

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A certain London publisher issues or did issue a series of 'Railway Tracts.' We have been favoured with Number 9. Its title is 'An interesting question.' The interesting question is, 'What do you think you have to do to get your sins forgiven?' and the writer says, 'I have very often put this question to my fellow passengers,—a piece of impudence which no one need be proud of. But this question, it appears, is usually followed by another, 'You would not like the thought of being lost for ever, would you?' and we are told that the accommodating 'fellow passenger' says, 'I should not.' 'No,' responds the Railway Tract man. 'No: however light a man may make of it in health, it is a sad sight to see a man die with the terror of hell upon him.' A cheerful 'fellow passenger' this!

In this tract, Number 9, we have the benefit of a general appeal which runs thus:—

I ask, Are your sins pardoned? Your conscience answers, No! Are you justified? No! Are you prepared to meet God? No! Are you certain to be with God in heaven? No! You may have every earthly comfort, but to-morrow you die—without hope. Fearful, fearful state! What will it profit you to gain the whole world and lose your own soul?

How awful the fact that every one of us is described in this verse. Yes, born in this very condition, and held fast prisoners by the devil, the god of this world.

These queer people seem to have very morbid ideas of God and His world,—ideas as ugly as they are unwholesome. They imply that man is devil-born and God-forsaken, except in so far as terror may somehow ward off His anger if it leads us to beg hard enough for His pardon. It is all on the lowest possible ethical and spiritual plane.

In one of Dr. Calthrop's discourses in 'God and His World,' lately noticed by us, there is an enlightening paragraph concerning the Buddhistic Nirvana which has been variously understood, as some grade of blissful peace or as annihilation. The Buddhistic conception of the other life, says Dr. Calthrop, is as real as Dante's 'Divina Commedia.' For every evil there is a special hell, and for every goodness there is a special heaven. A tepid goodness will land you into one of the six heavens of the Nats. A more ardent goodness will admit you into one of the heavens of the Rupa, or the embodied. Be a saint, and you will enter one of the heavens of Arupa, or the bodiless. Be a saint of saints, and you will enter Nirvana.

Now think of it, says Dr. Calthrop. If Nirvana means annihilation, you get this ridiculous result:—

Do evil, and you go to hell. Do good, and you go to heaven. Do nobly, and you go to a high heaven. Be a saint,

sage, and lover of your kind, and you go to the heaven of heavens. But be absolutely true, perfect, a sage of sages, a saint of saints, guide, redeemer and benefactor, and you are annihilated. There is absolutely nothing left of you. Does this sound rational, conceivable? Has not the prosaic Western mind, as again and again before, with all its learning and painstaking, failed to interpret the mystic, unfathomable mind of the East? Nirvana is oneness with Absolute Being.

Buddha himself 'entered Nirvana' on the day when, sitting under the Bo-tree, he was filled with infinite compassion for all creatures; for then and there he and the vast All were one.

The writer of the 'Song of a sad Soul,' part of which we quoted from 'The Agnostic Annual,' writes to complain that by the omission of the last verse, amongst others, we did injustice to the poem. If so, we are sorry, and we make amends by quoting it:—

O link with thy glory

Both ends of my story,

Thou rainbow of Reason o'er sorrow and strife.

From osier to elm,

Light a road through the realm

Where one weary man wanders the desert of Life.

'The poem,' says the writer, 'represents a mood, not a settled state. What sane man is settled?' Quite true!

Two weeks ago we referred to Dr. Ernest Crutcher's valuable Essay on 'The Philosophy of Pain,' in 'The Open Court.' The conclusion gives some idea of its argument:—

As the progress of man in future will be along the psychical, the physical will become even more subordinate to the soul-part, and be simply the housement of the spirit, refined, purified, etherialised, fit for the Master's use, as the 'temple of God.'

Towards such consummation the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together.

Hear the conclusion of this whole matter:

Pain begets experience;

Experience is the genesis of real life;

Life is preparation through which the soul is individualised;

Death conveys into enlarged psychical spheres of activity, from whence, after seasonable lessons, the spirit passes on into yet higher fields;

And thus ever on and on through progressive evolutionary stages towards heights intellectual and spiritual not imaginable by finite powers.

Aye, life with its griefs is a mystery, but, afterwhiles, we will be

'Laughing to learn

Death was so friendly, and the toils of life

So fruitful for all living things; and pain,

Seed of all pleasure; and our worst of woes

So like the foolish anguish of the babe,

Whereat the mother, loving most, smiles most.'

The prediction of 'Helen Wilmsans,' that her persecution by the U. S. Post Office would result in a gain for freedom, has come true. The following, from 'The Light of Truth,' has far-reaching value:—

The decision of the Florida Court against Mrs. Helen Wilmsans-Post has been reversed by the U. S. Court of Appeals. Mrs. Post ('Helen Wilmsans') one of the best-known mental healers of the country, was denied the use of the mails by the postal authorities. She was charged with using the mails for fraudulent purposes. The Circuit Court of Florida sustained the ruling, and for two years not even personal letters have

been delivered to her, all being returned to the writers marked 'Fraudulent.' She is now restored to her rights. The following extract from the Court decision will be interesting: 'The case should be tried with the distinct understanding that the practice of mental healing is, in federal law, as lawful as healing with drugs. As to the right to use the postal establishment of the United States, no discrimination is made between those whose vocation is healing, whether they be allopathists, homœopathists, osteopaths, or mental scientists.'

We unwisely resent discomfort and life's chilling winds, as though they were unfriendly to us. Even to the body they are not always unfriendly. We need toughening as well as cossetting. And, certainly, all pleasure and spiritual sunshine would be dangerously enervating to the soul. The very trees and plants, though they may have too much of winter, need it. What a subtle truth there is in the following beautiful telling of this law:—

Earth, captive held
By winter, deems him a foe—
That he can weld
Such fetters. Deep down below,
Her violets, close-celled,
Flutter to go.

Earth, when she's free
To bud and blow,
And feel through every fibre of each tree
The strength to grow,
Will say: 'Twas winter gave it me,'
And, in the sunshine, bless the snow.
—ALICE WARD BAILEY.

We understand that Mr. Jesse Francis Shepard, the 'mystical musician,' is again in this country, and that he is prepared to hold séances. Appointments and terms can be arranged with his secretary, Mr. Tonner, 11, Cambridge-Parade, Twickenham.

A FOOLISH SUGGESTION.

At the end of a review of Dr. A. R. Wallace's book, 'My Life,' in the 'Contemporary Review,' the writer says:—

'It is a horrible idea that the spirits of those we love may be at the beck and call of some professional medium, engaged for the evening to go through a programme of spirit tricks. I say it in all seriousness, and with no desire to scoff at believers in Spiritualism, among whom there are men worthy of the highest esteem; but if these inanities of the séance could be proved by strict scientific investigation to be genuine spiritual manifestations, there would be only one course open to the humane—the formation of a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Spirits.'

If spirits were 'at the beck and call' of people on this side there might be some justification for this writer's suggested 'Society,' but as it is not true—and no intelligent Spiritualist claims to be able to command or 'call up' spirits at will—it is simply ignorant fooling on his part.

'IDA LLYMOND AND HER HOUR OF VISION,' by Hope Cranford (Skeffingtons), is a record of spiritual awakening, and 'a vision of souls' conveying a message of hope and confidence in the eternal realities; it is offered in the hope that it may prove comforting to many souls who will accept it in the spirit of faith and love.

'THE CROWN AND CLIMAX' OF EARTH LIFE.—'It is not the fault of the dying that we have not a great deal more information about the way of passing from one life to another,' says Mabel Collins in the 'Occult Review,' but it is 'the fault of those around them, who refuse to listen to the precious words, or enjoin silence, or regard what is said as the wanderings of delirium.' When Spiritualism is more generally understood we shall alter all that, for, as Mabel Collins says: 'The average Spiritualist of all countries recognises with pleasure the probability of delightful meetings after death, and looks forward to freedom from the limitations of the body. . . . Through the gateway of death we all emerge from the shadows, and by it alone can the race pass to freedom. It is the greatest psychic event we know of, the crown and climax of this temporary life.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

AFTERNOON SOCIAL GATHERING.

In the interest of Members and Associates who find it impracticable or inconvenient to attend evening meetings, a SOCIAL GATHERING will be held in the

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX-STREET, STRAND
(opposite the Law Courts),

on Thursday, January 25th, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., for conversation and the interchange of thoughts upon subjects of mutual interest. Afternoon tea at 4 p.m. Admission will be by ticket only. Tickets will be sent to all Members and Associates.

Meetings will also be held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (near the National Gallery), on Thursday evenings in 1906 as follows:—

- Jan. 11.—MR. E. WAKE COOK, on 'Christian Science in the Light of Modern Spiritualism.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Feb. 8.—MR. FREDERIC W. THURSTAN, M.A., on 'Some Things we Want for Ideal Investigation.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Feb. 22.—MRS. W. P. BROWNE, MRS. M. H. WALLIS, MR. GEO. SPRIGGS, AND REAR-ADMIRAL W. USBORNE MOORE, on 'Some Notable Personal Experiences.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Mar. 8.—THE REV. LUCKING TAVENER, on 'Modern Art—the Spiritual Element in the Works of Blake, Rossetti, Burne Jones, and Watts'; with *Lantern Illustrations*. At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Mar. 29.—MR. J. W. BOULDING, on 'Shakespeare and Spiritualism; with Illustrations from Personal Experiences.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
April 12.—THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS, on 'The Holy Ghost the Comforter.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
April 26.—THE REV. J. HUNTER, D.D., on 'The Modern Revival of Interest and Faith in the so-called Supernatural.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
May 10.—MR. L. STANLEY JAST, on 'The Spiritual Significance of Symbols.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CLAIRVOYANCE will be given at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., by Mr. J. J. Vango, on Tuesday next, December 12th, and on the 19th inst., at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

RUSKIN A CONVINCED SPIRITUALIST.

In his review of Holman Hunt's new work, entitled 'Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood,' which appeared in the 'Daily Chronicle' of December 5th, Mr. C. Lewis Hind says:—

'Ruskin once confessed in conversation that he valued a certain picture because it carried emphatic teaching of the immortality of the soul. Said Mr. Holman Hunt, "You must remember that when last we met you had given up all belief in immortality." Ruskin replied, "I remember well. What has mainly caused the change in my views is the unanswerable evidence of Spiritualism. I know there is much vulgar fraud and stupidity connected with it, but underneath there is, I am sure, enough to convince us that there is personal life independent of the body; but with this once proved, I have no further interest in the pursuit of Spiritualism.'"

'FAR FROM THE CITY'S HUM; or, Short Stages along Life's By-ways,' by Annette Hammond (Women's Printing Society, 66, Whitcomb-street, W.C.), is a series of stories from French and English country life in the olden time, with a blend of spirit influence, and is a book that will probably please the young folks.

A SPIRITUALIST HANDBOOK.—Mr. H. N. de Fremery, one of our most indefatigable workers in Holland, is now publishing the second edition of his comprehensive handbook to Spiritualism, in which the various branches of the subject are treated with clearness and yet with considerable scientific detail. The work is well illustrated, the frontispiece being from a photograph of the levitation of a table at a sitting with the medium Politi. The title of the book is 'Handleiding tot de Kennis van het Spiritisme,' and it is published in seven parts or in one volume by C. A. J. van Dishoeck, at Bussum, Holland.

THE SCIENTIFIC APPREHENSION OF THE SUPER-PHYSICAL WORLD.

By MR. W. L. WILMSHURST.

An Address given to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, on the evening of November 30th, 1905; Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 585.)

In psychology the disillusioning process dates from Kant, as in physics it dates from Copernicus. Kant indeed regarded himself as the Copernicus of mind, for as the astronomer exposed the fallacies supporting the geocentric theory, and restored the sun to central rank in our system, so the psychologist stripped all illusive externals from the human mind and vindicated the lordship of the transcendental consciousness. The two chief obstacles to right thought and larger mental vision he found to be the ideas of Space and Time; useful enough conceptions indeed for present utilitarian purposes, but having in reality no existence in themselves, save as inseparable characteristics of consciousness which, owing to its present physical limitations, does not have knowledge except as modified and toned down by sense-perceptions. Space and Time are instruments of the mind; they must be in the mind for us to observe that things are in them. Yet, despite appearances to the contrary and save relatively, they are not realities; they only afford us the possibility for a comprehensive co-ordination of sense-elements, of time-ing and space-ing physical things, and have been likened to chemically prepared photographic plates on which the sunlight of experience combines and delineates things external to itself in definite form. Ridding ourselves of these utilitarian thought-instruments, we come gradually to knowledge of our true selves, and enter the larger intellectual life where we learn to discriminate between appearances and realities; and on regarding a given object, not to say, 'This is so and so because it so appears to me,' but to ask: 'What are the limitations of my mind which make me thus perceive this?' and so gradually to clarify our minds for seeing things in their true selves and not merely their outward forms; for seeing them as they would appear to a higher being, not limited as we. If we do not understand the true methods of perception of physical things, how shall we be able to judge of the transcendental and super-physical? We, in a world of three-dimensional space and one-dimensional time, must possess some true grasp of our own bearings before attempting to realise those obtaining among higher orders of life, freed of our limitations and occupying worlds of presumably ever-increasing space and time dimensions. And though the academic Pragmatist will urge* that such an attempt, if successful, would only result in 'useless knowledge,' he overlooks the benefit that would accrue to humanity by the adjustment to mundane life of such cosmic principles as might be deduced from such knowledge.

Is it reasonable, it may be asked, to suppose that humanity is intended or will ever be able to rid itself of its present Space and Time ideas; or, at least, to subordinate them within appropriate limits in its judgment of things? Analogies from the record of evolutionary progress, the already accomplished suppression of grosser instincts,† the widespread development of the clairvoyant faculty, and the premonitions of biology necessitate, I think, an emphatic affirmative as answer. That the possibility has been predicated theoretically; that it has been achieved, in fact, in many individual cases, is an earnest of the probability of universal accomplishment; and as the attention of men is more and more diverted from the material and formal, and more and more directed upon intrinsic realities (as now many tokens show that it is being directed), the

mind of humanity will gradually habituate itself to new methods, and, to adapt Shelley's words, will

'Think till thought creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates.'

And such an advance in human mentality would mark and involve a simultaneous advance in human morality and sociology. The change in intellectual outlook, the elimination from our thought of unrealities, has been well called a process of 'casting out the self.' By the removal of obscuring factors, by seeing things in their abstract essence, we learn to see them as they really are; to see humanity as it really is; as a higher being, and therefore, as God sees it. We lose sight of self and develop inevitable altruism.* We are in sight of a principle of scientific truth which will some day utterly transform present social ideals and help us so to regulate terrestrial life that it may be 'in earth as it is in heaven.'

The record of scientific discovery, then, has been throughout a record of disillusionment; a disillusionment, or cathartic, which we may regard as a necessary preparative for a still larger science. Research in both physics and psychology has brought us into contact with a super-physical world, subject, in both its material and mental phases, to a new order of law necessitating absolute 'inversion of ideas' about the universe. In fact, inversion, which is only the scientific synonym for self-renunciation, is the moral corollary, as well as the practical consequence, of the results of all departments of scientific inquiry. And obedience (whether voluntarily undertaken, or necessitated by the compelling cosmic force of disillusionment) to the fundamental law of self-sacrifice, is, *ipso facto*, attended by undreamed-of compensation in the surprising visions it gives us of the great unities that needs must underlie the Universe. It gives us in the sphere of psychology a proof of the unity of mankind, linked imperishably to a larger, cosmic, Divine Mind. 'The fact that the conscious person is continuous with a wider self through which saving experiences come, a positive content of religious experience, it seems to me is literally and objectively true.†' It brings us in physics to a vision of solidarity in the world of matter, and the phenomenal world is perceived to be a precipitation into matter of an antecedent noumenal world. It demonstrates to us through metaphysics (regarded in its modern, not its classical, meaning), that what is thought of from the physical plane as noumenal, becomes phenomenal on a higher plane, and as such must be there perceived by discarnate consciousness, and is so perceived by incarnate consciousness having the faculty of dissociating itself from its normal physical limitations. Here on this plane, in Professor James's words, 'we perceive but the symbols of reality'; on the super-physical plane realities themselves are present.

'All we have hoped and willed and dreamed of good shall
exist

Not in semblance but itself . . .

When eternity affirms the conceptions of an hour.'

(2) And what of life within the vast cosmic spaces, eclipsed from sight by our physical limitations, through which our world slides 'as the wind passes through a grove of trees'? That life,—human life, to speculate no further,—exists there, in unimaginable stages of growth and fulness of activity, is certain. Will Science be able to prove the fact inductively? At present she says 'No,' and many others, whose assurance of the fact of survival based on other evidence is absolute, say 'No,' also. Time will decide. For the present, the Materialist (or nowadays perhaps one should say the Unspiritual Monist, for in his enforced perception of the unity of all things he waives terminology and is willing to treat the universe indifferently as all matter or all spirit), asserts that though he 'can just conceive that the ponderable and visible structure of the brain may have a counterpart in ether,‡ there is no tittle of evidence to show that mind can exist dissociated from the

* See Mr. C. H. Hinton's Works, and note the natural evolution from knowledge to altruism foreshadowed in II. Pet. i., particularly verses 5-7.

† James, 'Varieties of Religious Experience.'

‡ See Mr. J. McCabe's criticism of Sir O. Lodge, 'Hibbert Journal,' 1905, p. 755.

* As is urged in Mr. F. C. S. Schiller's 'Humanism,' Essay II.

† See Huxley, Collected Works, 'Evolution and Ethics,' p. 89, and note thereto.

mortal nerve-structure that supports it during physical existence. Possibly the conception he 'just' permits himself to make may be, after all, a true one. Even the wildest visionary will hesitate to predicate mind or spirit uncontained by some vehicular matter, however attenuated. But possibly also, and this without making appeal to the moral or the psychical argument in favour of survival, the key to the biological problem is the necessity for 'an inversion of ideas' in regard to life, comparable to the inversion that has become necessary and accepted in regard to matter. The biologist has in fact run into a veritable blind alley of his own making, and, like the tail-less fox of fable, invites all mankind to surrender an universal, inherent instinct, because, forsooth, he himself is baulked by a problem of his own setting. Survival of death, he tells us, is the 'citadel of superstition,'* and, to his credit be it said, there is abundant precedent for suggesting that, in this case too, mankind has been subject to a ghastly illusion. But, after all, may not his conclusion be drawn from false premises? Water cannot be weighed in water, nor ether in ether. Can mind be measured in mind or life be analysed in life? Does not *I am*† imply that *I am always*, that annihilation is under no circumstances predicable of *Me*, whatever happens to the material vesture, which is by no means *Me*? 'It is my greatest desire,' said Van Helmont, 'that it might be granted unto atheists to have tasted, at least but one only moment, what it is intellectually to understand; whereby they may feel the immortality of mind, as it were by touching.' A single blast from the nostrils of a man who has formed a moral, instead of an intellectual, conception of the universe (e.g., Emerson's 'Essay on Immortality') puts to utter rout the whole army of unspiritual monists for any healthy, unwarped mind. Until, however, the false trail of the biologist is abandoned and an 'inversion of ideas, without contravening anything observable from the order of nature,' is substituted,‡ official science will continue unable to certify the fact of post-mortem persistence of consciousness; but the circumstantial evidence,—were there none other and there is much,—and the inevitable inferences to be drawn from the results of official science, leave no room for doubting that the granting of the certificate is but a matter of time. *Ignoramus* is the true and honest confession it makes to-day; *Ignorabimus* is an unworthy slander upon its own splendid past. But until ignorance, or mere conjecture, rises into hypothesis what are the probabilities deducible from extant knowledge?

Revert for a moment to what we have learned from the discovery of the ether and all that it implies. From the precipitation of inorganic nature from a supersensuous abstraction into gross matter, liable at any moment to resolution again into its primal state, are we not justified in drawing an analogy in regard to ourselves? May we not imagine a pre-natal, post-mortal humanity which, as it moves through the seen and unseen spheres along the mighty spiral of evolutionary development, is, in the persons of its microcosmic units, fulfilling the same macrocosmic law? The secret, fundamental verities of the universe reveal themselves in startling parallels. 'Natural religion,' said Emerson, 'supplies all the facts which are disguised under the dogmas of popular creeds,' and since the greatest, most important, verity ever established by science is the fact that the material world is a projection from a spiritual plane, is not the inevitable inference that the human spirit (like its divine prototype and exponent, the Word-made-flesh), 'trailing clouds of glory,' came down from heaven, and in the course of evolution *was made man* (a process still in operation and not yet perfected); that it also in its inmost spiritual essence must perforce have issued from the pure mothering spirit of Deity, and has therefore in truth been

born of a virgin;* that it suffers constriction and crucifixion in the refining fire, the conditioning house, of earth-life, buried as it is in dense matter and physical limitations; and that at length it, too, shall rise again to its true and pristine place of being?

(3) Speculation upon the unimaginable possibilities open to discarnate life is scarcely profitable: as well might a deep-sea fish hope to realise the potentialities of terrestrial man. Divested of gross physical limitations; enfranchised with larger space and time dimensions; omnivident, 'full of eyes within and without,' to use the strained, despairing symbolism of even the Apocalyptic seer; its emotions, bared and quivering to such forces of good or ill, of love or hate, as it is capable of responding to, unmuffled by our armour of protective and Lethæan flesh; qualified for work, yet subject to restrictions, alike incomprehensible to us, it plays its part in the cosmic scheme as we play ours a stage below. That interaction between it and us should exist is as natural and inevitable as that between the separate cog-wheels of a timepiece. Those who doubt this seem surely to be wanting in philosophic breadth and perspective. Such interaction may graduate from the sublime and sacred character spoken of in the terms of religion as 'the Communion of Saints,' to the astounding, if sometimes trivial and grotesque, type observable in the séance-room. If humanity exists in the unseen, it must needs be as varied as it is here, and presumably its desire for communication with us, manifested by what, seemingly, are intelligent personalities, must be keener on their part than on ours, and is a factor fraught no less with an abundance of moral significance than with an infinitude of pathos. That certain given psychical phenomena of an abnormal type, such as we are now familiar with, should not be due to such interaction, but should be producible by forces as yet undiscovered but latent in ourselves, is a proposition which is assuredly a legitimate subject for painstaking inquiry, in our present ignorant state of the patently abyssal depths and powers of personality. If there be a line of demarcation let it by all means be ascertained. That granted and proved, however (and patience, time, and impartiality are essential for the purpose; it may well be that the privilege of establishing the truth is reserved for the sceptical Didymus), does not a greater marvel remain behind? If incarnate humanity be so capable, what of the possibilities of the discarnate? Let it suffice for the present for those who know something of those possibilities to rest rich in the treasure of their own knowledge and welcome such new evidence as time shall bring to light. Knowledge comes only to those fitted and willing to receive it; the patient, truth-loving sceptic may in some cases be more fitted for it than the uncritical and over-credulous; in either case 'the light which one refuses to take in may come back condensed in lightning.' If certain facts be found ultimately to be traceable to merely human potencies, so be it. There are others also, surpassing any latent capacities of ours; visions, tokens, and voices saying 'unspeakable things,' and breathing

'Thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls.'

'Let not him who seeks cease until he finds; and when he finds he will be astonished.' The controversy respecting the spiritistic hypothesis is caused by a certain class of mind taking an unduly narrow and rationalistic, rather than a moral, view of life.

CONCLUSION.

Along the lines of reasoned demonstration here traversed, then, we may, I think, justify our moral intuitions in regard to

* Haeckel's definition.

† In Sanskrit or rather Proto-Aryan speech, the primitive language of civilised man, *aham* is the word signifying life, or I am, for the individual. The same word written as *Aum* is the sacred name of God in the East, or the *I AM* of the Old Testament. In both cases the word implies 'eternal.'

‡ Though emanating from a physicist, not a biologist, such an inversion has been hypothetically put forward by Sir Oliver Lodge in an essay on 'Life,' 'Hibbert Journal,' October, 1905.

* The vexed question of the Virgin Birth has its roots in a very ancient philosophical idea. In Vedic law, undifferentiated virgin matter or ether (*prakriti*) is regarded as the source of the physical world which is the cause of all illusion (*maya*), the term *maya* often being used to express matter. *Maya* being then the matrix or matter through which spirit becomes manifest is responsible for the idea that Deity has incarnated in the world, born of or through a virgin matter or mother. In Chinese Buddhism *Maia* is the goddess of creation and increase, apotheosised perhaps from *Maia*, the name of the mother of both Buddha and Krishna. The Virgin Mary (*vere*) has also thus come to be conceived by some fanciful thinkers less as a historical person than as a philosophical idea; and, by still others, as the human type of the sea (or virgin *mare*) of primordial matter which gave birth to the physical world. This strange mixture of fact, idea, and philology has probably contributed to the present confusion of thought respecting the Virgin Birth of Christ, about which, however, I express no opinion.

the super-physical world and the phenomena which we are accustomed to associate with it. The views here expressed are, of course, capable of extensive amplification exceeding the limits of this paper, but such as they are I believe them to be well founded. Cosmical speculation is generally a perilous task for even the expert and best equipped professional philosopher, and the sense of temerity, great as I feel it to be, often weighs least heavily upon the unqualified and adventurous tyro. Still even one who, like Browning's Karshish, is but

'The picker up of learning's crumbs,
The not incurious in God's handiwork,'

and who is not hampered by the restrictions attaching to the professional scientist and theologian, may hope, perhaps, out of the fragments that fall from the tables of the rich to regale himself, and offer of his medley garnerings to others.

The knowledge at our disposal nowadays, imperfect as it is, leads up at all events to an outlook upon the universe that is juster and steadier, more comprehensive and satisfying, than has at any previous time been possible to the intellect of man. We see a self-contained and self-conserving Cosmos, one in essence; dual, even multiple, in aspect. A fraction of it, finite and conditioned, is perceptible to human sense-organs; the remainder of its immeasurable bulk is eternal, unconditioned, and unmanifest to sense perception, but is lying close at hand, waiting to be still further perceived by faculties of consciousness the seeds of which are latent in us and are destined to mature in the patient course of evolution. Separate and wholly different sets of laws are seen to prevail in Nature's manifested and unmanifest planes; 'that which is flesh is flesh, and that which is spirit is spirit,' and through the intermixture in man of a physical nature, subject to laws appropriate to the physical plane, and a spirituality whose true home is in the unconditioned, where separate laws obtain, there is, and must needs be, perpetual illusion and conflict; conflict which is the concomitant of all growth, and which becomes apparent in all forms of individual and social unrest and misery. The evolutionary process consists in development of the higher and spiritual at the expense of the lower and physical, and in the process there must needs be a stage or stages of racial growth when the former tends to predominate markedly over the latter. Such a stage seems now to have been reached. We are, despite many appearances to the contrary, living in it; the evidence of the fact is abundant for those who care to look for it. 'When the Master of the universe has points to carry in His government, He impresses His will in the structure of minds' (Emerson), and the present amazing epoch of scientific discovery and psychical phenomena, it can scarcely be doubted, is due to the promptings of unseen Intelligence. Not only in the sphere of scientific work is such an influence discernible. Along the whole world-wide line of civilised human interests the motion of a tidal current of spirit-force may be perceived. Upon its wave-crests are those, men and nations of men, who are being lifted to truer vision, to larger life; within its troughs are the forces of human inertia and reaction. It seems as though some cosmic principle of spiritual hydraulics (to coin a clumsy but perhaps not inapt metaphor) may be at work, interacting between the seen and unseen planes; and that impulses and instincts from those in the higher life are streaming in on us, unconscious of it though we be.* And the gradual assimilation of this new knowledge, of these new impulses, cannot but bear fruit in human thought and action. All will come to see that human life is a small segment of a circle, the rest of which, eclipsed from sight at those points whose interchangeable names are birth and death, lies within the higher reaches of the universe. All will come to see that this physical plane is a place for adjusting means to ends, for conditioning consciousness to loftier knowledge; that life, 'passing through Nature,' must treat her as a preparatory school for the university beyond. They will learn so to adapt and habituate their thought as to

discriminate between the illusive and the real, the temporal and the eternal; to observe the physical and super-physical in their just and relative proportions, till, in Mrs. Browning's graphic, if flamboyant, phrase, not merely to their intellectual eye but to their new-developed clairvoyant vision

'The sensuous and unsensuous seem one thing,
Viewed from one level;—Earth's reapers at the sheaves
Scarce plainer than Heaven's angels on the wing.'

They will the better discern the value and sanctity of human life and, seeing death in its true aspect as an incident in an eternal process, will

'Hate the black negation of the bier,
And wish the dead, as happier than ourselves
And higher, having climbed one step beyond
Our village miseries, might be borne in white
To burial or to burning, hymned from hence
With songs in praise of death and crowned with flowers.'*

And, best hope of all,—without which indeed all else is foolishness and unpractical utopianism,—from a surer appreciation of metaphysical truths, at the bidding of cosmic laws proclaimed by Wisdom-teachers from of old, and now for the first time receiving intellectual confirmation, human life in this world may come to be modelled on saner and humaner principles. Individualism, the gospel of Self, seen to be a sin against eternal realities, will give way before a growing and generous altruism. The struggle for life of self will, in accordance with the law of inversion, flower into struggle for the life of others, that Good may be for all and in all. From the principle which, we now see, necessitates 'an inversion of ideas' whenever any branch of science pushes research to the frontier of the physical and super-physical, of the intellectual and the transcendental, some future Newton will doubtless construct an entirely new cosmology, the influence of which will react upon the practical conduct of human life. Politics, morals, sociology will eventually become transformed and the purpose of evolution, the 'far-off divine event,' gradually be accomplished by the harmonising of the seen and unseen portions of the universe.

Whoso labours, whoso *thinks* even, towards this great consummation is already unconsciously praying and helping the fulfilment of his prayer: As above, so below; 'In earth, as it is in heaven.' (Applause.)

Mr. Wilmshurst replied to several questions from the audience, and the proceedings closed with a hearty and unanimous vote of thanks for his eloquent and thoughtful Address.

* Tennyson, 'The Ancient Sage.'

SIR OLIVER LODGE ON PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

In his address before the Society for Psychical Research on Monday last, Sir Oliver Lodge took the position that has been so often advocated in 'LIGHT,' that psychic phenomena should be thoroughly investigated on their merits, apart from all preconception as to their possibility, and said that if these phenomena occurred in quantity and quality sufficient for investigation, it was the duty of the Society for Psychical Research to examine them as astronomers observe an eclipse or a transit of Venus. Dogmatic denial was as much superstition as ascribing everything to evil spirits. Diligent and searching inquiry was needed into the facts, which were not like those of inorganic nature, for they involved the interfering and confusing human element; nor did they, like history, depend entirely on direct testimony; they were a mixture of the two. In studying them, no phenomenon or instrument was too trivial; if the movement of an untouched object was a fact, and one hitherto unknown to science, it did not matter how trivial was the object moved. If a communication showed signs of hypernormal intelligence or clairvoyance, it mattered not how trifling was the event perceived. We need not look for infallibility in the information received, for infallibility was not obtainable on earth. In Sir Oliver Lodge's absence, through ill-health, the paper was read by the Hon. Everard Feilding.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—No meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane after Tuesday next, the 19th inst., until the New Year.

* Professor Wundt ('System of Philosophy') has formulated a law of the universe which he calls the *law of increase of spiritual energy*, and is confirmed in his conclusion by Professor W. James ('Human Immortality,' p. 89). This suggestion should be compared with the profound reflections of a modern mystical divine, Rev. John Palsford, in 'Morgenröthe,' pp. 204-5.

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

DOES THE THEATRE HELP US?

In face of the fact that, in London at all events, theatres are springing up everywhere, and that placards announcing 'House Full' have to be always kept handy, it seems odd to say that theatres are on their trial: but so it is; and the question is not so much as to their popularity and success as to their making for righteousness or going to the side of the devil. Mr. Stead, doubtless moved by rumours, lately went out of his way to visit a few theatres. The result was that, while he here and there saw some gleams of good, his final verdict was one of extreme disgust. This verdict has been both laughed at and resented, but there is this to consider—that both the laughter and the resentment may only show how far Mr. Stead is right,—may only show, in fact, that the evil thing has at last reached its consummation in Society's approval:—

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

It is the fashion to praise the theatre, to flatter actors, and even to preach the doctrine that the theatre might be made educational and a school of morals. Yes, it might; and a good many other things might be: but the question is,—Is the theatre tending that way? We regret to say we doubt it. Is it or is it not a fact that at least five plays out of six turn upon what is called 'love'?—and such love!—love decorated, made musical, floated on sparkling dialogue, more or less inane, but sparkling for all that; and yet, all the time, essentially animal, vulgar, vicious, and, in every sense of the word, immoral. The so-called 'problem plays' are nearly all that: so are most of the musical comedies. It is always the same old theme over and over again: and one need not see many of them to know that. Newspaper reports, which are plentiful enough, suffice. Here is the latest newspaper report of a much advertised play at an important theatre, the 'hero' of which is one of the best known and most highly paid actors of the day:—

A very fair and frisky farce—but one by no means out of the ordinary—was the occasion of enormous popular expectation at the Comedy Theatre last night, where Mr. Huntley Wright, the comedian of Daly's, celebrated the first appearance he has made for many a long year in a non-musical play.

We have a timorous and reprobate husband (Mr. Huntley Wright), who pretends that he is a great Alpine climber. He sends back to his wife (Miss Lottie Venne) glowing records of his exploits. Alas, however, like other farcical husbands, he

has not been to the Alps at all, but has been—also like other farcical husbands—to Paris instead.

The fun arises, &c.

We know all the rest, and we are expected to take this slush quite naturally, and without either resentment or a blush.

We are directly interested in this subject, just as we are interested in the output of novels and the stream of tendency in the churches. Our real enemy is the brutal side of human nature, and it does not matter how beautiful or decorative the brutal is made, it is the brutal that is Spiritualism's deadliest foe. In fact, the more beautiful and decorative it is made, the more spiritually ugly and hateful it is: for beauty belongs rightly to the things that are above. The viciousness, too, of the exhibitions we have in mind, lies as a rule, not in the actual presentation of the brutal, but in the subtle perversion of the good to low levels and base uses, and, on that account, is doubly degrading.

It is quite arguable that the ugly tomfoolery of the so-called comic people at the music halls, and their more brazen viciousness, do much less harm than the sensuous musical subtleties of the musical comedies: and it is also arguable that while the musical comedies, say of 'The Gaiety,' have become more deliciously decadent, the performances of the music halls have improved. That is so much to the good.

We believe that by some theatre lovers hopes were entertained that Ibsen's plays might move us to more serious and wholesome thoughts, but his 'problems' turn out to be only gloom without glitter, and melancholy without mirth; and the only effect thus far seems to be that people who were depressed by Ibsen take refuge in Bernard Shaw. Now we confess we have not seen any play by Bernard Shaw, any more than we have seen Mr. Stead's *bête noire*, 'The Spring Chicken,' but, one way and another, we have gathered a sufficient knowledge of both: and both threaten to leave a disagreeable taste in the mouth.

We have before us a collection of criticisms of Mr. Shaw's Plays, as given, or attempted to be given, in the United States. Now New York is not particularly famous for its elevated taste or high morale, but what does it say of these Plays? In brief, they have (or one of them has) been made a subject for treatment at the hands of the police. Justly or unjustly we know not: we only state the fact. But, apart from the police, here are the best accredited critics. What do they say? All of them agree as to Mr. Shaw's ability, but they all feel uncomfortable in his company. The most friendly of them puts him far above Pinero, who, he says, 'seems to be the merest boy, smoking cigarettes and talking of things that he knows as much about as the rabbit does of the purposes of Nature.' 'This man, on the other hand, has had life under his microscope and knows its secrets, has put himself in touch with real scientists who know the constitution of the universe, and now presents to us, with the sugar-coating that we demand, a few of the ultimate facts of life.' But even he has to say, 'You are on his side throughout the play, even if, when it is over, you are astonished to find what company you have been keeping.'

The other critics simply roast him. He is 'a man who attempts to set the world on fire merely to see it burn': and that, by the way, is the impression we have had of his speeches for years. 'Men laugh at him, applaud him, pat him on the back, shout to him to turn another somersault, and, when he has anticked, look at one another, wink solemnly, and whisper, "Punchinello." This again, curiously enough, is the impression we have received from his long series of speeches.

Other critics are still more severe. The New York 'Theatre' says Mr. Shaw is 'a menace to morals.' Another says, 'We've stayed behind the absolute truth too long. We now ask for the soul structure of the man who chuckles at us from over the footlights; who strokes us with a grater; who, as Huneker says, bathes humanity in muriatic acid and deceives us into laughing while we squirm.' All these criticisms, we believe, refer chiefly to a Play but little known in this country, 'Mrs. Warren's Profession,' the Play which so vehemently interested the New York police.

It is certainly strange that New York which, so far as we know, has never seen Mr. Bernard Shaw should so curiously have got hold of his measure through his Plays. In saying this, we do not by any means suggest that the Plays are, or are meant to be, immoral; but only that their morality reminds one of a serious and callous humourist who impales a rat on a skewer and describes its wriggings and its squeals. But it is a far cry from 'The Spring Chicken' to 'Mrs. Warren's Profession' or 'Man and Superman.' Between them, a few men like Mr. Tree hover, but we are afraid that in the main the theatre is an unfriendly force to the lofty or the simple spiritual life of our day.

WHAT IS THE SIMPLE LIFE ?

An interesting discussion on 'The Return to Simplicity' began in the November number of 'The Race-BUILDER,' a little monthly edited at Oxford and published by Elliot Stock. Alluding to Charles Wagner's well-known book, 'The Simple Life,' 'Clericus' urges that many of the methods proposed for simplifying modern life 'only touch the surface,' and says :—

'For a cultured person to relinquish his wonted mode of life, to dwell in a three-roomed cottage, and fare on beans and cabbage soup and black bread, would not be a return to the simple life, but to the sordid. Simplicity has little to do with outward details of life. It does not mean throwing away the fruits of civilisation, nor flouting culture of mind and taste. It consists in a certain attitude of soul, which will express itself in the outer life. We want a deeper sense of our duty as citizens, and a truer and more inspiring philosophy of life. Let us hold fast to a belief in the inherent divinity of man—taught by the Founder of Christianity and by all the great sages of antiquity—the immanence of a divine Intelligent Principle which is always urging him onward to a higher perfection; that this divinity is in *all* men, a link uniting all in one vast brotherhood, sharing their difficulties and helping one another along the difficult ways of life.'

In the December issue a correspondent urges that for city workers the daily routine of life is a little *too* simple, and needs more variety and excitement. Another asks : 'What on earth is Simplicity?' and concludes that 'we must bring about a state of harmony within each of us and let it radiate out around us, and that the simple life is really the harmonious life.' Still another says that life would lose much of its interest were it not complex, especially from the standpoint of a student of those problems of human nature which result from life's complexities. Mr. Geoffrey Lee thinks that the craze for owning things is the great hindrance to a simple life, and adds : 'We are learning that the individual cannot separate himself from his fellows, and that of all possessions material ones are the most immaterial.'

Spiritualists will cordially agree that a spiritual view of life enables us to steer an even course through many complications, and to avoid allowing material possessions, or the want of them, to interfere with our usefulness and our progress here or hereafter.

'AT HOMES' FOR INQUIRERS.—Mrs. Effie Bathe's next invitation 'At Home' for inquirers will be held on Tuesday, December 19th, at 8 p.m. All applications must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope; and each card of invitation is available for the date specified *only*, fresh application being necessary for each meeting as the demand for seats is so great. (For full particulars see 'LIGHT,' November 11th.)

THE CHAMBERS SEANCES AT NEWCASTLE.

As a rule inquirers into the physical phenomena of Spiritualism soon realise the many difficulties to be overcome before the facts can be accepted, and therefore I have always deprecated rushing the subject on the public, but as a result of the alleged exposure at the Westmoreland-road Spiritual Institute a few weeks ago, Spiritualism has since been very much in evidence in Newcastle.

I have had the experience, not of capturing, but, what amounts to the same thing, of detaining the form, for which I got in exchange a blow from a stout stick across my shoulders. At a private circle my suspicions were aroused that the form appearing was the medium; it showed no timidity whatever, but boldly approached the sitters and steadily stared us in the face. I had no difficulty in identifying the features of the medium, W. Petty. I felt sure the lad was not consciously acting the ghost or he would not have given us such opportunities to identify him. Being a frequent sitter at his seances, by favour, I waited patiently, until the medium's father also grew suspicious and asked me if I would arrest the form on its next appearance. I did so, and when the dear old man found it was his son he started across the floor in great indignation with his stick uplifted to thrash his lad, from which I saved him by stepping in between them. On the following evening, at a sitting held in my own house with his son, the old man became fully satisfied that the medium, in a mesmeric condition, was for the time being a helpless and innocent instrument in the hands of a strange power. Such is my understanding of the Westmoreland-road and all such fiascos.

As already intimated, Spiritualism is very much in evidence here just now, and Mr. W. H. Robinson arranged for a series of six test sittings with Mr. Chambers, to be held in the presence of the official members of the Rationalist and Secularist societies and two journalists, representing the 'Newcastle Daily Chronicle' and the 'North Mail.' Knowing that I had borne public testimony to Chambers' mediumship twenty-three years ago, Mr. Robinson asked me to join the committee, and very reluctantly I agreed, stipulating that the inquiry was to be held solely to determine whether or not Chambers was a conjurer, and whether Spiritualism had anything or nothing to do with the matter. I have sat in many circles, but I never sat in one so formidable, or so unlikely to obtain phenomena, as the one which gathered together on Sunday, November 19th, in the house of a lady living in Jesmond.

It devolved on me, as chairman, to intimate that, though I feared they had come with great expectations, they must banish as far as possible all thought of spirits and Spiritualism, and direct their minds exclusively to the question whether Chambers was or was not a conjurer. With this object in view, Chambers was handed over to the two journalists appointed as examiners, whereupon a doughty sceptic jumped up and demanded to be a third examiner, for he would not believe in anything unless he beheld the form and medium together at the same time. The representatives of the Press offered no objection, and he was appointed as a third searcher, and I even hinted to him some methods whereby the white raiment in which the forms usually appear in the seance room could be secreted. The examiners went with Chambers into an adjoining room, undressed and searched him. He was then dressed in a black jersey and a black suit supplied by the committee, and in custody of the examiners returned to the seance room, where, in the presence of all the sitters, he was enclosed in a net bag made of twine, tied at the back of the neck and sealed. He was tied fast in a chair behind the curtains which screened off a corner of the room, and the chair was fastened to the floor.

I sat at the back of the circle and cannot vouch for anything more than the spontaneous utterances of those in the immediate neighbourhood of the curtains testifying to what they saw and felt; but what impressed me most of all was the urgent and vehement appeals of the obdurate sceptic referred to, that the hand, which at the time was touching that of a lady who sat next to him, should touch his hand. He promised faithfully

that he would not detain it, but I am sorry to say his apparently earnest appeals were passed over unheeded. At the end of the first séance the test fastenings were examined and there was not the slightest evidence that they had been in any way interfered with.

I was not present at the second sitting on Monday, November 20th, but I attended the third and fourth sittings held on Wednesday and Thursday of the same week in the same house and always under the same test conditions. As references were made in public papers to the appearance at the second séance of a form dressed in armour, I have since seen the lady whose hand was touched on the previous evening, and she vouches for the genuine appearance of this form. She is a highly intelligent lady, the wife of a very extensive coal exporter. At the third sitting I had not a good position for making observations, but I can vouch for the objectivity of a diminutive form.

At the fourth séance I took a place admitting of more exact observation. I saw a head and face appear at nearly the top of the curtains, when, almost simultaneously, I heard others talking of seeing a head and face and stating that the features were those of the medium. This was afterwards followed by the appearance of two forms, a taller and a shorter one, walking with some agility within the curtains. That they were objective I believe, because my own observations were corroborated by those of others.

I am perfectly sure that Chambers is not a conjurer; he is neither smart, clever, nor nimble enough for that, and I am equally sure that Maskelyne and Cook could not, under like conditions, and placed as Chambers was, have produced phenomena such as we witnessed.

I always impressed Chambers with the idea that phenomena, if any occurred, were absolutely of no value if at the end of the sitting the test conditions were found to have been interfered with, and it is indisputable that they were always found intact just as originally applied.

Gosforth.

JNO. MOULD.

FAITHIST GENERAL MEETING.

A number of Spiritualists from various parts of England met on the 4th inst., at 3.30 p.m., at the Faithists' headquarters, 19, Ramsden-road, Balham, to elect the Community Chief of the Confraternity of Faithists for the ensuing eight months. Tea was provided at 6 p.m., and other refreshments during the evening. Mr. W. Wilson, the retiring Community Chief, reviewed the progress of the Order since April, 1904, and showed that much good work had been done, including the publishing of a considerable amount of literature. The Faithist Temple Fund stood at £21; the Oahspe Fund amounted to £40, and the Sustentation Fund to £7. Communities had been founded at Balham (two), Tooting, Dalston, Portsmouth, and Teddington.

Mr. F. T. A. Davies eulogised Mr. Wilson for his devotion as Community Chief, and mentioned that Mr. Wilson had spent over £150 of his own money in his efforts to promote the work. Mr. Davies also testified to the zeal of Mr. Geo. Morley, who was elected as Community Chief for the next eight months. No charge was made for tea or refreshments, and all in the Brotherhood, lecturers and mediums included, work free; the keynote of the Confraternity being abnegation of self for work and service to the Creator's glory.

F. T. A. D.

'MIND DEVELOPMENT.'—Mr. Samuel George, the author of 'Mental Art, or the Art of Mind Development,' being Vol. I. of 'The Mental Power Library,' takes an effective method of securing the attention of his readers by telling how, by a gradually developing chain of circumstances, he was led to the conviction that there must be a substantial basis for various systems of character reading, such as graphology, palmistry, phrenology, physiognomy, psychometry, and astrology. He gives various readings of his own character, obtained from professors of these respective arts, and their agreement on definite points is truly remarkable. The development in his character during ten years, as revealed by phrenology, he ascribes to his study of mental science, and states that his health and physical powers have undergone a remarkable improvement. The book is published at 1s. 6d., net., by the Power Book Company, of 14, Kenilworth-gardens, Wimbledon, S.W.

DR. SLADE'S LAST ILLNESS.

Dr. Andrew B. Spinney, who cared for Dr. Slade in his sanitarium at Belding, Mich., during the closing years of his earth life, narrates in 'The Sunflower' (Lily Dale, N.Y.) some interesting phenomena obtained through the great medium, and incidentally we gather that Dr. Spinney is not only a convinced Spiritualist but has generously offered to take anyone whom the National Spiritualist Association is assisting at half the usual price, on which terms he carefully tended Dr. Slade for five or six years previous to the latter's transition.

Dr. Spinney's first meeting with Dr. Slade was singular. Dr. Slade was just going out, and, passing through the room where Dr. Spinney was waiting, was under control of his Indian guide, who said he had lately seen Dr. Spinney prescribing for a patient under circumstances which he correctly described, and invited him to accompany the medium to an entertainment, and pass the night with him. Dr. Spinney then found that the medium was extremely sensitive and easily affected by psychic influences. Dr. Spinney says:—

'After retiring, when he was sound asleep, the chairs and tables and other furniture moved around the room. The covering was repeatedly taken from the bed and tossed upon the floor. Spirit hands touched both of us and loud raps came on the bedstead, walls and furniture. During the night Dr. Slade woke under control and talked to me several times.'

Referring to the slate-writing, Dr. Spinney says that sometimes:—

'we held the slates high up, nearly level with our shoulders, between Dr. Slade and myself, and secured good results. Some time after this my son went to him and under test conditions received a communication from his grandfather, my father, concerning his last gift to him made while on his death-bed. In every case of slate-writing with Dr. Slade that I ever witnessed, the so-called *exposed* of Dr. Lankester would have been impossible, and in every case Slade himself alone, unaided by some force invisible and outside of himself, could not have produced these things.'

About six years ago some friends found Dr. Slade partially paralysed and a victim to both liquor and morphine, and Dr. Spinney took him and 'built up his poor wrecked nervous system and improved his health greatly.' After resuming work for a time Dr. Slade was again sent, under permanent arrangement with the National Spiritualist Association, to Dr. Spinney, who says of him:—

'He was not insane but as in all paralysed cases his mind and memory were seriously affected, and he gradually sank into a condition of senile dementia. This made him irritable and restless and for the last two years a great care. Finally a second shock to the left side brought the end, and the imprisoned spirit gained the release for which he had so impatiently waited and prayed.

'Now I wish to say that even in his broken condition, his spirit friends did not desert him nor leave him alone to pass the birth to a higher life unattended. Many times he would want me to sit with him but I could rarely spare the time. Whenever I did there would be some results. The last time, about nine months ago, his hands were too feeble to hold the slates, so they were closed, with a small piece of pencil between, and placed under my feet with Dr. Slade some ten feet away. Both slates were covered with long messages to me concerning him, thanking me and the National Association for what we were doing for him, and saying that soon he would be with them and no longer a care to earth friends. Now I know that the slates were clean, were closed, and that the bit of pencil was the ordinary slate pencil, yet the writing was Slade's own penmanship with all the personal peculiarities of his paralysis. He did not handle the slates and the writing took place under my own feet some distance from him. Last Christmas, after a short address by myself I reached and took his hand in mine and in a moment he was entranced and gave a beautiful invocation and inspirational address, in a natural, full, free voice with no hint of paralysis, dementia or decay. Surely this shows that the spirit never grows old or sick or weary. It is only the house that decays.'

Dr. Spinney concludes by saying that Spiritualists should realise the necessity for the mastery of mind over body and the guarding of the psychic faculties by restraint of self-indulgence; then the body would become holy and healthy and the mind more clear and active down to the sunset.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

'Spiritualism in the Bible.'

SIR,—I had already read with interest Mr. and Mrs. Wallis's book 'Spiritualism in the Bible,' and since reading Sir W. E. Cooper's letter on p. 586 of 'LIGHT,' I have re-read the three chapters on 'The Psychic Powers of Jesus,' 'Good Conditions Indispensable,' and 'The Teachings of Jesus,' which, when taken together, effectually rebut the strange charge brought against the authors of 'belittling' or 'disparaging' Jesus, or of 'killing the great High Priest of Spiritualism.'

I cannot find a single word in the whole book which suggests that in speaking of 'conditions' for healing the authors refer to 'cabinets, darkened rooms, or mysterious surroundings,' and in fact this assumption is absurd, because Spiritualists do not regard these as 'essential conditions' for the exercise of healing mediumship. It is equally wide of the mark to suggest that the authors make Spiritualism 'depend on the fact of whether Christ performed' any particular number of miracles. In fact, as Miss Dallas (who will scarcely be accused of unorthodoxy) states in her book, 'Gospel Records,' the idea of 'miracle' in the record has been 'rather a hindrance than a help to its acceptance,' and 'miracles' are now almost universally acknowledged to be examples of real but uncomprehended laws. Miss Dallas says:—

'It is evident that the working of miracles, that is to say, the supernatural powers exhibited by Christ, were psychic powers, similar in kind, though greater in degree, to those now found among men of various nationalities; and that because He was a perfect specimen of human nature, Jesus was possessed of the gifts of a psychic.'

In 'The Bible Reader's Manual,' edited by the Rev. Charles H. H. Wright, D.D., I find thirty-eight miracles mentioned, of which three are probably common to both the 'double' and 'triple' traditions, leaving thirty-five, 'less than three dozen,' as the authors say, specifically referred to in the four Gospels. The authors are concerned, however, not with the number of miracles, but with the conditions under which they were performed. What these 'conditions' were may best be inferred from St. Mark's Gospel, because this undoubtedly follows most closely the original account (called Proto-Mark, or the Triple Tradition) from which the three Synoptic Gospels were in part compiled. In quoting this account Matthew and Luke frequently polish the language and summarise it by the omission of details.

The first condition, and the most essential of all, is fully admitted by Sir W. E. Cooper; it is that of *faith*, shown by the person to be healed and by those most nearly concerned.

The second is one which is alluded to at least ten times by Mark, and which was dispensed with only in a few instances where great faith was shown, though even then it often seems to have been expected; it is that of *touching*, or personal contact. I will instance Mark vi. 56, 'as many as touched him were made whole.' See also Mark iii. 10, where 'they pressed on him for to touch him,' for 'he had healed many.' Matthew and Luke do indeed say he healed them *all*, but for reasons given above I prefer Mark's account.

The third condition, though sometimes only inferred by the command to 'tell no man,' is a certain amount of *privacy*. In Mark vii. 33, and viii. 23, we have both taking aside and touching, though Luke and Matthew omit these details. At the house of Jairus (Mark v. 37, 40) he took only Peter, James and John, and put all the rest out.

Now as to adverse conditions. In Mark vi. 5, it is distinctly said that he *could not* (οὐκ ἔδυνάτο) there do any mighty work, though he healed a few sick persons. In the case of the sick of the palsy (Mark ii. 1-12) he was preaching to a crowded roomful of people and saw the faith of the bearers of the sick man ('they, their,' vv. 3-5, refer to the bearers; see the Greek). The Scribes present seem only to have demurred to his claim to forgive sins, and it is noticeable that the small centre of adverse conditions thus set up, though not sufficient to prevent the healing, was instantly sensed by Jesus.

With regard to the injunction to 'tell no man,' this may have two meanings: (1) Jesus did not wish to be sought out merely on account of his works; (2) psychic healers sometimes warn patients not to discuss the treatment with incredulous friends, for fear of counter suggestions which may weaken their faith in the cure.

Let us remember, in conclusion, that so far from regarding his own works as miraculous, Jesus said that if his followers had faith they could do greater works than even he had done among them. S. F.

SIR,—Sir W. E. Cooper says, 'I am an ardent believer in Spiritualism, but, at the same time, I believe firmly in Christ's Divinity.'

'Divinity' is an equivocal word. Perhaps it would be well to restrict it to the sense indicated by Peter (2 Epistle i. 4), 'That by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature.' In that sense all of us believe in the actual Divinity of Christ, and the possible Divinity of all.

A FREE CHRISTIAN.

SIR,—Will you permit me most earnestly to thank Sir W. E. Cooper for his letter? I would like to tell him that I had drifted into materialism, and that personal experience of the truths of Spiritualism brought me back to Christ and to Christianity, and it is a source of deep regret to me that some Spiritualists should try to deprive their teachings of its highest attributes and degrade it to the level of materialism. I would like also to assure him that there are large numbers of Spiritualists who hold their faith in their Divine Master the more firmly and dearly because, through His grace and mercy, their material eyes have been permitted to behold again their dear ones passed into His presence, and with this faith only do I believe the investigation of this important subject to be safe or profitable. A. FAWCETT.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Sir W. E. Cooper ('LIGHT,' p. 586), seems to be under a misconception as regards the work of modern healing mediums. I have before me a work by Professor Wm. Denton which contains statements, made on oath, attesting the remarkable power exercised by Dr. J. R. Newton, the spiritual healer. These testimonies include the cure, in less than half an hour, of a young woman who suffered from spine disease, accompanied with total paralysis of the lower limbs, for over five years. R. H. Havens had a broken leg, the knee was drawn up, and calloused, for six years. Dr. Newton straightened his leg and cured him, and he left his crutches behind. A young lady, lame for six years, was cured in ten minutes. Mrs. C. P. Thomas certifies that her daughter, who had been entirely blind for one year, was cured by Dr. Newton in three minutes. In all cases the sufferers had been attended by medical men who had failed to cure them. A reporter of the San Francisco 'Daily Evening Post' watched a throng of patients, eighty in number, who passed in and out of Dr. Newton's room, and who were afflicted, he said, 'with pretty nearly all the ills that flesh is heir to.' One who limped in on crutches flung them away and came out dancing. Another had been blind for six years, and was overjoyed to be again able to read. A child who lay on a pillow, 'perfectly helpless and unable to move any portion of its body except its eyes,' was cured, and in half an hour was 'sitting up playing and laughing.' Mr. W. P. Eliason certifies that after explaining to Dr. Newton how his daughter was suffering from a chronic affliction of three years' standing, the genial doctor said, 'I can cure her and will not put you to the trouble and expense of bringing her here. I will do it *now*.' In about two minutes he said, 'Your daughter is well.' Mr. Eliason noted that it was then noon, and afterwards learned that on that day, between twelve and one, while at dinner five hundred miles away, his daughter remarked to her mother, 'Ma, I feel so much better! I feel that I am well!' and well she certainly was. These are a few only of the immense number of remarkable cures effected by Dr. Newton, who exercised his gifts for many years, not only in America but in this and other countries, with unvarying and, in many cases, instantaneous success; and he is by no means the only healer who has accomplished these good works. None of these wonderful cases occurred in 'cabinets, darkened rooms, or mysterious surroundings.'

READER.

SIR,—The small volume by Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, 'Spiritualism in the Bible,' which I know has been a help to many, appears to be a hindrance to your correspondent and critic, Sir W. E. Cooper. The reason of this, in my opinion, is, that the writer approaches the subject as a prejudiced person, his bias being noticeable throughout his long, and in many places illogical, communication. It is especially indicated in his concluding paragraph, where it appears that he has not yet become one of the 'heterodox' few who recognise the functionings of the Nazarene as part of the great cosmic order, but is still with the 'orthodox' multitude of what he calls 'ordinary Christians,' who consider the marvels of primitive Christianity as supernatural and not rationally explicable by our present-day evolving psychic science.

No Spiritualist worthy of the name calls in question the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, that 'Son of Man

(his own designation for himself) who, nineteen centuries ago, attained to God-consciousness.

Your correspondent, deeply imbued with the dogmatic teaching of sacerdotal Christianity, desires apparently to limit the attribute of divinity to Jesus, who was different in degree only, but not in kind, from other sons of man.

Our beautiful Spiritualism teaches that every child of the race is a spirit clothed in humanity, and that as we are all by inherent generation sons of Adam, and that as 'Son of God' (Luke iii. 38), we are bound to be children of the Father of Spirits. It is when each one, like the prodigal of the parable, comes to himself that he recognises that filial relationship and appreciates the good news which Jesus by his life and teaching ever proclaimed.

With such a heritage every human being has within himself the potentiality of Godhood, for men not merely can be, but shall be 'perfect as their Father in heaven' is perfect. With such potency of perfection involved in our humanity we must strive to evolve in our daily lives the divine character manifested by Jesus.

There are many points in the letter affording scope for severe criticism. I should like only to say that the writer's implication that there is any attempt in Mr. and Mrs. Wallis's book 'to kill the great High Priest of Spiritualism, its Founder and its Prototype,' or to bring 'the Great Master down to the level of the ordinary mediums of to-day,' is in my view unworthy of any follower of that 'Elder Brother' whose 'Spiritualism was of the highest order,' as he justly remarks.

Every true Spiritualist desires to emulate the Spiritualism of Jesus of Nazareth, and none more than these two dear souls, E. W. and M. H. Wallis.

When we have more of that spirituality which was manifested in the life of Jesus, more of his moral elevation and tolerance of the weaknesses of others, combined with mediumistic and psychic gifts in our present-day sensitives, then our modern supernatural manifestations of spirit-power will be more worthy of our noble cause.

A. WALLACE, M.D.

SIR,—Knowing that the subject of 'Spiritualism in the Bible' bristled with difficulties, owing to the preconceptions and prejudices of believers and unbelievers alike, we endeavoured to confine ourselves to the statements made in the Bible, and, as far as possible, to avoid controversial and theological points. Sir W. E. Cooper, in 'LIGHT' of December 9th, acknowledges 'the care and attention bestowed on the subject' by us, and we regret that he has so misconceived the spirit and purpose of our book as to conclude that we rely on 'belittling' the powers of Jesus to prove our case. This we emphatically deny. Instead of seeking to 'disparage' Jesus, we relied upon the records of his life-work and teaching to prove that he is, as Sir W. E. Cooper says, 'our Elder Brother,' and to uplift and dignify mediumship as against those who fail to realise its great spiritual value. Sir W. E. Cooper himself, unintentionally, no doubt, seems to limit Spiritualism to 'cabinets, darkened rooms, and mysterious surroundings,' but surely he is aware that the best part of Spiritualism is that of the happy home circle and the consolatory and inspiring communications received from loved ones on the other side. Surely he knows that many of the most satisfactory phenomena have occurred spontaneously, or as he puts it, 'on the spur of the moment,' and also that many Spiritualists, ourselves amongst them, protest against promiscuous dark séances!

The difference between your correspondent and ourselves is mainly one of attitude or point of view. Into the question of what is or is not 'conceivable' we cannot enter, as we did not consider speculations or probabilities, but his ingenious argument that Jesus did no mighty work among his own people because he did not care to do so is not borne out by the Gospels. We quoted the passages (Mark vi. 5), 'he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and healed them' and (from Matthew xiii. 58), 'because of their unbelief,' or hostility, (the Greek words, we understand, indicate that he lacked the power). We did this to show that 'harmonious and sympathetic conditions were as requisite then as now,' and we gave a number of illustrative incidents (which our critic ignores), to show that many of the manifestations occurred 'under favourable conditions and in the absence of hostile observers.' This necessity for good conditions Sir W. E. Cooper actually admits, for, while he asserts that Jesus completely disregarded those 'surroundings that Spiritualists of to-day set so much store by' and repudiates our suggestion that he required 'favourable conditions,' he himself says that 'the sincere and earnest belief that such things are possible' was an indispensable condition, which, surely, is but another way of saying that 'sympathetic and harmonious,' or 'favourable' conditions, were essential.

However, we have no desire to enter into a discussion with Sir W. E. Cooper. It is truth we want, and if he can help us to find it we shall be thankful. 'Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind,' is our motto, and we leave our little book to speak for itself, content to abide by the verdict of open-minded searchers after truth. If we may judge by the letters of thanks and appreciation which we have received, we may conclude that, in many instances at least, the readers have been helped and comforted and our object has thus been achieved.

E. W. AND M. H. WALLIS.

[Other letters have reached us on the same subject, but the above must suffice.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

'Psychic Pillow Tapping.'

SIR,—About twenty-five years ago we had a fine baby boy born to us, who left his earthly body within a year after his birth. One evening a few months afterwards, my wife and myself having retired, we heard distinct raps upon the pillow between us; these raps readily responded to our questions until suddenly my wife asked if it was our boy 'Joe' who was rapping, and I answered her 'yes.' At once she exclaimed, 'Well, if he cannot come in some better way, so that we can see him and talk to him, he need not come at all,' and never since that hour have we heard a word from him.

On another occasion, some years ago, as I was lying in bed alone, I heard my mother's spirit-voice exclaim, 'Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear me!' I replied: 'Mother dear, please don't come in such a mournful way, come bright and cheerful; you know how, don't you?' but I have never heard my mother's spirit-voice since!

One night my wife and I retired in different rooms, with an open door between us. Some spirit voice called my name in an audible voice, and at the same instant called my wife's name also. The thought occurred to me that if I hung a trumpet over my head at night it might possibly be of service, and enable the spirits to talk to us more freely, but for over two years not a voice have we heard.

One more instance. I had a cousin Julia, who passed away several years ago in a slightly demented condition, and when she came to me first she plainly showed that she was slightly out of her mind. I requested her to try to improve in her manner of coming, and she never came again.

The above experiences lead me to believe that a spirit finds it difficult to come back except in the exact mental state in which it passed away.

Therefore we must accept them just as they are, 'without one plea,' or they may not be able to come at all.

Buffalo, N.Y., U.S.A.

J. W. DENNIS.

Spirit Identity.

SIR,—A good test of spirit identity was given at the public circle at Chiswick, on Sunday morning, November 19th, by Mr. Harris, who described a gentleman standing by me whom I recognised. The medium asked if he was an Irishman as he gave a curious name, 'Pat.' I said that it should be 'Pap,' and asked if he had anything to say. He gave me a comforting message, and I then asked if he could tell me the cause of his death; the answer was, 'yes, he burst his heart, and his lungs filled with blood, and it choked him.'

It is a curious fact that he did 'go out' just as he said, like a candle, and the real cause was never known; some said he choked himself with a piece of steak, but the doctor ascribed it to heart failure, and therefore no inquest was held. He was a prominent Freemason, and they gave him such a funeral as only Americans do. Mr. Harris had no knowledge of this, but he said that the spirit took him across the sea and showed him New York Harbour, with the Statue of Liberty holding the light.

On Sunday, November 26th, my friend 'Pap' came again and warned me about a letter I was to receive, which I actually got on the following morning, and if I had not been warned I might have made a blunder, as it made me very angry. I may say that in earth life he was my foster father, also my son's godfather. He was known by every one by the name of 'Pap,' in the Lodge, in the home, and in business.

In America I had one never-to-be-forgotten test in New York, from Miss Maggie Gaule, when Mr. Morse was on the platform, and another from a Mr. Clark in Newark, N. J., which was a great help to me.

It is less than three years since I knew anything of Spiritualism, and Mr. Peters was the first I ever heard of at the Cavendish Rooms. If every one got as much comfort out of Spiritualism as I do, I think all would be Spiritualists.

Barnes, S.W.

AGNES PIMBLETT.

Some of the Paintings of the Late James Archer, R.S.A.

SIR,—The many friends of the late Mr. James Archer will, I am sure, be pleased to avail themselves of the opportunity of seeing some of his highly-inspired and finely executed oil paintings, which, as you announced last week, are now on view, and for sale, at the office of 'LIGHT.'

They are all such as appeal to the mystic mind and the truly artistic soul, and represent very worthily the art of the spiritual verities. For example, in the 'Dream of Fair Women,' you feel the power of the artist's love for Tintoretto—his favourite master—as it is in itself a masterpiece of the mellow 'chiaroscuro' of the Tintoretto school. Beside it stands the 'Quest of the Holy Grail,' of a beauty that is almost too spiritual to be seized. Yet there it is, a wondrous, magical, haunting beauty, and one cannot but join in the quest of the armed knight. 'The Coming of Arthur' is a powerfully depicted scene. In the light of the crescent moon one sees 'Excalibur,' that rose from out the bosom of the lake, 'standing in the white light of the world that is known only to the mystic seer, and one cannot but join in the wonder of those who gaze upon it from a barge.

But I must write no more. I feel, however, that it is an honour to all Spiritualists to be named with such an artist. He painted for, I should think, over sixty years. Even as a lad he painted a portrait of Lord Jeffreys and De Quincey (the only portrait there is of the latter), and he was as simple-hearted a Spiritualist as anyone I have known. Indeed, few were so truly children of the spirit as was this master artist, scholar, thinker, and seer. To his fair name I count it an honour to offer my lowly tribute.

JAMES LEITH MACBETH BAIN.

Another Warning Dream.

SIR,—I had occasion last week to call upon a friend who is an official at one of the large railway works. Seeing a picture of a 'smash' hanging up in his office, I told him of the young fellow who kept out of the Waterloo disaster through a dream three times repeated, which I mentioned in my letter in 'LIGHT' of December 9th, p. 587. This reminded him of a dream he once had—he rarely dreams, by the way—in which he saw one of the company's men with his feet covered with molten metal. He rushed to the ambulance box only to find it quite empty. He then awoke and told his wife of the startling dream he had had. He was so impressed that the first thing he did on going to the works next morning was to go straight to the box he had dreamt of, and which, of course, should be kept fully supplied with 'first aid' appliances, only to find the box absolutely empty! He at once gave instructions for a supply to be obtained without delay. Later in the day the rest of his dream was fulfilled. A quantity of molten metal fell on the feet of one of the men, but through the prompt action of my friend, all the necessary appliances were at hand ready for use.

Nottingham.

J. FRASER HEWES.

Spiritual Healing.

SIR,—At the beginning of October last Mr. J. L. Macbeth Bain, of London, visited Dundee, and under the auspices of the Dundee Society of Spiritualists, delivered two very interesting and encouraging addresses on 'Experiences with the Unseen World,' and 'Spiritual Healing.'

A School of Healing was at once formed, of which Mr. William Thomson, of Broughty Ferry, was elected president, along with a secretary, treasurer, and a committee consisting of three ladies and three gentlemen. Rooms in Meadow-street, belonging to the Dundee Society of Spiritualists, were secured, and an hour on Saturday evenings was reserved for lectures and demonstrations, and another hour for treating cases, of which we have had several every week, and in all of which good has been done.

The constitution has been made as broad and simple as possible. To qualify for membership one has simply to have the desire to heal and the recognition of the power coming from the spirit, without dispute as to the manner. The membership fee is one shilling per annum, and we have forty-six active and earnest members.

The introductory lecture was delivered by Mr. George Featherstone, of Rotherham, on October 28th, and we had addresses from Mr. Hadin, of Broughty Ferry, every Saturday in November, and on the motion of Mr. Thomson, our president, Mr. Hadin was heartily thanked for his valuable services. On December 2nd, in the absence of Dr. Henry Buist, Mr. W. K. Smith spoke on 'Magnetism, Hypnotism, Mesmerism,' and in January he will begin a course of lectures.

JAMES C. CRAMOND.

Spirit Identity beyond Doubt.

SIR,—At our séance three Tuesdays ago (seven sitters) a spirit came into the room, and being normally clairvoyant I described him 'without one weak point,' as stated in the letter of testimony from the two sitters for whom he came. One of them said, 'Can you see anything about his eyes?' I replied, 'One has a white fleck in it.' 'Can you see how he got it?' 'Yes, iron-stab, Amsterdam.' 'Quite correct,' replied the sitter, 'he had a white fleck in one eye caused by a stab from a bit of iron at Amsterdam.'

I then said to the sitter, 'Well, if Captain H. (the spirit) comes again he must give another proof as I shall not re-describe him, neither shall I say, "Oh, Captain H. is here," as I might be a liar or merely a victim of imagination.' The next Tuesday Captain H. came again. I waited. Then he described to me a room, its furniture, lamp alight, sort of fireplace, &c., in which the sitter was at one time ill with pains in his head. 'All correct,' said the sitter. 'Now,' I said, 'a man enters that room, bangs a parcel on the table, and leaves a lot of thawing snow on the carpet from his broad welter boots.' 'I know,' said the sitter, 'that is exactly what happened, and the man was Captain H.' 'Yes,' I said, 'and as a further test he says your doctor was So-and-so' (giving a full description). The sitter said, 'That is a good likeness of the doctor, and Captain H. did know him.'

On the following Tuesday I said, 'A spirit has been to see me during the last week and he says his next proof of identity will be something about his pulling down a window violently and then saying "That's — funny!"' 'No more is needed,' said my sitter, 'it is Captain H.; he pulled a window down in my studio and the glass fell into the street. The servant gave a man 2s. 6d. to buy some glass to repair it, but the man went off with the money and never returned, and so Captain H. laughed and said "It is — funny."'

Now, sir, I consider that Captain H. has proved his identity, and also that 'There is no death.'

VINCENT N. TURVEY.

Bournemouth.

Properties of the Ether.

SIR,—May I ask Mr. Wilmshurst to kindly explain the meaning of a phrase in his admirably reasoned address? I quote from 'LIGHT,' p. 584: 'It may be said in rough terms that it [the ether] is itself matter, so highly attenuated as possibly not to be gravitational (though this seems uncertain), but still ponderable matter.' Since ponderability implies weight, and weight implies gravitation, I do not see how a body can be ponderable and yet not gravitational. In fact, I could more readily conceive the reverse proposition, for as we cannot weigh ether in ether, or air in air, a gravitational ether would be incapable of being weighed (i.e., imponderable) except in an ether vacuum, and this cannot be obtained if ether is all-pervading.

My views on ether, as far as I have any, are indicated on p. 467 of 'LIGHT'; I believe Sir Oliver Lodge suggests that gravitation and other distinctive properties of matter depend on the ions in the atom, and, therefore, it would seem that ether free from ions or other stress-forces would have no material properties, and, therefore, neither gravitation nor ponderability. But I should greatly value a further exposition from so profound, lucid, and candid a thinker as Mr. Wilmshurst.

S. G.

Caught up in the Spirit.

SIR,—I have a pupil about whom I felt strangely troubled, feeling instinctively that he needed help and guidance. Three nights ago as I fell asleep I asked earnestly and passionately that I should be guided how to help him. I remember seeing myself floating from my body, and in a moment I stood in Kensington Gardens between my pupil and a young friend. I touched them, forgetting I was in the spirit, and heard the source of all the trouble. I was given wisdom to understand, and saw all the pain laid bare to me. I wrote the next day to my pupil and asked him to come and see me. He came, and I told him my vision. 'Nothing is concealed from me,' I said. 'If this vision is true I can help you, for the truth will make you free.' He silently took a letter from his pocket and replied: 'I did not like to tell you. You will find it all there. Now indeed you can help me.' The vision came in time to save a great wrong. I can only add that I mention this direct influence of the spirit, this manifestation of power and help, because I think that although it will be inexplicable to the materialist, it will be understood and appreciated by those who have grasped the secret of the divine phenomena so closely touching us. I myself have a deep feeling of gratitude for this experience.

FLORA NORTHEK WILSON.

3, Dallfield-terrace, Dundee.

10, Cheniston-gardens, W.

Another Good Case of Prevision.

SIR,—On August 17th, 1905, I attended Mr. Vango's usual Thursday evening séance. His guide, 'Sunflower,' on coming to me, at once described, with almost startling accuracy, an acquaintance of mine whom I had not seen for more than a year, or heard from for seven months. I was not thinking of him at the time, being as a matter of fact actively engaged in thinking of someone else; but I had spoken of him to a friend during the day. 'Sunflower,' to my surprise, alluded to him as one who had passed on, which was incorrect, and on asking her the reason of this she explained that she saw him dressed all in white and surrounded by great brightness, which, if on this plane, indicated him to be a man living a good life. This I believe to be the case; moreover, I easily understood the white clothes which seemed to puzzle 'Sunflower' a little under the circumstances. I did not, however, enlighten her at the time—the explanation of such light attire being that the man in question was then, so far as I knew, on a ship in a warm climate.

She went on to say that I had not been in the habit of hearing often from this man directly, but that I had heard of him indirectly quite recently (all quite true), and that I should hear again from him personally soon.

To-day (December 3rd) I received a quite unexpected communication from him, posted at Brisbane on October 25th—the séance, and the man himself, having in the meantime passed out of my mind.

I think it only fair to the medium to ask you to be kind enough to insert this little account in an early issue of 'LIGHT,' as a tribute to his guide's marvellous gift of sensing the conditions and surroundings of a sitter; and I might also say at the same time that on a subsequent occasion I had a very successful description of an invalid relative, psychometrically, through a knitted shawl which I took.

I attended the séances with a Spiritualist friend, well-known to Mr. Vango; I myself was not known to him, and I purposely withheld my name for my own satisfaction, being as yet but an inquirer into these things, and an inquirer of a by no means credulous turn of mind. So far as Mr. Vango is concerned I am still a nameless individual.

NEMO.

Spiritualist Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Kindly allow me once more to thank, through your columns, the few friends who have kindly remembered the above fund and have sent subscriptions as set forth below. May I also appeal to your readers to note the smallness of the receipts, and remind them that unless funds are speedily forthcoming it will be impossible for the committee to pay the customary grants. Will Spiritualists please remember their own workers? Some of the letters, pleading for aid which cannot be given, are most piteous. Here is a man who writes to-day—he has three children who have no boots to their feet. Here is another sister who has sought work for three months and is in danger of having all her few remaining necessities sold for rent. What can I do? The funds at my disposal are almost gone. Will no one help?

WILL PHILLIPS,

22, Bellott-street,

Hon. Sec.

Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

Amounts received in November: Mr. McDermott, 2s. 6d.; J. B. S., £1 1s.; W. J. Lucking, Esq., 10s.; J. H. Wright, Esq., 5s.; Mrs. Stanley G. Watts, 3s. 9d.; total, £2 2s. 3d.

IN 'CHRISTMAS CRUELITIES,' issued by the Humanitarian League, Mr. Ernest Bell describes not only the wholesale slaughter, but the suffering entailed on living animals by our Christmas 'Saturalia,' and says: 'Were our object to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Darkness instead of the Saviour of the human race, we know of no way more appropriate than by that great wall of anguish beginning weeks beforehand on the plains of America and other far distant lands, gathering in its progress fresh increments from all sides, and converging to this city of London which we call the centre of civilisation.'

A PREMONITORY DREAM.—A correspondent sends the following strange experience to the Russian Spiritualist paper 'Rebus.' He says that in 1895 he dreamed that he was walking with his mother through a wood, at the end of which they could see a phosphorescent light in the midst of which stood his deceased father, who beckoned to them to go to him. The son turned to his mother and said, 'There is father wanting us to go to him; I do not want to go, but you, as his wife, must follow him.' Then his mother left him and he, very much vexed, turned and left the wood. When he awoke he noticed that it was three o'clock; he felt very sorry at having to lose his mother. The next day the news came that his mother had died in the night, exactly at three o'clock.

SOCIETY WORK.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Owing to the requirements of the wholesale agents, 'Light' must be sent to press next week earlier than usual, and we shall therefore be unable to print reports of Society Work in our next issue.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, HECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. R. Boddington's able address was much appreciated. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. T. B. Frost. On Monday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Atkins, clairvoyance and psychometry. Fee 6d. On Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle.—S. H.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. E. W. Wallis addressed a good audience on our 'Message to the World.' Speaker on Sunday next, at 7 p.m., and on Wednesday, December 20th, at 8 p.m., Mr. E. S. G. Mayo.—W. T.

CHISWICK.—AVENUE HALL, 300, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last good messages were given at the morning and evening circles, and on Monday evening. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. Wright. Monday, at 8 p.m., Mr. P. Preys.—H.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Underwood's trance address on 'Mediumship' was much enjoyed. A good after-meeting was held. On Sunday next Mrs. Fairclough Smith will give a trance address, followed by clairvoyant descriptions.—J. P.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. and Mrs. Baxter gave able addresses on 'Spiritualism and Christianity Alike.' On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. Hough. On Thursday, investigators' circle.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. W. O. Drake spoke with force and earnestness on 'Spiritualism: Its Past, Present, and Future.' On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Imison will name a baby. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., circle. On Sunday, December 24th, Mr. Fielder.—W. R. S.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Ronald Brailey spoke on 'A Mountain Séance,' and gave successful clairvoyant descriptions with full names, which were instantly recognised. The school being closed for repairs, there will be no further service until January 7th.—N. RIST.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Jones gave an instructive address on 'Trinity.' In the evening Mr. T. C. Dawson, the president, dealt ably with 'The Development of Human Thought.' On Tuesday, December 19th, at 8 p.m., Mr. E. S. G. Mayo will lecture on 'The Mystic Land of Silence.' All heartily welcomed. On Wednesday, December 20th, social evening.—N. T.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Burdee and Mr. H. Boddington gave interesting addresses to an attentive audience. In the after-circle several helpful messages were received. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., service. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., circle. Boxing Night, social gathering; tickets 1s. Watch night service.—H. Y.

BRIGHTON.—COMPTON HALL, 17, COMPTON-AVENUE.—On Sunday last Mrs. Boddington's first visit to our society was much enjoyed, her address in the evening on 'Spiritualism a Trinity' being particularly fine. Speaker on Sunday next, Mr. F. G. Clarke. Hall open Thursdays from 3 to 5 p.m. Will speakers having open Sundays for 1906 please write to Mr. A. Cape, 11, Roundhill-crescent?—A. C.

PECKHAM.—CREPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—Our circle on Sunday morning last was well attended. In the evening Mr. Blakeborough presided, previous to his departure for the Midlands. Miss A. V. Earle's inspiring trance address was much appreciated and was followed by a good after-service circle. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., address by Mr. Tayler Gwinn. Illustrations of psychometry by Mr. J. Sloan on December 24th.—VERAX.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last, to a crowded audience, Miss MacCreadie's excellent clairvoyant descriptions of twenty-one spirit friends were mostly recognised. Mr. F. Spriggs, vice-president, ably officiated as chairman. On Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis, trance address on 'Spiritualism as a Saviour.' On Sunday, December 24th, Mr. A. V. Peters, clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday, December 31st, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, answers to written questions.—A. J. W.

SOUTHAMPTON.—WAVERLEY HALL, ST. MARY'S-ROAD.—On Sunday last Captain Greenaway's address on 'Passing Events' was much appreciated by a fair audience.