

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

'A Treatise on Theonomy,' by Robert Blake (London: R. Sutton, The Exchange, Southwark), is a novelty. It is evident that the writer is an original, if not a convincing, thinker, with confidence and intellect enough to make him a challenger of all the great masters of Metaphysics and some of the sciences. In his way he also is a 'God-intoxicated man,' only his God is Force, with Mind behind or within it. His method is peculiar. He states Propositions (there are ninety-five of them) backed up by Notes and Definitions, and leaves the matter, so that an enormous amount of argument is put into his one hundred and forty-four small pages.

We cannot attempt any analysis of a book which is itself all analysis, and will only say that the writer thinks he has demonstrated the absurdity of materialism in any form. The work is not at all theological, but, at the close, there is the following reference to 'religion':—

The application of Theonomy to religion is too obvious to require special mention at present. We may, however, say that, having shown that we are conscious directly in thought of the action of the souls of others and of Force (I. 54, 65), we have not only proved the possibility of men having been influenced directly by the spirit of God; but we have demonstrated the extreme improbability of such influence having ever failed to affect them; as it is inconceivable that in any age men could have lived in the presence of an all-penetrating power, and been wholly unconscious of that by which they were surrounded. Such influence being immaterial, and as such beyond actual description, could in any age have been only indicated by such words, and symbols, and modes of thought, as were already in familiar use at the time. In the present age it would naturally reveal itself, in sympathy with the scientific preoccupation characteristic of the age, in the form it assumes in these pages. But, however far separated in thought we may be from the remote past, it is impossible to read such words as these, 'The spirit of God moved on the face of the waters,' without the conviction that the writer must have felt, as he penned them, that influence, which may be as real to us as to him, that mysterious communion with God, which it is the object of all religious ceremonies to enable worshippers to realise, and the realisation of which is, now as then, the greatest height, the purest truth, to which the human soul can reach.

Apart altogether from the writer's main contention, the little book, simply written notwithstanding its subtlety, yields a capital study for the following out of a line of thought; an intellectual exercise at all events.

'The Socialist Review' 'cobbler' had better 'stick to his last.' The Review is certainly good while it does that;

but when it sets itself to answer the question, 'Shall the State supersede the Church?' it comes to grief. Here are some of its assertions and recommendations:—'The Church has failed as the organiser and defender of religion'; therefore 'the religion which comprehends the fulness of life must work through the State.' And how is the State to work out 'the religion which comprehends the fulness of life'? Here is the answer:—'The function of the State in restoring art to the people will appear with the universal opening of libraries, museums, art galleries, and music halls on Sunday, and the provision of a municipal theatre (will one be enough for London?) with special consideration given to the presentation of superior dramas and operas on Sunday.' And that is 'The Socialist Review's' prescription for giving to the people a 'fulness of life' in religion and art! Heaven help us if this is all!

Dear old Felix Moscheles, a veritable angel of peace and always a preacher of it, lately told, at a peace meeting, two instructive little stories. He has been hovering about boys' schools, and this is what he tells us:—

I asked the boys what they would like to be. I suggested policemen, bootmakers, or omnibus conductors, or soldiers. I warned them I was going to ask them why, and I got occasionally very interesting answers from the boys. One little fellow alone had the pluck to answer when it came to this: 'Why would you like to be a soldier?' he said, 'To cut blacks' heads off.' That was a very drastic performance. Now, in answer to that I daresay you will think of a great many better things than I thought of at the moment. I put the question: 'What do you do when I stick a pin into your leg?' 'I holloas.' 'What would a black man do?' 'He holloas.' I may tell you there was a moral to be deduced from that answer, and I did my best.

On another occasion I had just returned from the Hague. It was after the 1899 Conference, when I spent several weeks in the Hague. I had just returned from there, and it seemed desirable to hold forth to the school children on the subject of the Hague Conference. I certainly put on view as sober a face as I could, and asked if there was anyone who was present who had ever murdered anyone, and they answered 'No.' 'No, to be sure, but is there anyone here who would like to murder someone some day or poke his eyes out?' 'No,' and it went on like that, and I wound up with the natural conclusion.

That may seem puerile or crude; but is it? What if the real remedy for war is the early creation of a sane sentiment respecting it, based on the disgusting horror and infamy of it?

We rejoice that even in Japan, where the sacrifices of war take on the sanctities of a cult, a beginning of better things is noticeable. A Japanese 'Chronicle' says plainly:—

The growth of militarism at the present day is not a natural growth, but an abnormal and diseased one, and the time has come when either militarism must begin to recede or civilisation. Disguise it as we may in trappings of patriotism, self-sacrifice, and so forth, there is something innately repulsive in the idea of harnessing all the forces of the highest civilisation in the service of an institution so essentially vile and barbarous as war. And when we know how modern war is engineered and to what sordid interests its holocausts are

devoted one is apt to grow impatient of the slow-footed processes of the Zeit-Geist.

An older 'civilisation' halts. Poor decrepit Spain would, if it could, again consecrate war. It has lately done its best. 'Concord,' which always has its eyes open to these imbecilities, says :—

The 'Heraldo de Madrid' has just recorded that the Supreme Council of War and Marine has issued a report in favour of conferring the grade of Captain-General of the Army upon the 'Vergen del Pilar,' the famous Madonna of Saragossa ! The new post is to be created in deference to a petition recently presented by various religious societies and corporations, and the Minister of War is actually on the eve of publishing the Royal Ordinance appointing the deceased lady to her responsible position at the head of the Spanish Army !

A Methodist writer acutely says :—

We have long been familiar with attempts to prove that natural law extends to the spiritual world. Endeavours to establish and illustrate this truth have been used in the services both of Christianity and of Moralism. A reverse process is now taking place. There is a growing tendency to find the foreshadowings of spiritual, or rather psychic, life throughout the whole of the organic and even of the inorganic universe.

'Foreshadowings,' though, is hardly the word. *Creative power* would be better. What is happening is that all our discoveries point to the existence of a vital and vitalising force as the actual cause of the whole manifested universe. It is giving us God with an added emphasis but in a different sense.

The journal which draws our attention to this says :—

There are signs in abundance to show to us that we are on the very threshold of a magnificent new era. It is good to live in these days, and to see new miracle after miracle wrought. What would our grandfathers have thought had they read the following extract in their old-fashioned paper ? 'A man in Paris was talking and another man 310 miles away heard what he said. If there had been a wire stretched between them we should have—no, not understood it better, but should have been less surprised. But they were connected only by that which connects all things in the universe, the ether, and it was by means of this that they conversed. The man in Paris spoke into a receiver joined with some wires strung up the Eiffel Tower. The other man was just as far away from him as he could get to the westward, at the jumping place of France, the cape of Raz de Sein, near Brest.' We read it and accept it. They would have said : 'The man who wrote this is either a rogue or a fool.'

How utterly modern this wonderful invention is ! and yet we have already put it among our commonplaces. The great inferences, however, have still to be drawn.

'Father Taylor,' of whom our readers have heard, was very ill, without prospect of recovery. An intimate friend, thinking to comfort him, said, 'Ah, well ; you will be among the angels.' The old sailor-loving preacher only said, in reply : 'I like folks better.' Quite natural : but what if the angels are 'folks' ?

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

On Thursday evening, the 19th inst., in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, with Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair, Miss Florence Morse, speaking under spirit control, replied to a number of interesting written questions which had been sent up to the platform by Members and Associates present. The answers, which were clear, thoughtful and instructive, were much appreciated, and a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the speaker at the close. We shall publish a full report of this meeting in an early issue of 'LIGHT.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, DECEMBER 3RD,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MR. E. E. FOURNIER D'ALBE, B.Sc.,

ON

'PHYSICAL CONDITIONS OF LIFE IN THE NEXT WORLD.'

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.

The next meeting in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, S.W. (near the National Gallery), will be held on Thursday, December 17th, when interesting Personal Experiences will be given by Mrs. Annie Boddington, Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham), and Mr. W. Kensett Styles.

1909.

Jan. 14.—Rev. Lucking Taverner, on 'The Influence of the Spiritual in Early Italian Art.' *With Lantern Illustrations.*

Jan. 28.—Afternoon Social Gathering, at 3 o'clock.

Feb. 11.—Mr. James I. Wedgwood, on 'Occult Experiences in the Lives of the Saints and their Parallels in Modern Spiritualism.'

Feb. 25.—Mr. J. W. Boulding, on 'The Great Spiritualist Martyr—Joan of Arc.'

March 11.—Rev. J. Page Hopps, on 'A Scientific Basis of Belief in a Future Life.'

March 25.—Mr. W. J. Colville. (Subject to be announced later.)

April 22.—(Arrangements pending.)

May 6.—Mrs. Annie Besant or Miss Edith Ward.

May 20.—Miss Katharine Bates, on 'Automatic Writing : Its Use and Abuse.'

In accordance with No. XV. of the Articles of Association, the ordinary annual subscriptions of new Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as covering the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1909.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

MEETINGS ARE HELD WEEKLY AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, December 1st, also on the 8th and 15th, Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham) will give clairvoyant descriptions, 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*, December 2nd, at 8 p.m., Miss Violet Burton will speak on 'The Gift of Faithful Vision.' Admission 1s. ; Members and Associates free. No tickets required.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On *Thursday next*, December 3rd, at 4 p.m., Mr. James I. Wedgwood will preside and conduct the proceedings. No admission after 4.10 p.m.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Friday next*, December 4th, at 3 o'clock, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions relating to the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism, mediumship, and life here and on 'the other side.' Admission 1s. ; Members and Associates free. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of general interest to submit to the control.

MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing *one* friend to the *Wednesday and Friday* meetings without payment.

SPIRIT HEALING.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. A. Rex, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., to afford Members and Associates and their friends an opportunity to avail themselves of his services in magnetic healing under spirit control. As Mr. Rex is unable to treat more than four patients on each occasion, appointments must be made in advance by letter, addressed to the Secretary, Mr. E. W. Wallis. Fees, one treatment, 7s. 6d.; course of three, 15s.

PHENOMENA IN HOLLAND.

Mr. H. N. de Fremery, editor of the leading Dutch Spiritualist periodical, '*Het Toekomstig Leven*,' has recently issued in book form a series of articles in that paper, in which he described a number of séances which he had attended; and in the November number of '*The Annals of Psychical Science*' he summarises the results obtained at these sittings. Both the book and the article are entitled, '*My Experiences in a Spiritistic Circle at the Hague*.'

The circle was a strictly private one, formed about three years previously by a few friends who met regularly once a week, not with any scientific object in view, but in the hope of witnessing some of the wonders described in the literature of Spiritualism. After some time the phenomena became interesting and even important, and it was found that the introduction of strangers no longer hindered their production. The medium is not named or described; she sat in the circle until, at a given signal, she went into the cabinet and was put to sleep by one of the sitters, a doctor, placing one hand on her forehead and the other at the back of her head, the process taking about a quarter of an hour. At the end of the séance she was aroused by the same process, but sometimes took half an hour to regain consciousness.

The séances were held under such conditions of light and contact that the reality of the phenomena described by Mr. de Fremery may be regarded as well established. These consisted of raps on the table and in the cabinet, showing an 'intelligent direction' not always in accordance with the wish or expectation of the medium or sitters; movements of objects without contact; touches; breaths of wind; luminous phenomena, and nebulous forms. The objects moved included the table, the armchair in the cabinet, which was pushed out into the room, turned half round, and at one time held so fast that it resisted all Mr. de Fremery's efforts to push, pull, or lift it. A musical box was heard playing in various parts of the room, and a palm-leaf fan, said to have been brought to one of the earlier séances as an *apport*, was shaken and rustled in all directions, 'endowed with the rapidity and nimbleness of a bird,' even striking against the ceiling and rattling the teacups on a table at some distance from the sitters. One movement of material objects, though only momentarily observed by himself and the lady of the house, is described by Mr. de Fremery as being strikingly convincing. He had risen, at the close of the séance, to turn on the gas; as he did so he purposely looked towards the cabinet, and immediately he saw the curtains of the cabinet close, as though to shield the medium from the too bright light. The medium's hands were lying motionless on her knees, and it was not she, nor any person present, who closed the curtains.

On one or two occasions, while the writer or another sitter held the palm-leaf, it was drawn upwards with such force that they were obliged to release it. As Mr. de Fremery was the tallest person present, and the leaf was drawn out of his hand while holding it as high as he could, any person doing this 'would have been obliged to mount upon a chair or table, which he could not possibly have done without being seen.' At other times he was permitted to introduce his hand into the cabinet, when one of the curtains was pressed against it, 'as though a hand had grasped the curtain close to my arm and was trying to close it up.'

Luminous patches or discs were seen floating about the room, and at times, by request, a red light appeared, and the red and white lights circled round each other. These were

only seen when the medium was in the cabinet, and usually were 'higher than a man could reach by climbing on to a chair.' At times the luminous spot seemed to carry the musical box or the palm-leaf about with it, and at the same time a nebulous form would appear, with a head and arm enveloped in cloudy veils, the arm being extended at various angles of elevation and drawn back again. The luminous spot would hover round the head of the form, and on one occasion seemed to draw it up to a height of over eight feet; sometimes the form would 'contract and huddle up into a small, scarcely visible cloud on the floor.'

On one occasion a more defined materialisation of a hand was seen. Mr. de Fremery says:—

Suddenly I felt my right cheek gently pinched; my impression was that it was done by a warm hand. I looked carefully around to see if anything was moving away. After a few seconds I saw something coming out of the cabinet; this advanced towards me, when I saw near to me a small hand of natural colour, with part of an arm enveloped in some black material. The hand came nearer, with continual movement as though feeling the space and groping its way. Finally, it rested on the doctor's arm; it was a small, well-formed left hand. Immediately I heard the doctor say, 'Someone is touching my right arm.' The hand quickly and tremblingly drew back and disappeared from my sight. I then described what I had seen, and was glad to find that the doctor's impressions and my own agreed perfectly. . . . How was this small hand, placed so confidently on the doctor's arm, and apparently belonging to no living person or child, condensed into a reality so visible and tangible? What was it made of, to be able to exert a pressure capable of being felt, and dissolve into nothing a moment afterwards? And who modelled this human form? These are questions which foreshadow new views on the constitution of the material universe.

Mr. de Fremery lays emphasis on three points: that there was no hallucination; that many of the phenomena could not have been produced by any ordinary means at the disposal of the medium or sitters; and that there was ample evidence that the 'directing intelligence' of the phenomena was not exercised by the persons present. They were given to understand 'that the authors of all these mysterious happenings desired to manifest themselves to the group in order to give them indisputable proofs of the continuance of spirit life after death.' If this is true, he says, 'the phenomena at once lose their nonsensical, infantile, puerile appearance, because the beings who come back into our sphere naturally lose a portion of their faculties, just as a man who dives into water is no longer capable of doing many things which he can do without difficulty when he returns to shore.' But the 'divers into our material sphere' seem gradually to acquire greater facility, and finally may give indisputable proofs of identity as well as of presence and intelligence.

There is great need in this country just now for physical phenomena similar to those described above, and we should be pleased to know that earnest inquirers were forming circles with a view to obtaining developments in this direction.

A NEW 'COMMUNICATOR.'—As will be seen by an advertisement on page ii., an ingenious device has been invented—it is said, 'from instructions and suggestions received from the spirit world,' for use as a means of obtaining messages from the other side. The illustration given sufficiently indicates the nature of the contrivance, except that it does not show that the semi-circular table, with the pointer attached, rests on wheels running in the groove in the strip of wood below it. The spaces devoted to the letters might be larger with advantage, otherwise the whole apparatus is compact and serviceable. It is enclosed in a neat cardboard box about fourteen inches long and seven inches wide, is sold at 3s. 6d., post free for 3s. 10d., and can be seen at the office of '*LIGHT*,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. We should imagine that those persons who possess the requisite mediumistic force will find this 'communicator' very useful, and that inquirers may avail themselves of it with advantage when they wish to make experiments, as it can be used by one, two, or three persons. Useful instructions are given with each one. We would suggest, however, that an hour is too long for each sitting—half that time as a rule being ample for all purposes, and further a warning is needed against too frequent experiments—three or four times a week, at regular intervals, and in a serious frame of mind, being quite as often as attempts should be made.

DO THE DEAD RETURN ?

An address delivered by Mr. George Spriggs to the members and friends of the City Temple Debating Society, on Thursday, November 5th, Dr. Abraham Wallace in the chair.

(Continued from page 555.)

Now I come to the appearance of materialised spirits. The circle in Melbourne was a private one, no money being taken, the same as at the Cardiff circle. The sittings were attended by judges, lawyers, doctors, magistrates, and many of the leading merchants. All of these sittings were held in good light.

The writer of the report from which I now quote says :—

Professor J. Smith, of Sydney University, attended a sitting. After a number of materialisations of spirits, he received a message from an old friend, Mr. D. Addressing the scientific visitor, he said, 'Standing beside you are two spirits,' and on being asked to name them he did so. The names were those of two gentlemen, formerly residents in the capital of a neighbouring colony, but now deceased; and they said that the object of their coming was to mention to the visitor the fact that one of them wished to communicate with the surviving members of his family; that he had discovered that his youngest son, whom he named, was mediumistic, and that he wished his old friend to make known that fact on his return home so that advantage might be taken of it in the manner desired. Returning to Sydney, Mrs. Smith made inquiries from the wife of the spirit, and found all the statements correct, even to the health of her son. The professor and his wife did not know of the facts stated or the Christian names of the people named in the message.

In the 'Harbinger of Light' for March, 1881, will be found the results of the measurement of the forms. Ten different forms materialised at varying heights as follows: Male forms, 5ft. 5in., 5ft. 7½in.; female forms, 5ft. 2½in., 5ft. 0¾in.; 5ft. 4in.; child Lily, 4ft.; another 5ft. 3½in.; other males from 5ft. 8½in. to 5ft. 11in.

In the same report the weight of the medium (myself) is recorded as being 148½lb. The highest weight of a materialised form was found to be 139½lb.; the lowest 33lb. 10oz. One of the most remarkable facts observed was the diminution of the weight of the same form at successive weighings immediately following each other. Even whilst they stood on the scales the weight would go down to a few pounds. Then they would retire to where the medium was sitting and again obtain their full weight. The experiments went on through a number of sittings, but I think it is a pity we did not carry the investigation still further, so that the medium and sitters could all have been weighed at the same time as the spirit form, to see where the force came from, because we observed that when we had tall sitters in the circle, the forms would often be taller. In weighing and measuring, one person was told off to see that the forms stood solid on their feet when measured; one had to see that they stood properly on the platform scales; and two took a record of the weights, one checking the other.

An early sitting in the month of March was marked by an occurrence as striking as any that had been recorded during the progress of the manifestations. This was the recognition by five different sitters, including one of the visitors, of one spirit form as being that of an old colonist, and a well-known pioneer in the cause of Spiritualism, who had passed away some five years before. Amongst those who recognised this spirit friend were his son, daughter and nephew. He came on two occasions and displayed considerable emotion at being able thus visibly to manifest his presence to his relatives and friends. On the second occasion he shook hands with Mr. Carson, who stood up for the purpose, and who had a good view not only of the full form, but also of the wrinkled features and thin beard.

All the facts I have stated have been witnessed by hundreds of people, and attested by the sitters in the circles, both in this country and Australia. This can be verified by looking up the reports in the papers I have mentioned. When fully materialised, the forms display emotions when they meet their relations and friends, and I ask, if they are not the spirits of the departed, who are they?

In concluding his Address, Mr. Spriggs said :—

One of the objections raised, by people who are non-believers, is that the spirits never say anything worth listening to. If time would permit, I could disprove that statement, but my object this evening is to show that those whom we consider dead still live and do return to us, often giving valuable information. Spirit return is natural, and as old as humanity. All sacred books give records of it. It rests with us to understand and make the best use of the powers God has given us, and deliver our minds from materialism.

Having said so much, I should now like to say a few words on my own individual responsibility. I am conversant with all that prejudice or honest scepticism can urge against what I have to say; I am acquainted with the genuine exposures of sham mediums, as well as with the sham exposures of genuine ones; I am aware that fraud has been practised in the name of Spiritualism; I am also aware that many who were Spiritualists only in name have brought disgrace upon the movement by their conduct; and bearing all this fully in mind, I emphatically and unhesitatingly assert, and maintain the assertion in face of all opposition or denial, from whatever quarter it may come, that spirit communion is not only a possibility, but an actual and realised fact. I cannot demonstrate this in words, but you may rest assured that such a plain declaration rests upon very solid ground. Those who imagine that published 'phenomena' are the all of Spiritualism never made a greater mistake. Though I have made public a great deal that has come under my notice, it is a fact that those things upon which my strongest convictions of the reality of spirit communion are founded have never seen the light.

In conclusion, I would ask again, Who and what are these appearances? After thirty years' experience, I have arrived at the conclusion that they are human beings in another condition of life; that they feel and love; that, in fact, they are our dear ones, gone to a higher plane of existence. Let those of us who realise the facts push on the good work of Spiritualism, so that it may vibrate throughout the world and help all to understand that they are brothers. Above all, let us keep Spiritualism free from sect, creed, and dogma, and make it as free as the air we breathe.

Of all the circles that I have held, none gave me so much satisfaction as those at which the spirits manifesting themselves proved without a doubt that they were the friends of those on earth. Passing over all the phases of mediumship in which I have been engaged, such as table-turning, trance, automatic writing, crystal-seeing, moving of objects in the light, and materialisations—for the latter of which I sat two or three times a week for fifteen years—the one which appeals to me the most, and is to my mind the most beneficent, is that which enables me to diagnose disease and help suffering humanity. I can also declare without hesitation, after thirty years' experience, that mediumship is healthy and uplifting if it is used and practised in a proper manner. Mediumship is to me a sacred power, and one that must be exercised on spiritual lines to be of benefit.

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIALISM.

To judge from some recent utterances quoted in the 'Literary Digest,' the question of the attitude of Christianity to Socialism is being anxiously discussed in America. Dr. Eckman, of New York, in the 'Christian Advocate,' holds that the clergyman is compelled to consider Socialism as 'a philosophy of society, a scheme of reform, a system of political economy, and a body of religion'; and in each case not merely as an academic question, but in relation to the Christian gospel. He remarks that 'while Socialism teaches that a change of circumstances will effect a change of character, Christianity teaches that a change of character will effect a change of circumstances.' The truth seems to be that each reacts on the other, and that a change of circumstances, which may arise from a change of character, may help forward that change, and so pave the way for a further outward improvement.

Dr. Eckman considers that 'current interest in social problems is traceable to nineteen centuries of Christian teaching more than to any other cause whatsoever,' and that though 'organised Christianity has often been a long way behind the social ideals of its Founder, this should be credited to human infirmity, and not to Christianity itself.' Christianity means different things to different people; and the social ideals of its Founder were expressed in the form of moral principles which would be effective, if thoroughly carried out, under varied forms of social organisation, while without the spirit of human brotherhood no system could be an ideal one.

'WHAT'S IN A NAME'—'SEER' OR 'MEDIUM'?

BY JAMES ROBERTSON.

It is rather surprising that the followers of Thomas Lake Harris should strain themselves to assert that this phenomenal man was not a 'medium,' but a 'seer'—after all, are they not of the same family group? Rousseau speaks of moments when he was dazzled by a thousand sparkling lights, when crowds of vivid ideas thronged into his mind so that he could scarcely breathe, and says that if he could have written out the quarter of what he saw and felt, he could have demonstrated much of the highest value. Wordsworth speaks of a presence that filled him with the joy of elevated thoughts. Whatever name we may give to such experiences—seership or mediumship—they are spiritual realities which thousands have felt. Andrew Jackson Davis, in the 'superior condition,' enters a sphere of wisdom and gives out what he has learned; Tuttle, while measurably conscious, writes out the 'Arcana of Nature'; Stainton Moses automatically pens, while conscious, 'Spirit Teachings'; while J. J. Morse, Mrs. Richmond, and others *unconsciously* pour out streams of wisdom. Other teachers consciously give expression to sentiments and ideas which are given to them. How are we to draw the line between 'seer' and 'medium'? I know it is claimed for Mr. Harris that he was a very superior kind of instrument. He was pleased to designate himself, or allow others to designate him, 'the Seer,' 'the Adept,' 'the Avatar,' 'the Imperial Messenger of the Cycle,' but this was in the days when he would only have the word mediumship used regarding himself in the sense used by St. Paul, 'a medium or mediator between God and Man.' But we have no warrant for ascribing to any instrument, however golden mouthed, a position which is not in harmony with Nature. No one could have a higher appreciation of the poetical effusions of Harris than I have; they are amongst the most phenomenal productions given to the world. There is poetry enshrined in them worthy of Shelley at his best, and it is only the fact that they were issued under the name of Spiritualism that has prevented them from getting that reception which they so much deserve.

'The Epic of the Starry Heaven,' a sublime composition, was spoken while Harris was in the trance state; some four thousand lines were communicated in thirty and one-half hours. After its completion the Intelligence who inspired the poem signified his willingness to answer any question which S. B. Brittan, the close friend and companion of Harris, might ask, and in answer to one question Dr. Brittan was told that the ideas descended into the mind from the individual localities to which the poet seer was intromitted and then projected into speech. In a preface to the work, purporting to have been uttered by the spirit-author of the poem, it is stated that Mr. Harris was inducted to his mediumship by the spirit of Dante, and that while it was being given, 'there was a death-like pallor of countenance, a rigidity of limb, &c., which could not have been assumed.' Those who read the poem must be struck with the spirit of Shelley's pure ethereal fancy in it, rather than the breath of Dante. Outside the rapidity of production, there is a revelation of fertile thought and strong and graceful imagery which is only to be found in our greatest poets. I know that in the after years, when Harris entered upon another rôle, he disputed much that Dr. Brittan had written regarding its production; but Harris saw all that was printed in the 'Spiritual Telegraph' at the time, was in close friendly relations with the editors, was a regular speaker at Spiritualist meetings (was what we should call 'a test and inspirational medium'), and he never sought to contradict a word. I could fill pages in evidence of this, but for the present I will give only one instance. At the conclusion of an Address which he delivered in New York during 1853, he entered into a narration of his test mediumship, and mentioned how someone was introduced to him under a fictitious name, how he was thrown into the trance state, and gave forth so much of fact, that when he came out of trance he found his visitor bathed in tears, and he claimed that what had been revealed through him 'was sufficient to illustrate the great and consoling truth that the time had already come when embodied and disembodied spirits can clasp hands across

the grave.' 'The Lyric of the Morning Land' was produced in much the same manner as the other lengthy poems, and though they reveal a high order of mediumship, or seership, there is no need to place the instrument through whom they were given on some pedestal different from other mortals. That Mr. Harris, in Glasgow, drew his pen through the word 'medium' and substituted 'minstrel' does not disturb any fact. If the exercise of great spiritual gifts calls for us to shut our eyes and leave the seeing to the man who claims to be greater than his fellows, then might we pray with Browning: 'Make no more giants, God!' The clear light of reason should never be shut out by any authority, let him cry out as loudly as he may that he is Messiah or Avatar.

'THE TWO WORLDS' ATTAINS ITS MAJORITY.

To the public mind, a criterion of the influence and importance of any movement is afforded by the character and standing of its organs in the Press. Our own movement has generally been fortunate in its channels of public expression, and several of the periodicals advocating Spiritualism have weathered the storms and stress of many years. This has been because their promoters and earnest upholders have been inspired by the courage of deep conviction, which has enabled them to surmount many difficulties and frequent discouragements.

All this is well illustrated by articles in last week's number of 'The Two Worlds' (November 20th), referring to the fact that that paper has now 'attained its majority,' the first issue having been published on November 18th, 1887, twenty-one years ago. Mr. E. W. Wallis, who was associated with the paper from the commencement, and indeed was the first to propose that it should be started, contributes 'A Retrospect' in which he modestly but clearly describes his own share in the launching and subsequent conduct of the paper, of which he was assistant editor and business manager during the five years of Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten's editorship, and afterwards editor, manager, and secretary for six years, until his removal to his present sphere of activity in London. Mr. J. J. Morse, the present editor, reviews the progress of the paper during these twenty-one years, and pays high tribute to the efficiency and devotion of those who preceded him; portraits of all the successive editors are given on the front page of the issue: Mrs. Britten, Mr. Wallis, Mr. Peter Lee, Mr. Will Phillips, and Mr. J. J. Morse. The leading article concludes with an expression of goodwill to 'LIGHT':—

As all workers in our cause are brethren in a common labour, the young man of Manchester, having now attained his majority, sends fraternal greetings to his senior in London.

We heartily reciprocate the fraternal sentiment, and congratulate our younger brother of Manchester on having attained the dignity of 'manhood' in active service for the good of humanity and the spread of the great truths of Spiritualism, including the sense of higher responsibility that must arise from the recognition of the continuity of life and influence, unbroken by bodily death.

Both Mr. Wallis and Mr. Morse refer to the ever-present sense of spirit guidance which has been 'a source of encouragement and strength in many weary trials.' Mr. Wallis tells how Mrs. Britten, 'in the early days when the trials were many and the prospects were gloomy,' came into the temporary office:—

Drawing herself up in the wonderful way which she had when influenced from the other side, her eyes flashing with the light of inspiration, she said in most impressive tones: 'This means success; I see the paper like a ship in troubled waters, tossed about, but it weathers every storm and rides safely on. I see the dark clouds lifting, the light begins to shine, and the ship passes into smoother waters. When those who are now at the helm are gone it will still go on, for the spirits are guiding it on to successful work for the cause they love.'

We are glad to believe that this prophecy has been fulfilled, and that, as Mr. Morse says, 'The unseen guidance has undoubtedly directed the men and women who have carried on the work at all times,' and will continue to do so.

S.

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LUTHER'S LETTERS.

An altogether delightful book, and a right noble Christmas present of a kind, is Martin Luther's Letters, selected and translated by Margaret A. Currie (London: Macmillan and Co.). The translation is ideal—admirable English with Luther's atmosphere and tone, covering a vast amount of ground, from gossip about his wife's beer-making and 'cherry-eating boys' to his tremendous fights with 'Satan,' and his high affairs of State: all remarkably attractive.

Luther, as everybody knows, was a daring spirit, ardent in faith, resolute in conduct, defiant in temper, and a hard bitter with tongue and pen. 'Although the Pope should assassinate me, and cast me into hell, he cannot raise me up again to slay me once more,' he writes, as though that settled the matter: 'He can only do it once!' But his gentleness, his modesty, his gracious pleasantry, his almost nervous and over-anxious thought for his poor friends, and for all God's strugglers, are not so well known. 'Keep what I write from the learned,' he says to Christoph Scheurl; 'My sole endeavour is to bring myself down to the capacity of the common people.' 'I beseech you,' he writes to a preacher in Göttingen, 'further Christ's cause, and introduce no innovations into the services.' Altars, vestments, lights are 'trifles.' Be gentle and generous, with regard to non-vital matters, he says to the Wittenbergers: 'Be kind to the weak, feeding those who are young in the faith with milk.' 'The sun has great brilliancy and heat . . . but one can escape from the hot rays of the sun into the shade, and this is what love does when it yields to its neighbour.' 'I would do even as much for my enemies,' he added.

Luther's humour, too, was abundant and ever-flowing—a blessed scabbard for his cutting blade! Next to the Bible, he loved Æsop's Fables. He dismisses a certain proud Italian with the dry remark: 'I wish he could be persuaded that God is also the creator of the human race outside Italy.' Don't make a fuss about processions and vestments, one way or another, he says: If the Margrave and Elector wants vestments, pile them on! 'and if your lord the Elector is not satisfied with one procession, then go round seven times, as Joshua went round Jericho; . . . and, if your lord has any desire, let him go on in front,

springing and dancing with harps and cymbals, drums and bells, as David did.'

'I must always joke whether sick or well, weak or strong, a sinner and yet justified, well-nigh dead and yet alive in Christ,' he writes to Wenzel Link; and then asks him to send, 'not poetical dreams, but songs, which will give me great pleasure.' 'Ask a boy,' he says, 'to collect (and send) all German pictures, rhymes, songs, &c.' Almost to the last he kept his mirth very near the surface. He joked over his wife's anxiety about his health, even when there was ground for anxiety. He writes to her as 'my dear wife, Katherine Luther, doctress and self-tormentor, my gracious lady.'

He took the greatest delight in Nature, and all Nature's simple things; her birds, her flowers, her little children. Busy and careworn, he writes to Justus Jonas: 'I have been overwhelmed with care and business of every kind, so that I, a worn-out old man, would prefer wandering in the garden (which is the old man's joy) to behold God's wondrous works, as manifest in trees, shrubs, flowers and birds. This is the recreation I most dearly love.' Writing from his mountain place of hiding, he dates his letters, 'In the region of the birds,' 'In the region of the air,' 'In the region of the birds who sing beautifully on the trees, praising God night and day, with all their might.' On other and perhaps less happy days, it is 'Given in my Patmos'; and once, 'From my desert.'

His industry was enormous, ceaseless. His great work, the translation of the Bible into the German language, was not only the translation of a book, it was the practical creation of a literature. In his hiding at the Wartburg, he produced the translation of the New Testament; and, incessantly, tracts, books and letters poured, all through his life, from his trusty weapon, the pen. It interfered with his possible pleasures. Invited to join in a hunt, in the hope that it might give him a day's relaxation, he could do nothing but think of his hunt, 'a spiritual chase,' he called it; and an exposition of the 147th Psalm was the capture—'as I sat in the carriage,' said poor Luther. *That* was his 'hunting-ground'! At another hunt, lasting over two days, he says, 'Amid the nets and the dogs I pondered over theological matters': and then he wanders off, comparing the huntsmen with godless teachers and high ecclesiastical persons who entrap and destroy innocent souls. Writing to George Spalatin, he says, 'I managed to save a poor hare, and hid it under my coat, but the dogs discovered it, and bit its leg through the coat, and choked it, so we found it dead. Thus do the Pope and Satan, despite my efforts, try to ruin saved souls.' He turned everything to profit in the eager prosecution of his work.

The letters simply abound with keen and wise thoughts on a vast variety of subjects. Here are a few of these. 'The cross of Christ,' he says, 'is distributed through the whole world, and each receives his portion.' It is not a substance to be 'enshrined in a casket of gold, but in a golden heart filled with loving charity.' Writing to a pastor who was fretting about his health, the strong but pitiful Luther says, 'I thank God you feel a little better'; but he reminds him of the proverb: 'Imagination often makes things appear real.' 'The health of the soul,' he says, 'depends very much on that of the body'; and then, as though fearing he had written too much like a superior person, he suddenly dumps himself down by the side of the poor hypochondriac, and says, 'I can talk beautifully to you, but do not follow my own counsel. Farewell in the Lord!' Discussing sacraments, he rests all on the state of mind of the recipient—'All is possible to him who

believes.' The wafer is only a vehicle or a help—'Christ operates only on those who eat and believe.' To one who was mourning the loss of a beloved wife, he writes a most tender-hearted but robust and faithful letter, bidding him to wise and devout self-restraint, and moderation of grief: also to moderation and even cessation of 'masses, vigils and daily prayers for her soul,' and this he supports with an acute plea—'If we are always asking for one thing, it is a sign we do not believe God.' 'Vigils and masses for the soul,' he tells him plainly, are 'mere mummery.' The great reality is to trust God for all.

We must defer our examination of these letters in so far as they relate to the great subject of Demonism, but cannot conclude this notice without a reference to the last letter in this collection, written to his wife only four days before his death; the kindly soul still disguising his feebleness, and telling her that he hopes 'to return home this week, if God will.' He tells her of the gay goings on around him, of the settlement of serious affairs with the lords through the Council, of his happy scheme for reconciling two estranged brothers, and of how they are 'provided with meat and drink like lords,' but he does not tell her that the last time he preached he had to say, 'I could say much more, but am weak, so will leave it alone.' Then a touch of his humour flickers up: 'The report comes from Leipzig and Magdeburg that Dr. Martin has been snatched away by the devil. It is the invention of these wiseacres, your countrymen.' There follows at once a reference to certain warlike rumours, and then, right sharp, comes the fine old Luther note of trust and joy: 'But let us say and sing, that we shall wait and see what God will do. I commend you to God!' And there all ends.

SPIRITUAL HEALING IN THE CHURCH.

At last! A resolution was adopted unanimously at a meeting of clergy and laymen, held on the 16th inst., at Sion College, Victoria Embankment, in favour of a Central Church Council for the consideration of questions connected with healing by spiritual means. Spirit mediums for upwards of sixty years have been engaged in this beneficent work of healing by 'the laying on of hands,' but their work has been ignored by the Churches, or else designated Satanic; at last, however, this method of healing is to be recognised, and regularised, apparently, by the Church. Well, better late than never. The Psycho-Therapeutic Society will have to look to its laurels.

At this meeting, the 'Daily News' report states:—

The Rev. Prebendary Pennefather, who presided, said that general interest had been roused in the matter by the report of the Lambeth Conference. Mr. J. M. Hickson, of the Society of Emmanuel, said that society was formed more than three years ago, with the object of reviving in the Church the gift of healing. The members of their society acted through prayer, the laying on of hands, and, when requested by a patient, anointing, which was performed by a priest. They were in sympathy with all kinds of healing, which they considered to be a gift of God, but they wished for a more spiritual atmosphere round a patient. There was very little of this in hospitals, which was largely the fault of the Church. The Dean of Westminster (Dr. Armitage Robinson) said that he was a believer in healing by Divine intervention, and he believed in the miracles worked at the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, but he doubted, if he threw the shrine open now, that similar results would follow. It was necessary to have some test of the nature of the cases dealt with, as had been adopted by the Roman Catholics at Lourdes.

SPIRITUALIST FUNERAL.—On Friday, November 20th, the remains of Mr. Sidney Carl Keats, Hampstead, aged twenty-three, a member of the Chiswick Society, and a Lyceumist, were interred, according to his own expressed desire, in the manner customary with Spiritualists. Mr. Percy Smyth, president of the Chiswick Society, officiated at the services held in the house and at the graveside, which were bright and cheerful; no black was worn.—H. S.

RATIONAL IDEAS CONCERNING A FUTURE LIFE.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

On Sunday evening, the 15th inst., at St. James's Hall, Great Portland-street, W., the Rev. John Page Hopps delivered a discourse on 'Rational Ideas Concerning a Future Life.'

After a prayer and the reading of a few verses from the Apocalypse describing St. John's vision on Patmos of a new heaven and a new earth, Mr. Hopps read the well-known passage from Victor Hugo in the course of which the great novelist wrote:—

I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest once cut down, but the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. The sunshine is on my head; the earth gives me its generous sap; all heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. You say that the soul is a resultant of unknown bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous as my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. . . . For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse—history, philosophy, drama, romance, tragedy, satire, ode and song. I have tried them all, but I feel I have not said a thousandth part of that which is in me. When I go down to my grave, I shall say like many others, 'I have finished my day's work,' but I shall not say, 'I have finished my life.' My day's work will begin again next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley, it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens with the dawn.

That passage (said the speaker) is my text for a study to-night of a rational idea concerning the future life—a tremendous subject, and a subject which concerns everyone of us. Most subjects are speculative; objects of curiosity, objects of study, objects of interest, more or less, perhaps, objects we can leave alone, but here is a subject which concerns everyone of us and everyone upon the face of the earth. And yet it is a subject which must always be surrounded with mystery. Hence, if it is possible to get even a ray of light upon it, for God's sake, for pity's sake, let us have that ray. But because it is a subject of such tremendous moment, of such unspeakable importance and surrounded with mystery, it is all the more necessary to keep cool and not to give way to any frightened fancies. The least likely place for studying the question of a future life is an excited, hysterical revival meeting. The likeliest place for the profitable consideration of the subject of a future life is in a quiet assembly like this and a study which professes to be rational.

You all know the old programme. Some of us are so sick and tired of it that we have absolutely given up the subject altogether. That old programme was: after death, then either life continued at once or a long sleep in the dismal grave, to be followed by resurrection a million years hence and then, at any rate, eternal bliss or eternal agony. I do not want to worry and distress you by reading much of that which has been written and printed with regard to the so-called orthodox idea of a future life, especially about hell, but I must give you two or three short quotations from representative men belonging to days long gone by, though I could easily have given you extracts quite as dreadful from Mr. Moody and Mr. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, for these two men said some of the most horrible things that ever were said on the subject of a hell. Here are two verses written by that grand writer of hymns, Dr. Isaac Watts. Dr. Watts wrote some of the loveliest hymns in the English language, but he also wrote some of the most horrible things about this subject of a future life. Speaking of God in one of his hymns (and, just imagine, people used to sing it—they set it to music!) he says:—

His nostrils breathe out fiery streams,
He's a consuming fire;
His jealous eyes his wrath inflame,
And raise his vengeance higher.

His dreadful wrath like burning fire
In hell for ever burns,
And from that hopeless world of woe
No fugitive returns.

I will only give you another extract, this time from that great, good, saint-like John Wesley. Every Wesleyan minister is expected to read Wesley's sermons and to believe in what Wesley preached, but in the sermon No. 123, the saintly Wesley insists that the fire in hell is real fire.

Mr. Hopps then cited the passage in the course of which Wesley discusses the torments of the wicked in the 'lake of fire burning with brimstone,' and refers to the impossibility of their 'fainting away' and becoming unconscious of their condition, since they are made 'strong to endure whatever the united skill and strength of angels can inflict' upon their suffering frames!

Doubtless John Wesley would not say a word of it to-day, and (continued Mr. Hopps) I have no doubt that in the heavenly world he is very sorry he ever said it.

And now what is the future life at all? What have we to guide us? It is an immense subject and would require a multitude of Sundays for the proper discussion of it.

I will give you four simple clues which may guide you in the matter, and which are as practical and rational as they are simple. The first is that a great thought is itself a great hope. People have often said to me when I have been preaching a rational idea of the future life, 'Now, that is beautiful. It seems too good to be true.' My answer is always that in this marvellous universe of God the thing that is good is therefore likely to be true. A great thought of a great good is in itself an argument on which to base a great hope.

The second clue is that there is an immense help in the doctrine of evolution. You can trace the law of evolution into a future spiritual condition. Now take this idea of evolution, which is one of the greatest scientific facts in the world to-day. If by slow gradations through countless ages man has been developed (as we know he has been) from the lowest forms of life, is it not reasonable to argue that in this highly developed creature we have the pledge and prophecy of a possible persistence of evolution into a spiritual state of being? One of the clear thinkers of the latter part of the last century, presiding over a meeting of the British Association, made this remarkable statement. He said that 'Evolution up to the present time seems to have been concerned in developing the body of man from the lower forms of bodily life, but the evolution of the bodily form of man seems to have come to a standstill, and now the line or track of evolution seems to be in the direction of the development of mind and spirit.' That is my argument. This great law of evolution seems to be developing man's finer and real self, and that points to evolution into the unseen.

Then as regards the possibility or probability of what is to happen in the future life, we are always safe in reasoning from the known to the unknown, and the reasoning based on the known concerning the unknown is a hundred times more valuable than a collection of texts of scripture. It is the most solid argument that you could possibly have.

I will only mention, just to go no further, the fourth clue—the experience which seems to run all through the ages, and which in these latter days we know as spiritual phenomena. Through all the ages and in connection with all religions, men have always believed in communication between the seen and the unseen worlds. And, as the old proverb has it, where there is so much smoke there must be fire, or, as I would rather express it, where there is so much light there must be flame.

Two words in regard to this subject are very helpful—the word 'rational' and the word 'humane.' Most of the old ideas concerning the future life are neither rational nor humane. Those quotations I read just now were neither rational nor humane. There is neither a gleam of reason nor a throb of humanity about them.

There is, I think, only one way in which we can rationally account for a future life, and that is that every human being must be a dual personality. As St. Paul said, 'There is a natural (or animal) body and there is a spiritual body.' Well, what if the spirit life is a great scientific fact? What we have to realise is that science has proved to us the existence of grades of matter. Matter goes on from granite to gas, and

from gas right away to the ether—which everybody has to infer, but which nobody can take hold of—and from that there may be an ascent to a spiritual realm, since, for aught we know, spirit is only a refined form of matter. What if the spirit has itself a body to match the mind? What a glorious, emancipated creature it would be! And if this is so, death would only be a passing out and a passing on of the real spirit-self when it had slipped off what Shakespeare calls 'this muddy vesture of decay.'

Passing next to a consideration of his key-word 'humane,' Mr. Hopps said: If there is a God, He is a humane God. Whatever else you disbelieve, it is of no use having a God who is not humane. He must be at least as good as a good father, a good friend, a good comrade. Therefore I stand for the humanity of God, and nothing can be true about the future life which does not square with humanity as well as with rationality.

Properly understood, the subject of a future life is not necessarily a religious subject at all. It is only the accident of the connection of a future life with God and the idea of punishment and reward that has made it a religious subject. The future life might be as much a reality as this, and yet there might be no more of God there than here. The question of a future life is not a question of religion at all. It is much more a question for the physician and the biologist than for the priest and the preacher. The subject of a future life might be examined as a scientific subject, quite apart from the priest's and theologian's interference and intrusion with their ideas of heaven and hell.

Then let us take the question of man's fate in a future life. Here, again, are four clues which we might profitably follow. The first clue is the simple statement that God is at least consistent. We have no use for a God who is not consistent, who has one standard of justice in one world and another standard of justice in another. The laws of Nature are consistent—the same in all worlds, the same to all creatures. Therefore the principles of God's Universe must be consistent. We find here that remedy and uplifting are the laws of all life; we find the law of all life is progress, development, evolution from lower states to higher. Why should we not draw the inference from *here* to *there*? If you make that inference from the known to the unknown you get rid of all that pernicious nonsense about eternal torments in the passages I have quoted.

The second clue is that God, in some sense, is the Father of us all. That was Christ's own name for God—'Our Father.' If there is any truth in Christianity, in the Lord's Prayer and in the religion of Jesus Christ, then God in some sense is our Father, and is thus the inspirer of all our best and loftiest emotions. The witness of our highest reason, the witness of our most awakened conscience, the witness of our truest humanity, is the witness that God has given us, and there is no clearer revelation from God, not even in the Bible. I would rather go to a good father or mother than to any theologian or priest in this matter, for I know God speaks through these fathers and mothers, and I am never quite sure that He speaks through theologians and priests.

The third clue is this: Jesus is *there* what he was *here*. I am taking the Christian on his own ground. He believes in Jesus; so do I. He believes that Jesus is in the eternal spiritual world; so do I. And I believe Jesus has not changed, at any rate he has not changed for the worse. When Jesus was on earth he came to seek and to save that which was lost. He has changed for the worse if he sought for the lost and tried to save them in this world, and does not seek and try to save them in the spiritual world.

Proceeding to a consideration of the last 'clue,' viz., the Bible itself and the fact that it abounds with messages of hope, Mr. Hopps referred to the old stumbling block represented by the oft-quoted text, 'As the tree falls so must it lie.' It was generally supposed to imply that as a man died so shall it be with him for ever. But, when a tree falls, the owner sees that it is only an obstruction, but is of value as timber. Therefore he hastens to remove it and make the best use of his fallen tree. Surely,

then, in the same way God would make the best use of His fallen man. Again, the Bible contained such statements as 'The Lord is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works.' Was hell one of His works and were His tender mercies over that? Again, we were told that 'the mercy of the Lord shall endure for ever.' Then we were admonished to 'do good to them that hate you, that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven.' If this teaching of eternal torment were true, then it would seem that the Father was not setting an example to His children.

Finally, taking the two words, 'Progress' and 'Justice,' the preacher said that Progress, that great generalisation, was the very life of all modern science. All science was founded on the great doctrine of natural law being natural progress. It seemed to be the one certain law of all life. We were all on the march—that was good science, good philosophy, and good religion. There was pain and struggle and misery, but we were beginning to see that these things had their uses in the development of the race. Much of the struggle and suffering of to-day were only the 'growing pains' of the human family, and we were getting through them to more humane and juster conditions of life. Then there came a question—a rational question—a question we all had to face. If this mighty, sweeping evolution has been going on for all ages and has produced man with all his possibilities of progress and development, is it not rational and scientific to assume that its work will not cease at the end of this little external life of the body, if there is a future life? Surely the only God that religion could recognise is a God that can carry on this splendid process of progress and development into the next life.

Such a conclusion was warranted if only by a reliance on the justice of God, to say nothing of His sympathy and love. Was there to be no justice for the millions of heathen in foreign lands who had never heard of Christ or Christianity, for the miserable battlers for existence in our great city slums, for the honest seekers after truth, true to themselves because they could come to no conclusion about some metaphysical, philosophical, theological problem which they could not understand?

In conclusion Mr. Hopps said: They tell us that the angels stand for ever about the great white throne and carry palms and harps in their hands. Harps in their hands when so much is waiting to be done to rescue souls from the depths! Are they callous, are they ignorant, are they heartless, these happy angels? Are they sunk in lazy selfishness? I think instead of harps they should take lanterns and go into the outer darkness to seek and save the lost. If I had the chance of a harp or a lantern I hope I should choose the lantern.

Such, at least, are one man's thoughts of the future life. But they are not mine alone, they are thoughts coming into the hearts and minds of men and women in all the churches. Like John the Baptist in the wilderness, they are the heralds and forerunners of the Christ to be. To-night I stand here and call upon Christendom to hear the challenge, 'Prepare the way of the beautiful God. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'

After the lecture an invitation card was distributed at the doors, of which the following is a copy:—

Rational Religion. St. James's Hall services to be continued in Little Portland-street Chapel. The committee of Little Portland-street Chapel have asked the Rev. John Page Hopps to continue in the chapel the services so successfully carried on in St. James's Hall. The chapel will be as free to the public as the hall has been, and Mr. Hopps will have precisely the same absolute freedom as to the services and addresses. Those who continue to attend the services will be as free to come and go, without being in any way urged to attach themselves to the chapel unless they themselves signify their wish to do so. The chapel opens at 6.30 p.m. Organ at 6.45. Service at 7. All seats and books free.

EDWARD T. BENNETT: AN APPRECIATION.

We are indebted to the kindness of Mr. Frank Podmore for the following appreciative notice of Mr. E. T. Bennett:—

Edward T. Bennett, whose death took place on the 16th inst., had been intimately connected, for more than a generation, with the Spiritualist movement. He was for some years an active member on the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists. In January, 1882, a conference, convened by Professor Barrett, was held at the rooms of that Society, which led to the formation of the Society for Psychical Research. Many members of the B.N.A.S., amongst them Edward Bennett, accepted seats on the Council of the new organisation. Mr. Bennett, from the outset, gave his services freely in helping to start the new Society, acting for the first few months as its honorary secretary. As the work grew in importance a salary was attached to the post, and for the next twenty years our departed friend rendered faithful service as librarian and assistant secretary to the Society. During his tenure of office the membership of the Society advanced from a few score to upwards of a thousand; sixteen volumes of 'Proceedings' and ten volumes of the Society's 'Journal' were published, and a large and valuable library was formed, the arranging and cataloguing of which formed part of Mr. Bennett's duties. Though always true to the Spiritualist tradition, Mr. Bennett threw himself heartily into his new work and loyally accepted the new methods and the new standpoint.

In October, 1901, on the occasion of the reconstitution of the secretarial arrangements, consequent on the death of F. W. H. Myers, Mr. Bennett resigned his position, retiring at the end of March, 1902. In accepting his resignation the Council, on the motion of Sir Oliver Lodge, placed on record 'their appreciation of the long and faithful services of Mr. E. T. Bennett to the Society.' They further elected him an Honorary Associate, and awarded him a suitable pension. In the leisure of his retirement he compiled some useful books, with which the readers of 'LIGHT' are probably familiar, illustrating the progress of psychical research during the past twenty-five years.

A man of singular modesty and kindliness, without malice and without guile, faithful in duty, and loyal to all allegiances, he has done his life's work and has entered into his well-earned rest.

We can unreservedly endorse Mr. Podmore's closing tribute to Mr. Bennett, and may add that although he was connected with the Society for Psychical Research for so many years he never lost his deep and abiding conviction of the reality of spirit intercourse, and in his four contributions to 'The Shilling Library of Psychical Literature,' especially in the two last, *viz.*, 'Automatic Speaking and Writing' and 'The "Direct" Phenomena of Spiritualism,' he gives evidence of his acceptance of the reality of the phenomena and of the spiritualistic explanation of some of them, for on p. 62 of the last-named work he says:—

It is legitimate to claim that these 'direct' phenomena are facts which demand the careful examination of science; also that they are facts which strengthen our belief in telepathy, and what is of far greater interest and importance, that some of them afford what almost amounts to scientific evidence of the existence and presence of intelligences other than human beings in the flesh, between whom and ourselves intelligent communication can, and does, take place.

SPIRITUALIST FUNERAL AT BOURNEMOUTH.—Mr. John L. Castner, Hon. President of the Bournemouth Spiritualist Society, passed over quite suddenly on Tuesday, the 17th inst., at the age of sixty-eight years. Mr. Castner, a Member of the London Spiritualist Alliance, had been an ardent Spiritualist for many years, and was loved and revered by all with whom he had dealings. The interment took place on Friday, and the funeral procession caused no small stir in Bournemouth. It was the first Spiritualist funeral there, and was characterised by an entire absence of mourning trappings. The widow (herself a hard worker in the cause) and daughter were robed in white, with violet ribands, the whips of the coachmen were adorned with violet and white ribands, and all present carried bunches of white flowers, which were afterwards cast into the grave. The service was conducted by Mr. Dudley Wright, who gave an address in the Cemetery Chapel, and a short address was also given at the graveside by Mr. John Walker, Vice-President of the Bournemouth Society.

VICTORIEN SARDOU AS A MEDIUM.

According to 'L'Echo du Merveilleux,' Victorien Sardou was not only one of the earliest declared Spiritualists in France, but he was himself a medium of considerable power, and executed numerous drawings under spirit influence. In 1851 he was told by his friend M. Goujon, the astronomer, that at the house of the American Consul in Paris he had witnessed the raising of a large dining table: he leaned on one end of it, and yet it was still raised, lifting him from the ground. Sardou asked, 'What does M. Arago say about it?' Goujon, who was Arago's secretary, replied that the great scientist had said to him: 'You have seen it, therefore it is a fact. You do not know the cause; but there are many things of which we do not know the causes.' This attitude might be commended to many, even at the present day.

Sardou then frequented the society of Spiritualists and mediums, and met with Rivail (Allan Kardec), with whom he joined in investigating the subject in all its bearings. He appears to have obtained many well-marked physical phenomena, such as a table 'walking about the room like a well-trained dog,' showers of roses falling from the ceiling, and the keys of a piano depressed by invisible fingers. He then began to write and draw automatically, under an influence which claimed to be that of Bernard Palissy. One afternoon he had taken an ordinary sheet of paper, and the pen drew a line right across it; in explanation he was informed that it was too small. A larger sheet was similarly treated, and when he stated that he had no larger paper, the reply was, 'Go and buy some.' As it was raining, and the shop where he usually bought his paper was a long way off, he protested, and was told to go to a square near by. He could not remember any shop there, at which paper was sold, but the spirit persisted that there was one. He went out, and was about to return home, unsuccessful, when he noticed a small sign on the *porte-cochère* of a house, indicating a wholesale dealer in paper, and found that he could obtain any size required. When he got home, his pencil wrote: 'You see I was right.'

Under this influence, supposed to be that of Palissy, Sardou executed a great number of curious drawings, and even etchings on copper, representing streets, houses, furniture, flowers, animals, and persons of strange types, some of them said to represent the residence of Zoroaster on the planet Jupiter, with the animals and vegetation proper to that distant locality. After a time, however, Sardou ceased to be sensitive to this strange artistic influence. Writing in 1863, with regard to one of his spirit drawings, Sardou said:—

I look forward to the day when these very curious phenomena, inexplicable as yet in the present state of our knowledge, shall no longer be subjected to two extremes of opinion: the scientific incredulity which admits nothing, and the ignorant credulity which accepts everything, even charlatanism. But that time will not come yet, for we are as fully steeped in scientific superstition, as our ancestors were in superstition of another kind. We are good hands at persuading ourselves that we know things which we do not know, at denying what passes our understanding, at proving by A+B that certain things cannot be true, even though they are, since official science has not authorised Nature to produce these results!

After forty years the scientific world has been forced, in other branches of knowledge, to admit that the more it learns the further it seems to be from finality; and in this particular branch of knowledge (which it is beginning to admit to be knowledge, and not illusion) it is gradually coming to the wise and cautious verdict of Arago. M. Sardou has lived to see a considerable breach made in the frowning walls of scientific prejudice, and the public attitude much more favourable to a calm and dispassionate consideration of the claims of Spiritualism.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a Conference meeting at Third Avenue, Little Ilford, on Sunday, December 6th. At 3 p.m. Mr. C. W. Turner will open a discussion. Speakers at 6.30 p.m.: Messrs. G. T. Gwinn, C. W. Turner, J. Kelland, and M. Clegg.

JOTTINGS.

We are pleased to learn that Professor Barrett's recently published work, 'On the Threshold of a New World of Thought,' has had a rapid sale and is now out of print. Professor Barrett asks us to state that he is now preparing a new and enlarged edition, which he hopes to have ready so that it can be on sale early next year.

Sir Oliver Lodge, in a letter to the 'Christian Commonwealth,' expresses his surprise that some should have assumed that he denies the Christian Resurrection. He therefore expands a sentence in his book (p. 290) to the following, in order more clearly to express his meaning: 'The record may be taken as exact, without any need for assuming identity of material particles in the Resurrection body. The appearances during the forty days are mysterious, but they can be accepted very much as they stand, for they agree with our experience of genuine psychical phenomena the world over.' In other words, Sir Oliver Lodge but affirms what we have always contended, *viz.*, that Spiritualism renders credible those manifestations which were deemed miraculous because they were supposed to stand alone.

'Things to Come,' referring to 'Spiritist Signs,' says, 'it is not our place to deny or question them, as unbelievers in a spirit world attempt to do. We readily admit the evidence, for what it is worth, but we deny that they are "messages from the dead." They are messages from lying and deceiving spirits, personating dead people in order to support the Devil's lie that "there is no death." Now, are not these "tidings of comfort and joy"? We do not envy the state of mind of those persons who believe that there is a personal devil, and that the people of this world are given over to the tender mercies of lying and deceiving spirits. But so long as there are people who believe that kind of thing it will be necessary to try to help them to a more spiritual and a happier state of mind. Evidently there is still a large field for educational work by Spiritualists.'

'John o' London's' 'maunderings' have stirred up some Spiritualists to reply in the correspondence columns of 'T. P.'s Weekly.' 'J. B. T.' writes: 'I saw recently an advertisement announcing a book by a man who has spent thirty years in going into Spiritualism. The writer of that book is a personal friend of mine. He is a hard-headed Scotchman. Is it not reasonable to say that one could rely more on his lengthened experiences than on the surmises of one who really knows nothing?' This writer evidently refers to Mr. James Robertson's admirable book on Spiritualism. 'John o' London' replies that 'we are a very long way from the necessity of seeking a spiritualistic explanation of even the most startling phenomena.' This really means that some people prefer to go 'a very long way' round rather than admit the plain inference to which the facts directly point; thereby violating the fundamental rules of impartial, scientific investigation.

Reviewing Mr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe's valuable work, 'New Light on Immortality' (noticed in 'LIGHT' on p. 508), 'The Morning Leader' says; 'In the nineteenth century we clung to a belief in immortality in the face of the contemptuous protests of an over-dogmatic science. In the twentieth century we seem likely to find in a science grown more humble our chief justification for a much stronger faith in the continuity of life. This change of view is almost startlingly presented in Mr. Fournier d'Albe's new book. Writing as a scientific man, he reverses the attitude of the Hæckels and Huxleys of the past. They resolve—or try to resolve—all life into the product of inanimate nature; he resolves all nature into a series of living universes, or orders of life, each composed of living "particles," and each particle endowed not only with life but also with spontaneity and will.' The Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance may expect a treat on Thursday next, when Mr. Fournier d'Albe will speak on 'Physical Conditions of Life in the Next World.'

While refraining from criticism the reviewer says: 'The logic by which Mr. Fournier d'Albe establishes his philosophy of life is exceedingly ingenious, and his premises are quite as reasonable as those of materialism. And yet it may be doubted whether his conclusion is really consoling. The essential part of us—in which our will, character, and memory reside—lives on after the death of the physical body; but under what conditions, and with what prospects before it? Materialised spirits never tell us: when they appear, they seem to use not only the voices but also the very limited minds of their mediums; and their utterances are usually

commonplace. Mr. Fournier assures us that the after life is really a sort of heaven ; but this is the mere assumption of an optimist. Nevertheless, his book is very well worth reading. It should give a stimulus to all honestly scientific speculation on the momentous question of life beyond the grave. This is better than we usually get from 'The Leader,' but we are not limited to 'materialised' forms for our information.

Mr. A. V. Peters is continuing to give great satisfaction to our South African friends. He reached Durban, Natal, on Sunday, October 25th, and was officially welcomed by the Durban Society at a social gathering the following evening. His first public meeting was held on Wednesday, October 28th, and the hearty applause which greeted Mr. Peters at the close of his psychometric and clairvoyant descriptions clearly indicated the satisfaction he had given to the large audience assembled. A number of striking tests were given, and the Durban Spiritualists are looking forward to a good time.

The 'Morning Light,' a 'New Church' weekly journal, says : 'If those who pass from this world to the next continue to be, as we are taught, altogether themselves, retaining the same mental outlook, and the same characteristic impulse of the soul which distinguished them here, then it is reasonable to expect that Mr. Myers would leave no stone unturned, no means untried, to hold open the channels of communication between the two worlds. He would surely be amongst the foremost to demonstrate his "survival of bodily death" and to establish the continuance of his identity beyond all possibility of doubt.' We agree ; and because we do agree we cannot refrain from expressing regret that, judging from what has been published, our friends of the S.P.R. have not allowed Mr. Myers to speak for himself instead of bothering him for 'Concordant Automatism,' many of which are open to the telepathic objection and therefore of little value as evidence of spirit identity. Experience has taught Spiritualists that it is the spontaneous manifestations and messages that almost invariably afford the best evidences of spirit action and individuality.

The Glasgow 'Evening Times' on the 18th inst. gave an outline profile portrait of Mr. James Robertson, with the word 'Spiritualism' below it. In another column it was said that 'Mr. James Robertson was born in Glasgow sixty-four years ago, and for more than thirty years has been the most prominent advocate of Spiritualism. His name is known the world over as a writer on the subject, for Mr. Robertson has contributed to the spiritualistic press of America and Australia, as well as to that of our own country. His style of writing is clear and vigorous, and his manner of speech is equally clear and impassioned. In the advocacy of those truths which are dear to him he has the eloquence born of conviction and sincerity. There has recently been issued from his pen "Spiritualism : The Open Door to the Unseen Universe," a book of over four hundred pages, favourably reviewed in these columns and in many other quarters. . . . Mr. Robertson is universally esteemed. While the antithesis of a Churchman, he is a man of high spiritual culture. He is at the zenith of his mental activity, and his wide sympathies, coupled with large experience and sincerity of purpose in all walks of life, make him a most interesting personality.'

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 which may elicit discussion.

A 'Letter Guild' Proposed.

SIR,—With the valuable assistance of 'LIGHT' I should be glad to form a 'Letter Guild,' to draw together and assist those who by force of circumstances are obliged to live in the outlying places of the earth, where they may be alone in seeking spiritual knowledge. We who belong to the London Spiritualist Alliance and live in this busy centre can hardly realise how valuable and comforting even a monthly letter would prove to those in such circumstances. For each of these lonely ones I would try to find a correspondent in London and put them in postal touch with each other. There are many kind, helpful men and women who, I feel sure, would be glad to participate in this interesting work.

Letters from Colonials or those in unspiritualistic places abroad will be gladly dealt with to the best ability of

RADIUM.

c/o 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Medium Wanted in Dublin.

SIR,—I ask space in your journal to invite some psychically endowed lady or gentleman, who is a student and missionary of the deeper side of things, to pay a week-end visit to Dublin. I can promise in return a circle of sympathetic and intelligent friends, some of whom have psychic powers, though not yet developed freely. My home will be at the visitor's disposal ; expenses will be paid, and a small fee offered. I also invite offers of help from readers of 'LIGHT' residing near Dublin.—Yours, &c.,

35, Strand-road,
Sandymount, Dublin.

JAMES H. COUSINS.

The Spiritualism of Socrates.

SIR,—Perhaps you will re-publish the prayer of Socrates : 'Beloved Pan, and oh ! ye diviner ones who are about this place, grant that I may be good in my inner nature ; and that what I have of external things may be consonant with those inner things. May I deem the wise to be the only truly rich. And let me have only so much of gold as a provident man might enjoy and use.' I ask for this repetition because I am sure that I am not the only one of your readers who is thankful to Mr. Angus McArthur for his excellent contribution to what is known of Socrates. Surely it must come home to everybody, even to cavillers of the Podsnap order of mind, that the wisest of all the great Greek minds, whose fame has lasted over two thousand five hundred years, is a witness, an ever-living witness, testifying, out of the knowledge of his own wise soul, to a truth, confirmed through all the ages, of a Persistence of Soul onward, upward, towards perfection, of which his well-nigh perfect life was but a promise of attainment. To correct, to measure such a mind with a foot-rule is Profanity.—Yours, &c.,

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Is a 'Seer' a Medium ?

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of November 14th Dr. E. W. Berridge expresses the opinion that Jesus was not a medium, and seems to consider that a formal surrender of personal consciousness is a *sine quâ non* of mediumship. He describes Jesus as 'an adept,' one who gains proficiency either through art, or through the 'evil that is good we are not skilled in.'

Now, if Jesus was not a medium why does Paul call him a mediator ? (1 Timothy ii. 5.) Is not a mediator an inter-nuncio—a medium of communication between two parties ? It is clear that Jesus did not claim to be the real source of his own remarkable manifestations. (See John v. 19 : 'The Son can do nothing of himself' ; verse 30 : 'I can of myself do nothing' ; John viii. 28 : 'I do nothing of myself, but as my Father taught me I speak these things' ; John xiv. 10 : 'The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me He doeth the works.' These passages show that Jesus was regarded, by the writer of the Gospel, as the agent of higher powers ; in fact, all through the New Testament Jesus appears in a subordinate capacity—as the medium of some great and inscrutable power, be it God as Father, or God as the proximate impulse of the spirit world. Jesus is always in complete accord and willing subjection to the Father of Spirits (Hebrews xii. 9). Granted that there can be no doubt as to the exceptional character and lofty ideals of Jesus, this admission does not place him beyond the pale of mediumship unless Jesus was Almighty God. There is no phrase (nor collocation of phrases) in the whole range of the New Testament that can fairly be taken to prove that Jesus was God—hence, if he was not God he must have been in subjection to the Father, and thus we find Jesus taking his place among the prophets by whom God hath spoken ever since the world began.

I do not think Dr. Berridge fairly interprets the mind of Paul as it is expressed in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, 11th chapter, where he is made to speak of veiling (not hats). Take this beautiful thought in conjunction with the bridal dress of to-day and the veiling usually worn by females when presented for confirmation in the Greek, Roman, or Anglican Churches, and then decide where and how the hats come in. Perhaps your correspondent could enlighten me as to the exact date when females began to wear hats.

The sly drive about Paul's spiritual sanity is quite effete. The exquisite reasoning of the 14th chapter of 1st Corinthians fully demonstrates the clear and colossal mind of Paul (see verse 15) : 'What is it then ? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding *also*.'—Yours, &c.,

JOHN WILLIAMS.

86, Bellott-street, Cheetham, Manchester.

Spiritualism at Kingston-on-Thames.

SIR,—Here, at Kingston-on-Thames, which is one of the historic towns of England, I have to regret daily that no Spiritualist society exists. There are, however, a number of persons interested in psychic matters, and I shall be glad if you will allow me to invite the co-operation of all such in introducing the uplifting teachings of Spiritualism to the residents of this town and district, especially any lady or gentleman who could suggest (or lend) suitable premises for the holding of public meetings.

A private circle has been held at 98, Canbury-avenue for over a year, and additional sitters would be gladly welcomed who could join us regularly.—Yours, &c.,

T. BROWN.

To Help the Poor.

SIR,—Permit me, on behalf of the Howard-street Spiritualist Mission, of New-road, Wandsworth-road, who are desirous of reaching and helping our poorer brethren, to ask if any of the readers of 'LIGHT' will kindly help the committee by donations, either in cash or parcels of clothes, which the officers will gladly distribute to deserving persons in the neighbourhood. Donations, parcels, &c., sent to our president, Mrs. W. J. Scott, 35, Musjid-road, Battersea, S.W., will be duly acknowledged.—Yours, &c.,

CHAS. COUSINS,
Secretary.

A Puzzled Thinker's Question.

SIR,—Permit me to suggest in reference to the question asked by Mr. H. J. Marshall in 'LIGHT' of the 7th inst., page 538, that it would be of great interest to many of your readers if some of the able writers who from time to time give their views upon the state of the soul *after* it has left the body, would kindly express their opinions upon the time, manner, and source of its entrance into that body. I am well aware that this curious question has engaged the attention of philosophers and theologians for many centuries, from Origen downwards. But these discussions are treated in so scholastic a manner and contain so many references to dogmatic pronouncements, as to be of little service in the light of modern researches. There are three several theories, concisely set forth in Glanvil's 'Lux Orientalis' (I quote from the original edition, London, 1662. 8vo.): 'The first of these opinions that offers itself to Tryal is, that God daily creates humane souls which immediately are united unto the bodies that generation hath prepared for them. Of this side are our later divines and the generality of the schoolmen.' The second is 'The way of Traduction or propagation. And the adherents to this hypothesis are of two sorts, *viz.*, either such as make the soul to be nothing but a purer sort of matter, or of those that confess it wholly spiritual and immaterial.' The third theory, strongly advocated by Glanvil in his 'Lux Orientalis,' is that of the *pre-existence* of souls whether associated or not with bodies. This conjecture being of far greater complexity than either of the former, is treated at great length by the author, and that in so abstruse and complicated a fashion as to leave the reader with no very clear idea of the process presumed to have existed. The general drift of Glanvil's views seems, however, to favour the theory of a transmigration of the soul from body to body throughout the ages. A sober discussion of the subject and an exposition of modern views would be appreciated by many of your readers.—Yours, &c.,

J. E. H.

The Prevention of Crime Bill.

SIR,—May I venture to call attention to what seems to me the mistaken view expressed in the resolution of the Humanitarian League regarding Mr. Gladstone's Crime Bill, published by you in 'LIGHT' (p. 553)? I have been engaged in penal work for some years, and the views I offer are the result of some experience.

An inspector of English prisons, Major Griffiths, once aptly said that prisoners were divided into two classes—'those who ought never to go into prison, and those who ought never to come out.' Sweeping statements are not often true, but there is much deep truth in this one. For the first class of offender we have now the Probation Act—for the second, we are shortly, I trust, to have the Prevention of Crime Bill made law. There is no cruelty in this Bill when its provisions are carefully considered. Let it be remembered that it can only touch offenders *four times convicted of serious offences*. Such a series of convictions indicates a type of individual dangerous to society. Is it right that such people should continue to

generate offspring, and in other ways spread their poison through society? There must be compassion and protection for the innocent as well as for the guilty. Under Mr. Gladstone's Bill such people will be segregated until they show signs of that amendment which will render them no longer dangerous to society. They will be subjected to a milder discipline than those undergoing fixed sentences, and the power to shorten their confinement will rest with themselves—will depend upon their own efforts for improvement. There is no undue harshness in this system—there is rather an unconscious cruelty on the part of society when in mistaken pity it would leave such individuals unarrested in their courses, to injure continuously themselves and others.—Yours, &c.,

LUCY C. BARTLETT
(Member of the Executive of the
Howard Association).

Lyceum Club, 128, Piccadilly, W.

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.

CROYDON.—PUBLIC HALL LECTURE ROOM, GEORGE-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Frederic Fletcher's address on 'The Message of Spiritualism' was highly appreciated. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Imison, clairvoyante.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. D. J. Davis gave an excellent address on 'The Purpose of Phenomena.' Sunday next, seventh anniversary. Tea at 5 p.m. Tickets, 6d.; at 7 p.m., speakers and soloists.—H. B.

FINSBURY PARK.—19, STROUD GREEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Baxter spoke on 'Child Life in the Spheres.' Sunday next, Mr. D. J. Davis. December 6th, Mr. H. Leaf on 'The God of Israel.'

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. H. Schrepfer gave a good address. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mrs. Agnew Jackson. On Thursday, at 7.45, Mrs. Podmore. Wednesdays and Fridays, at 8, members' developing circles.—J. J. L.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Dudley Wright spoke delightfully on 'Prayer.' Soloist, Mr. Otto. Mr. G. Spriggs presided. Sunday next, at 6.30 for 7 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis will give answers to written questions.—A. J. W.

CLAPHAM.—RICHMOND-PLACE, NEW-ROAD, WANDSWORTH-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Adams spoke on 'Banner-Bearers.' Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Blackburn. Monday and Thursday, at 8, Friday at 2.30 p.m., circles. Saturday, at 8, prayer.—C. C.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Gambril Nicholson spoke instructively on 'The Permanent Power of Thought.' Mr. Geo. F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, Mrs. Effie Bathe on 'The Saving Power of the Christ.'—W. H. S.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, MUNSTER-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Ord and Mrs. Neville rendered good service. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Imison, address and clairvoyant descriptions. Wednesdays, at 8, public circle. December 6th, members' experiences.—W. T.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. C. A. Gode and Miss Sainsbury spoke, and Mrs. French gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Wood. Monday and Thursday, at 8, public circles; Wednesday and Friday, at 8, healing.—J. S.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. W. Underwood gave an address on 'Spiritualism, Objective and Subjective.' Miss F. Payn rendered a solo. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Stebbens, address; Miss N. Brown, psychometry. Monday, at 7 p.m., ladies' circle. Thursday, at 8.15 p.m., circle. Saturday, at 7 p.m., officers.—W. Y.

ACTON AND EALING.—21, UXBRIDGE-ROAD, EALING, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Snowdon Hall spoke on 'Circles and their Objects.' Mrs. H. Ball rendered a solo. 19th, Mrs. Boddington gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Blanche Maries. December 5th, at 8 p.m., social and musical evening. Refreshments. Admission 1s. each.—S. R.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Leaf gave an instructive address on 'Auras,' and clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. Barton sang. On the 19th Miss Maries gave a good address on 'The Cultivation of Content.' Mr. Wellsbourne sang. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., Miss Brown; at 7 p.m., Mr. G. T. Gwinn. Thursday, at 8, Mrs. Cheeketts. December 6th, Mrs. Effie Bathe.—C. J. W.