

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,309.—VOL. XXVI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1906. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

## CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .....	61	Judge Righteous Judgment .....	67
Death Defeated by Hypnotism ..	62	Dr. R. Hodgson and his Work ..	67
L. S. A. Notices ..	63	Materialisation through Mr.	
'Madame X.' and 'Xénoglossie' ..	63	Eldred .....	68
Lord Carlingford's Letters ..	64	Mr. Eldred Explains .....	69
Psychology Useful to Spiritualism	64	Catholics Coming Round .....	70
Reminiscences of W. Stainton		Dr. Funk and his Critics .....	71
Moses ..	65	'A Caution to Sensitives' .....	71
Revelations of the Past .....	65	'The Problem of Evil' .....	71
The Death Penalty .....	66	Society Work .....	72

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

'The Progressive Thinker' publishes a particularly odious specimen of rancorous abuse, ostensibly from a medium who resents stern criticism and inquiry. As a matter of fact, the abuse takes the form of a threat to murder. At a late meeting of the Chicago Spiritualists' League, the President, Dr. C. A. Burgess, read the following anonymous letter which he received soon after his election:—

Chicago,

January 2nd, 1906.

Dr. Burgess.—We understand that you have been elected president of the Chicago Spiritualists' League, and we also understand that the object of the League is to interfere and run out of Chicago all mediums who do not belong to the League, or work in accord with it. We belong to no meeting, and are making our living by the aid of our departed friends, and do not want to be interfered with. Just a word of advice, Mr. Burgess: if you stir up any muss, look out for a piece of lead under the first rib of left side; so be careful.

The speaker for the evening, Dr. Warne, said that this letter did not surprise him. He was familiar with such letters, and that very day it had been communicated to him that a Chicago materialising medium had boasted that a member of her family had taken an oath 'to get even with Dr. Warne.'

We might regard all this as grim jesting but for the fact that we have had something like it at home. Our readers have, of course, perused the letter from Mr. Ellis (Mr. Eldred's manager) which we printed on February 3rd, and, if we mistake not, they were startled by the concluding paragraph, threatening to 'deal blow for blow,' and adding, 'We enter into no explanation *re* weapons to be used, but you may rely on them being sharp.' This is perhaps capable of a semi-innocent explanation, but it bears a sinister resemblance to the Chicago letter, and the spirit of it is the same, and is as wicked as it is detestable. 'Thuggery and Spirituality are not companionable,' says 'The Progressive Thinker': and so say we. We go further and say that any mediumship, even if entirely genuine, which goes hand in hand with an evil temper, is not worth having. But can any mediumship be thoroughly genuine which so violently resents doubt or disbelief? Truth and veracity are calm and strong.

'The Christian Register' still keeps handy its little jug of cold water, to pour down our backs. Here is its latest contribution:—

The death of Mr. Hodgson raises a question like that which was asked after the death of Mr. Myers in England. These two men have made careful and thorough-going studies of occult and psychical phenomena. Mr. Hodgson had for his

principal occupation for years the study and control of the phenomena manifested in the case of Mrs. Piper. Now these men have passed on. They were expert in all that concerned the study of such phenomena on this side of the grave. Both of them promised when their turn came to send back, if possible, intelligible messages. In the case of Mr. Myers it is a fact, we believe, that the test he devised has failed since his death. If this happens in the case of Mr. Hodgson, is it not better for us to believe that, for wise reasons which we should approve if we knew them, the blessed ones who have passed within the veil are as much restrained from communication with us as we are from communication with them?

Surely another inference is possible, this namely, that means have not yet been found. But 'The Christian Register' is in a violent hurry. Dr. Hodgson has only just passed on.

We are puzzled to know why the failure of these two men to communicate should be set over against the thousands who do communicate: and we are still more puzzled to know why a 'Christian' should be so anxious to keep the doors locked and the curtains drawn.

But, come now, 'Christian Register,' there is a rumour that Dr. Hodgson *has* been heard from. Are you prepared to consider that seriously? or is there, after all, and at the back of all, an unadmitted prejudgment that a message from Mr. Myers or Dr. Hodgson is impossible?

The Editor of 'The Abolitionist' writes interestingly on the curious case of William Sharp masquerading as Fiona Macleod. He says:—

No one could have suspected it. That big, burly Scot, with his great mane of hair, his boyishness and large geniality, was not one to identify with the intense feminine personality revealed in the works of Fiona Macleod. Nor did his work resemble hers. He wrote voluminously, and, truth to say, without any of the rare distinction that marked Fiona's work. He was a good critic, particularly of verse, and his monographs on the sonnet and the ode are really excellent work, thoroughly well informed and accurate. His boyish love of adventure and active life was the very antithesis of the brooding Celtic melancholy and the delicate and intimate sympathy with the most secret depths of the feminine mind which were found in Fiona. That William Sharp could have possessed the mysterious woman's voice which found its utterance in such writings as 'The Sin Eater' and 'The Washer of the Ford' was inconceivable. He was an excellent fellow, kindly and genial, but emphatically masculine. She was nothing less than the rarest and strangest woman's voice of her time. . . . The explanation is, I think, that the second self, the unconscious or subliminal self, of William Sharp was Fiona Macleod, and somehow that subliminal self found its proper means of expression, while, side by side, the other self, William Sharp, lived his strong man's life in unmodified masculinity.

Really now, are we not working this 'second self,' this 'unconscious or subliminal self,' too hard? If we are to admit the hypothesis of a second personality at all, it is much more rational, and a good deal more simple, to conclude that William Sharp was a medium, used more or less consciously, as Robert Louis Stevenson probably was, at times, by a clever impressionist 'on the other side.'

The Rev. Loic F. Prior appears to be a most acceptable Spiritualist teacher in Australia: and it is whispered that

we may have the pleasure of giving her a welcome in this country. In 'The Harbinger of Light' there lately appeared one of her discourses, on the subject of Prayer. Some may consider her too 'advanced' in relation to the Personality of God and the desirability of prayer to Him, but she is at any rate on high ground and breathes a pure air. Here is a taste of this discourse:—

Do you say you pray because a loved one has gone from you? But where is your loved one gone? Either into a spiritual life where all is grand and wonderful, where the aches of the body bear not the spirit down, where the aspiring and inspired soul moves on and on to greater conquests—either there, or he has gone to the eternal sleep of Endymion—no consciousness. Then why should you grieve? Have you asked yourself that question? If gone to the first, as we Spiritualists know, then are you not glad of the life that is his to-day? Do you not feel a joy to know that the poor body is no longer racked by aches and pains? Are you not singing glad songs because his soul is free—free to roam throughout the paths of the universe—free to scale mountain-tops—free to rest in peace in the valleys? How grand is this life! Why do you grieve and why do you pray? Because you are selfish, because you are missing him. That is why. Don't do it! Say—'I know he has gone into the larger life, I know that he has gone from the trials of this life, and for him I am glad, I am so glad that I will try to live my life better that I might go to him, that I might be with him, that together once more might we wander through the fields, that once more might we gather the flowers that bloom in great profusion in the world of the soul.' And if, as the materialist says, he has not gone to this wonderful spiritual country, but has simply returned into the elements whence he came, what of that? If he has so gone, so will you: that is all. Do your work and do it well while here. Don't live in the shadows. Don't strike the muted strings and give out only moans.

We buy a 'War Cry' occasionally—always, in fact, when we are asked by one of the pleasant people who usually sell it in the streets; and we always find something good in it. The number for January 13th was our latest speculation. It is really full of good things. Yes; 'The War Cry' is a most human document. Here is a glimpse of the Army's methods:—

#### EVERYTHING LOOKING BEAUTIFUL.

In a little Scotch town an awakening was brought about by an act of practical religion on the part of the officers.

One day the latter entered a house where they found a woman drunk in bed, her five children dirty and unkempt, while her unfortunate husband was endeavouring to wash them and make them presentable.

As it was just about time for the open-air meeting to begin when the officers called, they could do nothing just then, but they were at the house very early on the following morning. They at once began to clean it up, washed the children, and had everything 'looking beautiful,' to use the captain's expression, when the husband came in at dinner time.

The wife was afterwards persuaded to come to the meeting, and the action taken by the officers spread through the little town, causing everyone to become interested in the Army. Then the crowds began to come to the meetings.

On another page we find the following pathetic quotation from 'The General's' New Year Letter to his officers:—

I would struggle after a full trust in God—  
When the way was dark, and I could not see;  
When my heart seemed hard, and I could not feel;  
When my spirits sank, and I could not rise;  
When persecution raged, and comrades fled;  
When poverty and temptation were my lot;  
When bereavement and loneliness darkened my home;

And—

When in affliction's furnace tried,  
Unhurt on snares and death I'd tread;  
When sin assailed, and hell, thrown wide,  
Poured all its flames upon my head—  
Like Moses' bush, I'd mount the higher,  
And flourish unconsumed in fire.

In a recent Life of Dr. Torrey's partner, C. M. Alexander, a queer story is told which, however, fits in with

many such stories about the Müllers, the Barnardos, and the Price Hugheses of the world. Said Mr. Alexander:—

I prayed the Lord that He would help me to choose a good suit of clothes and lead me to the right pattern. I was asking Him to take the lead in the least little detail of my every-day life as I had never done before. We went through the rolls of cloth, and, of course, my eye settled on the best roll in the lot. I inquired its price. The tailor said, 'A suit in that cloth would be 40 dollars.' I said, 'Then it's no use talking about that one.' We went along, and each piece of cloth seemed to be unsuitable, and finally the man turned to me and said, 'You liked that first piece better than any, didn't you?' I said, 'Yes.' 'Well,' he said, 'there was a man came in here and had a suit made of that cloth, but it didn't quite fit him, and he was not pleased with it. It is a new suit, never been worn. If it should fit you I will let you have it for 18 dollars.' We tried it on, and it fitted me exactly, with the exception that the trousers had to be shortened a little; so I had 2 dollars left for ties and collars. Thus I learned a lesson that I have never forgotten—that God answers prayer for temporal things as well as for things spiritual.

'The Outlook,' an Evangelical paper in the United States, says that this illustrates the supreme objection that devout souls feel for the Torrey-Alexander movement. 'The Outlook' probably shrinks from this over familiarity with God. So do we: but we suggest an explanation. It is quite conceivable that some friendly spirit heard the prayer and arranged the little domestic drama. Alexander called it an interposition of 'The Lord' just as the old Hebrew prophets saw in every spirit 'The Lord.'

#### SPIRITUAL PRAYERS

(From many shrines.)

Infinite Ruler of creation, whose spirit dwells in every world! we look not into the solemn heavens for Thee, though Thou art there; we search not in the ocean for Thy presence, though it murmurs with Thy voice; we wait not for the wings of the wind to bring Thee nigh, though they are Thy messengers; for Thou art in our hearts, O God, and makest Thine abode in the deep places of our thought and love; and into each gentle affection, each contrite sorrow, each higher aspiration we would retire to meet and worship Thee. Amen.

#### DEATH DEFEATED BY HYPNOTISM.

An extraordinary story comes from New York. The 'Tribune' correspondent in that city states that Dr. John Quackenbos, Professor of Psychology at Columbia University, recently stated that:—

'Hypnotic suggestions given as death actually impends have a power absolutely unparalleled in any other mental state. A suggestion from himself saved the life of a young lady dying from pneumonia last June. Her condition was an equivalent to a death sentence, namely, a temperature of 107½, pulse 160, respiration 60. The attending physicians had withdrawn from the case. Dr. Quackenbos took one of the lady's hands, called her by name, and commanded her not to die. After working over her a few minutes, the patient's mental mist cleared away. She talked coherently, and finally recovered. Dr. Quackenbos declared that two other patients had been saved from death by the medical man shouting a command in the ear at the moment of dissolution, and he asserted that such methods would be effective in many cases of drowning, poisoning, and shock.'

SOME GLOOMY PREVISIONS.—A correspondent sent us, as long ago as December 16th last, and again on December 26th, details of visions which he had had, and which seemed to forebode trouble or calamity to Queen Alexandra. The trouble, he said, came from over the water, from an easterly direction but somewhat southerly. There were five houses connected with it, and the time indicated was 2 p.m. A bust of the Queen was seen by him overshadowed by a black-winged figure in deep shadow, the general colour being grey, tinged with yellow. In reply to an inquiry as to the date, the number twenty-seven was given. It is perhaps significant in this connection that the Queen's father, King Christian of Denmark, died on the twenty-ninth of January, having been seized with indisposition shortly after 2 p.m. The same correspondent foresees other national troubles as being about to occur in England, India, and Russia, as to which we may say more should his visions be verified by events.

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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

THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 22ND,

WHEN BRIEF ADDRESSES WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MRS. W. P. BROWNE, MRS. M. H. WALLIS,  
MR. GEO. SPRIGGS, AND  
REAR-ADMIRAL W. USBORNE MOORE,

ON

'Some Notable Personal Experiences.'

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

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

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.

## MEETINGS FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CLAIRVOYANCE will be given at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on Tuesday next, the 13th inst., by Mrs. Fairclough Smith, 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.

DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES.—Mr. George Spriggs kindly places his valuable services in the diagnosis of diseases at the disposal of the Council, and for that purpose will attend at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on Thursday afternoon next, February 15th, between the hours of 1 and 3. Members, Associates, and friends who are out of health, and who desire to avail themselves of Mr. Spriggs's offer, should notify their wish in writing to the secretary of the Alliance, Mr. E. W. Wallis, not later than the previous Monday, stating the time when they can attend, so that an appointment can be arranged. No fee is charged, but Mr. Spriggs suggests that every consultant should make a contribution of at least 5s. to the funds of the Alliance.

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—Mr. Frederic Thurstan, M.A., will kindly conduct a class for Members and Associates at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for psychic culture and home development of mediumship, on the afternoon of Thursday, February 22nd. The class will commence at 5 p.m. and close at 6, and visitors are requested to be in their places not later than 4.55. There is no fee or subscription.

SPIRIT CONTROL.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis will attend at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for conversation with her spirit control, on Friday next, February 16th, at 3 p.m., prompt. Visitors should come prepared with written questions, on subjects of general interest relating to Spiritualism, mediumship, and life here and hereafter. These meetings are free to Members and Associates, who may also introduce non-members on payment of 1s. each.

PRINCESS KARADJA requests us to inform her friends that she expects to arrive in London on February 13th for a month's stay. Her address will be: The Lyceum Club, 128, Piccadilly, W. Since visiting England five years ago, Princess Karadja has had many interesting experiences, which it is possible she may relate at a gathering of friends interested, of which due notice will be given.

## 'MADAME X.' AND 'XÉNOGLOSSIE.'

As our readers will remember, Professor Richet, some months ago, gave to the members of the Society for Psychical Research an Address entitled 'Xénoglossie,' with the particulars of a case in which 'Madame X.,' a friend of his, who knows no Greek, had, during the past five years, at various times, produced automatically sentences of Greek script—some short and some of considerable length—most of which were afterwards found in a very rare dictionary. Some account of this Address appeared in 'LIGHT' of July 1st, 1905, and it has been reproduced at length in the last issue of the Society's 'Proceedings,' followed by three criticisms, the first by Sir Oliver Lodge, the second by Mrs. A. W. Verrall, and the third by the Hon. Everard Feilding and Miss Alice Johnson.

In the first of these criticisms Sir Oliver Lodge gives an admirably concise summary of the facts, followed by a suggestion which may serve as 'a working hypothesis,' which may satisfy 'the demand for a rational grasp of what occurred, short of cheating.' He claims that 'the ostensible and apparent explanation of the phenomenon as due to an intelligent control—subliminal or other—is not *absurd*, on our present knowledge, but on the whole is the only reasonable explanation that can be offered, provided deliberate fraud be out of the question.' He adds: 'On the whole I am inclined to reject the hypothesis of fraudulent knowledge of Greek, coupled with considerable memory, and the still more difficult hypothesis of abnormal memory of form alone without any knowledge of substance.'

The second paper is an extremely technical analysis of the script by Mrs. A. W. Verrall. This scholarly piece of work can only be duly estimated by those who know Greek. The point of general interest may be found in the last four pages, in which she tells us that, 'from a consideration of the contents of the automatic writing as well as from that of its form, we are led irresistibly to the paradox that the writer possesses both knowledge and ignorance, knowledge and ignorance of an irreconcilable kind. For what we have observed is not the alternate presence and absence of knowledge of Greek, but the simultaneous possession of knowledge and non-knowledge of the same thing.' (A conclusion which obviously harmonises with the hypothesis suggested by Sir Oliver Lodge.)

The third paper, by the Hon. Everard Feilding and Miss Alice Johnson, pursues another line. The writers' aim is to show that in their opinion none of the evidence produced by Professor Richet is sufficient to eliminate the hypothesis of fraud. But they go further. In the first portion of the article they indicate 'certain considerations which point to, though they cannot prove, an alternative conclusion to M. Richet's' [i.e., point to *fraud*], 'and it will be the second portion of our task to sum up what these amount to, though without intending to commit ourselves in any way to the opinion that this conclusion is the right one.'

The summing up amounts to this, that it is suggested that Madame X. has, deliberately and persistently, for a considerable time, been practising deceit upon psychical researchers in general and her friends in particular. And although the writers admit that she obviously knows but little Greek (Professor Richet affirms that she knows none), they suggest that she has taken the trouble to commit to memory long passages which she has hunted up in a rare book in the Paris Library, with the deliberate intention of 'keeping up the game,' as these critics phrase it; in other words, of perpetrating a mean deception upon those who trust her honour and value her friendship.

Students may perhaps differ as to whether it is possible, under the circumstances described, for a person to accomplish such a feat of memory as this would involve. Professor Richet denies that it is normally possible. That is a question for experts to settle. If I venture to refer to this matter in print it is not that I presume to offer any opinion on the complicated question of evidence, which is puzzling even the competent researchers who are dealing with it. I have a different aim in view.

The moral character of Madame X. is a factor which cannot be ignored, as of no account in this matter, without increasing considerably the difficulty of arriving at a just conclusion. It is, of course, possible that the circumstantial evidence for the abnormal quality of the phenomenon in question may ultimately be accepted as sufficient, irrespective of all moral questions. But is it reasonable, is it scientific, to underrate the moral evidence when it can be readily obtained? Professor Richet does not underrate it, he appeals to it indeed as of great value, whilst at the same time he indicates the grounds on which he thinks the facts are attested, even irrespective of the honesty of the sensitive. Sir Oliver Lodge and Mrs. Verrall clearly indicate that the hypothesis of fraud seems to them not acceptable, although as experienced researchers they do not forget it. But in the third article it is definitely assumed to be a reasonable explanation of the facts. In justice to the writers it should be stated that they acknowledge they feel 'the greatest difficulty in reconciling the theory with the personal knowledge they have of Madame X.'; still the whole tenor of the article shows that they by no means consider that her recognised moral character invalidates their argument for fraud.

Mr. Feilding will perhaps remind us that human judgment is fallible, and that persons have sometimes been deceived in those they trusted. This is true of course, and yet human testimony when it is strong and abundant is, and ought to be, accepted as an argument of great weight. In order to show that it is possible for a person who does not know Greek to pick out sentences from a dictionary that will apply to unforeseen circumstances, which is what he suggests that Madame X. may have done, he tells us that Miss Johnson experimented with a dictionary in this way. 'In order to test this hypothesis, Miss Johnson, who knows no Greek, spent about half an hour searching in the Greek-French part of the dictionary for phrases which might apply to the known circumstances of this case.' What reason have we, however, for accepting the statement that Miss Johnson 'knows no Greek,' and was honest in this matter, which does not apply with equal force to Professor Richet's statement respecting Madame X. ? I do not for a moment doubt that this statement is correct, because, although my knowledge of Miss Johnson is very slight, I entirely trust the opinion of those who do know her, and I feel that to suppose that she could in such a matter perpetrate deliberate fraud would be so unwarrantable that it could only reflect shame on me if I were to harbour such a notion.

Madame X., on the contrary, is well-known to me; I have stayed in her house for weeks as a guest; we have corresponded and met frequently, and I may therefore be allowed to claim her as a friend and to express my sense of the privilege which this claim is to me. It is not only, or chiefly, because I recognise that she is a very remarkable psychic that I value her friendship, it is because I recognise in her those qualities which alone give worth to friendship, the high aim and single mind, which alone enable her to face the odium of suspicion with the quiet dignity and unswerving purpose which I observe in her.

It is with considerable reluctance that I bring myself to express what may be called eulogy; for it is, I know, contrary both to her instincts and to my own to do so; but I am compelled by an impulse which should not be suppressed. When the honour of a good woman is called in question it is time that those who know her to be a good woman should say so publicly. Professor Richet has asserted that his knowledge of her has produced in him the assured conviction of her integrity. My knowledge has done the same, and in spite of the very obvious fact that his name is famous and mine is known only within a small circle, I may be allowed, without being charged with presumption, to act as, not friendship alone, but as common justice, prompts me to act, and to bear my testimony to the fact that the hypothesis of wilful fraud is in the case of Madame X. *entirely inadmissible*. At the same time I feel I owe her something like an apology for so doing. It is only those who do not know her who will find a use for such testimony.

H. A. DALLAS.

#### LORD CARLINGFORD'S LETTERS.

A further series of extracts from the letters received by mediumship from the deceased Lord Carlingford (Mr. Chichester Fortescue), already noticed on p. 8 of 'LIGHT' for January 6th, is published in the February number of 'Broad Views,' together with an intimation that Mrs. Nugent has authorised the publication of these letters in the form of a pamphlet, at the request of the writer in the further sphere, 'who earnestly hopes that some of those who knew him when on earth may recognise his identity in these communications.' We are pleased to be able to state that, through the kindness of Mrs. Nugent, a number of copies of this pamphlet will be on sale, for the benefit of the London Spiritualist Alliance, at the office of 'LIGHT,' price 1s. each post free.

The extracts published in 'Broad Views' illustrate especially the religious ideas of the communicator. He was, during his earth-life, deeply imbued with religious feeling, although dissatisfied with conventional theology, and since passing on he appears to have found what he vainly sought on earth. Two extracts may be given, showing the majestic simplicity of the unseen writer's present faith:—

'There is but one God, one Eternal Spirit. Between that Spirit and ourselves never a cloud has risen. We need no mediator, as He sees our every act, He hears our every whispered prayer, and every hidden kindness is known. Act always knowing that you are the only responsible person, and that no faith or dependence upon others can protect you from the consequences of personal wrong-doing.'

'Let us proclaim a glorious gospel which teaches that God is alone glorified by being permitted to reign on earth and not only in heaven; that it is not serving Him to spend our mortal lives in fitting ourselves for a future place on high through the medium of candles, chants, incense, and posturing before symbols and graven images of an imaginary God, who is supposed, or said, to be a wrathful and jealous Being far away. But rather let every word and deed be an act in itself of adoration, which shall add to God's glory on earth, inspiring others to copy and adopt it among themselves, so that "he who runs may read" that God the Most High is here amongst men and not hidden in mystery.'

The remaining extracts form a development of this simple anti-dogmatic creed, in which, while the 'historical' framework of the Gospels is pulled to pieces, it is at the same time declared that 'to follow these Gospels is to walk in the straight path of honour, rectitude, purity, and happiness,' for 'the noblest aspirations of mankind are there embodied.' 'The Sermon on the Mount alone, when accepted and honestly practised, will ensure absolute happiness; for it teaches all that is holy, breathes love, purity, truth, and the perfect way to happiness on earth and immortal joy.'

The spirit writer hopes that these views may appeal to some on earth who, like himself, could not accept what the Church had to offer by way of solace and comfort under sorrow and the burden of existence.

#### PSYCHOLOGY USEFUL TO SPIRITUALISM.

In a recent number of the Danish Spiritualist paper 'Sandhedssøgeren,' the Editor of which, Dr. Sigurd Trier, has been visiting England, the animistic theories of psychologists are commented upon with considerable shrewdness. In reviewing a recent book by Dr. Paul Bjerre on the case of 'Karin,' commented upon in 'LIGHT' for September 23rd last, p. 446, 'Dr. C. J.' claims that this scientific presentation of phenomena, admitted to be real, is to be regarded as resulting in favour of Spiritualism rather than against it. Dr. Bjerre shows that the medium's psychic force can be transmuted into another form of energy, but he commits the error of taking conditions for causes. The medium affords the conditions for phenomena, says 'Dr. C. J.,' but is not the cause of them. In proving that the force derived from the medium can act at a distance in conformity with suggestion, Dr. Bjerre opens the way for the Spiritualist view that the action of this force may be governed neither by the medium nor by the hypnotiser, but by a spiritual entity who can make use of the force more easily and more directly than an incarnate person could. In fact, in the experiments referred to, the unseen entity always preserved a certain autonomy in defiance of the will of the hypnotist, but this feature is discreetly minimised by the experimenters.

## REMINISCENCES OF W. STANTON MOSES.

## II.

## SELF-ANALYTICAL.

February 17th,\*—

MY DEAR MRS.—, Your diagnosis is curious, and tempts me to personal vivisection. I am sure, from a habit of self-study, and from what friends tell me, that I must be a puzzling mixture. At the printers' they tell me that a very large experience supplies no parallel to the even regularity of my 'copy'; no erasure, interlineation, or alteration in it. I write with great ease, and never read MSS. over. I have had all my life an inquiring mind, with a great facility for getting at information, owing to an inveterate habit of asking questions. I have also a keen sense of logic, long cultivated and trained. Also I am almost over cautious, from a sense of there always being at least two sides to a question, and have a desire to view both before pronouncing an opinion. This is a joke against me with my friends. When I do form an opinion I hold it with tenacity, and change it only on gaining new light. I never look back. I am very firm of purpose. I would take any amount of trouble to carry out a plan (even a trivial one) once formed, especially to rectify an abuse or a wrong. I think this capacity for taking trouble is what most strikes my friends.

Yes, will is strong in me: all you saw is head not hair; I keep that closely clipped. I have a strong sense of humour, and a good deal of 'language'; a magnetic power which is remarkable. I attract people or repel, but the former chiefly, for no man has more warm friends. Very few meddle with me: no one has his own way more than I, and I hope none abuses it less. But I can fight when I feel I am right, and do not count opposition. I am now amusing myself by contending at my Liberal Club (always in a minority of one) against Gladstonian Liberals, but my good humour secures me against making enemies.

Again I have great power of work: I wrote on Saturday last for twelve hours, and did as well the last hour as the first. I never tire of work, and waste no time on 'fringes'; I go direct to what I want to do.

Also I have a power (though I detest speaking in public) of influencing large audiences when I get stirred up. Emotional I am, of course; and my language gift comes in. But I am more concentrative than imaginative, though I have a certain gift of picturesqueness.

Much is due to my training. I began to train myself, and to analyse myself to that end when I was a small boy, and I have gone on doing so ever since. I never fail to look at myself *ab extra* as well as *ab intra*, and I think I am singularly free from anything that would disturb a clear view.

I am very amenable to kindly expressed opinion, very desirous of hurting no man, very anxious to do all I can to add to the sum of human knowledge and human happiness. But I suppose I am obstinate, sometimes hot in temper, sometimes dogged in pursuit of a line I take up. Always busy, never lazy, and never happy out of work.

Now that is the analysis you want. Your one mistake is as to 'caution.' Perhaps you will laugh at my frank self-vivisection, and think how little man understands himself. But I am not far wrong.

I should not have written with this openness to anyone who would accuse me of egotism.

Best regards, yours ever,

W. S. M.

\*No other date is given, but believed to have been written in 1882.

## REVELATIONS OF THE PAST.

Mr. Erastus C. Gaffield, of Boston, Mass., who has already published 'A Series of Meditations' and 'A Celestial Message,' sends us his latest work entitled 'The Past Revealed, a Series of Revelations concerning the early Scriptures' (Boston: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company), which he dedicates to 'those Intelligences who have so graciously assisted me in its production.' Mr. Gaffield takes up the salient points in the Bible narrative regarding the Creation, the lives of the Patriarchs, the varied fortunes of the Jews in Egypt, the character of Moses, and the Exodus, all of which he regards as literally true and as conveying an inward meaning, namely, the working of the Infinite Spirit who willed the Perfect Law, first in 'the moulding of the plastic elements, pre-existent in space, into conditions such as physical beings would require,' and afterwards in the formation of man, who was 'made subject to both the material and spiritual influence.'

Man, we are told, was 'from the beginning a spiritual entity in a world of undiscovered forces, without vision of his own latent capacities and sublime destiny'; but on his self-consciousness becoming aroused, partly through his more intuitional companion, he desired 'to taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which in a metaphysical sense refers to the realisation of the inner self-consciousness or the discovery of the Divine Ego.'

With regard to the numerous communications from spirit intelligences recorded in the Bible, Mr. Gaffield reminds us that man's powers of comprehension are progressive, and that his idea of God varies from age to age, so that from the general beliefs of an age or of a people 'we may judge the plane of spiritual realisation which the race had then attained.'

In reference to the value of the Sabbath, Mr. Gaffield says:—

'A day of relaxation from all toil affords opportunities for the spirit to extend its subtle divine influence over the physical brain, and to conserve the welfare of the body. Its control of thought, as expressed in acts while upon earth, practically aids the construction of its prospective spiritual home and defines its architecture. This was one of the mystical reasons for the institution of the Sabbath. The necessity for its continuance is based upon the spiritual and physical needs of man, and has, through all the ages, vindicated its claim to respect and maintenance.'

Almost at the same time we received another work by Mr. T. Troward, late divisional judge, Punjab (London: Stead, Danby and Co., Kensington, W.), taking up the same narrative and 'helping the reader to see in the Bible a statement of the working of the laws which are inherent in the nature of things,' thus bringing us back to the One Universal Principle, the I AM which indicates 'that Unity of Spirit from which all individualities proceed and in which they are included.' Spiritualism is slightly alluded to in the chapter headed 'The Devil,' and Saul's séance at Endor is treated as an act of witchcraft, the culmination of his rebellion.

'Who's Who,' for 1906, retains the same character of completeness and accuracy which has caused this annual publication to be recognised as an indispensable book of reference to public men of the day and those occupying prominent positions in every field of work. In the present issue there appears an interesting biographical notice of Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers (Editor of 'LIGHT' and President of the London Spiritualist Alliance), in which it is mentioned that he was born at Holt, Norfolk, on August 7th, 1823, and was educated at the Gresham Grammar School there; that he joined the 'Norfolk News,' Norwich, in 1848, remaining there until 1872, having started the 'Eastern Daily Press' in 1870. On his removal to London in 1873 he established the National Press Agency, of which he was manager until he resigned in 1894. In 1881 he started 'LIGHT,' a weekly journal of psychical, occult and mystical research, and in 1882 he was associated with Professor W. F. Barrett, F.R.S., in the promotion of the Society for Psychical Research and was a member of the first Council. The tabular information formerly included in this annual is now issued as a separate 'Who's Who Year Book' at 1s. *net.*, which forms a sort of summary index to the larger work, and the two together form a striking example of a brilliant idea ably carried out into practical utility.

DISCOVERIES IN PHRENOLOGY.—In addition to the forty (or so) organs already recognised as existing in the human head, Mr. J. W. Vale, of 19, Rutland-road, Ilford, E., has found six more, which he has described in a pamphlet entitled 'Important Discoveries in Phrenology,' price 7d. post free. The new faculties are sagacity, execution, imagination, lucidity, profundity, and cleanliness, and of course everyone will desire to know just where they are located, and how identified, and how stimulated into active expression.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10th, 1906.

## Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c. To France, 13 francs 86 centimes.

'LIGHT' may also be obtained from MESSRS. SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT AND CO., LTD., 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and through all Newsagents and Booksellers.

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

### THE DEATH PENALTY.

As a subject which, alas! could wait, we have delayed a notice of Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner's admirable pamphlet on 'The Death Penalty' (London: William Reeves). This was probably fortunate, as, with the new Parliament, burning with reforming zeal, the time is now propitious for bringing the subject to the front.

Although the facts have frequently been brought into the light, and have always been easily accessible, it is still a popular delusion that the death penalty is a cure for crime. It is a pardonable error, but an error it assuredly is. It looks as though hanging for murder suggested murder, and as though familiarity even with death bred contempt. For proof of that one need not go farther afield than the figures cited by Mrs. Bonner. The English appear to have been gluttons at hanging. The climax was reached in the year 1810, when the number of offences punishable by death amounted to the awful number of 222. These offences included:—

All thefts from a dwelling-house amounting to 40s. and upwards.

All thefts from a shop amounting to 5s. and upwards.

All thefts from the person amounting to 1s. and upwards.

Stealing from bleaching grounds or the King's stores; letter stealing; cattle, horse and sheep stealing; fraudulent bankruptcy.

Cutting growing trees or growing corn.

Cutting a hop-bind in a hop plantation.

Mrs. Bonner, summing up our British Beninism, says:—

Until well within the last century hundreds of people were sentenced to death every year in England. I do not know that the French during the later Middle Ages were particularly scrupulous in the matter of executions, yet if we may believe Sir John Fortescue, Chancellor of Henry VII., they were a long way behind us, for he says that there were more persons executed for robbery in England during one year of Henry VII.'s reign than in France in seven years. Hollinshed, the Elizabethan historian, alleged that during Henry VIII.'s reign there were upwards of 72,000 persons hanged as thieves and vagabonds. This amazing total gives an average of something like 1,900 executions per annum. As there were no complete statistics at that period, it is possible that this number may have been exaggerated, yet, without doubt, it approximated very closely to the truth, because, when we come to a few years later—to the reign of Elizabeth—we have unimpeachable documentary evidence which shows that the number of executions was very great. It has been calculated, by no less a man than the late Mr. Justice Stephen, that after making all possible deductions for error, the executions could not have been less than 800 a year. The probability is that they were considerably in excess of 800; there is even the possibility that they were actually double that number.

. . . It was by no means an uncommon thing in those days to see people strung up in batches of sixteen or twenty at a time

after an Old Bailey Sessions, and Townsend, a Bow-street officer, gave evidence at the Royal Commission of 1816, that once he had seen, after an Old Bailey Sessions, as many as forty persons hung, in two batches of twenty each. The famous 'execution groves' of Kumassi and Benin could hardly have presented a much more slaughterhouse-like appearance than the Old Bailey burial ground of 120 years ago.

At last, England got ashamed and, let us hope, enlightened. It was seen that the death penalty did not pay,—an excellent British argument! Juries began to falter, to dodge the law, and either artificially to reduce the crime or refuse to convict. The Bishops remained firm but homely citizens shrank. Proprietors of bleaching grounds petitioned Parliament for the repeal of the death penalty, and on the ground of the safeguarding of their property. The bankers did the same, in the belief that the punishment for forgery would be more effective if it were made more nearly to fit the crime.

In 1861, at the consolidation of the criminal law, the death penalty was retained for murder, treason, piracy and setting fire to dockyards and arsenals, the actual infliction of the penalty being confined to murder cases only.

Upon this, Mrs. Bonner judiciously remarks that it is questionable whether murderers are always and necessarily the worst of criminals, as they ought to be if the severest penalty is reserved for them. In fact, few crimes are as variable in their degrees of criminality as that of murder. There have been murderers who did not belong to the criminal class at all, whose crime was the result of sudden passion, or inexplicable impulse, or even the result of a rough sense of justice, approaching to Saul's state of mind when he thought he did God service.

More than forty years ago, a Royal Commission on this subject was appointed, whose Report was presented after nearly two years of inquiry. That Report recommended discrimination in relation to murder cases, and the carrying out of executions in private. A minority Report asked for the abolition of the death penalty altogether: but still the ancient Briton in us hesitates even after Holland, Italy and Portugal have led the way. Perhaps, however, Mrs. Bonner is right in saying that the ugly thing lingers, not because we are callous, but because we are indifferent: and perhaps the taking the infamy of executions out of the streets has helped this indifference.

Many objections to the infliction of the death penalty could be cited, such as the inherent savagery of it, the moral effect of it upon the public mind, and the very serious fact that once inflicted it cannot be recalled. But there is one objection to it which is seldom cited and yet which appears to us to have tremendous force in it. The old and still largely current idea is that an impenitent murderer is 'a lost soul,' and we are assured that for lost souls there remains only—Hell. The sentence of death, then, practically amounts to a sentence to Hell. Was this the law's intention? and ought any jury or judge to undertake so awful a responsibility? But, short of this, there is a consideration which affects not so much the murderer as Society. Do we know precisely what we do when we turn a murderer loose upon the world? Our orthodox critics, and even a good many Spiritualists, tell us that it is the gross and earthly spirits who press most closely upon us. If so, what will probably be the effect of turning a murderer out of his body that he may go as he pleases, perhaps with a feeling of revenge against his murderers?—and quite possibly with a desire to drag down others to become partners in his crime and sharers of his fate? This is by no means a fanciful *dénoûment*. It may be, and possibly is, the sternest and the saddest of realities.

From every point of view, then, the infliction of the death penalty is undesirable, and is specially ugly and hateful just in proportion as it is connected with the



feeling of revenge. The murderer, as a murderer, is himself a victim,—a victim of ignorance, viciousness, temper or temptation. He is on our hands as a patient. He needs to be restrained or cured.

### JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.

In view of a recent article in the 'Daily Mail,' in which the danger signal has been raised again in connection with Spiritualism, perhaps it will be advisable to reconsider some of the arguments in support of the desirability of the investigation which Spiritualists pursue. We have never denied that there are pitfalls for the unwary, and we recognise that warnings are not unnecessary or out of place—indeed, some years ago we headed a leading article with the title 'Beware!' and urgently warned off the frivolous and imprudent from experimenting in Spiritualism—but, we maintain, the fact that the subject is one fraught with danger for the ignorant and inexperienced is a strong reason why the prudent and wise should study it. It is proverbial that 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,' and doubtless the haste of the fools is to be avoided, but is it angelic to fear? It is generally assumed that this fear is admirable; we, however, venture to question this assumption.

If there is truth to be learned, danger will never be admitted as a fit plea for not exploring desert tracts or polar seas. And if by spiritualistic experiences some knowledge may be gained concerning the after death condition, if it be only a few grains of knowledge that can be thus acquired, surely those who care for such knowledge, and who are equipped with the reason and common-sense which are essential pre-requisites for research of this kind, will not be deterred from it by fear.

It is not everyone, of course, not even every sensible person, who is fitted for personal investigation and experiment—more particularly are those unfit whose nervous system is defective. Mediumistic development would in such cases, as a rule, be detrimental not only to the experimenter, but to the cause of Spiritualism generally. Everyone who, in the pursuit of Spiritualism, breaks down, and becomes unhealthy, thereby injures the cause and renders it less likely to commend itself to the public as a legitimate pursuit. It is largely because our work has been so often hindered by being pursued by overstrained, unbalanced, and incautious persons that it has not been accomplished more rapidly. The work is worthy, and demands the wisest and sanest co-operators. It is worthy, for it is based upon a true principle—on a profound belief that we live in a real *Uni*-verse; that no jot or tittle of fact is insignificant and to be neglected.

There are two ways of approaching facts. They may be considered as units, as separate letters of the alphabet, or as integral portions of a language. If we regard facts as parts of a Divine language we shall recognise that we must not neglect any fact. We may be able to grasp only one here and another there; they may seem disconnected; but with unflinching patience we shall collect them and treasure them away, for some day the missing links may be found which will make them intelligible.

There are many facts which to the careful student of Spiritualism are at present unintelligible, but we do not on that account raise the foolish and ignorant cry, '*Cui bono?*' Enough has been discovered, as the result of patient and persistent endeavour during the last fifty years, to negative such wholesale condemnation and warning as that administered by the author of 'The Dangers of Spiritualism,' both in his book and in his recent article in the 'Daily Mail.' His warning would have been much more effective if it had been accompanied by reasonable recognition of the

good results which have attended this study when wisely pursued. It will, however, do us some service probably, by frightening away just the sort of inquirers we do not want, and checking the mere curiosity-monger. But upon some minds, those for instance who are not afraid to follow hard after truth, his denunciation will have no effect. Neither will it have weight with those who have experienced the stimulating effect of contact with the facts of Spiritualism, and who have felt that their faith in the righteous order of the Universe has been deepened and their hope for the future enlarged. It will have no effect on those who believe that God has not endowed mankind with faculties which men are forbidden to use or opened a door of discovery by which they are not allowed to try to enter. It is more discernment that is required, so that faculties may be wisely used, not more indifference and negligence with regard to them,

One of the best attested traditional sayings of Christ is the maxim, 'Be ye skilful money changers'; which meant, of course, that His disciples should be apt to discriminate and to discern between good and evil. He required of them the exercise of fine moral judgment, and perhaps there is no quality in which the average religious person is more deficient. The majority judge 'according to appearance,' the few only recognise the tremendous importance of cultivating the discrimination necessary in order to 'judge righteous judgment.'

### DR. RICHARD HODGSON AND HIS WORK.

The following tribute to the value of the work accomplished by Dr. Richard Hodgson, from the pen of Mr. B. F. Underwood, appeared in the 'Daily Journal,' of Quincy, Ill., U.S.A., for January 18th. After referring to the very slight mention in the newspapers of Dr. Hodgson's transition, Mr. Underwood says:—

'Dr. Hodgson was engaged in a work of which the multitude know little, and of which, therefore, they have no appreciation. But those who know of his investigations highly value his services to the cause of science, that portion of science which as yet has not become established impreguably upon a solid basis, but which is, every year, reaching a greater degree of certitude, and receiving a larger number of endorsements from representatives of official orthodox science.'

'Dr. Hodgson had devoted a quarter of a century to the study of psychical phenomena, including telepathy, clairvoyance, the various phases of subliminal consciousness, and all those various manifestations of human personality which have been made the subject of learned treatises by the French school of physiological psychologists, like Janet, Binet, and Richet, by Lombroso, of Italy, and English physicists and psychologists like Sidgwick, Crookes, Lodge, Myers, and others of similar calibre and standing. The mass of facts which Hodgson collected was very large. He was a regular contributor to the publications of the Society for Psychical Research, which form a library in themselves. He was perhaps the most careful investigator in the United States. In sympathy with his work and co-operating with him were Professor James, of Harvard, Professor Hyslop, of the Columbia University, Rev. M. J. Savage, the well-known Unitarian minister, and others of a similar high character.'

Mr. Underwood concludes with a reference to Dr. Hodgson's high standing in the Society for Psychical Research and his special connection with the American Branch, and rightly insists that 'a man of his high character and ability, and of his valuable services, should not go wholly unnoticed,' even though the number of people who appreciate such work is comparatively small.

'THE OCCULT REVIEW' for February contains the usual varied assortment of papers on occult subjects; Robert Calignoc gives many curious details as to 'Professional Astrology in Ancient Rome'; Lady Archibald Campbell, in her third article on 'The Only Wisdom,' discusses the difference between Spiritualism and Spiritism; Reginald B. Span recounts some of his 'Glimpses of the Unseen,' and Nora Alexander writes on 'Dreams,' with special emphasis on the difficulty of expressing 'the experiences of dream life in the terms of waking life.'

## MATERIALISATION THROUGH MR. ELDRED.

It is to me a cause of deep regret that certain of Mr. Eldred's sitters entertain suspicion respecting the phenomena obtained through his mediumship; and without in any way wishing to adopt an antagonistic attitude towards those who, by their conscientious observation, have arrived at an unfavourable conclusion, I feel impelled from a sense of justice towards this medium to narrate a personal experience that I had with him recently, which demonstrated to my entire satisfaction that he possesses the materialising power to which he lays claim.

Respecting séances, however, at which I have not been present I am obviously unable to form an opinion; but I hold that at a time when the integrity of Mr. Eldred is to be determined upon the evidence of his numerous clients, it becomes the bounden, brotherly duty of all those who can honestly record tests of identity obtained through his mediumship, to have the courage of their conviction, and impartially present the other aspect of the situation; all evidence being distinctly valuable if temperately proffered in the interests of truth.

About the middle of October last I wrote to Mr. Eldred (with whom I had no previous acquaintance), asking for two seats at one of his séances; and further stating that Mr. Knowles, an excellent normal clairvoyant, wished to accompany me. In reply Mr. Eldred offered me a choice of dates, and expressed his willingness to give me, provided that I would come to Nottingham, every opportunity of witnessing his materialisations.

I arranged to go on Wednesday, November 1st, and during the intervening time our many spirit friends took the keenest interest in the proposed sitting. The day before the contemplated journey they held a prolonged consultation together as to what special test they would try to give us. They finally decided that their united efforts were to be concentrated upon helping the brother of Mr. Knowles, called 'Jack,' to materialise, he having, upon one most memorable occasion, succeeded in *building up in front of the cabinet* with certain unmistakable proofs of identity through Mrs. Corner. By virtue, therefore, of his superior knowledge respecting so subtle a process, the chief control of Mr. Knowles informed me in his quaint style: 'that Mr. Jack was going to try and make a body; and consequently the whole night would be devoted to getting the conditions together.' I expressed my satisfaction at such a decision, but hardly dared to count upon so great a joy with any certainty.

Next day Mr. Knowles and I journeyed to Nottingham, and in due course arrived at Mr. Eldred's house, where a large circle soon assembled. The ladies removed their hats and cloaks in the bedroom immediately behind the apartment in which the séances are held; and I subsequently ascertained that the back of the cabinet in the séance-room was immediately against the bedroom wall.

Upon entering the séance room we were first invited to examine the cabinet, and I fully availed myself of such permission by raising the rug, as well as feeling carefully all over the linoleum on the floor for any roughness suggesting an invisible aperture. I then went thoroughly over the dark red plush curtains, which formed the sides of the cabinet by being nailed over trellis wood-work, putting one hand inside and one outside, as by so doing I must between my two hands have detected anything secreted there. The cabinet had no top, but in the same manner I searched the loose curtains hanging over the back and front of it. When all had expressed themselves satisfied by their close scrutiny, Mrs. Eldred superintended the seating of the sitters by placing a lady and gentleman alternately in two rows of chairs facing the cabinet at the further end of the room. The door by which we had entered was the only one in the séance room, and this remained closed in full view the entire time. To its left, as we faced the cabinet, stood a small organ used for accompanying the hymns; and to its left again sat Mr. Ellis, who acts as Mr. Eldred's secretary. Exactly opposite him at the other end of the first row of sitters was another gentleman, who during the séance regulated an electric battery placed upon the mantel-piece.

Light fell upon the front of the cabinet from two gas jets fixed each side of the closed window behind the second row of sitters; and the amount of light was controlled from inside the cabinet. This varied considerably during the séance, but I can honestly state that never for a single moment were we in total darkness; for although at times the light was very dim, still both sitters and all objects in the room were always discernible. I certainly however suffered considerably from the fumes of gas and want of ventilation, to say nothing of the peculiar smell and 'burring' of the battery which caused me a certain

amount of nervous irritation; but with such a purpose at stake one willingly submits to personal discomfort; and after joining hands during the singing of a good many hymns, signs of materialisation were to be observed between the front curtains of the cabinet.

I do not propose to describe with every detail all that transpired during this séance, but simply an incident of special personal interest. Therefore I will pass quickly over the materialisation and dematerialisation of drapery; the appearance of Mr. B.; a workman giving the name of 'Joe,' who materialised for the first time, and conversed with one of the sitters, who fully recognised him; the apparition of an old feeble woman; and another male form. After these a very tall man came out of the cabinet and beckoned to Mr. Knowles, who had previously whispered to me: 'that he could see through the closed curtains quite clearly, and that all our spirit friends were inside the cabinet.' This faculty was also alluded to by another medium present (I believe Mrs. Veary, of Leicester); and the two clairvoyants frequently described witnessing the efforts of *several spirits at the same time* trying to build up behind the closed curtains; the entranced medium in his chair being to clairvoyant vision equally visible.

As the spirit desired Mr. Knowles to approach he left his seat, and stood beside the spirit, who said to him: 'Fetch her too.' I then advanced until I could, with Mr. Knowles, peer closely into the face of the man, who with one hand pulled the drapery back from first one cheek and then the other *repeatedly*, being obviously anxious that we should particularly observe his face. There was over the drawn features a corpse-like pallor that was painful to look upon; and as I gazed into the blue eyes, which were wide open, there was in them no answering response, for they stared as if into vacancy. The reason for this (so Jack afterwards told me) was because he could not with these physical eyes see my material body, but only my astral one; and as I stood thus Mr. Knowles whispered to me, 'It is Jack.' He then turned away, being for the moment too much affected to speak further.

The spirit now bent over me, and rested his head upon my left shoulder, his body trembling so much that I feared he would fall. After remaining thus about a minute he suddenly straightened himself, and gripping my hand with considerable force he pulled me after him into the cabinet. I resisted somewhat, fearing that my sudden entrance might prove detrimental to further materialisation, but inside at last I went. The spirit then made great efforts to again speak, but finding himself no longer able to do so he kept pointing first to himself and then to the medium, who looked indeed a pitiable object as he sat in his chair. I knelt in front of him and thus perceived that his body was all contracted as well as being about half its normal size. There was also no perceptible movement in the shrunken form; the whiteness of the face showed in strong relief against the dark background, and there was a set look on the fixed features that one associates with death.

After Mr. Knowles and I had resumed our places among the sitters, who also witnessed what I here describe, many other forms came out from the cabinet who were totally different in stature, build, and *proportionate* size. We, however, desired nothing further, for our dear one had succeeded in fulfilling what he so greatly desired; and from that time onward, as long as the séance lasted, the Maori guide of Mr. Knowles executed a continuous war dance outside the cabinet by way of expressing the exuberance of his delight at the achievement!

Now, reviewing the whole séance dispassionately, there are certain strong points in Mr. Eldred's favour that cannot be justly ignored:—

- (1) That unrestricted opportunity was given to all the sitters to thoroughly examine the cabinet.
- (2) That the light was never extinguished.
- (3) That the forms did not merely peep furtively through the cabinet curtains, but more or less advanced right into the circle.
- (4) That both Mrs. Eldred and Mr. Ellis *invariably* requested the sitter indicated by the spirit to leave his, or her seat, and stand beside the form.
- (5) That unrestrained opportunity was permitted for conversation between the two where the spirit was able to speak.
- (6) That I (a stranger to Mr. Eldred) was pulled into the cabinet, where I had the privilege of observing spirit and medium together; with every opportunity, had I been so disposed, to roughly seize either.
- (7) That, previous to the sitting, neither the medium nor those associated with him had received the slightest clue as to who our various spirits were, or what they proposed attempting.
- (8) That Mr. Eldred impartially welcomed clairvoyants as sitters, although if his materialisations were but fraudulent imposture, clairvoyants and their spirit friends would be a



source of extreme danger to him by being able to see behind the scenes.

(9) That the difference between the various forms on November 1st was so great that no one person could have simulated them *all*. Presuming, for the sake of argument, that Mr. Eldred does the masquerading, it would be as well for those who are of this opinion to substantiate their vague suspicions by some actual proof to that effect. The only likelihood to be postulated where such dubiety of Mr. Eldred's integrity exists, is that a brief period of total darkness is pre-arranged, and that Mr. Ellis dexterously inserts in an aperture of the cabinet at this psychological moment a well-assorted bundle of wigs, beards, moustaches, &c.; not forgetting a compressed dummy to pose as the medium whilst he is manipulating his hirsute accessories, and butter muslin. To the doubter any trickery on the part of Mr. Eldred must be either through *accomplices*, or *impersonation* by artificial aid. If by *accomplices*, what definite charge can Mr. Eldred's critics advance as to their modes of entrance and exit? If *impersonation* be the hypothesis, and the medium permitted himself to be thoroughly searched, as well as the cabinet, before the séance, during which no period of total darkness occurred, does any positive proof exist—not mere suspicion—that under these conditions the medium invariably and totally failed to obtain any materialisation? Whilst if Mr. Eldred is to have vague suspicions generated against him in the minds of prospective sitters, as an adherent of fair play I protest against such methods of truth-seeking, which certainly cannot be psychically productive of the finest phenomena from any genuine medium. Also if Mr. Eldred's adverse reputation is to rest upon critical suspicion, can he not triumphantly refute it upon the corroborative testimony of a very large number of sitters who through his materialising powers have been fully satisfied?

(10) That to both Mr. Knowles and myself a conclusive proof was given that 'Jack' could not have been Mr. Eldred, for *Jack's eyes were blue, but those of the medium are dark brown*; and however a fraudulent medium might fake his features *he could not change the colour of his eyes*. Moreover, Mr. Eldred is barely my own height, whilst this spirit form was quite as tall as 'Jack' was in earth-life—so tall, indeed, that he had on this occasion to bend over me to lay his head upon my shoulder.

(11) That the pulling aside of the facial drapery in so marked a manner was in itself a test of personal identity; for poor 'Jack' passed away in the prime of his life from necrosis of the bone near the nose, due to an injury received from a cricket ball striking him there in early life. Necrosis set in very unexpectedly, and several terrible but futile operations were performed upon him ere he finally succumbed to the agonising pain. For some time after his passing over he was unable to show himself to a clairvoyant without a certain amount of disfigurement, respecting which he was extremely sensitive; and the first question that he would invariably ask me when controlling his brother was: 'Can you see my bad face?' As time passed this gradually became less noticeable, and he is now able to show himself without the slightest defect. This is a source of great pleasure, and when he now controls he passes his hand over the once-suffering side, complacently remarking as he does so: 'My face is quite well now, Dear.' The pulling away of the drapery was to make us both see that this was so; and I especially noticed that no other spirit during Mr. Eldred's séance either touched, or in any way disarranged, the soft material partially enveloping the head.

(12) That our entire band of spirit friends (whom we have never so far detected in deceit or misrepresentation) unanimously affirm that 'Jack' did materialise through Mr. Eldred, or, in the Maori's own words: 'he and Mr. Jack, assisted by the medium's brother and spirits, took "stuff" out of the medium's body and wrapped it all round Mr. Jack. Mr. Jack next thought very hard of how he used to look, and he then helped him to make a body as much like it as he possibly could.' This description is somewhat crude, but in simple fashion it certainly conveys some idea of the process of materialisation.

The critical mind could, however, reasonably object to the fact that upon this particular evening there was no examination of the medium previous to the sitting; also that no form of securing him was adopted, and that he was not searched after the sitting. But opportunity to defraud does not of necessity induce it; and tests must be accepted, or rejected, upon their specific merits.

As I said before, I can only testify to that which I have personally witnessed, and this I am convinced was a genuine manifestation of Mr. Eldred's materialising mediumship.

EFFIE BATHE.

I witnessed all that Mrs. Bathe relates here; and am fully convinced that the spirit described was that of my brother Jack.

January 29th, 1906.

JIM KNOWLES.

## MR. ELDRED EXPLAINS.

In reply to the article in 'LIGHT' of February 3rd, describing a test séance given to the Nottingham Spiritual Evidence Society, I would like to correct a few statements made by them and to give a more accurate version on other points. In the first place the report states that the use of a wire cabinet was suggested by them and refused. No mention was made to either Mr. Ellis or myself until a week after the séance, and then we heard *indirectly* that some such suggestion had been made, but not to us. It is also stated that Mr. Ellis had stipulated for tape to be used! This again is wrong; the suggestion being soft cotton cord, on account of anything of a harsh nature cutting one's flesh. Again there is a statement that my hand was not examined after the séance. This may be true more or less, but during the cutting of cords in full light the private marks were *seen* by the Dane, who made them upon my hand, also by the majority of sitters present. What took place during the trance state I cannot personally say, but what occurred while I was in the waking or normal state I *can* vouch for. The signing of the paper drawn up by Mr. Ellis, which states every facility was given for a perfect examination of the cabinet, &c., was left until the close of the séance (*after the word of honour was given by all present*) on account of the mental state of myself and the desire to proceed at once with the séance while a trace of the element necessary for the phenomena was present. Mr. Hewes, after giving his word to sign the same, refused to do so without making an addition to the declaration. This was naturally refused, with the result that he broke his word as a man of honour, and was then told that he was not a honest man, and was requested to leave the house. Previous to coming to Homelea, he said to one of the sitters: 'If a spirit comes out of the cabinet I shall not believe, will you?' Is this honest? Again, a certain gentleman was seen by several present, on kneeling to examine seals, deliberately to rub a lighted taper over them, I presume to deface the same if possible. If these and other actions are not likely to arouse one's ire, well, all I would say is I regret I was in a semi-trance condition during the ordeal. After the séance all sitters with one accord (Mr. Hewes having left), without hesitation, pronounced the phenomena to be genuine, and congratulated Mrs. Eldred on the success of the séance. After the few representing this society had left my house and got under the bane of Mr. Hewes' influence (who was waiting outside for them), they, like children, must refute eventually their own word, and be led by him by the nose. I leave the public to judge the stamina of such men. I would say again that I do not need the evidence of such people, and should not feel honoured by a diploma signed by the officials of such a society. I have enclosed photographic copy of declaration, signed by them, and repudiated later. These are supposed to be honest and reliable men, and yet in both cases after signing to the effect that they would *not publish* or give to the Press, &c. (our usual form), they rush into print. In approaching me in the first place they desired to command and test—not myself, but the spirit people. This shows the mental calibre of the alleged qualification of these men to judge spiritual phenomena. We have, by the way, offered, after an examination made by two competent architects, to pay all fees if anything in the nature of trap doors or any disturbance in the floor, walls, or ceiling can be met with. They have not come forward yet in compliance with this offer, although it was made to one of the committee. I ask the public, Can any reliance be placed on the words of such people? As a business man of over eighteen years I feel justified in taking a stand against such bigoted jealousy and opposition. As a medium I shall do my best for the spirits. All mediums have suffered, and the movement has been placed in jeopardy by such people. We preach charity and yet are only too ready to hurt wilfully our own workers, upon whom the present-day seekers rest their evidence. Is this fair? Is it honest? Above all, is it manly? Truly we want universal brotherhood, charity, and love to reign pre-eminent if any progress is to be made. Failing this, God help all earnest and conscientious workers against the self-appointed Popes in this our religion.

(Signed) CHARLES ELDRED.

P.S.—I would say also that the statement made to the effect that wax had been added to one of the seals is absolutely untrue.—C. E.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to say a few words in reference to the séance with Mr. Eldred about which Dr. Abraham Wallace wrote in 'LIGHT' of January 27th last. I was present at that séance, and I am the man who was invited by the materialised form to enter the cabinet and view the entranced body of the 'medium.' I wish solemnly to state that on entering the

cabinet I found the supposed body of the medium to be a dummy. The head of the dummy was, I should say, an inflated bladder. It had rather the appearance of a carnival mask, such a mask as one often sees worn on November 5th. The body of the dummy was dressed in Mr. Eldred's clothes, the cuffs empty in the most approved style, according to the legend which represents Mr. Eldred as shrunk up to almost nothing while the materialised form is manifesting. This is, in brief, what I saw. I would gladly give Mr. Eldred the benefit of every doubt, but of the truth of what I have stated there can be no doubt whatever. I was not expecting anything of the sort, and I was dumbfounded at what I saw. To make quite certain I remained in the cabinet as long as possible, and I brought my face to within ten inches of the face of the dummy, with the result that I am prepared to go into a court of justice and to swear that the figure on the chair which was supposed to be the body of Mr. Eldred was a dummy.

As to the séance in general, I wish to corroborate in every particular what Dr. Wallace has said. It was suspicious and unsatisfactory throughout. This seems to be the opinion of almost everybody who was present with whom I have had an opportunity of discussing it. It is generally believed that the light was purposely put out, and that under cover of the darkness the medium slipped out and received his outfit from his confederate who sat next to the cabinet.

In conclusion, I only wish to say that I have sat with all the best materialising mediums in England very many times during the last seven years, and that never have I witnessed anything like what I have described above. It is painful for me to write as I have written, but in the interests of true Spiritualism I feel it to be my bounden duty to make public so shameless a fraud. You have my name and address, but I do not wish to make these public at present, lest it should prevent my continuing my investigations.—Yours, &c.

TRUTH-SEEKER.

SIR,—As a sincere seeker after truth I should like to ask Dr. Abraham Wallace, whose letter appeared in 'LIGHT' of January 27th, how he would account for *two* forms being seen at the same time outside the curtains. I should think there would have been some difficulty in conveying into the cabinet sufficient material to make up a second form, even *presuming* that one was the medium himself. Then again, the forms certainly *did* appear to dematerialise, or sink through the floor in *front* of the curtains, and the drapery looked more transparent and cloud-like than any material I have ever seen. Dr. Wallace omitted to state that the explanation given as to the difference in the voice of 'John King' was that the medium had scarcely recovered from an operation to his throat, which prevented that organ from being properly used.

I myself spoke to the lady sitting two from Dr. Wallace on his left, and she assured me that she was absolutely convinced that the form she saw was that of her *husband*; that he had put back the drapery from his face, and she recognised his features. Could one be so deceived? I do not wish Dr. Wallace to think that I am holding a brief for Mr. Eldred; far from it. I went to the séance longing and *trusting* that I might be permitted to see and recognise *some* one of those whom I had known on the earth plane. I came away disappointed and disheartened, for in the first place the lights being turned down made it *possible* that all might not be fair and above board, and then the very discourteous way in which Dr. Wallace was treated when he politely asked to be allowed to search the medium, and suggested waiting any length of time until he had quite recovered, made one suspicious that there was *something* to hide. It appears from Mr. Bostock's account that the medium allowed himself to be measured after the séance held in Nottingham. Why then should objection be raised to his being searched on his complete recovery, if there *was* nothing to hide?

If this séance was all a fraud it makes one ask, is there *no* truth in all that has been told about the return of the so-called *dead*? If so, is it worth while wasting time and money on investigations?

I feel that if there *is* any truth in it that I *must* keep on until I have more *personal* proof. Unfortunately these experiments are expensive, and when one hears that *all may* or could have been done by a clever trickster, the effect is most discouraging.

P.S.—I enclose my name and address, but not for publication.—Yours, &c.,

A SEEKER AFTER TRUTH.

SIR,—As one of the circle of which Dr. A. Wallace gives a description, from his point of view, I feel that common fairness compels me to say how the same phenomena were seen by myself. I pass over all questions of identity and confine

myself to some of the points having a distinct bearing on the simple question as to whether the forms were genuine materialisations, or whether we were watching the medium masquerading with white drapery and dummy figures.

The medium's manager, Mr. Ellis, was at the extreme left of the circle, facing the cabinet, and, at my own request, I occupied the next seat. When the light went out for a few minutes, I was not holding the manager's hand, but heard him repeatedly ask the sitters to keep quiet, so that he could hear what 'John King' had to say. This seems hardly consistent with the theory that he was engaged in passing a quantity of drapery, &c., into the cabinet.

I was able to get a very near and clear view of the face in profile of the 'John King' form, and was struck by the straightness of the nose in contrast with the slightly aquiline nose of the medium.

My seat near the end of the semi-circle was taken with a view to being in a good position to watch any dematerialisation in front of the curtain. When a form began to dematerialise Mr. Ellis offered to change places with me, and I slipped into his chair at the extreme end. Leaning over as far as possible, my line of sight was almost in a line with the front of the cabinet, so that I was now in probably the best position in the room for observing this particular phenomenon. I carefully carried out my one object in taking this seat by keeping my eyes on the last piece of drapery as it disappeared. I saw no drawing into the cabinet, but a straight downward disappearance, with a fading away of the last bit on the floor.

For seeing the two figures 'out' at the same time, my position was not good, but they seemed to me to come, one from the middle opening of the cabinet and the other from between the curtains and the end of the cabinet, the one appearing a few seconds before the other; the two forms being quite separate and distinct, and not, as one would gather from Dr. Wallace's description, both together in the same opening of the cabinet.

That is all I feel compelled to trouble you with as to what happened from my point of view.—Yours, &c.,

Oakhurst, The Park,  
Nottingham.

E. P. DAVIS.

[We have other letters on the same subject, but the above must suffice for the present, and any further communications must be as brief as possible.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

#### CATHOLICS COMING ROUND.

The 'Revue du Monde Invisible,' since the recent death of its founder, Monsignor Elie Méric, has come under the direction of Monsignor M. Le Monnier, and its attitude towards 'Spiritism' has taken a turn in the right direction. In the January number the editor discusses Professor Richet's account of the materialisations at Algiers, and makes rather a shrewd point when he says, taking up one of the Professor's phrases: "'A phantom having the attributes of life!' Is there not a shocking contradiction between the two parts of this phrase? That under hallucination our senses should lend to a phantom attributes of life which it *seems* to possess, we can readily agree. If a phantom actually *has* the essential attributes of life, it is a real being, a person; we cannot call it a phantom.' Monsignor Le Monnier applauds Professor Richet's cautious abstinence from hard and fast conclusions, which, he says, spiritistic science is far from having arrived at. He even hails Spiritism as a champion against materialistic positivism, for, though the Church forbids its practices, he has known several who have been led back to the true fold by the proof it affords of the existence of an invisible world.

AGAINST MEAT-EATING.—The Order of the Golden Age, of Paignton, Devon, has just issued a new edition of Mr. Sidney Beard's 'Comprehensive Guide Book to Natural Hygienic and Humane Diet,' price 1s. 6d. post free, and has reprinted a paper contributed to the 'Herald of the Golden Age' by Sir W. E. Cooper, entitled 'Is Meat-eating Sanctioned by Divine Authority?' The author of the latter discusses various Biblical texts bearing on the subject, showing that meat-eating is nowhere directly commanded, though the existence of the practice is recognised, and that the sacrificial system was no part of the original law of Moses; also that the Apostles are traditionally stated to have habitually lived on vegetable products. Mr. Beard's book, which has now reached its fifth edition, and thirtieth thousand, is well known as a useful and plainly written text-book, which shows what to do, and how to do it; also what *not* to do when adopting a reform diet—so often mis-called 'vegetarian.' There is a special chapter on what to do when travelling, visiting, or 'at sea' generally, and it turns out to be quite possible for reformers to live up to their principles, even under these circumstances.

## DR. FUNK AND HIS CRITICS.

Dr. I. K. Funk, in final reply to a series of savage attacks from two Brooklyn materialists, who got up an 'Anti-Fraud Society' against Mrs. Pepper, has written a letter to the 'New York Sun,' in which he says that he has never claimed to be a scientific investigator, and has been simply urging those who are qualified for the work to take it up and push it to results. He 'takes advantage of the aroused public interest to fasten on the minds of the people two or three truths,' and says:—

'There is no problem before the public that has in it so great potentialities for good as has this one. When a man of clear, hard scientific sense, like Sir Oliver Lodge, after much investigation is led to say, as he did in the "Pall Mall Magazine," January, 1904: "Some of us have proofs that the individuality persists after death, which are as certain as proof can be," and when eminent scientific men of tried skill, like Alfred Russel Wallace, and other exceedingly keen investigators who have made much study of the tricks of conjurers, and have deeply studied psychology, like Richard Hodgson and James H. Hyslop, tell us that when they began their psychic investigations they were materialistic in their belief, but came out of their investigations convinced of the continuity of human existence—then flippant assertion and mere pooh-poohing are out of place.'

In answer to an opponent who 'grows merry' over the notion of becoming as 'a little child' in psychic investigations, Dr. Funk says:—

'Let me once more quote Thomas Huxley, with special emphasis upon the words "every preconceived notion": "Sit down before a fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing." ("The Life and Letters of Huxley," by his son, Volume I., page 235.)

'And Goethe tells us that when he set about to learn any new truth he first emptied himself of all knowledge, until he could feel as he felt when he began to learn his A B C. Humility is ever the entrance way to the temple of truth. But it is well to remember the profound distinction between being childlike and childish, and I think I for one effectively so remember.'

## 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.*

## Provisions Fulfilled.

SIR,—A few weeks ago I called upon Miss Sinfi Lovell, the Welsh seeress, and was told that I was going on a journey, and that there was an accident inevitably associated with it; not a very serious one, for she saw me afterwards undertaking certain things I wanted to accomplish. She warned me particularly not to jump out of a train before it stopped, as the accident she saw was connected with a railway platform.

On the very night that I left London I had a nasty fall on the platform of Bristol station, pitching on my face, cutting my nose, and being partially stunned, but I was able, fortunately, to proceed to my destination. Miss Lovell's other prognostications related to things not in the immediate future, but already events are shaping themselves so as to give every promise of these predictions being fulfilled. On Friday week last (January 19th) she mentioned to my wife and others, that when consulting the crystal that day for a client she had seen a very bad wreck of a battleship with two or three hundred men drowned, and few, if any, saved. On Monday came the news of the loss of the ironclad 'Aquidaban,' when three hundred men perished and only one was saved. I think we often expect too much of clairvoyants. We expect them to be always 'in the vein,' when, obviously, it is most unlikely that they can be so at every moment of the day.—Yours, &c.,

A STUDENT.

## The Psychological Society (London).

SIR,—It is with very great regret that I have to announce the resignations of Mrs. Bolton and myself from this society on March 1st next, but my health has been so bad recently, that I am advised medically to take this step as the one chance of saving myself from a complete breakdown.—Yours, &c.,

GAMBIER BOLTON,  
President.

## 'A Caution to Sensitives.'

SIR,—Mr. Piddington and Miss Alice Johnson have stated in your columns, on January 27th last, and at the annual general meeting of the Society for Psychical Research, on Friday, January 26th, that only three people, including the sensitive, were present at the séance in the Society for Psychical Research room, and that no smoking occurred during the day.

Fortunately, there is no doubt about the occasion, as my friend has only once been in the rooms of the Society for Psychical Research. Moreover, some of her statements to me agree with the notes of the séance. I have seen the lady twice during the last few days and find that, in all essentials, she adheres to her story, more particularly as to the smoking and the number of people in the room, which she declares to have been eight.

The person described to me as smoking was reported to have said with reference to his 'reading': 'Of course you know I belong to the Post Office,' and the sensitive alleged that his name was 'Frank Rodmore' or 'Podmore.' There is only one person to whom this description could apply. As a matter of fact, I find that no allusion was made to the Post Office during the séance: certainly Mr. Podmore was not in the room.

I am quite satisfied that the sensitive is suffering from an hallucination. If the circumstances she related to me, and which she now confirms in conversation and by letter, ever occurred at all, it was not in the Society for Psychical Research rooms.

At painful cost I have now learnt that mediums of great sensibility are liable to impressions of the most varied kind from incarnate as well as discarnate spirits. Their organisms are like the wax barrel of a phonograph, and they are specially prone to become the subjects of hallucinations. They are never normal, and, I expect, the more sensitive the medium the greater is the danger.

I beg to unreservedly withdraw my accusation against the conduct of a séance at the Society for Psychical Research rooms on the ground of smoking, and to express my belief that the sensitive was treated with all consideration. I am sure that no attempt was made to obscure the operation of her gift, and I wish to express my regret for any annoyance which I may have inadvertently caused to the lady and gentleman who were present.—Yours, &c.,

W. USBORNE MOORE

8, Western-parade, Southsea. (Rear Admiral).  
January 31st, 1906.

## 'The Problem of Evil.'

SIR,—The Rev. Charles E. Hutchinson, whose letter appeared in 'LIGHT' of December 23rd, is surely wrong in taking up the cudgels on behalf of old theology! He is evidently one of the steadily increasing band of liberal, broad-minded Churchmen, the result chiefly of the leavening effects of Spiritualism upon old-fashioned, moribund theology; quite one of us, indeed!

My comparison of the teaching of Spiritualism was with that of the churches for centuries past, and not with that of the advanced guard of modern theological thought. The very quotations your correspondent uses are from the light-bearers of a brighter day, and his chief arguments help to prove my contention that 'sin and suffering,' as already quoted from Oscar Wilde, 'are beautiful, holy things and modes of progression.' Will anyone maintain that this has been the teaching of the Christian churches? What a different position they would occupy to-day if it had been!

To an unbiased student of Christian theology the dominant note left upon one's mind is one of gloom and despair. Long faces and sullen tempers, frowning upon all innocent gaieties and amusements, and a terrible fear of death! To me, however, religion means joy and gladness, a heart singing as blithely as a bird, health of body, mind and soul, and an unspeakable hope and trust in God.

The Rev. C. Hutchinson says that 'the Christian Church teaches that God, in making man a free agent, fore-knew that he might avail himself of his moral freedom and wrongfully assert it by disobedience,' &c. I cannot pretend to understand myself, how a being created so that he might possibly act in a certain manner, can be blamed when he does so act. It is one of the hair-splitting sophisms that old-fashioned theology is so full of. I believe that the relations between God and man are absolutely simple and straightforward, and that all the mysterious twistings and turnings are of man's invention. Your correspondent further says that 'We do not assert, as Mr. Venning states we do, that sin and sorrow and suffering "are inconsistent with the goodness of God"; and yet if one thing more than another is responsible for the prevalent scepticism and infidelity, not to say

atheism, it surely is this problem of evil and the manner in which it has been treated by the churches. How many calling themselves Christians have denied God because they could not reconcile the suffering and sin in the world with a God of love!

Not so long since the belief was almost universal in a devil, total depravity, everlasting hell fire for the sinner—even for unbaptized infants—a fallen and cursed creation, and an angry and revengeful God. Whence came these blasphemous beliefs if not from the churches? And some are even preached to-day in places.

That the churches are awakening to the needs of the hour must be a source of profound satisfaction to all thinking people; for far too long have sinners been regarded as outcasts and pariahs, they should rather be deemed ignorant children who have not yet learned by experience the beauty and joy of goodness.—Yours, &c., A. K. VENNING.

Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

#### A New Mission.

SIR,—A few earnest seekers after truth have worked for the past eight months, in conjunction with a band of spirit friends, through the kindness of Mrs. Fairclough Smith, at 166, Marylebone-road, N.W., with the object of forming a spiritual mission to give out the highest teaching in the Christ spirit, and they now feel that the time has come to extend their work, for which purpose they are commencing regular Sunday evening services at 6.30 p.m., at the London Academy of Music, 22, Princes-street, Cavendish-square, as may be seen in the advertisement portion of your valuable paper. I may add that the members of this society hope eventually, should the work justify it, to build a church in Central London for the worship of God in spirit and in truth.—Yours, &c.,

P. E. B.,  
Hon. Sec., The Spiritual Mission.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which *do not exceed twenty-five words* may be added to reports *if accompanied by six penny stamps*, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns.

BOURNEMOUTH.—21, CHARMINSTER-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Walker gave a trance address on 'Jesus' Place in Spiritualism,' and an after-circle was held at 8.15 p.m. Speaker, on Sunday next, Mr. J. Adams.—R. R. S.

CHISWICK.—110, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday last convincing tests were given at the investigators' circle, and the membership is increasing. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum.—H. G. H.

BRIGHTON.—COMPTON HALL, 17, COMPTON-AVENUE.—On Sunday last Mrs. Boddington's excellent addresses were greatly appreciated. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., open circle; in the evening Mr. Hopkinson, a young local medium, will speak.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Pearson's address was followed by clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington. Thursday, at 8 p.m., investigators' circle.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Abbott gave a fine address to a large audience. On Sunday next, Mr. Burton. Monday next, at 3.30 p.m., 'Talks with a Spirit Control.' Silver collection. Thursday, at 8 p.m., Nurse Graham, clairvoyante. Silver collection.—S. H.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—GOTHIC HALL, BOUVERIE-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last an address was followed by interesting discussion. In the evening Mr. John Kinsman (vice-president) gave a telling address on 'The Message of Spiritualism.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Robert King; also at 3 p.m., séance for inquirers.—S.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. J. Leeder's lucid and detailed answers to twelve questions from the audience gave much satisfaction. On Sunday next Miss MacCreadie, clairvoyante. Doors open at 6.30, commence 7 p.m.; early attendance is necessary.—A. J. W.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last representatives of the London Union held a public meeting, Mr. Adams presiding. Mr. Long spoke eloquently on 'The Right Use of the Divine Gift of Mediumship,' and Mr. Rix gave a short address on 'Mind.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. R. Brailey, address and clairvoyant descriptions.—N. RIST.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mrs. Podmore gave a fine address on 'What the World Needs,' followed by successful clairvoyant descriptions and circle. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Ball; on the 17th, social gathering. Admission free, programmes 6d.; on the 18th, at 7 p.m., Mr. Clarke.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Ray gave Bible instruction and Mrs. Woodrow clairvoyance. In the evening, Mr. Butcher presiding, Miss A. V. Earle's address on 'The Spiritual Side of Elections' was much appreciated. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Frost. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., members' circle.—L. D.

BRITTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On the 3rd inst., through the kindness of Mrs. Fairclough Smith and Mr. Beard, a tea was given to seventy children, followed by a magic lantern entertainment which was much enjoyed. On Sunday last Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave a trance address on 'The Value of Spiritualism,' and excellent clairvoyant descriptions, to a crowded audience. Speaker on Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. D. F. Davis.—J. P.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—At the Thursday circle convincing tests were given by Mrs. A. Boddington. On Sunday last Mr. J. G. Davis gave an impressive address on 'The Gifts of the Spirit.' A trio was given by Mr. Burdee, Mrs. Ramsey, and Miss Drayton. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., service, speaker, Mr. J. Butcher. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m. (Room 3), psychometry and clairvoyance. Silver collection.—H. Y.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday afternoon last, at the Conference of the Union of London Spiritualists, Mr. Underwood opened the discussion, and in the evening addresses were given by Messrs. Clegg, Frost, Underwood, and Wright. On the 10th inst., at 7.30 p.m., dance. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis on 'Life and Death in the Light of Spiritualism.' On the 14th, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Symonds, clairvoyante.—W. T.

WISBECH PUBLIC HALL.—On Sunday, January 28th, Mr. E. W. Wallis, of London, gave stirring addresses to large audiences.—H. S.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.—On January 31st Mr. E. S. G. Mayo lectured on 'The Spiritualist Doctrine of Evil' to an appreciative audience. On Sunday and Monday last Mrs. Johnstone, of Blackburn, conducted the services.—E. B.

STRATFORD.—NEW WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD.—On Sunday last an eloquent trance address by Mr. George H. Harris on 'The Hidden Blessings of Truth,' was much appreciated. Mr. G. W. Lear presided.—W. H. S.

PLYMOUTH.—Oddfellows' Hall, Morley-street.—On January 28th Mrs. Short gave good psychometrical delineations, and on Sunday last Mr. Clavis spoke ably on 'Mahometanism.' Miss Demellweek sang a solo, and Mrs. Short gave clairvoyant descriptions.—M.

PORTSMOUTH.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On January 30th Mrs. Mary Davies related some interesting experiences and gave good clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday last two able addresses by Mr. Frank G. Clarke, of London, were evidently appreciated.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—On Sunday morning last an address by Mr. F. Wilson on 'Oahspe' was followed by discussion. In the evening, Mr. G. Morley gave a trance address as a 'Guide to the Perplexed,' followed by clairvoyant descriptions.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. R. J. Parsonson opened an interesting discussion on 'Our Responsibility for Thought.' In the evening Mr. R. Boddington dealt ably with 'Spiritualism, a Science, Religion, and Philosophy,' and replied to questions.—N. T.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday morning last, at the public circle, many visitors received messages and clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening Mr. Wynford Brierley gave an instructive address on 'Spiritualism: Its Message and Mission,' followed by messages and clairvoyant descriptions.—S. C.

HULL.—Special services were held on Sunday last in the Lecture Hall, Kingston-square, under the auspices of the local Spiritual and Philosophical Society and the Psychological Society, when Mr. Lobb delivered stirring addresses to large audiences on 'Communion with the Dead,' in the course of which he narrated many interesting personal experiences.

LEAMINGTON.—PRIORY-TERRACE (NEAR G.P.O.)—On Sunday and Monday last, at the second anniversary services, Mrs. Norton, of Burton-on-Trent, spoke on 'Life beyond the Grave,' 'Death and Its Surprises,' &c., held séances, and reviewed Biblical phenomena. On Tuesday a social and tea, followed by a musical programme, were much enjoyed.