, London, N.

Amounts received: From Mrs. K. T.-Robinson, 10s. and 20s.; Mrs. M. Marchant, 10s.; Miss E. L. Boswell Stone, 2s. 6d.; Star and Crescent, 5s.; Mr. A. Colbeck, 10s.; 'N. H.', 5s.; Mrs. W. P. Browne, £1 1s.; Mr. W. P. Browne, £1 1s.; Junior Spiritualists' Club (from collecting book, per Mr. H. Hawkins), 20s.; 'W. S. D.', 2s. 6d.; London Spiritualist Alliance, £5; Plymouth Society (per Mr. Evans), 6s.; 'W. C.' (Derby), 10s.—Total £12 3s.

SOCIETY WORK.

MANOR PARK.—TEMPERANCE HALL, HIGH-STREET, N.—Speaker on Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Boddington.—P. G.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. H. Wright gave a helpful and well thought-out address on 'Do the Dead Live Again?' which gave much satisfaction. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. R. Bullen.—R. J. P.

NEWCASTLE PSYCHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY.—On Sunday last a splendid address was delivered by Mr. Westgarth, of Heaton, on 'Spirit Communion.' At the after-meeting, Mrs. Read gave many good psychometrical tests.—H. S.

PORTSMOUTH.—ALEXANDRA HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey delivered instructive and earnest addresses on 'Spiritual Life: Mundane and Celestial,' and 'The Unseen Cloud of Witnesses.' The clairvoyance at each service was clear and convincing to many. There was a crowded audience at night.—E. R. O.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last, after a reading by Mr. G. W. Lear and an invocation, a very able and scholarly address was given by Mr. W. M. Green on 'Angels—what are they?' which was much appreciated. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. D. J. Davis.—W. H. S., Hon. Sec.

READING.—On Sunday last Mr. W. J. Colville gave two interesting lectures in the Banqueting Hall, Willison's Hotel, and answered numerous questions from the audience. On Sunday next, Mr. Colville will lecture in same place at 7 p.m., on 'Do Heaven and Hell exist To-day?' followed by answers to questions.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—ATHENÆUM HALL, GODOLPHIN-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Roberts, of Leicester, gave excellent clairvoyance to a good and attentive audience. On Thursday, at 8 p.m., at 73, Becklow-road, a public circle will be held. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Robert King. (See advertisement).—P. HODGINS.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday last good spirit descriptions and advice were given at the morning circle. Much interest is being taken in the series of evening addresses on 'The Appearances of Jesus after Death,' which will be continued on Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m. The public are heartily invited to the morning circle at 11 a.m.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY (LONDON).—Our meetings with Mr. Cecil Husk and Miss A. V. Earle were well attended; the address by the latter on 'Give us this day our daily bread,' being greatly appreciated. On Sunday last, Mr. Arthur Lovell's third lecture on 'Self Development,' was given before a large and interested audience, several taking part in the friendly discussion which followed.—GAMBIER BOLTON, Sec.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last our president, Mrs. H. Boddington, delivered an interesting and instructive address on 'Mediumship.' Miss Deighton kindly contributed a recitation. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Helen Checketts. Next Thursday, at 8 p.m., Madame Clairabelle will give psychometry. Tickets 6d., or silver collection on entrance. On Sunday, the 17th inst., the service will be conducted by Mrs. Effie Bathe and Mr. Robert King.—B.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. W. Millard gave a trance address upon 'Spiritualism: Its Teaching.' Séance followed, with clairvoyance. Meeting every Sunday at 7 p.m. Developing circle on Thursdays at 8 p.m.—M.

GLASGOW.—2, CARLTON-PLACE.—On Sunday last Mr. D. McIntosh gave a thoughtful paper on 'Spiritualism: What it is Doing for Us'; and Mrs. Hunter gave very successful clairvoyance.—A. R.

GLASGOW.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, 136, BATH-STREET.—On Sunday morning last Mr. James Robertson, the honorary president, gave an interesting account of the history and influence of the mediumship of D. D. Home. An autograph letter from Sir Wm. Crookes, denying that any recantation had been made by him, was read and shown. In the evening Mr. Robertson spoke on 'The Dawning of a Brighter Day,' giving in outline the history of psychical research, and showing that an ever-increasing number of scientists, though unwillingly, were being compelled to admit the truth and value of the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism.—G. Y.

PLYMOUTH.—13, MORLEY-STREET.—Our circle on April 29th was well attended. On Sunday last Mr. Trueman spoke on 'A White Funeral; or the Bursting of an Earth Bud into Blossom in the Spirit World.' It was an 'In Memoriam' address for one of our Lyceum scholars, the dear child of Mr. and Mrs. Steer, old friends to the cause. Good clairvoyance was given by Mrs. Trueman. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. Prince.—H. PRINCE.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Veitch related some interesting personal experiences. Short and up-lifting addresses were also given by Messrs. M. Boddington, Hough, and Wyndoe. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., and 7 p.m., Lyceum anniversary services, when songs, drill, and recitations by the children will be given, and addresses by Mr. and Mrs. Boddington in the afternoon, and by Mr. Adams in the evening. On Tuesday, at 7 p.m., Band of Hope. On Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.—E. BIXBY.

ILFORD.—THE CLOCK HOUSE, ILFORD-HILL.—On Sunday last Mr. J. C. Kenworthy's address on 'The Lord's Prayer' was received with enthusiastic applause by a large and intelligent audience. A lively discussion concluded an exceptionally happy evening. Mr. Kenworthy will be our speaker every Sunday until further notice. We are about to form a library, and being at present very short of funds would be extremely grateful to any society that would help us. If every society will respond to this appeal with say one book only, the thing will be done. Please forward to the Hon. Sec., J. H. Kennett, 937, Romford-road, Manor Park, Essex.

LEICESTER.—QUEEN STREET.—The Lyceum anniversary this year established a record in the way of successful services. They were conducted by the esteemed pastor, Mr. G. H. Bibbings, who in the afternoon named the babe of Mr. and Mrs. Goadly, two of our most willing workers, with eloquent utterances, accompanied by the laying-on of flowers as emblems of purity and sweetness. The night service was one ever to be remembered. Throughout both services the scholars added many interesting items, and the words of Mr. Bibbings made the evening complete and enjoyable—so much so that a request was made to repeat some of the items on the following Sunday.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. E. W. Wallis was at his best, when, before a large audience, he gave a reading, followed by an unusually impressive trance address on 'Immortality.' We regret that such admirable discourses have no permanent record. It is due to a cause such as ours that some arrangement should be made whereby messages such as that delivered through our friend might be preserved. Mr. Wallis also sang 'The Loom of Life.' On Sunday next Mr. Peters will give clairvoyance. On the 20th inst. we hope to see all old friends at the 'Farewell Social,' as it will be the last of such functions to be held in Blanche Hall.—A. J. CASH, Cor. Sec., 51, Bouverie-road, N.

CHISWICK TOWN HALL.—On Tuesday, April 28th, the large Town Hall was packed to hear demonstrations in clairvoyance and medical diagnosis by Dr. Wm. Harlow Davis. The success attending his efforts won the entire audience, and disarmed criticism. One of the illustrations in clairvoyance, given in minute detail, was publicly acknowledged by a gentleman in the audience as being absolutely correct. He said it referred to particular matters occurring forty-five years ago, and he was the only known person living at the present time associated with the facts. Dr. Davis, in one of the demonstrations of medical diagnosis, drew an acknowledgment from a lady that she was about to undergo an operation; he assured her it was not in the least necessary, explained her trouble to her, and gave her definite medical advice and instructions for its amelioration. The president drew from Dr. Davis the promise of another visit. Madame Buyon performed some classical music on the grand piano. Monday next, Mr. W. J. Colville (see advertisement on front page).—P. S.