

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,353.—VOL. XXVI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1906. [A Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A Sermon by the Rev. A. J. Innes, on 'Longing to go to heaven,' has just reached us. It is like its title,—direct, simple and quaint. The text is the famous saying of Paul, 'We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' The preacher bids us note that Paul says, 'We know': and yet he reminds us that many doubt. It is their loss: but, at the same time, he warns us against the over faith that might lead us to allow our existence here to be 'dominated by the desire to get away into the next world as soon as possible.' As Browning has it, 'there is a decency required.'

But, if we really do not wish 'to get away into the next world as soon as possible,' we ought not to talk and sing as though we did. Let us be truthful, says this preacher. For instance, is there not the possibility of insincerity in a mixed congregation singing:—

Oh, to be over yonder,
In that land of wonder,
Where the angel voices mingle,
And the angel harps do ring!

Another verse of this hymn runs thus:—

Oh, to be over yonder!
Alas! I sigh and ponder—
Why clings this poor, weak heart of mine
To any earthly thing.

What does Alice think of that, as she sings it by the side of Frank? They are to be married in three weeks. What does Frank think of it as he hears her trill it out in her pretty cosy voice? O no! it won't do.

This sensible preacher says:—

There is no solid fact in the pilgrim-and-stranger idea except this, that we may be said, while in the present world, to be journeying from one point of life to another. This may be expressed, again, as 'passing through the world'; but we shall also pass through the next state of life to another, and through that to a farther one, and so on, progressing through eternity, with ever a higher heaven in front of us, if it be true, as Tennyson says, that 'from state to state the spirit walks.' However, be that as it may, God has made this world our home for a time; and, whatever His other 'mansions' may be, this is a rich and beautiful one, in which we may take pleasure, promote human welfare, uphold divine principles, employ all our faculties, and form to some extent the heavenly character, which alone ensures future happiness. The way to heaven is the path of love and duty on earth, and we have no right to wish to leave it by taking another earthly path, much less by suddenly leaping from this world to the next. . . . Let us so work, then, under our heavenly Father's eye that we may neither 'long to leave nor fear to go.'

'Tekel, or The Wonderland of the Bible,' by J. Horton (London: Philip Wellby), is not exactly 'food for babes.' It is by a resolute woman who, as a firm believer in the divine infallibility of the Bible, undertook a thorough overhauling of it, with results that first shocked and then captured her.

Step by step she feels her way with doubting but patient feet through as strange a story as ever appealed for faith, and step by step she hesitates, disentangles, doubts, protests and grimly smiles. But she is worth watching and following. Perhaps a little lacking in scholarship, she certainly lacks nothing of courage, patience and mother wit: and if she ends in a wilderness or a morass it does not seem to be her fault.

The book is charmingly printed in bold type and on comfortable paper, and is written with an attractive simplicity that is really inviting.

'The moral damage of war,' in a new and enlarged edition, by Walter Walsh, of The Gilfillan Memorial Church, Dundee, has just been published in Boston, U.S., by Ginn and Company. It is dedicated to the 13th International Peace Congress, held in Boston in 1904. It is a tremendous indictment, but its almost unbelievable statements are fully borne out by references to documents and first-hand evidence.

Illustrations of 'the moral damage of war' are taken chiefly from English-speaking peoples, but the writer of the book explains and justifies this. He says:—

Under the influence of that self-love which induces every nation to imagine itself the finest possible specimen of the human race, discontent may be felt that the proofs of war's damage are culled for the most part from the English-speaking peoples; and the familiar accusation may be again heard that we are of those who 'speak well of every country but their own.' Alas! would that it were possible to believe that these apples of Sodom could be gathered only from the Anglo-Saxon stock; but, so far is this from being the case, that the author would undertake in a very short time, confining himself only to the wars of the last hundred years, to fill another volume as large as the present with similarly odious evidences of war's demoralising influence upon the minds of every civilised nation in the world. No: the demoralisation does not inhere in any one people more than another; it inheres in war itself, by whomsoever waged; in the war spirit by whomsoever provoked. And it would be a thing equally silly and sinful to illustrate the moral injury of war by reference only to the brother nations; for that would be to feed still further the national vanity which is so largely provocative of war, and which it is one object of the following pages to expose.

Mr. Walsh does not believe that relief from this curse of war can ever come from political, intellectual or utilitarian motives. His only hope is in religion; and his religion is that which is the direct opposite of 'the way of the world.' The way of the world is self-assertion: the way of religion is self-sacrifice. The way of the world is the way of grasping for material ends: the way of religion is the way of the spirit, and, as Paul said, 'the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, truth, meekness, temperance.' 'Against such,' said Paul, 'there is no law': and against such no one would want to go to war.

It seems a little contradictory, but it is a fact, that the student of Spiritualism on the practical side wins special enlightenment from the finer forces and activities of the body. In fact, there is a sense in which it is true that a study of Spiritualism ends in a study of those finer forces and activities. At this stage of our existence we are by no means spirits that have bodies as 'tabernacles' or tools only. We are spirits that are at present strangely blended with bodies, and the disentangling is not always easy. Many states of mind, as we call them, are in truth only or mainly states of body.

This is very largely true of children, who are often painfully misunderstood and even cruelly treated, simply for want of knowledge about nerves. A 'naughty' child is, as often as not, a brain-irritated child. It needs, not a beating, but a day or two with its nice grandmother in the country. An 'obstinate' child is, as often as not, a brain-stupified child, as a writer in 'The Family Doctor' once pointed out in the following passage which deserves consideration:—

A friend once told me how, when a child, she was one day kept without food, and sent to bed hungry and exhausted, for not reciting some lines by heart, the punishment being inflicted on the supposition that she was wilfully obstinate. She said that she does not now think herself to have been naturally obstinate, speaking generally; and in this particular instance, she added: 'But what no one knew then, and what I know as a fact, was that after refusing to do what was required, and bearing anger and threats in consequence, I lost the power to do it. I became stone. The will was petrified, and I absolutely could not comply.' She expressed the conviction that the obstinacy was not in the mind, but on the nerves, and that what we call obstinacy in children, and in grown people, too, is often something of this kind, and that it may be increased by mismanagement or persistence, or what is called firmness in the controlling power, into disease or something near to it.

Known chiefly, or only, in a pleasant little world, in that great world of America, is Isabel Frances Bellows, whose poetry, delicate and thoughtful, sometimes comes our way to charm us. We have just been reminded of the following, on 'The Little Pilgrim':—

O little pilgrim, whither art thou going?
The way is long and steep;
Dark is the night, and all the winds are blowing.
Yet I the path must keep.

Turn, little pilgrim, turn thy footsteps weary,
For thou wilt miss thy way;
The path is lost in fog, the heights are dreary!
Ah! but I would not stay.

O foolish pilgrim, what will be thy pleasure
When thou hast reached the goal?
Lonely thou art, and weary beyond measure.
Yet I will trust my soul.

What dost thou see that thou, without repining,
Dost go upon thy way?
Before mine eyes a star is softly shining
That makes the darkness day;

And in mine ears the words of saints and sages
Ring louder than the storm;
And, though without the chilly night wind rages,
My heart with love is warm.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines.)

O Thou who art Love and who dwellest in love! teach us herein to be followers of Thee, as dear children. Never may we shut our hearts against the sorrows of even the unthankful and the evil. Make us ministers of Thy tender mercy, to soothe the wretched, to lift the penitent, to seek and to save the lost; till all shall at length know themselves Thy children, and be one with each other and with Thee. Amen.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held at the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, DECEMBER 20TH,
WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MRS. PAGE HOPPS,
ON

'Cross Currents in Passive Writing.'

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.

Prospective Arrangements for the New Year.

MONDAY, January 14th.

PROFESSOR W. F. BARRETT, F.R.S., on 'The History and Mystery of the so-called Divining or Dowsing Rod.' With Lantern Illustrations. At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

THURSDAY, February 7th.

MME. E. D'ESPÉRANCE. (Subject to be announced later.)

THURSDAY, February 21st.

REV. J. PAGE HOPPS, on 'Evolution and Spiritualism: The Story of a Response.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

THURSDAY, March 7th.

REV. TYSSUL DAVIS, on 'Spiritualism as a National Religion.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

FRIDAY, March 22nd.

MR. G. R. S. MEAD, on 'The Gospel of the Gnosis.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

THURSDAY, April 4th.

ALDERMAN D. S. WARD, on 'Psychic Phenomena, Sacred and Secular.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

THURSDAY, April 18th.

REV. ADDISON A. CHARLESWORTH, on 'What is Man?' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

THURSDAY, May 2nd.

MRS. LAURA I. FINCH, on 'The Psychology of Mediumship—Some Recent Experiments.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

THURSDAY, May 16th.

MR. J. W. BOULDING, on 'Philosophy versus Spiritualism, with Illustrations from Personal Experiences.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S-LANE, W.C.,
FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, the 18th inst., Mrs. A. Webb will give illustrations of clairvoyance 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.

TRANCE ADDRESS.—On Wednesday next, the 19th inst., Mr. E. W. Wallis will deliver an Address at 6 p.m., on 'Family Life in Spirit Land,' to Members and Associates—no tickets required.

PSYCHIC CULTURE.—Mr. Frederic Thurstan, M.A., will kindly conduct a class for Members and Associates for psychic culture

and home development of mediumship, on the afternoon of Thursday next, December 20th, at 4.30 p.m. There is no fee or subscription.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, the 21st inst., at 3 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to Spiritualism, mediumship, life here and on 'the other side.' This meeting is free to Members and Associates, who may introduce non-members on payment of 1s. each. Visitors should be prepared with written questions of general interest to submit to the control.

RECOGNISED MATERIALISED FORMS.

In a recent issue of 'Reason' the Editor, the Rev. B. F. Austin, B.A., gave the following report of materialisation phenomena which he witnessed at Toledo, Ohio, a Mr. Johnson being the medium. Mr. Austin says:—

'The conditions seemed perfect. . . Mr. Johnson requested me to place him under test conditions. He used a bedroom adjoining a small sitting room (where the circle gathered) as his cabinet. I saw that there was no entrance to this bedroom save the open door between the rooms, over which hung the curtain, and another door which I locked and sealed. The windows were securely barred.

'Soon the forms began to appear, singly, and sometimes in groups, each one manifesting such perfection of form, feature, and dress as I have never witnessed before. I had seen great numbers of forms in many sésances, and many wonderful and demonstrative materialisations; but for beauty and perfection of the materialised body this sésance surpassed any I ever witnessed.

'A nurse, one of the guides, came out in such good light, and with such strength and power of speech, as to make it seem impossible to regard her as other than mortal. She conversed and answered questions with great ease and self-possession. Then came a little boy, who was readily recognised by the father, mother, and sister present, all of whom knelt down on the floor to receive in turn his embraces, his kisses, and his loving words of greeting. They formed a very pretty picture—earth and heaven meeting—as they held their family love-feast in our midst. Then came two of the guides—divinely beautiful—leading out the entranced medium and walking with him around the circle.

'Many similar manifestations were given, all of which were distinctly recognised, and all were able to converse more or less with their expectant friends. But the most interesting and lovely of all—to me at least—was that sweet child-angel who passed out of our college home nine years ago—Kathleen, the idol of our hearts.

'The curtains parted and there she stood in a dress of white glistening raiment, with a small bonnet of some silky texture upon her head, fastened with a bow of ribbon under her chin, with her golden ringlets hanging to the shoulders, her blue eyes lit with the light of life and love, her lips just parted with a dawning smile, her face glowing with eager interest and a look of pleasant surprise! But only for an instant, for she rushed speedily across the room to me—a vision of heavenly beauty surpassing, it seems to me, one's fondest dreams and imaginings.

'Four times she came out; once only did she cross the room; and when kneeling near the curtain for her second coming, a sister, long since a dweller in spirit land, and in whose charge the angel-child has been since her birth into spirit life, stood so near the curtain that I saw her plainly. Reaching through the parted curtain she tapped me lovingly on the shoulder and gave me a message to those still in the body.

'It is impossible to do justice in words to such a sésance or to such intercourse with the "heavenly ones." Happy the man whose mind and heart are open to the fact of angel visits. Happier still are those whose lot it is to meet a medium like Mr. Johnson!'

SPIRITUALISM SPREADING IN SPAIN.—The 'Daily News' recently published an interview with Don Enrique Blanco, B.A., who is engaged in Protestant mission work in the South of Spain, and who is at present in England seeking to raise funds for the extension of his work. In reply to a question as to the general attitude of the Spanish people, he said that they are 'growing tired of the formality and the excessive claims' of the Church of Rome, and that while some of them 'drift into atheism, a larger number turn to Spiritualism.' We are glad of it. There is hope for Spain if its people become intelligent Spiritualists—for Spiritualism naturally leads to an active, hopeful, and progressive life, both individually and collectively.

'TEKEL, OR THE WONDERLAND OF THE BIBLE.'

That there is a large portion of the public who will be interested in this able and original exegesis of the Old Testament* (of which I only intend to treat), is certain, though the exegesis is neither scholarly nor learned. There are plenty of theological works to meet the more intellectual readers and students. 'Tekel' is not written for them, nor for symbolists and analogists. It is, however, for those of the many to whom it is addressed, an eloquent and remarkable discourse.

The author seems to greatly desire to try to vindicate the majesty of Almighty God from the stigma of cruelty and injustice, which the belief in the actual and literal interpretation must necessarily involve. Thousands of Christians, it would seem, who consider themselves in full possession of the understanding of the Scriptures, read them with the fullest allegiance to every word. To such Christians this volume will be of use, pointing out as it does, in an admirably connected and carefully sequential manner, how impossible it must be that the commands and injunctions in the Old Testament can be literally interpreted as the Voice of God. The inner voice of man must resent such travesty of Divine Utterance—and it does; but it intuitively seeks for another reading.

The author's thoughts on the Book of Job are profound and just, full of suggestion, leading the reader to discover, that behind all the terrible story he has been relating, unveiling, as he courageously and firmly does, the horrible narrative of cruelty and crime that the literal history of the Jews undoubtedly is, there is a deeper meaning; and he well perceives that the true majesty and Wisdom of Divinity lies in the inner meaning, pointing this out by quoting Job, who shows it forth to his friends while combating their worldly philosophy, which comforts him not.

Now Spiritualists, as a rule, are well versed in a different and higher interpretation, but their materialist friends are not; a study of this book, therefore, will cover all the arguments which those friends could adduce against the Scriptures and also of that large class who are under the mistaken idea that the English, French, German, or other equivalent is the actual 'jot or tittle' which under pain of damnation is not to be altered, and to whom the God of the Jews is the only Almighty. These readers altogether forget the other assertion, that the letter is Death, the spirit Life.

Before closing this notice I should like for a moment to cross lances with Mr. Gow, who, in his able review of Mr. Waite's poem, 'Strange Houses of Sleep,' in 'LIGHT' of November 10th, says: 'It is curious to what an extent the old theological idea of the fall of man obsesses the thought of some mystics.' I should correct this into 'possesses the thought of all mystics.'

Mr. Gow then quotes a wonderful line: 'Man's royal nature unto shame was brought.' To my mind these fine synthetic words epitomise the grand hope of the future of mankind. The 'reversion to original type,' to use the scientific phrase of the day, is a return to the archangelic type—the first Adam! And this glorious doctrine is the underlying key-note which sounds so sonorously from cover to cover in Mr. Waite's poem; in a different one, indeed, from the book I have been reviewing; nevertheless, while the mystic poet sings in his poetic language of the inner wisdom latent in the 'royal nature of man now brought to shame,' the author of 'Tekel' feels darkly after that great Wisdom in which he ardently believes, as is evident from his anxiety to show forth the unwisdom of the foolish 'obsession' of clinging to the letter, and thus causing the irreverence towards the Bible with which it is possible a careless reader may unjustly charge the author.

ISABELLE DE STRIGER.

* 'Tekel, or the Wonderland of the Bible.' By J. HORTON. London: Philip Welby, 6, Henrietta-street, W.C. Price 6s. net.

Bristol.—'E. M.' will be pleased to meet with mediums or Spiritualists in Bristol, with a view to joining a circle. Letters may be sent to 'E. M.,' care of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C.

AT THE GATE OF DEATH.

Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co. have recently published an anonymous work entitled 'The Gate of Death: a Diary' (price 6s. net.), which purports to be the experiences, reflections, and speculations of a literary man who was twice very near death, first as the result of an accident and again from a chill caught through exposure during convalescence. While slowly 'climbing back into life' he occupied himself by writing down his experiences as nearly as he could remember them, with subsequent reflections on life, death, religion, and other matters. Thus the book is discursive and interesting, rather than profound. The author's initial views are thus set forth:—

'One's idea of death is that one slips out of the body, but that one's mind and memory must still be one's own. I have often thought that death, by closing all the avenues of sensation, might leave one for a time insensible to all impressions, in a blind and deaf condition. I have always believed in the preservation of identity, and I have sometimes wondered whether the reason why the spirits of the dead have no power of communicating with the spirits of the living may not be that the soul that has suffered death may have to learn its new conditions, just as a child born into the world spends weeks in a kind of insensibility to outward impressions.'

And so the author rambles on, founding vague surmises on faulty assumptions, and drawing incomplete conclusions; he never seems to 'get on with his dying,' or to have anything beyond the preliminary experiences which are recorded in biographies and death-bed narratives. Many of his sensations are those of the body in its struggle to retain its grip on life: 'I was like a man holding on to a rock-ledge, knowing that a fall means death, and instinctively intent on nothing else but clinging as long as he can.' It was not that he feared death; he merely 'watched life as a man might watch an expiring flame, absorbed in the wonder whether it would be extinguished or not.'

Reviewing his past life, he found that he cared nothing for personal successes and position achieved, nor about having laboured steadily and conscientiously, nor even that he had tried to discern and follow the will of God:—

'In that hour it was revealed to me that I could not have done otherwise; that all my life, success and failure alike, had been but a minute expression of that supreme will and thought. What I did care about was the thought that I had made a few happier, that I had done a few kindnesses, that I had won some love. I was glad that there had been occasions when I had conquered natural irritability and selfish anxiety, had said a kind and an affectionate thing. Rectitude and prudence seemed to matter nothing: what oppressed me was the thought that I might have been readier to do little deeds of affection, to have been more unselfish, more considerate.'

The author has, at times and for long periods together, had the sense of direct union with higher spiritual life, or with God—the experience of the mystic consciousness. Yet at other times he doubts even the reality of this experience. On other points he has similar difficulty in coming to a clear decision; he tells us that death is 'a sudden unaccountable disruption and suspension of familiar life,' which brings one 'into contact with something infinitely great, ancient, remote, marvellous,' and 'obliterates all familiar trains of thought, habits, and ideas,' and says (p. 54):—

'Just as I cannot conceive of the annihilation of existing matter, neither can I conceive of the annihilation of what I call vital force and consciousness. The life that animates matter is, to my mind, fully as real and actual as matter itself. As to consciousness, that is a different question, because life can certainly exist, as in the case of a person stunned by a blow, when consciousness does not exist, or when, at all events, the memory of consciousness does not exist afterwards. It may be that consciousness is dependent upon the union of life and matter, but I believe with all my heart in the indestructibility of life, and that when I die, when my body moulders into dust, the life that animated it is as much in existence as it was before. Further than this I dare not go, because all the evidence seems to point to a suspension of consciousness after death.'

We think that the author's main fallacy lies in the virtual identification of consciousness with subsequent remembrance. A hypnotised person has a consciousness which he exhibits by

his action in response to suggestion, and when again hypnotised he may be conscious, through memory, of those experiences; but in the waking state he has no remembrance of them. Thus consciousness is not to be determined by the ordinary waking memory, nor is it confined to those things of which we can give an intelligible account afterwards. Yet the hypnotised man may be aware of his waking experiences, and his hypnotic consciousness is therefore more continuous than his waking one. Just so, after death, we shall probably remember our earth-life, including, perhaps, many things which we cannot now recall to memory. The after-death consciousness is probably far superior, both in memory and powers of perception, to that which is associated with the physical brain.

Some *obiter dicta* on funeral rites, and on the peevish way in which the religion of Love is taught to bored or frightened children, are excellent, though not always germane to the subject of the book. But on the whole the author records his experiences frankly, thoughtfully, and therefore in a way which cannot fail to interest the reader and impress him with a sense of their reality.

MAN AND THE UNIVERSE.

We have already, in our issue of November 17th, reviewed Mr. J. Denham Parsons' new book, 'The Nature and Purpose of the Universe' (London: T. Fisher Unwin, price 21s. net.), but as we then referred principally to its bearings on the spiritualistic theory, we think that some further account of it may be acceptable to our readers.

It is Man, and not the Universe, that is the real theme of Mr. Parsons' book. He propounds twenty-four 'theses,' in which he lays down the requisites for a reasonable philosophy, and defines mind, personality and consciousness. His twentieth thesis may serve, in addition to what we have already said, to indicate his views on the after-death state:—

'If man survive the death of his flesh and blood body, his subliminal and automatic consciousness and all its wonderful powers and its perfect memory, a memory unaffected by injury to such body and thus presumably registered upon a more subtle body, will, like the rightful territory of a young ruler who though born and bred thereon has not previously taken possession thereof, be at the disposal of his supraliminal consciousness to a much greater extent and to a much greater degree than is now possible.'

Other theses are to the effect that our material plane is but one of many, and that 'any increase in the number or power of our senses could not but reveal to us another world or plane interpenetrating the one we now know.' Thus there is nothing surprising in the existence of clairvoyance and other psychic faculties. Mr. Parsons truly says that 'it cannot be proven that the so-called dead do not survive in some such world or plane,' and he thinks there is adequate ground for assuming that they do survive, and evolve, and continue to reap what they have sown.

As the Universe must be founded upon reason and order, Mr. Parsons infers that the 'sub-humans' (animals) must play an essential part in the carrying out of its reasonable purpose. The inequality and seeming injustice in the lot of men and animals 'could not but be adjusted were there an unending progression of finite mind or life towards the mind or life which is Universal and Infinite.' The purpose of the Universe must be 'the begetting and perfecting of mental personalities,' and these, he thinks, must be produced in the first place as 'irrational souls' and afterwards born with reasoning power, as human beings, though even then the earth plane is no more than a 'nursery for rational souls.'

In his elaboration of these various theses, Mr. Parsons dives deep into past and present systems of philosophy, and confronts Aristotle and Kant with Lao-tze and St. Paul. Haeckel is convicted of having inadequately stated the 'riddle of the universe,' and Rationalists are assured that the author's theory of the universe is too coherent to be irrational.

Mr. Parsons discusses at great length Christian doctrine, principally according to St. Paul and Justin Martyr, and shows that the ancient Egyptians, as well as St. Paul, had a clear

conception of continued existence in a spiritual and incorruptible body upon another plane. He even carries the war on reincarnation into the enemy's camp, and makes this assertion:—

'In the sacred scriptures of the Brahmins, the Vedas, no such thing as a theory of reincarnation is set forth. On the contrary, the Vedas show the settlers from Central Asia to have been worshippers of Nature who enjoyed their lives, prayed that their sojourn here might be prolonged, and desired that, similarly embodied and as their own proper selves, without loss of memory or personality, they might be granted a life to come; a vastly different point of view from that of the post-Vedic philosophies as set forth to-day.'

The idea of reincarnation, however, appeals to the author in one sense, namely, as a theory 'that the human is the result of the reincarnation of the sub-human and of the progress of a finite mind upward through lower forms of embodiment to the highest form known to us,' and he thinks that this is 'far less unreasonable' than any of the theories of the reincarnation of souls already human. As for the animals, or 'sub-humans,' he considers that many of them 'are sufficiently sentient and self-conscious for a future life of some sort to be necessary for them if justice is to be done,' and that reincarnation of animals as human beings would at the same time do justice and solve the double problem of the future of animals and the preliminary development of the human soul.

Mr. Parsons enters at great length into the problems of mind, consciousness, and survival, and dismisses T. J. Hudson's theory of two minds, of which the one capable of inductive reasoning is a function of the physical brain, and incapable of surviving bodily death. Such a condition, he points out, would be no survival of the true human personality. His general conclusion is that mental personality, like the bodily structure, is the result of evolution through ages; that it is one and indivisible, and may express itself through various bodies on different planes, its expression on each plane being limited by the finite and imperfect nature of the body through which it acts on that plane. Thus the brain is merely the instrument of the personality for use on the physical plane; and the author thinks that the personality, after the change called death, 'can awake to altered conditions of existence, which mainly consist in having to use a less grossly material counterpart of our known body upon a less grossly material plane than our present appreciable environment; a counterpart that already exists, and a plane that to it will be just as material or apparently substantial as the plane now known to us seems to us as now circumstanced.' His explanation of sleep is not very clear, but he seems to think that the self-consciousness, then centred in the finer body, ceases during sleep to issue orders to the automatic consciousness which resides in and controls the physical body, and leaves it free to repair the body and renew its powers.

Mr. Parsons thinks that man is 'the creature of suggestion,' and that the training of children is one long course of suggestion exercised by parents and surroundings. 'The automatization of the subliminal half of the mind' is the key to habits and character, and it is the duty of the evolving personality to choose what suggestions it will give or encourage, and to create new or reverse old tendencies in the subliminal or automatic consciousness. Post-hypnotic suggestion for the cure of bad habits is said to be effective in proportion as the waking consciousness genuinely desires a cure. The problem of free will is bound up with the fact that we cannot throw away the result of past choosings; 'every decision of man's supraliminal consciousness is a choice which helps to mould his mental personality,' and 'only what we persistently will, day by day and year by year, really determines our action under any given circumstances; our free choice at the time being over determined by whole hosts of earlier free choosings.'

The closing section of the book is devoted to the higher aspects of man's nature and destiny; the author insists strongly on one universal, omnipresent Existence, which 'thought the material universe into being' for the purpose of forming and perfecting finite mental personalities, whose object should not be self-effacing absorption but rather self-fulfilment by aiding others, and so assisting in the progress of the finite towards

the Infinite. Though the author is no mystic, he recognises an 'eternal purpose of a mind Universal' which, 'can alone account for the ubiquitous dominance of abiding law,' and 'a great scheme embracing all things existent,' a scheme 'traceable to an Uttered Word and a Thought Unspent whose offspring we are,' and involving continued life for the reasoning personality, and unceasing 'progress in powers and qualities which ennoble and in activities that bless.'

If we do not always agree with Mr. Parsons' opinions in detail, we may heartily sympathise with his main object of upholding the spiritual conception of the universe, and of man's destiny, as against the material one, and we only wish that he had accorded a higher place to intuition; reason is sometimes a terribly roundabout and uncertain method of arriving at truth, as is exemplified by Mr. Parsons' involved arguments and sometimes bewildering phraseology. We think that on these subjects enlightened intuition is the higher faculty, the safer and truer guide.

THE PASSING OF 'SALADIN.'

William Stewart Ross, better known as 'Saladin,' Editor of the 'Agnostic Journal' and author of 'The Book of At Random,' 'God and His Book,' 'Lays of Romance and Chivalry,' and numerous other books and pamphlets, passed, on November 30th, to the search for Truth on a higher plane. No great study of 'Saladin's' writings is needed to show that he was pre-eminently a truth-seeker, and all truth-seekers have the sympathy of Spiritualists. His agnosticism consisted in the belief that we cannot really *know*, because, on this plane of existence, we have neither means to discover nor criteria to appreciate the nature of Reality. Thus he wrote:—

'I am no Sadducee. I do not know that man shall live again; but I feel that he will. This is not a matter of positive science, but of psychic vision. It is in us to outgrow our present planes of comprehension. We may know God when we become more Godlike. What I antagonise is the popular creed which has given us a crude, anthropomorphic deity, the belief in whom is intellectually impossible. I antagonise not the psychical aspiration to God; but I hate the public and conventional worship of a God that anthropomorphically has been handed down to us from savages.'

'The theistic conception, apart from the orthodox monstrosity, is not incompatible with even the most advanced psychological science. . . . In the arcanum of our being, religion has, perhaps, the right to an even grander province than that assigned to Science. But let the Religion be up to the highest manhood of the Present hour, not the mythological rags and tatters of a remote and savage Past. I earnestly ask with Emerson: "Why should we grope among the dry bones of the dead past, and put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe?"'

Again, he considered that there was—

'No region of speculation, overt or occult, that does not concern, and profoundly concern, the Agnostic. Only on such occult planes, Agnosticism admits, and reverently admits, the incompetency of its *gnosis*; and where Christian orthodox—if not even Theosophy—dogmatizes, Agnosticism admits "I do not know." . . . The Agnostic is not so profoundly impressed with what he knows as with the consciousness of the abysmal depth of the arcanum which, on his present plane of being, he cannot know.'

Our good friend Mr. James Robertson, writing in 'The Two Worlds' for last week, refers to 'Saladin's' poetical nature, from which, 'when he gave full play to his intuitions, there oftentimes streamed forth a flood of spiritual thought.' 'Saladin' was formerly a not unfrequent visitor at our conferences and conversaciones, and has long been a close friend of that highly esteemed veteran Spiritualist, Mr. Andrew Glendinning. Let us congratulate him on having reached a plane on which Agnosticism is impossible and where his ardent spirit cannot but progress in true Knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.—We have received a five-dollar bill with the request that it shall be given to Mme. M. The request shall be at once complied with, but we wish we could at the same time communicate the name of the donor, who, however, has withheld both name and address.

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

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15th, 1906.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assistant Editors ... E. W. WALLIS and J. B. SHIPLEY.

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, Italy, &c., 13 francs 86 centimes. To Germany, 11 marks 25pfgr.

Wholesale Agents: MESSRS. SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT AND CO., LTD., 23, PATERNOSTER-ROW, London, E.C., and can be ordered through all Newsagents and Booksellers.

AN ORIGINAL.

'Charles Godfrey Leland: A Biography'; by Elizabeth Robins Pennell (London: A. Constable and Co.), is a work that should gladden the hearts of all Occultists, Spiritualists, Psychical Researchers, Folk-Loreists, Theosophists, and Romany Ryes. It is in two handsome volumes, and covers an enormous deal of ground, for Leland was a restless creature both physically and mentally, and was always and in all senses on the wing.

He is best known as the writer of the Hans Breitmann ballads, but that caused him a simmer of worry. 'I don't dislike my "Breitmann Ballads,"' he said, 'indeed I love many of them, but I am sometimes highly pained when I find that people know nothing else about me, have never heard of my "Practical Education," or what I have done in Industrial Art, Language, Tradition, &c. So that when anybody begins by "loading up" on the Breitmann, I cannot help a mild *despise*.'

Leland was indeed a voluminous writer. In addition to unrecorded hundreds of magazine articles, a list of his books is given in this work, covering four pages. But his true line was gypsying and ferreting into magic, witchcraft, sorcery and charms: and this work is full of such things, but not discussed in a solemn scientific way, rather in the way of a glorified tinker and tramp. He was devoted to this business from his birth. A weird story is told by himself of a kind of witch baptism of him by his old nurse, who carried him up to an attic and left him there with a Bible, a key and a knife on his breast, and lighted candles, money and a plate of salt at his head, 'rites that were to make luck doubly certain by helping him to rise in life, and become a scholar and a wizard';—a baptism after his own heart! and very effective, for he lived to be called Master by witches and gypsies, and to be not only a student of witchcraft with the impersonal curiosity of the scholar, but a practiser of it with the zest of the initiated: and old Philadelphia was the very place for developing all that.

He travelled much, and, though he had 'the best society' open to him, he always drifted tinker and gypsy way. His biographer says of him, when in London; 'Whatever his social amusement may have been from time to time, I think his real relaxation was in his afternoon tramps. Sometimes we went gypsying; and everywhere he was carried straight to strange adventures and strange coincidences. He was continually poring over amulets,

charms, crystals, magic mirrors, records of incantations, Shelta vocabularies, gypsy talk and old songs: and seemed to be constantly in contact with the wonderland that everywhere hovers about our earthly commonplace. He believed that behind all so-called superstitions there lurked tremendous powers, and thought there was 'a great field in Voodoo.' He tells several stories of a certain felicitous working 'most delightful miracles.'

But it must not be supposed that he was possessed with this subject to the exclusion of others. His thoughts went far afield, and his moods were as varied as his studies. He was a healthy anti-pessimist. One of his many schemes was the publication of a 'Gospel of Joyousness,' and he actually did publish a book entitled 'Sunshine in Thought.' 'It was all directed,' he said, 'against the namby-pamby pessimism, "lost Edens and buried Lenores," and similar weak rubbish which had then begun to manifest itself in literature, and which I foresaw was in future to become a great curse.'

He deprecated excessive mourning for 'the dead.' In a letter to a friend he mentioned the old Norse belief that if we unduly lament for the dead they are made restless, and are tormented with our tears: and he very wisely said, 'As regards terrible bereavements there is but one thing to do—to draw nearer to those who remain, or whatever is near and dear to us in life, and love them the more, and become gentler and better ourselves, making more of what is left. . . Weak and simple minds grieve most,—melancholy becomes a kind of painful indulgence, and finally a deadly habit.' 'Work,' he added, 'was the great remedy.' Wise, pathetic and gracious words, these!

Unfortunately, a MS. of some 200 pages, giving his anxious and matured thoughts concerning Religion, was lost, but enough remains, in a long letter to a friend, to convey some idea of its beautiful hopefulness and strong sense. He himself had great hope of it and called it 'a higher, clearer, more definite and more humane form of the Religion of Humanity than anyone has yet set forth.'

Here is a glimpse of it:—'The object and aim and end of religion should be to make people better—to induce them to work and develop all their powers, and never to rest in seeking and realising the *ideals* of all things, and the road to this is by Love,—by mutual aid and worship. . . The Infinite Source is and always will be unknown. No one has ever proved or disproved theism or atheism. Only that there are Ideals of everything—*this* we know—and that our *best* in all things consists in seeking and developing in every way these Ideals.' Then he adds this suggestive and brilliant generalisation; '*Nothing is till it is formed*, and the Infinite Glory and the Fearful Beauty and Tremendous Splendour of God the Unknown are first put into form in man's mind. Now are not we, who form such thoughts, forms of God, the Infinite Unknown Will which is always bursting into life and reality in myriad-million forms—in every motion of matter? We are.'

He was conscious of spirit guidance and of that strange subtle something which ever enfolds and interpenetrates the sensitive spirit. 'Wherever I go,' he says, 'in all sorts of gaiety, I am always oppressed with a dim, mysterious feeling that this is, after all, but for a time. There are times when I am rolled back, as if by a retreating surge, into the depths of that mysterious Pantheistic philosophy which, when it has once touched the soul, influences it for ever and ever. Voices seem to say, Thou art ours—thou art ours; and ever and anon I fall back on the philosophy of the Absolute stronger than ever.'

This is but a small harvesting from a wide and wealthy field. It may serve to interest inquiring and thoughtful minds in a book of singular vivacity, originality and power.

TENNYSON AND HIS MESSAGE :

IN RELATION TO THE DIVINE IMMANENCE, THE EVOLUTION OF MAN, AND A FUTURE LIFE.

BY THE REV. JOHN OATES.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday evening, November 22nd, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall; Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 585.)

The slow progress and the final consummation in the finished humanity, is the theme of the following poems. In 'By an Evolutionist' the body on its physical side is supposed to be the product of matter when the soul of the man asks of the Almighty, 'Am I your debtor?' :-

'And the Lord, "Not yet, but make it as clean as you can,
And then I will let you a better."'

But if the soul be identical with matter then why seek to be different? :-

'Why not bask amid the senses, while the sun
Of morning shines?'

There is no room for lofty ideals and moral aims in materialism. If God and immortality are fictions why not live a life of mere sensations? If soul is matter there is no moral reason why it should not live in the 'stable' of being, with the 'hounds'! But old age affirms that it has starved the beast within, and gives the secret of the process :-

'Hold the sceptre, human Soul, and rule thy
Province of the brute.'

Thus the evil may be coerced and expelled. Conscience must be crowned and obeyed. The final result appears in the partly spiritual man :-

'But I hear no yelp of the beast, and the Man is quiet at last
As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a
height that is higher.'

Again, in the poem 'The Dawn,' as the poet catalogues the evils of our social life, he sees clearly that we are only yet in the dawn :-

'Dawn not Day,'

with just enough light to reveal the many in the dens of being. But are not the liberated few prophets of the many? Is not dawn the promise of day? Yes, and the poet thinks there is time 'for the race to grow,' and to lay the ghost of the brute that haunts us :-

'In a hundred, a thousand winters? Ah, what
Will our children be?'

And in 'The Play' we find an answer to the question with which 'The Dawn' closed, as well as an answer to the series of questions in the poem 'Vastness' :-

'Our Playwright may show
In some fifth Act what this wild Drama means.'

Then in the poem entitled 'The Making of Man,' he draws the curtain and we seem to see the playwright at work shaping the last act in the human drama. Ages have passed and generations have played their part. Very slow is the great law of progress. Vast forces of the supernatural, annexing the results of human experience, are moulding man into rhythmic order :-

'Shall not soon after soon pass and touch him into shape?'

Then slowly, grandly, in the far away time the ultimate man emerges crowned in the midst of creation, a symmetrical soul in which the harmonies blend in the sublime anthem :-

'Hallelujah to the Maker.' 'It is finished—Man is made.'

This assurance of the final triumph of good over evil, the evolution of the perfect man, rises again in clear ringing cadence in all the later poems. But observe there is for man a condition of attainment which the poet enforces in 'The Dreamer,' 'Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After,' 'Merlin and the Gleam.' The condition lies in the persistency expressed in the poem 'Will,' and repeated in the following poems.

And first 'The Dreamer.' The dreamer, haunted by the sacred text, 'The meek shall inherit the earth,' falls asleep, when the earth-spirit creeps by wailing her lost youth and faded vision, and clashing battles and contending classes, and gloomy doubts, and hollow graves, a very dirge of pessimism, but the dreamer answers the wail with a song of the coming triumph, and seizes the refrain of the earth-spirit and sets it to the music of hope :-

'Whirl, and follow the Sun!'

It is the lesson of persistence; stagnation is death, but motion is life. The law of progress is slow but sure, and man must work with the law if he would come to his best. Behind all the brooding darkness there is a sun, flashing his beams into the shivering night. The man must not doubt his destiny, but in the orbit of duty, 'Whirl, and follow the Sun.'

In 'Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After,' when that passionate outburst of pessimism which denounces the social evils of the times and betrays the mistrust of old age in *demos* subsides, the poet returns to his normal meliorism and the unclouded vision of the splendid destiny of man. The bells ring out again across the stormy scenes of the vast struggle, glad peals of hope, with the ever-changing chimes of will and resolution and persistence :-

'Follow light and do the right, for man can half control his
doom,

Till you find the deathless angel seated in the vacant tomb.'

Again, in 'Merlin and the Gleam,' the pure idealism of the poet is expressed, and the lesson of persistence reiterated. The interest of the poem, however, lies in its autobiography. It is a series of pictures of the life-work of the poet. It portrays his changing moods, and gives his peaceful outlook when on the border of boundless ocean. As the grey Magician the poet addresses the young Mariner, to whom he recounts the story of his life. He tells how in youth, when his soul was sleeping, the wizard, the spirit of poetry, found him, and 'learned me magic,' and set before him a pure and lofty ideal which he strove to realise. At first the way was beautiful, but soon the path was darkened, for the critics croaked :-

'A demon vex me,
The light retreated.'

But he obeyed the whispered voice and followed the gleam, when it led him on through fairy scenes of Nature, with her many-voiced music, into the region of human life, with its varied interests, until it brought him to the world of romance when it inspired the 'Idylls of the King.' Then the shadow fell again :-

'Arthur had vanish'd
I knew not whither,
The king who loved me,
And cannot die.'

The reference is to Arthur Hallam and is skilfully woven into the passing of the Arthur of romance. His sorrow had caused the gleam to wane 'to a wintry glimmer,' but it gave a new meaning to life, touched its finest chords and voiced the 'yearningly tender' song of 'In Memoriam.' Then the shadow passed into the gleam and was clothed with it.

As he grew older the gleam grew 'broader and brighter' and his songs were filled with light and with music of hope.

Old age creeps upon him, but he still follows the gleam. The grave blooms with flowers and he can die rejoicing :-

'And all but in Heaven
Hovers the Gleam.'

He concludes with a message to the young Mariner of a restless age, face to face with the sea of life, to be persistent and not to trust the material lights, but the pure idealism of the soul :-

'After it, follow it,
Follow The Gleam.'

The lesson is repeated in the poem entitled 'Faith,' as it takes up the glad note of progress and sings of the golden age. It rebukes the agnosticism that hugs its doubts and the pessimism that darkens life with the shadow of the tragedy wrought by the resistless energy of Nature. In the midst of its wild forces and in the glare of human passion we are not to

forget that we are being evolved; the work is unfinished and there 'is a gleam of what is higher.'

'Silent Voices' fittingly concludes the series on the evolution of man. It is a glad song sung by the shore of the deep from under the falling shadow of death, wherein we hear the clear swelling notes of the complete triumph of the spiritual over the material.

The human soul has wrought out the evil of the flesh and now stands by the silent sea waiting for the calling of the voices to the wider vision and the richer life of a more glorious day :—

'Glimmering up the heights beyond me
On, and always on !'

III.—MAN.—HIS IMMORTALITY.

We come now to the third and last message of the poet relative to a Future Life or the Immortality of the Human Spirit.

The following poems illustrate in part his teaching on this important subject of the persistence of personality, or the survival of spirit after death :—'In Memoriam,' 'The Two Voices,' 'The Voice and the Peak,' 'The Grandmother,' 'Vastness,' 'The Ancient Sage.'

First, he finds an argument for the future life in the pure justice of God :—

'Thou wilt not leave us in the dust
Thou madest man, he knows not why :
He thinks he was not made to die ;
And Thou hast made him : Thou art just.'

The justice of God is involved in the immortality of man. Man has the thought, and cherishes it with pathetic fervour, that he 'was not made to die.' Whence comes the thought that thus breaks the bounds of time and sense, and thinks itself part of a larger order of life—transcending the limits of the infinite? Who but the Infinite One could inspire an infinite thought in a finite mind? The thought of immortality is imbedded in the consciousness of the race, 'my mind can take no hold of the present world, nor rest in it for a moment, but my whole nature rushes on with irresistible force towards a future and better state of things.' What was thus philosophically expressed by Fichte is poetically voiced by Tennyson :—

'My own dim life should teach me this
That life shall live for evermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core
And dust and ashes all that is.'

If God be just He will not crush the seedling thought He has sown broadcast into the human mind. The very thought is a prophecy and a promise.

Second, he finds an argument for immortality, or a future life, in the inward evidence of being, thus expressed in 'The Two Voices' :—

'Who forged that other influence,
That heat of inward evidence,
By which he doubts against the sense ?

He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
That read his spirit blindly wise,
Not simple as a thing that dies.

Here sits he shaping wings to fly :
His heart forebodes a mystery :
He names the name Eternity.'

What is this 'inward evidence'? It is the sense of eternity. The soul is ever haunted with the mystery of death and with the feeling that death does not end life. As the sky bends over the earth and is its complement, so eternity domes the soul and completes the unfinished life of man. Strike out immortality and a whole host of human powers, aspirations, intuitions would find no explanation either of their origin or persistence. But the poet, along with Emerson, infers that 'when the Master of the universe has points to carry in His government, He impresses His will in the structure of minds.' God has built into the structure of the human soul this sense of eternity, and it is incredible that He should place it there without a moral purpose. Having implanted an infinite desire He will surely satisfy it with an infinite reality. The poet sees in the human soul heights and depths beyond all material

limits. The thought finds speech in 'The Voice and the Peak.' The things within the soul are larger than all without. In its instincts and intuitions and aspirations the soul is keyed to the spiritual and eternal. The voice of the Peak tells of constant change, the flux of Nature. The physical heights are drawn down into the depths of ocean :—

'They leave the heights and are troubled,
And moan and sink to their rest.'

Only to be reared again and yet not for long. The cycle of change must end and the material forms will

'Pass, and are found no more.'

But the soul is greater. It has heights beyond the mountain—its aspirations soar to God. It has depths deeper than the sea—it carries within a spiritual world, with endless tides of emotion :—

'A deep below the deep,
And a height beyond the height !'

Thus, in the 'inward evidence,' the poet finds an intimation of immortality.

Third, he finds an argument in deathless human love.

This is delicately touched in that poem of pure human feeling 'The Grandmother.'

The pathos of the poem lies in its naturalness. It is the voice of the human heart crying for those 'within the veil.' The white-haired grandmother sits and prattles of the husband of her youth and of the children who had come and gone—of the babe whose little face was troubled with pain as he fought in vain for life. Annie and Charlie and Harry are dead and yet she will have it that they are all alive :—

'They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed,
I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.'

Now that she is told of the death of her Willy there are the same tender recollections with the insistence of love in believing that there is a dawn to death :—

'For Willy I cannot weep. I shall see him another morn.'

She is old and tired and wants to rest, but her love is young as the morning. She talks of death as if it merely meant going into another room. She will go soon and find her dear ones waiting there !

'Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next ;
I, too, shall go in a minute.'

The poem, in its simplicity and pathos and naturalness, voices the pure instinct of the universal heart, that death does not end life. Whatever reason may say, when haunted with the mystery of the future, the heart is always ready with its protest and supplies its own proof of immortality :—

'And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, "I have felt."'

A large part of 'In Memoriam' is a powerful affirmation of man's immortality, but the deathlessness of love is finely focussed in Ode xxxv., wherein the poet shows that immortality is involved in the existence of love. If some trustworthy voice declared that death ends all in his narrow house, yet the poet would still want to keep love alive. Again, he would be reminded by the disintegration of Nature of the final death of love itself. In that case love would lose its sweetness and become a pain :—

'Half dead to know that I shall die.'

But the case is impossible. If love were linked to death and not to life it never could have been :—

'If death were seen
At first as death, love had not been
Or been in narrowest working shut.'

It would have remained animal and instinctive instead of becoming spiritual and perceptive. Thus the existence of love, which ever craves the object 'loved and lost awhile,' is to the poet an intimation of immortality.

Fourth, he finds an argument for a future life in our unfinished lives and unrealised aspirations.

The argument is powerfully condensed in the poem 'Vast-

ness,' wherein he sums up the utter failure of nature and human life apart from immortality :—

'What is it all, if we all of us end but in being
our own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallow'd in vastness, lost in silence, drown'd
in the deeps of a meaningless past?'

What if our philosophies and arts and sciences and human loves and noble deeds pass into eternal silence? Then God has surely mocked us and human life with its pathetic cry for fuller, richer being is but a 'a murmur of gnats in the gloom.' The poet falls back on love, and rests in it, as the deepest thing in the soul demanding immortality. Death cannot kill love nor the loved one, and, as he recalls the memory of his friend, he sings once again in the shrine of love the song of immortal life :—

'Peace, let it be ! for I loved him and love him for
ever, the dead are not dead but alive.'

Fifth, he finds an argument in the human spirit as an entity distinct from matter.

In 'The Ancient Sage' the mystic dreamer tells how his self or spirit became separated from the body and in its separation entered into life unspeakable :—

'I touched my limbs, the limbs
Were strange, not mine and yet no shade of doubt,
But utter clearness, and thro' loss of self
The gain of such large life as match'd with ours
Were sun to spark—unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.'

In such experiences, more common among the dreamers of the Orient, the poet finds a mystic hint of immortality. Indeed, a letter, penned by himself, shows that in this passage he was relating his own experience as a trance or inspirational medium. Whatever may be said of the experience, doubtless the fact that we do not think of spirit in the terms of matter becomes an argument for existence apart from matter, and is expressed in the poem.

Thus in all his works the poet protests, with glowing indignation, against the crass materialism that would resolve all of man into dust. It is incredible that the mighty forces of Nature and of civilisation should have spent themselves on the making of man, only, at last, as he rises to higher life, to use the hidden hands that made him to thrust him back into the grave of endless silence and sleep.

'What then were God to such as I ?

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,
Like birds the charming serpent draws,
To drop head-foremost in the jaws,
Of vacant darkness and to cease.'

(Great applause.)

At the close of his able Address, which was much appreciated and frequently applauded, the Rev. John Oates was accorded a very hearty vote of thanks, and the proceedings closed, as it was generally felt that any attempt at discussion would spoil the fine spiritual conditions which had been brought about by the high tone of Mr. Oates' beautiful presentation of the message of the great poet.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

On Thursday, the 6th inst., there was a very large attendance of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance at the meeting held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, when a series of papers were read embodying some of the most striking personal experiences of the six well-known mediums, Miss S. McCreadie, Mr. J. J. Vango, Mrs. Fairclough Smith, Mr. A. V. Peters, 'Clairibelle,' and Mr. Ronald Brailey. These experiences were listened to with close attention and were all highly appreciated; and, at the close, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to the writers and readers of these interesting records, which, we are pleased to say, will appear in full in early issues of 'LIGHT.'

BELFAST.—'R. D.' wishes to know if there are any readers of 'LIGHT' in Belfast who will communicate with her, and would be grateful for the opportunity of occasional interchange of thoughts on Spiritualism. Letters may be sent to 'R. D.,' care of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C.

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT.

Miss Lilian Whiting's latest book, 'From Dream to Vision of Life' (London, Gay and Bird, price 4s. 6d. net), is largely a presentation in connected form of the ideas enunciated in illuminating articles from which we have quoted from time to time; her ideas are so helpful, and her presentation of them so pertinent and encouraging that we are glad to see them collected into a book as a continuous treatment of the theme. Miss Whiting is convinced that 'in the common daily experience lies the secret of the spiritual significance of life,' and that if we look for this significance we can find it everywhere, and utilise it to increase the joy of living :—

'It is entirely possible to achieve a certain transformation of life, now and here, that enables one to live in the rose and flame of radiance and of beauty. One may as easily live in the ethereal as in the ordinary atmosphere. The ethereal atmosphere is an ever-present environment, as is that of the air. We are surrounded by beauty, which one has only to open his eyes and see. . . . To come into recognition of the ethereal realm would make the same difference in our daily lives that it would make to the deaf, dumb, and blind to have the senses of hearing and sight and the power of speech.'

Miss Whiting tells us that the existence of the ethereal world is now as much an established fact as the existence of Africa, but perhaps she is too ready to identify the 'ethereal realm' of science with that of psychology. Each is certainly existent, but their identity, or the relation between them, is not yet clearly shown. Similarly, the author rightly regards the reception of messages from the unseen as being no less a proved fact than the reception of wireless messages by one signalling station from another, or the hearing of a telephonic message from a friend at the other end of the wire. She dwells on the correspondence between the senses of the physical body and those of the spiritual or ethereal body, and regards the unseen universe as not only 'the reservoir of all the forces on which we draw for the motor power of living,' but also as 'the vast reservoir on which we may draw for companionship, for sympathy, guidance, direction, counsel.' Consequently she lays stress on the necessity for 'a clearer perception of the fact that one may live, daily and hourly, here and now, the life of the resurrected spirit,' and that through realisation of this will come 'the power to awaken from the dream into the radiance and glory of the Vision of Life.' What we like about Miss Whiting's teaching is that she lays emphasis on the certainty of spiritual truths, and invites each one to accept and utilise them for help and guidance towards the ultimate destination of the soul.

SIGNOR MARCONI AND SPIRITUALISM.

Signor Marconi's conversion to Spiritualism is the subject of a communication from the Rome correspondent of 'The Morning Leader,' of the 10th inst. It was brought about, he says, quite recently, by the Princess D'Antunni del Drago, who, besides being a convinced Spiritualist, is a remarkable medium. When the Princess first spoke to Signor Marconi about Spiritualism, he expressed his disbelief, and she invited him to assist at a séance, and he did so. She says: 'There were only myself, Signor Marconi, and the medium Politi. We formed a chain round a small table, and without telling all the phenomena we obtained, it is sufficient to say that when Signor Marconi left he was a convinced Spiritualist and quite determined to study the subject scientifically.'

DUBLIN.—'B. B.' wishes to know if there are any séances held in Dublin, and would be pleased to hear from resident Spiritualists with a view to joining a private circle. Letters may be addressed to 'B. B.,' care of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C.

REV. R. J. CAMPBELL ON THE DEVIL.—Writing in 'The Young Man' for November, in reply to a correspondent, the Rev. R. J. Campbell said: 'The Christian view of the personality of the devil seems to me to be largely coloured by Persian influences mediated through Hebrew religion. It is a sort of reminder of the ancient notion of the cosmic conflict of Ormuzd and Ahriman, light and darkness, good and evil. Of course such a dualism is really inconsistent with theism. Still, I think it is quite possible that we may be more greatly influenced by *unseen intelligences* than we are aware, both for good and evil.'

THE MONK'S PROPHECY FULFILLED.

We referred, on p. 578 of 'LIGHT,' to the remarkable prophecy said to have been uttered about three months ago by a sick monk, to the effect that he himself would die in two days, the infirmarian within a month, and Dr. Lapponi within three months. The two first deaths took place as predicted, and on Saturday morning, the 8th inst., on the very day on which our notice appeared, Dr. Lapponi himself succumbed to a malady which the 'Giornale d'Italia' describes as an internal tumour complicated by pleurisy.

Dr. Giuseppe Lapponi was born April 16th, 1851, and in 1888 was appointed consulting physician to Pope Leo XIII., whose regular attendant he became two years later. He was retained in the same position by the present Pope (Pius X.), and his influence at the Vatican was very great. In 1898 he published his book on Hypnotism and Spiritism, a second edition of which has quite recently appeared, and has been translated into various languages.

To a writer in the 'Giornale d'Italia' Dr. Lapponi said that he was a convinced Spiritualist, and that the Church was not opposed to, but explicitly admitted, direct intercourse between the spirits of the departed and the living. He further said that, when the first edition of his book appeared, Pope Leo XIII. not only authorised it to be printed but read it attentively and discussed with him the possibility of spirit manifestations through mediums, and the great mysteries which surround the supernatural world, over and above the truth revealed by religion. The late Pope was not a Spiritualist, but he neither disapproved nor condemned investigation. Dr. Lapponi deplored the unwillingness of scientific men to investigate these phenomena, and quoted Arago's phrase, that outside of pure mathematics it was imprudent to speak of anything as 'impossible.'

SELF-INDUCED 'OBSESSION.'

A correspondent in the West of England writes: 'For a long time past I have been under a force of hypnotic influence and evil wishes that have almost overwhelmed me—can you put me in touch with anyone who will help?' An inquirer, in the 'Progressive Thinker,' asks a very similar question, viz., 'How can I get free from the influence which causes me disgusting dreams and annoys me with bad odours?'

To this question Mr. Hudson Tuttle replies:—

'This is another query which comes up as aftermath from the blighting doctrine of obsession. There is nothing more pitiable than the unfortunates who are deluded into the belief that they are controlled by irresponsible spirits, to be made their jest and sport. Every passing whim is taken as due to "influence," and under this suggestive self-hypnotism, the supposed obsessing spirits are made the scapegoats of every folly, idiocy, and crime. Every physical indisposition is regarded as an annoyance by obsession, and hence the responsibility is supposed not to rest with the poor victim. It is vicarious atonement in a degraded form, and gives rise to the same dependency and want of sturdy self-reliance and the manly courage which makes one ready to accept the consequences of one's own acts. This correspondent is inclined to believe that some mischievous spirit is bent on his annoyance, while the trouble lies in indigestion, a result of vital depletion. If the body were preserved clean by hygienic diet and conditions, and the mind held to high and noble purposes, then if there were as the "obsessors" legions of depraved spirits, they could not pass even the outer gateway of the soul. If there is obsession, the obsessed are responsible. They have opened the door, and by their own folly fastened it open. No one can close it but themselves.'

LEWISHAM.—'A. M.,' an Associate of the London Spiritualist Alliance, would be pleased to become acquainted with other Spiritualists residing in or near Lewisham. Letters may be addressed to 'A. M.,' care of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C.

PALMISTRY.—'The Throne,' of December 8th, offers to palmists an opportunity to test the extent of their knowledge of palmistry and to demonstrate the accuracy of their science, if such it be, by printing a photographic reproduction of the hand, and of the lines on the palm of the hand, of a woman who has had a tragic and eventful career, and proposes to award £50 to the palmist who sends in a true reading of this remarkable hand. We shall be interested to know the result.

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.

The Return of Great Souls.

SIR,—With reference to the question recently raised in 'LIGHT' as to the reappearance and return of great souls to the earth, I should like to say that there has always been a tendency to doubt great names, and rightly so, for we are so apt to judge of the departed in the same way as we judge of great ones here. But I have found that this is an entirely erroneous attitude to take, for it is not long before the greatest souls of our own day come and reveal themselves to us, or make their presence felt, but with a remarkable change in their characteristics. They left us, perhaps, somewhat inflated with their own importance, and they return to us with a greater sense of humility. They have, as it were, lost the propensity to isolation, and have acquired a habit of thinking in terms of all; and this, I have found, becomes more and more noticeable as the spirit advances in wisdom and love, till at last it almost seems to lose consciousness of its own existence, except as in connection with the All. And truly, if greatness is anything, we would sooner have that greatness which unites than that which isolates; and I feel sure that the more we are able to acquire this method of looking upon great souls, the more likely is it that they will be able to come near to us and share our joys and sorrows. I remember one particular spirit who revealed his name to our circle some years ago; we all doubted his identity when he gave his name, although he had regularly taken part as one of the controls in our circle, under the name of 'Hope,' and as 'Hope' we all learned to love him. And then the blow came when he said who he was; and to our doubts he said, 'I am known as "St. P.," but I would have you know me as "P.," your elder brother.' When we again remonstrated with him, he replied, 'You look to us as saints; when we come back and see the order of your household, the houses in which you dwell, your clean habits, and gentle mode of life, we think of you, and the days in which we lived on earth, and think that if it had been possible for us to obtain a glimpse of you in our day we should have called you gods.' Another came and said, 'You look upon us as great; and on our day as great; but when we compare your world with our world, your schools with our schools, your books with our books, then indeed are we at a loss to comprehend you; for one scrap of your printed paper, which you throw away as valueless, would have glorified any one of us, and would have been the source of pilgrimages from distant lands, to come and gaze upon the wonder of it. It is we who should cry "saints" and "gods," and not ye.' And so while we have the tendency to idolise, they on their part have the capacity to generalise—to harmonise and piece together all experiences and glorify the powers of Evolution.—Yours, &c.,

MARIE DE MARIN BRENCHELEY.

Piccadilly Mansions,
17, Shaftesbury-avenue, W.C.

Mr. Jesse Shepard.

SIR,—There was quite a flutter of excitement in our spiritualistic circle when I announced that I had succeeded in inducing Mr. Shepard to come to Pforzheim after his visit to Berlin.

He gave a recital in a large public hall and also one of a more private nature, and both have to be pronounced as entirely successful. The piano playing was perfect and the singing caused even the most sceptical a 'frisson' of the supernatural, two distinct voices being heard at the same time.

I have now heard Mr. Shepard three times, and on each occasion the music has been different. Several persons came from Stuttgart and Karlsruhe, and the president of the Occult Society in Karlsruhe, immediately after the last recital here, engaged Mr. Shepard to give one in that city on the Monday following. The recital in the capital of Baden was a great success, and took place in a fine hall, the enthusiastic audience demanding another in the same place to be given on the evening of the 7th inst.

Mr. Shepard has already received invitations from all the leading capitals and cities in Germany. Such are the demands made on his time and strength that he finds it impossible to answer any but the most urgent business letters, as he is now travelling without a secretary.

Mr. Shepard has promised to return here on his third visit to Berlin in the near future. His visit has given a real impetus to the cause of progress and spiritual harmony in Pforzheim.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT FRIEDERICH.

Appeal for a Sick Medium.

SIR,—Some ten or more years ago you were good enough to insert an appeal from Mrs. W. P. Browne, Miss Woodcock (who is now on the other side), and myself on behalf of the well-known medium, Mrs. Spring, who was then dangerously ill with pneumonia. Through the generous response to that appeal, which enabled her to have the nutritious food and care necessary to her, her recovery was ensured, and she resumed her mediumistic work.

Some time afterwards Mrs. Spring was beset with an infirmity which we were unable to induce her to overcome, and, therefore, we had to withdraw ourselves from her. But between two and three years ago the good news reached me that she had overcome this failing and was again doing very good work as a medium. Personal investigation convinced me that this was true, and although I have not been able to keep myself in constant touch with her since then, I have received, frequently, favourable reports of her from friends whom I have sent to her.

But last evening I heard from two friends who had been to her that she was very ill, although still giving sances with success. I went, therefore, to see her this morning, and found her in great pain and quite helpless, although in process of being dressed to give a public sance this afternoon. Early in September she caught a severe cold, and has been suffering from what appears to be rheumatic gout, ever since. But, throughout this long period of, often, intense pain and constantly increasing weakness, she has never ceased to earn her living through her mediumship, and has made no appeal to charity.

But now the time has surely come when charity should be shown to her. For, unless relief be afforded her in some way, and unless she be, for a time, freed from all strain upon her powers, collapse must, I think, ensue. She is being, I may say, nursed most kindly by a friend—a poor woman like herself—who is thus giving what she has—her time and strength—to help one in need. I would, with your permission, ask some of your readers to do the same by money gifts.

I beg to enclose a cheque for one guinea as the commencement of a fund for Mrs. Spring's relief. May I add that other contributions will be received at your office and acknowledged in your paper?—Yours, &c.,

MARY MACK WALL.

December 4th, 1906.

[We shall be pleased to receive any contributions in response to Miss Mack Wall's appeal.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

'Elsie Neuman.'

SIR,—I have recently seen Mrs. Leigh Hunt Wallace, and have learned from her that her protégée and patient, Elsie Neuman, the whilom helpless cripple from rheumatoid arthritis, for whom you kindly permitted me to make an appeal in 'LIGHT' some two years ago, through the combined effects of the Wallace Diet, the electric bath treatment from Dr. Stenson Hooker, and the magnetic massage of Mr. Matthews, can now walk without crutches, and can so use her hands that a knitting machine has been bought for her by which she can earn her living. So the hope I expressed in my appeal has been justified, and one who was a burden to herself and upon others has been turned into one of the world's workers. To hear of this will surely gladden the hearts of those amongst your readers who took a share in the good work by their donations to the Elsie Neuman Fund.—Yours, &c.

MARY MACK WALL.

Mr. Myers' Communications.

SIR,—The letter of 'L. M.' in your issue of December 1st, containing communications purporting to come from the late Mr. F. W. H. Myers, is of great interest to the investigator. In a recent debate with a materialist, my opponent mentioned the sealed letter left by Mr. Myers, and he tried to make a point of the failure of any medium to give the contents of the letter. Now, if Mr. Myers is really communicating through the wife of 'L. M.', cannot he give the contents of the letter he left with Sir Oliver Lodge? If he can describe the 'holly trees and ivy in Bronshill garden when he was a boy,' there should be no difficulty in getting him to meet the test of identity which he made before his death. This would be more satisfactory from all points of view, and it is the only way of scientifically proving the survival of human personality after bodily death. I hope 'L. M.' will succeed in proving the identity of the communicator.—Yours, &c.,

W. FAULKNER.

Kent-road, Birkdale, Southport.

The National Fund of Benevolence.—An Urgent Appeal.

SIR,—May I, through you, make a special appeal to the readers of 'LIGHT' in regard to the Pension Fund of the National Fund of Benevolence, as, owing to the smallness of the amount at disposal, it is feared that the monthly grants of from 5s. to 20s. hitherto received by some few old workers and Spiritualists will have to be discontinued, and this would be the cause of much suffering and distress to them? I have received pitiful letters from some of these old people (who are over eighty years of age), and would earnestly urge the necessity for prompt action on the part of your generous readers. All remittances should be marked 'Pension Fund' and sent to the hon. secretary, Mrs. Jessie Greenwood, Ashleigh, Hebden Bridge, by whom they would be thankfully received and duly acknowledged.—Yours, &c.,

(MRS.) M. H. WALLIS.

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.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last an address by Mr. A. Rex was much enjoyed. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Card, from Australia, address.—J. P.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Roberts gave an address and Mr. Roberts clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Savage. Thursday, at 8 p.m., investigators' circle.—A. G.

OXFORD CIRCUS.—22, PRINCE'S-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Long gave an interesting and masterly address, and we shall look forward to hearing him on a future occasion. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. James Macbeth. Please do not forget the Sale of Work. (See special advt.)

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Sheepshank's address on 'The Seer in Song' greatly pleased the audience. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. R. Stebbens. December 26th, at 5 p.m., concert and dance, tickets 6d.; music and refreshments.—C. A. G.

CROYDON.—128A, GEORGE-STREET.—On the 4th inst. Mr. Imison's address on 'Death, its Cause and Necessity,' and Mrs. Imison's clairvoyant descriptions were greatly enjoyed. On Tuesday next, at 8.15 p.m., Mrs. Effie Batho on 'How Spiritualism Helps Humanity.'—N. M. T.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave an instructive and helpful address on 'Freewill in the Light of Spiritualism.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Tayler Gwinn; December 23rd, Mr. Fletcher.—S. T.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Agnew Jackson gave an excellent address on 'The Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, and the Continuity of Life,' and Mrs. Webb clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. H. Boddington.—N. R.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BROOKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Westley Adams gave a delightful address on 'Mission Work in the Spirit Spheres.' Mr. Adams presided and read a poem. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss V. Burton on 'A Model Lesson: How to Think.' Thursday next, at 8 p.m., Miss E. Murphy; silver collection.—G. A.

BRIGHTON.—COMPTON HALL, 17, COMPTON-AVENUE.—On Sunday morning last an excellent circle was held, and in the evening Mr. Hopkinson gave a good address on 'Thoughts,' and Mrs. Curry clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday next addresses by Mrs. M. H. Wallis at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m. Subject to be chosen by the audience at night.—A. C.

ACRON.—AUCTION ROOMS, HORN-LANE, W.—On December 3rd Mr. R. Brailey gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday last Mr. Piggot spoke finely on 'Socialism and Evolution.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Abbot. December 18th, at 8.30 p.m., at 2, Newburgh-road, Mr. Spriggs will give his experiences. All welcome.—M. S. H.

CHISWICK.—110, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last the subjects 'Warnings' and 'Jesus' were discussed, and abundant healing power was manifested. In the evening Miss Violet Burton discoursed on 'Is Life worth Living?' and answered several questions. On Monday Mr. Percy Smith gave a good address on 'Home Circles,' and answered questions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle and healing; at 7 p.m., Mr. Wright. On Monday next, at 8.15 p.m., Miss Murphy, clairvoyant descriptions. Admission 6d. each.—H. P.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Walters, and in the evening Mr. Stebbens on 'Spiritualism as I have Found It,' were much appreciated. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Turner, of Fulham. December 23rd, Mrs. Checkett.—L. D.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Miss McCreadie gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions of fourteen spirit friends, all fully recognised, with helpful messages. Miss Clarice B. Laughton finely rendered a solo. Mr. F. Spriggs ably presided. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis, trance address on 'The Fate of the Risen Dead.'—A. J. W.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—On Sunday morning last Mr. G. Morley gave an address on 'The Art of Happiness.' Clairvoyance by Miss Mylam. In the evening Mr. Morley spoke on 'The Higher Spiritual Life' and gave good clairvoyant descriptions. On Sundays, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., and on Wednesdays at 8.15 p.m., services are held for Faithist teachings and clairvoyant descriptions.—W. E.

FINSBURY PARK.—123, WILBERFORCE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Messrs. Donovan and Maslin and Mrs. Willis, under spirit influence, gave good advice.—F. A. H.

SOUTHAMPTON.—WATERLEY HALL, ST. MARY'S-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. P. R. Street gave an instructive address on 'Christian and Spiritualist from a Bible Standpoint.'—S. H. W.

PORTSMOUTH.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On December 5th Mr. Wiffin spoke and Miss Witte gave clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday last Mr. Wiffin gave addresses.—C. E.

READING.—PALMER HALL.—On Sunday last Mrs. Effie Bathe, on her second visit, gave a thoughtful and instructive address on 'How Spiritualism Helps Humanity,' and answered questions. We pleasantly anticipate her next visit.—W. P.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Baxter delivered an excellent address on 'The Messiah of God.' In the evening Mr. H. Boddington gave an able inspirational discourse on 'Whom Shall We Trust?'—N. T.

GLASGOW.—CLARENDON HALL.—On Sunday evening last Mr. D. M. MacIntyre delivered a fine address on 'Spiritualism, the Need of the Hour,' and Mrs. Murray gave successful clairvoyant descriptions.—A. G.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday last, at the morning circle, Mr. W. E. Long gave good counsel and clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening some of the members delivered short sympathetic addresses.—E. S.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Vincent N. Turrey gave an able and instructive address on 'Mind in Medicine,' followed by clairvoyant and psychometrical descriptions.—F. T. B.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—MILTON-STREET.—On Sunday morning last a paper was read and discussed. In the evening Mr. J. Connolly spoke finely on 'What think ye of Christ?' and answered questions.—N. C.

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey delivered two able addresses to good audiences, and gave accurate delineations of spirit faces upon a black board. On Monday evening he gave fifteen recognised drawings.—T. L. R.

MANOR PARK AND EAST HAM.—OLD COUNCIL ROOMS, WAREFIELD-STREET.—On December 7th Mrs. Webb's clairvoyance was appreciated. On Sunday morning last Mr. Hursthouse read an address by Mr. J. J. Morse on 'Reincarnation.' In the evening Mr. A. H. Sarfas spoke on 'Spiritualism, Practical and Sentimental,' and ably answered questions.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—GOTHIC HALL, 2, BOUVIER-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Richardson's address on 'Is there a Hell?' was discussed. In the afternoon Mrs. Podmore conducted a circle. In the evening Mr. H. G. Swift related some interesting 'Experiences,' and Miss Eileen Murphy gave psychometrical delineations.—S.

DUNDEE.—FORESTERS' HALL, RATTRAY-STREET.—On Sunday evening, December 2nd, Mr. J. M. Stevenson and Mrs. Odhner occupied the platform. On the 6th answers to questions and clairvoyant descriptions were given by Miss Lizzie Cairnie, Mrs. Odhner, and Mrs. Ogilvie. On Sunday last Mrs. Jessie Compton gave addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Her visits are always much appreciated.—J. M.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHED HALL.—On December 5th Miss Alice McCallum, at her first public appearance, gave twenty-six spirit descriptions, with full names, mostly recognised. On Sunday last Miss Mina McCallum gave interesting personal reminiscences, and many convincing proofs that 'there is no death.' On the 10th Miss Alice McCallum gave remarkable clairvoyant descriptions, twenty-seven being recognised.

LUTON.—DALLOW-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Champkin gave an impressive address on 'Worship God,' and good clairvoyant descriptions.

NORTHAMPTON.—ST. MICHAEL'S-ROAD.—On Sunday afternoon last Mr. Cheshire spoke on 'Phenomena.' In the evening Mr. T. Spence gave an address on 'Building the Spiritual Temple.' Both subjects were well appreciated by large audiences.—G. T. R.

LINCOLN.—UPPER ROOM ARCADE.—On Sunday last, at the first anniversary, addresses were given by Mr. W. Mason, of Sheffield, who reviewed the growth of Spiritualism in Lincoln during the past three years, and congratulated us upon the progress we had made. In the evening Mr. Mason spoke on 'Is God a God of Love?' On the 10th he held an afternoon meeting and gave clairvoyant descriptions at all meetings.—H.

BETHNAL GREEN.—On December 4th and 6th an interesting public debate was held between the secretary of the local branch of the Y.M.C.A. and Mr. J. Connolly on 'Does the Bible Teach Spiritualism?' in the course of which Mr. Connolly gave a fine exposition of Spiritualism, and proved conclusively the exercise of seership, clairvoyance, the practice of automatic writing, and the manifestations of spirits, in Bible times. The speaker on the other side said that he had been pleasantly surprised to find the subject so attractively set forth by Mr. Connolly, and the proceedings terminated very amicably.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

'The Forecast,' for Winter, 1906. 6, Henrietta-street, W.C. Price 6d. net.

'Sanctification by the Truth.' By BASIL WILBERFORCE, D.D. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. Price 5s.

'Theosophy and Modern Science.' By EDITH WARD. London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond-street, W.

'Through Silence to Realisation; or, The Human Awakening.' By FLOYD B. WILSON. New York: R. B. Fenno & Co., 18, East Seventeenth-street; and Elizabeth Towne, Holyoke, Mass. Price, 1dol.

MONTHLY MAGAZINES:—'The Occult Review' (6d.); 'Broad Views' (1s.); 'Theosophical Review' (1s.); 'The Nautilus' (10 cents); 'Light of Reason' (4d.).

THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH.—'Man can never be so sufficiently assured of the course of his thoughts as to swear fidelity to this or that system, which for the time being he may regard as the true one. All that he can do is to consecrate himself to the service of Truth, whatever she may be, and to incline his heart to follow her wherever he thinks that he sees her, and this though at the cost of the most painful sacrifices.'—RENAN.

'THE LYCEUM BANNER,' for December, contains the usual bright articles, notes on lessons, pages for boys and girls, stories, records of Lyceum work, &c. A suggestion is made, which might be valuable: 'How many Lyceums spend a lot of valuable time to get up a Service of Song, Concert, Dramatic Entertainment, &c., just for one occasion, when, by a little notice in the paper, they could arrange to give it many times, or exchange it with other Lyceums to give a return visit!'

ALMSGIVING.—A titled French lady, to whose publications under the name of 'Ch. d'Orino' we have already referred, has lately issued a new volume of communications received by automatic writing, entitled 'Reflets de l'Erraticité' (Bibliothèque Chacornac, 11, Quai St.-Michel, Paris, price 3fr. 50c.). The book opens with some moral and philosophical essays purporting to be written by the spirits of Balzac, Bossuet, Père Didon, le Curé d'Ars, George Sand, Zola, Renan, and others; but the larger part of it is devoted to replies to questions by various communicators, mostly clerics during their earth life. From the character of the replies we cannot but think that they are to some extent tinged by the thoughts of the medium, and sometimes two replies will amount to much the same thing in different words. At other times a lively discussion takes place, and decided difference of opinion is shown, especially as to whether minerals have anything corresponding to life or a soul. The volume closes with a discourse on almsgiving, and the following recommendation is given: 'If you are unable to become acquainted with the recipient of your charity, do not give with indifference. Even into the humble penny dropped into the blind man's collecting bowl, you can put a little of yourself; do not act as if wishing to get rid of an importunate person, but think of him as a poor brother whom you pity and for whose poverty you feel sympathy. The coin given will bear the trace of your charitable impulse, and the poor man, when he handles it, will unconsciously feel the calming and comforting influence. Few things are lost in this world, and least of all a charitable thought.'