

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,197.—VOL. XXIII. [Registered as] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1903. [a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

## CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .....	601	Christ's Christmas .....	606
L. S. A. Notices .....	602	Higher Spiritualism in Earliest	
Interview with Dr. A. R. Wallace	602	Christendom. An Address by	
Materialisation of the Incarnate	603	Mr. G. R. S. Mead.....	607
Spiritualism Denounced .....	604	Reconciliation .....	611
'A Strange Experience'.....	605	Society for Psychical Research ..	611
Society for Psychical Research		A Boy Medium in Belgium .....	611
and Mrs. Thompson.....	605	Society Work A .....	612

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

In a few days Christmas will once more be here. We anticipate the day and offer our kindly wishes now. Let all true Spiritualists enter rightly into the spirit of the time. Properly understood, it is a time for service and not for self-indulgence. Let it be that, and it will help to sweetly end the year. Forgive every enemy; pay off old debts: owe no man anything but to love him: look up forgotten comrades, or—dare we whisper it?—neglected parents: find a place by the fireside for the poor relation: and let the heart of the Child-Christ enter in. Then perchance it will come to pass that we shall learn how to keep Christ's Christmas all the year.

We have been saving up for Christmas an extract from an American paper concerning dress, and the wonder and glory and cost of it.

It appears that a Convention of dressmakers was lately called at Chicago, and that the great 'modiste,' Madame Baker, presided. This lady, in her speech from the chair, gave an estimate of what it costs a society woman to 'keep up with the procession.' The figure put down was two thousand dollars for one year, if the processionist is willing to economise a little on evening dresses.

'Unity,' from which we quote, says, with not excessive severity:—

Concerning these matters 'Unity' is not entitled to an opinion, but it is in position to express sympathy for that large pathetic class who are not in the procession but who are straining every nerve to keep in sight of it and who are in continual terror lest the procession may suddenly turn a corner and pick them up just once or twice during the parade—and they must always be ready, for the unexpected happens at unexpected times. Perhaps it is also pertinent for 'Unity' to ask, What is the 'procession' anyhow, and whither is it going? Is it a compliment or otherwise to be found in it? What if some day public sentiment were to take just a little tilt so that the term would become a reproach, and women found in the 'procession' should find themselves losing caste in the estimation of the noblest, the true leaders of society? When extravagance in dress comes to be regarded as a sign, not of good taste but of bad morals, then such extravagance will cease, and the needle industry will begin to grow ethical.

What has that to do with Spiritualism and 'LIGHT'? No thorough-going Spiritualist will ask that question. The thorough-going Spiritualist makes the body with its vanities know its place, and declines to let this mortal house to Vanity Fair. The thorough-going Spiritualist does not care to 'join the procession,'—does not care either for the road or for the glory of it. 'The fruits of the spirit are,' not finery and extravagance, and the pampering of the body, but 'love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control.'

Evidently an anxious inquirer asks us the following venerable question: 'What guarantee have we that Satan, who is transformed into an "angel of light," may not be personating the departed? Is not this possible and probable? This supposition may account for the supposed spiritual absence of a devil among Spiritualists.' There is but one answer;—No guarantees can be given in this matter of spirit-communion. There are only trusts and probabilities. But, in truth, are we very much better off in relation to the visible world? Are there no demons in the flesh, in London and elsewhere, who masquerade as 'angels of light,' and who personate beyond all possibility of detection? Devils! Oh, yes, there are plenty even in this centre of civilisation.

How then do we guard, or try to guard, against these? By using our judgment, by standing on our guard, and by the good old rule, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' As for the unseen frauds, we can, at all events, believe that we are not left to combat them unaided. On this imperfect earth, we trust largely to detectives and the police. Why not do the same as to the unseen? It is an absurdity and a gross mistrusting of God to suppose that we are left a prey to 'the devil and his angels.' No: but there is law beyond the veil, and there must be guardians and administrators of the law there, whose business it is to safeguard us. People talk loosely about 'infidelity': but there is no infidelity like the infidelity of excluding God from the spirit's life: and we do exclude Him in proportion as we assume that 'Satan' can do as he likes with us.

'Physicist,' writing in the 'Daily Telegraph' concerning the inane things about radium now being printed in certain 'yellow' papers in London, makes a naïve remark about the disturbed condition of our old friend 'Science'—Science, the cocksure,—Science, the denouncer of the 'impossible' He says:—

The atomic theory is shaken, the eternal fixity of the atom is given up. With Professor J. J. Thomson's electrified corpuscles, a thousandth part the size of the hydrogen atom, streaming from uranium, polonium, radium, actinium, thorium, and the rest, the physicist at present does not know where to draw the line. The tendency in scientific circles is to believe that the higher elements, and especially those like uranium, thorium, and radium, that have extreme atomic weights, will break up into simpler elements. That's all.

'That's all'! The 'eternal fixity' of the supposed basis or foundation is gone: that's all! The finalities are breaking up, and showing minute mountain ranges beyond the last hill: that's all! Nobody now knows 'where to draw the line,'—that blessed old line, so definite, so impregnable, by the side of which 'Science' sat and smoked its pipe, serene: that's all! All we can say is that if 'Science' has been hustled out of its arm chair, and into the open road, and no longer knows 'where to draw the line,' it may hear of something to its advantage at 110, St. Martin's-lane.

Messrs. Kegan Paul and Co. have just published a book by E. Clinton-Andrews, entitled 'Richard Bradley: being a glimpse into the unseen world, and the history of an



odd man.' The work consists of two Essays and a long Introduction telling the extraordinary story of the inner life of the writer,—a youth who spent his life in—what shall we say?—a world of almost indescribable emotional romance,—a spirit, apparently born on the wrong planet. Make of it what we will, the story is brilliantly told; but the Essays, though undoubtedly thoughtful, seem rather fantastic.

We regret to hear of the illness of two brave and faithful stalwarts, Dr. Peebles and Mr. Moses Hull, and we are specially sorry to learn that the latter needs financial help. The 'good soldier' in this campaign of ours has indeed need of the capacity to 'endure hardness,' and Mr. Hull has been in every sense a good soldier. We are sure that if any one feels moved to send him a kind word and a little substantial help, 'The Banner of Light' people (204, Dartmouth-street, Boston, Mass., U.S.) will gladly communicate with him. 'The Banner of Light' justly says:—

No one has done more valiant service for Spiritualism with pen or tongue than has Moses Hull. He deserves well at the hands of all who love a progressive Spiritualism, and we hope there will be a generous outpouring on the part of the people of the substantial means he needs to make his struggle for life successful. It is not charity that is sought, but only just compensation for the hard labour he has put forth for the good of our beloved Cause. Let us waft him the healing balm of kindly thoughts, with our offerings of cash, that his pain may be eased and his worry lessened during his illness.

Is not this exquisite? But we know not the writer of it:—

AT CHRYSTEMASSE TYDE.

Two sorrie Thynges there be,—

Ay, three,—

A Neste from which the Fledglings have been taken,

A Lambe forsaken,

A Redde leaf from the Wilde Rose rudely shaken.

Of gladde Thynges there be more,—

Ay, four,—

A Larke above the olde Neste blythely singing.

A Wilde Rose clinging

In safety to a Rock, a Shepherd bringing

A Lambe, found, in his armes, and Chrystemasse Bells  
a-ringing.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

IN THE SALON OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS,

SUFFOLK STREET, PALL MALL EAST, S.W.

(Near the National Gallery).

1904.

- Jan. 8.—REV. J. PAGE HOPPS, on Swedenborg's 'Memorable Relations of Things Seen and Heard'; with some modern confirmations and inferences.
- Jan. 29.—MR. E. WAKE COOK, on 'Joan of Arc and her Spirit Guides.'
- Feb. 12.—MISS EDITH WARD, on 'Human and Superhuman; the Relation of the Spiritualist and Theosophical Movements to the Problem of Human Progress.'
- Feb. 26.—MR. J. BRUCE WALLACE, M.A., on 'The Superpersonal Element in Man.'
- Mar. 3.—MR. WM. LYND, on 'Invisible Light' and 'The Thursday. Wonders of Radium,' with practical demonstrations—introducing inventions of Sir William Crookes and Sir Oliver Lodge.
- Mar. 25.—MRS. PAGE HOPPS, on 'Happiness as a Fine Art.'
- April 8.—MR. J. W. BOULDING, on 'Some Interesting Spiritualist Experiences.'
- April 22.—MRS. J. STANNARD. (Subject to be announced.)
- May 6.—DR. W. R. WASHINGTON SULLIVAN. (Subject to be announced.)
- May 20.—REV. JOHN HUNTER, D.D., on 'Some Conditions of Right Thinking.'

The doors will be opened each evening at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

## INTERVIEW WITH DR. ALFRED R. WALLACE.

An exceedingly interesting interview with Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace appeared in the 'Christian Commonwealth' for December 10th, in which, among other things, the veteran scientist has something to say in answer to the critics of his recent book, 'Man's Place in the Universe.' He thinks it clear that the majority of the reviewers did not give the time necessary to read the book from beginning to end and impartially weigh the facts:—

'Some of the critics say that the book is the outcome of my preconceptions, but in that they are entirely wrong, for I had no theory at all until indisputable facts seemed to point almost irresistibly to certain conclusions. On the contrary, many of my severest critics are themselves influenced by preconception. Their fixed idea as to what is actual or possible in the universe is the touchstone by which they test my arguments and inferences; whereas I started out with an absolutely open mind.'

Dr. Wallace added that he did not even have to create the foundation on which his argument is built. He merely brought together the conclusions of modern astronomers, physicists, chemists, and biologists, and indicated their bearing upon the question of our relation to the visible universe.

### Are the Stars Inhabited?

Dr. Wallace maintains that all the probabilities are against life in any such form as we know it here existing on any other planet:—

'Regarded from a purely naturalistic point of view, it is only by the merest chance that man ever came into existence at all on this globe, and the probability of the particular combination of circumstances necessary to produce and sustain the miracle of life obtaining on another planet is so remote as to be practically non-existent. Indeed, we know for a fact that such conditions do not prevail in the bodies, other than the earth, which constitute our solar system, and analogy suggests that they do not exist in any other star or planet.'

Sir Oliver Lodge appears to share Dr. Wallace's view as to the uninhabitability of any other planet of the solar system, but he says it is 'absurd' to suppose intelligent beings are not to be found on any other lump of matter in space. The term 'absurd,' Dr. Wallace says, is no argument, and he pointed out that Sir Oliver Lodge has himself said that the attempt to explain the universe by chance has absolutely failed, it must have had a designer; and Dr. Wallace says that his own argument tends in that direction. He further says:—

'Darwin believed that the mental, moral, and spiritual nature of man were alike developed from the lower animals, automatically, by the same processes that evolved his physical structure. I maintain, on the other hand, that there are indications of man having received something that he could not have derived from the lower animals.'

In answer to the question, 'Have you any theory as to how he got that "something"?' Dr. Wallace replies:—

'I do not think it is possible to form any idea beyond this, that when man's body was prepared to receive it, there occurred an inbreathing of spirit—call it what you will. I believe this influx took place at three stages in evolution—the change (1) from the inorganic to the organic, (2) from the plant to the animal, (3) from the animal to the soul of man. Evolution seems to me to fail to account for these tremendous transitions.

I need hardly say that I have never suggested that this earth alone in the whole universe is the abode of life. What I do say is, first, that our system appears to be in or near the centre of the visible universe; and, second, that all the available evidence supports the idea of the extreme unlikelihood of there being on any star or planet revealed by the telescope, I won't say life, but any intelligent being, either identical with, or analogous to, man. For myself, I confess that I find it difficult to imagine that there can be in the universe, under one supreme Head, a great number of quite differently-formed, but equally intelligent, beings.'

### The Spirit World and the Immortality of the Soul.

Dr. Wallace was asked whether, as a scientist, he had any difficulty in believing in the existence of consciousness apart from material organism. His reply was:—

'None whatever. At the same time, I have a difficulty in conceiving—though there is no reason why it should not exist



—pure mind, pure spirit, apart from any substantial envelope or substratum. St. Paul speaks of a "spiritual body"; that is a body possessed by disembodied spirits. To them it is real enough, but to us it is not corporeal.'

Having expressed his belief in 'the persistence of the individual after the dissolution of the body,' Dr. Wallace continues :—

'The best spiritual teaching seems to me to be that we are all capable of infinite progression, that none are so bad as to be incapable of advancement. I believe that the reason for the existence of this world and the explanation of the problems that puzzle us are that the earth and its struggles and pains are essential to the development of the highest spiritual natures.'

It may be added that Dr. Wallace stated that he was 'quite unable to accept current religious doctrines.'

#### 'The Ultimate Problems.'

With regard to 'the ultimate problems,' Dr. Wallace holds that they 'are insoluble, and indeed unthinkable':—

'I have no difficulty in conceiving an ascending scale of being rising up into what the Christian means by "God," but the idea of a Supreme Being does not, of course, explain the mystery of the universe. The child's questions as to when God began and where He came from still remain unanswered. The fundamental problem is, Why does anything exist at all? Why was there not an absolute negation—nothing but empty space? Infinite time or space or matter alike are unthinkable by us.'

As to the question asked by some people, 'Why was not man made perfect at once?' Dr. Wallace says that that practically was not possible; and refers to the only long private conversation that he ever had with John Stuart Mill, who then argued, 'There cannot be a God, or why did He allow evil—why did He not create man perfect?' Dr. Wallace says :—

'I thought the logic very weak and the remark a very superficial one for so great a man. Just think! If man had been created perfect he would have been incapable of progress or advance—in short, he would have been God himself. You cannot conceive of any being less than God being perfect. Therefore all that kind of talk is pointless. The law of the universe seems to be growth by evolution—from the lower to the higher, smaller to greater, worse to better, and so on. That principle may actually govern the principle of God Himself. The old idea that God is omnipotent in the sense that He can do anything, even make two and two add up into five, is not a working theory. Limitation, pain, struggle, are evidently essential factors in the development of spiritual beings, and if we believe in a Supreme Being with faculties at all similar to those with which He has endowed us, we cannot help also believing that His purpose is the perpetuation of the greatest happiness of the greatest number.'

The following question and answer are especially interesting to Spiritualists, for, being asked if he 'could explain how it came about that the sense of God, which, in the case of Darwin, seems to have practically died out, has, in himself, grown deeper and stronger as he has grown older,' Dr. Wallace replied : 'Partly through my contact with Modern Spiritualism'! He, however, is not very hopeful that the tendency will be for scientists to become more religious or spiritual, but is of the opinion that :—

'The process is a very slow one. The attitude of science was probably never more materialistic than now, unless it was at the end of the eighteenth century. Spiritual scientific men are very few, and most of them are afraid of revealing their mind. The majority of scientists seem to regard it as a sign of insanity to avow belief in any other than what are called the ordinary laws of Nature. . . . For instance, take the recent correspondence in the "Times." When Lord Kelvin and Sir Oliver Lodge expressed their belief in some outside power, some external cause, leading scientific men went dead against them. They seem to think, and to like to think, that the whole phenomena of life will one day be reduced to terms of matter and motion, and that every vegetable, animal, and human product will be explained, and may some day be artificially produced by chemical action.'

Even if that were done, Dr. Wallace was of the opinion that behind it all there would still remain an unexplained mystery!

## MATERIALISATION OF THE INCARNATE.

The testimony of Madame d'Espérance has many noteworthy features, none more so than the fact that it supplies a remarkable instance of an incarnate person having materialised at a séance. The person was Madame herself, so that if there has hitherto been reason to doubt the possibility of such a thing, the fact can now be no longer denied, however it may be accounted for. The flash of the magnesium light has placed it on record, on the photographic plate; the attendant circumstances are minutely and carefully detailed, so that the fact is indisputable. A narrative of the incident will be found in Madame's lecture on pp. 560-1 of 'LIGHT.' It is headed 'A Perplexing Experience,' as no doubt it was, both to the lady and her friends. She had no intention nor conscious thought of materialising, and did not even know she had done so until the photograph was produced.

I may be permitted to express my opinion that Madame has acted wisely in giving the singular incident to the world. In view of the publication of Mr. Myers' great synthesis, the time may be considered ripe for fresh practical light upon this interesting subject, and a valuable service has been rendered to the cause of Spiritualism, which it may be hoped will lead ere long to materialisation taking a duly accredited and honoured place with other properly verified phases of psychic phenomenon.

A careful reading of the narrative will convey to all candid, well-informed minds the conviction that it affords indubitable proof of the fact, already assumed in my hypothesis, that it is the subliminal self which materialises, and that it may do so quite independently of the normal consciousness. I further aver that it is the sub-conscious self of the *person manifesting* which materialises. In this case it was the sub-conscious self of the medium, and her likeness appeared in the features. Is there any reason why we should not suppose that, in other cases, the resemblance of the features—to say nothing of other evidences of identity—does not correctly indicate the manifesting spirit? We are told Theosophists hold that it is invariably the medium, and no other, who manifests. It seems to me that those who put forward such a hypothesis have a heavy burden of proof to produce, and they have not yet produced it. They have to account for the resemblance in form and feature which the figure bears to the spirit claiming to be manifesting, which is often so strongly marked as to compel recognition by the most intimate friends. They have to explain why the tone of the voice or the cast of the eye has been so frequently recognised: they have to show the origin of the familiar phraseology, manner and gesture, and a hundred and one more things which, apparently trifling in themselves, go largely to make up what we understand as the evidence of personal identity.

It is the same difficulty as that in which Professor Hudson has endeavoured to involve the whole question of spirit return, by attributing to the subliminal self what practically amounts to omniscience and omnipotence, in close association and co-operation with blank idiocy, or alternatively with fraud so persistent and systematic as to be grossly immoral. But such a hypothesis is too big a draft upon human credulity, and cannot stand for a moment alongside of the sane and simple thesis of spirit return and spirit operation, even from the incarnate form.

But, to return to Madame d'Espérance's remarkable case, there is the further proof of another personality acting beside her own. It seems to have got into the wrong *corpus*, or to have transferred its personality from one form to another at a critical moment. The photograph, we are told, shows Madame's head on another's figure, and the head of another on what was apparently her body. It is evident that, as 'Walter' said, 'Things did get considerably mixed up,'—the result of the medium's weak state of health at the time. But it is evident from the narrative, from points in the lecture with reference to 'Yolande,' for instance, and more especially in 'Shadow Land,' that Madame was frequently conscious of her personality getting mixed up with that of someone else. This naturally results from the close association with the phenomenon which



the medium must necessarily hold. That it does *not* imply the *absence of any other* manifesting intelligence is sufficiently demonstrated by the incident of the wrecked Russian ironclad, related on p. 559 of 'LIGHT.'

The incident of the 'mixed' figures, and similar experiences, afford excellent proof of the composite nature of the human personality for which Mr. Myers contends, and which, in spite of the fears of timid Spiritualists, is destined to do much to put Spiritualism on a scientific and rational basis, which will be beyond dispute. Some, indeed, may infer that the head in the photo belonged to the subliminal self of Madame d'Espérance. But against this inference there is the fact that up to the time when the photo was taken Madame retained her *normal* or *supraliminal consciousness*, and it *was located in the body, which remained in the chair*. She saw the figure beside her, but did not identify herself with it, and had no idea that it resembled her. The spirit animating it must, therefore, have been her subliminal or sub-conscious self. Here is an explanation of why materialised figures sometimes resemble the medium to some extent, as they will naturally do when the will-power of the manifesting spirit is weak, for the mixing process must always go on to a greater or less degree.

But let it be noted that *the features animated by Madame's sub-self resembled her normal bodily features*. We have, therefore, in the incident a striking proof that in so far as the materialised form *resembles*, not the medium but *another, it embodies another personality*. When the form it resembles is that of a friend, either incarnate or excarnate, the inference is irresistible that the animating spirit is that of the friend who is represented, in his sub-conscious state. It may be argued, of course, that it was a case of multiple personality, and that the strange head represented only one of many fragments of the subliminal personality of Madame d'Espérance. The argument looks plausible, but there is no evidence to support it. In the absence of any sign of identification of the strange head, it is difficult to dispute the bare possibility of such a thing; but it would be absurd to contend that the head belonged to Madame's personality if, as in numerous other cases, it gave unmistakable indications, recognised by others, of belonging to someone else. We must be reasonable in discussing such matters, and if it be admitted that the animating principle of these manifestations is spirit, then it logically follows that the animating spirit is the one whose likeness is revealed and whose identity is established.

My own theory of the strange head is that the manifesting spirit was *driven out* of the materialised form by Madame's sub-self, which had gained an abnormal access of power through the weak condition of her normal organism. Finding itself ousted, the visitor took refuge with Madame's other part, and proceeded to operate on it in the way generally known as 'transfiguration.' Succeeding in this operation, it is not difficult to believe, as Madame says, that it 'seemed to be regarding the proceedings with great complacency and satisfaction.'

Madame d'Espérance, in her 'Shadow Land,' records another case where, in a low condition of health, she gave a séance in which she was clearly and perfectly aware of having her identity closely associated with that of the manifesting spirit. It was in Sweden. Madame sat in the circle with the other sitters, alert and observant, while the figures materialised in the cabinet. I quote a small part of a long and interesting description, from notes taken at the time:—

'Now comes another figure, shorter, slenderer, and with outstretched arms. Somebody rises up at the far end of the circle and comes forward, and the two are clasped in each other's arms. Then inarticulate cries of "Anna! Oh, Anna! My child! My loved one!"'

'Then somebody else gets up and puts her arms round the figure; then sobs, cries, and blessings get mixed up. *I feel my body swayed to and fro, and all gets dark before my eyes. I feel somebody's arms round me, although I sit on my chair alone. I feel somebody's heart beating against my breast. . . never did I feel a touch so plainly. I begin to wonder which is I. Am I the white figure, or am I the one on the chair?*'

And yet these Swedish ladies recognised their daughter and friend in the materialised form. Was that form—were those

features and the identified personality animating them—the mere product of the medium—a sort of masquerade by her subliminal self, duly supplied for the purpose with all the information necessary for personation? The supposition is too grotesque. It surpasses human belief.

My thesis is that on the subliminal plane the spirits of disincarnate and incarnate persons act with like faculties; that when a circle or séance is held for materialisation, or for any other purpose recognised by Spiritualism, the presiding medium acts as a *focus* towards which are drawn and centred, like rays of light, the necessary psychic and physical qualities which are contributed as emanations from the sitters; that towards the same focus are attracted various spirits, excarnate or incarnate, known to the sitters or the medium, or interested or in sympathy with them; that from these two currents focussed in the medium, and mingled with similar qualities possessed by the medium in an eminent degree, are produced the phenomena which we know as Spiritism.

I am supported in my thesis by the conclusion reached by Madame d'Espérance, under the direction of her guides, when, after a trance vision, returning to the mists of earth she desired to materialise herself, so that she might know experimentally how it was done. She discovered that it was done through force of desire and will, 'by sweeping together masses of the cloud mist, by *breathing into it the life* with which I was myself endowed; forcing into it living will, part of my own desire and intensity of purpose, it became animated, a part of myself.'

This may appear transcendental to some, but it is the true explanation of the mystery, and I think I shall be able to show in another communication that it is in harmony with the latest pronouncements of psychic science in Mr. Myers' monumental work.

London.

L. GILBERTSON.

#### SPIRITUALISM DENOUNCED.

The 'Sunday Circle' for November 28th devoted a page to 'A Warning against Spiritualism,' by the Rev. Archibald G. Brown, who declared that "'Spiritualism" is simply a synonym for the witchcraft denounced and accursed of God from beginning to end of the Scriptures.' This opening assertion is followed by a string of texts which are supposed to refer to Modern Spiritualism, but which, in reality, 'have nothing to do with the case.' The animus of the preacher is manifest in the following gem:—

'Whichever way your discussion turns, or, whatever you prove, you prove that it is a sin. Prove that it is a reality, and you prove that in intercourse with it you have had fellowship with that which is forbidden of God. Prove that it is false, and you prove that those who have aught to do with it are having fellowship with a lie. . . I am, personally, as persuaded as that I am standing here that it is demons personating the departed in order to seduce the living. Therefore come out of this evil. Have no fellowship with the unclean thing.'

It would be useless to attempt to argue the matter with the Rev. Brown while he is prepossessed with such misconceptions regarding Spiritualism, and urges his readers not to be induced to parley with it by discussions as to its genuineness, or as to the amount of sham there is in it, and those who would be deterred from the investigation by his tirade are just the people who are not ready for the truth, and, therefore, had better leave the subject entirely alone. But those who are open-minded and interested will find a different aspect presented in the new work by Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, entitled, 'Spiritualism in the Bible.'

'A BIBLE STUDENT.'

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

No use can be made of any communication which is not accompanied by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

Several communications are necessarily held over for a future issue.



## 'A STRANGE EXPERIENCE.'

THE SÉANCE WITH MR. HUSK.

In your issue of December 5th Mr. L. Gilbertson refers to a letter of mine which appeared in 'LIGHT' of November 14th, and explains his reason for thinking me 'as a type of chronic pessimist,' fit neither to live nor die.

Probably few care whether 'in this world I fill up a place which may be better supplied when I have made it empty,' so I will not pursue the subject further than to say that with regard to sarcasm, I have no inclination to criticise his sentiments, nor would I presume to be sarcastic about *them*. We do not understand one another. That is all.

And now at the risk of filling up space in your journal which might be better supplied, may I supplement my previous letter on the subject of the strange experience of a friend of mine at one of Mr. Husk's séances, by stating what else transpired on the occasion referred to? Mr. Gilbertson writes: 'If he ("R.") wishes us to believe that materialisation is a fraud and the mediums or the spirits humbugs, let him try to prove it.'

Let me rather try to prove the contrary—but, I repeat, these physical manifestations are fog-enwrapped, and wearying to those who, as Mr. Gilbertson says, 'would be in the presence of the eternities.'

Accompanying the clergyman referred to were my son and his wife, who, being on a short holiday from South Africa, had taken a tour through the United States, and by means of an introduction courteously given by the Editor of 'LIGHT,' attended several materialisation séances at Los Angeles. My son was satisfied (though, I think, with insufficient evidence) that he saw the forms of his mother and uncle; but my daughter-in-law, possibly from over-anxiety to see *her* mother also, was always disappointed. She hoped for better things with Mr. Husk, and during the séance the following incidents (affecting them personally) occurred: A bugle-call was played, and someone remarked, 'This must be intended for Major R. What does it mean?' My son expressed his ignorance, but the clergyman explained afterwards that it was a 'call' well known to himself and brother at the time of the Franco-German War. They had a piece of music in which the call was introduced, and which was named 'The Prussian Cavalry March.' This manifestation was followed by the tunes recognised by the clergyman, and which I described in a former letter. After this three hymns were rendered, and instantly recognised by my daughter-in-law as having been often played by her mother many years ago.

To my mind, the most convincing part of this manifestation is what she subsequently told me, viz., that her mother was no musician, but learned a few hymns which she often played, invariably over-emphasizing certain parts; and, strange to say, the hymns were exactly reproduced with fortissimo passages.

I cannot but believe that the performer, regretting her inability to show herself in America, and sensing her daughter's keen disappointment, adopted this plan, made possible by Mr. Husk's graceful form of mediumship, of proving her identity—a mode, perhaps, superior to any other; for what more potent instrument could there be than the power to reproduce music whose tones have long since ceased to vibrate, and whose echoes have hardened into an incurable sadness of the soul? As a marvellous test of identity, the resurrection of the simplest air, once familiar both to spirit and mortal, must appeal with the force of a torrent to the startled ear of one who, perhaps, is but looking for an illuminated face shining in the darkness.

What more appropriate means could be devised, when soul is attuned to soul, of restoring 'the tender grace of a day that is dead' than the out-breathing, in melody, of the ineffable joy of the one, and the responsive yearning of the other for the realisation of its own bright ideals?

If this gift, apparently possessed by Mr. Husk, and presumably, therefore, by others, could be developed, few would care to attend materialising séances where 'spirits,' even grosser than when on earth, with voices coarser and hoarser

than when functioning in genuine flesh, irritate with their flippancy, sicken with their effrontery and ignorance, and force us even to shudder for our own future.

I would add to this letter my appreciation of 'H. C.'s' offer, and the expression of my opinion that there is no reason for assuming, with Mr. Gilbertson, that the circle would be in danger from 'determined will-resistance, hostile mental suggestion, prejudice, and an antipathetic state of mind.' It is this disinclination to credit others with the same desire for truth which we fancy ourselves to possess that causes so much friction amongst Spiritualists, and still more between Spiritualist and Theosophist.

Bristol.

R.

## THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND MRS. THOMPSON.

A private meeting of the Members and Associates of the Society for Psychical Research was held at 20, Hanover-square, on Monday, the 7th inst., when Mr. Piddington read extracts from a lengthy report of his experience of Mrs. Thompson's trance phenomena. The report, in its entirety, will shortly be published in the 'Proceedings' of the Society, and will be found to contain items of great significance. As a result of Mr. Piddington's long observation, he has acquired an unshakable belief in the honesty of Mrs. Thompson, and in the actuality of some of her controls. 'Nellie' he knows and likes well. Her speech differs widely from that of her mother, as well as from that of the two next most familiar operators, 'Mrs. Cartwright' and 'Mr. D.' 'Nellie' still talks as children talk—'I telled you,' 'I writed you,' &c. Why this should be one cannot say, since 'Nellie's' childish days are behind her, and children are supposed to progress and receive tuition in spirit life.

'Mrs. Cartwright' speaks in a deliberate, pedantic fashion, while 'Mr. D.,' a new control, expresses himself always in classical English, nearly as much above the normal Mrs. Thompson as 'Nellie' is beneath her. These are points of interest, but the most striking matter on record so far is concerned with the alleged control by the late Professor Sidgwick. Specimens of automatic script were handed round the room, and the resemblance between them and the writing of Professor Sidgwick when in the body, is admitted both by relatives and friends. On one occasion at least the late Professor purported to speak through Mrs. Thompson, and Mr. Piddington describes this as the most realistic and impressive experience in the whole course of his investigation of spiritualistic phenomena. It was not simply *like* the man, he said, but apparently it *was* the man. An incident that occurred at one of the council meetings of the Society, and of which it may fairly be inferred Mrs. Thompson had never heard, was referred to by Professor Sidgwick at one of the séances, and received corroboration on the 7th from Mr. Arthur Smith, who said he recollected the occasion perfectly. In prophecy, 'Nellie' comes out badly, and error and confusion often put in an appearance, but there is gold amid the dross for all who care to sift. A brief discussion followed the reading. One gentleman—the happy possessor of a 'legal mind'—advocated the concentration of attention *exclusively* upon the 'frauds' in the case; but surely this was a superfluous recommendation! He did not suppose the supra-liminal mind was to blame, but the *sub*-liminal was capable of anything, or so he seemed to think!

From the day of its adoption, 'Fraud' has been the favourite child of the Society for Psychical Research, and like many another pet, would be all the better now for a little wholesome neglect. It is an ugly word, and nine times out of ten 'error' would be more appropriate.

BIDSTON.

MR. ALFRED PETERS desires us to inform his friends and clients that he will shortly leave London for an extended tour on the Continent, and will therefore suspend his mediumistic work on and after the 21st inst. Mr. Peters will take with him the good wishes of Spiritualists in all parts of Great Britain.



OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19th, 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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### CHRIST'S CHRISTMAS.

One of the strangest things in Christendom is the transformation of Christmas. It began as the adoration of a babe in a manger, and it threatens to end in amazing millinery, prize cattle, pantomimes and an orgie. The transformation could probably be traced; and, if it were, we should not be surprised to find a very close connection between London's keeping of Christmas and the old Roman Saturnalia: but the irony of it is colossal.

And yet, as the Old Testament has it, there is 'a remnant'; and Oxford-street, Drury-lane and Smithfield must excuse us if we still keep Christmas with some reference to the founder of the feast. What a seed it was, to produce such fruit! What do we find when we resolutely get back to him, and dare to face the truth?—a carpenter's son, giving up his trade to become a kind of homeless religious wanderer. His hearers 'went to their own homes,'—so the record runs,—'but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.' 'The foxes have holes,' he said, 'and the birds have nests, but I have not where to lay my head.' How poor and unfriended was this Hebrew Buddha! 'Have any of the rulers believed on him?' sneered his depreciators. It was only 'the common people' that 'heard him gladly.'

What an apparently joyless life, too! To use the quaint language of one of our modern poets, 'mirth was strange' to him, though there are traces of wise humour here and there, especially when he chaffed the rulers and the scribes, the Pharisees and the men who loved 'the chief places' in the synagogues and at feasts. Even his disciples gave him trouble with their fastidiousness, their ridiculous quarrels, their stupidity and their fuss—and, in the end, their cowardice.

And, after all, he was a seeming failure;—his life a loneliness, his witness derided, his message from the Father taken for blasphemy, his only crown a crown of thorns. Between thieves and murderers they crucified him with extremest degradation, and so flung him out of the world,—as they thought. Even the early Church hardly escaped losing him altogether, what with its judaising and paganising of his great human simplicity,—too beautiful, too simple for such a world,—the heavenly, misunderstood and solitary Christ!

But it all had meaning; and one could easily believe that it was all intended so;—a thrilling thought! What if, after all, the Heavenly Powers meant just such a Christ all the time? And, in truth, it is an old story: for God's strong sons and messengers nearly always come from the manglers of the world, and have to be men of sorrows and

acquainted with grief. What a divine rebuke to the foolish standards of the world, with its bedazzled eyes before royalty and tinsel and pomp, and its relish for a 'noble lord'! If one had the audacity to think such a thing, one might almost believe that all through history these Heavenly Powers took pleasure in laughing at us and putting us to scorn—conquering the conquerors with its homeless Christs.

But something less doubtful is suggested. Is there not great and noble teaching in the spectacle of this supreme victor, winning with such poor weapons and on such low vantage ground? What is the meaning of that struggle with Satan in the wilderness, with the temptations of food and riches and power? History or vision or allegory, it stands for the truth of this glorious conqueror's life, and the loneliest and least helped may now learn by his side what may be made of life by the lone spirit, trusting only to itself and the Heavenly Powers. Thus it is 'the man of sorrows' who, as the man of sorrows, becomes the true Saviour: and his 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me' becomes at once the rallying cry and the prophecy for all God's daring and self-surrendering forerunners.

Ascending, we come into light. This lonely, joyless, struggling, suffering Christ, is set forth as the 'beloved Son.' The words 'Father' and 'Son' are nearly always on his lips: and they are there as much for our sakes as for his. He never isolated himself. His was the brotherly spirit, the all-enfolding charity, the humility of insight and pure love. He seems to take our hands in his, as one of us, only to lead us to 'The Father.' What if it, in some way, were intended that one of the world's homeless outcasts should do this? The world wanted such a Saviour, and wants him now—a 'well-beloved Son' who comes from home to show us the way back to it—who comes with his gracious God's-spell, or Gospel, and bids us listen to the message from a Father forgotten or never known.

He gave men Light. The saying, 'I am the light of the world' is attributed to him. If he said it, it was said with gentlest humility as a light-bearer, and not with arrogance as one who advanced a claim. If it was only attributed to him by one who believed in him, it stands as the record of an experience or a faith.

He gave men Peace. The historical or legendary angels' song at his birth bore witness to a profound truth, repeated in that most touching farewell, 'My peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you': and, if Christendom has suffered and is suffering for want of peace, it has been and is because it has made belief in Christ only a profession and not a fact.

He gave men Hope and God. Even to the dying thief, who showed a trace of justice and compunction, he said, 'To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.' 'Show us the Father,' said one of his disciples—hardly knowing what he said: and the Master unfolded the mighty truth that the Father could be seen only in the Son.

In these thoughts we find the original and the permanent significance of Christmas. It is when we turn from the feast to the founder of it that we understand both: and he will best keep Christmas who longs to say with him: 'Come unto me, ye tired and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

DRAWING ROOM MEETING.

In the interest of Members and Associates who are unable to attend evening meetings, a Drawing Room Meeting will be held in the CENTRAL SALOON, St. James' Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), on the afternoon of FRIDAY, JANUARY 22ND, from 3.30 to 5.30. Afternoon Tea at 4.15 p.m.



## THE HIGHER SPIRITUALISM IN EARLIEST CHRISTENDOM.

An Address delivered by MR. G. R. S. MEAD to the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, on December 4th, 1903.

MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, who presided, introduced Mr. Mead to the audience as a gentleman who belonged to another wing of the same army, whose writings had greatly impressed him not only by their acute insight into many spiritual problems, but also by the generous way in which he always dealt with those who thought differently from himself.

MR. MEAD, who, on rising, was greeted with hearty applause, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I thank you sincerely for the very cordial welcome you have accorded me even before I have given my address. I have to speak to you to-night about what I have called 'The Higher Spiritualism in Earliest Christendom.' It must be within the knowledge of some of you in this room that the subject which interests me above all other subjects is the history of the beginnings of the great religion of the Western world; and I believe that no body of men and women gathered together can better appreciate the aspect of the beginnings of Christianity which especially interests myself than those who believe in the possibilities of what has been called Spiritualism.

Now, with regard to what I call Earliest Christendom, I will take you back with me, to begin with, to about the year 25 A.D., a year when, according to the received chronology, the Master had not appeared to take up His public ministry. About this year a most instructive and interesting document was written by a very learned Jew of Alexandria in Egypt, a Jew of the Dispersion, who lived in what at that time was the centre of the civilised world so far as philosophy was concerned; a Jew with all the astuteness of his race, with all the religious fervour of his forbears, a man who was intimately acquainted with all the religious thought of his time in that crucible of religious thought, and not only with the ordinary opinions in the city and in the lecture-rooms, but also with the inner strata of thought that were deposited in the secret communities of those who devoted themselves to the inner life. He wrote concerning these communities, and especially with regard to one of them to which he had access, a treatise called 'On the Contemplative Life.' In that treatise he describes how those men whom he looks upon as the highest philosophers, who had given up all and betaken themselves to the service of God—he gives a most interesting description of how they lived, retired from the world in certain communities, each of them occupying a small hut or cabin by himself, in which there was a corner partitioned off, a small closet as it were, in which the saint or seer or prophet betook himself to prayer and meditation, taking with him into that sanctuary only the sacred rolls of his tradition. This will put you in mind of the saying preserved for us by one of the Evangelist writers: 'Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.'

Now this Jew, whose name was Philo, tells us many things about these men and women. They apparently had behind them a very long tradition, and one of the things which distinguished them was 'philosophising'—philosophising about the mysteries of their own religion. They were ascetics, celibates; they almost starved themselves, for they had only one meal a day, and that consisted only of bread and hyssop. Sometimes they fasted for three days, and sometimes no fewer than seven days, in order that they might enjoy visions of the inner world and obtain spiritual illumination and enlightenment concerning the meaning of their sacred books, which they regarded as a revelation from God.

The particular community to which Philo himself had access was situated on the southern shore of Lake Mareotis, near Alexandria. But Philo tells us that there were very many of these communities scattered over Egypt. He says that in every province there were communities of those whom he calls Therapeuts, Servants of God, or Healers—Healers of the soul

rather than of the body. But, says Philo, this race of men, as he calls them—those who were 'kin' to the Source of their inspiration, sons of that great Centre of illumination which Philo calls the *Logos* or the Word of God—were scattered all over the civilised world; and, mark you, the year I am talking about is 25! According to the testimony of Philo, then, there were many communities of men and women who had sought refuge from the world, sold their property, made provision for their families, and betaken themselves to the religious life, a higher and inner side of religious discipline, whereby they might become seers of God and prophets of the divine things, speakers-forth of the divine mysteries. Philo tells us a great deal about those whom he calls Therapeuts; and not only Philo, but a later contemporary of his who flourished from 70 to 100 A.D., Flavius Josephus, Joseph ben Mattathai, the historian, also tells us about those whom Philo calls the Essenes, who followed the practical life, whereas those I have referred to were Essenes who followed a contemplative or 'theoretical' life, the *θεωρητικοί*; and by *θεωρία* they did not mean some academic 'theory,' in the modern sense of the term, but face to face knowledge of divine things.

Philo has also told us a great deal indirectly about the Essenes who did not live in Egypt. These were 'practical,' according to Philo; that is to say, they followed a discipline which was not so intimate, not so advanced, not so difficult as that of the Egyptian Therapeuts about whom I have spoken. A great deal of speculation has arisen about the Essenes proper, whose main community was at Engeddi, on the shores of the Dead Sea. There were, however, in all probability, many other communities of those who were accepted Essenes, and many followers of the order who belonged half to the world and half to the brotherhood—men who surprised the ancient world by their love to God and love to their neighbours.

Those who have made a close study of the mystic schools of Judaism of that time, those who are Talmudic scholars in brief, have approached these Southern schools to the Hassidim, or the 'Pure'; these Hassidim were regarded as the purest sect of the Pharisees. The Pharisees, however, were really not a 'sect,' but the national school, the national body, of the Jews; those who remained in the religious traditions of their race, believing in the theocracy of God, and that they were verily and indeed the chosen nation. It may surprise some of you to learn that there were no less than ten degrees of purity among these Pharisees, the degrees becoming more and more rigid, and that those who had reached the highest were supposed to heal the sick and raise the dead.

These folk about whom I am speaking, and I have only picked out two lines of tradition, are samples only of a number of mystic schools of all sorts and kinds that existed in these early days. I am speaking of the first quarter of the first century.

When it became necessary at the Caesarisation of the Christian Church—about the time of Constantine, when the Christian body was favoured by the Emperor and given privileges as the State Church—when it became necessary for the history of the origins of Christianity to be written (some feeble attempts had been made before but not with success), the task fell to the Church Father who became the Herodotus of Christianity—that is to say, to Eusebius. Now Eusebius looking about him for evidence of the founding of the earliest churches, lights on this treatise of Philo the Jew, and claims that this Therapeut community south of Alexandria is the first Christian Church of Egypt, and with this start the 'tradition' was finally stereotyped that this was indeed the first Christian Church, founded by Mark. There was no further question about the matter, and it was accordingly handed down through the ages that the facts were so. So all went on merrily as a marriage bell, until the time of the Reformation; for—mark you what it meant. It meant that the first Church, the earliest Church that you could get any outside record of at all, was a Church of monks and nuns. All this was quite consistent with all that was known of the Church until the time of the Reformation. Then there was a protest against monkdom, and Protestant historians found it exceedingly inconvenient to have these first Churches of Egypt pointed to, to clinch the Catholic



argument. It was exceedingly inconvenient to have this fact hurled back at them when they protested against monkdom. Why, the first Christians were all monks and nuns, so argued the Catholic historians. The controversy raged for some three centuries, till finally a way out was found with great ingenuity. The Protestant historians boldly asserted that this treatise of Philo's was a forgery, that it was forged somewhere about the beginning of the fourth century, and to-day you will find in all our Protestant dictionaries that this treatise is referred to as 'pseudo-Philo.'

But, you will say, why are you telling us about these dry details? How can they interest us? But bear with me a moment. Within the last few years an acute scholar has set to work to examine this treatise and to compare it phrase by phrase with the language of Philo's acknowledged works, and he has established—and you cannot avoid his conclusions—that it is a genuine treatise of Philo. Now this is the dilemma for our Protestant and Catholic historians. Here you have men and women practising the contemplative life—monks and nuns. The tradition of the Church has asserted—it is even till to-day so asserted by the Roman Catholics—that these people were Christians. How, then, I ask, could there have been existing in 25 A.D. a fully-organised Christian Church, with a long tradition behind it of practices handed down to them from their fathers and their fathers' fathers? That is the point. Either Christianity existed before Jesus or the dates of the beginnings are erroneous. For myself, then, I start with this idea in my mind, based, as I think, on very good historic evidence, that there were many communities in the early days at the beginning of Christianity devoting themselves to what I call in my lecture the 'Higher Spiritualism.'

And now I will try to take you, historically, another step. The earliest canonical documents you have of Christianity are not the Gospels; they are the Letters of Paul. We need not to-night go into the question of how many of the Letters of Paul are genuine; we need not go into the involved criticism of the subject; speaking for myself, I hold that ten of them are, for the most part, legitimate, genuine letters of Paul. Doubtless some things have been written into them, but for the most part they are genuine documents from the actual man himself, or dictated by him.

Now, if you take these letters and read them, in what sort of an atmosphere do you find yourself? Do you find yourself in an atmosphere that is similar to the atmosphere of the four Gospels? By no means; it is a different atmosphere altogether. Do you find anything quoted by Paul from the great sayings of the Master? Not a single one, or at best only one disputed saying. You find Paul moving in another air, in an air in which he is in contact with schools of religious philosophy on the one hand, and on the other hand you find him in contact with churches or associations—speaking to people who have been long established, and have for long practised certain 'gifts.' It is true that Paul does not think very much about most of these 'gifts,' and he is in a position to know, because he speaks with more tongues than any of them. But who were these folk with long-established spiritual practices? They are surely not brought suddenly into existence by his own enthusiasm. Why, again, does Paul use a nomenclature which is a strictly technical nomenclature? Let me give you an example of what I mean. You will recollect in that very important passage in which Paul refers to the theophanies of the risen Christ, that he tells us to whom these appearances were made, and ends with: 'And last of all he appeared to me also, as to one born out of due time.' Now, what on earth does 'born out of due time' mean? If you are interested in the subject, and will look up the commentators, you will find that you will come across no commentary that is really satisfactory. There are many attempts to explain, but no really satisfactory explanation. But if you turn to the Greek, it says: 'And last of all as to the abortion he appeared unto me also.' He does not say 'as to an abortion.' There is no doubt about the reading. It has never been called in question, and if it were, one would naturally prefer the more difficult reading to the simpler, according to the rule. What, then, does Paul mean? Evidently something that his early readers knew about.

'You know,' he seems to say, 'what the abortion means. In that way, then, He appeared to me also.' It is quite true you find no explanation in what has become the orthodox tradition of Christianity; but if you turn to the fragments of Earliest Christendom that have not got into the Canon you will find there is a great deal on the subject of 'the abortion,' as taught by these early mystic Christians, or 'Spiritualists.' They were called 'Pneumatics'; it is the very word they used, and so also did Paul when he said, for instance, 'He that is at one with the Lord is at one with the spirit; he that is at one with the "harlot" is at one with the flesh.' Here we have the spiritual and the carnal; these were the great antitheses in his mind. As to the 'abortion' it is part and parcel of one of the great mystic dramas or myths, the grandiose and stupendous drama of the bringing into existence not only the physical world but also the prototypes of every manifestation of matter, and of every manifestation even of the world of mind. There was, they said, in the beginning the Fulness of the Being of God, the prototype of all heavens. Now the youngest and last of all the divine emanations of Deity was she who was called Wisdom, the lowest in that stupendous and transcendent existence, but the highest that the human mind can possibly conceive. It was owing to this Wisdom, if I may so phrase it, that the whole trouble arose. Wisdom, in imitation of the God over all, desired to bring forth of herself, without the aid of her consort, the divine and supernal Christ. This she did because she desired to imitate the Father of all, who brought forth without the help of another. This is the meaning of the 'only begotten'—he who is brought forth by the Father alone without any intermediary—really the alone-begotten. So she brought forth, but brought forth an imperfection in this world of perfection—an abortion. And all the divine supernal powers combined to expel this inchoate thing out of the divine perfection, so that it rested 'without,' as it were, the prime matter of a world inchoate and chaotic.

And just as in the great world-process the whole of formation and evolution is the bringing of this back once more by the World Christ into the Fulness—a most marvellous mystic drama—so in regard to the suffering, inchoate soul that is in each of us, the divine soul within, her divine spouse the Christ, forms and perfects her into His own perfect likeness. Now do you understand what Paul meant? 'And last of all as to the abortion, to me—to me, who was unborn, inchoate, He appeared, the divine Master, the divine spouse; to enform, and complete, and perfect, and build up my inner self, like unto Him, so that I should rise from the dead' (for those men called 'dead' those who had no intuition of these spiritual things) 'and be united with the divine Source, the Christ within.'

Now what does all this show us? It shows us that Paul was in contact with men who were familiar with the inner mystic, spiritual doctrine, a doctrine which had to do with knowledge and experience, and was not based only on faith. For what did they say? They divided mankind into three classes; they said the lowest were material, who had no interest except in things of sense. Then, there were the psychics—those beginning to feel something higher, but whose faith it was found necessary to confirm by wonder-doings. And finally, there were the Pneumatics, the spiritual, who knew themselves, not that they were bodies containing a soul, or that they possessed a soul to save from eternal damnation, but who knew that they *were* souls; and as one of the old Greek philosophers said, 'The coupling of the soul with the body is contrary to Nature.'

And now I will take you to my next page of history, to the Gospels, documents which as they have come down to us are clearly based upon earlier sources. How are we who have a common belief in the possibilities of the great wonder-doings recounted in them, how are we to believe in regard to the wonder-doings recorded of Jeschu ha-Notzri—Jesus the Nazarene? Because we believe in the possibilities of these things, even of all that may be narrated in the Gospel narratives, is it, therefore, expected that we must necessarily endorse, as an actual objective, physical fact, everything that we are told by these



writers? Whatever may be the opinion of the rest of you in this hall, as far as I myself am concerned, I say No! We may believe in the possibility of these things being done; we may believe that one who was so great, such a great Master of Wisdom, as Jesus, could have done all these things had he so willed, but the question arises, Is it probable that he did so? If he were a Master of Wisdom, do you think that he would have considered it a very wise action to have fascinated untrained and ignorant people by wonder-doing, so that they should believe in him? I believe myself it is somewhat improbable. He taught them, it is true, in parable, all things necessary for them to know, but He did not teach them the whole, for it is distinctly stated there were many things He could not explain to them, but He explained to the disciples apart. What has become of these explanations?

Now these men that I have been referring to, these so-called Gnostics, were in contact with a tradition of that nature, and based all they had to say on this fact. They said, further, that the Master had continued to teach after the resurrection, in one account as long as twelve years. Now, most of you know that those who are called the Church Fathers most bitterly resented these claims, and called the authors heretics, and among other things, 'first-born sons of Satan,' for you know pretty well what are the epithets that are used by those exceedingly in earnest about their theological convictions.

In order, however, that I may not be altogether misunderstood in this matter, let me take as an example the story of the Master in the storm on the lake. The Master goes to comfort His disciples, walking on the sea. The question is: Do you believe that that took place in the ordinary straightforward way that we are expected to believe it, that the Master did actually walk physically on the surface of the water? I do not mean to say that He could not do so; I am not going to commit the very elementary error of denying possibilities. I admit at once that He could, because I have a very fair conviction that people who do not come within measurable distance of the lowest characteristics of the Christ have done somewhat similar things. There is such a thing as levitation, which has doubtless come within the knowledge of some of you even in this room tonight. But I do not think He would have done so because, supposing it was necessary for the Master to comfort the disciples, who as yet did not understand these possibilities, He could have gone in a subtle body and made that visible as He wished. Or it may be that they themselves were clairvoyant. All this you may take into consideration with regard to such a miracle. And in this particular case I am inclined to think it probably did happen, but it puts me in mind of another story, told of the Buddha, with all the gorgeous exaggeration of the Oriental mind. One day the Blessed One, accompanied by ten thousand of his disciples, came to a river, running in a strong current, and there was no means of getting across. But the Buddha, taking this great company with him, miraculously passed over to the other side. This is handed on as a solemn fact. In the same scriptures, however, the Buddha is seen on another occasion preaching to a few disciples at the side of a river, in the same circumstances as before, and pointing out how many difficulties there were in getting to the other side, that is, to the spiritual peace of Nirvâna. You thus see how the parable easily gets transformed into the miracle. And precisely the same thing takes place in Christian tradition—for instance, the great miracle which is related of the feeding of four thousand, five thousand, and in another version seven thousand persons, with five barley loaves and two small fishes. Again I do not say it was not possible, but I ask—would Jesus, a Master of Wisdom, have done this thing? I give you some reasons why I do not believe it literally. In the 16th chapter of the Gospel ascribed to Matthew there is reference to the 'leaven' of the Pharisees, and the Master is made to say, Do you not understand when I spoke about the feeding of the seven thousand that I did not speak about 'bread'? It was the bread of life with which he had fed them. Accordingly, if we are professing ourselves to be students of evidence and sane believers in such difficult matters, we have, you see, first of all

to sift out many of these happenings by the light of common-sense and reason.

Take another great happening. How many of you in this room believe that Jesus of Nazareth actually rose again from the dead in His *physical* body? I am again not going to say it is not possible that there should be a physical resurrection from the dead, for Heaven only knows what the possibilities are in the universe. I say simply that it is highly improbable. Now Paul, who is our earliest recorder, who was before the Evangelists, teaches that Jesus rose from the dead; it is the main, the central, fact that fascinated his mind; he preached it as his chiefest doctrine. But we all know perfectly well that the Master did not appear to Paul in the physical body, but in vision. Moreover, when Paul tells us what had been the other manifestations, epiphanies or theophanies of Jesus, he uses the same words as he does concerning his own. He puts them all on the same basis, namely, the appearance in some subtle body, or spiritual body.

I said at the beginning that there were many schools at the time of the beginnings of Christianity whose scholars devoted themselves to these higher things, who gave themselves up to develop an inner knowledge of things; they called this inner knowledge *gnosis*, but they said that *gnosis* was only the beginning of the way, the end of it was God. Now we have preserved to us, chiefly through the industry of the Church Fathers, who were very indignant with all these people, numbers of quotations from ancient documents circulated amongst the mystics under pledges of secrecy. And one of our Church Fathers, who was exceedingly busy in collecting these things, in refuting a school of mystic tradition called the Naasenes, says that they based all their theories and 'babblings' on the mysteries of the Pagans. In the index or the summary of the treatise of this Church Father, it is said that one of the books was devoted to the Pagan Mysteries. Now the only manuscript we possess was discovered on Mount Athos in 1840, and from it this book is missing. This is exceedingly unfortunate, but fortunately this writer, this mystic Naasene, tells us that the whole of the mystery institutions of antiquity dealt with exactly the same problems and mysteries as the teachings of the Christ. He says there were two kinds of mysteries, the lesser and the greater; the lesser had to do with *generation*, the greater with *regeneration*; the lower with sex, and how a man came into the world, and whither he went, and how he was re-incarnated; the higher mysteries with the unwritten eternal mystery, the Birth from the Virgin. This man tells us what was the real central object of the whole of the straining and striving of these early mystics—that they should be born again, born from above, born from the Virgin Womb of the spirit, not from the impure womb of generation below.

Now, if you turn back to your Gospels, and to the introduction to the first and third Gospels, you are faced with the physical miracle of the Virgin birth, a matter that disturbs the Christian clergy of all denominations at this day in a very marked manner. Most of them still insist on the actual physical miracle, and also on the rising of the body of Jesus literally from the dead; but not all—because there are hundreds, nay thousands, of the clergy who cannot believe it.

You see what it means. These popular dogmas are simply the gross materialising of inner spiritual truths, everlasting truths, human truths that appeal not only to Christians but to every son and daughter of man that is born.

The teaching was this—the Christ, the Illuminated, the Son of God—(there is a Son of God potential in all of us, and these sons form the Sonship of God in all)—the Son of God is born from this Divine Spirit that is within us, the 'dwarf is to grow into the stature of the Great Man,' that is, is to become at one with God.

I use the language of one of the extra-canonical sayings. But, indeed, wisdom asks, when face to face with these sayings, when was the 'Jesus saith' put before them? They are the old, old sayings of the mystery teaching of which He was the greatest exponent in the West. He cast down the walls of partition that had been built up round these institutions. Thus one of the sayings saith: 'I stood on a lofty



mountain, and I beheld a great man reaching unto the heavens, and another a dwarf; and I heard a voice as it were of thunder, and I drew nigh for to hear. And he said: I am Thou and thou art I, and wheresoever thou goest I am with thee; and I am scattered in all; and whencesoever thou gatherest me thou gatherest thyself.'

Why was that saying of the Wisdom cut out of the Canon?

Let me give you yet another, only just found from the rubbish heaps of Behnesa. 'Jesus saith, "Seek and cease not till ye find, and when ye find ye shall wonder, and wondering ye shall enter into the kingdom, and entering the kingdom, ye shall have peace."'

All these sayings came from the great mysteries—traditions that were hidden amongst these early mystics and philosophers, men who apparently knew what they were talking about, men who in reality invented all the great dogmas of the Christian Church. The Church has taken over these dogmas, but it has cut itself off from the source from which the dogmas came, and has lost the explanation. In these documents to which I allude, you have, for instance, the most marvellous explanation of the creation out of nothing. None of you, if I had time to go into it, would reject it, as it is set forth by the Gnostic teacher. And so with other things that these mystics talked about. They were endeavouring to solve the great secret that lies ahead of us. As we are above the animals, they said, so this Christ, the true Man, is above us, and that is the next stage of evolution. Then these doctrines began to be published abroad by means of Pauline propaganda. The Christ is born of a Virgin, said the mystics. The unknowing said, 'Jesus the Christ, that is, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Mary, was born of a Virgin.' Mary was, therefore, a Virgin; and when they said that the Jews said some very uncomplimentary things that I will not trouble you with to-night.

Now I have, it may be, pulled down some of the orthodox structure, but I think I have built up more than I have pulled down. I say too much attention has been paid to the Man, and too little to His teaching. It was a great thing that was taught, and this teaching became the great heresy—namely, that it was possible for all of us to become in our turn Christs. That was the great teaching of Christ. There was no selfishness about Him. He showed us the possibilities as the first fruits. This Christ-stage is the stage of true humanity which we aspire after. And in all these things which you admire in your fellows, the feeling for others, and working for others, you are admiring that next stage which you will some day be perfected in. That is the basis of all ethic because it is the real being in existence. That is the mystery which Paul says was hidden from the foundation of the earth, that is the fundamental teaching of Christianity, and the whole of what I call the Higher Spiritualism in Earliest Christendom. (Applause.)

Questions being invited, one gentleman asked whether Mr. Mead did not consider that the religion he spoke of came originally from India. Mr. Mead replied that he did not think so. It had been argued that there was a direct connection between India and these mystic schools. He did not deny that there was a line of connection in the great trade routes, but he did not think the Essene doctrines had been built on the Buddhist model, or Pythagorean model. It was common to human nature that when men were striving after the same things they hit on more or less the same organisations to carry out their purposes. They knew very well that when an invention was discovered it frequently came to two or three men simultaneously, as they might learn from anybody connected with the Patent Office. And in this greater matter, when these things worked in men, they followed a great similarity, and the general tendencies of their teachings were similar.

Another gentleman, after prefacing his question with the remark that present-day psychical knowledge furnished a key to many things not generally understood in the Gospels and Epistles, asked Mr. Mead what he thought of that most interesting séance on the Mount of Transfiguration? Mr. Mead replied: Here they had the materialising of two individuals who had lived in the earth-life before, and Jesus got a prediction of his death which was to take place at Jerusalem. As to the rising again, there was no such thing. Paul saw a materialised spirit form. He was a psychic, a clairvoyant, and so were Peter, James, and John. As to the Virgin birth, there was no

indication of Virgin birth at all, for Matthew tells us that Jesus had two grandfathers. You found that from a common-sense reading of the first chapter of Matthew and the third of Luke.

Mr. E. W. Wallis asked for Mr. Mead's opinion of the Acts of the Apostles, as distinguished from the Gospels and Epistles. Mr. Mead replied that he took up the position of many scholars now, that the Acts had a genuine document in it, a very detailed diary, namely, the 'we' clauses—'we sailed,' &c.; the rest appeared to him to be more or less an academical exercise. The speeches were put into the mouths of the speakers, just as was the case in the history of Thucydides. They were made for the occasion, and much ingenuity had been expended in trying to reconcile the opposed tendencies of Peter and Paul. There was a great difference of opinion between the Petrine and Pauline traditions. He did not accuse anyone of deliberately sitting down to forge anything. In those days such an idea never entered into the mind of man. The copyright law was not then in existence. It was indeed considered a virtuous thing when you wrote something in the style of an ancient writer to say it was by him, as a sort of pious compliment.

Replying to a lady, Mr. Mead said we had Coptic translations from the Gospels in several dialects, and they preserved some readings which were of great service. For instance, taking the words from the fourth Gospel: 'In the beginning was the Word . . . the same was in the beginning with God.' The Coptic translation is very useful. The first 'beginning' is translated by a word that has nothing to do with time, but signifies 'in the something called the beginning, the first principle.' Afterwards the Coptic translation uses a word referring to time to translate the second 'in the beginning.' That Coptic translation perhaps preserved a true difference, and our received Greek text has not handed it on correctly. We have something like 150,000 tabulated different readings in the Greek text of the New Testament.

A gentleman asked if religions had not one common origin in the movements of the planets. Mr. Mead replied that they certainly had a common origin, but he did not believe either in the planetary theory or in the solar myth theory, or the one so much in fashion nowadays, the vegetation theory—what Andrew Lang called the Covent Garden theory—or the polar theory. Religions came from one source, a spiritual source, not a vague abstraction, but true wisdom and knowledge manifested in manifoldly different ways in the mind of man.

Replying to another questioner, Mr. Mead said they arrived at the date of Philo's treatise from a study of his style, for he had fortunately left a number of treatises, and they knew it was part of a treatise he was writing to present to a certain Emperor, and the date could be fixed according to these indications.

Asked whether Philo's work was any more authentic than the Christian Gospels, Mr. Mead said that Professor Conybeare's most brilliant piece of scholarship had proved that it was a genuine Philonian tract; there was no doubt about it.

Asked if there was any easily accessible reading on the subject, Mr. Mead mentioned his own book—'Fragments of a Faith Forgotten.'

Asked whether the so-called Christians were not Christians but Ebionites, Roman Christianity being based on the Eleusinian mysteries, according to the theory of a questioner, Mr. Mead answered amid laughter, 'I don't think you can prove that. I shall be very happy to read your book when it comes out, and to review it.'

An inquirer wished to know what about the Jewish story that the real father of Jesus was a Roman soldier. Mr. Mead said that was another very long story. They would find it referred to in another of his books which had just come out. It was a very painful side of research, which was, however, very necessary to be gone into, and presented a very strange tradition with regard to Jesus. A persistent Jewish tradition was that Jesus was born about one hundred years B.C.

A cordial vote of thanks was then passed to Mr. Mead for his very interesting address.

TRANSITION.—'The Diamond Fields Advertiser' of November 23rd last, reported the transition of Miss E. Strickland, Matron of the Carnarvon Hospital, Kimberley, on November 21st, from heart failure. Miss Strickland went from London, about nine years ago, to Kimberley, where she laboured ardently and won the respect of all with whom she was brought into contact. She was an earnest and avowed Spiritualist, and her decease is a great blow to the little band of Spiritualists in Kimberley, many of whom were present at the funeral, which was largely attended by representatives of every section of the Diamond Fields community.



## RECONCILIATION.

One of the saddest of the many sad things in this world is the disruption of friendship, and the severance of all the pleasant ties between those who have been intimate friends and trusted companions. Frequently these results arise from misunderstandings, unintentional and fancied slights, or the misrepresentations of others. A very little in the way of explanation would put matters right, but the coldness continues, wrong constructions are put upon attempts at reconciliation, and the one-time fast friends drift further and further apart until hostility develops into enmity and hatred.

'What a pity!' exclaims the onlooker who is friendly to both parties. He wishes he could bring his old comrades together, so that they would shake hands and be friends once more. But he is powerless unless there is a mutual willingness on the part of those who are most concerned, and he is often afraid to intervene lest he should make matters worse. If those who have differed and shut up their hearts against each other would only let the spirit of Spiritualism—of true fraternity—sway their thoughts and feelings they would speedily realise that all such exclusions are personally injurious, that the true law of the spirit is love, forgiveness, conciliation, and reconciliation. As Caroline Atherton Mason sings:—

If thou wert lying, cold and still and white,  
In death's embraces, O mine enemy!  
I think that if I came and looked on thee  
I should forgive; that something in the sight  
Of thy still face would conquer me by right  
Of death's sad impotence, and I should see  
How pitiful a thing it is to be  
At feud with aught that's mortal.

So, to-night,  
My soul, unfurling her white flag of peace—  
Foretelling that dread hour when we may meet  
The dead face and the living—fain would cry  
Across the years, 'Oh, let our warfare cease!  
Life is so short, and hatred is not sweet;  
Let there be peace between us ere we die.'

Or better still, 'Let there be peace between us' now and henceforth.

At this season of the year, when old memories awake in our minds during our brief respite from the daily round of labour, and we have time to pause—to remember—should we not think kindly not only of those who have passed through the mists into the life beyond, but of those who remain on *this side*, and yet have been lost to us because of the mists of misconception and differences? Aye! should we not think kindly, and forgivingly, even of the erring ones, and those who have wronged us, so that Love, Sympathy, and Good-will towards *all* men may reign in our hearts and make happy and bright our Christmastide? Surely the angels' song of Peace and Good-will would then find glad response in our hearts!

R. S.

## SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

If Mr. Dan Jons were an 'insider' of the Society for Psychical Research, instead of being, as he acknowledges, an 'outsider,' his remarks would naturally have more value. In the controversy to which he refers, no one has expressed a wish that the Society should hurry up with its 'pronouncement' on immortality, spirit communion, &c. The *pace* of the Society has always been slow; that is a *sine quâ non* of any attempt at strictly scientific research. It is the present *methods* of the Society which many of us feel bound to condemn; and only those conversant for many years with the working of the Society from within are competent to give an opinion of any value upon this question.

Unwearying patience with right methods and slow results is truly scientific.

Unwearying patience with wrong methods and slow results is simple folly.

Mr. Myers showed us an admirable example in giving hospitality to all possible material for his research, and then carefully sifting the wheat from the chaff.

Those who consider that the work has been carried on in an equally satisfactory manner during the last three years are, of course, justified in remaining where they are. I would add that I am one of those who do not consider the Servian Massacre prediction conclusive, although suggestive; but the *method* of investigating it was an admirable lesson in 'how not to do things.'

E. KATHARINE BATES.

## A BOY MEDIUM IN BELGIUM.

In a recent issue of 'LIGHT' we quoted a paragraph from the 'Advertiser' in reference to the doings of an alleged 'half idiot' who was said to be working 'miracles' at South Brabant, Belgium, his idiocy, it seems, consisting in the fact that he is entranced and when in that state writes under spirit control. A Brussels correspondent of the 'Daily Express,' writing on the 2nd inst., says that he was present on the previous evening at a séance held by the sixteen-year-old Spiritualist, Eduard Pirsch, in the hamlet of Chevelipont. He says:—

'We sat round a heavy kitchen table, the boy medium being at the head, with blank copy-book and pencil before him. When the spirits take possession of him, he says, his hand writes unconsciously at their direction.

'The president of the local society gravely introduced the visitors to "Callon," supposed to be the spirit of a great traveller who died in Peru fifteen years ago. Then followed a pause, after which there was the sound of the medium writing at great speed.

'When we examined the writing we found it to be a dissertation on Spiritualism, Belgian politics, and religion. While the message was being communicated Pirsch was asleep, and only stirred momentarily when his grandmother cried "Turn! Turn!"

'We also communicated with one, said to be "Pirrot," the spirit of a Montigny watchmaker, who has been dead for many years. By his aid we saw luminous balls of various colours, mostly red, float across the room. "Pirrot" is rather an eccentric spirit, and loudly boxed the medium's ears for daring to move without orders during the séance. He drummed loudly on the table, and through the medium wrote in the Walloon patois.

'Often, we were told, "Pirrot" makes the beds spin round in the dead of night, and tears the bedclothes from the sleeper. Sometimes he makes himself useful by winding up the household clock.

'Then followed a remarkable exhibition of table-turning. The great kitchen table round which we were sitting danced upon the stone floor, and finally leaped over the high partition into the next room, where it was found to be badly split. One of the journalists who accompanied me, a tall, nervous man, was persuaded to mount the table, which romped about the room in spite of his weight.

'The séance lasted until three in the morning, and the boy looked very lively and fresh at the end. The six hours' ordeal he had gone through had left no sign of fatigue. Between the spirit communications he was quite a boy. I heard him running about with a companion in an adjoining room.

'Pirsch says that during the last few days he has communicated with the spirit of Zola, who declares that it is owing to his influence that the Dreyfus case has been re-opened. The spirit added that he intends to supervise the proceedings of the new trial.

'The cures said to be effected by young Pirsch have caused great excitement in the neighbourhood of South Brabant, and hundreds of ailing people flock to the cottage where he lives to have their cases diagnosed and remedies prescribed.

'Pirsch lives with his father, mother, and grandmother, and a younger brother, who were all present at the séance, as were also two Belgian journalists, who accompanied me, the president of the local Spiritualist group, the village postman, and four or five stolid peasants.'

## 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 Drapery.

SIR,—Surely your correspondent, Mr. Gledstanes, can hardly be in earnest when he states that the black frock coat sleeves of the medium appearing beneath the spirit drapery at a materialising séance are no proof of any trickery. I have always understood that the etheric fluid from which the spirit-form is built up is derived partly from the medium and partly from the sitters, but no such fluid can be derived from the garments worn; and even if the latter are dematerialised, they would surely not be built up again beneath the spirit drapery! If your correspondent's views are accepted, how is it ever possible to distinguish between real and fraudulent phenomena?

A PERPLEXED READER.



## Need of the Christ-Spirit.

SIR,—Mr. Morse's account, in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' of the feeble state of the cause of Spiritualism in California, is, indeed, distressing, but is in no way surprising.

Anyone who has had opportunity to study the working of the movement in our own land cannot fail to have observed that, to a very great extent, it is a self-seeking movement. Our great and worthy cause is, indeed, headed and supported in many quarters by truly unselfish souls, by the choicest of men and women; but the rank and file are often far, far below that quality. (All honour indeed to those who continue to labour among such elements.) They are seeking a supposed good for self alone, and the quest ends with the satisfaction of self.

Now this is the root of the disease, and the cause of the feebleness. In one word, the Christ-spirit, which your valuable paper certainly does not suffer us to forget—the self-forgetting, self-sacrificing love—is wanting in the lower quality, and so long as this is so our cause will fail to firmly establish itself among men. It may even serve a scientific end, but it must fail to serve a truly spiritual or life-giving end.

The satisfaction of the scientific mind is a great good, but even the scientific mind is not remarkable for the power of consolidation! Nor can it ever of itself develop this power. Yet one thing is lacking, and so long as this one thing needful, even the Christ-spirit, is wanting from Spiritualism, it must remain a feeble power among men.

JAMES L. MACBETH BAIN.

## Some Reminiscences.

SIR,—The interesting contribution by Mr. J. H. Gledstones in a recent issue of 'LIGHT' reminds me of some reminiscences of my own of a similar nature.

When 'Rosetta,' the beautiful materialised lady, appeared first in Mr. Craddock's séances (when he was merely an investigator of the phenomena with myself, and could certainly have no pecuniary, or other interest in fraud), she always explained as the reason why her mouth was covered with a white material, that the mouth was not fully materialised, and, as yet, it was impossible to dematerialise the medium's moustache, so as to keep the form clear of it. This experience corresponds with your contributor's remarks about the materialisation of a form without teeth, where the medium's are an obstacle to such a result.

I have also seen Mr. Craddock's coat-sleeves under the white drapery of 'Abdullah,' and have also felt his boots, but reserved any objections until further light came, and I can readily understand that many other things in materialisation séances, that appear fraudulent, are not really so, but are quite in harmony with the various grades of development in a materialised form.

HENRY LLEWELLYN.

15, Leonard-street, Burslem.

## A Re-appearance.

SIR,—A friend of mine had for some time been ill of consumption. I was told by a local medium, Mrs. Starkey, Alpha-place, Cato-street North, Birmingham, that he would not last till Christmas. Both myself and my friends thought he had a much longer life before him than that. However, she was quite certain on the point. Seven days after this, viz., on Thursday morning, December 3rd, at 8.15, my friend suddenly passed away. Between 11 a.m. and 12 a.m. he appeared to Mrs. Starkey at her house two miles away, and she at once ejaculated 'There's Joe!' Her father and two gentlemen present were interested to know who Joe was and what she meant. She told them, and said that she had got the impression that he had passed over. At 7 p.m. I went up to her house, and the first words she said to me were, 'Joe has been here to-day.' I did not get the news of his death until the next morning's post. I thought this item might be of interest to your readers, as it is a well-verified case.

WM. TYLAR.

41, High-street, Aston, Birmingham.

## Self-Hypnotism.

SIR,—'Yoga's' letter in 'LIGHT' of the 5th inst., in reply to my inquiries, does not quite deal with my difficulty. What I should like to know is this: If I gaze at a button, or a mirror, or a 'graph' until I hypnotise myself, shall I not merely fall asleep and remain in that state until I awake? Must not a suggestion be given to a subject by an operator after he is hypnotised? Is it not true that the effects of self-hypnotism are likely to be injurious? Will you kindly permit some of your expert readers to reply to these questions for me through your columns?

'DOUBTFUL.'

## SOCIETY WORK.

In future all additions to reports announcing forthcoming meetings, being in reality in the nature of advertisements, must be paid for. They must not exceed twenty-five words, and when sent must be accompanied by six penny stamps, or they will not be published.

Notices of future events exceeding twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns at the usual rates.

MANOR PARK.—TEMPERANCE HALL, HIGH-STREET, N.—Speaker on Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn; public circle at 8.15 p.m.—P. J. G.

PORTSMOUTH.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. George Cole gave a valuable lecture on 'Scientific Spiritualism.'—E. R. O., Cor. Sec.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts gave a stirring address to a large audience, and also gave clairvoyant descriptions successfully at an after-circle.—F.

MEERTHYR TYDFIL.—TEMPERANCE HALL.—The soirée held on the 10th inst. was attended by over 300 people. On Sunday last, Mrs. Eva Harrison, of Birmingham, spoke eloquently and acceptably.—D. L. M.

WOLVERHAMPTON.—73, LEICESTER-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. H. Lennard, of Birmingham, spoke on 'Progress,' and 'Liberty for Man, Woman, and Child.' Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. T. Timson, of Leicester.—W. D.

SOUTHAMPTON.—WAVERLEY HALL, ST. MARY'S-ROAD.—On Sunday last Colonel Dillon (U.S.A.) delivered an instructive address entitled 'A Student's Experiences in Spiritualism,' to an attentive audience, and Mr. E. M. Sturgess gave excellent illustrations of clairvoyance.—E. H.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—NORTHUMBERLAND HALL.—On the 9th inst. Madame Stone gave good phenomena to an appreciative audience. The circle on Saturday last was well attended. On Sunday last Miss Rust gave a splendid address on 'The Origin of Man,' and a good after-meeting was held.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Millard delivered a splendid trance address on 'Spiritualism Defines the Ultimate Life.' Speaker next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Millard; and Mr. Blackman will give clairvoyant descriptions.—R.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Boddington presided. Miss Nita Clavering and Mr. Dalton gave much pleasure by singing two solos. On Sunday next, Councillor D. J. Davis. On Tuesday, at 3 p.m., public séances, and on Thursday, at 3 p.m. and 8.15 p.m.—S.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last, after a reading by Mr. G. W. Lear, who presided, Mr. R. King delivered the last of three very instructive addresses on 'Evolution,' all of which have been greatly appreciated. On Sunday next Mrs. Leo.—W. H. S.

GLASGOW.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, 136, BATH-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. J. W. Boulding addressed large audiences in his usual masterly manner. His subjects were 'The Temptation in the Wilderness' and 'The Ordination of Dr. Sceptic.' The latter was a brilliant impeachment of dogmatic theology and a triumphant defence of the 'thinkers.'—W. M.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD.—On Sunday last a deeply interesting address by Mr. J. Adams on 'The Birth of Jesus,' was followed by an instructive discussion. Eight ladies and gentlemen were enrolled as members of the society. Circles are held on Mondays and Thursdays, at 8 p.m. Speaker on Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Hough.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—THE ATHENÆUM, ST. STEPHEN'S-AVENUE.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey gave interesting illustrations of psychometry and clairvoyance, and Madame Leslie Dale, R.A.M., sang two songs with great taste. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Stannard will give an address upon a branch of psycho-therapeutics; and Mr. Wilfred Tickle will play some violin solos.—LUX.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. G. T. Gwinn named a child Mabel Evelyn House, and gave 'Muriel' as her spirit name. Mr. Gwinn also gave a good address on 'If Men Only Understood.' On Tuesday next, at 7.30 p.m., Band of Hope. On Sunday next Lyceum at 3.0 p.m., and at 7 p.m. Mr. H. Fielder. Saturday next, 'social,' at 8.30 p.m.—D. G.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. W. T. Cooper, vice-president of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, presided over a large gathering of members and friends, to whom Miss MacCreadie's guide, 'Sunshine,' described twenty-three spirit friends, twelve of whom were recognised. Many helpful messages were also given. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis will deliver a trance address on 'Two in One, Sinner and Saint.' Doors open at 6.30 p.m.—S. J. W.