

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!'—Paul.

No. 1,460.—VOL. XXIX. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 1909,

[a Newspaper.]

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For further particulars see page 3.

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This Alliance has been formed for the purpose of uniting together persons interested in the study of Psychical or Spiritualistic Phenomena, which throw fresh light upon the nature of man, and reveal him as surviving the change of death. It also provides opportunities of investigation, and affords information by means of papers and discussions.

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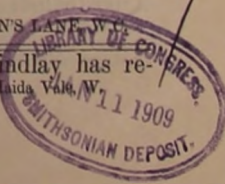
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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A hearty greeting to all friends and strangers, comrades and readers, believers and onlookers, far-off and near!—all of us seekers after truth and fellow-pilgrims on the great highway that leads from life to life, from Protoplasm to God.

A pathetic but hopeful greeting to our world on its march through sand and jungle out of darkness into light, from struggle to attainment, from bitter tears to sunny joy!

A Happy New Year to all! because a year of progress towards the Brotherhood which will one day mean self-denial and peace.

The advent of a New Year reminds us of a pretty but pathetic Article in 'The Open Court,' by Frank Pierson Tebbetts, on 'The Land of Once Upon a Time'—that Paradise of childhood with its Fairy Land of gallant knights and ugly ogres, beautiful ladies and hungry wolves, enchanted forests and wicked witches, lovely princesses and happy dwarfs in green and gold.

Too early, the enchantment fades and ends in the land of things as they are, and the young dreamer is told to wake up and to prepare for business, which means a pocket book instead of 'Grimm's Goblins,' and the grinding out of money instead of watching the dance in the Fairy Ring. So this writer, facing the coming years, and knowing well what they must mean to the youth who is summoned to 'grow up,' says to these children:—

You will come to new experiences as you advance in years. You will meet new problems, new obstacles, new difficulties in the way of life, but you will not have to put on spectacles and frown painfully and look gravely in order to find their solution. Go at them with a rush and a shout and a merry laugh, just as you climb the hill and swim the creek, and follow the hounds, and you will find them melting away like snow before the summer sunshine, leaving you fresh and unexhausted. You will meet with new crises and dangers, new burdens and responsibilities, new aspirations and disappointments as you travel upon this lengthy road: the relationships of your new estate will surround you with difficulties and problems which each day you will be called upon to solve. Meet all these trials bravely, resolutely and with a quiet courage—but above all meet them joyfully, gladly and with a childish confidence.

He deprecates the tendency to make children 'old' at any cost, to darken their lives with 'tasks' and 'duties,' to oppress them with a sense of the solemnity of life, to tear out of their hearts every shred of romance and imagination, and to feed them upon rules and systems until they become 'prating, artificial things.' He would have them to be 'children forever' and believers in their

childhood's dreams, tempering all their beliefs and transforming all their actions. 'I should tell them,' he says, 'to cling to their belief in the land of once upon a time as one clings to life and to hope.'

Mr. Joseph McCabe's brief Essay in 'The R.P.A. Annual' for 1909, on 'New Light on the Nature of Mind,' is another of his acute attempts to get 'spirit' into the 'material' pen, and keep it there. He actually tries to identify the movements in the brain-cells with states of consciousness, and to get rid of the gulf between them; and he does this in the name of our latest science, by showing what enormous forces reside in electrons and atoms. But no piling up of figures in terms of tons will serve to identify force with consciousness, which must always be something in an entirely different category.

Mr. McCabe thinks that these wonderful discoveries in the electron region, with their millions of tons of energy, have smashed up Spiritualism and driven the mystic out of the field. That is odd, for it looks to us quite the other way. The electrons, he says, are believed to be—that is to say, the beginnings of matter are said to be—'centres of strain in ether.' But 'centres of strain' are not what we know as matter. They are far more like the result of a will, or the thrill of a thought. But that is precisely what the Spiritualist wants and what the mystic delights in: for both depend upon finding the origin and the meaning of all things in a region beyond all that we know as matter, even in that region where it is true that 'In the beginning was The Logos'—the thought, the stress, the thrill.

He says a word, however, for psychical research and 'the more sober elements in the phenomena,' and hopes to 'steal the spiritual world for science.' Good! let him try. We think the end of the game will be the scooping in of science for the spiritual world.

One remarkable sign of the times, in connection with what is called 'the unrest' in India, is the calm but bold claim that the East is about to liberate the West from its bondage to low material things. Swami Bodhananda, speaking lately at Pittsburg in the United States, made this claim, but it comes from many channels and in various ways. He said:—

Whenever this world of ours, on account of growth, requires a new adjustment, a wave of power arises somewhere and fulfils the great cosmic necessity. As there are two planes on which man lives and acts, the material and the spiritual, the waves of adjustment come on both. From time immemorial the Orient has been the starting point, the birthplace, of the waves of spiritual adjustment. Her contribution to the general growth of the world has always been, and will be, her spiritual gift. Spirituality constitutes the very life of the people of the East.

During recent times, Europe and America have been the scenes of material progress. While the West is deeply absorbed in material acquisition, the East has been intensely practical in spiritual realisation. While this world, with its transitory joys and pleasures, has been the goal of life to the

people of the West, the theme of life in the East has been renunciation. Under these circumstances, to deliver the West from the depths of abject materialism, and perhaps to assimilate a little of her material civilisation also, a mighty wave of spirituality has again started from the East, which at no distant future will inundate and absorb the whole Western world with its omnipotent force. None can resist its progress. It is a necessity of the age, a demand of cosmic evolution. Any man who has ears to listen can hear the distant murmur of this flood of spirituality.

Though accustomed to it, we can never cease to wonder at the Church's fretful antipathy to Spiritualism. The Bible is all alive with it, and so was the Church in its formative stages. But it is now content to live on its past and to write luscious hymns and sing them to pretty tunes, to amuse itself on Sundays.

It reminds us of what Bernard Shaw lately said about music and art—*ay!* and about Religion. The creators are followed by confectioners. Bach and Beethoven are followed by 'a school' of men 'who write symphonies and songs that are a pure delight, but they are made of sugar from beginning to end.' Is it not very largely so with the Church? And the worst of it is that the Church confectioners are restive when they are reminded of the creators, and of what they did.

Still, there are signs of movement, especially when we find a Dean of Westminster giving his blessing to a clerical Association for developing gifts of healing.

Our American friends certainly beat us in plain direct preaching. It is probably the result of our being over-weighted with centuries of tradition. Here is a Rev. O. M. Caward, M.A., preaching to a meeting of the Labour Unions, on 'Jesus the carpenter.' The preacher holds that a carpenter is a co-worker with God, and that Jesus expressly represents that fact: a lovely spiritual truth, rightly understood!

Then the preacher launched out, and tried to bring all the Labour Union people in. Said he:—

The man who makes out of pieces of wood a car, or a door, or a chair, or a house, is helping God to develop His world.

The man who makes out of a piece of iron a bolt, or a rod, or builds a locomotive, is helping God to develop His world.

The man who mines coal, the man who tills the soil, the man who digs a ditch, all are helping God in the care of His world.

Go farther, the capitalist who dreams of a great enterprise and, by the power of brains and money, sets a great army of labourers at work is also helping God to develop His world.

The teacher who takes the children and trains them in the arts of civilisation is helping God to take care of His own.

The honest lawyer or judge, whose sole aim it is to do his work that justice may reign, and that men may find it hard to do wrong and easy to do right, is helping God to take care of His own.

Even the preacher who is trying to lift men above the selfishness and smallness, trying to make lives better and homes brighter, to help the burdened and to cheer the sick, and to comfort the dying, is only helping God to take care of His own.

Let the man down in the coal mine get, through Jesus Christ, a sense of his partnership with God; let him reach up in the standard of his work as high as he may; he can become consciously a fellow-worker with God as Jesus was.

When the world becomes conscious of God's estimate of the dignity of labour, when the clashing 'classes' see God's methods of revelation as they are, and when men as men come close enough to the heart of Jesus to feel the dignity and obligation of labour in fellowship with God, we shall no longer slight the labourer, we shall no longer suffer the dangers of 'clashing classes,' we shall no longer feel individual isolation by reason of work's chains. But in the sweet, strong power of the Nazareth carpenter's spirit the world of classes shall move forward toward God's ideals, and the world of men shall reach upward until all shall feel the sacred sense of partnership with God.

A recent number of 'The Theosophist' reprints from 'Hints on Esoteric Philosophy' a long letter from Colonel Olcott (1881) referring almost entirely to 'the Brothers' and their occult appearances. One paragraph is significant to-day, when we are wishful for more manifestations than we get. Colonel Olcott said:—

My teachers have always told me that the danger of giving the world complete assurance of their existence is so great, by reason of the low spiritual tone of Society, and the ruthless selfishness with which it would seek to drag them from their seclusion, that it is better to tell only so much as will excite the curiosity and stimulate the zeal of the worthy minority of metaphysical students. If they can keep just enough oil in the lamp to feed the flame it is all that is required.

There is probably a great deal in that, but we often wish they would risk it.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS

(From many Shrines).

Eternal God, whose years have no beginning and whose providence knows no end, help us to lose in Thee the sense of the vanishings of Time, and the fret of our anxiety before blind Fate. May we be sure that we are being borne on by the great Life-Tide which flows all the way to Thy Haven, and is the expression of Thy will. Teach us that all things—success and seeming failure, loving companionship and lonely solitude, strength and weakness, joy and sorrow—will all work together for good. Give us hallowed memories and holy resolves, grateful thoughts and quiet trusts: and use us, O Mighty Spirit! to help on the coming of Thy Kingdom and the doing of Thy will. Amen.

REMARKABLE MEDIUMISTIC DRAWINGS.

The Berlin correspondent of 'The Morning Leader' reports that the exhibition of the remarkable pictures drawn by Frau Assmann, while in a state of trance, has just closed. He says:—

The daughter of a poor miner near Halle, her life was full of work and hardship; she married a poor man, and now, at forty-six, is still scantily supplied with this world's goods. Four years ago Frau Assmann began to develop these trance conditions, which have baffled many of Germany's greatest doctors and scientists. She gave a 'séance' for the benefit of the Berlin Press one day, and all declared themselves face to face with an inexplicable fact, humbug being outside the question.

Her séances are simplicity itself, taking place in full daylight. She seats herself at a table, holding a bunch of crayons in her left hand, concentrates her gaze upon the paper before her, retiring into herself, so to say. Her face becomes rigid, her eyes dilate, and then operations begin. Taking the crayons one by one, Frau Assmann draws, with lightning rapidity and unerring precision, the outlines of flowers such as mortal eyes have never beheld. The blossoms and foliage are huge in size, brilliant in colouring, and filled in with myriads of tiny specks, the execution of which would drive anyone under normal conditions—as a famous Wiesbaden doctor stated—to the verge of lunacy.

There is little shading and no perspective to speak of, but these pictures fascinate, startle, and compel admiration by reason of their bold outlines and delicate minutiae. In some of the pictures strictly geometrical forms stand out among the fantastic blossoms, on seeing which one is convinced the artist must have carried off many a prize for free-hand drawing. As a matter of fact, Frau Assmann never had a drawing or painting lesson in her life, nor has she ever practised drawing or been interested in art.

THE ANNUAL DINNER AND CONCERT for members and friends of the Psychic Class at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., will be held at Pinoli's Hotel, Wardour-street, W., on Wednesday evening, January 13th, 1909, at 7 p.m. Tickets (3s. each) can be obtained from Mr. B. D. Godfrey, office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's lane, W.C. Early application for tickets is requested.

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, JANUARY 14TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

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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.

ON JANUARY 28TH, at 3 o'clock,

AN AFTERNOON SOCIAL GATHERING

will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will also be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings:—

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, on 'Spiritualism and the Deepening of Spiritual Life.'

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.'

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

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

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, January 5th, Mrs. Place-Veary 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.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On *Thursday next*, the 7th inst., at 4 p.m., Members and Associates are invited to hold an informal meeting for psychical self-culture, without the aid of professional mediums, and to consider future arrangements. *Special Meetings* will be held on Thursdays, February 4th and 18th, March 4th and 18th, and April 1st and 29th, at which 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*, January 8th, 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 *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.

C. C. MASSEY'S LETTERS.

Gratitude is due from all earnest thinkers on spiritual philosophy to Professor W. F. Barrett for his careful and appropriate selection, from the letters and other writings of the late C. C. Massey, of a series of extracts* which give in a succinct form the gist of his philosophy. Mr. Massey was not one of those who came prominently before the world, but he was untiring in his efforts to lay his views and conclusions clearly before those who came within the sphere of his influence, as readers of the papers to which he contributed, or who sought his advice by private correspondence. As Professor Barrett says of him, 'By his suggestive writings and the sweetness and beauty of his life he achieved more than many men of greater renown.' Professor Barrett also says:—

C. C. Massey was an idealist in philosophy, and a Christian mystic. Philosophically he was largely influenced by Jacob Boehme and Hegel. Like them, he believed, as all mystics have felt, that the eternal opposites, good and evil, subject and object, are reconciled in a higher unity. In mediæval times mysticism was a reaction from the cold and logical scholasticism of the theologians; at the present day it is a reaction from the barren formalism of orthodox official religion. . . . Mysticism, in its religious aspect, teaches us that our redemption from sin consists, not in any outward expression, not in formula or ritual, but through the 'process of the cross,' through an awakening to the consciousness of the indwelling spirit of God; the merging of our alien and separate self-consciousness into the divine and universal life. With this at-one-ment comes deliverance from sin, from the restlessness and isolation of self. Only through affiliation with God can the brotherhood and solidarity of the race be realised.

This question of self-hood, which has perplexed so many who fail to see that the surrender of the lower self-hood is a preliminary to the finding of the higher self-consciousness, is treated by Mr. Massey in some illuminating sentences. He tells us that we cannot realise the idea of brotherhood until we first realise that of sonship or membership of a transcendental personal unity, to which we are drawn by the bond of origin forming an attractive force which we call divine love; this relation realised, we instantly perceive the similar relation of all beings to the Universal. 'We can have no relation to the Divine which does not imply an analogous relation amongst ourselves.' As to the self, he says that man recognises himself first as an individual, then as a social unit, 'free by voluntary adoption of the regulations which at first appeared as limitations or compulsions derogatory to the self, but in which the self now recognises its own development.' On the stage of free personality the process is repeated:—

The individual will give up his separate personality, merging it in that social whole, be it what it may, in which he most intimately knows himself. It may be the State, the Church, a party, a sect; he completely identifies himself therewith. Apart from this, his self has for him no ideal interest. Result, the third moment in which his identity is restored as the very personification or self-consciousness of the community in which he lost it—he has become the Representative Man, the hero, the leader, whom that community instinctively follow as the personal expression of their collective unity. The identity of the truly representative man is no longer that of the mere social unit; in the voluntary merger of that identity he has reformed it as a total personality (p. 182).†

Turning now to matters which more closely concern us, we find that Mr. Massey held high views of life and destiny after death. Like all mystics, he was not content with the mere idea of survival in a state of life comparable with our present one; in spite of the greater freedom of the after-life as

* 'Thoughts of a Modern Mystic. A Selection from the Writings of the late C. C. Massey.' Edited by W. F. BARRETT, F.R.S. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co. Price 3s. 6d. net, or 3s. 10d. post free from Office of 'LIGHT.'

† This section of the book, on 'Stages in the Cognition of the World,' is more fully referred to by Mr. F. C. Constable, in his letter published on p. 12 of the present number of 'LIGHT.'

represented by Spiritualists, he regarded it as a continuance of limitation, and as but the prelude to endless progress until all limitation should be surpassed. He says (p. 39) :—

Psychical science, in my belief, has to relay the basis of religion, but I deprecate the idea of directly discovering immortality by means of it. We may—I think, do—discover survival, but that for me means only a ghostly and memorial prolongation of the earthly life (Hades or Sheol), and has no religious interest. On the contrary, I want the expansion of life, not a continuance of its present contracted mode. There is no true 'Spiritualism' in the disclosure of survival. We want to break the limit, not to prolong it. Religion would elicit the interests that will carry the personality up into an environment of higher life.

With views such as these, and an assurance of higher modes of existence founded upon the necessity of admitting a central Intelligence of which we all are parts, and with which we are destined to become conscious of intimate union, it is no wonder that Mr. Massey looked rather disdainfully on 'phenomena.' He took the singular view (p. 28) that 'the lifting of the veil in the way of external manifestations is disorderly,' and that those who attempt it 'cannot expect protection or furtherance from divinely spiritual powers.' But the opposition to phenomena came, he thought, from adverse influences of a low and malicious character. As to public opinion, he considered that 'much of the opposition to phenomenal Spiritualism arises from disgust of the grotesque incongruity between spiritual mysteries and the vulgar manifestation of which the world chiefly hears in connection with the subject.'

(To be continued.)

THE QUESTION SETTLED FOR MR. STEAD.

In the 'Fortnightly Review' for January, Mr. W. T. Stead relates how he knows that the dead return and tells how 'Julia' came to him. He says, after fifteen years of frequent communication with her :—

I have no more doubt of the existence and the identity of Julia than I have of the existence of my wife or of my sister !

Mr. Stead used to say that he would wait until some member of his own family passed over before he 'finally declared his conviction on the subject.' Twelve months ago his eldest son 'died' and Mr. Stead says :—

The tie between us was of the closest. No one could deceive me by fabricating spurious messages from my beloved son. . . . Twelve months have now passed, in almost every week of which I have been cheered and comforted by messages from my boy, who is nearer and dearer to me than ever before. . . . After this, I can doubt no more. For me the problem is solved, the truth is established.

Mr. Stead also relates how, during the late Boer War, when sitting with a friend for spirit pictures, the photographer told him that the spirit of an old Boer had come to be photographed, and that he gave his name as Piet Botha. Mr. Stead did not know any Botha named Piet, but when General Louis Botha came to England after the war, Mr. Stead sent him the photograph and next day received a visit from Mr. Wessels, a Free State delegate, who after inquiring how the photograph had been taken, explained : 'That man was a near relative of mine. I have got his portrait hanging up in my house. He was the first Boer Commandant killed at Kimberley. His name was Pietrus Johannes Botha, but we always called him Piet Botha for short.' The photograph was subsequently identified by two other Free Staters, who knew Piet Botha well. In Mr. Stead's opinion, telepathy is out of court in this case, which, he thinks, fulfils the supreme test : viz., 'that a plainly recognisable portrait of a dead person shall be obtained by a photographer, who knows nothing of the existence of such a person, and that no visible form shall be seen by the sitter in front of the camera.'

The point which is not made clear is, that the photographer knew nothing regarding the existence of Piet Botha.

FLOWERS OF MYSTIC THOUGHT.

Our old friend, Mr. James H. Cousins, one of the most exquisite of the Irish poets, has given us another seasonable offering, another casket of gems, in 'The Bell-Branch.*' It is a dainty little volume, a 'posy' of poesy ; in which high thoughts are expressed with rare artistry, and with more than the sonnet's brevity. The title is suggested by a lovely quatrain from the 'Sleep of the King' :—

Shake now the Branch of Night, and let its Bells
Tremble with music, till the souls of men
Bloom upward through the soil of Sleep, and flower
And fructify in Gardens no man tills.

Mr. Cousins has the mystic's insight and the artist's touch, and that pregnant suggestiveness that says so little and hints so much. The great purpose over-ruling the conflict of aims and of cross-purposes in the world is given in a couplet :—

The whole in all its parts fulfils
One purpose through the warring wills.

In 'A Freshet' he gives a mountain storm, the roaring rush of waters through the quiet valley, and the spiritual thought they suggest, in eight lines :—

Far in the hills the lightnings gleam,
And heavy clouds their burdens shed.
Here, all is calm . . . yet, see the stream
Rise roaring from its bed !
And, 'sooth, the heart's tumultuous moods
Perhaps as lofty birth may claim,
Where in the Soul's high solitudes
The Spirit speaks in flame.

Mr. Cousins sings of wedded bliss rather than of the storm and stress of passion, and he might have said with Schiller : 'Hand in hand with thee ascending, I essay the path which upward tending, Melts into the Spirit's light.' He has manifestly tasted of the higher, the larger Love. In a poem called 'Five Years,' he finishes thus :—

Five years with overflowing store
Of Love that mingles mind with mind ;
That, giving, gathers more and more,
And, taking, leaves not less behind ;
And rolls the clouds from Truth's majestic sun,
And finds the One in all, the All in one.

Such work should win its way into the hearts of all who appreciate high thoughts musically expressed.

E. WAKE COOK.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a meeting at Braemar-road, Plaistow, E., on Sunday, January 10th. At 3 p.m. Mr. C. W. Turner will open a discussion. Speakers at 7 p.m.: Mrs. Gordon, Messrs. G. T. Gwinn, J. Adams, and C. W. Turner.

A CORRESPONDENT, who resides in the West of England, states that he wrote to a psychometrist for a delineation and 'after waiting a fortnight for a reply, which gave ample time for the psychometrist to make local inquiries,' he received a correct account of himself and his circumstances ; but the clear prophecies given regarding his future never came to pass. He applied to a second psychic, and on this occasion gave a *nom de plume* and the address of a friend. In return he received several full descriptions of deceased persons, purporting to be relatives and friends, but they were totally unrecognisable. Our correspondent advises inquirers not to make appointments with mediums beforehand, unless they withhold their names and addresses, lest, by private inquiries, the mediums ascertain all the details for their 'tests.' Further, he suggests that, when a lock of hair is sent, it is 'not at all a difficult matter for an expert to deduce from it a fair general description of the complexion, eyes, &c., of the owner of the hair.' We can understand that there may be a variety of causes for the psychic's delay in responding to communications, and think it probable that our correspondent's suspicions are groundless. The cost of making private inquiries would probably, in most cases, be more than the fee which would be paid by the inquirer.

* 'The Bell-Branch,' by JAMES H. COUSINS. Maunsel and Co., Dublin. Price 1s.

INTERESTING ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

(Continued from page 618.)

QUESTION : Is the evolution of spiritual qualities quicker on your side than it is here ?

ANSWER : Yes, certainly. It is true we have bodies, but they are not of a dense and material character ; nor have they the same needs and requirements as have yours. With us the spirit functions through the spiritual mind or brain, not, as it is with you, through the physical brain as well, and therefore, because the material form has been removed, and the cares and anxieties of the material life have ceased, the emancipated one usually finds the unfoldment of his spiritual qualities much easier than when in the physical body. But do not despise your physical life because it does not respond as rapidly to your spiritual needs as the spiritual life will do when you have passed into it. You are here to gain strength of mind and will, to receive the first imprint of individuality, and therefore this earthly life is as necessary to your spiritual development as is the infants' school to the child who must afterwards learn in the higher schools. Call this world, if you will, the infants' school ; you must pass through it, and it is your duty to learn all that you possibly can respecting it, and you may look forward to the time when you will find your lessons more easy, your power to acquire knowledge greater than it was in the earlier days, and, your spiritual nature unfolding more rapidly and clearly, you will go forward through the death-change to the higher schools beyond, rejoicing in your new and glorious power.

QUESTION : What relation has hypnotism, as practised by the living on the living, to the spirit control of mediums ?

ANSWER : We should say that hypnotism, as practised by the living on the living, gives you one of the clearest ideas concerning spirit control that it is possible for you to receive. It is the action of mind over mind, and shows the influence mind may exert over the physical body. So we on the spirit side influence the medium's mind and control the organism. The principal difference is that while the hypnotist is one of yourselves and is visible, the spirit who controls a medium is invisible to the majority of earth's children. We come into relation with the mind of the medium, and through that mind we control brain and organism and the muscles of the body.

QUESTION : When one travels in spirit life, say to the sun or moon or other planets, is the spirit body taken with the individual or is the spirit body abandoned and built up at the journey's end ?

ANSWER : When we wish to travel rapidly from one point of the spirit world to another we do not leave our bodies behind. We do not say it is impossible to do so, but we have never yet encountered anyone who is able to get out of his soul, or psychical, body. That body seems to be part of us, as your physical body seems to be part of you, so that you cannot abandon your physical body : even if you leave it temporarily you must return to it where it is. By the knowledge we gain of the laws that control the spirit body, we are able to transfer ourselves from one point to another in a, to you, extraordinarily short space of time, but the body goes with us ; we have the power to carry it through the air speedily and safely. For those who desire a longer journey, and who wish to visit some far distant planet, a goodly amount of preparation is required, and also a deeper knowledge of the laws involved, and, generally speaking, those who wish to visit the planets do not do so alone, but in company with those who have a like desire.

QUESTION : When a person is in deep trance and controlled by a spirit, who is responsible at the time for the ordinary subconscious mind of the individual ?

ANSWER : The mind of the person to whom that body belongs. The life force has not been withdrawn. Although for the time being the spirit may have left the body there is still the cord of life between them, and the spirit is responsible for the continuance of the order and functionings of the physical body, which are mainly controlled

by the sub-conscious power of the individual. The spirit influencing the medium is not responsible entirely for the well-being of the physical body, and yet it is his duty to see that nothing comes close enough physically or spiritually to injure it ; and it is also his duty, when he perceives that the well-being of that body is being disturbed, to withdraw the influence of his mind so that ordinary consciousness shall reassert itself and the medium again protect his body.

QUESTION : How can one put himself into the clairvoyant condition ?

ANSWER : By becoming quiescent, so that his spiritual vision may become clear and his spiritual perceptions respond to the finer influences surrounding him. There are various methods : some prefer to sit quietly alone, in a subdued light, so that their spirit friends may come near to them : others prefer to sit with one or more sympathetic friends, that by their emanations of spiritual light and by their sympathy they may assist the spirit friends in the production of the proofs of their presence. Others, again, prefer to make use of some agent such as a crystal, a glass of water, a mirror, a disc, and so forth. Unless the one who wishes to develop clairvoyance can secure a certain set period for quiet, there is little hope of successful development of true spiritual clairvoyance.

QUESTION : How do spirits generally explain the problem of evil ?

ANSWER : As being due to the undevelopment of life conditions on earth. That is, that the earliest generations of human beings were undeveloped : not imperfect, but undeveloped. That they were the first parents for the divine life to manifest within and become individualised, but they were on a low plane, in conditions of what you term savagery, and the race has had to struggle up and out of those conditions of primitive ignorance and limitation. What you term evil we term lack of development. Evil is not a thing planted in the world at a beginning long, long ago, but the result of man's ignorance of the spiritual side of his nature. In spite of the wrong-doing that takes place day by day throughout all lands, we who are on the spirit side see that little by little, the higher, the truer and the more spiritual conditions are gaining ground and humanity is growing better, while evil is becoming less. As human development progresses and as knowledge increases, people will the more readily recognise true spiritual influences, and so-called evil will be beaten down and the tree of righteousness will develop, grow, and blossom in human life.

QUESTION : What is the Crown of Life ?

ANSWER : We should term 'the crown of life' the realisation of the fact that life has not naturally a limit set by physical existence, but is eternal, and that it includes the realisation of that deeper, sweeter side which is the manifestation of divine life, energy, and purpose, and which will carry humanity through the life of the physical world safe into the brighter and more spiritual conditions of the other life beyond. It is the realisation of the eternal life ; of the unending development and unfoldment of the human consciousness—the drawing closer and closer to the Divine Intelligence and Centre of Life—the realisation of the Unity of the Spirit, the One-ness of all ; this, we should say, is the Crown of Life, to which each and every one can and will ultimately attain. (Loud applause.)

The proceedings terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to Miss Morse and her control for their instructive and helpful services.

A CORRESPONDENT writes : 'I find that there are a great many persons who are not ready for spiritual truths, at present, and a few who are. Spiritualism, I think, will be the saving of true religion, as at the present day there are so many who no longer believe in Church dogma and will not accept a "cut and dried" ready-made religion. Many are fast losing whatever faith they may once have had in supernatural religion, and are drifting into a mere unintelligent unbelief which finds its expression in apathy and empty indifference as regards spiritual principles—out of which state seemingly nothing but Spiritualism, with its vital evidences and personal appeals from the unseen, can, or will, arouse them.'

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DR. HYSLOP ON THE RESURRECTION.

Dr. J. H. Hyslop's new book, 'Psychical Research and the Resurrection' (London: T. Fisher Unwin), is badly named. The subject of 'The Resurrection' comes in only as a closing chapter, and occupies but fifty-seven pages out of over four hundred. The work, as a matter of fact, is important far beyond the significance of its title. There are eleven chapters besides the chapter on 'The Resurrection,' all of them definitely dealing with experimental Psychical Research, and dealing with it in a thoroughly workmanlike way:—no rhetoric, no nagging, no rapture, no nonsense of any kind, but simply the industrious application of knowledge and of sympathetic common-sense to a subject believed to be of a value practically supreme.

Having said that, we intend, however, to confine our attention to that last chapter, partly because of its general interest and partly because it is new; the greater part of the book being a republication of matter that has appeared elsewhere.

By 'The Resurrection,' used as a customary phrase, the resurrection of Jesus is, of course, meant; but its application to the general question of persistence after death is brought out. Nothing, says Dr. Hyslop, can be clearer, in the biblical literature of the past, than the important and central place occupied by the story of the resurrection. Whatever interpretation was placed upon it, 'the whole fabric of Christianity rested upon its integrity': and, in his opinion, the story as told in the New Testament was intended to be the story of the resurrection of a physical body; and, in so far as the hope of life beyond death turned upon the resurrection of Jesus, that hope, unfortunately, got entangled with the notion of a resurrected body for all,—a notion which time was sure to crumble down and ultimately destroy, and which, as a matter of fact, owed its vitality to the expectation of a speedy return of Jesus and a general resurrection of the dead.

Dr. Hyslop enters upon a keen and subtle discussion of the influence upon the idea of resurrection of the contending doctrines of early Christian theology and of Epicurean and Greek philosophy respecting the eternity of matter. Early Christian theology had for its basis or buttress the idea that the Deity had absolute control of matter. 'Spirit, not matter, became the eternal; and, as personality or intelligence was the essential characteristic of spirit, there was no difficulty in supposing it capable of

re-creating the body at the end of the world, as it was assumed to have created it for this life.' With the rise and advance of Greek philosophy and ideal science, matter was advanced to the first rank as eternal and unchangeable, and, in proportion as this was done, belief in interventions, and playing fast and loose with matter, faded. Constancy and Law took the place of Miracle and Arbitrary Will. Experience became the test of truth, and Uniformity the order of the life of the world. Hence the tendency to drift away from belief in the exceptional physical resurrection of Jesus, and the ultimate promise of its total disappearance as of any value in relation to the resurrection of anyone else. In fact, so far from the physical resurrection of Jesus being of any value as a promise or symbol of our own, the reverse is true, for we know that other bodies do not 'rise again,' and everybody is beginning to think that they never will: so that the physical resurrection of Jesus is a barrier, not a promise.

But Dr. Hyslop comes to the rescue in a way long familiar to our readers. He says: 'While we cannot accept the proverbial story of the resurrection from the point of view of science, there may be a view of it which will bear scrutiny and which would have all the meaning that history and tradition have attached to it.' This view turns upon the historical records of apparitions which were well known to the Epicureans; and indeed apparitions continuously appear in all ages, make of them what we will; and, to religion, they were not only valuable but necessary.

Hence the importance of the resurrection of Jesus, and it is not difficult to find in that resurrection, as its actual reality, an apparitional appearance, or what we should now call a temporary materialisation or spiritual manifestation of a spirit personality, which might only too readily grow into the story of the resurrection of a dead body,—a story which, in any case, and whatever the fact at the heart of it, would be and do all that was necessary to silence the Greek materialist, and rally round it all the forces of aspiration and hope and spiritual joy.

That brings us up to the Society for Psychical Research which, says Dr. Hyslop, has proved beyond cavil the fact that apparitions do occur. He cites the 'Census of Hallucinations,' with its three hundred and fifty cases 'which seemed worthy of consideration,' and refers to a residue of fifty-two cases 'which satisfied the most severe tests of scientific method as to the probabilities of their truth.' The conclusion arrived at by the Psychical Research committee was that the fifty-two cases proved the reality of apparitions; and the remaining two hundred and ninety-eight cases were not disproved but only failed to pass the exceedingly severe and exhaustive tests devised by the Society.

The real value of this genuine bit of research is to be found in the confirmation it gives to similar testimonies which, from time immemorial, have found their way into the experience and records of the race. As to that, Dr. Hyslop's summing up shall be ours:—

The scientific acceptability of such facts to-day, when subjected to the scrutiny of scepticism, would make it entirely credible that Christ may have appeared in a similar way to his disciples, and explain a perfectly natural source for the story of the resurrection, a source, too, that would carry with it more or less guarantee for the conclusion which the early Christians had based upon the one incident.

If the examination of the present finds the phenomena credible as real and significant, there is no difficulty in accepting the credibility of them in the past, which we know to be full of assertions of them. Of course, each instance of alleged appearance must be submitted to the evidential test and credited or rejected accordingly. But when the fact of apparitions has been once established scientifically the ancient

allegations of them are less incredible than they would otherwise be. This is a truism. But it is mentioned in order to connect the acceptability of the present with the possibility of the past, and to make the past a part of the present in the interpretation of its nature and tendencies. This does not prove the truth of the story of the resurrection of Christ, but it does remove its supposed contradiction to the law of Nature, except in so far as history and tradition have interpreted it as a physical resurrection. This must remain incredible as long as such phenomena are not now frequent, and so long as human experience does not reproduce it as a law of Nature. But the existence of veridical apparitions would substantiate all that is useful in the story of the resurrection, and make human experience in all ages akin.

It is a pity the Chapters are not dated. That would perhaps have helped to indicate the progress of Dr. Hyslop's mature thoughts. For instance, Chapter two strongly reminds us of Mr. Podmore, and one would like to know whether it is much earlier than, say, Chapter one or Chapter eleven.

A FRESH BEGINNING.

'A happy New Year'—certainly, thousands of them, here and hereafter!

In a sense it is always a new year, for, as Susan Coolidge sings:—

Every day is a fresh beginning,
Every morn is the world made new;

and a new era opens up for us at any time. But it is well that we should pause in the rush and tumble of our strenuous life and listen to the spirit, if only for a brief season, that we may gain refreshing renewals and realise realities. The getting and spending, the planning and doing, the going and coming, the seeing and hearing, the ordinary daily routine, are so exhausting and usually so fruitless that it is a relief to drop them all and simply rest—rest and meditate—and let the light and healing of the Life and Love Divine flow in upon us and lift us up.

We chase after success, treasure, pleasure, fame, position, happiness as though they were realities: things valuable in themselves to be captured and held, whereas they are evanescent, of little real worth: the pleasure is in the pursuit rather than the attainment. The idea that 'the game is not worth the candle,' however, some day dawns upon the wearied and disillusioned hunter, and he is fortunate who does not turn cynic or pessimist.

We hear frequently of a 'divine discontent,' but seldom meet with it. More frequently it is querulous, envious, and uncharitable; but the spirit of appreciation and thankfulness extracts blessings from the most unpromising conditions.

Youth, hopeful, zealous, idealistic and sanguine, sees the golden age just ahead and pushes forward hot-footed to take possession of the promised land. It will find time to understand—to-morrow: and will be happy—by and bye: when the millennium is brought about, or conferred by external agencies. Age looks back; its good time is behind. These days are not like 'the good old times': 'there were giants in those days': 'the world went well then,' but things seem all wrong now: fear-thoughts and gloomy forebodings shadow the present and—well—'man never is, but always to be blest'!

Spiritualists are sometimes charged with harking backwards to superstitious practices and not keeping abreast of the times, or with prying into the secrets of futurity, but in reality Spiritualism enables us to realise that only the present is ours—the now—in which to live and know and realise. In one of her inspired poems Lizzie Doten says:—

The world is strong with a mighty hope
Of a good time yet to be,
And carefully casts the horoscope
Of her future destiny:
And poet, and prophet, and priest, and sage,
Are watching with anxious eyes,
To see the light of that promised age
On the waiting world arise.

O, weary and long seems the time to some,
Who under Life's burdens bow,
For while they wait for that time to come,
They forget 'tis a good time now.

The 'good time now' is the only time we have, or shall ever have. It is ours to use, to make the most of in the wisest and happiest way. Nothing is gained by vain regrets—by cherishing sad memories, by dwelling on griefs, sorrows, losses, or miseries. Let the past be past: there is neither sense nor reason, religion nor benefit in chewing the cud of bitter reflection; or of useless remorse.

It is the height, or depth, of folly to embitter the present by dwelling self-pityingly on *past* blessings, and, because they are gone, pulling down the blinds of the spirit and sitting in gloom and misery. The thankful heart rejoices because of happiness which it *has* known: the memory of past delights brightens and sweetens the disposition. Nothing can rob one of the good results of past joys—but they may be lost by useless repining and surrender to grief. The concrete result of experience should be a sweet, gracious, kindly, cheerful mental and spiritual attitude—habitually thankful for life with its opportunities for sympathy and ministry.

Here is a timely 'message from the dead' (through the instrumentality of Mr. A. G. Hales), from Adam Lindsay Gordon, the Australian poet, who, in a fit of depression, took his own life:—

When your soul is sick with sorrow, when you see the dawn
with dread;
When you wish that God would give you shelter with the
cloistered dead—
Turn aside where none may see, bare the head and bend the
knee—
Pray to God to give thee grace to fill thine own allotted place
with gentle strength—
Think of sunshine and of flowers—brood not on the bitter
hours.

Could the scales but leave your eyes for a moment night or
day,
You would see a legion round you of the dear ones passed
away:
You would know there is no dying; no more sorrow, no more
sighing—
Death is but a swift transition, but a part in each life's
mission, not an end—
Life and death are God's own giving, death leads on to higher
living.

It is well to realise that *now* is the time to be good, do good, and feel glad and happy, or as the song says:—

Live, live to-day: to-morrow never yet
On any human being rose or set.

If we are sad and wayworn, let us remember that we can begin again, for, to again quote Susan Coolidge's beautiful poem:—

Every day is a fresh beginning,
Every morn is the world made new;
You who are weary of sorrow and sinning,
Here is a beautiful thought for you—
A thought for me and a thought for you.

All the past things are passed and over,
The tasks are done and the tears are shed;
Yesterday's errors let yesterday cover;
Yesterday's wounds, which smarted and bled,
Are healed with the healing that night has shed.

Yesterday now is a part of forever,
Bound up in a sheaf which God holds tight,
With glad days, and sad days, and bad days which never
Shall visit us more with their bloom or their blight,
Their fullness of sunshine or sorrowful night.

Let them go, since we cannot retrieve them,
Cannot undo and cannot atone;
God in His mercy receive and forgive them!—
Only the new days are our own;
To-day is ours and to-day alone.

Every day is a fresh beginning!—
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain,
And, spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted, and possible pain,
Take heart with the morn, and BEGIN Again!

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
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DR. HYSLOP ON THE RESURRECTION.

Dr. J. H. Hyslop's new book, 'Psychical Research and the Resurrection' (London: T. Fisher Unwin), is badly named. The subject of 'The Resurrection' comes in only as a closing chapter, and occupies but fifty-seven pages out of over four hundred. The work, as a matter of fact, is important far beyond the significance of its title. There are eleven chapters besides the chapter on 'The Resurrection,' all of them definitely dealing with experimental Psychical Research, and dealing with it in a thoroughly workmanlike way:—no rhetoric, no nagging, no rapture, no nonsense of any kind, but simply the industrious application of knowledge and of sympathetic common-sense to a subject believed to be of a value practically supreme.

Having said that, we intend, however, to confine our attention to that last chapter, partly because of its general interest and partly because it is new; the greater part of the book being a republication of matter that has appeared elsewhere.

By 'The Resurrection,' used as a customary phrase, the resurrection of Jesus is, of course, meant; but its application to the general question of persistence after death is brought out. Nothing, says Dr. Hyslop, can be clearer, in the biblical literature of the past, than the important and central place occupied by the story of the resurrection. Whatever interpretation was placed upon it, 'the whole fabric of Christianity rested upon its integrity': and, in his opinion, the story as told in the New Testament was intended to be the story of the resurrection of a physical body; and, in so far as the hope of life beyond death turned upon the resurrection of Jesus, that hope, unfortunately, got entangled with the notion of a resurrected body for all,—a notion which time was sure to crumble down and ultimately destroy, and which, as a matter of fact, owed its vitality to the expectation of a speedy return of Jesus and a general resurrection of the dead.

Dr. Hyslop enters upon a keen and subtle discussion of the influence upon the idea of resurrection of the contending doctrines of early Christian theology and of Epicurean and Greek philosophy respecting the eternity of matter. Early Christian theology had for its basis or buttress the idea that the Deity had absolute control of matter. 'Spirit, not matter, became the eternal; and, as personality or intelligence was the essential characteristic of spirit, there was no difficulty in supposing it capable of

re-creating the body at the end of the world, as it was assumed to have created it for this life.' With the rise and advance of Greek philosophy and ideal science, matter was advanced to the first rank as eternal and unchangeable, and, in proportion as this was done, belief in interventions, and playing fast and loose with matter, faded. Constancy and Law took the place of Miracle and Arbitrary Will. Experience became the test of truth, and Uniformity the order of the life of the world. Hence the tendency to drift away from belief in the exceptional physical resurrection of Jesus, and the ultimate promise of its total disappearance as of any value in relation to the resurrection of anyone else. In fact, so far from the physical resurrection of Jesus being of any value as a promise or symbol of our own, the reverse is true, for we know that other bodies do not 'rise again,' and everybody is beginning to think that they never will: so that the physical resurrection of Jesus is a barrier, not a promise.

But Dr. Hyslop comes to the rescue in a way long familiar to our readers. He says: 'While we cannot accept the proverbial story of the resurrection from the point of view of science, there may be a view of it which will bear scrutiny and which would have all the meaning that history and tradition have attached to it.' This view turns upon the historical records of apparitions which were well known to the Epicureans; and indeed apparitions continuously appear in all ages, make of them what we will; and, to religion, they were not only valuable but necessary.

Hence the importance of the resurrection of Jesus, and it is not difficult to find in that resurrection, as its actual reality, an apparitional appearance, or what we should now call a temporary materialisation or spiritual manifestation of a spirit personality, which might only too readily grow into the story of the resurrection of a dead body,—a story which, in any case, and whatever the fact at the heart of it, would be and do all that was necessary to silence the Greek materialist, and rally round it all the forces of aspiration and hope and spiritual joy.

That brings us up to the Society for Psychical Research which, says Dr. Hyslop, has proved beyond cavil the fact that apparitions do occur. He cites the 'Census of Hallucinations,' with its three hundred and fifty cases 'which seemed worthy of consideration,' and refers to a residue of fifty-two cases 'which satisfied the most severe tests of scientific method as to the probabilities of their truth.' The conclusion arrived at by the Psychical Research committee was that the fifty-two cases proved the reality of apparitions; and the remaining two hundred and ninety-eight cases were not disproved but only failed to pass the exceedingly severe and exhaustive tests devised by the Society.

The real value of this genuine bit of research is to be found in the confirmation it gives to similar testimonies which, from time immemorial, have found their way into the experience and records of the race. As to that, Dr. Hyslop's summing up shall be ours:—

The scientific acceptability of such facts to-day, when subjected to the scrutiny of scepticism, would make it entirely credible that Christ may have appeared in a similar way to his disciples, and explain a perfectly natural source for the story of the resurrection, a source, too, that would carry with it more or less guarantee for the conclusion which the early Christians had based upon the one incident.

If the examination of the present finds the phenomena credible as real and significant, there is no difficulty in accepting the credibility of them in the past, which we know to be full of assertions of them. Of course, each instance of alleged appearance must be submitted to the evidential test and credited or rejected accordingly. But when the fact of apparitions has been once established scientifically the ancient

allegations of them are less incredible than they would otherwise be. This is a truism. But it is mentioned in order to connect the acceptability of the present with the possibility of the past, and to make the past a part of the present in the interpretation of its nature and tendencies. This does not prove the truth of the story of the resurrection of Christ, but it does remove its supposed contradiction to the law of Nature, except in so far as history and tradition have interpreted it as a physical resurrection. This must remain incredible as long as such phenomena are not now frequent, and so long as human experience does not reproduce it as a law of Nature. But the existence of veridical apparitions would substantiate all that is useful in the story of the resurrection, and make human experience in all ages akin.

It is a pity the Chapters are not dated. That would perhaps have helped to indicate the progress of Dr. Hyslop's mature thoughts. For instance, Chapter two strongly reminds us of Mr. Podmore, and one would like to know whether it is much earlier than, say, Chapter one or Chapter eleven.

A FRESH BEGINNING.

'A happy New Year'—certainly, thousands of them, here and hereafter!

In a sense it is always a new year, for, as Susan Coolidge sings:—

Every day is a fresh beginning,
Every morn is the world made new;

and a new era opens up for us at any time. But it is well that we should pause in the rush and tumble of our strenuous life and listen to the spirit, if only for a brief season, that we may gain refreshing renewals and realise realities. The getting and spending, the planning and doing, the going and coming, the seeing and hearing, the ordinary daily routine, are so exhausting and usually so fruitless that it is a relief to drop them all and simply rest—rest and meditate—and let the light and healing of the Life and Love Divine flow in upon us and lift us up.

We chase after success, treasure, pleasure, fame, position, happiness as though they were realities: things valuable in themselves to be captured and held, whereas they are evanescent, of little real worth: the pleasure is in the pursuit rather than the attainment. The idea that 'the game is not worth the candle,' however, some day dawns upon the wearied and disillusioned hunter, and he is fortunate who does not turn cynic or pessimist.

We hear frequently of a 'divine discontent,' but seldom meet with it. More frequently it is querulous, envious, and uncharitable; but the spirit of appreciation and thankfulness extracts blessings from the most unpromising conditions.

Youth, hopeful, zealous, idealistic and sanguine, sees the golden age just ahead and pushes forward hot-footed to take possession of the promised land. It will find time to understand—to-morrow: and will be happy—by and bye: when the millennium is brought about, or conferred by external agencies. Age looks back; its good time is behind. These days are not like 'the good old times': 'there were giants in those days': 'the world went well then,' but things seem all wrong now: fear-thoughts and gloomy forebodings shadow the present and—well—'man never *is*, but always *to be* blest'!

Spiritualists are sometimes charged with harking backwards to superstitious practices and not keeping abreast of the times, or with prying into the secrets of futurity, but in reality Spiritualism enables us to realise that only the present is ours—the now—in which to live and know and realise. In one of her inspired poems Lizzie Doten says:—

The world is strong with a mighty hope
Of a good time yet to be,
And carefully casts the horoscope
Of her future destiny:
And poet, and prophet, and priest, and sage,
Are watching with anxious eyes,
To see the light of that promised age
On the waiting world arise.

O, weary and long seems the time to some,
Who under Life's burdens bow,
For while they wait for that time to come,
They forget 'tis a good time now.

The 'good time now' is the only time we have, or shall ever have. It is ours to use, to make the most of in the wisest and happiest way. Nothing is gained by vain regrets—by cherishing sad memories, by dwelling on griefs, sorrows, losses, or miseries. Let the past *be* past: there is neither sense nor reason, religion nor benefit in chewing the cud of bitter reflection; or of useless remorse.

It is the height, or depth, of folly to embitter the present by dwelling self-pityingly on *past* blessings, and, because they are gone, pulling down the blinds of the spirit and sitting in gloom and misery. The thankful heart rejoices because of happiness which it *has* known: the memory of past delights brightens and sweetens the disposition. Nothing can rob one of the good results of past joys—but they may be lost by useless repining and surrender to grief. The concrete result of experience should be a sweet, gracious, kindly, cheerful mental and spiritual attitude—habitually thankful for life with its opportunities for sympathy and ministry.

Here is a timely 'message from the dead' (through the instrumentality of Mr. A. G. Hales), from Adam Lindsay Gordon, the Australian poet, who, in a fit of depression, took his own life:—

When your soul is sick with sorrow, when you see the dawn
with dread;
When you wish that God would give you shelter with the
cloistered dead—
Turn aside where none may see, bare the head and bend the
knee—
Pray to God to give thee grace to fill thine own allotted place
with gentle strength—
Think of sunshine and of flowers—brood not on the bitter
hours.

Could the scales but leave your eyes for a moment night or
day,
You would see a legion round you of the dear ones passed
away:
You would know there is no dying; no more sorrow, no more
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Death is but a swift transition, but a part in each life's
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Life and death are God's own giving, death leads on to higher
living.

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The tasks are done and the tears are shed;
Yesterday's errors let yesterday cover;
Yesterday's wounds, which smarted and bled,
Are healed with the healing that night has shed.

Yesterday now is a part of forever,
Bound up in a sheaf which God holds tight,
With glad days, and sad days, and bad days which never
Shall visit us more with their bloom or their blight,
Their fullness of sunshine or sorrowful night.

Let them go, since we cannot retrieve them,
Cannot undo and cannot atone;
God in His mercy receive and forgive them!—
Only the new days are our own;
To-day is ours and to-day alone.

Every day is a fresh beginning!—
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain,
And, spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted, and possible pain,
Take heart with the morn, and BEGIN Again!

PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES OF MRS. A. BODDINGTON.

The following interesting Paper on 'Some Notable Personal Experiences' was read by Mrs. Annie Boddington, on Thursday, December 17th last, at a meeting of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, Mr. H. Withall, Vice-President, in the chair.

Mrs. BODDINGTON said: Personal experiences are not of much value to the public unless they are corroborated by those who have shared the test cases. For this reason I have chosen those of recent dates in order to be able to present the opportunity for the recipients to be questioned if necessary. I have letters with me giving permission to make use of the names of the writers. In case the repetition of clairvoyant descriptions should prove wearisome, I have thought it advisable to relate some experiences of a different character. Seeing that I have been a student of occultism for the past twenty-eight years, and a medium for longer than that, you will appreciate my difficulty in selecting from a host of incidents those which will be likely to prove most interesting to a public audience.

When Mr. Withall invited me to relate my experiences, he particularly suggested that I should deal with facts tending to prove the identity of spirit people, and instances of this kind will necessarily include not only clairvoyant perception of the spirits, but the reception—clairaudiently—of their names and of messages from them to their friends. In this age of intellectual and scientific investigation many theories are advanced to explain the facts upon which we base our fundamental principles, amongst them being thought-reading and the projection of thought-forms. As against the latter, I have frequent experiences of spirit people giving me their names and messages without my being able to see them at all. At other times, as against thought-reading, the spirit people have been seen by me, but no names have been given, although the name of the spirit naturally occurs to the sitter immediately he recognises the description. But the most striking experiences that tell against the theory of ordinary thought-reading are those in which prophetic intimations are made by spirit friends.

A communication of this kind was given to a lady a few months ago. She attended her first Spiritualist meeting at Brighton one Sunday when I was giving clairvoyant descriptions, and had a private interview with me the next morning. A spirit came with her, who proved to be her husband, recently passed out, and he gave her, through me, advice and information upon matters that were of vital importance. He and she had been professional people in the musical world, and during the season had always organised a concert, assisted by their pupils, but the lady, being left to manage by herself, felt unwilling to undertake the responsibility. However, her husband urged her to take the *large* hall, instead of the small one they had always used for the occasion, and assured her that the concert would be the greatest success she had ever had and that the opportunities arising out of it would more than fill her business life. After some weeks, when I again visited the Brighton Society, this lady came to me and gave me permission to record the fact that although her former visit was her first experience of anything of the nature of Spiritualism she was then so convinced of the identity of her husband and of the reality of her communion with him that she acted entirely on the advice he had given, with the result that everything had taken place exactly as he had assured her it would. In support of her statements she sent me the local newspapers reporting the concert as the greatest success of any ever organised by this lady and her pupils. Practical results such as these, from our interviews with the so-called dead, go a long way towards answering the hard-headed sceptic when he inquires: 'If it is true what good is it?'

Another case of proven identity occurred at a public meeting

at the Mechanics' Institute, Nottingham. I saw a spirit man who informed me that he had passed out of the body through some timber falling upon him, that he was taken to the hospital and died there. I was able to describe this man clearly and to say that his name was 'Harry King,' and that he wanted his mother to be informed of his return. A lady in the audience said that he was the son of her particular friend and that she knew that his mother was greatly distressed because she had been unable to get to the hospital in time to see him before he left the body.

The next illustration of clear-seeing comes in connection with a Mr. Tatlow, who says, in a letter that I have just received:—

Dear Mrs. Boddington,—As I hear you are to give some of your experiences at the 'Alliance Meeting,' I should like you to relate some of the wonderful proofs of spirit identity that you have given me. It is now nearly seven years since I ventured to visit your séances at the rooms at Clapham. Perhaps you do not remember the result of that visit, but I shall never forget. I handed you a gold chain, which I was then wearing, and you became painfully influenced and agitated, falling on your knees and saying, 'Oh, do forgive me, do forgive me, how I have wronged you!' and much more, too painful for me to repeat. The chain had belonged to my dead brother who had cruelly wronged me, and I realised that he had come back to ask my forgiveness. This being my first experience I was seriously impressed. My brother has come to me many times, and has told me that by our sympathy and prayers he has been helped to a happier condition.

Mr. Tatlow goes on to say:—

Then the next time, if you remember, I handed you a gold ring. In connection with this ring you gave me the name of 'Harry B.,' and described a house in the country standing at three cross ways. You spoke of hearing voices inside the house and of seeing two men coming out, whose dress, &c., you described. You followed them up the road, through a peculiar gate; then one man left the other, crossed a meadow, then a road, with grass growing as if it was a by-road, then through another peculiar gate, across a marshy meadow and over a foot-bridge above a muddy mill stream. Then you described a white house, with windows like those of a church. You saw the man get into a boat and row to a bend in the river. You then exclaimed, 'Oh, what dark water!' You saw the man plunge out of the boat into the water and lost him. This man was a dear old friend of mine who committed suicide, and his body was found at the identical spot you described. The house was called the 'Mill House.' Knowing every inch of the way, I followed your description almost breathlessly. This poor fellow and myself had been staunch friends from boyhood, and he had given me the ring as a keepsake. After this I felt that I must follow up my investigations, and asked if I might become a member of your Tuesday circle.

About the third time I came you were controlled by my mother, who became very agitated and kept on repeating, 'Oh, dear, how can I make you know I am your mother!' and then reluctantly said, 'I always got you pig's-fry when you came from London for your holidays.' This to the outside world will appear ridiculous, but to me it had special significance, because, for many years, my mother had taken much pleasure in providing this plebeian dish whenever I went to see her, knowing how much I enjoyed it. I could go on for a long while repeating cases of identity, but suffice it to say I continued my investigations and to-day am proud to call myself a Spiritualist.

Another instance in which a spirit clearly proved his identity occurred to Mr. Edward Paxton, a certificated nurse, who came to one of my public circles as a complete stranger. I held his watch so that I might link myself to the psychic conditions around him, and received the name 'Harold' and added, 'The name, with an inscription, is inside this watch,' which was correct. I was then consciously controlled and made to understand that the spirit man had suffered the tortures of cancer, and cried out with pain, saying, 'Nurse, dear, it is I, Harold.' To add to the value of this experience, Mr. Paxton reminds me that I quoted a line of Greek familiar to him and his friend 'Harold,' and which they used to often repeat to each other. After recovering from the control, I was able, clairvoyantly to give what Mr. Paxton called a 'vivid description' of his friend, who was the original owner of the watch. The same evening the mother of this visitor

came and gave her name, presenting herself very clearly to my vision, and telling me that she had passed out very suddenly. This was the introduction of a new-found joy to one who is now a most ardent disciple in our cause.

My mind reverts to an experience that was very clear and definite. I had known two old Spiritualists, Mr. and Mrs. P., for a number of years; the lady being a good medium. About two years ago Mr. P. passed out of the body at Nottingham. Three weeks afterwards the wife came to see me. We were sitting alone when Mr. P., the spirit, came and gave his wife some practical advice and information which subsequently she acted upon and benefited accordingly. Mrs. P. then said to me: 'Ask him to tell me what I had better do for the future.' He replied, 'Don't bother about doing anything for three months'—within the three months the lady passed suddenly into the spirit world.

Here is some testimony from Mr. William Welsford, who came to me a perfect stranger and received some of the best proofs of continued existence that I have ever been able to give. I saw a lady with him very clearly. I then noticed something strange about her eyes, and, looking more attentively, discovered that she was blind. Mr. Welsford, however, refused to admit that he recognised her. I then saw by her side, and described, a young man wearing military uniform, who told me that he died in Egypt six years ago from heart trouble. The spirit lady then said: 'Tell him that Charlie is here with me.' This forced the position upon Mr. Welsford, who exclaimed: 'Yes, that's right, it is my wife and her favourite nephew.' The spirit-wife came many times after this and gave advice and information of a private but helpful nature.

The following case, I think, upsets the theory of telepathy. A spirit-lady came who gave me the name of 'Sarah' and desired me to ask Mr. Welsford 'why he would persist in throwing away the substance for shadows,' adding, 'But there, mother always said you were a fool.' Mr. Welsford recognised my description of the lady and said he quite understood. The most interesting part to me was when the spirit asked me to tell him that he would shortly leave London in a ship and afterwards take a second journey by water. At the time nothing seemed less probable, but soon afterwards the prophecy was fulfilled by Mr. Welsford's going by boat to Scotland, and, later, on another unexpected business journey by boat.

The next spirit visitor was a man who gave me the name of 'Charlie Williams' and who talked about 'music.' He was recognised as a well-known singer for whom Mr. Welsford had written the music of the popular song, 'The Union Jack of Old England.'

We often hear the complaint made by inquirers that they cannot get full names from the spirit-people. Unfortunately, this is true in many instances, but there are exceptions that prove the possibility. At one of our regular members' circles I gave Mr. Welsford seven descriptions of spirit-people, with their full names and messages, which conveyed unquestionable proofs of identity. The last description was of a lady who gave the name 'Lucy Knight,' but she was not at once recognised. She then bowed to me and said 'Miss Knight.' Then I had a vision of the house and garden where the lady had lived and mentioned many of the surroundings in the country, which led to identification, and Mr. Welsford afterwards explained that the house was situated at Teignmouth. The same night a 'Mary Tomlinson' came and said she had worked for Mrs. Welsford, but had left London to go into the country to live with her brother and had died there. This could not have been a case of thought-reading, as no one present knew the facts, but the message was investigated and everything proved to be quite as the spirit had stated. Only twice have I been able to get so many full names at one séance for one sitter.

A few weeks ago I had an experience with a convert of mine named Mrs. Hawkins, who is also a member of this Alliance, which is unexplainable, I think, by thought-reading or telepathy. When this lady first came I was able to describe the personal appearance and characteristics of one of her spirit

friends who gave the full name. More recently I saw a spirit-man whom Mrs. Hawkins could not recognise, but when he gave the name, 'George Harris,' she said, 'Why, that is my grandfather, but I never saw him.' Another spirit then came and gave her name as 'Mrs. Gregory.' 'No,' said Mrs. Hawkins, 'I do not know her.' The spirit, 'Mrs. Gregory,' then said to me, 'Tell her I will make myself known to her to-night.' Mrs. Hawkins wrote to me subsequently, saying:—

I did not think anything more of the message, but just before retiring for the night I was impressed to search for an address that I had mislaid, in a book which had formerly belonged to an aunt of mine. I assured myself that I was taking needless trouble, as I could see no reason for its being there. However, I searched without finding the address, but, while turning over some papers to look for it, I came upon a photograph of a lady answering the appearance, with all the details of dress exactly as you had described. On the back was written 'Pollie Gregory.' I then remembered that she was a cousin whom I had never met, but who used to be in close touch with my mother and aunt.

The spirit lady had thus compelled recognition as promised.

My greatest interest in spirit power was awakened about twenty years ago, when I discovered that I could be used as a healing medium. I had never seen anyone make 'passes' or manipulate a patient in any way, but hearing of a poor woman who was suffering from a very bad leg, I sent for her, and then and there proceeded to treat it under an impelling influence that quite startled me. The wound in the woman's leg had commenced fourteen years previously, and she had been given up as incurable, but after I had treated her magnetically for a few weeks she was healed. Since then I have been the 'happy medium' for curing a number of serious cases, and hold letters expressing the gratitude of the patients. Small ailments, such as neuralgia, toothache, headache, and other passing inconveniences, are easily dealt with, but I should like to relate an illustration of what is possible to be done by spirit power. The spirit friend had successfully treated a little child who was quite a cripple with rickets, and her friends brought a young woman to me who was suffering with a 'withered leg.' It was so much shorter than the other that she wore a high boot and used a stick to support herself. She had been pronounced incurable by hospital and other doctors, and was persuaded to come to me as a last resource. The wasting process had brought about a general condition which was so painful that, as she first said, she didn't mind about the withered leg if I could only relieve her of her other pains. The magnetic treatment gave almost immediate relief, and in a few months the withered limb assumed the normal proportions of its companion, and the girl threw away her stick and wore an ordinary boot.

A young lady was brought to me who was being treated at Brompton Hospital as a consumptive patient. My spirit friend denied that she was consumptive, and in three months she was quite restored to health. The sequel is interesting. She had been treated 'without money and without price,' surely a 'Christian act,' but her friends thought otherwise, and the poor girl had to write to me and say that her people had forbidden her to see me any more because 'the cure was so wonderful that only the devil himself could have performed such a miracle.'

The spirit-man who trained me for the healing work had a peculiar method of tightly fixing my mouth, so that I was unable to speak. His controlling process was interesting, as I was conscious of all he did; as developing mediums often express themselves, I knew what I was doing but could not help doing it. He would give me mental impressions and advice of a practical nature which I could remember, but could not speak of until he had ceased to control me. For my own part, I much enjoy *conscious* control, and have often been able to participate in the pleasure of giving convincing proofs of spirit identity. It has often been said that *conscious* control is the most desirable form of development.

Another phase of experience which is very fascinating is the ability to live a personally conscious existence apart from our physical bodies. I have often seen my own body when it has been sleeping. Not only have I stood aside and looked at

it and seen the furniture in the room, but have conversed with spirit visitors as one of themselves. Some few years ago I used to set myself to prove to my friends that I could quit my body at will, by giving them the particulars of their surroundings and the details of their homes.

One night, some time ago, I was quite conscious of being away from my body. A spirit-lady met me and said, 'I want you to come with me to Mrs. B.'s house. She has rheumatism in her knee very badly, and if you will come and magnetise it she will be all right.' I did as the lady asked, and then returned to my sleeping body. The next day I called on Mrs. B. (who is a member of this Alliance) and inquired how her knee was. She replied, 'I have had rheumatism very badly, but it is better now.' She then remembered that I had not seen her for some weeks, and asked how I knew about it. I told her what had happened on the spirit plane, and she recognised the spirit-lady who took me to her.

I had grown to enjoy my existence in the spirit world so much that it was becoming difficult for me to return to everyday life. One day my spirit friends told me I had better cease my efforts in this direction for a time because I still had my duties to fulfil towards those who were needing my attention on the earth plane.

Whilst preparing this paper I have received a letter from Captain Coffin giving me permission to relate some clairvoyant experiences I had with him. His mother came, but I was not able to receive her name. In order to prove her identity she showed me a beautiful harp which she seemed to be playing, and then showed a small dog which had been a favourite. Then came a cousin of Captain Coffin's, who disappeared, but returned wearing a riding habit and bringing two beautiful fawn-coloured dogs coupled together. These had been pets belonging to Captain Coffin. He afterwards brought the photographs of all I had described, also that of his wife, who then gave her name, and messages that he appreciated. On the same day I saw two military gentlemen whom the captain could not recognise, but, after waiting a few minutes, they both gave their full names, which brought them to his memory as friends who had passed out of their bodies many years ago.

This account of my personal experiences would scarcely be complete if I omitted to mention the many materialising séances I have attended during the past twenty years, but time will not permit of more than a brief reference. The well-known medium, Mrs. Corner, better known as 'Florrie Cook,' consented to give a series of séances in my own home for the benefit of the Battersea Society, of which I was at that time president. The sitters being new to Spiritualism Mrs. Corner willingly agreed to test conditions suggested by the sceptics. These consisted of a muslin bag made large enough to hold the chair and the medium. It was tied at the top over her head, and all knots sealed, the tape being attached to a hook in the ceiling. The first night that we used this bag the spirit people surprised us by simply taking the medium out and sending her to tell us to go and see what they had done with it. We found the bag folded up, tied round with the tape, and hung on the hook in the ceiling. *The knots and seal were intact.* She was often tied to the chair inside the bag, but the sceptics soon grew tired of the tying, knotting, and sealing process, which made no manner of difference to the results.

On another occasion 'Marie' appeared in full form, and came right away from the cabinet to compare her height with that of a tall girl who was in the circle. 'Marie,' bare-footed, was the taller. Many of you will remember that Mrs. Corner was quite a little woman. I think our last séance with her was the best. It had often been remarked that only 'Marie' manifested. On this night, however, 'Moonstone,' a guide of Mr. Peters, came and stood between the curtains in full form, and wearing his national costume. He told us how many people were at his medium's circle that night, which was afterwards verified. We were just talking of closing the séance when we saw the bottom of the curtain slowly raised and a little girl appeared sitting on the floor. She distinctly said 'See me,' and was recognised by her mother and a lady friend as being a child

of two and a-half years who had not long passed out through the painful death of burning, and who used to call her mother's attention by saying 'See me.' We all watched the little child slowly dematerialise. We always had sufficient light to see everything in the room clearly, so that every sitter was satisfied that the manifestations took place under strict test conditions.

To those friends who have enjoyed similar experiences mine will simply mean corroboration. To those who are seeking I trust they may prove encouraging. To the stranger within the gates I would suggest, 'There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy.' (Loud applause.)

JOTTINGS.

On Tuesday next, the 5th inst., the meetings of the London Spiritualist Alliance will recommence, and Mrs. Place-Veary will give clairvoyant descriptions at 3 p.m., at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. For full particulars of this and other meetings see the announcements on page three.

A correspondent, who lives near Pretoria, South Africa, writes: 'Some of the leading clergy of the Church of England are being drawn into psychic research through the gate of spiritual healing which is being opened to them, and they are holding private prayer meetings and circles for the development of their latent spiritual gifts. I hear that in this they are only following the lead of certain London clergy, who are unconsciously preparing the way for a great revival of these gifts—once so common in the Church.'

With reference to the alleged 'dangers' of hypnotism, to which Dr. Stenson Hooker referred in his recent Address at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, it may not be out of place to mention that some time ago, when a prisoner pleaded, as an excuse for his wrong-doing, that he was hypnotised, the judge, who sentenced him to seven years' imprisonment, recommended him to get someone to hypnotise him to bear the punishment. Evidently the judge believed, as does Dr. Hooker, that the man could not have been compelled to do an act which was contrary to his moral nature, and that, even if he had been hypnotised, he must have been a consenting, and therefore a responsible party.

'La Nouvelle Presse,' Paris, a Republican evening paper, publishes every Saturday a special number partly devoted to psychical science. The copy which has been sent to us contains an article on vital magnetism, and a biographical sketch, with portrait, of Dr. Foveau de Courmelles, an eminent French investigator of new curative methods, secretary of the society for 'transcendental photography,' and president of the French Anti-Vivisection Society. It seems to speak eloquently for the public interest—or curiosity—with regard to psychical matters when an evening paper can devote the front page of a weekly edition specially to this subject.

A curious and well-authenticated case of an apparition of a living person is reported in 'The Times' for Tuesday last by the Rev. R. Brock. The Rev. Dr. Astley, Vicar of East Rudham, Norfolk, is at present in Algiers, where he was severely bruised in a railway accident on December 16th. On Saturday last the housekeeper at the Norfolk vicarage, while closing the shutters at dusk, saw the vicar apparently coming across the lawn with a paper in his hand. He beckoned to her and went into a little recess outside the window. The housekeeper called the maidservant, who also recognised Dr. Astley, and then informed the acting vicar, the Rev. R. Brock, who saw the form of Dr. Astley in the study, seated in a chair with some books before him. His face, dress, and peculiar way of wearing his watch-chain, were distinctly recognised. The figure gradually vanished. As our readers are aware, such 'phantoms of the living' are by no means unknown, and a book on the subject was compiled by Messrs. Gurney, Myers, and Podmore. In this case the form was seen by three witnesses.

Referring to the late Joseph Skipsey, the pitman poet, Dr. Spence Watson, in his recently published book, makes a statement, says Mr. W. H. Robinson, to the effect that Mr. Skipsey had abandoned Spiritualism before he died. This statement Mr. Robinson controverted in a lecture on Sunday, December 20th last, and said that he had no hesitation in saying that Mr. Skipsey died a thorough Spiritualist, for he had a talk with him the day before his death. Mr. Skipsey also told him that interest in Spiritualism was far wider and

deeper than anyone conceived, and he mentioned several of the great literary men amongst his friends who constantly plied him with questions in regard to the unseen world, and whose interest apparently never flagged, though, to the world in general, they never mentioned such things. Skipsey himself had been compelled reluctantly to withdraw from public Spiritualism, solely because he was too poor to lose by the falling off of the sale of his poetry, not because of any change of belief.

Manifestations of a startling nature are reported to have been witnessed by Professors P. F. Hall and William James, of Harvard, with a medium named Frank E. Foskett, described as a young mechanic. The 'Daily Express' correspondent says that every possible precaution was taken to prevent fraud, and that the test conditions were made unusually severe. At Professor Hall's house, 'Foskett sat in the middle of the room before a small table and performed every feat of a Hindu fakir,' and then went through the fire test, exposing his hands to the flames from matches and from a lamp. 'He poured alcohol into a basin, set it on fire, and bathed his hands in the blazing liquid for ten minutes, also spreading the flaming alcohol over his face and arms.' He showed no marks of burns or blisters, and said that the flames only caused a pleasant feeling of warmth.

The second séance, at the residence of Professor William James, we are told by the 'Daily Express,' was so remarkable that the professors decline to discuss it until it has been repeated, but another witness is reported to have said that the medium was completely dematerialised, and 'seemed to dissolve in thin air; he was gone forty-one seconds, and then materialised again.' The spectacle was so startling that the spectators were 'absolutely afraid and lost sight of the test conditions.' Surely, learned professors should not lose their heads at a little thing like that! When the medium is lost sight of, we do not see how the test conditions are to be kept in view. It is said that the experiments are to be repeated, and we hope that the eminent investigators will publish a detailed account of what they observe, however disturbing to scientific equanimity.

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.

Evidence of Spirit Identity.

SIR,—On Sunday, November 29th last, I visited, for the first time, Mr. J. J. Vango, and received from his control two descriptions of spirits which were the best tests that I have received during a two years' close investigation.

As the medium took my hand he began to describe a spirit whom I could not remember, and said: 'He tells me you knew him in business.' 'One meets so many in business,' I said; 'can you give me any individual characteristic that might help me?' 'Yes, he shows me his handkerchief and on it are little streaks of blood. He tells me he passed out from internal hemorrhage.' But I could not recollect him, so promised to think about him. Evidently the spirit was not satisfied, and made a parting effort: 'He wishes me to express his gratitude to you for the helping hand you gave his wife and family after he passed over,' said the control. Even that did not help me, so the medium, still under control, began a second description. 'I now see with you a little chubby boy. He might be two and a half or three years old. He is climbing up into your lap and brings with him violets and snowdrops.' Then followed a description of his appearance, throat mischief, operation (tracheotomy), under which he passed away. He calls you (pause) not dada but something like *deaa*, do you recognise him?' 'Yes,' I said, 'my son, that was his peculiar way of saying dada, and the other details are absolutely correct, his age was three years and three months.' Continuing, the control said: 'I also see with him a little tiny babe; he tells me that she is his sister, and that there is another still in the body.' This was quite true. Years after he passed over twin-girls were born; one happily remains, and the little mite who is with him only lived thirty-six hours.

After the circle, while waiting at the station and racking my memory as to who my first spirit friend could be, I was suddenly struck (as it were) with the name of Morse. It

seems strange that I did not and could not before think of one who had been employed in the same house as myself, and who, about nine years ago, passed out of the body from consumption. I got up a benefit concert that was a great help at the time to his wife and family. Evidently this was what the spirit referred to in his effort to make himself known.—Yours, &c.,

GEO. CRIPPS.

The Action of Memory.

SIR,—I do not wish to imply that I can explain the action of memory, but to state that I have been able to see, clairvoyantly, how one particular incident was 'remembered' by one particular individual; but this may open up a vista for others.

On November 29th last I was at a friend's house, and during our conversation on psychic topics I said to a gentleman, 'Do you remember a little girl being very badly burnt or scalded a long time ago?' After some hesitation he suddenly said, 'Oh, yes; it was my sister, a long time ago.' He took about fifteen seconds to remember it.

I now propose to tell you how I *knew* that he did know of such an incident, and also how I watched the process of his 'calling it to mind.' As he stood up before me, I saw in his aura, about level with his knee and say twenty inches away from it, a tiny black film, about the size of a matchbox cut in halves; on this dark grey film was a picture in colours of a little girl being burnt or scalded. While the gentleman was racking his memory, I saw a small golden rod, or ray, shoot out of his head behind his ear and gradually lengthen like a telescope until it got down to the little 'photo-film,' if I may so call it, in his aura. The rod did not waver about at all, it came out of his head at the exact angle that would take it to the 'photo-film,' and gradually extended itself until it lay across the little film and about a quarter of an inch beyond it. Then a peculiar thing happened. As if the rod were red-hot, the film 'cockled up' and twisted itself round the rod, and both gradually withdrew into the head. As they got to the ear I was *certain* he would remember the incident, and directly they vanished into the head he said, 'Oh, yes,' &c. Immediately after he spoke there appeared behind him the shadowy form, life-size, of this spirit, and had I not seen the previous incident I should have said, 'Behind you is the spirit form of a little girl who was burnt,' &c. I believe I saw many other 'films,' but they were only like spots on a leopard's skin.—Yours, &c.,

VINCENT N. TURVEY.

The Dangers of Spiritualism.

SIR,—As an irregular but always interested reader of 'LIGHT,' I have much to thank you for, and I am glad to have an excuse for writing to you. That excuse is afforded by the paragraphs on page 586 of 'LIGHT,' for December 5th, on my short story, 'Keep that Gate Shut,' in the 'Gentleman's Journal' for November 21st.

After referring to the criticisms, from the Spiritualistic view-point, of 'T. K. B.' and Mr. R. Bulfield, you remark: 'Robert Overton . . . makes a spirit wife recommend her husband to commit suicide in order to join her on the other side.' But I do not. This wicked advice is given by a spirit of evil impersonating the spirit of the dead wife, and the danger my story emphasises is this very danger of impersonation in the world of normally impalpable and unseen intelligences. Am I not right, sir, in believing that the existence of this peril is recognised and acknowledged by Spiritualists?

I feel sure that you will permit me to correct the misconception I have referred to, especially as it appears to be shared by both 'T. K. B.' and (more especially) Mr. Bulfield.

I appreciate the ethical criticism of yourself and these gentlemen quite as keenly as I appreciate the complimentary references to the literary presentment of the criticised plot and its underlying theory. Your own question, 'What is the use of a gate at all if it cannot be opened?' places me in a verbal dilemma from which I cannot extricate myself.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT OVERTON.

[We appreciate Mr. Overton's point. The danger of 'impersonation' is a real one, but only so, to any extent, to those who unwisely accept as authoritative, and unquestioningly act upon, communications from the other side. 'Keep a level head and try the messages by the light of your reason and conscience' is always our advice to inquirers—then they will not easily, or for any length of time, be imposed upon by 'impersonating spirits.'—ED. 'LIGHT.')

The Integration of Space.

SIR,—You will probably review Professor Barrett's 'Thoughts of a Modern Mystic.' But it seems to me possible that the paper by Mr. C. C. Massey on the 'Stages in the Cognition of the World' may escape notice as too mystic for the ordinary reader.

I would therefore draw attention to the first part, which deals with the 'Integration of Space': for I think it should be of extreme interest to Spiritualists in that it offers a possible theory as to the relation of matter to spirit. Let me attempt to explain what this theory is.

Imagine a universe of two dimensions, and intelligent beings therein existing. Then this universe will be one of matter: for there will be resistance in two (not three) dimensions. Let us term this universe a plane: then one object moving in the plane will be resisted in motion if it meet another object—we have matter.

Now I think it will be admitted that a being existing in a universe of three dimensions is existing in a universe higher in form than one of two dimensions; the universe of two dimensions will be subsumed under that of three dimensions. When, then, a being in three-dimensional space considers two-dimensional space and the beings therein existing, such a being has knowledge *higher in form* of the existence of two-dimensional beings than they have themselves.

But suppose a being in three-dimensional space (our space) does consider two-dimensional space and the beings therein. What conclusion must it necessarily arrive at?

That, *in reality*, there is no resistance—no matter—in two-dimensional space. Such a being knows that the ideas of matter which two-dimensional beings have are purely subjective—they exist solely because the two-dimensional beings exist in two-dimensional space.

Now go a step farther. Imagine a being in four-dimensional space considering us in our three-dimensional space. It will know that our ideas of matter are subjective: that they exist solely because we, as human beings, exist in a universe of three-dimensional space.

We may thus speak of space of two dimensions as a partial integration of space: space of three dimensions as a higher integration under which the former integration is not lost, but subsumed, and so on to an ultimate integration in the Supreme. These limits of integration are not lost in the ultimate but subsumed under it—in Mr. Massey's beautiful words we find 'the accomplished in the accomplishing.'

I may, perhaps, point to a possibility which Mr. Massey's theory seems to open.

May not a being in higher dimensional space have power to project itself on to a universe of lower dimensions, in like manner as we, in three-dimensional space, can project our shadows on to the two-dimensional space of the surface of water?

If so, we might expect that, when disembodied, we may have power to appear to the embodied as human beings in three-dimensional space. And these appearances would be to us real appearances of the departed.—Yours, &c.,

F. C. CONSTABLE.

Mr. Fournier d'Albe's Theory of Location.

SIR,—While here in the body the physical universe is only perceptible to the physical senses, and anyone in whom any or all of these senses are extinguished or in abeyance perceives nothing or only a part of that universe. Thus to a blind man the visible universe does not exist—to a deaf man, the audible, and so forth. When we leave the body the physical senses are extinguished, and with them the perception of time, space, weight, and other matters. Such expressions as 'beyond the stars,' 'between the earth and moon,' therefore become inapplicable, and Mr. d'Albe's theory of location becomes inadmissible and untenable. While in the body we can only perceive the superphysical under special conditions, and the same applies, though, perhaps, with less difficulty, to ourselves and the sub-spiritual. One can get some dim idea of the range of these difficulties on reading (for instance) the experience of Stainton Moses in 'LIGHT' of November 25th, 1899; and on considering the information given by a 'control': 'When it is dark to you it is light to us, and when it is light to you it is dark to us,' meaning earth conditions, of course.

Ghosts, poor things, are of their very nature, most of them, earthy. Sometimes they are but mere simulacra, sometimes only phantasmagorical presentments of bygone people and events, and it must be noted that there is usually more than one explanation of any of these supernatural phenomena. Read 'Ghosts—by a Ghost.'—Yours, &c.,

H. W. THATCHER.

Podmore versus Podmore.

SIR,—In your issue of the 12th ult. you reprinted some interesting testimony to the strength of the evidence for Spiritualism written nearly thirty years ago by a gentleman bearing the same name as myself. Perhaps you will spare me space for a brief reply. I must first congratulate my namesake on keeping, like myself, an open mind on the subject. He admits, it will be seen, no insuperable *a priori* difficulties: he is ready to believe, as I, his elder, have always been ready to believe, on sufficient evidence. In fact, my chief ground of quarrel with my junior lies in his estimate of the evidence. The young man—he was a very young man—writes: 'I believe that the evidence for the facts of what is called Spiritualism is indisputable. It is impossible to doubt either the good faith and accuracy of the witnesses, or the adequacy of the means of investigation which they have employed. . . I believe that the [Spiritualist] theory is the only one that will adequately account for all the occurrences vouched for by competent witnesses.'

My predecessor will, I feel assured, forgive me if I make the retort courteous by denying every one of these propositions, with the exception of that relating to the good faith of the witnesses. The ability to analyse and weigh evidence only comes with long experience and after much disillusionment. I cannot help thinking that, notwithstanding all his brave words, some dimly-realised perception of his own incompetence to judge the evidence was really responsible for the incapacity for belief of which he complains. He protests too much, methinks. Young men are like that.—Yours, &c.,

FRANK PODMORE.

Greetings from Mr. W. J. Colville.

SIR,—Permit me to let my many friends among your worldwide circle of readers know that they are remembered at this festive season even though an ocean rolls between.

I have recently been working in Washington and Baltimore with pronounced success. The 'psychological moment' was evidently present for me, as in no past season have I addressed so many and such large gatherings under so many diverse but harmonising auspices. The First Society of Spiritualists provided me in November last with some of the finest audiences I have ever addressed, and I am told that the people in attendance represented several distinct movements, though all alike displayed the keenest interest in spiritual philosophy. This organisation is to be congratulated on having for president Mr. F. A. Wood, a singularly broad-minded man who is constitutionally a harmoniser. Mrs. Stephens, a gifted psychic, ably seconds Mr. Wood in all his efforts, as do all the other members of the advisory board. The Capital City branch of the Theosophical Society secured my services, late in November and early in December, and in that active and earnest body I met Dr. Baker and Mrs. Duffie, both excellent organisers and competent whole-souled expounders of their cult. At the Metaphysical Centre, led by Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, I gave many lectures and held question and answer meetings during six busy weeks. I am offered a permanent position in Washington whenever I can accept it.

The National Association of Spiritualists is to be highly congratulated upon its present flourishing condition. Its beautiful home at 600, Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Washington, is excellently managed by Mr. and Mrs. Kates, who are always ready to extend gracious hospitality to visitors from any part of the world.

In Baltimore I was handsomely welcomed, and gave many more than the four lectures which were all my other engagements permitted my delivering in the beautiful church which is owned by the Spiritualist Society and is entirely free from debt. Mr. Pruden, president, Mr. Scharffetter, secretary, and other indefatigable officers, have worked so effectively that, although Baltimore is a very conservative city, organised Spiritualism commands the respect of almost the entire community. Wherever I have been of late I have found ever-increasing fraternisation between different bodies of workers; and though they do not usually amalgamate they co-operate for the general good.

I am spending Christmastide in New York, where I am always at home, in the midst of mingled work and gaiety. Trusting this happy season is bringing rich blessings to you all,—Yours, &c.,

421, West 57th Street,
New York City, U.S.A.

W. J. COLVILLE.

TRANSITION.—On December 28th last, Dr. Gallagher, of Heaton Moor, passed to spirit life. He has been a Spiritualist for many years, and, we are told, 'has taken "LIGHT" and loved it from the first.' His mortal form was interred at Stockport Borough Cemetery on Thursday last,