

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A happy, a blessed, New Year to all!—a year of courage, hopefulness and progress. On another page we discuss 'The passing years.' There is an undertone of warning in it which some might turn to good account, if they would pause and ponder it. No man is ready to go into the next world whose affairs are in a tangle in this. It is one of the first duties of every man to keep his affairs in such order that those who depend upon him and trust him shall not suffer because of his neglect.

One thinks with pity of the poor women with broken hearts upon whose weak shoulders are continually falling the burdens of miserable complications that ought never to have been allowed to continue. In regard to this matter alone it would be well if some unseen messenger could thunder in our ears: 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.'

Our painstaking friends, Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, have just produced (and offer for sale at the office of 'LIGHT') a book of one hundred pages of undoubted value. The subject is 'Spiritualism in the Bible,' but the ground covered goes farther afield, and, by the way, many ripe thoughts are set down, only indirectly bearing upon the Bible.

Make of it what we will, it is impossible to deny that the Bible is, before all things, a book of spirit-communion. It is open to the scorers of modern Spiritualism to say that Spiritualists mimic the Bible-wonders, but not one of them can even pretend that the wonders are not in the book; and the Spiritualist can at all events appeal to them against the devil-theory on the one hand, and the 'impossible'-theory on the other.

As for the believers in the Bible, as 'God's Word,' who also, curiously enough, are revilers of modern Spiritualism, all we can say is that they are to us walking enigmas. Their own book, their one inspired authority, their 'Word of God,' is, from beginning to end, a justification of modern Spiritualism which they ought to welcome as a confirmation of the truth of the book.

We hand them over to Mr. and Mrs. Wallis for treatment. They could not be in better hands.

'The Notion' does not appreciate the anxiety to verify names in connection either with documents or ideas. The originality of Christ's sayings scarcely interests it at all, and the dispute concerning the authorship of the Plays of 'Shakspeare' is, in its opinion, a waste of time. Its gossiping editor says:—

I see friend 'Nunquam' is still pounding away most vigorously at Christianity, in the 'Clarion.' At any rate, he

seems to think it is worth the powder and shot he is expending upon it. He is now doing his best to prove that all that is excellent in Christianity existed long before the birth of Christ. I do not see, though, that this really matters. Truth is truth, come from whatever source it may, and if Christ drew together and focussed in his teaching all the stray truths of any value which existed before his time, then I must say that I, personally, am greatly indebted to him for what he did.

In another note, referring to the Baconian controversy, he says:—

These Baconians think they have the most convincing circumstantial evidence, and they are thoroughly enthusiastic about it. I have no doubt they are a very learned set of people—in all probability learned nuisances—and it occurs to me that they might occupy their time and money in a very much more satisfactory manner. So far as the authorship of the Pentateuch is concerned, I do not care a jot whether it was Moses or John the Baptist who wrote it so long as I have the thing itself; and the same argument applies to the works of Shakspeare: we have got the works: there is nothing finer in human language: and what more do we want? The question of authorship is an insignificant one.

These are very heretical remarks, but, as counter irritants to some of the apostles of 'The Higher Criticism,' they are not without their uses. It is always an open question whether it is better to simply love flowers and delight in every curve and tint, or to be able to name every species and to detect and describe every part of them. What does it really matter who drew up the Ten Commandments, or who compiled the Sermon on the Mount?

The application of this to 'spirit-messages' is obvious. Of course it would be pleasant to know that Plato had honoured us with a visit, or that Jesus had given his approval and promised his help, just as it would be pleasant to know who compiled the Book of Genesis or who indited the 23rd Psalm; but it is well to have our reliance upon authorities pruned, and to have our attention concentrated upon what is said and done.

Mr. Wake Cook has been writing a series of awakening Papers in 'Vanity Fair' on 'Anarchism in Art.' One of his latest, on 'The Purpose of Art,' glows with his ardent faith in the 'Great Immanent Spirit of the Universe,' and in the life of Man in Him. He holds that the purpose of Art is to set forth and interpret The Beautiful, which is a very clear revelation of God. Mr. Wake Cook bravely says that Art, in revealing Beauty, has perhaps given us a 'truer, and certainly a more gracious, revelation of the Great Immanent Spirit of the Universe than is given in the blood-stained history of the Jews.'

All the laws and facts of human life seem to urge us to larger interests and intenser action. 'This multiplying of experiences, this education in time for eternity, is the real purpose of life, the chief end of man. . . The real purpose of Nature is to awaken us to this larger consciousness, to arouse to intenser and fuller life.'

This, Mr. Wake Cook thinks, strongly suggests that this life is but one stage in an endless evolutionary series:—

In the present life, or school term, we are in the lower form, learning the A B C of existence, and the value of our

higher education depends on a thorough grounding. Every experience has its value; all sorrow and suffering carry compensation in another stage if only by force of contrast alone. The storm and stress of life, the disappointments, the battle with adverse circumstances—all have educative use; they give the point of dark, without which we could have no sense of light; the point of contrast, without which we could have no sense of values. Therefore, the deeper, richer, fuller our experience of this life the better we are prepared for the next, a narrow life being a sheer waste of opportunities which can return no more.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox, writing in 'New Thought,' puts in a plea for the sensible encouragement of children, avoiding the making them conceited by excessive petting and praise, or morbidly self-distrustful by depreciation. She says:—

I heard a grandmother not long ago telling callers, in the presence of a small boy, what a naughty, bad child he was, and how impossible it seemed to make him mind. Wretched seed to sow in the little mind, and the harvest is sure to be sorrow.

To all young people I would say, cultivate a belief in yourself. Base it on self-respect and confidence in God's love for His own handiwork. Say to yourself, 'I will be what I will to be.' Not because your human will is all-powerful, but because the Divine will is back of you. Analyse your own abilities and find what you are best fitted to do.

Then set about the task of doing your chosen work to the very best of your ability, and do not for an instant doubt your own capabilities.

It is no easy matter to overcome a habit of self-depreciation.

It is like straightening out a limb which has been twisted by a false attitude, or correcting a habit of sitting round-shouldered.

It requires a steady and persistent effort. When the depressing and doubtful thoughts come, drive them away like malaria-breeding insects. Say, 'This is not complimentary to my Maker. I am His work. I must be worthy of my own respect and of that of others. I must and will succeed.'

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines.)

All-merciful Father, who hast graciously permitted us to see the light of another year, incline our hearts unto Thee, that all our thoughts and deeds may answer to Thy call; that we may henceforth follow whither Thou shalt lead, and may ever do that which is right and good in Thy sight. Grant us clear insight into the truth and steadfast apprehension of the right, that through the mazes of this world's errors and temptations we may walk unhindered and unfalteringly the pathway of godliness. Grant us strength to do Thy will. Lead Thou us by the hand, as a father leadeth his child, lest we fall. Satisfy us early with Thy mercy, that we may rejoice, and be glad in Thee all our days. Amen.

A GOOD CONFESSION.

The Rev. Joseph Campbell, M.A., Vicar of Papanui, Christchurch, New Zealand, in the course of a sermon on 'Some Characteristics of the Spirit World,' which was reported in the 'Harbinger of Light,' made the following personal confession of faith:—

'I do believe there are times when the spirits of those who have passed away may influence us and help us along the path of life. I know of one spirit that has influenced me for many years, the spirit of one of my greatest friends, who prayed that his mantle might fall upon me. He was one of those preachers who stirred the hearts of thousands, and who always brought scientific truths to bear on the Bible. I know the prayers he offered up before his death are still being offered up by him on my behalf, and have been answered. They have enabled me to come to any knowledge that I may have attained in things spiritual; and it is so with you. You have felt the influence of departed ones upon you; and I believe, if we developed the spiritual man within us more, there would be closer contact between the spirits of just men made perfect and those being made perfect, and ourselves.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (near the National Gallery), on

FRIDAY EVENING NEXT, JANUARY 8TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS

ON

Swedenborg's 'Memorable Relations of Things Seen and Heard,' with some Modern Confirmations and Inferences.

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

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

DRAWING ROOM MEETING.

In the interest of Members and Associates of the Alliance who find it impracticable or inconvenient to attend evening meetings, a DRAWING ROOM MEETING will be held in the Central Saloon, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), on the afternoon of Friday, January 22nd, from 3.30 to 5.30 p.m., for conversation and the interchange of thoughts upon subjects of mutual interest. Afternoon tea at 4.15 p.m. Admission will be by ticket only. Tickets will be sent to all Members and Associates.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PSYCHOMETRY AND CLAIRVOYANCE will be given at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., by Mr. J. J. Vango, on January 12th, 19th, and 26th. These sésances commence punctually at 3 p.m., and no one is admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. to Members and Associates; to friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—(On Friday next, January 8th, at 3 p.m., the sésance will be attended by Mr. E. W. Wallis, and arrangements have been made with Mrs. M. H. Wallis for a further series of meetings at the rooms of the Alliance, at which pleasant and instructive talks may be had with one of her intelligent controls. These sésances will be held every Friday, at 3 p.m., prompt, commencing on January 15th. Fee 1s. each, and any Member or Associate may introduce a friend at the same rate of payment. Visitors should come prepared with written questions, on subjects of general interest relating to life here and hereafter.

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—Mr. Frederic Thurstan kindly conducts classes for Members and Associates at the Rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for the encouragement and direction of private mediumship and psychical self-culture. Meetings will be held on the afternoons of January 8th and 29th. Time, from 4.30 to 5.30 p.m., and visitors are requested to be in their places not later than 4.25. There is no fee or subscription.

DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES.—Mr. George Spriggs has kindly placed his valuable services in the diagnosis of diseases at the disposal of the Council, and for that purpose will attend at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, Charing Cross, W.C., on Thursday afternoon, January 7th, and subsequent Thursdays, between the hours of 1 and 4. Members, Associates, and friends who are out of health, and who desire to avail themselves of Mr. Spriggs's offer, should notify their wish in writing to the secretary of the Alliance, Mr. E. W. Wallis, not later than the previous day, stating the time when they propose to attend. No fee is charged, but Mr. Spriggs suggests that every consultant should make a contribution of at least 5s. to the funds of the Alliance.

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE ROTHE CASE.

An important article in the current number of 'Psychische Studien,' headed 'A Supplement to the Rothe Case,' is contributed by Fritz Freimar, but is devoted chiefly to a transcription of the observations published by Dr. R. Henneberg, assistant at the 'Psychiatrischen und Nervenlinik' of the Royal Charité Asylum, where the unfortunate Frau Rothe passed some time in order that her mental condition should be under observation.

There are some details in this essay of Dr. Henneberg's which have not before been published, and which will, I think, be interesting to readers of 'LIGHT.' I give a translation of a few of the most important passages, prefacing them with a remark of Herr Freimar, that 'the calm and almost favourable attitude' of Dr. Henneberg towards the incriminated flower medium (which, indeed, is evident throughout the whole article) must create a strong and favourable impression in all unprejudiced minds as to his capacity for scientific research on the difficult problems connected with mediumship. Herr Freimar says:—

'The writer describes in considerable detail the previous life, as well as the physical and psychical condition, of the accused, who was born on September 8th, 1850, and was consigned to the "Charité" on June 29th, 1902, that her mental condition might be fully observed; and says that, as to the former occurrences of diseases of nerve and mind in her family, it was only shown that her daughter Anna, born in 1870, died at Leipzig from convulsions, having suffered from her sixteenth year from attacks of hysteria. Her father, the mason Zahl, of Altenburg, died of cholera in 1866, as well as her mother and one sister; and a brother suffered from cancer in the throat. At school she learnt quickly. She was taught by a Fräulein H., and brought up very religiously. From her sixth year she was accustomed to see, in broad daylight, both at home and out of doors, misty spirits ("Gespenster") with distinct heads and hands, who spoke to her and gave their names, one of which was that of a deceased friend of her mother, Frau Ella. Her mother, greatly alarmed by these visions, took her to the Superintendent B. in Altenburg to be "blessed," and he promised that she would see no more "ghosts." She also took her to pray at the graves of the aforesaid deceased persons, but, in spite of all, the spirits did not cease to appear to her, and she suffered much from terror at night during her school days. After her confirmation, in her sixteenth year, she went as a servant for two years on an estate near L., where, it is said, she predicted several remarkable events. In after years these visionary forebodings occurred more frequently; thus in 1898 she saw in a garden at Siegmarsdorf—two days before the event happened—the burning of the Zwickau barracks, and men in white (the soldiers in their drill uniform) running about. She saw these visions with her normal consciousness, but shut her eyes to see them more clearly. As parlourmaid at Dr. Sch——'s, in Altenburg, she saw the burning of the castle a fortnight before it took place. After that she was in service at Counsellor M.'s for a year, and in 1870 she married the smith Rothe (who was somewhat given to drink), and set up house with him in Gera.

'She gave birth to eight children, of whom only two are now living, one of whom, from the effects of an illness when nine years old, became deformed. . . . Six weeks after her last confinement in 1878 she fell down senseless from a kind of stroke, and during six weeks she was paralysed on the right side and lost her speech, remaining in weak health for some time afterwards.

'She became interested in Spiritism in 1892, after the death of her daughter Anna's fiancé from consumption. When Anna was playing his favourite air on the piano, she saw his form sitting on the sofa, and afterwards was invited by his parents to spirit séances. At the very first psychographic séance she obtained mediumistic writing on a slate held under the table, with the words, "Theo. It is I." When her medial gifts became known in Chemnitz she was overwhelmed with invitations from the Spiritists in that town. Even before she knew what it meant, flowers were "materialised" in her presence, falling at her feet when out of doors. She thought someone was playing practical jokes upon her. Her reputation reached Dresden, where she granted a séance to Dr. Sch——, at which the first *apports* of flowers took place.

'She and her family resided at Chemnitz till October, 1901, from which place she from time to time was invited to other towns. It was about four years since she became acquainted with Jentsch, who, not for gain,* but from enthusiasm for

Spiritism, to which he sacrificed his savings and services, undertook the management of the affairs and accompanied her as her protector. Her husband, who in the early days of their marriage laboured diligently for the support of his family, became somewhat estranged from her on account of the dissimilarity of their interests. He often forbade her working for Spiritism, about which he understood nothing, and, from grief at the attack made upon her, he was seized with asthma, from which he died in December, 1902. Under the guidance of Herr Jentsch about five hundred séances took place with the phenomena of trance addresses, raps, *apports*, and direct and automatic writing.'

Here follows a further description of these manifestations, as well as an account of various illnesses, including fainting attacks and a nervous fever:—

'Nine years ago she was frequently hypnotised by Dr. Sch——, but experienced only a feeling of exhaustion. She had some remembrance of the hypnotic state, but none whatever of her trance conditions, which she could neither induce nor hinder. That she had ever simulated trance, *apports*, or direct writing, the accused firmly denies. She is a thin, middle-sized, delicate-looking woman, with very expressive and not unsympathetic features. She is, though totally uncultured, a very intelligent woman; she is modest in demeanour, quiet and reserved in her conversation, and never speaks harshly of her enemies. The general impression she gives is a sympathetic one. She is observant, and gives sensible answers to questions. But, while understanding a joke, she consistently refuses to answer any questions about her mediumship, and declares that she is quite ignorant in the domain of theoretical Spiritism. As a pious, devout woman, she looks upon her situation as a trial sent from God, and even the news of the sudden death of her married daughter and her husband caused her no lasting emotion.'

In order to try her medial powers six or seven physicians held séances with her at the 'Charité' in the usual manner, of which the doctor gives the fullest details. The unsatisfactory results she herself ascribed to the sceptical attitude of mind of the sitters and her own ill-health; but they seem to have been not completely without result, for on pp. 9 and 10 of the essay, says Herr Freimar, an account is given, which had been taken down in shorthand, of a trance address on July 6th, and when the sitters rose to get a smaller table, a piece of quartz the size of a hazel nut suddenly fell down at Frau Rothe's feet, and it seemed as though against her will. Some of the gentlemen also noticed a ticking sound, as well as several raps:—

'In the establishment she only twice essayed to obtain manifestations. On June 14th in her sick room she gave a trance address, and on July the 21st she held a séance with four other patients, which she was forbidden afterwards to do. No *apports* were obtained.'

The following is what the doctors learned from inquiry of her husband—then living:—

'He first knew her in Altenburg, as a lively and excitable servant girl. In the first years of their marriage she often complained of pains in the head, and was very excited about trifles; she also had fainting attacks; she worked hard and diligently in household matters. Later on her daughter did the housekeeping. He was powerless to oppose his wife's spiritistic labours, especially when she was under the guidance of Jentsch, from whom, however, he obtained food and lodging, as his little "invalid's pension" was exhausted. His wife herself had no money, only what was given her by the impressario. He had only been present at one séance—in the spring of 1901, when flowers appeared; where from he did not know, but he thought it impossible that all the flowers shown him after her seizure could have been concealed in her petticoat. . . . She possessed a certificate signed by one of three physicians of Loschwitz, near Dresden, to the effect that the trance condition evoked by hypnotism was undoubtedly genuine, so that it was in good faith she attributed the communications to spirits of the deceased. . . . From an aforementioned attestation of the author (Dr. Henneberg), in which, according to his observation, there was no sign of serious mental disturbance, it is to be inferred that he considered it proved that it was quite possible the accused, who without doubt showed a number of so-called mediumistic symptoms, believed in her own medial gifts and in the intervention of spirits. . . .

'Spiritism, according to the author's opinion, does not arise solely from imposture or deception, but is due much more to peculiar manifestations of the soul life, psychic automatism

*I conclude this is her own account.—Tr.

with conscious or unconscious action (animism?—Tr.). The genuine mediumistic raps, writing, trance-speaking and table-tilting occur more easily with hysterical persons than with others, and with practice may attain a considerable development. At the present time no decided opinion can be formed about clairvoyance and telepathy. . . . It is extremely probable that Rothe produced the *apports* always in a state of lucid consciousness, as they showed signs of preparation, unless one adopts the absurd theory of the "astral double." But this by no means proves that the imposture was not due to a diseased condition of the mind. The inclination inherent in an abnormal psychic constitution to act as a medium found in Rothe a favourable field for development in spiritistic circles, while the practice for the sake of gain is directly attributable to the impressario. Her responsibility should, therefore, be looked upon as the slightest, if the legal authorities laid proper weight on these facts. . . .

The latter part of Dr. Henneberg's treatise deals more especially with mediumship generally than with the Rothe case. I will only quote one passage. He writes:—

'With professional mediums it is not seldom that genuine somnambulistic conditions are supplemented by trickery. On the other side examples are frequently found in which mediums, on the loss of their medial powers, with an improvement in their hysterical conditions, become healthy and useful persons in practical life. Bastian, who was renowned throughout Europe as a medium, is now a railway official, with nothing abnormal about him.'

This seems to me rather weak. Many English readers may not know that some years ago the celebrated materialisation medium, Harry Bastian, was invited to give a séance at Vienna by the young Archduke Johann, who went to the séance with several other young men for the express purpose of *exposing* Bastian. He was 'seized,' and—probably owing to the very bad conditions which must have existed in such company—the form grasped was found to be a 'transfiguration' and not a separate materialisation, and the unfortunate medium was 'exposed' in a pamphlet published by the Archduke.* I do not remember whether Bastian suffered any bodily illness from this seizure, as so many poor mediums have done who have been similarly treated, but it is not to be wondered at that after such an affair he should no more have acted as a professional medium. But there is no reason why, because he now gains his living as a railway official, he must necessarily have lost his medial powers; though—as all mediums know—from want of exercise they would probably decrease in strength.

Herr Freimar writes in conclusion;—

'We could well wish that the writer (Dr. Henneberg), who is so well grounded in the theoretical view of the subject, had the advantage of experimenting with an undoubtedly genuine and trustworthy medium, such as those that Crookes and Zöllner were able to experiment with; then, in spite of his critical acumen, the wonderful mediumistic performances of a Home or a Madame d'Espérance must appear to him in another light. This, from his love of truth and his methodical reasoning, we cannot doubt; while his honest efforts to solve the problem—which even the most zealous Spiritists are unable to do—of the "Flower Medium," can only justify the mistrust of the experienced psychiatrist against everything endorsed by hysterical persons about spirit messages.'

M. T.

* The cudgels were taken up on Bastian's behalf by Baron Hellenbach, in 'Birth and Death.'—Tr.

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—The usual monthly conference will be held at the Co-operative Hall, Braemar-road, Canning Town, E., on Sunday next, January 3rd, 1904. Afternoon at 3 p.m., evening at 7 p.m. Tea at 5 p.m. Special speakers: Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn and others.

'FROM THE VASTY DEEP.'—Under the heading 'From the Vasty Deep,' the 'Glasgow Evening News,' of December 22nd, contained a long and admirable letter in defence of Spiritualism, from the pen of Mr. James Robertson, the President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists, which ought to be effective as an antidote to the usual journalistic misrepresentations.

MR. A. V. PETERS, who was married last week to Miss Frances Eavery, in the parish of Minster, Thanet, has left England with his wife for Paris, where they may be addressed care of Madame Lalot, 20, rue des Ecoles. They propose to spend several months in France and then proceed to Geneva; but of course all arrangements at present in contemplation will be subject to any modifying circumstances that may arise.

SOME RECENT SEANCES.

BY 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

Prefatory Note.—This series of articles has been written by me entirely owing to a request made by my friends on the other side, and certainly with no intention of dealing with family affairs except for the purpose of unfolding experiences obtained at those séances.

I.

In the end of September last, when on a holiday in Westmoreland, I received by wire the sad news of the sudden transition of my late wife's only surviving brother, the last of a large family. He had only survived my wife's departure by about fourteen months, and though not in robust health, his demise, through an apoplectic seizure, was quite unexpected by us. On the day of my wife's funeral, early in August, 1902, my brother-in-law informed me that he had made his will in favour of my clairvoyante daughter, to whom he was greatly attached, adding the words 'I have made it all right for her.' As the matter was a delicate one, I did not ask him how he had written his will or where he had put it for safety; but from his way of expressing himself it was clear to me that the testamentary disposition of his estate had not been made by a solicitor and must have been of the briefest description, being probably confined to a few simple lines of holograph writing. This relative was a bachelor, living in his own house—a man of fixed habits, very intelligent, a careful liver and precise in all his doings. In religion he was a Calvinist, or at least a very orthodox individual, and he knew nothing whatever of the clairvoyante's gifts, or of our belief in Spiritualism, simply because he was the very last man to whom I could have given any information on the subject; although my intercourse with him was pretty frequent and affectionate, and our political and social views were much in unison.

Shortly after the interment, I opened his repositories and was greatly surprised to find no trace whatever of a will, although I found everything else in order; and although over two months have now elapsed since he passed on, and every inquiry has been made and every possible depository duly searched, the document has not been found. Fortunately, in this case it does not matter, as family arrangements can be made which will dispense with the necessity for its production. But all the same, we became anxious to learn from the people on the other side what they knew or could find out regarding the existence, or the reverse, of this document, which certainly was, according to my relative's statement, penned by him about fifteen months ago. Accordingly I asked the clairvoyante to inquire of her control ('Dr. S.'), the first time she saw him, if he could ascertain what had become of the missing testamentary writing, or whether it existed at all. She did so; but unfortunately within the last year (as he had duly informed us previously was about to happen) he has gone to a higher sphere, and, as he wrote me, his entrance to the place where my departed relative had gone upon his transition was extremely difficult. During the past two months I have had five letters, automatically written by 'Dr. S.', through the clairvoyante, on the subject. The caligraphy and characteristic mode of expression are always the same, having been unchanged since he first began to control the medium in 1889.

In his second communication he asked me to secure the services of a trance medium whom he named, and who has often sat with us in former years; at the same time requesting me to ask this psychic to bring his crystal with him, and to use it in the dining-room of the house belonging to my recently departed relative. This request was at once complied with, and a meeting was arranged for a night in the second week in October. The clairvoyante, two of my sons, and another daughter, who is a good sensitive, along with myself, all sat. The trance medium, at our request, did not go under control, but only used the crystal. He very soon described the appearance of the deceased with great exactness, gave me his profession, and stated that he was much troubled in his mind about a paper, which he (the medium) thought was his will, and the impression left on the mind of the crystal-gazer

was that the missing document was in the room in which we were then sitting, and he thought it would be found. This was positively all the information we could obtain, except this—that the clairvoyante, on looking into the crystal after handling it, said she saw distinctly her late uncle's face looking anxiously at her. I have only to add that the personal appearance, profession, or any other details of my departed relative, were quite unknown to this particular medium; while my purpose in calling in his services on this particular occasion was not stated to him, as he was only informed that the control ('Dr. S.') wanted us to utilise his crystal on a particular night.

I defer a notice of my further investigations to a second article.

(To be continued.)

WHEN AUGURS DISAGREE.

M. Sage in his recent book entitled 'Mrs. Piper and the Society for Psychical Research,' brings into disconcerting light some very serious contradictions in the statements of hitherto highly-esteemed spirit communicators—to wit, Stainton Moses' 'Imperator,' and Mrs. Piper's 'George Pelham.'

I refer to the latter's very emphatic contradiction of 'Imperator's' characteristic doctrine in 'Spirit Teachings,' that the soul carried with it at the death of the body all its passions and attitudes, and was very slowly purified of them.

'George Pelham,' replying to this, said (*vide* p. 108 of M. Sage's book): 'Not so. Not at all so. I claim to understand this, and it is emphatically not so. Sinners are sinners only in one life.'

The result of this denial of Mr. Moses' doctrine (derived from 'Imperator') was that 'G. Pelham' was asked to find Stainton Moses and beg him to come himself and communicate. This was done, and when Professor Newbold remarked to Stainton Moses that his writings had taught what was denied by 'George Pelham,' he replied (p. 109): 'I have found out differently since I came over here. This particular statement (that evil spirits tempt spirits to their own destruction), given me by my friends, as their medium, when I was in the body, is not true.'

The explanation by 'George Pelham' of this alleged recantation by Stainton Moses of one of his most central teachings is (p. 122) that though Stainton Moses was 'a true, a very true medium, yet he made a great many mistakes and deceived himself.'

Here the bewildered student will very naturally be in doubt whether it was Stainton Moses, or 'Pelham,' or 'Imperator,' who 'deceived himself'; or perhaps he may be driven to conclude that they were all deceiving themselves or all bent on deluding the sitters. In listening to such voices from the darkness one never knows. How, indeed, can there be *any* test when such approved experts on the other side agree to differ about so elementary a fact? Surely this contradictoriness of things with which earnest inquirers are confronted must be the 'granite wall' which Sir William Crookes confessed he found himself pinned against in the course of his spiritualistic researches.

Rhapsodizing writers are continually promising us all sorts of good things in the next world, and they are largely moved to a belief thereto by the utterances of trusted communicators such as 'Imperator.' But when an equally reputable spirit (*e.g.*, 'George Pelham'), speaking through such a highly thought-of medium as Mrs. Piper, contradicts 'Imperator,' what becomes of these comfortable rhapsodies? They vanish, and the plain man in the street scoffs.

Finally, why is there such an apparent 'conspiracy of silence' amongst the many able minds of the Psychical Research Society with reference to these awkward discrepancies? Why is it left to an honest, clear-headed Frenchman to point them out and hint the necessity for discussion? The barren pages of the 'Journal' are the proper place for their elucidation. Is the somnolency of the Society for Psychical Research to last for ever?

'CIRCUMSPICE.'

'METUDI.'

Dr. Hinković gives in 'Psychische Studien,' a further account of 'Metudi's' manifestations, and in particular of an occurrence at a séance held at his house under the same conditions as the one described in my contribution to 'LIGHT' of November 28th. This séance took place on 'Silvesternacht,' that is, New Year's Eve, towards midnight. Of the many remarkable manifestations which took place I will only describe the following, which is of a somewhat unusual character.

At the beginning of the séance—in compliance with 'Metudi's' instructions—all present had written their names on one side of a piece of paper, the other side of which was held over a lighted candle till it was completely blackened by the smoke. It was cut to fit into a small box, the blackened side uppermost. The lid was then shut, and during the whole of the séance the box never left Dr. Hinković's hand. He writes:—

'Before the phenomenon occurred, we opened the box, according to "Metudi's" instructions, examined it carefully and found the blackened paper intact.

'I then laid the box on the table and "Metudi" told me to place my ear close to the box, which I still covered with my hand. I immediately heard a sound of scratching inside the box, so loud as to be heard by all the other members of the party.

'After a few minutes the table gave the signal that all was finished. The light was turned on and we found on the blackened paper in the box, which I still held, a greeting, "*Sretna nova godina*" (A happy New Year), having an ornamental border of little rings with "Metudi's" characteristic signature. . . . On the blank side of the paper were our own names, as we had written them. "Metudi" asked us then to examine the outside of the bottom of the box, where we found, in "Metudi's" characteristic handwriting, a few kind words addressed to my wife.'

M. T.

INTERVIEW WITH DR. ALFRED R. WALLACE.

In 'LIGHT' of the 19th ult. we quoted from the 'Christian Commonwealth' some particulars of an interesting interview with Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace. The 'Christian Commonwealth' has since published the following additional particulars:—

'In the course of the interview reported in our last issue, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, when speaking of his relation to Spiritualism, narrated an extraordinary incident which has not hitherto been published. When in Washington, in 1877, he made the acquaintance of General Lippitt, "a highly educated and very able man, and a most enthusiastic Spiritualist," who took him to a public medium, "an ordinary, poorly-educated American," who used to sit in good light in a corner of a room, previously examined, in front of a black curtain; above the curtain a hand appeared. The manager put paper and pencil into it, the hand was withdrawn, the process of writing was heard, paper was torn off and thrown over the curtain. In the course of an evening a dozen or twenty slips would be thrown over, each for a different person.

"On the second evening of my visit with General Lippitt," said Dr. Wallace, "a paper was handed to me (I still have it) on which were written words that utterly astonished me. The writing began: 'I am William,' and I fully expected to read 'William Wallace,' the name of my elder brother, who died when I was about twenty-two. But the writing was, 'I am William Martin. I come from my old friend William Wallace to tell you that he is unable to communicate with you this evening but hopes to do so another time.' The marvel centres in the name William Martin. He was the son of the builder of King's College, London, and whilst it was being built my brother went there to get practical experience, and, years after, when I and my brother were working together at architecture, he would say, 'Martin always said it should be done this way.' I never saw Martin, and to no human being, so far as I am aware, had I even mentioned his name for forty years until it was brought to my mind in this extraordinary way."

'Dr. Wallace wished it to be understood that he studies Spiritualism and its phenomena in exactly the same spirit as that in which he pursues other branches of science. He is confident that belief in Spiritualism is spreading, both among religionists and scientists.'

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THE PASSING YEARS.

It ought not to be a melancholy thing,—to the ripe Spiritualist it never can be a melancholy thing,—to watch the procession of the years. Like Tennyson's 'Brook,'—the years may come, the years may go, but he goes on for ever: and, because he knows it, he moderates regret and conquers fear. He is the victim of no illusions. He knows, and faces the knowledge, that a new year is not a new start. The old day-books and ledgers may be put away for the year, and new books be opened, but every item is carried forward or is contained in something that is; and so, he knows, it is with his life. Even New Years are, in a sense, illusions, for there is no breach of continuity in Time. With that, the movements of suns and planets have nothing to do. This also he knows, and he gets behind no thin subterfuges and hiding veils. The years are passing, and the procession is nearly over for him: and already, within quite measurable distance, the last of his years creeps on. But there are no terrors and bemoanings for him. When the show is over he will be tired, and will be quite willing to go home.

When forecasting the future of human life, it is of the highest importance that we should ponder its past. It is the origin of life that gives us the surest pledges concerning its destiny. We are the descendants of very poor relations. It is not a fallen but a risen and rising race; and the evolution of man is full of pledges concerning the hidden consummation. The past discloses the slow and steady march of Man from Brute, and the present suggests nothing as to a process ended or a destiny fulfilled. On the contrary, every fresh advance, every higher attainment, every new discovery, suggests vaster issues, finer possibilities, diviner dreams: until evolution into the unseen becomes as much the inference of the scientist as the dream of the saint.

Life, then, is a glorious progressive creation, an unfolding of apparently illimitable powers:—a suggestion which is of infinite importance in estimating its value now. The Master said, 'The life is more than meat,'—a saying of great simplicity but of profound significance. But the world has to a large extent reversed that, and has used life only as a kind of vehicle for the enjoyment of sensations. What Jesus meant was that it mattered comparatively little what sustained life, and that the main thing was the

development and refinement of life. 'What shall we eat? and what shall we drink?' are poor questions after all. We are here for spirit-growth and soul-uplifting. That is the only thing of importance. All the rest is decorative or, at best, only means to an end. Shakspeare makes Hamlet grandly say: 'What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!' It is a superb ideal, but how true,—and untrue! The noble reason and the infinite faculties may be taken for granted as possibilities, but no one has better shown than Shakspeare that it might be just as true to say: 'in form and moving, how execrable and ugly! in action, how like a demon! in apprehension, how like a beast!' and it is only when we bring into the account 'the eternal years' that we get the right point of view for estimating life at its true value, and perceiving its true uses.

The shortness of life and its insecurity have always had a kind of pathetic fascination for the finer spirits of the world. Nothing lofty, beautiful, spiritual, in poetry, philosophy and art, has escaped the influence of the pathos of the mystery of life's vanishings. Even one of the earliest Christians, bathed in the sunshine of the first Christians' hope and joy, felt moved to join in the universal sigh. 'What is your life?' he asked, and himself gave the answer, 'It is but as a vapour which appeareth for a little while, and then vanishes away.' But that never really satisfies; and can never end the debate between melancholy and longing, lament and love; and so, religion, which always begins with its warnings, ends with its promises; and art and poetry in their highest moods do not end on the minor key, but rise, like the songster of the sky, from earth to heaven with the music of their hope if not with the ecstasy of their joy: and so it must ever be while human nature is what it is; and this conflict of pathos and longing will never cease until both merge in the open vision. There will be

No more dying then.

It is from this point of view, as we have said, that we can estimate life at its true value, and perceive its true uses; and therefore, wisely distinguish between the passing tinsel and the abiding gold. It is a fact that we have to be ceaselessly on our guard against the tendency to let the present and the lower hide the future and the higher things. The smoke from the burning of a little rubbish in a field may hide the early evening star smiling in its lilac sky: and even so may our small tempers and ambitions hide from us all that is meant by the Soul and Heaven and God.

Over the doorways of a cathedral in Italy there are three inscriptions over three arches. On one, appears a carving of a wreath of roses, with the words, 'All that delights is but for a moment.' On another there is a cross, and this,—'All that disturbs is but for a moment.' On the central arch, the great saying is sculptured:

'ONLY THAT MATTERS WHICH IS ETERNAL.'

It is this which gives us the right note for the passing years.

PSYCHIC LECTURE AT LEWISHAM.—On the evening of Monday, December 14th, a lecture on 'Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death', was delivered by Mr. Laurence Gilbertson, F.J.I., before the members of the Union Literary and Scientific Society, Lewisham. Notwithstanding the disturbing influences of the bye-election, there was a good audience, and they appeared to be much impressed by the lecture, which lasted fully an hour. An intelligent and animated discussion followed, in which the lecturer acquitted himself with credit and distinction.

MATERIALISATION OF THE INCARNATE.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers, in his book on Human Personality, has left behind him a work on true scientific lines, which has compelled, from even the secular Press, hitherto sceptical and derisive, the unwilling acknowledgment that it is a serious and successful attempt to place upon a reliable philosophic basis the strange phenomena known as psychic or spiritist. The gain to the cause of spiritual and philosophic progress is not a small one. It is the result of a classification of the voluminous mass of carefully verified evidence bearing upon psychic manifestation which has been gathered together in the sixteen volumes of the 'Proceedings' of the Society for Psychical Research, nine volumes of the 'Journal' of the Society, Gurney's 'Phantasms of the Living,' and other works of a similar character. Most of the evidence had already passed through Mr. Myers' hands; he had spent much time and labour, during the best years of his life, in assisting in its collation, and he was familiar with it. This evidence he has graded and co-ordinated, and with it he has built up a well-knit, closely-reasoned system which is bound to command respect, even from those who may not agree with all its conclusions.

The essentially important feature of Frederic Myers' system is his new thesis on telepathy, that wonderful force which, since the publication of Edmund Gurney's book in 1886, has been developing, and growing in interest and importance, and which Myers now describes as of 'fundamental importance—the first law, may one not say? laid open to man's discovery, which, while operating in the material world, is a law of the spiritual or metetherial world.'

Myers finds that, to cover the facts, telepathy must be regarded as more than a mere current of vibration passing through metetherial waves, as rather a subtle, living force, observation of which proves that 'Life has the power of manifesting itself to life.' 'We find,' he says (s. 638), 'that the conception of a telepathic impulse as a *message despatched and then left alone*, as it were, to effect its purpose, needs more and more straining of manipulation to fit it to the evidence.' 'The laws of life, as we have thus far known them' (s. 634), 'have been only laws of life when associated with matter. Thus limited, we have learned little as to life's true nature. We know not even whether life be only a directive force or, on the other hand, an *effective energy*. We know not in what way it operates on matter. We can in no way define the connection between our own consciousness and our organisms.' 'The hypothesis' (s. 635) 'which I have suggested in "Phantasms of the Living" itself, in my "Note on a possible mode of psychical interaction," seems to me to have been rendered exceedingly plausible by evidence of many kinds since received; evidence' (unfortunately for us) 'of which the larger part falls outside the limits of this present work. I still believe, and more confidently than in 1886, that a "psychical invasion" does take place; that a "phantasmogenetic centre" is actually established in the percipient's surroundings; that some movement bearing some relation to space, as we know it, is actually accomplished; and some presence is transferred, and may or may not be discerned by the invaded person; some perception of the distant scene in itself is acquired, and may or may not be remembered by the invader. . . . The gradual accretion of evidence has obliged me, for the mere sake of covering all the phenomena, to use phrases and assumptions which go far beyond those which Edmund Gurney and I employed in our first papers on this inquiry in 1883.'

Telepathy then is found to be, not mere thought transference, in its simplest, shallow form, but something very much deeper. It is a form of 'self-projection,' an 'invasion' by 'segments of personality detached from primary personality.' 'The evidence,' he says (s. 638), 'leading me thus unresistingly along, has led me to this main difference from our early treatment of veridical phantasms. Instead of starting from a root-conception of a telepathic impulse merely passing from mind to mind, I now start from a root-conception of the *dissociability of the self*, of the possibility that different fractions of the personality can act so far independently of each other that the one is not conscious of the other's action.'

Hence the thesis of the multiple personality, which is the other great feature of Mr. Myers' book, and combines possible dissociation of that personality with activity in what he calls the metetherial environment.

'The innovation,' Myers continues (s. 638), 'which we are here called upon to make is to suppose that segments of the personality can operate in *apparent separation from the organism*. Such a supposition, of course, could not have been started without proof of telepathy, and could with difficulty be sustained without proof of survival of death. But, given telepathy, we have some *psychical agency* connected with man *operating apart* from his organism. Given survival, we have an element of his personality—to say the least of it—operating when his organism is *destroyed*. There is therefore no very great additional burden in supposing that an element of his personality may operate *apart from his organism*, while that organism still exists.'

'*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*. If we once get a man's thought operating apart from his body'—(the italics here are Myers' own)—'if my fixation of attention on the two of diamonds does somehow so modify another man's brain a few yards off that he seems to see the two of diamonds floating before him—there is no obvious halting-place on *his* side till we come to "possession" by a departed spirit, and there is no obvious halting-place on *my* side till we come to "travelling clairvoyance" with a corresponding *visibility of my own phantasm* to other persons in the scenes which I spiritually visit. No obvious halting-place, I say; for the point which at first seems abruptly transitional has been already shown to be only the critical point of a continuous curve; I mean, of course, the point where consciousness is duplicated—where each segment of the personality begins to possess a separate and definite but contemporaneous stream of memory and perception. That these can exist concurrently in the same organism our study of hypnotism has already shown, and our study of motor automatisms will still further prove to us.'

It will be observed that Myers' two theses of multiple personality and telepathy quite obliterate the supposed distinction between manifestations of the living and those of the so-called dead, so far as their *mode* is concerned; and the whole reasoning of the book goes to show that the same psychic principles operate in both cases throughout the whole range of psychic communication and manifestation. Phantasms are not only included, but specifically mentioned, *e.g.*, as follows: (s. 648) 'That which "breaks loose," on my hypothesis, is not the whole principle of life in the organism; rather is it some psychical element, probably of very varying character, and definable mainly by its *power of producing a phantasm*, perceptible by one or more persons, in some portion or other of space. I hold that this phantasmogenetic effect may be produced either on the mind, and consequently on the brain of another person—in which case he may discern the phantasm somewhere in his vicinity according to his own mental habit or prepossession—or else *directly on a portion of space*, "out in the open," in which case several persons may simultaneously discern the phantasm in that actual spot.'

A 'phantasmogenetic effect' produced 'on a portion of space' may be taken fairly to apply to materialisations in a séance-room, where psychic 'emanations' have produced an atmosphere conducive to such an effect, as already explained and illustrated in my former articles. But, lest it be thought that I am straining the meaning, I will quote one more brief extract, the words of which are sufficiently wide and comprehensive (s. 643): 'One advantage of the conception of psychical invasion or excursion is that it is, at any rate, sufficiently fundamental to allow of one arrangement of all our recorded cases—*perhaps of all possible cases of apparition*—in accordance with its own lines.'

It is quite evident, then, that every kind of psychic manifestation—provided it be genuine—is to be interpreted as the 'Manifestation of Life to Life.' The experiences already referred to in materialising experiments fully confirm this view, and the principles which I have laid down in my former communications on the subject are fully confirmed on both the theoretical and practical sides. It is true we have only pro-

gressed a step or two; still, that is progress, and ought to lead to the hope and desire for more. It is not the insoluble 'Riddle of the Universe' which we are endeavouring to solve, only a part of it, which ought to be quite within the capacity of the human mind to explore and apprehend, though it may fail to comprehend it in all its depths of mystery. I believe with Frederic Myers that 'all cognisable mind is as cognisable as matter,' and I therefore dare to hope that much more may yet be done in probing the mysteries of materialisation and all other forms of psychic phenomena, on the lines Myers has so clearly laid down.

If it be asked how this is to be done, I am afraid I have no other course to recommend than that which has been described, somewhat contemptuously, as 'grope and stumble.' I am gratified, however, as well as amused, to find that, although thus disparaged, this modest rôle is by no means regarded with the same disfavour in certain high quarters. I find, *e.g.*, that Madame d'Espérance, in her 'Shadow Land,' quotes encouragingly the terse saying of her friend, Mr. Aksakoff: '*Truth is found in groping.*' Myers himself declares for the same modest rôle, for he says: 'I shall at any rate not attempt to conceal my own ignorance and uncertainties; but *shall grope about*, so to-day, before my reader's eyes, indicating again and again where our insight at present ends, and repeating again and again from different points of view, and with fresh illustrations, those imperfect yet important fragments of knowledge which I hold we have in fact attained.'

If we grope, we shall probably stumble; but it is just possible that we may be saved thereby from a worse fate. I think someone has said; 'It is human to err; but it is human wisdom to retrieve our errors.' And Carlyle says: 'Properly there is no other knowledge but that which is got by working; the rest is yet all a hypothesis of knowledge; a thing to be argued of in schools; a thing floating in the clouds, in endless logic-vortices till we try and fix it.'

In all the circumstances I feel justified in repeating to all who are interested in the subject the advice I offered at the outset, to continue investigation in the light of the five-pointed star, whose points are calm patience, quiet determination, unswerving honesty, unflagging industry, and never-failing perseverance.

London.

L. GILBERTSON.

'A STRANGE EXPERIENCE.'

THE QUESTION OF MATERIALISATIONS.

In 'LIGHT,' of December 12th, Mr. Gilbertson again refers to my letters in relation to 'A Strange Experience.' My object was not to defend any theory of my own on the subject, but to elicit some reasonable explanation (possibly Theosophic) from others who might be more qualified to discuss it.

With your permission I will allude to one or two of Mr. Gilbertson's strictures on my remarks. He says: "'R." discounts the difficulty of his problem when he admits that "it is conceivable that the double might materialise, if there were any motive." Here he begs the question by his admission and by suggesting the absence of motive. What does he know of the motive of the double? or, to be more accurate, of the subliminal self? He seems to rest his case on the assumption that motive was absent.'

Now, my admission was, in effect, that conceivably a double (not a thought-form) could materialise itself in the séance sense, but that although 'spirit John Bull' might, by will-power, return to earth in breeches, the breeches (being only a thought-creation) could not attend a séance and materialise itself.

He further says: "'R." can understand the projection of thought-clothes, therefore he is bound on the same principle to accept the thought-body.' I fail to see the analogy. The thought-clothes, referred to by the late Mr. Varley in his evidence before a committee of the Dialectical Society, were (if I mistake not) the covering, not of a materialised spirit, but of one seen clairvoyantly. They were the production of will-

power; and I expressed my inability to understand how a form produced by the will-power of the clergyman's brother in South Africa could itself become animated, intelligent, and potent, even to the extent of materialising at a séance.

Mr. Gilbertson now explains that he intended to have said 'astral body' or 'double.' From my point of view this just makes all the difference. I suppose a thought-form, whether body or breeches, to be an ephemeral, evanescent creation of will; and I take the astral (human) and the double to be synonymous terms for an *entity* of some sort. Mr. Gilbertson says the term 'subliminal self' does as well; and I expect it does: but whatever the nomenclature used, the entity would have to be a *livé* thing, if I may so express myself, not an inanimate garment.

Then with regard to *motive*: It is easy and natural to assume sympathy and resultant attraction; but it so happens that, in this case, there was none—absolutely none. For obvious reasons I cannot say more. Was I not justified in speaking of 'assumption without knowledge'?

Mr. Gilbertson advises me to peruse Madame d'Espérance's lecture, to be followed by a mild course of 'Shadow Land,' written by the same authoress. Again I thank him for advice, but I have already read the former, and indeed all else that has been published in 'LIGHT' since 1881.

Touching Mr. Gilbertson's quotation from the above lady's lecture: 'I then understood that thoughts were the only real tangible substances,' I ask: Is it certain that he has seized her meaning? Mr. Gilbertson seems to think her words corroborate his view of thought-emanations or projections being or becoming substantial, tangible, ponderable objects on the earth-plane. I surmise rather that she refers to the constructive force which thought attains to on the spiritual plane. Madame d'Espérance, at p. 401 in 'Shadow Land,' speaks of thought-forms as absurdities.

'Shadow Land' has been in my possession for some years: and 'Yolande'! 'Yolande,' the incomprehensible mother of roses, child *magicienne*! 'Yolande' of the Eastern form and English speech; whether a one-time inhabitant of this planet or of another, whether a spirit-blossom swept to earth and claiming kindred with her medium, or a *thought-form* born of some poet's brain in wild atomic dance; launched into space fully equipped with all the attributes of head and heart that go to form the mortal! How can I forget her? Madame d'Espérance's experiences, as written by herself, carry conviction with them. It would have been folly on my part to have included *all* physical mediums in my lamentation when I said, perhaps too hastily, 'It seems to me that the physical side of Spiritualism is nurtured on the fog in which it lives and moves and has its being.'

Further, I think it somewhat unfair for Mr. Gilbertson to force me on to the ropes, as it were. He says: 'If he wishes us to believe that materialisation is a fraud, and the mediums or the spirits humbugs, then let him say so, and try to prove it.' I do *not* mean it, as put in that crude, unqualified and comprehensive way, but I do mean that the conditions under which séances are conducted in America and England are conducive to, and make for, fraud. The more willing we are to submit to (unnecessary) darkness, to linking of hands, to brain and nerve-disturbing noises, to startling touches on head, knees, &c. (all in the darkness), to shouting of 'controls,' and clanging of instruments, the denser will become the fog, and the more nutritive and fattening to the showmen. Outside this region of human fraud we find ourselves in another sphere of mirage, mystification and topsy-turvydom. We are shaken with spontaneous phenomena—phantasms of the living and the dead, veridical, true in one sense, deceptive in another; at times whimsical, bizarre, distracting; square phenomena grinning from round holes; lawless intruders into a realm of law. Peace, peace, O turbulent, multitudinous life! we would rest. 'Nay,' cries Mr. Gilbertson, 'Classify.' The earth recedes, 'Correlate.' I faint, I fall. Ah, kind oblivion! 'Co-ordinate.'

Possibly Mr. Gilbertson's advice is sound, but . . . perhaps . . . *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle.*

R.

Bristol.

THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

ELIJAH'S VICTORY.

'So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.'—1 KINGS, xix. 2.

BY DR. GRESSWELL, M.A.

There is no feature in the zealous and earnest character of Elijah more marked than his marvellous power over men, as most vividly shown, for example, in his command over King Ahab at Mount Carmel. At the same time his power of obtaining help through prayer was far more wonderful. This is instanced by his great appeal to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and its immediate answer.

Elijah was a man of great spiritual power and high ideals, and his one ambition was to serve God. In the whole Biblical record in the Old Testament we do not read of any who wielded greater power than this grand old patriarch. But in Jezebel he had a regal opponent of alien blood, who likewise exercised great power over men, and at the same time knew the magnificent efficacy of prayer. To such an extent was she endowed that Elijah, having heard of her words of prayer above quoted, fled into the wilderness for solitude and safety, threw himself down under a juniper tree, and cried out unto God in despair: 'It is enough: now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.'

In the hour of victory Elijah had given way to despair and hopeless fear. Fear, indeed, had brought on physical and psychic weakness. The paralysing effect of terror is too well known to need illustration. Thus this great father of his people lay wearied, worn, sad, demoralised. Terror had impaired his vitality and opened his system to the attacks of germs of a deadly nature. In the whole range of the Bible there is no case of spiritual conflict between good and bad so powerfully shown. The true import of the words of St. Paul to the Ephesians is here made manifest: 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.' Elijah and Jezebel equally well knew the value of prayer, both appealed to the spirit world for help, and at the time we are speaking of, Elijah lay paralysed, having committed moral suicide. The strong, healthy, life-giving energy of faith was ebbing away. Elijah had long known the power of God; Jezebel knew something too of the power of good, but she was equally, nay more, familiar with the power of evil. Elijah up to this point had not fully recognised the powers of darkness; he was puzzled, and puzzled almost to distraction. His passionate appeal was certainly one of blank despair. How often do we read in the Old and New Testaments the holy exhortation of the angels of light, 'Fear not!' Courage is a necessary condition for spiritual communion and assistance.

We may now proceed some steps further in our survey of this battle royal raging between good and evil in this impressive history of these two passionate zealots.

'Arise and eat,' said the angel to Elijah, after awaking him by a touch, from his sleep of fatigue and exhaustion. He arose and ate, but laid him down again to sleep, or die. But the angel's touch was felt again and the order was given a second time: 'Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.' And Elijah arose and did eat and drink of the food which had been prepared for him and in the strength of that food he went forty days and forty nights. The angel, it is clear, knew where Elijah purposed going, and so prepared him by food for his journey to Mount Horeb, where he might speak with God.

The angel did not bid him return, as might have been expected in view of the fact that he had that command given him so soon afterwards. No; he must be prepared physically, by bodily sustenance, to go to his destination, Mount Horeb, the Holy Mountain. All good men have their holy mountain. Up to this point Jezebel had succeeded in rendering Elijah's victory null and void. She had won the battle thus far.

Horeb had a sacred record, for was it not there that Moses conversed with God? And so Elijah resorted to this spot for light. Was he not in much the same frame of mind as Cardinal Newman when he wrote that beautiful hymn, 'Lead, kindly Light'? He had lost God, and he went to seek Him. But it was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire that he found God on this occasion. He could no longer see God in any of the phenomena of nature; probably he most expected to find Him in the fire, the agent through which he had fought his last great battle of victory. Then faith winged his soul beyond the sky, and he heard the voice say: 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' Only too well does this question imply how wrong this worn-out hero had been in leaving his scene of action before the victory was made complete. The soul-cry of this great man was answered; it was clear that he had forsaken the path of God. Had he stayed and convinced Jezebel he would have completed his victory, as he had done in the case of Ahab. Had he been actuated, as Christ was, by love of His enemies, he would have stayed and followed up his victory to that success which God ensures to all who 'Fear not,' but go on to the end. In the still small voice Elijah found God, and he was bidden, 'Go, return.' Is that not the case with all of us in seeking Light? If we have passed from the narrow path we have to return to the point whence we diverged before we can proceed on our journey. If the power of evil had not always been great, then good would have always had an easy victory. This has never been the case. Christ most distinctly pointed this out. Belief in Christ's teaching of faith in God is only the first step in climbing up the many-runged ladder of union with God and love toward all men.

Yet God knew Elijah's weakness, and He forgot not to send an angel to minister unto him, and thus Elijah eventually won a complete victory, which might have been attained much earlier, and with much more lasting results. One honour won was a surety for more. The greatest teaching in Elijah's case is shown in the fact that God never leaves His own, even when they do fail. Good is more powerful than evil. How different was the end of Queen Jezebel, who, in her dire extremity, had none to help, none to succour. Her very flesh was eaten by dogs in the street.

GREETINGS FROM MR. J. J. MORSE.

As it is scarcely possible to reach all our friends at home by means of the customary seasonable cards, will you kindly allow me to send to them and yourself the usual New Year greetings of myself, Mrs. Morse, and Miss Florence Morse, through the medium of your pages?

This time we are only three thousand miles away from you, while on the previous occasion on which similar greetings were sent we were nearly thirteen thousand miles from the land of our birth, and the friends whom we love. When next the New Year arrives we shall be at home, and it is not out of the way to say it must be a strong inducement which would call us away so far again. For though we have had many kindnesses bestowed upon us, and are still most kindly treated, yet home is home, and the friends of a lifetime hold the first place in our hearts.

To you all, then, dear friends, wherever you may be in our island home, North or South, East or West, in Merrie England, Bonnie Scotland, Gallant Wales, or on the Emerald Isle, our loving greetings and sincerest good wishes to you for a happy and prosperous New Year! And may the cause we love, the facts upon which we rest, and the truths for which we stand, continue their resistless march, achieving still grander conquests during 1904 than those already inscribed upon the banner of our hosts.

To our spirit friends our thanks indeed, to our co-workers our fraternal greetings, to all our cordial goodwill. For the New Year what better motto than those inspiring lines:—

'Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait';

and by responding to this appeal we shall be of some service to our fellows.

In these greetings we three unite, and for us all I remain, as ever, your fellow-worker in the links of fraternal esteem,

J. J. MORSE.

61, Dartmouth-street, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.
December, 1903.

'MENTAL CAPACITY AND SUBJECTIVE ACTION.'

Notes of an Address by ex-Judge Abram H. Dailey, of the New York Bar, delivered before the Law Department of the Brooklyn Institute, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Ex-Judge Abram H. Dailey opened the season of the Law Department of the Brooklyn Institute by speaking at Historical Hall on 'Mental Capacity and Subjective Action,' and 'The Daily Eagle' gave a full report, from which we quote the following:—

'In opening, the speaker said that he should perhaps make somewhat of a departure from the usual legal method of viewing such a subject, because he intended to consider it more from the psychological standpoint, as he thought there was a lack of knowledge on certain phases of mental science, which, if understood, would lead to a better administration of justice.

'When taking up the subject Judge Dailey said: "Man is the result of many preceding causes. These came down through his ancestry and brought with them something of all that have preceded him. Many of these inherited qualities are vices in man, but were not in the animal kingdom where they seem to have originated. Ancestral thought survives in the form of intuition. The law of differentiation steps in and gives variety to the individual. Man has superior mental powers, such as conscience (of which there is some evidence in the brute creation), love, reason. There was a period in the development when, it is evident, the animal did not reason as man reasons." Here he told of a consciousness existing in the vegetable kingdom, instancing the case of apple trees in his orchard which would have overshadowed a plum tree had not the smaller tree bent at an angle of almost forty-five degrees and so reached out into the sunshine. He asked his audience to remember this and realise how easy it is for us to be influenced by unsuspected causes.

'Physiological and psychological deductions were considered at some length, with quotations from T. J. Hudson and other psychologists as to the subjective and objective mind. Judge Dailey is not, however, a believer in the duality of mind. He thinks it is one mind working through several departments. Loss of consciousness, and actions when one is in that state from accident, hypnotism, or the force of suggestion, were all most interestingly discussed and interpreted through familiar cases in the law courts. Hypnotism is known as a world-old power, often found in the animal kingdom, as witness the fascination exerted by some vipers, members of the cat family, &c. The Le Plongeurs found a bas relief among the Mayan sculptures which showed a man under the influence of a hypnotist. As an instance of the force of suggestion when offered to one in a hypnotic state, a story was told of a party of medical students who visited a noted hypnotist and two of the number were subjected to his power. One was made to believe he was Professor James, and forthwith began to lecture, quite as Professor James would. The other was led to the window and told to watch the rushing Niagara River, and presently began to exhibit signs of great fear and said he was being carried forward and would soon go over the falls. A suggestion was made to the first that he was being insulted and should avenge the insult, when he immediately unsheathed a sword from a cane and rushed upon the one who was said to have insulted him. Force of suggestion through telepathy, and the suggestion which lies dormant in the mind of the hypnotised until a given time and then takes effect, and the possible relation of all this to crimes suddenly committed, were then considered.

'The law holds that if a man realises that his act is wrong he is sane enough to be amenable to the law. But it was shown—again through quoted instances—that one may know an act is wrong and yet be powerless to resist the committing of it. Judge Cullen had such a case and released the criminal on condition that when he felt the murderous impulse coming on he should return and be locked up—which he did. Hypnotism as a remedy for disease and moral degeneration has proved its worth in 8,500 cases, subjects in hospitals, and out of all tried only 105 were failures.

'"I do not believe," said Judge Dailey, "in putting people to death for any crime. They should be properly confined so that they can hurt no one. But if a man lives after death, by putting him to death we only transfer him to another state of existence. May he not be just as mischievous there as he was here? That may be an amusing suggestion, but it is logical. What right have we to put him into this other existence?"

'"'What we should do," continued Judge Dailey, "is to get at the root and eradicate that which is bad. Too many people are born bad. Pre-natal conditions are against them. We are not going to make things better until we begin by

making parents better." Here he told of a case in which he was assigned to defend a man, a murderer, whose father was an epileptic of cruel tendencies, and whose ancestry he followed up to find there were criminals and epileptics among them; one brother was a criminal and clearly showed the heritage from his father; and a younger brother, who seemed decent as he was growing up, succumbed to the family influence on becoming a man.

'"'Now those sons were clearly not responsible agents," said he, "although they knew the nature of the deeds which they committed and were cognisant of how the law would look upon them. The compelling power of such a parentage has not been sufficiently well understood."

'In closing, the speaker said that he thought that the time was coming when there would be less crime because its causes would be studied and thus prevented; there will be a better administration of justice, because the lawyers will consider the best interests of the community at large and yet do no injustice to their clients; a better judiciary, because there will be more time for cases and the justices won't have to "grind them through," and politics will have less influence in the election of our justices.

'"'When this time comes," said he, "there will be better religious thought, a better conception of the Deity, clergymen will preach a consistent doctrine, and pulpit and pew will be in agreement. Now the people in the pews often do not believe all the minister preaches, and the minister does not believe all that he preaches either."

'There was much applause for the plea for the tempering of justice with mercy which was made in every branch of the subject considered, and when the Judge closed, Sidney V. Lowell sprang to his feet and moved a vote of thanks in a hearty and cordial little speech, seconded by William Ingersoll, in one of equal friendliness. J. Hampden Dougherty, president of the department, put the motion in a felicitous manner, and there were no "contrary minded."

SCOTTISH SPIRITUALISTS' ALLIANCE.

A very interesting development of the movement of Spiritualism in Scotland has recently taken place by the establishment of an Alliance of the whole of the known associations of the country.

At a conference held in Edinburgh on November 28th, when delegates from Glasgow, Dundee, Greenock, Dunfermline, Falkirk, &c., were entertained by the Edinburgh Association, proposals for forming such an amalgamation and conservation of forces were discussed and eventually decided upon. The suggestions, which emanated originally from the Glasgow Association, were very favourably and sympathetically received by all the delegates, the anticipations being by such an Alliance to assist in providing speakers for the smaller societies, and also to inaugurate and establish propaganda work in places where at present no such work is accomplished.

While the Alliance will in no wise interfere with the internal work of the several associations who are self-supporting, it will enable these associations to take their share in assisting those of their brethren who are not so fortunately placed.

Lecturers and mediums who are open for engagements for a series of meetings are cordially invited to write, stating terms, &c., to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. K. MacLennan, 2, Ailsa-terrace, Vinscombe-street, Hillhead, Glasgow.

Officers and executive were elected as follows:—

Honorary Presidents: Mr. James Robertson, hon. president of the Glasgow Association; Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, of London, Editor of 'LIGHT.'

President: Mr. J. Eugene Plant, president of the Edinburgh Society.

Vice-Presidents: Mr. John Sharpe, president of the Glasgow Association; Mr. James Stevenson, president of the Dundee Association; Mr. George Brown, of Edinburgh; Mr. Robert Fry, president of the Greenock Association; Mrs. Donaldson, president of the Dunfermline Association; Mr. D. P. Black, president of the Falkirk Association.

Secretary: Mr. Kenneth MacLennan, vice-president and secretary of the Glasgow Association.

Treasurer: Mr. Alex. McGregor, treasurer of the Glasgow Association.

To which are added the delegates from each society.

It is hoped the acting executive will be warmly supported in their work by the various societies affiliating, and in their desire to promote the welfare of Spiritualism and the adherents thereto throughout Scotland.

K. MACLENNAN,
Secretary.

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.

Mr. and Mrs. Everitt.

SIR,—Will you kindly insert these few lines in 'LIGHT' to inform our numerous friends that, after twenty weeks' sojourn in the provinces, spreading a knowledge of spirit return and helping on the workers in the good cause, we have reached home again safely, and in good health, having thoroughly enjoyed our visits to the various societies, and been gratified to find that the cause is greatly prospering? With hearty New Year's greetings, yours sincerely,

THOS. AND M. A. EVERITT.

Holder's Hill, Hendon, N. W.

'Talks with a Spirit Control.'

SIR,—Permit me to call attention to the weekly meetings for 'Talks with a spirit control,' held at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., at which 'Morambo,' Mrs. Wallis's control, gives answers to questions, and joins in conversation with those present in a very interesting and instructive way. A careful observer cannot fail to be impressed by the evidences of consistent continuity of character on the part of the control. Mrs. Wallis's features and voice change, and both are uniformly the same from week to week.

The meetings were suspended from the end of May to the beginning of October. The first meeting in October had a very special interest for the writer. Mrs. Wallis was controlled, and manifestly by the same intelligence—'Morambo'—voice, features, and manner being precisely the same as on previous occasions months before.

It is a matter of regret, however, that we have no shorthand writer present to report questions and answers, to enrich the pages of 'LIGHT,' and give its readers an opportunity to study the nature and conditions of the life of spirit people.

Will some friend interested in Spiritism who can write shorthand volunteer to help in this matter? It is also somewhat surprising that more people do not avail themselves of these opportunities to confer with an intelligent spirit, and thus obtain assistance in reference to the problems which perplex the earnest student. S.

Advent.

SIR,—May I venture to remark that it is a subject much to be regretted that far the largest proportion of the so-called 'Spiritualism' of to-day is based on non-Christian principles? This, to my mind, is the reason why controversies showing a sad lack of 'brotherly love' have been so numerous lately in the pages of 'LIGHT.' If we were all working to carry out the will and the desire of the 'Word made flesh,' then surely we should succeed in convincing inquirers, and should permeate the materialistic society around us. 'Arise, shine,' should be our motto. Does not the expression, 'Be filled with light,' used by so many heavenly guides, mean that our candle should be lighted by Divine Light? We ourselves surely are nothing—the mere instruments; we the clay, the Christ the Potter. Let all who rejoice in the revelation of the Power of the Spirit draw near to each other, recognising the only true, infallible Source of spiritual intercourse. If we do this, the merely 'earth-bound' spirits of the séance-rooms will disappear; the futile nonsense too often listened to with rapt attention, will be stopped. Then the heavenly guides will be able more and more to speak to each solitary soul, who in its turn can reflect its influence on the discarnate as on the incarnate.

'Excelsior!' said one spirit, 'is our cry when redeemed, and so ever upwards and onwards we strive.'

'PAX.'

Theosophy.

SIR,—'Truth Lover,' in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' very kindly writes to tell us the first object of the Theosophical Society, and then asks a question as to how this first object is to be attained, after which he goes on to say unkind things both about the various writers on this subject in your valuable paper and also of the paper itself; and last of all he hides his identity under the guise of a *nom de plume*. As one of the writers of the letters referred to, may I say that I have not the slightest ill-feeling towards any brother or sister Theosophist or Spiritualist who may differ from me, and I believe that the writers who have taken a different view from myself have not the slightest ill-will towards me; the 'house divided' exists in the imagination of 'Truth Lover,' and not in reality.

Ripon.

J. MONGER,

Wimborne,

'The Sense of Responsibility.'

SIR,—May I, through the medium of your columns, ask a question which seems to be of crucial importance, and may I beg those of your readers who have the power to do so to kindly give such information as they can upon the matter?

How do 'Spiritualists' account for the decay of the sense of responsibility in those who give themselves to this cult? This loss of the sense of responsibility may be denied, but I do not speak as one who has dealt lightly with this matter.

Meeting after meeting is held, and the reality of 'spirit presence' is 'proved' time after time to an incredulous, or a sceptical, or an enthusiastic audience, as the case may be. Persons of whose moral nature the devotees of the cult know absolutely nothing, are urged to develop mediumistic gifts. Classes are formed by 'disinterested' leaders in the cult for the development of these gifts—with fees 'paid in advance.' Circles are formed, and frequently persons are admitted to those circles who, by the law of affinity, can attract only the lying, revengeful and unclean entities who seek, by these means, the prolongation of their term of gratification. The whole circle is thus drawn into magnetic affinity and nervous relationship with these devastating forces. They have formed a link which they are powerless to break. Little knowing the fate which has overtaken them, they gradually lose all sense of responsibility, even towards those whom they have sworn (by sacred and inviolable vows) to 'love, honour, and cherish' until death 'parts them.' They are no longer responsible human beings, and yet, as a result of the consummate deception and power of concealment of these obsessing entities, nobody dreams that they are entertaining in their midst demons who glory in wreckage of human lives and of good causes. Nor does this infection confine itself to the members of the circle who 'believe in Spiritualism.' Persons who frequent the halls where these 'spirits' have their special meeting places sometimes become drawn into the powerful magnetic circle, unknown to all others except to those whose loving eyes watch and weep over their gradual enfoldment in an evil aura, which even love itself cannot penetrate. The hopeless, helpless sorrow and suffering of these watching eyes is doubly increased when they find that those who urge, with much fervour, the extension of this 'spirit communion,' have no remedy to offer. They do not even seem to recognise that they—the inciting mediums or agents—are the persons responsible for this moral and spiritual wreckage of human souls. Appeals are made to these 'Spiritualists' to repair the wreckage they have made. And before the storm they have evoked, they stand helpless—powerless to aid those whom they have incited to their own irretrievable ruin (or careless of it).

May I ask the thoughtful followers of this most dangerous 'game of chance'—how do they account for this loss of the sense of responsibility? Is it true that presumably wise and clever persons still urge others to cultivate a high state of magnetic susceptibility, knowing that the dangers are greater than the supposed benefits, and that they—the investigators—can set up no safeguards, offer no remedy, when the ruin is complete?

One might as well push a child down a steep incline into a burning fiery furnace, and then decline all responsibility.

'MOURNER.'

Successful Psychometry.

SIR,—Since writing the letter which you kindly published in 'LIGHT' on December 12th, under the heading of 'A String of Questions,' I have had a psychometric reading from a London medium. I sent a leather watch guard, and carefully worded my letter so that it conveyed absolutely no information. I cannot do justice to the medium in a short letter, but if any other inquirer would like a detailed description I shall be pleased to give one, and also to furnish the gentleman's name and address. In his reading he goes straight to indisputable facts. My present unique circumstances are described, and the month mentioned in which such circumstances commenced. He gives me three dates, 1895-97-1901, and clearly indicates the moves I made on each and pointing to the results.

Then he gives a general description of the past ten years to the present time, and, with more or less detail, the course of events likely to take place until March next. My doubts as to the genuineness of psychometry are set at rest, once and for all, and daily I find fresh points in his remarkable letter that one cannot notice until such events happen. And may I in closing say that since my letter appeared in 'LIGHT' I have had a very kind and helpful letter from him, showing that with his remarkable ability he has a kindly spirit and is ready to lend a helping hand where he sees it needed?

CHAS. W. WILLIAMS.

Need of the Christ Spirit.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. Macbeth Bain, has expressed my opinion and feelings as to the lack of the Christ spirit in the average Spiritualist. On every side I have been pained that those I have come in contact with are simply seeking it for what benefit it may be to them in this life. My sincere wish has been for some time that a band of earnest spiritual mediums could be formed who would devote their gifts to the wants and sufferings of humanity; and if they are the means of good to those to whom they administer, a voluntary subscription might be asked of the recipients, which should be given to some benevolent fund such as the one which the esteemed medium, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, represents. I should like the opinion of others on this matter if you can spare a little space in your valuable paper.

MARY JEAN ANDERSON.

32, Leamington-road Villas,
Westbourne Park.

Mr. and Mrs. Everitt at Smethwick.

SIR,—It is our pleasure to inform your readers of an excellent séance given by these two gifted friends, during their recent visit to Smethwick, to a few of our society's workers. Almost at the very commencement of the séance, the first portion being held in full light, innumerable raps occurred, and by the instructions thus received the sitters were quickly placed in their right positions, and portions of Scripture were given out for reading as follows: Genesis xxxii. 24-28; Ezekiel viii., a portion of verse 3; Acts ii. 1-4; and Rev. i., verse 9 to the middle of the 11th; all of which were found to be most appropriate to the occasion. A series of sounds were then produced through the table, illustrative of various mechanical processes; a large drawer of the table, containing cutlery, was opened without contact, and when closed by the sitters was several times reopened, and the table itself was lifted bodily several inches from the floor and entirely free of all the sitters. When the gas was turned out beautiful spirit lights, visible to all, and in great number, continually floated about the room, being particularly brilliant and yet emitting no rays. Five spirit friends also spoke to us in the direct voice for several minutes each, giving the names of 'Zippy,' Dr. Jabez Burns, Miss K. Rogers, Mrs. Gregory, and 'Joey'; and while this occurred Mr. and Mrs. Everitt were both in conversation with the sitters. The violent knocking at a locked door of the room, and a rattling of the handle, preceded the entrance of a band of Indian guides carrying spirit lights. Dr. Burns, when speaking in the direct voice, said, in allusion to a remark of one of the sitters: 'We do not make bodies, we have our own bodies, and come into your state when you give the conditions to do so.'

During their visit Mr. Everitt gave us two very able addresses on 'The Real Man,' and 'Fifty Years' Experiences in Spiritualism,' on Sunday, December 13th, and also took the chair on the Monday following for Mr. G. H. Bibbings, who gave an eloquent address on 'What are the Dead Doing?'

The séance above recorded, on the Tuesday evening following, took place at our president's home. At the conclusion of the séance the sitters compared notes, and drew up a joint report of the proceedings, from which this account has been taken. Altogether we feel we have been greatly favoured, and we cherish the hope that our friends may yet long be spared to continue their good work for the cause. The following are the signatures of the sitters at the séance: D. Findlay, President, Smethwick Society; A. Morris, Secretary; E. Findlay, A. J. Grove, Joseph Darby, Charles Evans, J. Bissell, A. Preenen.

A. MORRIS, Hon. Sec.,
Smethwick Spiritualists' Association.

A Challenge.

SIR,—I have only just seen the recent numbers of 'LIGHT' (having been out of town), and I am surprised at the remarks that Mr. L. Gilbertson has made in reference to my proposition. I am only a humble searcher after truth, and I have no desire to flash £5 notes in anyone's face, and even if I were in a position to do so it might not be desirable. I have attended several séances conducted by Mr. Husk, and I am as anxious as Mr. Gilbertson is to get at the real facts, as to the truth of the phenomena; but I do not think I have the same faith in human nature, and certainly not in Mr. Husk, as he evidently has.

With regard to my having a preponderating influence if my challenge is accepted, I am quite willing to give way to Mr. Gilbertson in this respect, and would be content for Mrs. Husk to sit next to her husband under the following conditions, viz., that the hand of Mr. Husk which clasps his wife's hand,

and the hand with which she clasps her husband's, be both handcuffed and sealed, and that I be permitted to hold Mr. Husk's other hand, and a friend of mine Mrs. Husk's other hand; I reserving to myself the right to provide the handcuffs, and the séance to be held at my office; and if the fairy bells and musical box are played, or any materialised spirit appears during the sitting, I will give Mr. Husk £10, and another £10 to the London Spiritualist Alliance.

I will lodge the money with the Editor of 'LIGHT,' should my challenge be accepted; to be returned to me in the event of our meeting being a failure; and to make a business transaction of it, I am quite willing to give Mr. Husk £2 2s. for his services should a disappointment ensue.

H. C.

[If mediums will, in consideration of a money payment, give séances under conditions which preclude the possibility of accurate observation on the part of the sitters, they cannot fairly complain if they are sometimes suspected of deception, seeing that those who have paid for admission are manifestly entitled to satisfactory evidence of the genuineness of the phenomena presented. But our correspondent proposes conditions which would, almost inevitably, defeat the desired object. Manifestations are not to be had in answer to a defiant challenge, and are not likely to be obtained in the presence of the mental irritation caused by the process of handcuffing the medium, while failure will under such circumstances prove nothing either way.—ED. 'LIGHT'.]

SOCIETY WORK.

We must ask our correspondents to take notice that henceforth additions to their reports, in the form of announcements of 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.

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. Alfred Clegg gave an enlightening address on 'The Relation of Earth Life to Spirit Life.' (See advertisement.)—J. B. I.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—TEMPERANCE INSTITUTE.—On Saturday, the 26th, a good open circle was held, and on Sunday last, Madame Stone (of Heaton) gave a good trance address on 'New Ideas of Heaven,' and the usual after-meeting was held.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—A local effort was arranged for Sunday last, and several of our members gave readings, short addresses, and music, all of which were highly appreciated.

CATFORD.—24, MEDUSA-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Millard delivered an interesting trance address on 'Closing Time and the New Life,' and Mr. Blackman gave excellent illustrations of clairvoyance.—R.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Councillor D. J. Davis gave an interesting address on 'Is Man a Progressive Being?' and also dealt with 'The Drink Question.' Mr. H. Fielder presided. Miss D. Greenman rendered a solo.—COR.

HACKNEY.—YOUNG'S ASSEMBLY ROOMS, LIME-GROVE, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last Miss Chapin, the blind medium, gave an earnest inspirational address entitled 'What does Christmas mean to the Spiritualist?' followed by very successful illustrations of psychometry.—N. RIST.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey gave a splendid trance address on 'Looking Backwards,' after which he gave some examples of psychometry and clairvoyance. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., usual meeting. On Wednesday, January 13th, at 8 p.m., we expect a visit from Mr. Bibbings.—W.T.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—GOTHIC HALL, 2, BOUVERIE-ROAD, N.—On Sunday last Madame Nellie Cope and Miss Jennie Atkinson sang two solos each, and the Corresponding Secretary gave readings from 'A Christmas Carol,' and a very pleasant evening was spent. On Sunday next Mr. E. W. Wallis will give answers to written questions. (See special advertisement re Mr. Bibbings.)—A. J. C.

BRIGHTON.—BRUNSWICK HALL, BRUNSWICK-STREET EAST, WESTERN-ROAD, HOVE.—On Sunday, December 20th, Mr. Metcalfe gave an interesting address on 'Christ, and His Life Here.' After which, a lady visitor (Mrs. Burdett) presented the society with a five pound note to start a building fund. On Sunday last Mr. Metcalfe answered questions, and on Sunday next, the 3rd inst., Mrs. Russell-Davies will give an address. Tea and social meeting on January 4th, at 6 p.m.—A.C.