

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,518.—VOL. XXX. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1910.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

Per Post, 10s. 10d. per annum.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd. 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

Programme of Meetings for the Coming Week.

MONDAY, February 14th, 2 p.m. till 4.30 p.m.—

Informal Meeting for Social Intercourse.

TUESDAY, February 15th, at 3 p.m.—

Members and Associates, 1s.; Friends, 2s.

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THURSDAY, February 17th, at 4.50 p.m.—

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For further particulars see p. 70, 71.

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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 1910, 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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FROM FEBRUARY 14TH.

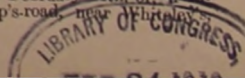
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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Sir William Richmond's Royal Academy discourse on present-day bustle and noise ought to have been given in St. Paul's Cathedral, and then reported in all the papers, on the off chance that it might have made men dissatisfied if not spiritual. But what comes most home to us is his hard hitting at the literary and artistic realism that finds expression in morbidity and ugliness. It is, in truth, a disconcerting sign of the times that so many able men and women, both in literature and art, surrender to the sensationalism of the gutter or the realism of a degraded Bohemianism.

We greatly regret that this is often the case in the exploiting of Spiritualism for the purposes of romance. Why should novelists go to the devil and his angels instead of to sane and pure-souled men and women for subjects? Why cultivate the ugly instead of the beautiful, the morbid instead of the wholesome, the problem turning upon lust and crime instead of the green pastures and the still waters of a pure intent? Must we be harrowed in order to be interested, and disgusted in order to be gripped?

We are all familiar with the fact that the unsophisticated people (like many of the so-called 'lower animals') possess faculties, senses, sensitiveness—what shall we call them?—that the people who are apt to despise them have lost or never had. In India and elsewhere, the way that news travels among the uneducated natives has astonished the 'clever' scientific people, time out of mind.

An instance of this is noted in a lately published book by Major Putnam. Writing of the death of Lincoln, he records that it was, in effect, known among the negroes in a small village far away in North Carolina before the army knew of it. He says:—

In the course of the morning I had gone to the shanty of an old darky whom I had come to know during the days of our sojourn, for the purpose of getting a shave. The old fellow took up his razor, put it down again, and then again lifted it up, but his arm was shaking and I saw that he was so agitated that he was not fitted for the task. 'Massa,' he said, 'I can't shave yer this mornin'.' 'What is the matter?' I inquired. 'Well,' he replied, 'somethin's happened to Massa Linkum.' 'Why,' said I, 'nothing has happened to Lincoln. I know what there is to be known. What are you talking about?' 'Well!' the old man replied with a half sob, 'we coloured folks—we get news or we get half news sooner than you-uns. I dun know jes' what it is, but somethin' has gone wrong with Massa Linkum.' I could get nothing more out of the old man, but I was sufficiently anxious to make my way to Division headquarters to see if there was any news in advance of the arrival of the regular courier. The coloured folks were standing in little groups along the village street, murmuring to each other or waiting with anxious faces for the bad news that they were sure was coming. I found the

brigade adjutant and those with him were puzzled like myself at the troubled minds of the darkies, but still sceptical as to the possibility of any information having reached them which was not known through the regular channels.

A courier arrived, after this, with the fatal news.

A wide-awake minister, the Rev. E. A. Coil, says:—

'Oh, I wish the nebulous religious thought of our day would crystallise somewhere!' That exclamation, coming, as it seemed to me, from the very heart of an earnest, troubled friend, deepened my interest in a condition to which I had already given a great deal of thought. That religious thought is in a nebulous condition must be apparent to all who have given the matter serious consideration. In his 'Social Evolution,' Benjamin Kidd says, if one should attempt to draw up a list of some representative definitions of religion 'formulated by the leading authorities representing various views, he would find the definitions themselves puzzling and conflicting to an extraordinary degree.' To prove the truth of that declaration he gives fifteen representative current definitions of religion.

But while many have been darkening counsel with a multitude of definitions, and others have been trying earnestly, but vainly, to secure and perpetuate uniformity of belief and action, the nebulous thought of the age has been crystallising, and great constructive forces have been at work. Figuratively speaking, as in the olden time, while the Church has been busy with the question of uniformity in matters of doctrine and ceremonials, something good and effective has actually come out of Nazareth, and the end is not yet.

To tell the truth, we do not greatly care that religious thought should 'crystallise somewhere.' If it did it would crystallise only to break up again, and the waste of time and temper in the breaking up is sometimes deplorable. Better than crystallisation is efflorescence, and, thank Heaven! that is always visible to eyes that can spiritually see. But out of all the clash of creeds and clamour of competitions, the just, the gracious, the beautiful are always emerging.

We have nothing to do with politics except in so far as they bear upon humanity and the solidarity of social groups. We stand for concord, goodwill, unity, peace. That induces us to fall in with a request to notice a little threepenny pamphlet by 'H. T. P.' on 'The only way to Union and Home Rule (with a definite plan)' (Dublin: Sealy, Bryers and Walker). It is a sensible and business-like, and yet, in a sense, a pathetic plea for the breaking up of the old antagonistic camps and uniting in a friendly and patriotic resolve to make the most of Ireland for Ireland's good.

We have long seen the need of this. It is indeed the key to the whole problem of Ireland's salvation. What is wanted in Ireland is an end-making of faction, and a practical beginning of brotherly patriotism, with a steady co-operation of all for the good of all.

This is the burden of 'H. T. P.'s' pamphlet, and a right good sensible and kindly pamphlet it is. Here are two or three small glimpses of its contents:—

How oblivious to our own interests other countries must think us, with our petty feuds, our vapouring, and our tall talk about an ideal Independent Ireland, while all the time the dust of bigotry, prejudice and hatred is blinding us to the real possibilities before us.

All the Churches preach brotherly love and toleration, but have they practised it themselves, or really endeavoured to induce their flocks to do so?

It is high time to awake out of our Rip Van Winkle siesta, to rub our eyes and try at the same time to rub some common sense into our brains. Let us cease to attempt the conversion of the English masses, who do not care a thraneen about us, one way or the other, and let us set about converting each other!

If ever there is to be a settlement for the benefit of all, now is the time. Let North and South take counsel in calmness and brotherly friendship, with frank and free discussion, and a real desire to arrive at some *modus vivendi* that will set us securely on our feet, and give us a fair opportunity.

It is want of knowing of one another that keeps men apart. Irishmen would learn more readily to respect and appreciate each other's different views, understanding that all, in their own way, were striving towards the light: so that the coming Brotherhood of Man—that we all hope for—would be advanced, and Irishmen would realise more clearly that goodness and truth are not the exclusive heritage of any one political or religious creed.

Mr. Fawcett, in the work we lately noticed, gives us a luminous chapter on 'Birth and the Plurality of Lives' in which he very judiciously discusses the question of reincarnation, which, in a way, he seems inclined to believe in, though he says that 'popular versions of "reincarnation" comprise much nonsense.' As for alleged memories of former lives, he has little beyond sarcasm. He says:—

Alleged remembrances of former lives often run into the grotesque. We have all met the egoists who recall pre-natal events with ease. And we note that they evince preference for picturesque or famous careers. A cynic, listening to these Pythagorases, might ask if remarkable personalities only are reborn. Interesting plebeians, he might insist, sometimes return to earth, but dustmen, butchers, laundrymen, and road-menders, never! We must allow that megalomania is rife among mystics, and that the cynic has good cause to split his sides.

Mr. Fawcett insists that there is no distinction here as between humans and animals. Whatever is the law of re-birth, it applies to them both.

A certain Dr. Joseph Newton, of the United States, speaking lately of what he believed to be 'The New Day in Religion,' was beautifully optimistic. 'Never,' said he, 'were the relations of God to man closer or more real than they are to-day': that is to say, men are co-operating with God with a more intelligent and anxious desire to make an end of misery and sin. This, he thinks, underlies the uprising of the mind against the horrors connected with the old-time view of the future life. He says:—

Here one sees the intellectual humility and the spiritual triumph of our age. The desolating march of pessimists across the landscape of the soul has been checked within the last fifteen years, and a new confidence fills the hearts of men. Death may still be the king of mysteries, but it is no longer the king of terrors. We of this good age die with more regret but with less fear than was true of our fathers. A recent writer, G. Lowes Dickinson, discusses with singular insight and lucidity the question as to whether immortality is desirable. He holds that it is the sense of this age that it is not desirable if a portion of the race, large or small, is to suffer eternally in a chamber of torture. Nirvana were better for all in face of such a prospect. Only on the ground, as Browning has said, that 'little else is worth while save the development of the soul,' is immortality desirable at all. But the proof of a future life if undesirable does not seem to be a matter of doubt, since men who deny both pain and death are strangely bereft of pity. At the same time we have in the moral order of life, and in the soul itself, a firm basis for all just and reasonable hopes.

We are living, we are moving in the dawn of a new day of faith. No mere fancy is it that this age is big with ethical and spiritual adventures, and with unguessed conquests of truth and of character. No good thing will be lost, no beautiful thing destroyed. And in the new day, with the magic of its passing hours, Time, which changes all good and evil things, is fashioning from the old love new shapes of beauty and service.

Even those who cannot see so plainly the glowing hope are learning to cultivate a large and patient trust, on which point Dr. Newton quotes the beautiful saying of Robert Louis Stevenson:—

If I from my spy hole, looking with purblind eyes upon the least part of a fraction of the universe, yet perceive in my destiny some broken evidence of a plan and some signals of an over-ruling goodness, shall I then be so mad as to complain that all cannot be explained? Shall I not rather wonder with grateful surprise that in so vast a scheme I seem to have been able to read, however little, and that little encouraging to faith?

'Welsh Love Murder' is the newspaper heading to the record of one of the most hideous murders ever perpetrated. A young lady was strangled with a handkerchief, twisted tightly round her throat. Near her was found standing Victor Jones, aged twenty-two, a local insurance agent. There were signs of a terrible struggle at the spot.

Hearing cries of murder, Constable Biston ran to the spot, and there saw Jones standing near the prostrate form. He said, dramatically, 'There she is; I have done it. I have strangled her because I loved her.'

'Because I loved her!' This blasphemy is by no means uncommon. All kinds of crimes are committed in this divine name. The animal, still rampant in us, has even now to learn what true love is.

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 24TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MR. ANGUS McARTHUR,

ON

'The Psychic Element in the Greek Testament.'

[This Lecture neither assumes nor involves any knowledge of Greek on the part of the audience. The Lecturer, however, believes that by using the original text he can throw a clearer light upon the psychic problems of the New Testament.]

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

Mar. 17.—LADY MOSLEY, on 'Spiritual Healing.'

Mar. 31.—MR. GEORGE P. YOUNG (President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists), on 'The Trend of Modern Science towards Spiritualism.'

Apr. 14.—MR. EBENEZER HOWARD (Garden City Pioneer), on 'Spiritual Influences toward Social Progress.'

Apr. 28.—REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS, on 'The Ministry of Angels.'

May 12.—MR. EDMUND E. FOURNIER D'ALBE, B.Sc., on 'Pre-Existence and Survival: or the Origin and Fate of the Individual Human Spirit.'

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

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

MONDAY.—FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Monday afternoons, after two o'clock, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TUESDAY.—CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, February 15th, Mrs. Place-Veary will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each. Mr. J. J. Vango on the 22nd.

THURSDAY.—THOUGHT EXCHANGE.—On *Thursday next*, the 17th, at 5 p.m., Miss Constance Holmes will speak on 'Some Characteristics of the Science of Cheirosophy.' Discussion.

FRIDAY.—TALKS ABOUT SPIRITS.—The second of a special series of short Addresses descriptive of the After-Death conditions of some typical spirits will be given through the mediumship of Mrs. M. H. Wallis, on *Friday next*, February 18th, at 3 o'clock prompt, when the subject will be 'THE MISER.' Questions will also be answered 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. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

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 a limited number of 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.

MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing *one* friend to the *Friday* meeting without payment.

A HAUNTING SPIRIT RELEASED.

Mrs. L. Welles, writing in 'The Swastika,' relates how she lived in a haunted house in Texas and liberated the unfortunate spirit who produced the phenomena which had distressed previous tenants.

The house agent, to whom she applied for a house which she had selected, told her that he felt it his duty to inform her that it had the reputation of being haunted and that the tenants usually paid a month's rent and then left. Asked why they did this, he replied that nothing had been seen to alarm the tenants but that the taps were unaccountably turned on and the water was running continually night and day. Mrs. Welles had been clairvoyant and clairaudient all her life and felt interested, so she took the house, which had belonged to a wealthy Southern family before the war, and moved into it. For a week nothing unusual occurred and then, one day:—

The water began pouring from the faucet in the bath-room stationary stand. I had just turned it off after using it, and knew that it was turned off tight, so that it could not slip back. I walked back and turned it off again, and almost immediately the water came pouring from the bath tub. I turned it off and went downstairs and into the kitchen, to find the cook frightened out of her wits, for she was having a similar experience. Well, this kept up all the afternoon, and we each worked faithfully in turning the water off, but to no avail. It seemed as if the more we turned off the water the greater the flow when it was turned on again by—what?

The next day the same thing went on, and although the plumber attended to the taps and fixed new washers, the water began to flow again almost as soon as he had left the house. This state of things began to be very annoying, and Mrs. Welles retired to her own room with the purpose of going into the clairvoyant state, if possible, in the hope of seeing or hearing something that might explain the mystery. After a time of quiet an old white-haired spirit woman appeared, but no word or sign was given, until all at once Mrs. Welles felt almost crazy with thirst. She called to her maid to take her a pitcher of water, and drank until the girl

was frightened. She asked for more, which was taken to her, and at last, when her thirst was appeased, she heard the words (clairaudiently), 'Thank God, I can die now.' Mrs. Welles said: 'Who are you?' and the voice replied, 'The last owner of this property.' In answer to the question, 'Are you happy?' she replied, 'Yes, since I got all the water I wanted.' Then she vanished, and it dawned upon Mrs. Welles that she had freed the spirit from some auto-suggestion that had bound her to earth. At any rate, there was no more trouble with the water, and Mrs. Welles lived in the house for a long time in peace and quiet. She found the physician who had attended the lady, and in answer to her inquiries he stated that the lady had suffered from cancer in the stomach, and was always thirsty. Her nurse declared that 'her last words were that if they did not give her all the water she wanted, she would haunt the house, and she kept her word.'

THE MAIN ISSUE, THE RIGHT USE OF LIFE.

Reincarnation has recently been pretty thoroughly threshed out in the columns of 'LIGHT,' and apparently with little or no effect—believers and non-believers alike holding tenaciously to their respective opinions. Dr. Peebles, while disbelieving in reincarnation, holds strongly to a belief in pre-existence, and the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will ere long have ample opportunity for considering that phase of the subject, as on May 12th Mr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe will address them on 'Pre-Existence and Survival,' and will pass in review the whole question of the 'Origin and Fate of the Individual Human Spirit.' Judging from his former address, we anticipate that Mr. Fournier d'Albe will have something fresh and suggestive to lay before his hearers on that occasion, whether he favours reincarnation or not.

However satisfactory to some minds the theory of reincarnation may appear as an ostensible solution of the puzzling problem of the inequalities of personal experiences in life, the fact remains that it depends upon inferences, suppositions, and deductions rather than on evidences and demonstrations. Its advocates admit that it cannot be *proved*: that when face to face with the scientific sceptic, the much-despised physical phenomena of Spiritualism form the best if not the only weapon with which to break down his materialism. Whether or not it be true that only a small or fragmentary portion of our real individuality is expressed through our waking conscious activity on this plane, while the preponderating part of our true self-hood is shut off from manifestation, as some acute thinkers, Sir Oliver Lodge among them, are inclined to believe, the fact remains that for all practical purposes the self that knows, feels, thinks, sees, works, dreams, fails, or succeeds, is the real self, and since present states of consciousness are the realities, so far as individuals are concerned, speculations regarding the past history of the 'I am' are of little real value to those who have no conscious realisation of personal pre-existence or knowledge of identity with other phases of expression ante-dating the present mode of manifestation of personality, power, and purpose.

This, then, is the point which we desire to emphasise: whatever truth there may or may not be in the theory of repeated incarnations with their failures or successes—whatever truth there may or may not be as regards future reincarnations, or progressive evolutions on other psychological planes—the fact of greatest moment to us all is that we are here now—alive, conscious, capable—and that life consists in expressions, achievements, liberations, and realisations. Further, we are what we are and where we are, and it is useless to repine, or resent our present position. It is our business to make the best of ourselves and the most of our powers and opportunities. We must live in the *now*. Yesterday has gone, only to-day is ours, to-morrow will never come. Be the outcome of our thoughts and deeds what it may, we cannot forestall it; and every attempt at an over-draft on the bank of life ends in failure, just as every impotent surrender, because of real or supposed evil karma, or

vicious heredity, weakens the will and impairs our strength and efficiency for useful life and wise and happy evolution.

Whether reincarnation or other deterministic theories be true or not, can make no difference as regards our true position or our present duty—our problem is the same: we have our battle to fight, our victory to win, our work to do, our service to render to the race, our love to offer to the poor, the needy, and the spiritually oppressed. Why should we spend time and strength peering into the past? Why grope among the shadows and seek to re-clothe ourselves in the garments of our forefathers? Why not accept and glory in the living present and let the dead past bury its dead? Why not equip ourselves to face the pressing problems of the hour and bravely oppose the ignorance, the intemperance and the vested interests behind which selfishness lies entrenched?

On the score of utility Spiritualism holds the field against all comers. It demonstrates conscious survival after bodily death and affords proof of spirit identity. It meets and conquers materialism by using the only weapon which the materialist recognises—facts which can be scientifically verified. It thus proves that the real self—the *I am*—who is and knows that he is, and possesses the power to express himself, to utilise the forces of Nature, to grow in strength, beauty, serenity and wisdom—lives on immortally. Spiritualism is practically useful to all men in all situations and conditions, because it gives the longest possible lease of life, security of tenure, the right to all improvement, a share in all unearned increments past and present, mental, moral and spiritual, and acts as a stimulus towards altruistic and progressive labour for the good of humanity. If Spiritualism be true, the largest, sweetest, brightest, fullest, freest, happiest life is that life which, by its own sunny disposition and joyous use of power, contributes the most to the stream of tendency which makes for righteousness: for heaven in the heart and life, here and now and for all men. Eastern believers in reincarnation do not delight in the thought of re-birth here—to them it is a doom to be dreaded, a fate to be escaped, a future prospect which blights the present. In the same way the thought that one's present troubles and misery are the consequences of former lives palsies the will, and renders the believer in karma infirm of purpose, lacking in sympathy, and incapable of joy in the life that now is.

Spiritualism, on the other hand, proclaims that every spirit is a centre of divine potency; life is an arena for action; circumstances are the spurs to purpose and the opportunities for achievement. Spiritualism, by its evidences that the people on the other side are still human beings, and live in a real world where association and progress are possible, proves that man is not only a responsible being, but an angel in the growing, at school for education, and that his aim in life should be to develop mind and moral sense and spiritual understanding—to cultivate character, independence, virility, originality, nobility and worthiness. Spiritualism stands for liberty, health, wisdom, righteousness, love—or, in other words, for a strong, active, self-possessed, self-reliant and self-expressing man and womanhood. It is intensely practical and intensely religious. It stands for usefulness now and always; for happiness now and always; for delight in being alive; for thankfulness, appreciation, enterprise, achievement; for the going on from good to better and from better to best—'without haste and without rest.' If we would *live* and prepare for the fuller life to come we must seek the truth, desire to improve, aspire to rise, but at the same time rejoice in the good things of the present hour—in the blessings and opportunities of each day—and be happy because no man lives to himself alone, but by example and influence, by sympathy and love, each can be helpful to others.

Above all, Spiritualism, by its revelations of the beauties of the other world, is to loving, suffering, struggling humanity a pledge of ultimate fulfilment. It proves that hope is not a mocker, that the dreams of our hearts, which give us courage in the darkest hours of trial and grief, are not 'idle dreams' but prophetic intuitions—foreshadowings of spiritual realities. When loved ones pass from the family circle and

are lost in the gloom of 'the valley of shadow,' we are not afraid—we do not feel that they are lost to us for ever—nor do we dread that they may have to return to this infant school of experience and be lost to us when we, in our turn, pass to the spirit world; for, if Spiritualism be true, that other life is the homeland—the real life where our ideals shall be attained, our fondest dreams be surpassed. In the Summerland home re-united loved ones shall go on their way rejoicing—growing in grace and goodness, knowledge and wisdom; and all that is truest and best, sweetest, tenderest and most lovable in human nature shall blossom forth in beauty: there errors will be outgrown, wrongs righted, follies forgotten, feuds buried, sins used as stepping stones to better things; love will rule, and life be rounded out in harmony and joy in the fulness of peace and the realisation of the spiritual brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God.

W. S. M.

HINDUISM AND SPIRITUALISM.

In connection with what has recently been said in 'LIGHT with regard to the teachings of the Vedas, it may be interesting to give some account of the Hindu religion, or philosophy, as compared with Spiritualism. In 1893 there was published at Calcutta a series of lectures on 'Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga,' by Mr. K. Chakravarti, secretary of the Calcutta Yoga Somaj and member of the Bengal Academy of Literature, who traces 'the various phases of spirit worship from the earliest Vedic ages to the age of the Tantras, in which Spiritualism, almost as understood at present, was sedulously cultivated—an age in which the lamp of Hindu intellect burned with supernatural lustre.' But he admits that the task is not easy, because the materials are scattered through a vast literature.

The Vedas enjoin the worship of a Supreme Being who is truth, purest intelligence and happiness. These words also carry with them the ideas of everlastingness, intelligence apart from matter, and happiness based on love—holy, grand and beautiful. There were also deities of the five elements, and other separate spirits and classes of spirits having various powers, whose influence caused various disorders corresponding to the quality of the obsessing spirit.

For the purpose of worship, the ancients held that it is necessary to contemplate the immaterial divine Spirit under some form or other, and this idea underlies all personifications of the Deity, and all images or statues of gods and saints. But, says the lecturer:—

It was immaterial to the ancients in what shape a devotee conceives the Creator in his mind. He may contemplate Him as a ray of light, or ascribe to Him a human shape with ultra-human qualities; in a word the way in which he himself is best satisfied. For a man who requires to commune with his Maker, who wishes to pour out his full heart to Him, who wants His protecting power in various ways, an imaginary corporeality, a name, in place of a pure negation, is necessary to fix his mind, to call the best feelings of his heart into play, to raise his soul from all that is earthly to all that is etherial. The human mind, privileged as it is to soar so high as the foot of the throne of the Almighty, is nevertheless, by its very nature, incapable of grasping the awful depths of infinity; and when we hear men and nations worship God as an immaterial spirit, we believe that they really do so with some idea of corporeality.

The Hindu methods of coming into communion with spiritual beings are all summed up under the term Yoga, or union, and under it is included the whole practice of personal devotion. *Maya* is a term used to denote the transitoriness of everything material, as opposed to the idea that God is everlasting. The active cause of our existence is the soul, which springs from God and, therefore, existed before creation. It is the soul that suffers pain or pleasure, not the body, for, as Kapila says, the corpse cannot feel. The soul requires as a receptacle a subtle body, which is the archetype of the grosser body. When, therefore, we read of the soul passing from body to body, we must understand that the soul comes to inhabit bodies successively finer or less material; the phrase does not necessarily imply reincorporation in a physical body.

All spirits, except God, are considered to have bodies or forms which are to a certain extent material:—

Of this higher form of matter, something has been seen and tested in various ways, and is a phenomenon as old as man. This something survives the physical change called death. All religions teach that it exists after death in Hades, Hell, or Heaven according to its deserts; that gradual progress is its law. The Hindu philosophy, which is a part of the Hindu religion, adds something more definitely (I do not know whether anyone else has read our *shastras* as I have). It says that this something exists neither for torture in Hell nor for enjoyment in Heaven, but passes through these stages as an apprentice to qualify itself for higher powers and higher appointments. To say that we exist after expiation as pensioners for enjoyments only, and for no action whatever, is repugnant alike to reason and experience.

The writer says that the possibility of establishing a bond of sympathy and communication between man and spirit, and man and God, under peculiar circumstances of intense grief or devotion, is well attested both historically and by individual experience. Consolation comes to us, both in dreams and in waking hours; and by concentration we can bring ourselves into communication with spiritual beings, and enjoy happiness otherwise impossible. Kapila, 'the great sage, the boldest of philosophers,' acknowledges without comment the existence of spirits and the possibility of communication with them, because such communications were too common in his time to admit of any precise mention. As the tangible knowledge of the future and unseen becomes a part of our education and more and more general, it acts more and more beneficially upon public morality, health and longevity. Self-purification is a primary feature of all spiritual practices, and this leads to self-control, and what is described as 'stretching out one's own magnetic power with a will to eliminate evil influence.' The force of mind, the force of character, and the force of the inner self are the principal aims of attainment.

There are, it is true, certain differences between the ancient Spiritualism of the East and its modern representative in the West. The invocations were usually addressed to spirits which were not regarded as the souls of departed persons, nor were spirit manifestations sought for as evidences of an after life. They were directed to the attainments of higher powers and of greater spirituality. Thus the objects which Patanjali set before himself were: to prolong life for the attainment of higher knowledge and devotion to God; to keep free from diseases and vices which retard progress in spiritual work; to exercise the higher faculties of the will and the powers of the disembodied soul, 'with the view of extending the domain of human knowledge, and making it subservient to the attainment of the principal object of human life, namely, of approaching God daily more and more with the humility and reverence of a dutiful son and servant.'

Commenting on the Gita, 'the brightest spiritual treasure of the Hindus,' the author shows that in it no stress is laid on outward circumstances, or the so-called inequalities of life; for the spirit is eternal, and constant amid earthly changes. It is motives and actions that affect the soul, and build up the spiritual form. 'This form is either celestial, ethereal or earthy, resplendent, bright or dark, according to the nature of the work done. As a leech does not leave one support until it gets another, so the soul does not leave the earthly body until the spiritual one is ready to receive it.' There are five *Koshas* or receptacles for the soul—spirit bodies, in each of which successively the soul acquires greater powers of perception and fulness of divine knowledge, as it passes through the corresponding five *lokas* intervening between the earth and the abode of Brahma. Up to the very last stage the soul 'can reincarnate for the good of the worlds beneath. These reincarnations, called *avatars*, take place according to the necessities of the worlds,' and are not confined to those of great religious teachers. Newton, Shakspeare, Liebig, and Laplace are quoted as being equally '*avatars*' for the revelation of the laws of Nature and of the ways of God. 'They go back to their realms when their missions of love and duty are accomplished.' It is evident that this conception of an occasional '*avatar*' of a great soul, as teacher in any department of

knowledge, is totally opposed to the idea that every human soul must inevitably come back to earth, not to teach, but to learn. This latter doctrine, which implies that progress can only be made here on earth, appears to us not to be in any real sense spiritual, but rather a veiled materialism, which makes the earth lives the most important factors in the progress and evolution of the soul. The Hindu teaching, on the other hand, makes earth life the starting point of our work, both for ourselves and for others—really for God:—

Our love of the Infinite Being must be preceded by the gradual expansion of our knowledge, since love of an object presupposes intimacy with it, and the more we know it the better we love it. The attainment of the true state must be a work of time; it must have a beginning, and that beginning should be from here; for the excellence of our future life depends on the excellence of our work in this world and of the heart that dictates the work. The Heaven has, in His mercy, spread the glad tidings through the best teachers that even the poorest, the meanest, and the wickedest spirits shall one day be happy in the splendours of His kingdom and in the sweetness of His infinite love.

In a word, the Hindu gospel is one of endless spiritual progress, and this also is the teaching of our Spiritualism. The aim of all practice is to form and cultivate the spiritual nature, so that it may rule the outward personality:—

The spiritual man knows the weakness of his physical namesake, and in true brotherly love teaches him not only to look with an equal eye of indifference on the fortunes and misfortunes of his life, the fame and calumnies of the world, the favour and disfavour of superiors, but to know how to train himself to withstand the rigours of climate, to conquer himself and sin, diseases and other ills of life. And while he does all this for his physical counterpart, he exerts himself to conquer illusions. Then, when this noble work is done, he passes from sphere to sphere, his hand grasping the torch of Truth, his heart bearing the cup of Love.

The author shows from a beautiful but little known Hindu sacred book that Love was the state in which the Deity was prompted to create, and that the same Love upholds and maintains creation. To know the Infinite and be happy there is no other means than through Love.

SPIRITUALISM AND INSANITY.

A Manchester correspondent sends us a cutting from a local paper headed 'Spiritualist Peril.' The article is taken from the 'Spectator,' and consists mainly of quotations from a small book by Dr. Charles Williams, entitled, 'Spiritualism and Insanity.' The only way in which the wholesale assertions made by opponents of Spiritualism, that it is a fruitful cause of insanity, can be tested is by official figures supplied by the superintendents of the various asylums of the country regarding the causes of the insanity of all the patients under their care: and this Dr. Williams admits in his book. Failing such figures, the denunciations of individuals, Dr. Williams included, amount to nothing—they are valueless as evidence. Further, Dr. Williams, the author of this book, when he lived in Liverpool, became president of a Church, professedly Spiritualistic, at which the proceedings and teachings differed from those of all other Spiritualist societies with which we are familiar: so much so, in fact, that the more prominent Liverpool Spiritualists disapproved of and refrained from attending the 'services' in which he took a leading part. It is manifestly unfair, therefore, that he should seek to hold Spiritualism responsible for the disastrous results which he now admits followed on his own course of action. As the writer of the article in the 'Spectator' clearly points out: 'Dr. Williams's experience was no test of what would happen to the whole community because his fellow-members of the society had, to begin with, a certain predisposition to morbid introspective states, or they would not have been drawn to the séances of the society.' This is quite true; the level-headed Spiritualists kept aloof.

WHENEVER it appeals to passion and arouses jealousy of border lines, 'Patriotism' is the old vice of clannishness under a more pretentious name.—CHARLES B. NEWCOMBE.

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SPIRITS IN PRISON.

To all far-seeing Spiritualists the Bible should be a welcome, an instructive and a confirmatory book. One need not regard it as infallible in order to discover its value, nor need we adore it as 'The Word of God' in order to find its uses for man. It is, in fact, a great mine of information, symbolism and reputed history not by any means properly valued or properly worked by us. On the one hand, Spiritualists have neglected it on account of the extravagant claims made on its behalf, and, on the other hand, they have failed to utilise it because themselves entangled in the net woven by those claims.

Those who neglect it, as a rule, do so because of the rank growth of bad science, bad history and bad ethics in the Old Testament, although vast stores of records important to Spiritualists lie quite outside of and apart from its science, its history and its ethics. But the New Testament is just as fruitful. Take only the luminous record in Peter's first Epistle concerning Jesus Christ: 'Put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.' There is no escaping from it. Nothing can be plainer. Jesus Christ went to the spirit world, and to the imprisoned there—Purgatory or Hell—and preached. What for? What is the one object of preaching? To liberate the bound, to uplift the fallen, to cleanse the impure, to save the lost. In the language of our day, he went on a Mission, to do rescue work and to save souls.

In one of the 'Apocryphal Gospels,' the Gospel of Nicodemus, we have an account of 'The descent of Christ to the Underworld,' a story full of weird romancing, but a story which, in one form or another, lingered long in the early Church. The Nicodemus Gospel record tells of the resurrection of Simeon and his two sons who wrote before the chief priests the story of the appearance of Jesus in Hades. The darkness was lit up 'as it were the light of the sun,' and the prisoners could 'see one another.' Abraham, united with the patriarchs and prophets, led the way in a mighty burst of joy. Adam chimed in and told Seth to describe the promise of an angel of the Lord that in 5,500 years from the creation of the world the only-begotten son of God would appear. While they were rejoicing, Satan arrived and began an alarmed and alarming conversation with Hades, in the midst of which 'a great voice like thunder' was heard, saying 'Lift up your gates, O ye rulers, and be ye lifted up, eternal doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!' Then David and Isaiah besought Hades to

open the gates, but in vain; and then the voice came again, 'Lift up the gates!' 'Hades, hearing the voice a second time, answered, as forsooth not knowing, and said, "Who is this King of Glory?" The angels of the Lord cried, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." And immediately, at this word, the brazen gates were broken, and the iron bars were crushed, and all the dead that were bound were loosed from their bonds, and we (the two sons of Simeon) with them. And the King of Glory entered as a man, and all the dark places of Hades were lighted up.' Then Jesus seized Satan and commanded him to be bound, and, going forth, holding Adam by the hand, he went to Paradise. And when they had written the story of what they had seen, they vanished.

It is a quaint story; probably not a word of it true; but it reflects the faith of many in the early days of the Church.

Passing by the curious idea that Adam, Abraham, David and Isaiah with all the patriarchs and prophets were in the dungeons of Hades, we do, at any rate, get a firm grip of the faith that release from Hades is possible, though it is limited by the special action of Jesus as a conquering king. Cannot we moderate the romancing, and take it all as a vigorous bit of symbolism suggesting the undoubted truth that in some kind of Hades both in the seen and unseen worlds there *will* be many who will need Christly help, to give them light and win their release?

One of our modern seers put it well when he said:—

Do you not now know the secret of Christ descending into the prisons? It is the truth penetrating into your own prison cells, and your spirits perceiving that truth, the light shall set you free. It is the glory of the individual spirit that, triumphing over the shadows of the senses, over the imperfections, the darkness and byways of crime, finds out its own individual prison; and one strength that cometh from within and another that cometh from above, two strengths making an almighty power, the spirit rises to the vanquishment of its dungeon cells from within.

This points to an undoubted truth—that Hades may be *here*; and, truly, for all we know, the Hades here may be the darkest we can ever know; for sheer earthliness, for instance, may be densest and most imprisoning here. What Shakspeare called 'this muddy vesture of decay' which 'doth grossly close us in,' may itself be more than half responsible for our earth-life Hades and may leave us emancipated when we are rid of it—emancipated or more ready for emancipation.

Ignorance may easily be another builder of our earth-life Hades:—ignorance, that is to say, of what real life is, so that the whole spiritual and mental self is positively oblivious of everything beyond the petty needs of the body and its paltry or squalid associations. The victim of that ignorance may be happy in a way, may have as much as he requires to gild his prison artificially, and buy a sham freedom; but the real self is in darkness and in chains.

To go no farther, we cite cruelty as another and probably the densest Hades of all. Inhumanity is the all-mastering sin. It is the essentially devilish characteristic. It is impossible until every one of the fine spiritual faculties is blunted, until every one of the pure spiritual instincts is killed. The mind that can contemplate cruelty and see it through is already in Hades or Hell.

Can we avoid the inference that all this will be reproduced hereafter? that as we end here we shall begin there? that the only thing we can carry with us is our Paradise or our Prison?

The story of the descent of Jesus into Hades, for the liberation of the imprisoned there, may at least be accepted as a symbol of the permanent and only emancipating power. When we think of that heavenly personality, so

utterly unselfish, so friendly and pitiful, so ready to forgive and heal, in the Father's name, we feel at once in an atmosphere of absolute purity and love. That wonderful scene at his crucifixion, with the pitiful appeal of the malefactor, and his brotherly response, 'To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise,' is by itself a revelation of what emancipation from Hades is.

When we think of the cruelty, the passion, the frightful selfishness of the world, and of the pouring of it all, day and night, into the unseen, it is good for us to be reminded again of this old romance of Christ's invasion of Hades, and to hold at least by the belief in a conquering Saviour; and then to infer that what has been, even in imagination, may effectually be again.

THE NEW WOMANHOOD.

ADDRESS BY MRS. DESPARD.

On Thursday evening, January 27th, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Mrs. Despard delivered an address on 'The New Womanhood' to a large gathering of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. Henry Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 64.)

Turning to what she regarded as the deeper and profounder ethic of the question—that which is included under the name of religion, Mrs. Despard claimed that there was a dual principle in humanity. It was on the recognition by men of this great principle that the return of humanity to health and sanity depended. In this connection the speaker passed in review instances from the old Pagan religions and mythologies, prefacing her remarks with the observation that while the gods seemed rather vague and indefinite figures in their dealings with men, the goddesses usually had distinct places and functions assigned to them in the old deocracies.

There was Athene, the delightful goddess of the Arts, who presided over the destinies of Athens, and who was worshipped amongst the Romans under the name of Minerva; there was the lovely Aphrodite, born of the sea foam, ruler of many beautiful things, and known amongst the Romans as Venus; there was Demeter, the great and bountiful goddess of Agriculture, she who wept for her daughter Persephone, who ruled over the opening buds and the spring showers. Then they had the gentle and mysterious goddess Psyche, the image and deity of the soul. Amongst the Egyptians they found the mystic Isis, whose name is still whispered in awe. Go where they would—whether to Greece, Rome, Egypt, Carthage or Babylon, they found amongst the ancient peoples this intuitive recognition of the dual principle in Nature. Even in the India of to-day the Mother-Father God was worshipped. Turning to the scriptures of the Christian community, they found in the first chapter of Genesis a plural form employed in the reference to the Creator who is described as saying, 'Let us make man in our image,' for it was said that in Hebrew the names Elohim, Adonai, and El-Shaddai were all plural forms. Mrs. Despard next referred to the two distinct stories of the Creation given in Genesis. In the first they had the sublime account beginning with the creation of light and going on to the creation of man, where it said, 'So God created man in his image, in the image of God created he him. Male and female created he them.' Male and female—that was the image. It was only when we came to the later account that we had a childish and prosaic version. We got there the account of the creation of man from the dust of the ground, the man who gave names to all living creatures, and who desired a mate—a female companion, who was in some way formed from himself. In this connection Mrs. Despard referred to Eve's speech to Adam in Milton's 'Paradise Lost.' 'God is thy law, thou mine!'—a quotation which she had recommended to the attention of

anti-suffragists. But even in this second chapter of Genesis we did not find this doctrine of the inferiority of women. In fact, the prophecy was that through woman the restoration of humanity would be accomplished.

During the early Hebrew times, as shown by a number of Biblical references, there were great women belonging to that race. Deborah, who was a judge in Israel, for example. It was only when we came to the later history of the Jews—the time of their decadence—that we found the women in a state of subjection. The young Jew was, for instance, taught to pray publicly: 'I thank thee, O Lord, my God, that thou hast not made me a Gentile, an idiot, or a woman!' And (said Mrs. Despard), 'I believe in these latter days the Jewish women have to respond "Praised be God in all things." The whole nation fell into decay when they came under the influence of the Talmud, and substituted its teachings for those of the beautiful Kabbala.

Mrs. Despard next turned to the New Testament—'that imperfect record of a beautiful and perfect life'—illustrating her arguments by citing various passages in the life of Christ, in whom she claimed could be found more than in any other historical character this dual element—the blended masculine and feminine principles. He had all a woman's tenderness, tolerance and gentleness, yet in all history had there ever been a stronger, a more scathing denunciation of wickedness and corruption than that which came from the lips of the Christ? It had been said that the Christian Church had degraded woman. 'But,' the speaker continued, 'I do not say that; but I think St. Paul was rather guilty in the matter. I speak with some feeling, for St. Paul has often been quoted against me. But I do not take my Christianity from St. Paul, I take it from One higher than he. St. Paul certainly spoke foolishly with regard to women, but then he was a student of the corrupt Talmud.'

For his criticisms of women St. Paul had no warrant in the life and teachings of his Master, who had never accused women of wishing to usurp the place of men, and who always showed especial sympathy and tolerance towards them. Amongst other instances which she quoted in support of this contention, Mrs. Despard referred to the story of the woman 'taken in that sin which had no forgiveness under Mosaic law.' His words to the woman (after he had foiled the attempt of the woman's captors to entrap him in his speech) were: 'Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more.' What did those words imply? Surely a proclamation of the equality of the moral standard between man and woman.

'Christ's attitude towards women, then, was one of liberation, as if he felt not only the wrongs that she suffered, but wished to give his followers an instruction that they might carry out in his Church. And certainly in the early Church we find woman honoured. In the Church of the Catacombs, women took their place as martyrs and saints: and then when we come down to the days of St. Francis of Assisi, we find that holy man accompanied on his mission by a woman who helped him in his work of trying to win the world to nobler ideals.'

Turning next to the Apocrypha, Mrs. Despard quoted the well-known passage: 'The Kingdom of God shall not come until the two are as one and the man as the woman'; and the less-known saying from the Egyptian Gospel—almost grotesque in its wording—'The Kingdom of God will not come until you women renounce the dress of your own sex.' Stripped of its Eastern symbolism, that saying doubtless meant that the Kingdom of God could not come until women departed from the institutions and conventions that held them down. Women, in fact, were to liberate themselves, to develop their womanhood, and woman and man together to return to a recognition of the dual principle in Nature and humanity.

There were many people who had been exceedingly troubled about this question of female emancipation. They thought it meant revolution, the subversion of decency and good manners, and were repelled by it on that account. Such people should find consolation in the reflection that when new wine is put into old bottles the old bottles are apt to break. That breaking of the old bottles was easily accounted for when they looked

around on the present condition of society. 'I do not wish to blame the men,' Mrs. Despard continued, 'but I know perfectly well that they have not been able to build up a social state which is in any sense beautiful or harmonious, or which at all corresponds with the beautiful state which has been prophesied by the sages and seers.'

It had been said that physical force no longer ruled in human affairs, and it was true. Who was the great man, the powerful man? He who had strong brain, muscle, sinew, virile force? No; that which ruled in the present topsy-turvy society was that man, that woman, that movement which had money, for society worshipped the Dagon of Gold. And it was the more significant that there still attached to society at the present time a tinge of materialism—a materialism in the form of medical science. There was a feeling abroad in favour of investigation, an investigation which was to be for the holy cause of science. We were to embark through the agency of scientists on an agonising search for that which would prolong the life of men and women on this earth, and remove the diseases from which they now suffer. This is what made their woman's movement of such intense significance, for the men of science had trenched on a realm of investigation which was most awful and most disastrous. Vivisection meant a medical tyranny than which no tyranny could be more terrible. (Applause.) So far they had been governed by men—if this happened they would be governed by fiends. Science had set out to find the secret of that power which held together and governed the material universe; but if man entered on that quest alone the consequences would be calamitous. It was only through that dual power, that blending of the male and female principles in the universe, that we could ever hope to enter the true spiritual realm. This was the meaning of that New Womanhood which was now beginning to express itself in the world. It meant that the best men and the best women were to stand together, and by their united efforts build up the world that is to be—the true spiritual kingdom—the Beautiful City of which all the great souls of earth, the sages, poets, and prophets had spoken and sung.

'My friends,' Mrs. Despard proceeded, 'when I am most dejected at the seeming hopelessness of the struggle, I take joy in this vision of the New Womanhood and the New Manhood. Looking into the future, I see the women of the world well-developed in body and mind, bearing and rearing a truly imperial race of boys and girls to whom they will teach the high wisdom that each has herself learned—independent in thought, clear and convinced in speech, vigorous in action, because the faults and weaknesses which have come of their hard subjection will have passed away for ever. I see women pursuing useful and honourable careers—women to whom marriage is no longer a necessity growing out of a sordid struggle for existence—women who live their lives with wisdom and judgment, and who can look life and death alike calmly in the face, and in the meantime enjoy to the full the sweetness and the beauty and the glory of the world. So it is I see her before me, and with her I see the new manhood also.

'It is this ideal which is at the back of our movement, and when I think of this New Womanhood which is to restore the race I feel that no sacrifice is too great, no cost too high, no work too much to enable one to bear a banner in the movement whose object is to prepare the world to receive her.' (Applause.)

THE DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN said they were all very much in accord with the views which Mrs. Despard had expressed; but while they were in agreement with her as regards the principles, they might disagree on the question of the tactics by which it was sought to carry those principles into effect. However, they did not wish to discuss the question of tactics, but to show Mrs. Despard that in the main they were at one with her. An old friend of Mrs. Despard was present that evening in the person of the Rev. John Page Hopps. He had always been in favour of the Woman's Movement, and it was

he who had suggested that they should ask Mrs. Despard to give them an address.

THE REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS referred to the fact that some forty years ago he had taken the chair at a meeting addressed by Lydia Becker, who was practically the pioneer of this great feminine movement. The audience consisted mainly of colliers and cotton spinners. At that meeting he had been asked what he thought of Lydia Becker. He had replied, 'She is just the sort of woman one would like to have for a sister.' She was, in fact, one of the most thoughtful, clear-minded, and kind-hearted women he had ever known—persuasive, simple, earnest, convincing. Later in life, however, Lydia Becker became a different woman, and her methods gave rise to the phrase, 'the shrieking sisterhood.' It was never quite true of her, and for whatever there was of truth in the phrase men were entirely to blame, for in her later career it might be said of her that she had to 'fight with beasts at Ephesus,' and that happened which was quite inevitable—she became a militant woman. She was never the mother of the 'shrieking sisterhood,' because she was musical and womanly, but she had to fight. 'At that time,' said Mr. Hopps, 'I was not an ardent advocate of Woman's Suffrage, but I took the chair for Lydia Becker, and supported her position, almost entirely because I thought it was a mean and craven thing to stand in a woman's way. It seemed a more manly thing to give the woman a chance, and keep the ring for her in case there had to be a fight; and I have felt that ever since. I am not sure that I have ever been an extreme advocate of Female Suffrage, because as an old politician, an old electioneerer, I have seen so much of the squalid and sordid side of the political arena. And I have always felt a secret wish that women did not want the vote, while recognising that they had a perfect right to it. That is the position I hold to-day, and what I feel about the whole business is that we don't know what the celestial powers are up to. All we know is that women during the last few years have shown a disposition to take possession of as much of the world as they can, and I don't blame them for it. (Laughter.) As a man standing, as it were, under an arch and watching the show go by, I wish in every way to help them and wish them Godspeed. And although, as I have already said, as an old politician and electioneerer, I have seen so much of the sordidness of the political arena, I am beginning to think that might be one of the reasons—not for keeping woman out but for bringing her in. (Hear, hear.) I have seen the seamy side of the thing for the last thirty or forty years, during which time I have been connected with all kinds of associations of a political character. I have been behind the scenes, and I am fully persuaded that if the Mistresses Despard and the Christabel Pankhursts lived and worked behind the scenes and manipulated the politics of the century, we should have cleaner politics, better tempers, less selfishness, but none the less determination. I have begun to feel—it has only come to me during the last few years—I have begun to realise that women should come into politics as much for the men's sake as for their own. (Applause.)

In concluding his remarks, Mr. Hopps said that so far as their interests as Spiritualists were concerned, he felt intensely that one of the great uses of Spiritualism was to help men and women to get beyond all distinctions of every kind—black man and white man, king and crossing-sweeper, man and woman, rich and poor, good and bad; that which united humanity was deeper and vaster and more vital than any of the things that seemed to divide it. That was the great teaching of Spiritualism—that beneath all the external we were getting to that which was eternal and spiritual. The movement was (to quote the title of the lecture they had heard recently from the Rev. Rhondda Williams) 'Towards Unity.' Mr. Hopps then expressed the gratitude of the audience to Mrs. Despard, not only for her lecture but for her presence amongst them. They had heard in the tones of her voice the sound of the trumpet, while the good spirits blended the whispers of the unseen with the war-charge of the seen. He moved a vote of thanks to Mrs. Despard for her address. (Applause.)

MR. JAMES MACBETH BAIN said, in allusion to the remark of Mr. Hopps concerning the part played by the higher powers in the Woman's Movement, that in his view the will of God was expressed in it. The address of Mrs. Despard had made that clear. God was in the movement, and His will would be done.

MISS MACK WALL narrated an interesting experience in connection with the ministry of the late Mr. C. H. Spurgeon, who had been her pastor. On one occasion he had made some slighting allusions to women from the pulpit. She had resented this so much that on her return home she had ransacked the New Testament for instances of Christ's attitude towards women, in order that Mr. Spurgeon might compare them with his own remarks, and these she forwarded with an expostulatory letter. In that letter she pointed out that Christ had never rebuked women by contrasting their character and methods with those of men. But He *had* rebuked men by contrasting their conduct with that of women. In the result Mr. Spurgeon made a complete and satisfactory *amende* by delivering a sermon into which he introduced references to every great and good woman in the Bible that he could possibly cite, making it clear that he did so to make reparation for the lapse of which Miss Mack Wall had convicted him.

MR. E. W. WALLIS said that the address to which they had listened should commend itself the more to them when they remembered that Spiritualism was also a woman's movement. As they knew, the beginnings of Modern Spiritualism came in the homestead at Hydesville through the mediumship of the girls there, and from the very beginning of the movement the spirit world had expressed its thoughts and purposes to us largely through women. Their mediums and inspirational speakers—Mrs. Hardinge Britten, Mrs. Richmond, Mrs. Brigham, and hosts of others—had been chosen as instruments for the proclamation of this gospel of immortalism, as it had been called. From the very beginning and all along the line Spiritualists had persistently and consistently maintained the doctrine of the underlying unity of the spirit, while recognising the dual principle of male and female to which Mrs. Despard had alluded. In seconding the vote of thanks to Mrs. Despard, he referred to the glow of enthusiasm which ran through her stimulating address. It had been inspired by deep convictions regarding the vital importance of the movement with which she had associated herself. He also felt that it was a vital thing—vital to the well-being of the race.

The resolution was then carried, with applause, and after a brief acknowledgment by Mrs. Despard the meeting terminated.

PSYCHIC CLASS DINNER.

On Thursday evening, the 3rd inst., about sixty Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, connected with the Thursday afternoon classes, and their friends, assembled at dinner at Pinoli's Restaurant, Wardour-street, W., under the able chairmanship of Mr. J. A. Wilkins; Mr. E. W. Wallis and Mr. George Spriggs being the guests of the evening. After dinner Mr. Wilkins spoke appreciatively of the helpful services rendered to the Psychic Culture Class by Mr. E. W. Wallis, for some six months, and of the kind and successful efforts of Mr. George Spriggs, in his conduct of the class for mediumistic development.

Mr. Wallis and Mr. Spriggs suitably acknowledged the thanks of the meeting. Mr. F. Thurstan spoke of the good work which the classes had done and were still doing. Short speeches were also made by Mrs. Ernest Slow, Mrs. Imison ('Nurse Graham'), Mr. H. Biden Steele, Mrs. Campbell, Mr. A. Rex and Mrs. Wesley Adams. A large number of ably rendered songs, recitations and musical pieces contributed to the success of a highly enjoyable evening.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a Conference meeting at Colvey Hall, 25, Fernhurst-road, Munster-road, Fulham, on Sunday, February 13th. At 3 p.m., Mr. G. T. Brown will read a paper for discussion. Tea at 5 o'clock. Speakers at 7 p.m., Messrs. G. T. Brown, G. Tayler Gwinn, and M. Clegg.

THE FATHER OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

By E. WAKE COOK.

'The world knows little of its greatest men,' at least until some centuries later, when it has grown big enough to appreciate them. The advent in 1826 of Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis, and his departure eighty-four years later, mark an epoch the importance and significance of which few even among Spiritualists fully comprehend. Davis was the greatest of the world's seers, and his case the most interesting and important in the whole range of psychology; yet our Society for Psychical Research, with strange blindness and lack of courage, has been spending endless time, money, and patience with Mrs. Piper and others proving the proven; while a case a thousand times more important has remained uninvestigated, and the great seer has been allowed to pass on beyond the range of face-to-face questioning. 'Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis 'tis true.'

If my statement of the greatness of his seership be questioned, then the sceptic is on the horns of a dilemma, and must admit Davis to be perhaps the greatest genius the world has yet produced: an uneducated young man, yet able to do the work of a whole Academy of scholars, scientists, and poets. He must have had the power of mastering all that was best in the then knowledge of the world (filling its gaps with an imagination out-soaring the poets, anticipating the general trend of knowledge half a century in advance), and the power of reducing all this into vast generalisations of unsurpassed grip and clearness, expressing it all in worthy prose, clear, eloquent, picturesque, and exercising that power of making language go beyond itself which was the prerogative of Shakespeare. This was shown when, trying to enable us to grasp the immensities of Creation, he leads us on, step by step, until our imagination is taxed to its utmost limits; and then adds that this is but an atom, and its duration but a moment, compared with what shall yet be!

His first great work, 'The Principles of Nature: Her Divine Revelations, with a Voice to Mankind,' dictated in trance when just out of his teens, is at once a history and a philosophy of existence, unique in the annals of literature. He goes to the heart of the great philosophical, scientific, historic and theological principles with rarest insight, and expounds their essence in fitting phrases. He analyses in masterly fashion the then state of the world and of society, laying bare the errors and pointing out the remedies. He expounds the philosophy of 'Animal Magnetism' and his own clairvoyant state, the most recondite principles of Nature, Matter, Force, and Spirit, and numberless other things concerned in his investigation; and in all there is a marked sense of central rightness. Then he gives the grandest account of the creation of the Cosmos ever conceived, and all with amazing scientific consistency and concordance with all-governing principles. Following this we get a compend of universal history, with a psychological examination of the chief actors, an account of all the principal religions; and the current theology of the day is subjected to a searching analysis that is startling; it was sixty years in advance when it was written, but it squares with the best thought of to-day.

After describing death as a beautiful and consoling process, he takes his flight through the seven spheres, and if his splendid descriptions are the work of imagination—well, as the Rev. Mr. Ripley said:—

If the young man is to be viewed only as a philosophic poet, who has given his epic of the universe, among other bards of ancient and modern times, Dante and Milton may well hide their diminished heads. Judged by the usual principles of criticism, as the work of an uneducated shoemaker of twenty-two years of age, we may safely pronounce it the most surprising prodigy of literary history.

Theodore Parker said much the same thing. Although the seer's magnificent conception of the spiritual spheres and the after-life was new at the time, the whole trend of thought since then has been in his direction and our ideas have been revolutionised.

Now comes the surprise, even to me. Forty years ago, and several times since, I read the application of his principles to the elevation of human society, headed 'A Voice to Mankind,' and always rated it highly, but thought it a little too flowery and rhetorical to be quite practical. Yet when re-reading it for the purpose of these notes I was perfectly amazed to find this uneducated young man, Andrew Jackson Davis, head and shoulders above the economists whose teachings are moving the world to-day. The Father of Modern Spiritualism, with supernatural wisdom and insight, founded his system on the principles of Nature, harnessed the driving forces of human nature, and added all the incentives that would bring out the best qualities and the best results. Instead of a disastrous class war and a revolution of ideas being needed to carry it out, he showed how half a dozen farmers, combining their forces on scientific lines, could there and then begin it, and, while shortening the hours of labour, so increase the profits as to induce the universal adoption of the principles. It all hangs on the great law of association, co-operation, and co-partnership, which we are now trying with such success; the very system which has recently turned poor Denmark into a rich and prosperous country, and has begun to lift Ireland in like manner. But I cannot now touch on the higher beauties of the system. I can only say that, through Andrew Jackson Davis, Spiritualism offers the grandest and most workable ideal ever offered to humanity; and its success-winning powers have already been proved. So I appeal to social reformers who have the seeing eye, to seize these life-giving ideas, translate them into the phrases of the modern economists, make them widely known, and so place Spiritualism at the head of the world's thought and work. By so doing we may build a new and more glorious social and national structure, without first reducing the old to chaos.

I have only been able to touch on one book, and one phase of the work of the 'myriad-minded' Father of Modern Spiritualism, who was as lovable as a man as he was great as a teacher, but his works touch life at all points, and constitute the most wondrous body of teaching that ever came through the mind of man.

CLAIRVOYANCE IN DREAMS.

Two cases of clairvoyance during sleep, mentioned in 'LIGHT' for January 29th, pages 49 and 55, seem to suggest some inquiry as to the cause for the exercise, on those occasions, of a faculty rarely called into play. With the latter instance we may compare Mr. Rider Haggard's celebrated dream, described in 'LIGHT' for 1904, p. 364; in both these cases the percipient dreamed in the most circumstantial manner what had befallen an animal belonging to him. In the case on p. 49, Mr. Sawyer's second dream related to what may well have been the actual fate of the ship he had recently left, and on which there were persons with whom he had discussed the danger of just such a disaster. As in the other two cases, this dream may have represented something that was actually happening at the very time when it occurred—although in this case confirmation is impossible.

These circumstances, with their close coincidences in time as well as in fact, naturally suggest the question as to how the perceptive faculties of the dreamers were directed to the particular events shown. We may regard them as instances of clairvoyance either during sleep or in the semi-waking state in which, as Myers tells us, the clairvoyant faculty appears to be more active than at any other time. But why should the clairvoyant vision be directed to the particular place, and at the particular time, at which it could perceive something that needed to be known? In all these cases the facts revealed—supposing them to be facts observed by a real clairvoyant perception—were such as could not easily have become known in any other way. If Mr. Sawyer's vision be true in detail, it is probably the only precise intimation we shall ever have as to how the 'Waratah' went down; Mr. Rider Haggard had no other information as to his dog's condition, and the owner of the horse had no reason to suspect that the animal was in danger. The

absence of anything like previous anxiety in this last case is especially striking: in the others we might suppose that the dream faculties would be engaged in seeking news of the ship or of the dog. But as they were not consciously exercised except at a particular critical moment, it seems more reasonable to suppose that in all three cases the attention was directed to a certain spot in response to something like a wireless 'telepathic' call. We need not suppose that in each case the whole circumstances were telepathically impressed on the dreamer's mind; but we may suppose that from dog or horse, or someone on the ship, a sort of signal of distress reached the sleeper, to which he then responded by turning his higher vision upon the quarter whence the appeal came, and thus perceiving for himself what was there taking place. This intelligence was probably impressed by the clairvoyant self upon the physical brain, which was thereby aroused to action, and the sleeper awoke—in one case, in time to take prompt action for the release of the horse from its dangerous position.

The point which I wish to bring out, in this suggested description of the process, is that we are not compelled to ascribe the result either to a marvellously definite transference of thought or to a preternaturally alert and active clairvoyant faculty; thought-transference is invoked only to arouse the clairvoyant faculty at the required moment, and guide it to the subject to which its application was desired.

NEPHESH.

SPIRITUALISM AT BRISTOL.

WELCOME BUT UNEXPECTED CORROBORATION.

It is doubtful whether there is another city of the same size as Bristol, which has so many churches, chapels and meeting houses of every imaginable denomination and sect, which agree to differ in the most friendly manner. As regards Spiritualism, however, the newest and at the same time the oldest phase of religious belief, they unanimously agree to condemn it unheard or denounce it as of the devil. Those of us who have had our eyes opened and who wish to remain members of the churches we have learnt to love, have to prosecute our studies and investigations by stealth, or risk being ostracised by our fellow members or excommunicated by the Churches. But the leaven is surely spreading. Many private circles are being held, and there is now a Spiritual Mission holding weekly meetings, at which several mediums have been developed, and the members have some splendid times. The leader, Mr. A. C. Osborne, is an enthusiastic and indefatigable worker. After many abortive attempts he at last obtained permission to give an address on Spiritualism on Sunday last to the discussion class at the David Thomas (Congregational) Church. His subject was, 'What is Man, Material or Spiritual?' But he had been warned that the class would not tolerate anything of an ultra-spiritual character. After dealing with the arguments of the agnostic and materialist, he briefly referred to the claim of Spiritualists to see and hear their 'departed' friends, as evidence of human survival, and mentioned the experiments of Sir William Crookes with the materialised 'Katie.' This led to an interesting development, as a member of the audience stated that he was a chemist, and had assisted Sir William in those experiments, and he could personally testify that 'Katie' was so real that they could feel her pulse, count her heart beats, take her arm, converse with her, and weigh her in the balance.

At the invitation of the president of the class, with the approval of the members, this gentleman promised to lecture at the same place on Sunday, February 20th, and Mr. Osborne went home gladdened and encouraged by the knowledge that the very men whom he had expected to abuse him and his message, had, after hearing him, asked for more.

A. H. HOLBROOK.

A FRIEND sends us the following inscription which he says is cut on a monument to the widow of a former vicar of a Midland parish: 'At the Foot of this Cross sleeps, till the day break, Sarah Anne, widow of the Rev. ———.' Our correspondent remarks that it is something of a curiosity, as being an example of how far back some of the English Church clergy are on the question of where we go when we leave this life, and he thinks that it merits a mention in the columns of 'LIGHT.'

JOTTINGS.

A question by Dr. J. M. Peebles was submitted to the control of Mr. C. Bailey at a séance in Melbourne recently. It was this: 'Have you ever heard a well-developed and cultured spirit express the desire and purpose to re-embodiment in the flesh, passing through uterine life, childhood life, and youthful life, with their diseases and temptations?' The control of Mr. Bailey replied: 'No, nor an undeveloped nor uncultured one. We regard the earth-life as a man regards a lost tooth that has ached violently. I never yet knew a man to desire to have the tooth back again, with all its aches and pains. I have never yet met a scholar who desired to go into the A B C class, and be among the children again.'

In a pamphlet entitled 'Spiritualism in Relation to the Doctrine of Immortality' (the A.P.S. Company, Limited, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., price 1d.), Mr. Dudley Wright points out that the tendency of thought to-day is much less materialistic than it was fifty years ago, and attributes the change in a large measure to the phenomena of Spiritualism, which have been 'so evidential and forceful in character that men can no longer refuse to sift and test the evidence,' and he points out that 'no man, whether scientist or layman, has yet taken up this study in real earnest, without becoming convinced of the reality of the phenomena, and very few, indeed, who have not at the same time become assured of the fact that individuality does not cease at death.' Mr. Wright's pamphlet is a useful one to put into the hands of inquirers, and Spiritualists will also find it of service when replying to opponents.

A correspondent of the 'Times' writes: 'Mrs. Brotherton, who died last week at Freshwater, aged ninety, was a remarkable woman. She was the daughter of John Melford Rees, a Puisne Judge of the Calcutta Bench, and widow of the landscape painter Augustus Henry Brotherton. In her long life Mrs. Brotherton had made many friends, among them Lord Tennyson, his eldest brother, Mr. Frederick Tennyson, Thackeray, the Brownings, and Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A. Her poems are full of real music and deep feeling.' We may add that Mrs. Brotherton was greatly interested in Spiritualism, having been for many years a subscriber to 'LIGHT,' which paper she used to send to Lord Tennyson, and it was through her that Mr. Stainton Moses paid a visit to Tennyson in 1889, when he had a lengthy conversation with the poet on the subject of Spiritualism.

The Rev. J. W. Ring, speaking of illumination, says that it is 'the result of following after intuition through the realms of imagination, but imagination may be perverted, and its lofty castles turned into prisons and dungeons. Illumination is a possibility of every soul, and is attained in a different manner by each. Illumination is a consciousness of things as they really are. Sorrow and pain may be the avenue for one soul to attain illumination, delight and joy the road for another; but the illumination is the same—a peace that passeth understanding, a poise that remains undisturbed through calm and storm, a consciousness which has made full and complete at-one-ment with right and truth.' We may add that the unfoldment which results in this illumination, or realisation of spiritual truth, is not a question of time; it may be a slow development, or a spontaneous opening out of the powers of perception and apprehension.

The advocates of the re-birth theory do not agree among themselves. Writing in the 'Christian,' in a 'mental healing supplement,' T. J. Shelton, of Denver, Colorado, U.S.A., quotes Mrs. E. C. Peets, president of the Cleveland Theosophical Society, as having said: 'It is certain that Mrs. Besant has been Hypatia and Bruno. She remembers all—every day of her existence as those characters. . . . During the time of Confucius, Mrs. Besant says, she lived as different characters, but she cannot recall their names. She predicts that she will live again.' Commenting on this T. J. Shelton says: 'Such teaching will confuse the mind and cause the vibrant spirit to languish in a mental prison. . . . In the first place a woman is always and for ever reincarnated as a woman and a man as a man. In the second place, we never remember any former incarnations, and never will. . . . I believe in reincarnations but I do not believe in remembrance. . . . It would be a burden of bondage and endless confusion for us to gather up the fragments of our unfoldment. You have no remembrance of the thousands of fathers and mothers you have had and the thousands of children that have called you father or mother. . . . How can the spirit within her (Mrs. Besant) throw off mortality while she keeps looking back in an effort to remember the past?'

In the 'Storyteller' for February there is a short story entitled 'The Helper,' by B. M. Crocker, in which spirit ministry is introduced in the most natural and helpful way. Two young ladies, whose father dies suddenly, are left with very little capital. They go to London and try to earn their livelihood by drawing sketches and painting miniatures. At first they are encouraged, but later their efforts meet with but little success, and they are in sore straits. One sister refuses to give in and they both make a fresh start the next day. A change is noticed in their work—the improvement is so marked that where they met with refusals they now receive commendations and commissions. They prosper and make many friends. One day, referring to a spirited sketch, Rose remarks, 'Now this really is good! So good that I can hardly believe I have drawn it myself—but that I am a mere automaton worked by a—a—certain—something.' Her sister confesses that she too has had similar feelings, as if some great personality guided her hand rapidly and unerringly. They discover that they have been assisted by a spirit artist, who, however, declines to give them his name, and will only be known as 'Helper.' He continues to aid them until they have become proficient and then announces that he must leave them—another artist needs his assistance for a special picture. He gives them a sketch of the picture and writes, 'good-bye.' Two years later the sisters see the 'Helper's' picture when they visit an exhibition of modern paintings on the Continent. The whole story is well worth reading.

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.

Electric Light and the Eyes.

SIR,—I do a great deal of reading and writing by electric light. The other day an electric specialist told me that a certain kind of electric light was very bad for the eyes, because it was deficient in the red and yellow rays, and because it had the ultra-violet rays to excess. It would be interesting to learn the experiences of your readers as to the best light for eye-work.

In these days when so many children wear spectacles—more perhaps in Germany than in England—the matter becomes one of national importance. It seems to me that too little distinction is made between light that is economical in proportion to its brightness and cheerfulness, and light that is comparatively uninjurious.—Yours, &c.,

EUSTACE MILES.

Spirit Travelling, or Clairvoyance?

SIR,—A remarkable instance of spirit travelling occurred at our weekly circle on Wednesday evening, January 19th last. There were six people present, including the sensitive, four ladies and two gentlemen. The circle commenced at 8.40. Nothing out of the ordinary occurred until 9.30, when Mrs. Brittain was seen to be in a deep trance. We thought that she was controlled and spoke to her, but there was no response. After being in this state for about five minutes she came to herself with a start, and turning to me she said, 'I have been to the Jamage Colliery, where your father is employed, I have seen an explosion. There were bricks falling and someone is killed and others injured. I saw the men rushing from all parts of the works to the pit.' We took notes of what she said, as it was given so clearly.

The next day a letter from my sister informed us of the calamity. On Friday, January 21st, the 'Staffordshire Sentinel' published a full report of the explosion fully corroborating the account as given by Mrs. Brittain. The explosion occurred during the time she was entranced, and the accident was described to the members of the circle within five minutes after it had occurred. The colliery is situated in the country about eight miles from here. This is not the first description of events occurring away which Mrs. Brittain has given.—Yours, &c.,

F. BRITTAİN.

Signed by the members present:

I. JONES, S. HALL, J. FORESTER, J. EDWARDS, A. BRITTAİN.

Dematerialisation Phenomena.

SIR,—I regret that Colonel Begbie, in his letter to 'LIGHT,' of February 5th, should excuse himself from further correspondence in this way, and I will write him privately, as he suggests, about the £10 challenge and his offer to tie and up another box of chocolates in the presence of

awaits events at their weekly sittings; I must thank the Colonel for this concession.

I scarcely expected him to agree to my offer to send him a sealed box, although, as you know,* I suggested such box being afterwards opened by the Society for Psychical Research (if the test complied with their rules) so that it would not have been a matter of the public taking my assurance in preference to that of the circle.

In the desire to uphold the *bona-fides* of their circle (which appears to have been established), the object of my letter seems to have been overlooked, viz., that anyone relating such extraordinary phenomena in a paper like yours should carefully give full details, which Colonel Begbie even now has not done, such as whether the box was tied and sealed at the end, side, or at the centre crossing of the string, and whether the string was twisted at the crossings on both sides of the box; nor does he give a copy of his letter and Sūsū's reply, asked for, so that your readers may form their own opinions as to whether it was a reply to his letter or not.

In giving particulars of such cases as these to the public, only those cases should be published in which every precaution has been taken to prevent the suspicion of possible fraud, and if the phenomena be genuine I do not see how such precautions can make any difference to the results, or be called 'antagonistic magnetism,' and they would be more likely to convince others than when experiments are carried out in such a cursory manner as is often done.

I may mention that, in my investigations, I have become convinced of the 'Movement of articles without contact,' but not of 'Matter passing through matter,' though I think it possible, from what I have read by Dr. Funk and others on the subject. As to spirits eating chocolates, I am afraid many confirmed Spiritualists will not believe that these were eaten by Sūsū and 'the soldier spirit friend.'

I may add that it was solely for 'the good of the cause,' and further enlightenment, that I entered this discussion, and not with any desire of proving any intentional fraud of the medium or sitters, and it appears to me that Spiritualists should encourage such inquiry, instead of resenting it, as is so often done.—Yours, &c., S. B. McCALLUM.

46, Connaught-avenue, Mutley,
Plymouth.

National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—I regret to announce that the donations to the above fund for the month of January only reached the total of 17s. 6d., viz.: Mr. M. Chapman, 7s. 6d.; Mr. G. F. Tilby, 10s.; the expenditure for the same period being over £8.

The seeming neglect may probably be due to the excitement caused by the election, but now it is over I would earnestly impress upon all Spiritualists the necessity of supporting the fund, so that our sick and aged workers may be cared for during the severe weather.

Any contribution will be gratefully acknowledged.—Yours, &c., A. E. BUTTON,

9, High-street, Doncaster. Hon. Sec.

Psychometric Sensitiveness.

SIR,—Whilst sitting in a circle one evening recently, I tried to give one of its members (who by the way is sceptical) some illustrations of psychometry, but without much success, as what I said was not acknowledged; but just before I gave up, I described a young man seated at a pianoforte, whom the lady recognised.

While my wife and I were being entertained at the said lady's house the next evening, a young man entered the room and stood beside the piano; instantly I recognised him and his surroundings as the object of my psychic vision, yet so far as I know I never saw this young man before.

I shall be obliged if any of your readers can give me an explanation of this experience and help me to understand by what means I receive the health conditions of people with whom I come into contact. I do not seem to be 'under control,' but am very sensitive to any slight noise or movement.—Yours, &c., FREDK. T. LEE.

Little 'Great' Persons.

SIR,—While reading 'LIGHT' of the 5th inst., I was forcibly impressed by your remarks on George Eliot's letters, with the littleness of great people, and *vice versa*. What a blessing it is to be quite an ordinary individual, for he that expecteth nothing shall not be disappointed.

I always revel in Dr. Peebles' letters; they are so broad and convincing. What need is there for reincarnation? Our lesson here is to learn the reality of the spiritual world, and to do this we must investigate by the whole man, the real and the moral united. God has lovely worlds and fields of light beyond our conception, and our destiny is ever upward and onward until finally we awake in the likeness of Him, 'in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' Shelley says most beautifully that the 'Dead are one with Nature.' The poet knew the pathos and sweetness of the words, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee.'—Yours, &c., E. P. PRENTICE.

SOCIETY WORK.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—On Sunday last Mrs. Beaupaire, under control, gave interesting experiences of spirit life. She also sang a solo. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. —*Percy Hall*.—On January 31st Mr. Leigh Hunt gave successful clairvoyant descriptions and helpful spirit messages. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. J. J. Morse delivered an eloquent address on 'Man, the Prophecy of the Angel.' Mr. Stanley Beard's solo was enjoyed. Sunday next, Mr. P. R. Street on 'Belief in God.'—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mr. J. J. Morse, under control, gave clear, lucid, and interesting replies to questions. Sunday next, Mr. P. R. Street, trance address. On the 2nd inst. Mrs. Miles Ord gave a pleasing address.

CENTRAL LONDON.—11, ST. MARTIN'S-COURT, W.C.—Sunday next, at 3.15 and 7 p.m., clairvoyant descriptions. SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD.—5, SPENCER-ROAD.—On Sunday last Miss Evans gave an address. On the 1st inst. Miss Violet Burton spoke beautifully on 'Faithful Service.'—W.M.J.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mrs. S. Fielder gave psychometric readings and spirit messages. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Abbott, address.—H. B.

CLAPHAM.—RICHMOND-PLACE, NEW-ROAD, WANDSWORTH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Gould gave an address on 'Mediumship,' and Madame Betty clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle, Madame Betty; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington, address.—C. C.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday morning last Mrs. Beaupaire gave helpful spirit messages. In the evening Mr. R. Boddington spoke on 'The Gospel of Life.' Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long.—A. R.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—On Sunday last Miss Violet Burton gave an address on 'The Tangled Garden of the Soul,' and answered questions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Robert King. Silver collection. Monday, 8, Mr. H. Leaf, clairvoyant. Saturday, 19th, at 7 p.m., social evening.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. Harvey gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions, nearly all recognised. Messrs. W. Gillett, E. Godfrey, and L. Grounseil finely rendered a trio. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. Smythe; at 3 p.m., Lyceum. Saturday, 26th, young men's tea party, special effort; all welcome.—A. B.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. T. Olman Todd spoke encouragingly to the Lyceum, and in the evening gave an eloquent address on 'Symbols of the Infinite.' Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. Osborne, address and clairvoyant descriptions. Monday, 7, ladies' circle. Thursday, 8.15, public circle.—W. Y.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mrs. Boddington gave excellent addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, addresses and clairvoyant descriptions; at 3 p.m., Mr. Severn on 'Books.' Monday, 8, and Wednesday, 3, Mrs. Curry.—A. M. S.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Abrahall spoke on 'Life in the Spiritual World.' In the evening Mr. G. R. Symons gave an uplifting address on 'White Robes.' Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. Richardson; at 7 p.m., special visit of Mr. E. W. Wallis, representing the London Spiritualist Alliance. Subject: 'Spiritualism Explained.' Wednesday, Mrs. Webster SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday evening last our vice-president gave a good address on 'Inspiration.' Mrs. Atkins, Madame Creda, and other mediums took part. On the 3rd inst. Mrs. Podmore gave successful psychometric readings. Sunday next, at 10.45 a.m. and 6.45 p.m., Mr. J. Kelland. Thursday, at 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Atkins. Tuesdays, healing circle. Wednesday and Friday, 8, members' circle.—J. J. L.

* These and other particulars were given in Mr. McCallum's letter, but for want of space had to be omitted.—[Ed. 'LIGHT']

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL.—On Sunday morning last Mr. A. Barton gave an address and answered questions. In the evening Mr. H. Pye read a paper on 'Why I am a Spiritualist,' and replied to questions. Miss Tracey rendered a solo. On the 3rd inst. Miss Brown gave psychometric delineations. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Webb, clairvoyante. Thursday next, at 8, lantern lecture by Mr. Frederic Fletcher. Tickets 6d. 20th, Lyceum anniversary.—C. J. W.

LINCOLN.—ARCADE, UPPER ROOM.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Armitage's answers to questions were much enjoyed.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. Kelland gave eloquent addresses.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. Elvin Frankish spoke on 'Preparing the Temples of God.'

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—14, HARCOURT AVENUE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Millard spoke on 'Spiritualism Teaches Hope.'—H.

CROYDON.—SMALL PUBLIC HALL, GEORGE STREET.—On Sunday last Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave eloquent answers to written questions.—C. B.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES' CRESCENT, N.W.—On Sunday last Mr. Stebbens replied to written questions, and Miss Brown gave psychometric delineations.—J. A. P.

BRISTOL.—28, BATH BUILDINGS, MONTPELIER.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Williams delivered a splendid address, and Mesdames Williams and King gave clairvoyant descriptions.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO STREET.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Davis spoke on 'The Nature of Christ,' and gave clairvoyant descriptions.—G. E. R.

WINCHESTER.—MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Letheren, of Exeter, gave a beautiful address and clairvoyant descriptions to a crowded audience.—A. W. H.

PORTSMOUTH.—VICTORIA ROAD, SOUTH.—On Sunday last Mr. H. J. Lacey delivered an address on 'Personal Expression.' On the 2nd inst. he gave psychic phenomena. Steady progress is being made.—G. McF.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STRONEBOARDS, E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Jamrach gave a good address and successful clairvoyant descriptions. On the 3rd inst. Mr. C. W. Turner gave an address.—C. W. T.

EXETER.—MARKET HALL, FORE STREET.—On Sunday morning last Mrs. Grainger spoke on 'The Unfoldment of the Spirit.' In the evening Mr. West gave an address on 'The Spirit Within,' and Mrs. Grainger clairvoyant descriptions.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHED HALL.—On Sunday and Monday last Miss Hibbert delivered inspiring addresses on 'There is a Guiding and Upholding Power' and 'In Search of Truth,' and gave psychometric delineations.—V. M. S.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—MILTON STREET.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. J. Blackburn spoke on 'Let us Come into His Presence with Thanksgiving' and 'The Greatest of all Things is Love,' and gave demonstrations of healing.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE STREET.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Street spoke on 'Man's Origin and Destiny' and gave clairvoyant descriptions. Other meetings during the week.—A. H. C.

LITTLE ILFORD.—CORNER OF CHURCH ROAD AND THIRD AVENUE, MANOR PARK, E.—On Sunday last Mr. C. W. Turner gave an address on 'Where are the dead?' and answered questions. On the 2nd inst. Mr. Noyce conducted a healing circle.—M. C. A.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. John Walker spoke on 'Our Knowledge of God,' and he and Mr. F. T. Blake gave clairvoyant descriptions. On the 4th inst. Mr. W. J. Street spoke on 'The Science of Life.'

FINSBURY PARK.—19, STROUD GREEN ROAD.—On Sunday last the first meeting of the new session was a pleasant reunion of friends physically and spiritually. Mrs. Jones spoke on 'The Purpose of Life,' and she and Mrs. Pulham gave clairvoyant descriptions.

BIRMINGHAM.—30, JOHN STREET, VILLA CROSS, HANDSWORTH.—On Sunday morning last Mr. S. B. Jones, of Liverpool, related how he became a Spiritualist, and in the evening discoursed on 'More Heavens than One.' On the 5th and 7th he gave successful psychometric readings. On the 10th Mr. Lennard gave an inspirational address and phrenological delineations.—D. L.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—On Sunday last Mr. Rundle, under control, related experiences on passing into spirit life, and gave recognised clairvoyant descriptions. At the annual members' meeting on January 30th, Mr. Rundle reported that an organ, a piano, and the sum of £5 had been presented by members to the society, which had made good progress during the past year. The retiring secretary, Mrs. Digby, was thanked for her able services, and officers were elected, the new secretary being Mrs. A. Jordan.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—The society here is making good progress, and on Sunday last the opening services in a new hall, the Assembly Rooms, Hampton Wick, were well attended. Mrs. Garling, Madame Duvergé, Miss Kent, Messrs. Brown, Scott and West made up for the absence of a regular speaker. Members and friends are urged to support the society by attending the meetings and introducing inquirers, so that more extensive mission work may be undertaken. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Blackburn, address. Soloist, Mr. J. Welbelove.—T. C. W.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON ROAD, FOREST LANE.—On January 31st a grand concert was successfully held to aid in reducing the debt on the building and to inaugurate an organ kindly presented to the Church through the united contributions of Mr. A. Dennis, Mr. Evans and Mr. W. F. Smith. The Committee on behalf of the members thank the ladies and gentlemen of the Psychic Class and their friends who kindly contributed their services. Two organ recitals were given by Mr. Musto. A dance was held on the Tuesday following, to further the above objects, Mr. G. Hayday acting as M.C.

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