

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,464.—VOL. XXIX. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1909.

[a Newspaper.]

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London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.

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For further particulars see page 50.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

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We beg to remind the Subscribers to 'Light,' and the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1909, which are payable *in advance*, that they should forward remittances at once to Mr. E. W. Wallis, 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Their kind attention to this matter will save much trouble in sending out accounts, booking, postage, &c.

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This removal may necessitate some changes in certain departments of the astrological business hitherto conducted, with unparalleled success, at the former address; and some important announcement will shortly appear either in a specially prepared circular letter or in the pages of 'Modern Astrology.'

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

It is sometimes said, as a reproach against those who urge attention to a Future Life, that this is distracting in relation to the needs and duties of the present. This is not so, as all history proves. The leaders and saviours of the world have nearly all had, in some form, the heavenly vision; and it would not be difficult to prove that the vast majority of even successful men of business 'laid hold of eternal life.'

But beyond this lies the undoubted fact that much of the life that now is needs the consolations and explanations of belief in a life beyond this. It is a world of many joys and hopes, but it is also a world of many sorrows and despairs. Lovely are its life-dawnings; but O how unspeakably sad are most of its sunsets! and how keenly we need the angel-hope, 'He is not here, but is risen'! No: the hope of a life beyond hinders not. In truth, it may give the pilgrim of earth the only joy which can conquer loss, and death, and time.

It would be an excellent corrective to much bigotry and immodesty of judgment and assertion or denial, if it could thoroughly be borne in upon us that what we know bears but a trifling relation to what there is to be known. That is a trite remark, but the need of enforcing its truth is enormous; and the ruling supremacy of it would be little short of a social, religious and scientific revolution.

Said Francis Bacon, 'They are ill discoverers who think there is no land when they see nothing but sea.' So are they who, looking out upon the life that now is, shake their heads and deny that there is any haven beyond this sea of human life; who are satisfied to believe that when the voyage is at an end, voyager and bark sink together in the boundless sea.

One would think that such a conclusion would be resisted, and effectually resisted, by the sense of horror and waste; and that hope alone would rise superior to ignorance or poverty of vision; but it is not so; for those who declare they see land are, as often as not, derided or blamed.

'Current Literature' (New York) for this month has a very severe article on 'New Thought' in the form of a review of a book by Dr. G. M. Gould on 'Borderland Studies.' The review is entitled 'A pathological view of the "New Thought" as a form of Mania.' Dr. Gould is editor of a leading medical paper, and is possibly prejudiced against 'New Thought' healing methods; but he has a

right to be heard, and 'Current Literature' presents him with a trumpet. In his 'Borderland Studies' he says:—

A healthy mind cannot read the so-called New Thought journals for an hour or two without the overwhelming conviction that these people are really insane. The wonder is that they have preserved so much commercial cunning.

He satirises the 'jargon' of these people; 'There are tons of printed stuff going out every month like this:—Unity is non-ethical. It simply is. God is. Energy is. Power is. Light is. Life is. Thought is. Love is. Attraction is. Electricity is. Man is.'

Says 'Current Literature':—

There is nothing directly vicious or nauseating in New Thought literature as a whole, according to Dr. Gould, but it is all 'indirectly morbid.' The neurotic woman is especially victimised by 'soul quacks,' who intensify her morbidity by their 'advice,' often to the destruction not only of her health but of her happiness. 'The people who are ministered to and treated are surely sick, very much so, mentally and socially; but the teachers, the high priestesses and their little "amen" sayers, the priests, are surely much sicker.'

The 'New Thought,' says Dr. Gould, is really a disease. It is a disease asserting itself most virulently when the 'misunderstood woman' falls into the clutches of the 'soul quack,' or the brooding wife with disordered organic functions resorts to 'metaphysical therapeutics.' The marked increase in various forms of nervous breakdown among American women of late years seems to Dr. Gould to be due to the havoc wrought by the spiritual quackeries in the minds of the half-educated.

'Current Literature' goes on to quote 'The Medical Record' and other medical papers, all to the same effect. As we have suggested, there may be a certain amount of professional prejudice at the back of all this, but it is quite right that even it should be noted, if only for the uses of the animals which, in some countries, at a certain period of the year, are turned into the vineyards to eat the too luxuriant shoots of the vines.

St. Paul said that in Christ there is neither male nor female,—an upsetting but noble saying, with which every Spiritualist who will reflect upon it must agree. It simply means that personality is more vital than sex,—that in the Christ-sphere, which is the deep spirit-sphere, we are all of the same substance, and essentially one.

A notable Chicago preacher, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, has been applying this doctrine to the Woman Suffrage question, with results which bring one round again to St. Paul's fine and refined saying. Here are two paragraphs from a telling sermon:—

In the light of evolution, woman has passed or is passing from the condition of being the drudge of primitive man through that of being the plaything, the decoration, the luxury of the cavalier, the pride of the aristocrat, upon whose fair form he hangs his trinkets, displaying his generosity and his chivalry in the gewgaws, filigree ornaments, precious stones, dainty fabrics, whose values are determined by their perishableness and the amount of human life woven into their intricate meshes, to the final stage which, indeed, is reached by but few, that of being a companion to man, a sharer of his toils, a fellow-student with him, a yoke-fellow, a help-

meet indeed. In this last stage woman's brain, muscle, nerve, her wits and her affections are commodities to be invested alongside with those of the man, in the interest of the home. They are needed by the State. She is a partner in the business of life, a contributor to progress, a fellow citizen in the real democracy; she must eventually count one in the commonwealth. Whatever the woman question may be, and however it is to be solved, the solution must begin in a recognition of the soul as the unit of spiritual force, quite independent of sex variation. Personality is deeper and higher than sex in the realm of life, there are identical elements and forces within, identity of dangers and perplexities, duties and privileges without, that know no distinction of sex.

Men need the feminine element in a government that is devoted to the humanities, that undertakes to keep the larger house in order, to protect its helpless, to take care of its maimed and defective wards, to educate its children. Already ninety per cent. or more of the public school-teaching force in America is feminine; already women have won their way into all the learned professions; already they have proved their ability to conduct business, to be successful farmers, gardeners, stock-growers, merchants. Why should not the State profit by their judgment and their experience at the centre of things? Whatever woman's weaknesses may be, and they are many, they are not such as to render American politics venial, office-holders coarse, and polling-places vulgar.

We are afraid that the newspapers are too good judges of the taste of the public, and that the few suffer for the many. It has, for some of us, already become a question of excluding newspapers altogether from the home, with their sensationalism, their lubricity and their readiness to dish up ghastly or nasty details. If there is anything in the law of suggestion, we are certainly running great risks by admitting into the home the newspaper of the day. The offence is so serious that one must fall back upon the old Hebrew Psalmist for a frank description of it. 'They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy. There is not one that is good: no, not one.' Even 'The Daily News,' the Puritans' paper, has answered with divorce obscenities our prayer for 'daily bread.'

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS

(From many Shrines).

Teach me, O God, to walk gently amid all the cares and distractions that enter my daily life. Let me be filled with the spirit of calm that will quiet the pain of disappointment and the fever of desire. Let me believe that Thou, who hast given to Thy children their longing for love and life, wilt not leave them all unsatisfied in their loneliness. Thy purposes are greater than our purposes, even as Thou art strength when we know in ourselves only weakness. Then let me trust myself with serenity to the leadings of that purpose which I cannot understand, and, while I wait and work and suffer in my mortal blindness, may my heart so go out in love and sympathy to those who also wait and work around me, that I may help in some real though small measure to bring the day of Thy kingdom on earth. Amen.

A CALIFORNIAN correspondent, Mr. Fred A. Binney, of San Diego, sends us a suggestion for a 'scientific test,' the substance of which is that the medium should sit at a table on which is placed a box about eighteen inches every way, containing a telephone transmitter, connected by wires with a receiver which could be held by the sitters in turn. It is suggested that the spirits might materialise their heads inside this box, and speak to the sitters through the telephone. The inside of the box would of course be dark, but the room could be lighted in the ordinary way, or by a red light. Our correspondent is told by the guides of a 'trumpet medium' that the idea is not practicable, but he feels sure that it is, and that it would form 'one of the grandest scientific proofs of immortality ever adduced.' If such a box would be too small, we suggest that a spirit might materialise and speak through a telephone fitted up in a dark cabinet while the medium sits outside.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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

THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 11TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MR. JAMES I. WEDGWOOD,

ON

'Occult Experiences in the Lives of the Saints and their Parallels in Modern Spiritualism.'

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

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

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. 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*, February 2nd (and on the 9th), Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham) will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On *Thursday next*, February 4th, Mr. James I. Wedgwood will conduct a class for psychical self-culture, at 4 o'clock. No admission after 4.10 p.m.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Friday next*, February 5th, 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.

SPIRITUALISM AT JOHANNESBURG.—'The Transvaal Leader' of January 2nd says that 'Spiritualist teachings and doctrine command a great and increasing following in Johannesburg. The Spiritualist Society is well and warmly supported; its beliefs daily find a growing number of professors. On the Sunday before Christmas the South African School of Music was packed to hear Mr. Frost, late of London, England, whose eloquence is as effective as his faith.'

CATASTROPHES AND PREVISION.

Every great catastrophe brings out a varied assortment of predictions which are claimed as bearing on the event, but many of these are much too indefinite to serve as warnings, or even to be recognised as being precise forecasts. A paper published in Maryland, U.S.A., on January 1st, stated that the well-known American psychic, Mrs. Maud Lord Drake, in a private letter dated December 4th, 1907, had written :—

I feel some terrible catastrophe approaching that seems stupendous in its calamity to humanity, thousands succumbing to its fateful, direful effects. It saddens and grieves my very soul. I see all of Europe under water, and not so far in the future, either. It will as surely come as that we live.

The only definite point in this prophecy is the word 'Europe,' for the expression 'thousands succumbing,' though correct, does not agree with the phrase 'all of Europe,' which would involve many millions. Even the European professional prophets seem to have been caught napping. An astrologer claims to have hit the longitude within five degrees, but even then the latitude is not defined. M. Gaston Mery, in 'L'Echo du Merveilleux,' analyses some published predictions, both of ancient and recent date, and finds little that bears precisely on the event. Earthquakes, ruined towns, and inundations by the sea are freely predicted, but beyond a reference to Vesuvius and another to Naples, nothing is said as to locality except that it will be 'abroad,' that is, out of France.

Some private cases of presentiment have been reported, we do not know precisely on what authority, and we quote them for what they may be worth. The wife of an Italian colonel told a general, who was staying in the same hotel, that she and her husband were going to Messina. The general did his best to dissuade them, saying that on account of the prevailing heat he had a presentiment that there would be an earthquake, adding : 'My presentiments never deceive me !'

A servant-girl employed at a house in the Piazza Scotto was betrothed to a young man then on military service at Naples. On hearing of the catastrophe he returned to Messina, but found the Piazza Scotto all in ruins. That night he dreamed that he saw his betrothed at the window of a burning house calling out to him to save her. Awakening, he got up, rushed into the ruined town, aroused the lieutenant of the guard, and told him there was someone still alive in the half-demolished house. On hearing the story of his dream the officer organised a searching party and proceeded to the spot. The young man called to the girl by name, and was answered by a faint voice from the ruins ; after seven hours' hard work, it is said, the girl was rescued unharmed. She had fainted, and remained long unconscious ; on coming to herself she had called out to her *fiancé*, this being, as nearly as can be gathered, at the time of his dream.

More remarkable, and better authenticated, is the prevision referred to in the 'Daily News' for January 22nd. A Roman lady, a member of the aristocracy, who was neurasthenic and subject to hysteria, informed a specialist, Dr. Santi, on December 2nd, that she had seen in her dreams 'Messina destroyed by land and sea,' and believed that it would happen on the 8th, 18th, or 28th of the month. She also wrote a warning intended for the King of Italy, but Dr. Santi, thinking it a delusion, suppressed the letter, which, however, he still keeps as evidence. On the 7th, 8th, and 27th the 'hysterical' symptoms returned, and on the 28th the catastrophe occurred. In commenting on this, the 'Daily News,' shaken out of its usual placid incredulity, accepts thought-transference as an ascertained faculty, and refers to it as explaining clairvoyance and (in some cases) prevision. According to this writer, thought-transference 'has been systematically studied, and under certain conditions it can be produced at will.' But it 'is not a faculty that deserves to be idealised,' for 'it is commoner among semi-savages than among civilised races, and often it is associated with disease.' It is also probably used by animals. It 'is certainly not mystical, and is no more supernatural than wireless telegraphy.' It may be employed

'to read the intention of some other mind, and so to anticipate an event.' But in the case of the earthquake this theory fails :—

There is here, so far as we can see, no possibility of thought-transference, as it is usually understood. The earthquake was not intended or willed by any human mind. It is, of course, possible to suggest that some more than human mind desired to convey the warning. But a wise and benevolent Spirit would hardly choose out a Cassandra so easily discredited ; he would foresee that the premonition would be ascribed to hysteria.

But what is hysteria ? May it not really be a condition of sensitiveness, which, being misunderstood by all concerned, leads the patient to confuse subjective impressions with objective ones, and hence her actions and speech appear strange to those who are not aware that she is living in two spheres of perception at once ? As to the choice of instrument, it is just the so-called 'hysterical' persons who are the most easily influenced. The closing remark of the 'Daily News' is thoroughly sound and sensible :—

We will only add here that for the sceptic who dares to say 'chance' we profess in advance our whole-hearted contempt. That sort of 'chance' has been too common in the experience of all unsophisticated races, from the Greeks who frequented the oracles down to the seers of Scandinavia and the modern Highlanders who possess, but rarely boast of, the gift of second-sight.

A DIP INTO THE DEPTHS.

Mr. Algernon Blackwood, the author of 'John Silence, Physician Extraordinary,' published by Eveleigh Nash, Fawcett House, London, price 6s., post free, has given us a character which in many respects resembles the famous Sherlock Holmes. The doings and sayings of this 'physician extraordinary' and psychic detective are chronicled by his confidential assistant, the laudatory 'Hubbard,' who extols his hero with all the fervour of Dr. Watson for Holmes, while 'John Silence' is represented as possessing immense will-power, keen intuition, ready resource, commanding force of character, much occult knowledge and remarkable psychic power. The book consists of five 'cases' in which Dr. John Silence acts as psychic investigator and expert, he having, it is said, 'submitted himself to a long and severe training, at once physical, mental, and spiritual—which involved a total disappearance from the world for five years. . . . For the modern psychical researcher he felt the calm tolerance of the "man who knows." There was a trace of pity in his voice—contempt he never showed—when he spoke of their methods.'

It is evident that Mr. Blackwood has familiarised himself with psychic problems, and especially with theosophical and other teaching regarding occult power, obsession, haunting, elementals, sorcery, lycanthropy, reincarnation, thought-influence, witchcraft, magic, &c., and he uses his information skilfully if not convincingly. He has a vividly picturesque descriptive style which resembles that of Sir Conan Doyle, and cleverly piles on the agony until the end. The alleged psychic experiences here set forth are gruesome, unhuman and repulsive. They may suit a class of readers who delight to have 'supped full with horrors,' but they revolt us.

We have never been in love with the idea of elementaries, or with dabbling in sorceries, spells, incantations, devil-worship and other such wild, weird, and wicked wonders ; and if it be true that, in the past, unevolved humans possessed powers of a magical or satanic kind, whereby they could transform themselves into the semblances of animals, set free their doubles, galvanise 'shells' into temporary activity, or return to such elemental conditions that their 'desire bodies' could materialise and, half wolf and half dog, roam and ravage and do horrible deeds, all we can say is, that we are thankful for evolution—thankful that we have become civilised and sane, and that spiritual love is slowly triumphing over animal lust. Our antipathy to the foolish tendency to try to go back and down to the plane of such sub-human horrors is intensified, not diminished, by the 'cases' so realistically and dramatically—but, to our mind, unconvincingly—set forth by Mr. Blackwood, through the

commendatory chronicles by 'Hubbard,' of the doings and powers of 'John Silence.' We can imagine that these highly-coloured sensational stories may have an injurious influence upon some morbid, sensitive, and impressionable minds—but they leave us cold. There are, however, many persons who already believe in black magic more than is good for them, who, whether these stories be true or not, may miss the main point—namely, the necessity for maintaining a high moral tone, and a strong mental attitude—and they may be terrorised by their own superstitious fears regarding the powers of the lower levels of the psychic world. This creepy book may be of interest to students of the occult, but Spiritualism is upon another and a higher level, deals with beings of an entirely different order, has other and more rational purposes and spiritual aims. Z.

PROFESSOR RICHTER ON 'LUCIDITY.'

'The Annals of Psychical Science' has now become a quarterly review, and its first issue in this form contains a lengthy description by Professor Richet of 'Experiments with Madame X.' The first portion of these experiments has already been published, having been the subject of an address given by Professor Richet before the Society for Psychical Research in 1905, which was printed in the Society's 'Proceedings' and in 'The Annals of Psychical Science,' and it was commented upon in 'LIGHT' for 1905, p. 308, and for 1906, p. 63. We will therefore only mention that the Greek phrases written by 'Madame X.,' as though copying from printed matter seen clairvoyantly by her, appear to have been shown to her by the deceased author of a modern Greek dictionary at the suggestion of a spirit, Professor Richet's great-grandfather, for not only does the writing contain extracts from the Prolegomena to that dictionary, and phrases taken *verbatim* from its pages, but one of the written sheets is signed by the two persons just referred to.

The next category of observations is that of 'lucidity' with regard to deceased persons. Professor Richet uses the term 'lucidity' to denote supersensuous perceptions, whether due to clairvoyance, psychometry, or (as we should say) to direct communication from spirits by clairaudience or any similar faculty. He does not theorise; he eliminates theories which he regards as untenable; while his only hypothesis, if he is right in using this word in this connection, is an unknown one, which he believes exists, though he does not know what it is. But can a hypothesis exist until it is formed and stated? A hypothesis is a supposition; can we make a supposition without knowing what we suppose? As for the facts, in addition to some particulars with regard to Professor Richet's grandfather and great-grandfather, which might have been gained from published biographies, Madame X. made a remarkable series of statements about a relative of Professor Richet who had recently died. She correctly gave his name (George Vian), his father's name and profession, residence, approximate description, and age. Along with several incorrect or unverifiable statements she gave some perfectly correct and characteristic ones, and described with striking precision the manner of his death, the details of which had been kept secret and were only known to a very few persons closely connected with him. These details could not have been hit upon by chance, or discovered by inquiry; our friends of the S.P.R. would no doubt bring in telepathy, but this is excluded (as far as any person known to Madame X. was concerned) in another instance, in which Madame X. gave certain particulars as to a deceased colleague of Professor Richet, regarding a visit to Fontainebleau, of which the Professor was not aware until told of it by his friend's widow. This 'incident of Antoine Breguet' is related in Maxwell's 'Metapsychical Phenomena.'

Another class of observations relates to persons still living, who were brought to Madame X. by Professor Richet in order to see what she would say about them. In nearly every instance she gave the initial of one of their names correctly, and in one case gave the complete surname almost exactly. She described circumstances of their lives, and, in two cases

mentioned characteristic facts before she saw them, knowing only that Professor Richet intended to bring a friend. An amusing incident happened while Professor Richet and Madame X. were reading over together the notes that Madame X. had made when psychometrising some writing; Madame X., in one of her annotations, thus relates the occurrence:—

While we were reading these notes, M. Richet suddenly became very sleepy. I slipped a lead pencil into his hand, and placing my left hand on his wrist and closing my eyes, I mentally willed M. Richet to write automatically the surname of the gentleman (Dr. Beretta), of which I was ignorant, and which I had tried to get clairvoyantly, but without success. In a little while Professor Richet's hand began to move, and the pencil slowly traced some letters on the notebook. I did not look, but kept my eyes shut all the time. The hand ceased moving, and almost at once Professor Richet awoke. He saw what was written, told me it was the surname of the gentleman in question, and congratulated me, thinking I had myself obtained it by automatic writing. I am not sure if the good Professor was pleased to hear that it was himself who had written the name while asleep!

Still another section of the narrative relates to information obtained by table movements and raps without contact. Some of this was highly significant, one communication apparently relating to the murder of the King and Queen of Servia on the very evening of the event. This also has been previously published ('Annals,' June, 1905). The message was signed with a name which closely resembles that of the father of Queen Draga, and another case of apparent spirit intervention is related by Madame X. as having occurred at a time when she was much occupied with the George Vian episode. Visiting a church, she says:—

I prayed long and earnestly that my friends on the other side might come to me and help me with 'George.' Suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder and heard someone say: 'My daughter, your prayer has been heard and will be answered.' Looking up, I saw a priest beside me. He was not looking at me, but rather into space above my head; he stood still, with his hand on my shoulder, for one or two seconds after saying those words, and then, without another word, he went away and passed out of the church through a door close by. A woman sitting not far from me rose and came to me, told me that the altar at which I had been praying was known as a spot where 'miracles' happened, and that most certainly my prayer was going to be answered.

We are not distinctly told whether it was a real priest who was clairvoyant or 'lucid,' or a spirit priest, whom Madame X. saw and heard. Professor Richet apparently avoids coming to close quarters with the 'spirit hypothesis,' and his remarks on it are curiously sophistical. He says in one place (p. 33) that 'spirits are *Dii ex machina*, easily invented in order to supply an explanation,' and again, with regard to Antoine Breguet (p. 87), he says:—

Assuredly, the hypothesis that it is the consciousness of Antoine himself who came to Madame X. is the simplest, and at a first glance it satisfies us. But then, what a number of objections such a hypothesis raises! How is it possible for the consciousness to survive after death? How can intelligences which suffer birth escape death? A beginning implies an end: birth implies death, the one involves the other!

Let us remind the Professor that the question is not one of possibility but of fact. If survival is a fact, then it is possible. Moreover, the learned Professor, who is content to say 'We do not know' how these results are produced, seems to be very sure about birth, if not about death. Surely a spirit which can survive the death which is called birth, can survive the birth which is called death!

In an article on 'The Tendencies of Metapsychism' Mrs. Finch deprecates the tendency to constitute the teachings of Spiritism into a body of religious doctrines, but she steals our thunder, calls it Metapsychism, enlarges on its importance for science, morality and religion, and says:—

Metapsychism will inevitably evolve towards a religious idea. In this new religion man, or rather the human soul, will be regarded as the centre. There will be a great feeling of respect and love for man, the masterpiece of creation; an unbounded respect for the human soul, that supreme flower of

all terrestrial evolution, for which are reserved destinies of which we can scarcely conceive. In a word, it will be the religion of humanity, the religion of the soul.

But 'metapsychism' is not enough for the Spiritualist. The 'flower of terrestrial evolution' would be incapable of celestial destinies. Soul and body may each have an evolution of its own, but the terrestrial evolution of the body can never evolve a soul, destined to inconceivable progression hereafter. For that, we need a spiritual evolution, as postulated by our Spiritualist philosophy.

CHILD MEDIUMS AND CHILD SPIRITS.

The mediumship of children is often of the most striking and convincing character, and we are sure that many instances might be recorded which would be of much value and interest to our readers, if only those who have charge of the little ones would favour us with the particulars of their experiences. In the 'Review of Reviews' for January Mr. W. T. Stead says:—

I wonder how often it is realised that the phenomenon described by Mr. W. Canton in 'The Invisible Playmate' is by no means unusual! Mr. Canton tells how his friend N.'s little girl had an invisible playmate which she called 'yourn iccle baby.' N. thought it was only a thing of the imagination, but he himself actually saw the 'iccle baby' before his daughter died:—

'Close beside her lay that other little one with its white, worn face, and its poor arms crossed in that old-womanish fashion in front of her. Its large suffering eyes looked for a moment into mine. Then my head seemed filled with mist, and my ears buzzed. I saw *that*. It was not hallucination. It was there.'

A month or two ago I was visiting friends, and remarked upon the charm and grace of their youthful daughter, and said I feared she would be lonely—being an only child. 'Oh, dear no,' said the father, 'her little sister and big brother who passed over many years ago are her constant playmates. Her brother, who died at infancy, will now be seventeen; he teaches her all her lessons.' It sounded rather mad. But what was my astonishment when talking it over at home to hear one of my own relatives declare that until she was nine years of age she had a little sister whom she met always at one spot in the garden and played with by the hour together. It was no unsubstantial shade, but a black-haired, romping child, who on one occasion tore her playmate's pinafore. A still more remarkable case is reported from South Africa. A Boer family always asserted that they played every day with a number of children invisible to their parents. 'Oh, father, you are going to sit down on the baby!' they would sometimes cry, and carefully remove an invisible something from the chair. 'All make-believe,' it will be said. But one day the children went to a funeral, and after they had looked into the open grave they never saw their little playmates any more. If 'Heaven lies around us in our infancy,' why should we disbelieve that the kiddies can see those who are invisible to the grown-ups? That children go far away to a distant, unapproachable place when they die is one of the doctrines which wring the hearts of bereaved parents with altogether unnecessary anguish. For the little ones do not go away. The world into which they pass is with us here and now, just as the colour and light world of the man who opened his eyelids was the same world as that dark world in which the closed-lidded men lived.

I say this because of the evidence of those who have been there and have described what they have discovered of life on the other side—which, after all, does not seem to be another side or another world, but is in very truth a world existing in and alongside of the actual world of things which we see, hear, taste, smell, and handle.

'We were as one on earth. Now I cry out to him. I plead for the slightest sign. I sit in the places where I held him nearest and dearest, and hold out my empty arms and pray to him for a word, a glimpse; but all in vain. Can you in some way direct me or help me, or am I asking the impossible?'

So writes an agonised mother to the editor of 'Reason,' who publishes it with the remark, 'This is the Soul Cry of Humanity—the Heart Hunger of the Race.'

To that 'Soul Cry' 'Rachel Comforted' will be an answer.

'Rachel Comforted'; being conversations of a mother with her son who was not, but whom she has found, is the name of the book which Mr. Stead will publish shortly, as mentioned in 'Jottings' last week.

SPIRIT INTERLOPERS.

An example of a not uncommon experience, which too frequently results in discouragement to inquirers, and forms one of the stock superficial arguments against investigation into Spiritualism, is given in the 'Journal of the American S.P.R.' for December last. It is thus briefly described in a letter to Professor Hyslop:—

After reading your book, 'Science and a Future Life,' we procured a Ouija board and proceeded to test it. To our surprise and joy we were able to communicate with our friends, and all went well until the time came when we were deceived by some spirits bent on mischief, who succeeded in misleading us by answering in place of our dear ones. One of these finally confessed, telling us also when she first came, and then she left us in peace. But the other persisted in annoying us, so we gave up using the Ouija board.

The more detailed record shows that from July to September, 1906, various messages were given, characteristic of the reputed senders, and referring to family matters, past and present; sometimes 'tests' of a simple kind were given. Then, the writer says:—

A group of three false spirits, who had been attracted by our merry interview with Mr. G., now stepped in and set systematically to work to deceive us. As we were entirely ignorant of the possibility of such a state of things, we were an easy prey for the snare set for us. It must have been that they remained about us constantly, listening to our conversations and reading our thoughts, for they certainly knew a great deal about our affairs, and successfully passed for our friends. It is true we found 'Michael' rather gay and rollicking, and 'Claire' rather more dictatorial, but throughout the thorny path that our unwary souls were about to tread we never doubted but that all on the other side was honesty itself.

They were very insidious. Carefully and by degrees they eliminated all our friends but 'Michael.' That is, one of them personated Michael. The two others posed as high personages in heaven, Michael being considered as an inferior and not allowed to speak without permission. When things had reached this stage, they began to tell us about God, Jesus, the resurrection, and Satan, and to our great amazement everything was different from what we had supposed.

One day, about six weeks after they first took us in hand, as I was passing from one room to the next, I suddenly heard this: 'It's all a hoax! It's all a hoax! Do you understand? It's a hoax.' At the same time I felt as though a cloud was passing away from me. . . . I said, 'O, how could you do it?' She told me that there were three of them—women; that she had not led a good life on earth; that she had died forlorn and unhappy, and had let herself drift along ever since. The night on which we were speaking and laughing with Mr. G. she had noticed us and had thought that it would be good fun to take us in. After being with me all these weeks, however, she had grown to like me and to feel sorry for what she was doing. She asked me to forgive her.

That evening the same spirit announced herself through the Ouija board, gave her name, and asked pardon, assuring the sitters that she would not trouble them again. The other interlopers, especially one of them, who gave her name as 'Gertie,' persistently refused to let the genuine messages come through, except at rare intervals; the sitters reasoned with her, tried to arouse her better nature and turn her thoughts to higher things, but failed to make any impression, and they therefore gave up using the board. 'Gertie' revealed a good deal of character, which is thus described:—

When 'Gertie' came we tried the method recommended by Hudson Tuttle in 'Mediumship and its Laws' for treating earth-bound spirits. She is more like a wilful, obstinate child than a really bad-hearted person. I can tell three phases of her character by the way she moves the little table: (1) a smooth curving motion with many flourishes, as much as to say, 'I don't care about anything'; (2) a quick, snappy motion, as though giving way to an angry mood; (3) the good way—smooth, even, straight for the letter wanted. The chief obstacle to her progress is envy. She seems ready to yield to her better impulses and then she resents the idea of yielding. It may be long before she masters herself, but I think it will come.

Forewarned is forearmed, and inquirers would do well to think over this experience, and consider how they may know their own friends, and how they may perhaps be able to convert a mischievous meddler, who perhaps only wants sympathy and kindness, into a useful helper.

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WILLIAM ARCHER'S LIONS IN THE PATH.

After all, it may be profitable to have a look at the formidable assortment of lions which Mr. Archer has cheviated into his path and ours. It appears that Mr. Wells has been so bothered or alarmed with the prospect of having 'to reconstruct our theories of the universe,' if Mr. Myers is speaking at the other end of the tunnel, that he has been 'making the difficulties of such a reconstruction a reason for dismissing the alleged phenomena with contempt.' That is very naughty of Mr. Wells, and foolish too, if true; for surely 'contempt' is the very last emotion that would be fitting. Bewilderment, or the crushing sense of helplessness, would be more becoming. 'Contempt' before these tremendous suggestions would only reveal the hopeless ignorance or the insane egotism of the victim of it. But we think Mr. Archer was not careful in choosing his word.

As we indicated last week, Mr. Archer is himself rather stunned before the revolutionary hypothesis or fact that the unseen people are being heard: but it would help him if he would reflect that we have ourselves to blame for any upsetting that may come of the triumph of a discovery which is only imagined to be new, but which is really very old. The English people are supposed to be, on the whole, believers in the truthfulness of the Bible; and the Bible is soaked through and through with such records as are now driving so many clever people out of doors, away from all their carefully constructed scientific and philosophical refuges. No one can say that they have not had fair warning concerning the possibility of spirit interventions on our material plane. And still Mr. Archer says that the difficulties in the way are 'gigantic, stupendous.' Yes, but, as he also says, the difficulties exist because of 'our theories of the universe.' Why not apply to 'our theories' for relief? There was once a clerk who complained that his stool was too short. 'Ah, yes,' said his employer, 'I must get a taller clerk.' It was an unthought-of solution; and the people who create the 'gigantic' and 'stupendous' difficulties because of their 'theories of the universe' would do well to ponder it.

To tell the truth, it rather amuses us to see these clever people getting up one after another and crying out, almost as though they were suffering from an intrusion, that the whole universe is bigger and more complicated than they bargained for! Mr. Archer is, on the whole, in a hopeful state of mind on the subject, but even he gasps at the

already 'surprising phenomena of the universe,' and protests that 'if we are to conceive that consciousness, once kindled, is inextinguishable and independent of all ascertained material conditions, the motives and methods of the power that so framed the scheme of things become a hundred times more enigmatic.' But we all ought to have got over the gasping stage, long ago. A proper estimate of our own powers and limitations ought to have made surprise a perverted egotism; and fresh wonder at the 'enigmatic' 'motives and methods' of 'the power that so framed the scheme of things,' a juvenile impertinence. It was settled, at least two thousand years ago, that we cannot by searching find out God, and that it is not possible to understand the Almighty unto perfection. The truth is that instead of exciting contempt or crushing knowledge, the report that the unseen people are speaking at the other end of the tunnel ought to be regarded as what we might quite well expect in such a universe as this.

One of Mr. Archer's most perplexing puzzles turns upon the working of Evolution: and he states his puzzle in some such way as this: Man either is or is not 'of a piece with the rest of creation.' If he is, if we assume that 'no special creative act was interposed to break the ascending series and give man a place apart'; then we have to face the problem: When did the indestructibility of life begin? Was it evolved like wings and fins? 'Gradual change is the essence of the evolutionary process; but there could have been no gradual change from mortality to immortality,' or from mortality to 'restricted' or temporary survival. Is Mr. Archer so sure of that? He says that wherever we draw the line, 'the jellyfish, the oyster and the flea are on the hither side of it.' How does he know that? What we usually mean by 'immortality' is not the question, but what Mr. Archer calls 'postponed mortality,' and there is really no need to gasp over the hypothesis that there may be some small emergence on the other side, even of the jellyfish, the oyster, and the flea. It is a big, an involved and a subtle universe, and for calm speculation or agnosticism there is any amount of room.

Then, if man as we know him is not 'of a piece with the rest of creation,' if part of the life of the world is destructible, and part indestructible, 'there must somewhere, and at some time, have been a mortal organism which generated another organism having within it the principle of immortality—surely an unthinkable "variation."'

Why 'unthinkable'? Is it not at least thinkable that at some turn of evolution a species or member of a group was produced whose life-principle was just able to keep itself together through the incident of physical disintegration, just as life crept in here by some cunning turn of the material wheel? Evolution of life into the unseen may, with a little practice, be as thinkable as evolution of life into the seen. Of course, it is a mystery, but it is precisely mystery we ought to expect. The most 'stupendous' and flooring of all wonders would be that everything should be obvious. That would be awful.

From this point, Mr. Archer condescends to chaff and to the sterile use of 'if' and 'why.' Why is man so like the higher animals if he is vitally different from them? Why should so much pains have been taken to conceal that difference? Why was the theory of evolution made so plausible with a consequence so colossal? If survival of death means, as it must mean, survival of personal consciousness, where are we to draw the line? Consciousness is a gradual growth. What then of the infant who dies within an hour of its birth? and so on and so on. It is

easy to frame questions when you think you ought to know all about it. 'The more we think of it,' says Mr. Archer, 'the more do the conditions of immortality become unthinkable; nor have any alleged communications from beyond the grave helped to elucidate the innumerable enigmas.'

Be that as it may, we repeat our advice, to make more use of our limitations, if only for the uses of modesty. The attitude of unbounded expectancy is best, and it is compatible with the attitude of unbounded humility. 'A thousand other difficulties encounter us when we try to reconcile the survival of Messrs. Myers and Hodgson with the doctrine of evolution.' That is far too small an estimate. The difficulties may run to millions. We may look forward to hobnobbing with 'the diplodocus and the deinosaur in the life to come,' says Mr. Archer: and that is included in his 'thousand other difficulties' when we 'try to reconcile the survival of Messrs. Myers and Hodgson with the doctrine of evolution.' We say to him: One thing at a time. Never mind the diplodocus and the deinosaur. Come and listen for Myers and Hodgson, or, indeed, for anyone who can speak from the other side.

THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENT IN EARLY ITALIAN ART.

BY THE REV. LUCKING TAVENER.

An Address (illustrated with lime-light lantern reproductions of many pictures) delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday evening, January 14th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, Mr. Henry Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 46.)

To realise the difficulty of these early Italian saints and painters in trying to teach the spiritual lessons, you have only to walk along the streets of Florence for a little way. You are sure to see one of the massive palaces which are types of the worldly prosperity of the dukes and citizens. Do you wonder that the men who ordered the erection of such places could not appreciate the spiritual teaching of the painters? The great ducal palaces came into existence as the result of the expansion of trade, the increased power and the consequent desire for luxury. They were also emblems of the oppression of the poorer classes and the terrible licentiousness that prevailed among the rich.

Leprosy and famine were rife and the poor were neglected, although there was untold wealth in the city. The monasteries were the only harbours of refuge for such as were in absolute need. But even these institutions did not do all they might, either for the bodily or spiritual well-being of the people. They had for long been the means of uplifting and saving the masses; but even Popes as well as monks gave way to the prevailing quest of pleasure; and the Church itself lost sight of the reason of its existence. Instead of centres of spiritual and altruistic ideals, the monasteries were becoming homes of selfish and indolent luxury. They arranged for no true religious teaching for the poor. Whatever preaching was done was in the Latin tongue, consequently it was not understood by the common people. The disciples of St. Francis devoted themselves to the permeation of the city with religious instruction; and amongst other means employed by them, was that of decoration of church and monastery walls with symbolic designs which conveyed spiritual truths.

In this hurrying city of London and in this commercial age we are just as guilty as were the wealthy Florentines in scorning the spiritual symbols of the early Italian painters. We have but little patience with the gilded halos of the saints,

the architectural thrones for the Christ child and his mother; we smile at the simplicity which allowed those painters to open the clouds and show us the Father and the saints of light taking interest in the affairs of earth. We consign the sweet-faced angels with their wings glowing with colour and gilt to the category of the fairy story, and all the other symbols then used we put on one side as Romanistic or ritualistic. But we forget that those symbols formed the spiritual language of those days; and the fact that we cannot read them to-day is proof that the majority are worshipping at the shrine of mammon rather than the temple of God. Our Art is always the reflection of our mind: it is the expression of our highest thought, and when an age or a city demands of its artists that they should only paint what they can see with their eyes of sense, it declares itself materialistic.

The highest Art is not what we call realistic, but imaginative, meditative. The true artist sees with spiritual eyes, and is able to express—faintly it may be, never completely—but he is able to express that which he sees of the truth of things, not simply in their outer covering, but in their essential inner truth.

It will probably be a shock to some of you to see the crude picture which is the first of my specimens of early Italian spiritual art. But I should like you to remember, first, that this is the earliest attempt of any consequence of the re-awakened Art conscience; and, secondly, that it was addressed to the poor and ill-educated people who could not understand the Latin sermons of bishops and priests. It is Cimabue's Madonna and Child, seen in the church of Santa Maria Novella. To the people of Florence this picture was a revelation such as we cannot appreciate, because we have grown so far away from it. But it is said that when Cimabue had finished his picture, all Florence came out and joined in procession and accompanied the carrying of it from the artist's studio to the church. As we look at this work we cannot imagine what there is in it to cause the Florentines to rejoice so much upon its achievement. If this was the best they could produce, we wonder what had become of all the wonderful knowledge of anatomy shown in Greek works? Apparently this and similar naturalistic knowledge had been completely lost, for there is no evidence of it here. The unnaturally long fingers, the almond-shaped eyes, the lack of childishness in the baby's face, and the general stiffness of the whole design would offend any modern artist. What was it, then, that so won the heart and thought of these people as to cause them to make holiday on its completion and to carry it to its place in the church with trumpet and psalm? It was certainly not that it was naturalistic—Cimabue could not have used a model in painting his picture. Was it not the simple, unaffected spirituality of this child-like work of art? I may not be able to carry you with me in my enthusiasm for this picture, but apart from its surroundings and its being the first picture of its kind, the tenderness of the entire picture (the gentle, modest look of the mother and the adoring angels looking on in worshipful wistfulness) forms a poem of exquisite beauty; but then, considering that nothing like it was ever painted before, I do not wonder so much that such gladness arose in the souls of those Florentines who panted then for the living streams of spirituality, and whose religious thirst was only to be quenched, till then, by the unintelligibility of the Latin sermons and the coldness of Greek or Byzantine art. Cimabue had met a want that the mosaic workers had failed to supply. You will not judge the Madonna's beauty by the cold, materialistic standard of twentieth century beauty. But if you will think of the Art that preceded the painting of this picture, and remember what fine spiritual art work followed it, you will grant, I am sure, that Cimabue demands our gratitude for his courageous introduction of the spiritual element into early Italian art.

But Cimabue was the teacher of Giotto; and Giotto, the merry, pious painter, completed the work of reformation in Italian art. This is his picture of the death of St. Francis. It is one of the wall pictures of the Bardi Chapel in Santa Croce. Just as Homer, true poet as he was, could not conceive of an earthly event without its spiritual import, so

neither could Giotto think of an earthly event without realising also its spiritual import. Bishop Guido, the friend of St. Francis, was some distance from St. Francis and did not know even of his illness. But the saint appeared to the bishop, and the latter, on making inquiries, found that the time when he saw St. Francis by his side was the very moment in which the soul of St. Francis left the tenement of his emaciated body. Giotto has painted the apparition above the death-scene. Notice, just by the head of St. Francis, there is his friend Bishop Guido, who is watching the ascent of the soul while all the others are engaged about the facts of the dead body.

In this picture you will discern the great strides made by Giotto over the work of his master Cimabue. Ruskin says that Giotto's great strength was his close imitation of Nature; but I should say that it was his fearless painting of what he believed to be the truth of his subject. It was not simply the aspect of Nature that he could see with his eyes, but the essential truth of the circumstances, whether seen with his natural eyes or believed in from the evidence of his spiritual sight. Guido was not at the deathbed of St. Francis; but was as much a witness to his death as the friends who touched the saint's hand or knelt in prayer by the couch, seeing that St. Francis in the spirit visited his friend as he left his body. Neither is it probable that the vision Giotto has painted in the clouds was seen by any of the others; but Bishop Guido's vision was to Giotto as much part of the scene as the bed and the watching friends; so Giotto has painted it.

It is well known that in 1848, when the decorators were cleaning and repairing the walls of the Bargello, they came across a fresco painted by Giotto in one of the rooms. The photograph of that fresco is now upon the screen. It represents the face of Dante and his friend the painter. I do not think there is any reason to doubt the authenticity of this portrait, which is therefore of great interest. It is, of course, much faded and damaged, but is, notwithstanding, a fine portrait of the Florentine poet and Giotto his friend. It is interesting also as an autographic portrait of Giotto—the only really authentic portrait of either poet or painter.

The story of Giotto is one of the pretty romances of the painting world. He was the son of a sheep farmer and was in the habit of tending his father's sheep in the fields near Florence, and occupied his spare time in drawing the sheep upon rocks and stones with chalk or any other substance he could find at hand. How Cimabue saw him so engaged, and how he contrived to secure the boy as his apprentice is well known. The master soon discovered the pupil's aptitude and set him to work upon important frescoes. He worked first at the memorial church to St. Francis at Assisi, afterwards in Florence, Padua and Rome. In Rome he met Dante in 1300 and was with the poet in Padua in 1306. It is idle to speculate on the influence of Dante on the mind of Giotto; yet it is interesting to remember that the two men had a great deal of intercourse. They had a fund of subjects in common; and their companionship must have been fruitful in suggestions for each other's works along the line of the higher life and thought. We have here another specimen, a fresco, of Giotto's preaching by paint. It is from the Bardi Chapel at Santa Croce in Florence, and represents the death, or rather the ascent, of St. John. The aim of the painter is to teach something of the experience we call death. The open grave is in the centre of the picture. On the one side are the believing disciples and on the other are the unbelieving or non-spiritual friends. Giotto's method was to represent the truth in the attitude of the believers, who, as you can see, are not concerned with the dead body in the grave. Those who have not risen to the height of spiritual truth are interested in the material body, but the believers see the ascending spirit. In the rays of heavenly light they know that the real John the apostle is ascending to Christ and his Father, while the others are mournfully looking upon the disused casket of the body from which the spirit has departed. Their heads are bent low and their hearts ache because he who was for so long their friend and teacher is no more with them. The others know the same

fact from the higher standpoint, *viz.*, that now John is no longer a prisoner to the limitations of the body, he has greater power and closer touch with them than he had ever had before. You will, from an art standpoint, perhaps, take exception to the closeness of the open heavens and the architectural structure in which the event is supposed to be taking place; but realism in such a work is not to be expected—Giotto had a higher mission than describing minutely the details of the material earth. The open heaven is near to the human temple in which we have worshipped God and held spiritual communion with our friends: The spirit of Jesus and the saints made perfect are near us, if we have but eyes to see them.

We now see a detail of one of the frescoes of the Arena Chapel at Padua. It is from the fresco 'Christ before Caiaphas.' The complete picture shows a rude crowd crushing about Jesus. One rough man has just smitten the face of Jesus with his hand and the question is asked, 'Who smote thee? If thou canst prophesy, answer!' I think that face is very beautiful. It may lack the modern skill in details; but I am sure you will agree with me when I say that the expression is wonderful for its gentleness, its dignity and perfect mastery over emotion. Remember it is at the moment of a surprise blow. Think of that as you look at those features and you will conclude that Giotto has wonderfully put into his painting the whole spiritual character of Jesus. It is as though Giotto would say: 'The master Jesus bears out in his actions, his teaching. He knows how to pity his tormentors and love them even in their tormenting. When smitten on one cheek he will turn the other to the foolish smiter rather than resent the blow, or return evil for evil.' How I would like to know the after story of the man who struck Jesus. Would not that look lift the lowest man to the highest level? Surely up to this time, the time of Giotto, this represents the highest attainment of Christian art. I think that face of Christ is Giotto's masterpiece.

On account of the poorness of the photograph perhaps I ought not to show you this illustration, but it is the only reproduction I have ever seen of a neglected fresco of Giotto's which I saw in what is now a lumber room at Santa Croce, but was once the refectory of the monastery. As you can see, it is much faded, and there is no light in the place at all; but it seemed sufficiently interesting to me to endeavour to get a photograph of it. It represents the Last Supper, and, above it, there is a symbolic design representing the stem of Jesse. The higher fresco was the object of interest to me, as it shows the utter regardlessness of materiality. Bishops and saints of the Church of various centuries are brought together by the artist and made to look up to the tree. They read labels on the branches and look at the figures, representing, as they do, the persons who come in the line of Christ. On the centre of the tree, which is designed so as to form a cross, hangs the Christ of God.

The artists of those days were not such specialists as are those of to-day. They were goldsmiths, silversmiths, sculptors, painters, and often had to do the work of architects, as Giotto's tower in Florence shows. It is separated from the cathedral by a narrow passage. On Ruskin's authority I state that it is the 'model and perfect mirror of perfect architecture.' In itself it is one of the most beautiful objects of Florence, yet the city authorities broke Giotto's heart, and caused his sickness and death, by declaring that its foundations were not adequate to carry the tower. It was never finished, for the pyramid with which Giotto intended to crown it was never erected. In his 'Seven Lamps of Architecture,' Ruskin says that the characteristics of power and beauty occur more or less in different buildings, some in one and some in another; but all together in one building in the world, the campanile of Giotto. He describes it thus: 'That bright, smooth, sunny surface of glowing jasper, those spiral shafts and fairy traceries, so white, so faint, so crystalline, that their slight shapes are hardly traced in darkness on the pallor of the Eastern sky, that serene height of mountain alabaster, coloured like a morning cloud, and chased like a sea-shell.'

But it is the series of panels surrounding its base with which I am interested. To quote Ruskin again: 'There is

assuredly no spot of ground out of Palestine in all the round world, on which, if you knew even but a little the true course of that world's history, you saw with so much joyful reverence the dawn of the morning, as at the foot of the tower of Giotto.' In my photograph you will notice a series of six-sided panels placed all round the tower. They contain Giotto's story of the development of man. There are twenty-seven panels placed about two feet above the visitor's head. They are small, but their smallness enabled the master to work upon them himself. These inlaid jewels should be studied carefully. Ruskin says that 'if you but once read them with patient following, your hour's study will give you strength for all your life.'

They represent the creation of man, his conquest over the earth and sea, and suggest his work and art, as applied to various industries and inventions. From the savage to the artist we see man developing. One specimen will give you an idea how Giotto worked out his designs. It represents Jabal, the father of those that dwell in tents. The last of the series is a problem to all students of the tower. I do not say I know exactly what Giotto meant by it; but it seems clear to me what he might have meant. Remember in all the others he has shown us man's various acquirements, leading up to the artist. The last of the series would naturally show us man in his highest capacity. Then let me tell you how Giotto has represented this. It shows us a creature with an animal's body and a man's head; a kind of God Pan; but he has attached to his hands and feet a pair of wings which he has apparently made himself, for they have loops into which hands and feet are slipped. Not resting on the ground, you would say it is Giotto's prophecy of the flying machine: but I do not think so. All the other panels show man in his regular conquest of the material; why should not this panel be meant by Giotto to indicate man's attempts to penetrate the spiritual mysteries with which he is surrounded? That is what I think Giotto meant.

(To be continued.)

IS THE REV. SILVESTER HORNE A MEDIUM?

Is the Rev. C. Silvester Horne also among the prophets—seers? In the January number of his journal 'The London Signal' he prints 'a Whitefield Ghost Story,' written by himself, in which he tells in the most circumstantial manner how at one of the festive gatherings at the Toplady Hall he saw old George Whitefield, his deceased predecessor, moving towards him and says that he was astonished that no one else saw him. He continues: 'As he turned his fine speaking eyes on me I realised at once that he was back in his old haunts as a friend rather than a critic.' George bowed with 'the stately eighteenth century courtesy' and, says Mr. Horne, 'I was amazed that no ear but mine heard the clear silvery accents of his voice.' After some conversation regarding the work now going on at the Whitefield Church, Mr. Horne said, 'You are very broad minded, Sir,' and continuing his story of the interview, gives this as the reply of spirit Whitefield:—

'One learns much,' he said, changing to an exquisite softness of tone, and in a thrilling voice that sounded now far away, 'on the other side of the veil. I live, Sir, in the home of music, and life and love. We do not judge one another by the old standards of earth. When we come to our Father's house we hear music and dancing. The heavenly harmonies are symbolised by the feast, the robe and the ring. They do the Father's will who plan the earth existence on the Heavenly model. You may be criticised, Sir, but your critics will all be converted some day . . . beyond . . . the . . . Veil.'

We should very much like to know if Mr. Horne is relating an actual experience—it reads as if he were—or whether it is only a literary device to point the moral. We feel like the little son of the minister who asked 'Is that true, father, or only preaching?' In any case it is good preaching and a good moral!

PSYCHIC PERCEPTION: OR THE 'RATIONALE OF CLAIRVOYANCE.'

Writing in 'The Swastika' Dr. A. J. McIvor-Tyndall deals usefully and explanatorily with the psychic faculties which are now being sought by so many and yet are so little understood. He emphasises the fact that these powers are perfectly natural and that there is nothing strange, peculiar, mysterious, or supernatural about them, or about their possessors. He says:—

Twenty years ago there were comparatively few persons who realised the power of clairvoyance—the faculty of the subconscious mind which enables us to describe distant places or to predict events which are still in the future. Ten or twelve years ago the individual who possessed this power was looked upon as something abnormal and uncanny. Gradually enlightenment has spread, until now, even among the most ignorant, we hardly find a person who has not some conception of the actuality and the normality of the ultra-mundane faculties represented by telepathic phenomena, clairvoyance and the power of prediction.

We know that our physical senses are interdependent: for example, the taste of a thing depends very much upon the sight of it. When it comes to the psychic faculties, this interdependence is still more apparent. And right here, I want to make clear the fact that our psychic faculties are not something distinct and separate from the senses that we term physical. They are simply a finer, more intense degree of these same senses. We know that all about us in our daily commercial life we find people of varying degrees of perception—purely, we may say, of intellectual perception. There are those who are slow of comprehension—not quick of ear, or eye, or understanding. Then there are those who seem to comprehend in one word, what it takes others many words of explanation to understand.

As we rise high in the scale of intellectual cultivation, or rather in mind-concentration, we unconsciously enter the field of the psychic faculties. We live much of our time in the finer realm of psychic life without being aware of it. Intuition is after all but an extension of the faculty that is ascribed to the physically conscious mind as the highest development of the physical senses—namely, an extremely sensitive, intensely fine sense of reason.

Clairvoyance is a quick perception of *that which is*, and it corresponds on the psychic plane to our physical sense of sight. The psychic sense of hearing we have termed clairaudience, and the psychic sense of feeling we term psychometry. The language of the psychic self—is telepathy. But, as a matter of fact, these senses blend so harmoniously that it is sometimes impossible to distinguish exactly which of the avenues of sensation is employed in receiving and sending impressions. They are simply an extension of the highest development of the physical senses.

In direct thought-transference, only the words, or meaning of a specific thing, are conveyed. Thought-transference may involve no degree of the clairvoyant faculty whatever. It implies simply the transference of specific thought-forms from one mind to another, without the necessity of speech, or other physical means of such transference.

An example of clear-cut and distinct thought-transference is the following, and it is an actual occurrence. I was doing some work in the editorial rooms of the 'Denver Post' a few months ago, when I distinctly heard certain words. I looked up, and asked one of the men sitting in the room with me if he had made that remark, and as the words were meaningless in themselves, I also asked him what he meant. He said that he had not spoken aloud but that he was fixing his mind upon an attractive heading for the story he was writing and those words had come into his mind. He was concentrating so intensely upon the words that they reached me but without any sense of their application, or meaning. Everyone has had the experience, doubtless, of having the words of a song or poem in his mind, and suddenly someone in the room has broken into the song or quoted the words. These are instances of direct transference of thought, and although we really know comparatively little of it as yet, we still know that it is not an uncommon phenomenon.

The faculty of clairvoyance comes into play when we feel or see or 'sense,' we may call it, something which does not exist consciously in the mind of another, or something upon which another is not concentrating. 'The faculty of seeing through opaque substances' is one of the definitions given to clairvoyance; but we have now to learn that there are no opaque substances: everything, however dense it may appear to the limited sight, in reality is luminous. There is another phase of clairvoyance, however, which is almost indefinable,

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a Conference meeting at the Acton and Ealing Centre, 21, Uxbridge-road, Ealing, W., on Sunday, February 7th, at 7 p.m. Speakers: Messrs. G. T. Gwinn and J. Adams.

that comes as a sort of 'inner conviction'—a certainty that is in no way dependent upon comparative circumstances, or reason.

Clairvoyance may not always include prediction, although it is generally associated with prediction. But there are instances of distinct clairvoyance which do not in any way include prophecy or prediction. For example, a party, of which I was a member, once experimented with a young boy of seventeen years of age, who was a remarkable clairvoyant, but who failed utterly when it came to prediction. He would describe in detail the appearance of a person or a room which he had never seen, tell the contents of a sealed package, or in any way tested, prove the possession of a power to see through supposedly dense objects. When asked what would happen the next day or the next week, he would refuse utterly to make prediction, saying he could not foresee. If urged to try, his statements generally proved quite wrong.

FOUR STRIKING TESTS.

'The Harbinger of Light' says: 'One of the best known periodicals in Italy is the "Ars et Labor," published by the great house of Ricordi in Milan. It is issued monthly, and has been established for sixty-three years. It contains eighty pages of letterpress, and one hundred and thirty photographic illustrations. One of its features is a section entitled "In the Field of the Unknown," dealing with psychic phenomena, the writer of the article being Signor F. Jacchini Luraghi, who deals with the subject in a scientific spirit, and appears indisposed to admit that the phenomena he describes are produced by beings in the invisible world. At the same time he admits that he is at a loss to account for the following facts:—

'At a sitting held in Rome, a spirit wrote as follows through the hand of a medium: "I am a spirit who quitted my mortal body some time since, and am living in terrible anguish. I have spoken to others, but no one will condescend to listen to my prayers, and so I have come hither. I was called Lida Giordani Brunelli, and I died at Cento on January 6th, 1907. I long ardently to communicate with my mother, the widow Luisa Giordani, née Buzzio, and with my husband, Fedele Brunelli."

'Her request was complied with, and it was found that on January 6th, 1907, there died at Cento, at the age of forty, Signora Lida Giordani, wife of Fedele Brunelli, now residing in the quarter of San Nicolo, in the parish of Argenta, where he owns some houses and lands. The widow Luisa Giordani, née Buzzio, aged seventy-seven, mother of the deceased, resides at Cento, with her only son, who is fifty-four years of age and a rich proprietor and manufacturer.

'None of the persons present had any knowledge of this family.

'To proceed. In Paris a small table began to repeat the Christian and surname of a spirit, who said that he had been a chemist residing with his family at Quebec, in Canada; that one day his mind was oppressed by the fear that he had inadvertently occasioned the death of a person by a mistake in making up a prescription, and that if the error should be discovered serious consequences would follow. It so preyed upon his mind that he drowned himself in the St. Lawrence.

'Inquiries were instituted, and the statements of the spirit were verified.

'Professor Faifofer, of Venice, has sent me the following:—

"At my house one evening I received this communication: 'I am Francesco Quirini. I am dead. The "Stella Polare" will arrive in two months from now.' I really regarded this as a fiction; so much so, that I recommended the persons in my house not to speak of it, lest it should give rise to alarm on the part of the relations of my poor friend. The only person to whom I mentioned the matter was my friend Dr. M., from whom I learned two months afterwards that the sad news was only too true. He had read the confirmation of the death in the newspapers before I had noticed it."

'From Professor Faifofer I likewise received another interesting fact:—

"Some time back my excellent friend, Matteo Scepis, captain of a frigate, attended a reception at my house. In one of the intervals C. Milial, a barrister, pointing to a three-legged table, proposed that we should hold a sitting; having agreed to this, he, Baron Stadler and myself took our places. After some trials, I took up a pack of cards, lying close by, and picking out one by chance, without looking at it, or allowing either of the others to do so, I placed it face downwards and

asked if any unseen visitor could tell us what it was. A single rap answered 'Yes.' Then it gave the letter S, and indicated the number three. Turning the card up, we found it to be the three of spades.

"Attracted by our exclamations of surprise, all present drew near, and Count A. Priero asked for a repetition of the test. Another card was similarly dealt with, and the answer was 'It is the seven of clubs.' How are these facts to be explained except by the intervention of intelligent independent entities? They come, perhaps, to confirm the latest affirmations of Lodge that a boundary dividing us from a world beyond the tomb exists; but that life also exists. Perchance we are on the eve of discovering a world of immeasurable proportions: the world of Universal Life."

A CLAIRVOYANT CHILD.

One of the members of the experimental circle at Antwerp writes to the 'Monthly Bulletin,' published by the Permanent Bureau for the Study of Spirit Phenomena in that city, to the following effect:—

Madame B., who is connected with the writer's family, lost a little girl, named Isabelle, a few months ago. About two months since another little girl, aged two and a-half years, while playing in a room which opened on to the staircase, suddenly exclaimed: 'Mamma, Belle is there, on the landing. Don't you see her?' The child said further that Belle was dressed in rose-colour and was smiling.

At another time the mother found the child throwing kisses into the air. On being questioned, the child replied: 'Don't you see Belle? She is sitting on the roof there, and cannot get down.' Again, the same child said she saw Belle in her mother's room, just in the place where the mother prayed for her every night. On the mother's birthday, when she was wishing that she had all her children around her, the little one said, 'Mamma, Belle is there, behind you, on the piano; she is not alone, she has another girl with her, they are holding one another by the hand. She is dressed in rose-colour and carries flowers; she is smiling.' The mother asked, 'Are you sure?' and lifted the child on to the piano, telling her to give her hand to her sister, on which the child immediately held out her hand, in a perfectly natural manner, as though to shake hands with someone whom she saw.

THE SUB-CONSCIOUS MIND AND SPIRITUALISM.

Replying to the question, 'Has the subjective mind power to produce all the Spiritualistic phenomena that have ever been manifested?' as is asserted by Thomson J. Hudson on page thirty-eight of his 'Evolution of the Soul,' Mr. Hudson Tuttle, writing in 'The Progressive Thinker,' says:—

The most 'catchy' and hence most popular explanation that has been put forth, of spiritual phenomena, is this of the subjective mind, sub-consciousness, and subliminal self. If this sub-conscious self had been proven to exist, the theory would be stronger, but it has not, and after all the reliance that has been placed in it, it still remains a conjecture, a convenient phrase to give sound the appearance of knowledge and make one assertion prove another.

Granting, however, that there is a subjective mind, a sub-conscious self, and that Mr. Hudson is pre-eminently endowed with this sub-self, is it not certain that however inferior the sub-self is to the normal self, it can know no more than what has come into the life of Mr. Hudson, or anyone through whom it is manifested? The experience of everyone who has even casually investigated spirit manifestations, yields examples where the information conveyed was entirely out of the consciousness of the investigator or anyone on this side. One such fact overthrows the ingenious theory of Dr. Hudson. Popular as this theory has been, reduced to its merits it is an assertion, supported by other assertions. Dr. Hudson was not an original investigator. He never gave attention to spiritual manifestations. He was one of the class on the borders of science who attempt to popularise and bring the more obscure parts within the understanding of the masses. Many have reached fame and fortune by these means, although their methods were simply to restate old facts, give new names to old ideas, and then proceed to evolve theories, by juggling with the data thus assured.

There may be a sub-conscious self, but it has never been proved, and hence the presumption must remain that there is only one self; that the individual is a verity.

DR. DEANE ON PSYCHO-THERAPEUTICS.

Lecturing on Monday, January 18th, before the Psycho-Therapeutic Society at Caxton Hall, Westminster, Dr. A. D. Deane said that a general medical practitioner who believed in treatment by means of human magnetism, hypnotism, and suggestion was sometimes placed in a difficult position, and it was not easy to know whom he might venture to treat psycho-therapeutically, for some would not respond to that form of treatment. Because his own experience had led him to follow up the power of thought and the finer, or less evident, forces of mind and body, some of the public had called him half a quack. They remarked: 'It is a pity that he goes in for hypnotism'; 'I am not going to let him stroke me'; 'I am afraid of him,' &c. Notwithstanding this, he felt proud that his name was attached to the Psycho-Therapeutic Society, because he was confident that its principles were sound and that it was making its influence felt. It was the only society that recognised, made use of, and tested every possible agency beyond the generally recognised and objective ones.

Proceeding, Dr. Deane related some interesting cases. A young lady suffered from what is called exophthalmic goitre. Her pulse was beating very quickly, about one hundred and thirty-five per minute. He said to her: 'At night when you go to bed think quietly and calmly that you are improving. Say that your heart beats more and more quietly and that you are getting better. I will also think for you at the same time. Feel that all around you is a power which you can draw upon, which will strengthen the power within yourself, as an accumulator is recharged from the main electric supply.' She called again a fortnight afterwards and said she was much improved. Her pulse was only about seventy-five.

A man had got into a depressed condition; sleepless and melancholic, he said that something or somebody told him that he must destroy himself. Dr. Deane said to him: 'Do not fight against the feelings, and the voices and suggestions, but, as if you were talking to something or somebody beyond yourself, say, "All right, come along, do your worst, you cannot do me any harm. I am going to sleep. I have a power within me much stronger than you, so I do not care!"' He came about four times and was now quite free from his misery.

They had all heard of wart charming. When attending a patient, she asked him to look at her little son's hand, which had a number of warts on it. Passing his hand over the little boy's hand, he said, 'Let me see it again in a fortnight.' The warts had all vanished.

One night a woman, anxious and breathless, rushed into his consulting room exclaiming, 'Doctor, look at baby!' There in her arms lay the child, pale, motionless, pulseless. He said, 'I am afraid that she is gone—but wait.' He leaned over the child, passed his hands along it, and then took hold of its wrists, for how long he did not remember, but it gave a gasp, soon it breathed, and shortly it came round. The mother had brought it a distance of half a mile in an apparently lifeless condition.

The lecturer said that suggestion could be inferred in the first three cases, but how in the case of the baby? Where did suggestion come in? They were only just being allowed to recognise thought as a force, but as to the forces emanating from them, in connection with them, and around them, they were still in the dark. Personally, however, he felt that they were experiencing enough to make them hope for and expect further enlightenment.

CAIRO.—A correspondent, who resides at Cairo, would be pleased to know of any one from whom he could obtain information about Spiritualism, or who could tell him of any séances, or a Spiritualist society, at Cairo. Letters addressed 'R.W., care of "LIGHT," 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C., will be forwarded.

THE New York correspondent of the 'Daily Mail' gives an account of an experiment, by hypnotism, on a man who was found wandering about, suffering from injuries to the head, and whose mind was a perfect blank. At the hospital at New Haven he was hypnotised by Dr. Diefendorf, a medical professor at Yale University, and he then told his name, birthplace, and all the details of his life, saying where his wife and daughter were, and where he had worked in New York. When he awoke he had no recollection of the facts disclosed during the hypnotic sleep. On another occasion, under hypnosis, he told how he had been struck on the head by two men, but could remember no more. The addresses given were found to be where he had lived and worked while in New York. The doctor hopes that by repeated appeals to the sub-conscious memory the normal faculties will be restored.

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.

Thought Reading and Psychometry.

SIR.—I should like to know whether the faculty of thought-reading (sometimes called muscle-reading) can be taken as indicative of latent psychometric powers. I have been most successful in discovering concealed objects (Stuart Cumberland fashion), but have so far failed in my attempts to psychometrise.—Yours, &c.,

HELIUM.

The Libraries and Spiritualism.

SIR.—When asking recently at Mudie's library for Robertson's 'Spiritualism' I was told that the book was not being circulated, as there was no demand for it. If this is so, it is certainly regrettable; at the same time it seems to me that Spiritualists who are subscribers to Mudie's should ask to be supplied with the book, in order to create a demand for a work so eminently calculated to spread the knowledge of Spiritualism among wider circles.—Yours, &c.,

A. WAGNER.

A Strange Premonition.

SIR.—In Elijah Waring's interesting 'Recollections of Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg),' 1850, there are several stories of an occult nature, of which I select the following: Mr. W. was returning home from Cowbridge one night after dark, and when he had reached a part of the road where a footpath furnished a nearer cut, he crossed the stile as usual, but had not proceeded far when he became uneasy and knew not why, but felt inclined to return and follow the road. He did so, but soon began to accuse himself of a whimsical indecision, and therefore retraced his steps, but again felt uneasy. This happened three times, when he ultimately followed the road. He soon heard the sound of horses not far behind, and descried in front of him an object lying across the road, which proved to be a man helplessly drunk. He had just time to remove him out of the way when the horses came galloping past. Had he been two minutes later the man in all probability would have been trampled to death.—Yours, &c.,

VRON-V.

A Cabinet Performance.

SIR.—I was one of those invited to attend a so-called materialising séance in a West End drawing-room on Friday afternoon, the 15th inst., arranged by Mr. W. T. Stead with an American music-hall performer and his wife—Mr. and Mrs. Tomson.

A somewhat misleading report, styled 'Spiritualism or Trickery?—Amazing Séance Mystifies Audience of Experts,' has appeared in 'The Daily Chronicle,' and in one or two other newspapers notices have been inserted apparently emanating from a believer in the mediumistic powers of Mr. and Mrs. Tomson, who have been for some time giving performances on the stage of the Alhambra.* On Friday there were not, to my mind, any evidences of Mr. and Mrs. Tomson being what we call spiritualistic mediums; indeed, Mr. Tomson quite honestly stated that they do not make any special claim as to how the effects are produced, it being the business of those who witness them to find out the method of production if they can. I have been told that these performers rail against Spiritualists, and yet during the performance on Friday afternoon they acted as if they were confirmed believers, adopting the attitude of those who endeavour to give the conditions for spiritualistic manifestations. Anyone who has seen the genuine phenomena could scarcely be misled by the appearances on Friday, even bearing in mind the rigorous preliminary precautions taken to prevent the results being achieved by normal means—precautions, however, which were relaxed during the progress of the sitting. A handful of gauze of the finest silk thread, with a square yard of fine silk chiffon and a couple of small flowers would be sufficient to account for the results obtained without adopting any other explanation, such as the theory of *apports*, for the physical phenomena.

The 'figures' draped in white, to my observation, were always those of Mrs. Tomson, slight modifications in appearance being obtained by different arrangements of her dark hair

* See report in 'LIGHT,' August 1st, 1908, page 365, entitled 'A Cabinet Performance.'—[Ed. 'LIGHT']

and the disposition of the silk drapery. The process of so-called dematerialisation was manifestly effected by Mrs. Tomson going down on her knees and drawing the white material within the curtains.

Mr. Tomson was allowed to approach the improvised cabinet, even to enter it, and during the course of the séance almost everyone in the room was invited to go into the cabinet 'in order to give the proper magnetic conditions' (!) I do not wish to be uncharitable, but if Mr. and Mrs. Tomson be the great mediums or psychics they are trying to make some earnest investigators believe they are, there surely must be some records of their powers reported from America before they had recourse to music-hall performances. Do you know anything of their history, or can any of your readers identify them?—Yours, &c.,

VERITAS.

A Social Pioneer Returns.

SIR.—On Tuesday afternoon, the 19th inst., I was greatly puzzled by the description of the spirit-form near me, seen by Mr. Ronald Brailey, in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, because I knew that it was utterly unlike any member of my family, nor could I recall a friend that it resembled. However, during the night the personality of the spirit-form was revealed to me, and truly the recognition was most interesting. The person in question was a social pioneer, an ardent humanitarian, and a friend of Robert Owen. In 1835 he organised a remarkable experiment in Ireland, thereby transforming lawless Irish peasants on a large estate into peaceful peasant proprietors. He lived to be very old, and I had not seen him for many years before he passed away, but his presence near me reveals the truth that he still cherishes the ideas that he strove all his life to inculcate, and desires to strengthen the efforts of those in the earth life whom he knew to be like minded with himself.—Yours, &c.,

M. H. H.

Inaccurate Ouija Messages.

SIR.—Your correspondent, 'Ouija' ('LIGHT,' p. 47), will hear on all sides that inaccurate messages are extremely common, and that their explanation lies in the fact that silly and mischievous people are to be met with in the next life as well as in this. The communicators may also be ruder and rougher than one's own friends, and secure the board for their own purposes. I therefore only write to point out a redeeming feature in the case.

To the question, who is the author of a lying communication? there are three possible answers: (1) The conscious sitter at the board; (2) an outside intelligence; (3) the sitter's sub-conscious self. The first may be put on one side as preposterous. The second is accepted by Spiritualists generally. The third scarcely commends itself to any sane mind, and consequently does not weaken the claim of the second. What is the object of life, unless it be the formation of character? What is the use of striving to improve character if there be a submerged self, unknown and unknowable—a self that cannot be controlled and taught to behave itself? Such a proposition runs counter to one's sense of the eternal fitness of things, and is incompatible with faith in a Supreme Power which has called us into being, and which we believe has implanted in us a higher, not a lower, inward nature, and has thus provided for the gradual unfolding and perfecting of our mental and moral attributes.—Yours, &c.,

BIDSTON.

'THE WESTERN DAILY MERCURY,' of the 25th inst., contains a report of a lecture delivered by Mr. John Lobb in the Market Hall, Exeter, to a crowded audience. Mr. Lobb declared that Shakespeare stated that the plays bearing his name were his, but he had been greatly helped by Bacon. He wrote all his pieces under spirit control—the control of seven great poets who predeceased him.

ILLNESS OF MR. HARRISON D. BARRETT.—We learn with deep regret, from an announcement made in 'The Progressive Thinker' by the President and Secretary of the National Spiritualist Association of America, that Mr. Harrison D. Barrett, former president of that Association for a number of years, is seriously ill. He is 'totally incapacitated by a paralytic complication for both public and private endeavour,' and his friends are greatly concerned 'as to the duration, or possible termination, of his illness.' 'In the past he has given, without stint, of his physical vitality and of his well-trained and richly-endowed mind,' and an appeal is being made on his behalf, which we trust will be promptly and liberally responded to, so that freedom from anxiety may be assured him and the best possible conditions provided for his recovery.

SOCIETY WORK.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Kelland lectured and Mrs. French gave recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mrs. Agnew Jackson, address.—W. H. S.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, MUNSTER-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. T. O. Todd gave a splendid address on 'Infinity.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Podmore, psychometrist.—N. T.

HOLLOWAY.—49, LORRAINE-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last inspiring messages were received; in the evening an address was delivered and Miss Venning gave excellent psychometric readings. Sunday next, morning and evening, Mr. John Lobb (see advt.).—W. W. A.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. D. J. Davis spoke on 'The Importance of Spirit Phenomena.' Miss Woodrow rendered a solo. Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7, Mr. Percy Smyth, address. Monday, 7, ladies' circle. Thursday, 8.15, public circle.—W. Y.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. H. Leaf gave a good address on 'Universal Spiritualism' and clairvoyant descriptions. Miss Hall kindly sang. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Place-Veary, address and clairvoyant descriptions.—N. R.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mr. H. Boddington gave excellent addresses. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Boddington; also clairvoyant descriptions on Monday at 8 p.m., 1s. each sitter.—A. C.

CLAPHAM.—RICHMOND-PLACE, NEW-ROAD, WANDSWORTH-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Jamrach gave an address on 'The Light of Spiritualism' and successful clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Wright. Monday, at 7.30, Thursday, at 8, Friday, at 2.30, circles. Saturday, 7.30, prayer meeting.—C. C.

ACTON AND EALING.—21, UXBRIDGE-ROAD, EALING, W.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Jackson gave an interesting address on 'If it were True' and recited a poem. Mrs. H. Ball rendered a solo. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. H. Ball. February 6th, at 7 p.m., social gathering, tickets 6d. each. Sunday February 7th, Mr. Abbott.—S. R.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Leigh Hunt gave twenty-one successful clairvoyant descriptions, of which sixteen were recognised. Mr. W. Tregale rendered a solo. Mr. G. Spriggs presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis will give answers to written questions from the audience.—A. J. W.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last a good circle was held. In the evening Mrs. Ord gave a splendid address. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mrs. Alice Webb. Thursday, at 7.45, Mrs. Webster. Wednesday and Friday, at 8 members' circles.—J. J. L.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Frederic Fletcher's address on 'After-Death Conditions' was much appreciated. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Effie Bathe.—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mrs. Fairclough Smith ably answered questions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mrs. Fairclough Smith (see advt.).

CHISWICK.—56, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last helpful spirit messages were given. In the evening Mr. G. Prior's address on 'The Light of God' was much appreciated. On Monday evening Mrs. Atkins gave successful psychometric delineations. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 2.45 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. S. Keyworth on 'Evolution and Spiritual Science.' Monday, 8.15, Mrs. Clowes, clairvoyante.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mrs. Webb gave clairvoyant descriptions. At the evening meeting Miss B. Maries gave a spirit-name to the infant son of our secretary, Mr. Williams. Mrs. Barton presented a silver cup on behalf of the members and friends of the society. On the 21st Madame Zeilah Lee gave good psychometrical delineations. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Frederic Fletcher. Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Stebbins and Miss N. Brown. Sunday, February 7th, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.—C. J. W.

SOUTHSEA.—1A, WATERLOO-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Medhurst twice addressed large audiences.—W. D. F.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES-CRESCENT, N.W.—On Sunday last Mr. Smith spoke eloquently on 'Spiritual Gifts.'—E. C.

FINSBURY PARK.—19, STROUD GREEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Baxter spoke on 'Fatality,' a subject selected by the audience.—A. W. J.