

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,519.—VOL. XXX. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1910.

[a Newspaper.]

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

Programme of Meetings for the Coming Week.

MONDAY, February 21st, 2 p.m. till 4.30 p.m.—
Informal Meeting for Social Intercourse.

TUESDAY, February 22nd, at 3 p.m.—
Members and Associates, 1s.; Friends, 2s.
Séance for Clairvoyant Descriptions ... MR. J. J. VANGO.
No Admission after 3 o'clock.

THURSDAY, February 24th, at 4.50 p.m.—
For Members and Associates only. Free.
Class for Mediumistic Development. Conducted by
MR. GEORGE SPRIGGS.
No Admission after 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, February 24th, at 7.30 p.m.—
Address at Suffolk-street ... MR. ANGUS MCARTHUR.
Admission, 1s. Members and Associates Free, by Ticket.

FRIDAY, February 25th, at 3 p.m.—
Admission 1s.; Members and Associates, Free.
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For further particulars see p. 82.

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or as sleep, and as harmless. It is but one of the aspects of change, and change is the heart-beat of life.

When we ask, If a man die, shall he live again? we are thinking of form as the man. Who was it that said, 'When the soul is freed from all corporeal alliance, then first it truly exists?'—strong and altogether glad.

To our seeing, death is a very real thing. So is sunset. We are on the dark side. Seen from the other side, sunset is sunrise. Everything depends upon point of view.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We often wish that our anti-spiritual friends would broaden their intellectual outlook, or, failing that, exercise their imagination. It is such a vast and complicated Universe, with worlds within worlds and folds within folds of what is called 'matter,' that it really does seem stifling to limit the outlook to gross material things. Does it never occur to them that, so far from the physical body being the cause of emotion and thought, it may actually be the barrier or sieve that holds back emotion and thought? There are times when the body seems overpowered with emotion and thought, like the inrush of a stream that has overcome its banks, and then may follow lunacy, or distressing forms of mediumship, or sickness, or the whitening of the hair, or, literally, a broken heart. Dr. Schiller said a very wise thing when he affirmed that 'matter is not that which produces consciousness, but that which limits it, and confines its intensity within certain limits; material organisation does not construct consciousness out of arrangements of atoms, but contracts its manifestation within the sphere which it permits.'

'The Christian Register' prints an exquisite little Paper by Hope West on the old question, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' Perhaps the following sentences may give an idea of its *motif* and its argument:—

Is not that like asking, Can the cart draw the horse?

Can anything that is cease to be? Science says no. The material out of which worlds are made is indestructible, eternal. Form is but the ripple on the brook.

From the view-point of man's supremacy I suppose it is reasonable to ask, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' We are thinking of death as limit, and thinking so because it seems the limit of man's supremacy. Nowhere else have we stamped our ignorance so determinedly, so obstinately, as upon the change which we call death.

Take away the misunderstanding that fears death, and what a weight would be lifted from all hearts! Life would wear another face. We should be looking forward with delightful thoughts and peradventures. Even a child could understand the worth of this life as preparation for a higher grade.

Nature hides from a soul that which is beyond death only as it hides to-morrow from to-day or as it hides from a child unborn that which is beyond birth. To teach that death was added to the original plan as punishment is the cruellest thought ever admitted to the human heart.

I cannot see how anyone endowed with common sense, and trusting God enough to dare to use it, can at heart believe that in a universe of change, a higher, wider, freer life possible, a supreme intelligence could have ever intended anything to remain for ever upon this small star. Life is larger than this little world has yet dreamed of. Death is as natural as birth

Commend us to an educated Indian, after all, for the power to discriminate spiritually between the Indian and the Briton, and to reveal why each is what he is. The following, from 'Prabuddha Bharata,' is a beautiful bit of spiritual vivisection. How complete and clean is the operation!—

The youth of European nations is full of iron discipline, and to this they owe their success in combination. The schools attended by English boys of the upper classes have been called by a thinker, 'One long reign of terror.' From the moment a boy enters, till the day when he leaves, he is the centre of a conspiracy of his peers to punish the slightest outburst of egotism or other offensive trait. This accounts, perhaps, for the mechanical, head-clerk type of distinction which so often seems to be the Englishman's main idea of greatness. It is quite clear that any individuality which survives five or six years of such treatment must either be lofty and persistent, or a mere intensification of mediocrity. Yet individuality of a noble kind does emerge sometimes, and it is easy to see how beneficial, on the whole, must be the effect of such a training on the average. Above all things, it breeds the power to act in concert, the power to distinguish between one's own whims and the main issues at stake, the power to suppress self in the interest of the community. In England, at any rate, it is this trait which distinguishes the ruling classes from the ruled, and it is their want of it that makes what we may call the *sudra*-classes so contemptible in the eyes of aristocracies.

From a different angle and a different sphere, this also is excellent:—

In Asia, the undivided family is the source of all discipline, and the goal of all effort. Instead of the hardened muscle produced by the constant friction of public opinion, we have here the warm heart and delicate emotions that go with ties of blood. No wonder Asia has produced Saviours! The individualism of Europe has no means of sounding the heights and depths of love. But instead of true discipline, the family can offer only a pattern, a mould, into which the individual has to fit. Let certain forms of respect, certain habits of religion, be duly fulfilled, and the family has no more tests to offer. It may be that one, with the capacity of a hero, rises within its bounds. Instead of jealous rivals, he is surrounded by applauding kinsmen. Instead of a task constantly growing in difficulty, he meets with praise too easily. The great fault of the family, as a civic unit, is that it forgives too much, and trains too little.

Our American friends are excellent at business rules, and possibly New York could teach London something. Any way, here are what New York calls 'The Ten Commandments'—the employer to the employed. They look horribly secular, as a good 'Christian' paper has just said; but, at the heart of them, they are very religious, very Christian, and really spiritual:—

1. Do not lie, it wastes both my time and yours. I am

sure to catch you in the end, and that will be bad for both you and me.

2. Watch your work, not the clock. A long day's work makes a long day short, and a short day's work makes my face long.

3. Give me more than I expect, and I will pay you more than you expect. I can afford to increase your pay if you increase my profits.

4. You owe so much to yourself that you cannot afford to owe anybody else. Keep out of debt, or you must keep out of my shops.

5. Dishonesty is never an accident. Good men and good women cannot see temptation when they meet it.

6. Mind your own business, and in time you will have a business of your own to mind.

7. Do not do anything which hurts your self-respect. The employé who is willing to steal for me is capable of stealing from me.

8. It is not my business what you do at night; but if dissipation affects what you do the next day, and you do half as much as I justly demand, you will not last half as long as you hoped.

9. Do not tell me what I would like to hear, but what I ought to hear. I do not want a valet to my vanity, but I need one for my dollars.

10. Do not kick if I kick: if you are worth correcting, you are worth keeping. I do not waste time cutting specks out of rotten apples.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS

(From many Shrines.)

Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the tender ties of home. Make our homes prophecies of heaven. Generate there the atmosphere of truth, righteousness and love. Enable and constrain us to hold our home privileges as a trust, and to bend these privileges loyally to Thy service. Grant us Thy patience and gentleness, and Thy wisdom, in dealing with the young. Let no child, from our behaviour, come to think that God is selfish, or arbitrary, or unjust. Protect our children from the deadly evil of having false notions of God ingrained into their tender minds by any misconduct or neglect of ours. Constrain and enable us to stand for God in our homes so truthfully and so faithfully that our children shall, early and instinctively, learn to trust and love Thee. So cure and overrule our frailties, and so animate us by Thy Spirit, that no child shall ever be misled by us into false notions or false ways, or be provoked by us into dangerous resentments, but evermore be drawn to trust and love Thee. Amen.

THE POWER OF SUGGESTION.

A teller of old stories lately ventured the following:—

At the siege of Breda in 1625 scurvy prevailed in the town to such an extent, and medicine had run so short, that capitulation seemed inevitable. At last one of the physicians resorted to the following ingenious but morally questionable expedient. To each of his brother practitioners he gave three small phials, the contents of any one of which he knew to be insufficient, by its own virtue, to heal two patients. But he caused it to be announced that so powerful was the drug that a few drops would impart curative properties to a gallon of liquor. 'The effect of the deception,' declares a doctor who was present, 'was really astonishing; for many quickly and perfectly recovered. Such as had not moved their limbs for a month before were seen walking the streets, sound, upright, and in perfect health.'

Truly, there is nothing new under the sun. Possibly the phrases 'suggestion' and 'self-suggestion' were not known in 1625, but there seems to have been a man then who hovered pretty near the fact.

The same writer says of our William III. that he probably had scruples about touching for scrofula, deeming it a superstition, and that he, for this reason, declined what was customary for kings to do. Possibly, he suggests, the king knew enough about 'mind cure' to know that his scruples would hinder the cure.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, 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.

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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 22nd, Mr. J. J. Vango 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.

THURSDAY.—MEDIUMISTIC DEVELOPMENT.—On Thursday next, February 24th, at 5 p.m., Mr. George Spriggs will conduct a Class for the Development of Mediumship, for Members and Associates only.

FRIDAY.—TALKS ABOUT SPIRITS.—The third 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 25th, at 3 o'clock prompt, when the subject will be 'THE CHILD.' 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 NEW PHYSICAL MEDIUM IN ROME.

The readers of 'LIGHT' will, I am sure, be pleased to learn that a medium of exceptional power for physical phenomena is now being developed in Rome. She is still a young woman, the wife of an honest workman, and only began to sit in séances a few months ago. The manifestations which take place in her presence are of the most astounding character: for instance, in dark séances, while she is in trance (or, rather, in a cataleptic state, for she is insensible to pain), and sits securely bound in her chair, every precaution being used against trickery, her over-dress is abruptly taken off, and thrown over the table of the experimenters. Spirit lights flit about in every direction in the room and up to the ceiling; spirit voices converse in a whisper with the investigators, who are all respectable persons and staunch Spiritualists; musical instruments play automatically; heavy pieces of furniture move about without human agency; and materialised hands and feet are cast in scorching hot paraffin. Several sculptors and casters who have inspected these moulds have declared that, as there is no visible joint in them, no human hand or foot could possibly have come out of them without breaking the mould.

But the most astonishing manifestation, considering the strict test conditions in which it took place, and because it cannot be explained except by admitting a fourth dimension in space, is the following: While the medium was fast asleep at a séance, the investigators placed several articles inside an empty box made on purpose, which box, instead of a lid, is covered with a strong iron network, through the holes of which the articles therein—a bell, a tambourine, and an accordion—could be seen. Then the box, locked, bound, and sealed, was placed under the table, round which sat half a dozen investigators. The room being darkened, in a short time all the said articles came upon the table, and when examined by candle light the box was found empty, but locked and bound as before. But still more astonishing, no sooner was the light extinguished than the bell, the tambourine, and the accordion were quietly replaced in the locked and fastened box. Conjurers may perform a similar feat with a double-bottomed box and stage apparatus, but certainly not with a box made as this one is.

Another transcendental manifestation occurred while the séance room was sufficiently lighted by a photographer's lantern, a large one, and the medium was sitting at the table, conversing with the investigators. Two tiny and rosy hands of a spirit child suddenly appeared close to the head of the medium, patting her hair. Then one of the astonished experimenters requested 'Remigio,' the controlling spirit of the medium, to show his hands, and his wish was granted by the appearance of a big and rough hand (Remigio in his life had been a workman), and the ghostly hand when grasped felt like the hand of a living person, except that it was icy cold and self-luminous. This is only a brief report of the more interesting manifestations, and if they continue as they have begun I have not the least doubt that the phenomena occurring through this marvellous medium (not yet a professional) will before long cast into the shade all those which have been witnessed up to the present time, and by the stubborn logic of the facts she may be instrumental in bringing conviction of the truth of Spiritualism to the most avowed sceptics and materialists.

ACHILLE TANFANI.

48, Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome.

In this dim world of clouding cares

We rarely know, till 'wildered eyes

See white wings lessening up the skies,

The angels with us unawares.

—GERALD MASSEY.

TABLE-TURNING EXTRAORDINARY.

An account of a series of remarkably successful séances for table phenomena, given by Dr. H. Salveton, a distinguished French lawyer, to the members of a psychical society at Paris, is reproduced in full in 'The Annals of Psychical Science' for the current quarter. The experiments took place in 1881-82, among the non-commissioned officers stationed at Chambéry, many of whom had heard of such phenomena and desired to witness them for themselves. Incidentally, some light is thrown on the reason why the term 'table-turning' has become the stock phrase, although 'table-tilting' would be a better description of the phenomena. It would appear that the first effects observed with a light table, having a central pedestal and three feet, as ordinarily used, was that the table would turn to right or left; and that the spelling out of messages by the table lifting one foot and striking the floor a given number of times to indicate the letters of the alphabet, was a later development. Dr. Salveton says:—

When I commenced to take part in the séances it had been found that a command to the table to turn in one direction or another was often successful, but this became monotonous, and they preferred to make it speak in the conventional language by successive liftings of one of its feet. One loud rap, occasioned by the falling down of the raised foot of the table, would signify 'yes'; two loud raps in quick succession would signify 'no'; other words were spelled letter by letter by means of a succession of lesser raps corresponding with the number of the letter of the alphabet.

Dr. Salveton gives reasons why the movements of the table could not have been produced artificially, either by a sitter lifting the table-foot with his own toe, or by bearing down on the top at the opposite side. He mentions a curious experience of his own: whenever he was designated by the table itself as the spokesman who was to put the questions to it on behalf of the other sitters, he noticed that the reply that the table would make to each question came into his mind before the table gave the answer, and that every time that he did not clearly foresee the reply, the table gave either no answer or an unintelligible one. He observed that the sooner the movements began after the chain of hands had been formed on the top of the table, the more successful was the experiment and the more easily and accurately the replies came; that the replies were always correct when previously known to one of the sitters; that they were always confused or absurd when the table was asked things unknown to all present. But this last statement is apparently contradicted by some of the incidents given. For instance:—

The table, being interrogated as to the name of the sweetheart of a private named B., replied that B. had a sweetheart in his own part of the country, and gave the name. All the experimenters and spectators protested that they knew nothing of this; we made a note on paper of the answer obtained, and went to B.'s room. After some hesitation, arising from bashfulness, he confirmed the correctness of the information thus given.

A veterinary surgeon found that some liquid had been put into his case of bandages; he was liable to punishment if he could not find the real culprit, and the table spelled out the name of the barber of the company. The barber was sent for, and on being charged with the act, he replied, 'Well, who told you it was I?' On being informed that it was the turning table, he admitted his fault, but was not punished because the evidence of a table was held to be 'doubtful.'

The two cases thus briefly summarised appear to disprove the assertion that the table always gave confused or absurd replies when questioned about matters unknown to all present. The last experiment of the series was sufficiently exciting and alarming to cause the amateur researchers to discontinue their investigations, and it reads like a chapter from Alexandre Dumas. Seven determined men, two of them with the points of their drawn swords thrust into the floor between their feet, the hilts ready to be grasped at any moment, sat round a table which had announced that it was moved by diabolical power, and that the demon, named *Dormon*, would show himself to them. Before complying with the request for total darkness, they asked whether any danger was

to be apprehended. The reply was, insanity for one of their number. As this man was evidently in a highly-strung condition, the others refused to expose him to further risk. The window of the room was then suddenly forced wide open, though the outside shutters were closed, the only candle was thrown off the trunk on which it had been placed, and the matches in a box alongside of it were scattered about the floor. Then the table began to dance a kind of waltz, which the experimenters could scarcely follow, the table-top slipping under their fingers. In its gyrations the table raised its feet, one after the other, and let them fall each time on the head of a match until all were exploded. When the matches were examined it was found that none of them had been bruised by the feet of the table anywhere but on the head. The candle, however, had been kept alight; it seemed as though an intelligence had tried to extinguish it, and to deprive the sitters of the means of relighting it. Dr. Salveton afterwards learned that a lunatic relative of one of the sitters had been a great 'table-turner,' and had asserted that the movements were the work of a 'devil' named Dormon, whom he had seen in the form of a tall, beardless young man of corpse-like pallor and draped in a shroud.

Dr. Salveton concludes from his observations that 'it is materially certain that gyratory and oscillatory movements can be imparted to a light table independently of the physical application of the muscular force of the experimenters,' and that by these movements sensible replies to questions can be obtained. His theory is that a force is discharged from the persons of the experimenters, which is directed and controlled by a 'collective, almost unconscious will,' which, as far as the experiment is concerned, replaces the personal conscious will. But with regard to the incident last described, he enumerates ten circumstances which were quite contrary to what would have happened if the window had been blown open by a gust of wind, and says: 'When taken together they agree perfectly with the unestablished hypothesis of an unknown intelligence, invisible to us, which consciously desired, despite our efforts, to deprive us of our light and of the means of relighting it.'

FRIENDLY HINTS TO DOUBTERS.

'Mine Unbelief' is the title of a logical, sincere, and sympathetic book by 'A. H. H. G.,' published by Philip Green, 5, Essex-street, Strand, W.C. (price 2s. net). A note at the beginning tells us that it has been written by one who is in touch with young men, and himself near enough to their age to retain the vivid remembrance of the thoughts which trouble youth, of the moods of doubt and restless questionings which are so persistent at that time of life, and sometimes so domineering. He certainly writes as one who understands, as one who has himself experienced these troublesome and perplexing moods of doubt, and is aware of their intensity; but he has reached a stage at which he can form a truer estimate and can appreciate the crudity which often accompanies these early phases of thought. The writer's aim is to point out certain considerations which may check extravagance in scepticism, and may tune the mind to a tone of reverence for the past, and for faiths sacred to others: for reverence is an aspect of justice, and to be lacking in it is to be deficient in a qualification very necessary to the formation of a right judgment. The writer thus expresses his purpose:—

If but here one and there one shall see the faint dawn of a future hope, shall catch a glimpse of a vast sublime Intelligence dwelling far above and beyond all human creeds and churches, shall even look back more gently on an earlier faith, then the author will be fully content.

The book is addressed entirely to those who find themselves outside the Christian position, and it deals mainly with the principles which lie at the root of all religions, such as the existence of God and of the soul, and attempts to show that loss of faith in the articles in the Christian Creed need not involve the surrender of these fundamental principles. This is done effectively; the thoughts brought forward for consideration being calculated to impress any thoughtful and reasoning mind, and to give pause to those who might be tempted to rash denials.

The process adopted is that of slowly undermining the castle of doubt, and showing that it is not securely based; there is no attempt to 'rush' the capture, or to explode the edifice by violent assertions. There may be as much dogmatism exhibited by the man who revolts against dogmatism as by the narrowest adherent to a creed. It is against this unconscious dogmatism that this friendly writer seeks to put his readers on their guard—not by pulpit oratory, and not from a platform of conscious superiority, but as a comrade who knows the vulnerable points in his brothers' position, because he has stood where they stand and desires to share with them the considerations which have opened to him a wider horizon.

There are not lacking indications that the writer has made some study of psychical matters, although it would not serve his purpose to enlarge upon them. We are disposed to suspect that this study may have taken no small part in his own mental and spiritual development. In the chapter headed, 'Have I a God?' there is a footnote referring to Mr. Myers' book on 'Human Personality,' and at other places there are points which touch the subject very nearly.

On page 56, he says:—

There seems but one conclusion, namely, that the *locale* of any future existence is not a *place* so much as a *condition*. Geographically speaking, it is more likely to be this earth on which we live. The change called death would not be a distant journey, but simply a birth into a different plane of consciousness.

Further on he sounds a wholesome note of warning, reminding us that the determination of that plane may rest largely with the individual:—

Once incarnate existence is admitted, there is no more reason against a happy renewal of old ties than there is for it. [From our point of view there is considerably more reason for it, of course!] On the contrary, as such ties have existed here, usually in all ways to our benefit, we need not meet trouble half way by inventing conditions under which we should all be summarily packed off to separate regions out of reach of each other. *Unless*, and though this is a pure speculation, it is a grave one, we should under the operation of some law find ourselves separated by any acts or line of conduct of our own or our friends, just as such conditions will bring about separation in this world. This is undoubtedly a strong motive with many orthodox Christians in their conception of the hereafter. Let us not be too sure that they are wrong.

The book may be heartily commended to the attention not only of those for whom it is primarily written, but also of those older persons who, feeling no doubts themselves, often help, involuntarily, to fasten the doubts of others more strongly about their necks by their want of understanding and inability to meet the difficulties of more sceptical minds.

H. A. DALLAS.

IS THEOSOPHY CONDEMNED IN INDIA?

MRS. BESANT'S REPLY.

Mrs. Besant writes in the 'Theosophist' for February:—

It is unpleasant to find the Spiritualistic journal, 'LIGHT,' publishing under the heading 'Theosophy Condemned in India' the diatribes of the extremists against Theosophy, the Central Hindu College and myself. It quotes from a pitiful exhibition of race hatred in a Calcutta journal, suppressing the fact that we are only condemned along with hospitals, English schools and the English in general, and that Hindus are exhorted to stand aloof from the hated English in everything. We are condemned because we are the most powerful agent in India for extinguishing race hatreds, and for this the extremists detest us. It is rather sad to see Spiritualists catching at such a weapon, and circulating such libels, designed to drive the English out of India, in order to injure Theosophy. Surely the position over here is difficult enough without an English journal, claiming to be religious, trying to intensify racial jealousy and antagonisms.

Perhaps Mrs. Besant, when writing this, had not yet seen the reply by Mrs. Ransom (on page 621 of 'LIGHT' for December 25th), to the article which we quoted on page 596 from the 'Literary Digest,' of New York. 'LIGHT' does not claim to be a 'religious' paper in the ordinary or narrower sense of the word, but it does claim to make for unity and brotherhood, and to give an impartial hearing to both sides.

UNPROVED CHARGES AGAINST SPIRITUALISM.

Under the title 'Spiritualism and Insanity,'* and the plea of describing 'the disastrous consequences to the mental health which are apt to result from a pursuit of the study of Spiritualism,' Dr. C. Williams has made an onslaught on Spiritualists in general, and their mental soundness in particular. 'Neurotic' is perhaps the least offensive of the terms he flings about in his book, for we are told that 'immorality, insanity, loss of health and premature death follow in the wake of the Spiritualist.' To alter slightly one of his own sayings, no doubt it suits the policy of the anti-Spiritualists to make such statements, but they are absolutely incapable of proof. Dr. Williams brings up the old and oft-refuted falsehoods, which have done duty for the last thirty or forty years, that thousands, or ten thousand, people are or were confined in lunatic asylums in America on account of having tampered with the supernatural. But if we take out those whose 'tampering' has taken the form of religious mania pure and simple, and those again who were merely shut up because they saw people and heard voices invisible and inaudible to others, there is no doubt that the 'thousands' would come down to tens or units, a mere trifle among the multitude of those who lost their mental balance by giving way to excesses of other kinds. That this is so is indicated by the fact that, replying to a question as to how many inmates there were in the lunatic asylums of America and how many were there because of Spiritualism, the 'British Medical Journal' for February 13th, 1879, said: 'We have been at the pains to turn over a file of last year's (1878) Reports of American State Asylums. In these Reports appear the tables of assigned causes of insanity among the inmates, amounting to fourteen thousand five hundred and fifty. The asylums in question are seven, and two include cases for a series of years. The only cases attributed to Spiritualism are four, reported from the Lunatic Hospital of the State of Pennsylvania.' These statistics are contemporary with the statements quoted by Dr. Williams. But even in the preparation of statistics care is needed, especially as Dr. Williams says that he asks his patients or their friends if they have recently, or at any time, had anything to do with Spiritualism.

The special danger which Dr. Williams apprehends from the practice of Spiritualism is, he says, 'the serious injury to the mental organism which is bound to result from constantly getting into the habit of forcing the will to become perfectly passive—an indispensable condition to the success of any séance, and a frame of mind which all sitters are always urged to cultivate.' From this point of view the development of mediumship (also 'urged upon all novices'!) becomes 'an unnatural, repulsive, and fearfully injurious process.' Those who 'surrender' themselves to the teachings of Spiritualism come 'completely under the control of demoniacal influences,' and are often tempted to commit suicide. Now, as all good Spiritualists know, the teaching of Spiritualism is absolutely opposed to suicide, and for more valid and cogent reasons than can be adduced by any other philosophy or ethical system. Spiritualism teaches self-control and resistance to all undesirable influences; it points out the possibility of such influence, and at the same time warns and guards the student against it. Spiritualism urges and assists the cultivation of will-power, and the passivity which is required for those who desire to develop mediumship is in itself an effect of will: the power is gained to become either intensely active or completely passive at will. Consequently it is not the will itself that is weakened at these times of voluntary passivity; but the will controls and calms the working of the mind and imagination: various mediums and leading Spiritualists known to us are persons of trained and powerful wills, who show this fact most clearly when they suppress all selfish inclinations in the desire to act kindly and helpfully towards others.

The numerous references in Dr. Williams's book to 'pos-

session,' which he makes into a veritable bogey, show that he is in reality quite convinced of the truth of Spiritualism—most of our critics are convinced of anything that they think they can bring up against us—but the advanced Spiritualist knows that the less pleasant phases of the subject are but the shadows which are the more intense in proportion as the light is brighter, and that even these will yield to judicious and sympathetic treatment, such as the Spiritualist alone knows how to apply.

'PURE SPIRITS'?

On Monday evening last 'a small but select company' assembled at the Waldorf Hotel to listen to Miss Bridey Mary O'Reilly's lecture on 'Pure Spirits,' the chair being occupied by the Rev. R. H. Benson. The first part of the address consisted of pure assertions—a string of unproved and unprovable affirmations with reference to supernatural beings called angels, who, we were informed, were quite different from human spirits, being of two kinds, angels of heaven and angels of hell. Miss O'Reilly described these beings, their knowledge, powers and supernatural abilities as if she were intimately acquainted with them. She admitted that some points were 'difficult to understand,' but she sailed along serenely, calmly assuring us that, among other things, angels could cause earthquakes, and lightning, and divide the sea! They could not foresee future events which depended upon man's free will, but they could know of coming natural events, and so on; but, if the angels are such supernatural beings, the question arises, how did the lecturer come into possession of her information? Later it transpired that she was merely repeating doctrines set forth by Catholic theologians.

That Spiritistic phenomena really occur was admitted by Miss O'Reilly, but lest we should be unduly elated by her gracious concession on that point, she hastened to 'harrow up our souls' by solemnly asserting that they were not the work of discarnate human beings but of *bad* angels who try to destroy the souls of men. These alleged bad angels were credited with amazing powers of impersonation and deceit, which they gloried in exercising to ruin men and women. Contrary to what is usually stated by opponents, we were told that 'most mediums are hale and hearty,' but almost immediately afterwards we were assured that they 'gradually lose their moral tone' and that 'madness and suicide' naturally follow. 'Even I,' said the lecturer, with unconscious self-righteousness, 'even I found that I was losing grace after attending some of these awful gatherings!' 'Awful,' 'horrible,' 'dreadful,' 'forbidding,' 'demons' were among the exaggerated terms that were freely employed in the descriptions of alleged 'experiences,' and, with reference to one family, who, it was said, held séances daily, the lecturer stated that 'the moral tone of the family where these manifestations took place fell so low that I really could not know them any more,' so she coolly left them to their fate—to go to hell their own way, if her view be the right one!

She declared that departed human spirits do not manifest because they cannot, and good angels only interfere when directed by God to do so; they then appear spontaneously, openly, and without any medium. At one séance Miss O'Reilly felt that there was 'an awful presence' and 'the blood froze' in her veins (!), but she recollected that she wore the medal and a ring of 'the Mother of God,' and prayed so ardently that she stopped the manifestations. Probably the other sitters at that séance would tell a very different story. On one occasion she believed that she conversed with an evil spirit, if not with the devil himself—he appeared as a black shadow, but she flung holy water at him and 'he slunk out of the room like a beaten dog!' I have always held that there are some persons—those who are highly nervous and possessed of a vivid imagination—who should leave Spiritualism severely alone, especially if they have had instilled into them the fear of the devil and are in dread of the unknown, and Miss O'Reilly struck me as being of this class. Only level-headed, open-minded and common-sensed individuals should study these things. Priestly suggestions, and auto-suggestions by fear-thoughts, are responsible for an immense amount of evil—aye, of 'madness and suicide,' to use the lecturer's favourite phrase. It was a pitiful exhibition of assumption and prejudice, tricked out in the garb of knowledge and presented as authoritative truth. It was, indeed, a warning example—but not against Spiritualism!

ONE WHO WAS PRESENT.

In the spiritual vocabulary there can be no such thing as 'righteous indignation.' It is the desire of resentment for revenge.—CHARLES B. NEWCOMBE.

* The Ambrose Co., Ltd, 55, Wigmore-street, London, W. Price 1s. 6d. net.

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A SORROWFUL ILLUSION.

The Spiritualist who knows his business and his duty also knows that unless his Spiritualism passes over to, and exerts its influence on, the practical affairs of life, he is by so much unprofitable, and probably a disappointment to the higher powers that desire to use him. It is this consideration which occasionally constrains us to take note of social questions, and that especially moves us to help to break down the still surviving barbaric belief in the inevitableness of war and the social and national utility of vast preparations for it.

Urged by this motive we desire to draw very serious attention to a small but profoundly important book by Norman Angell, entitled, 'Europe's Optical Illusion' (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co.). It is written with singular simplicity but with a masterly grip of a great case, and with a knowledge of business which should commend the little work as much to the Stock Exchange and to Lombard Street as to the mildest philanthropist near Primrose Hill.

The author has the cool audacity to tell all the old-fashioned statesmen of Europe, all the conventional 'patriots,' including the Steads and Frederic Harrisons, and even the ordinary advocates of the Peace Party, that they are all proceeding upon the lines of a now demonstrable illusion, that 'current political ideas and phraseology have not kept pace with the march of events,' and that Europe is obsessed by the ghost of an old robber whose accepted authority is now as ridiculous as it is pernicious.

In days gone by, invasion was possibly profitable. The invader could carry off people as slaves, or gold and silver goblets and coin, or plant itself upon the conquered land, or pay for the service of its mercenary or titled thieves by assigning to them territory: but the old big burglaries are now as physically impossible as they would be economically unprofitable. In fact, the big burglaries would not pay: and that is Mr. Angell's contention. He has nothing to say about the wickedness of war and its horrors: he only argues that it is bad business, and contends that it does not or would not pay: and all the current talk about invasion and fighting for trade and the capture of the Colonies is, to him, stupid talking in our sleep. The commercial and financial interlinkings of, say, Germany and England, are so numerous, so subtle, so delicate, so sensitively poised, that the capture of London, the looting of the Bank of England, and the carting off of the members of the Navy League and the British Scouts

would bring down German credits, banks, bonds and trade with a crash for which nothing could repay the robbers; and it would take more than a century for Germany to wash its hands, clean up its doorstep, and recover its credit in the markets of the world: and, in the meantime, there would be no peaceable or profitable foothold here for the robbers, and England would resume its trade and commerce with the world within a fraction of a generation. No: it would not pay; and every banker and merchant knows it; and, in the end, the bankers and merchants would decide as to that suggested invasion, Says Mr. Angell:—

It is no more possible for nations to get rich by bombarding things with cannon, and blowing its own customers and its own investments into smithereens, than it is for a Wall-street financier to enrich himself by shooting Rockefeller or Morgan in the head, or to 'capture' their fortune by breaking into their houses and stealing their plate or cheque-books. The business men of the world already know this, not a few economists and lawyers know it, and the only people who seem to be ignorant of it are the rulers of Europe, those who produce our great newspapers, and the sheep-like voting millions upon whom both classes depend.

The rulers of Europe do not know it because they are officially sunk in the rut of conventional survivals. The great newspapers do not (seem to) know it because they thrive on mischief-making, romancing and excitement, and 'the sheep-like voting millions' do not know it because—they are sheep.

It is really deplorable that so many of our 'leaders' are still held by the old terror of rapine and robbery which really ought to be left to the melodramas of our suburban theatres; and that Mr. Frederic Harrison, for instance, assumes, as Mr. Angell says, that 'European Governments have the instincts of Congo savages; the foresight of cattle-lifters and the business morals of South American adventurers.' 'Are we to assume,' asks Mr. Angell, 'that the Governments of the world which, presumably, are directed by men as far-sighted as bankers, are permanently to fall below the banker in their conception of enlightened self-interest? Are we to assume that what is self-evident to the banker—namely, that the repudiation of our engagements, or any attempt at financial plunder, is sheer stupidity and commercial suicide—is for ever to remain unperceived by the ruler?'

The remedy for all our old-fashioned fears is knowledge of our new conditions of international life, and of modern possibilities. Capture of Colonies, for instance, or capture of land for Colonies at one time, in a way, paid; but, under modern conditions, they have only a sentimental value, if that. We talk about the Colonies of 'our Empire,' and of 'owning' our Colonies. There is not a word of truth in it. Our Colonies own us, if there is any owning in it at all, for we not only acknowledge their independence, but their independence prevents the interference that would be possible for us in the case of a foreign Power and we pay for their defence.

No: the centre has shifted, from force to finance; from guns to utilities, from grab to paying regard for contracts, from the freebooter to the commercial traveller; and the urgent need of the hour is to recognise this, and to shape our policy and revise our vocabulary in the light of it.

Mr. Angell's remedy is in the spread of knowledge and in the substitution of a co-operation of business internationalism of interests for the isolated patriotism of national egotisms; but he does not seem inclined to take risks, and yet he supplies us with a parable which shows us the way. He says, 'There is an old French fable of a bewitched forest. An evil spirit told all the trees of the forest that the first tree to blossom in the spring would be

withered and destroyed. So every one of the trees waited for some other to be the first to blossom, and, of course, none blossomed, and, for a thousand years, the forest was leafless and sterile.' The Governments of Europe, says Mr. Angell, are the trees of that forest, each waiting for another to begin. Would to God that England, which is so proud of her eminence and so jealous of her supremacy, would go right to the head, take risks and lead the way!

THE ORDINATION OF DOCTOR SCEPTIC.

On Thursday evening, the 10th inst., Mr. J. W. Boulding delivered an address on 'The Ordination of "Dr. Sceptic," or the Value of Critical Examination in Matters of Belief,' to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East.

MR. BOULDING said: No one in this audience, I suppose, would dispute the proposition, that of all sane things in the world religion should be the sanest. Whether we regard the word religion as signifying the worship of God, or the rule of life, in either case sanity should be its chief characteristic. Yet I think it would not be difficult for me to prove that in both of these two relations religion in the past has been accompanied by such insane opinions, ceremonies and practices that it has sometimes exhibited itself as the greatest madness, and had it not been for scepticism, with its critical and cautious incredulity, this madness would have reached such abnormal proportions that mankind would long ago have perished by its mental aberrations and its moral corruption. I shall therefore try to show you a few pictures of this religious madness and to point out the antiseptic and beneficent uses of that sceptical hostility which religion has always branded as an emanation of evil, but which has really been its truest friend and ablest advocate.

Now it is one of the laws of Nature that every evil has its remedy, that every poison has its antidote, that every destructive thing has its destroyer: were it not so, the balance of the universe would be soon overthrown and all life would perish from the world. The insect, for instance, is eaten by the bird, and if it were not for these swift-winged and beautiful destroyers human life would soon be intolerable on our planet: and what the bird is to the all-devouring and fast-multiplying insect, such is the sceptic to the prolific and devastating brood of false opinions, and baneful superstitions that in the name of religion have infested our world and corrupted its spiritual life. You will see, therefore, that the sceptic has his mission, that he is a divinely-appointed member in the economy of things; that he is not, as some have held, a devil-sent and hell-inspired creature, but, on the contrary, he is a divine prophet in disguise; that, to use a Scriptural metaphor, God's 'fan is in his hand,' and he comes to thresh the wheat and 'gather it into the garner' of eternal truth; to purge the floor of all the refuse of human ignorance, misconception, and mistake, and 'to burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' Why, whatever should we have done without the sceptic? Whatever would our world have been like without the sceptic? Its madness has been awful enough, notwithstanding his critical and curative skill; but without Doctor Sceptic it would long ago have been an intolerable Bedlam.

When I use the word sceptic, I mean by it what the word itself implies, and not the meaning that common usage and vulgar associations have illegally attached to it. It is not the same word as infidel—though it is often used as synonymous with that term. It is very far removed from the word Atheist, though to indiscriminating minds it often conveys the same idea. The word sceptic is really a very respectable word, of a high and noble lineage; one of the aristocratic words in the genealogy of literature. It has descended to us, in fact, from the Greek philosophers, and its parentage is Greek, pure and undefiled. It has no relation whatever to the spirit that blasphemes, or even the spirit that denies; it is simply and purely the spirit that desires to see, that wants to know, that

looks hard and closely that it may see clearly, that examines minutely that it may know correctly, and that pauses with doubt and hesitates with caution that it may not be deceived and may not be mistaken.

The sceptic is therefore simply the man who thinks, and reflects, and holds his judgment in suspense till he has weighed the evidence: who takes time to weigh the evidence that he may weigh it well, and come, if possible, to an assured knowledge and an absolute certainty.

Now the infidel is primarily the faithless man, and in a second sense the man who does not believe—the sceptic not necessarily so. The infidel is the man who may not be a thinker, a reasoner or a judge: the sceptic must necessarily be all three. The infidel may be the man who has sold his master: the sceptic is the man who is seeking his master, if haply he may find him. The infidel is the Judas who has bargained away his conscience: the sceptic is one of the Greeks who came to Philip saying, 'Sir, we would see Jesus.' The infidel may be the man who has trampled on the flag to which he has sworn a formal allegiance; but the sceptic is the man who is looking for a regiment in which he may enlist, and colours which he may carry; in a word, to find a cause that appeals to his reason, and a king whose claims are beyond dispute. He is, therefore, opposed only to the dogmatist who bases his claim on authority and demands of his disciple unquestioning belief. And I need not ask you which is the nobler of these two. It is better to be a sceptic than a believer, if the belief has not been preceded by investigation, attended by thought, and consummated by conviction. And this is what Tennyson referred to when he said, 'There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds.' Thomas, for instance, was the sceptic amongst the disciples. He would not believe on the mere statements of others. He must have opportunity to investigate, to use his own judgment. His conclusion as a sceptic was worth more as proof than the convictions of the emotional Peter and the confiding John; and it has been of more value to Christianity because of the determined attitude that preceded and the deliberate method that attended his investigation.

It is customary, I know, to sneer at men like Paine and Hume, Montaigne and Voltaire of a past generation, and Holyoake, Bradlaugh, and others of recent times; but these men were the scourges of credulous religionists and the expositors of the follies and fallacies of unreasoning faith. Like the great Reformer who came out of Nazareth, they made a whip of intellectual cords to drive out of the Temple of true religion the ignorant professors and interested sectarians who made their God a commodity and their house of prayer a place of market, barter, and exchange.

To mention merely the 'relics' which people once adored, and which priests foisted on their ignorant credulity, is enough to convince the open-minded that Europe was once, in a religious sense, a vast lunatic asylum. There were several abbeys, for instance, that possessed the veritable crown of thorns. Eleven had the lance with which the Roman soldiers pierced the Master's side. Several had bottles containing the milk of the Virgin Mary, and one exceeded all the others in lying impudence and ignorant absurdity by exhibiting one of the fingers of the Holy Ghost! Truly there was need for Doctor Sceptic when the world had become so mad as this, and I ask you which of these twain held the divine credentials—which of them had been ordained by the celestial powers—the priest who in the name of religion palmed off such lying wonders on the ignorant crowd, or the sceptic who, in the name of common sense and truth, repudiated them and laughed at them and scattered their false pretensions to the winds?

The universal maxim of the Church in those days was, 'Ignorance is the mother of Devotion.' As long as the people could be kept ignorant they could be misled, but once let them understand that the dignity of man consisted, not in a fictitious sanctity or a robe of office, but in his honesty, sincerity, purity, and truth—that is, in his qualities as a man—and the authority of the ecclesiastic was a waning power, and his threat to punish an imaginary thunderbolt. And

this was what the sceptic did. So that gradually the priest sank into the shade and the man emerged into the sunshine: an angel in mortal vesture, and by virtue of his destiny an ascending God.

What power the priest arrogated to himself! It makes one blush for human nature when we read of his blasphemous assumptions. It is recorded that, when the great comet which is now known as Halley's Comet, and is at the present time approaching our world, made its appearance in 1456, the Pope actually dared to pretend to banish it from the skies. Not content with excommunicating kings and kingdoms, he laid violent hands on the heavens themselves. He pronounced his decree and exorcised the mysterious and portentous stranger; and when in the course of its eccentric orbit it disappeared into the depths of space he had the effrontery to declare that his authority had expelled it, and the ignorant crowd believed it and applauded him as a god.

Was there no need, I ask, for Doctor Sceptic to come forth and utter his protest against a blasphemy like that? And Doctor Sceptic came, and he has been very busy uttering his protests and winning the victory all along the line. Who was it that established the fundamental fact that the world in which we live was not the centre of the universe, but only one of a family of worlds revolving around the sun? It was Doctor Sceptic in the person of Bruno, and the priest burned him for it at the stake! Who was it that proved the antiquity of the world, and opened up to us the hidden records of its ancient history—those tablets of stone on which the finger of Nature had written its biography through ages upon ages of unrecorded time? It was Doctor Sceptic. Who was it that disproved the childish story of the universal deluge, the gathering of the animal creation into the Ark, and the institution of the rainbow as a covenanting sign of the Almighty repentance, resolve, and promise? It was Doctor Sceptic.

And so through all the series of Biblical fables and theological dogmas that an ignorant clergy thrust upon the world in an unscientific age. It was Doctor Sceptic who analysed their pretensions, delivered us from their thralldom, and made us the free-thinking religionists that we are. But for him we should still be afraid of our own voices, lest the 'familiars' of the Inquisition should have heard us whisper our doubts to one another or to ourselves, we should still be cowering beneath the ominous cloud of an ecclesiastical curse, and fearing that its thunderbolt might at any moment descend and shatter our homes, our fortunes, our liberties, and our lives; but, thanks to the sceptic, we can walk abroad in the sunshine of civil liberty and religious toleration, none daring to make us afraid. (Applause.)

I do not hesitate, therefore, to call the sceptical age in which we live a more truly religious age than those ostensibly and ostentatiously religious ages of the past, in which the priest was more in evidence and theology more paramount.

It depends upon what you call religion, whether you regard the age in which we live as religious or irreligious. If a blind submission to authority be religion, if a slavish adherence to the letter of the Bible be religion, if an absorbing interest in theological controversies be religion, then is this age the most irreligious of all ages, and this generation the most impious of all the generations of mankind. But if, on the other hand, pure religion and undefiled consists in an inquiring mind, a determination to know the truth and to follow it wheresoever it leads; if it consists in a passionate devotion to the essentials of moral life and character which alone constitute true spiritual manhood; if it consists in human tolerance and charity, in the breaking down of all artificial religious barriers, in the perception of the unity of the human family, and the equality of all men in the sight of God; if it consists in the practical amelioration of human lives, the abrogation of class differences, and the elevation of man to his rightful place in the economy of life: then is this age the most religious of all ages, and this generation the most pious of all the generations the world has seen. (Applause.)

We as Spiritualists stand in the relation of sceptics to the orthodox beliefs. We have dared to doubt many articles of

the creeds which have for ages dominated the religious world. We are, in fact, the Thomases of the twentieth century. We practically say: 'Except we see, we will not believe.' We will not hold a blind man's faith, especially in reference to the continuity of life—to the immortality of the soul. Of that we say, like Thomas, 'Because we have seen, we have believed;' or rather, because we have seen, we know. It is extremely difficult to walk by faith in a region which is so dark and dense as this. Is there anything more absolutely dark, apart from Spiritualism, than the mystery of death? Who can penetrate that awful blackness? 'Walk by faith'—you cannot do it! hope you must! stumble you will! Fall you may! But walk you cannot. You must know—or you cannot walk at all. Now, if a man asks me, 'Do you believe in the soul and its immortal life beyond?' I reply, 'No, I do not believe. I do better than that, I know. I have tried belief and it broke down. "Weighed in the balances and found wanting"—that is the verdict I have pronounced on faith. But I have seen, heard, tested, proved: and therefore I know. And that is the rock on which I stand. It is the same foundation as my other knowledge rests upon—observation, experience, evidence, fact; and it is just as scientific and as fully demonstrated and assured as the graving on the rocks of Nature and the writing in the structure and constitution of man.' (Applause.)

The proofs of the past history of man's body are not more certain than the proofs of the future destiny of his soul. In fact, it is the working out of the same great law of evolution, carried forward in this case to a higher plane, perfecting its work in the realms of the unseen. When anyone asks me, therefore, why I know, I answer as Paul did when he said: 'Have I not seen Jesus, our Lord?' by which he meant, of course, the spirit body of the living Jesus. So I reply: 'Have I not seen the living dead—my mother, to wit? Have I not heard her voice? Do I not hear from her often? Do not hundreds of people see their spirit friends? And do you think they are all liars? You take the word of such men as Dr. A. R. Wallace, Sir William Crookes, Mr. Myers, and Sir Oliver Lodge on other matters—on subjects you have neither the means nor the opportunities to investigate for yourselves. How comes it that you never doubt them on any subject but this?'

I for one should not like to go out into that mystery of death without the faintest knowledge of where I am going. I should like to have some kind of light, if it were only a Diogenes' lantern and a farthing rushlight in it. Let me see something twinkling there, if it is only a glowworm on that dark, dark road. 'More light!' cried the dying Goethe, 'more light!' and it is only the fool or the madman who rushes out into that darkness with stone-blind eyes. 'The wise man's eyes are in his head.' They were given him to see with, and he wants to see where he is going. Faith is a light that very often goes out, even with the best of men; and the bad man's faith is a Jack o' Lantern that leads him into the marsh and lands him in the mire.

The great question is not 'do we believe?' but 'do we know?' Have we ourselves proved that death is not extinction but only transition of being? Or is death the skeleton in our cupboard—always secreted, always avoided, always threatening to come out, and always dreaded as the descent into our midst of something too horrible to think of, and never to be thought of without a shiver or a sigh? He must present this aspect if we do not know him—if we haven't seen him—that is the other side of him, on which is written by the hand of knowledge, 'I, Death, have brought life and immortality to light.' The moon has two sides, but we on this planet only see one side. What the other is like, we do not know; and that is just like death to most people. They have only seen one side of him—the side that is related to corruption and the worm, the shroud, the coffin, and the grave. But, fortunately, we can do with death what we cannot do with the moon. We can get to the other side of him—the celestial side, which is turned towards the heavens, which is never eclipsed by the earth's shadow, which is bright with immortal day. Since there is knowledge to be had, do not be satisfied with a

blind faith, and say: 'It is one of the things God never intended us to know.' If it can be known, that is sufficient proof that God intended it to be known. Why should He wish to leave His children in the dark? You do not do that even with your own children, and do you suppose God is less tender and pitiful than you? On the contrary, He has been lighting candles and lanterns all the centuries through, giving spiritual communications and evidences age after age, through seer after seer, and it is you that have blown out the candle and put out the lantern, and said in your obstinacy, which you have misnamed 'faith': 'No, I prefer the dark. I would rather go without any knowledge. I would choose to go blindly and "walk by faith."' And then you think you are honouring God. I say you are dishonouring God. (Applause.) You are thrusting away with ungrateful hands the light He has offered you, and making yourself uncomfortable and miserable into the bargain. I can only say for myself that I would not give up my little candle of personal knowledge for all the great luminaries of so-called historical evidence that the whole of Christendom contains. What is Paley to me, or Butler, or Pearson, or Hooker, or Jeremy Taylor, or even Peter and Paul? Their evidences are not my evidences, their proofs are not my proofs, and none of them, except Paul and Peter, have any personal evidences; all the others have only arguments and reasons built round Paul and Peter, and these are no evidences at all, for death is a mystery that can be illuminated only by proven facts—personally proven facts. I know my light is only a little one, but it is my own; it was lit for me by the nearest and dearest friend I have in God's universe—my ascended mother, and it burns in my home with a steady, permanent light, replenished from day to day by her repeated assurances and new communications, and with that light burning I fear not death, for I know what is beyond. She is beyond, and death is but the mask which that angel wears, and will presently drop and show me her beloved face. I know, of course, that this is no evidence to you, and I am not foolish enough to ask you to accept it as evidence. This society does not ask you to have faith in it, or in any society. On the contrary, it asks you to be sceptics—that is, persons who think, inquire, reason, examine, and prove. It would not accept your faith even if you tendered it. Belief without inquiry is belief without conviction, and is no belief at all. Therefore, we say, be sceptics; sharpen your faculties, make them bright and keen; inquire and investigate, pause and consider, and if belief is arrived at, let it be achieved by toil, painstaking research, and conscientious thought, for that belief alone is worthy of a man's profession, the recognition of his fellow-man, the approval of his conscience or the acceptance of his God. (Applause.)

Bishop Butler in one of his works rightly suggests that communities like individuals may be insane, and certainly the history of religions illustrates his opinion. From the earliest centuries the Church deliberately and solemnly taught that the entire pagan world, both before the advent of Christianity and since, was doomed to eternal fire. All the sages, poets and heroes of antiquity, no matter how good and great their lives had been, no matter how illustrious in mind and morals, were doomed to the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched. And they were doomed for no reason except that they were not included in the visible Church of Christ, which was no fault of theirs, for they lived and died before that Church was founded, and before that Christ was born. Nor these alone, but those who were ostensibly Christians yet did not believe all the teachings of the Church, no matter how small their error or how trivial their departure from the orthodox belief, all of these were regarded as heretics, branded with the same damning curse, and doomed to the same everlasting destruction. The Church, to use a favourite metaphor of the Fathers, was a single ark of safety floating on a boundless sea of wrath and ruin. 'If anyone,' wrote St. Cyprian, 'out of Noah's Ark could escape the deluge, he who is out of the Church may also escape.' 'Without this house,' said Origen, 'no one can be saved.' 'No one,'

said Augustine, 'cometh to salvation except he that is in the Church.' 'Doubt not,' said Fulgentius, 'that not only all pagans, but also all Jews, heretics and schismatics who depart this life outside the Church are about to go into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' Even Luther, with all his new light and knowledge, maintained the same position, and proclaimed 'that remission of sins and sanctification could be obtained no how and no where except in the Church'; and Calvin also asserted the same thing, that beyond the bosom of the Church no remission of sins was to be hoped for nor any salvation. The Presbyterian divines assembled at Westminster also declared that 'out of the visible Church there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.' The Independents asserted the same. The English Church was one with both of them in that opinion: of which the Athanasian Creed is to this day the formal and authorised declaration. So you see there was no difference on this point between all these various and opposing sects—every one was agreed that out of the Church no salvation was possible to a human soul: though their sectarian differences discounted their pronouncements; for each meant by the Church his own Church, which reduced the position of all of them to an absolute absurdity.

Now do not you call that religious insanity? Do not you think the whole community has been on this point absolutely mad, as Bishop Butler suggests?

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUALISM AND 'BUSINESS' MEDIUMS.

STRAIGHT TALK ON AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

In the following article, which appeared in 'The Harbinger of Light' for January, Mr. W. H. Terry deals with a very important subject, viz., the employment of mediumship for mercenary ends. His experiences are similar to those of other editors of Spiritualist journals, and the advice which he gives is practically identical with that which we and others are constantly giving to inquirers and Spiritualists alike.

Nothing is to be gained by exaggerating the difficulties and the 'dangers,' so-called, of which so much is made by our opponents; but, at the same time, they should not be ignored. The greatest difficulty of all, however, is this: so few people are willing to be advised, so few heed the suggestions made by those who are more experienced than themselves. Again and again we have warned inquirers and Spiritualists against seeking or acting upon advice regarding finance, money-making, and business schemes; but, as an American Spiritualist remarked on one occasion, 'There are hosts of people who would harness the angels to a go-cart if they could make a dollar by it,' and all protests and warnings are disregarded by such persons. We reproduce Mr. Terry's straight talk, and fully endorse his sentiments. He says:—

We have not unfrequently appealed to investigators of Spiritualism to make some preliminary study of the laws of spirit intercourse, and the relation of the spirit world to our mundane sphere. This would not only facilitate their object, but save them from many obstructions and pitfalls that bestrew the path of those who blindly enter upon what is to them an unknown road—though to those who avail themselves of the light thrown upon it by previous intelligent and philosophical travellers a comparatively safe and agreeable one. This advice applies equally to those who have satisfied themselves of the fact of spirit intercourse, a large proportion of whom fail to study the spiritual philosophy, and become cognisant of the fact that the moral and intellectual condition of denizens of the spirit world nearest to the earth are approximately the same as those pertaining to the birth world, and, with few exceptions, their capacity for judgment of mundane matters is not equal to that of those still in the body.

Our attention is particularly drawn to this subject by the receipt of a letter from a subscriber who was induced to consult a medium in relation to an important business matter, and, acting on the advice given, had found it unwise and seriously detrimental to his worldly interests. This case is not an uncommon one. We have had many such brought under our notice, where through an exaggerated idea of the powers of a disembodied spirit, persons have met with much trouble

and pecuniary loss. This mistaken idea is very prevalent, and is a source of much misunderstanding and disappointment to novices in spiritual investigation or study. In some instances neither the medium nor the communicating spirit may be seriously to blame. The former is asked to get the advice of a spirit, and a spirit may as conscientiously respond when out of the body as when clothed with mortality, and the medium, having had truthful communication from the same source, may have confidence in the spirit's sincerity. The trouble is in the want of knowledge of the unreliability of advice from the world spheres, or lower planes of spirit life, in relation to worldly or purely mundane affairs; whilst the more advanced spirits who might have the power to foresee in this direction would only use it for purely benevolent purposes, and not for personal aggrandisement. Business and money-making pertain to the material world, and to apply for advice from a supra-mundane sphere, where the business of life is the unfoldment of the higher faculties of our nature, is manifestly unwise and derogatory to spiritual advancement. Spiritualism is essentially unselfish, and it is a desecration of its principles to make use of it for any selfish or purely mundane purposes. It is to be regretted that some mediums make business advice and fortune-telling a prominent feature. If they possess the psychometric faculty, which is inherent in some sensitives, it may be legitimately exercised as such, but to make the spirit world responsible for their revelations is unjust and dishonourable. They are welcome to all the credit they may get, but should be held responsible for their failures.

JOTTINGS.

In one of his lectures on 'Hindu Religion, Philosophy and Yoga,' K. Chakravarti, Yoga-sastri, says: 'In the *Puranic* age the seeds of spirit-worship were sown broadcast all over the land, which bore fruits in the age of *Tantras*. The last was the age of Spiritualism—a word to be understood almost in the sense in which it is known at present in the West. . . We find in the *Tantras* directions for forming circles, for invoking high and low spirits, for automatic writings, and showing spirit-forms, and in mirrors. . . Suppose a real ghost appears before you, dressed in a suit of clothes he used to wear when in life on this earth, and with spectacles and stick also. You ask, where could he have got these things outside our limited area? Yet you see them, others also see them. There can, therefore, be no mistake about them. The answer is that the ghost has created them for a time from matter less gross, by his then higher powers of combination and transformation of matter.'

According to the lecturer it appears that the 'Hindu sacred writings have shared the fate which, apparently, overtakes the scriptures of every nation.' He says: 'As things stand at present, many important *Tantras* are missing. Many are in a mutilated state, and many are disgraced by interpolations of later writers, who, as occasion required, passed off their own writings as texts to carry out their selfish views and purposes.' Perhaps it is as well, otherwise the dangerous tendency to put reliance in the authority of the text, instead of recognising that truth is the sole authority, might overpower and take captive reason, judgment, intuition and conscience altogether. Whether or not a doctrine was taught by a certain great man, or whether it is found in certain 'sacred' writings—so called—is after all a very minor matter, for there is nothing sacred but truth, and the real point to be determined regarding any doctrine is not 'did So-and-so teach it?'—but 'is it true?' and a decision on that point must be arrived at by each one for himself.

The 'Catholic Times,' in a review of Sir Oliver Lodge's book on 'The Survival of Man,' mixes up things that differ in the usual muddle-headed fashion of those who approach the consideration of Spiritualism with an antipathetic bias. Avoiding the question as to whether the evidence cited by Sir Oliver Lodge is of a kind to establish the contention that communication has been held with discarnate intelligences, the reviewer coolly proceeds to discuss the value of the messages. He says: 'If the spirits of the disembodied dead can talk no better, can give no more information . . . the nether world must be as dull a place as Achilles found it,' and he goes on to talk of 'vapid tittle-tattle of personalities . . . in Hades.' This is manifestly unfair. Sir Oliver Lodge points out that his object has been to establish identity—not to compile information, and this necessary restriction of his quest renders such criticism as the above entirely beside the mark and foolish in the extreme. The critic not only most unwarrantably suggests that the communicators dwell in 'the nether world,' in 'Hades,' but he talks nonsense when he speaks of 'the spirits of the disembodied dead'—a phrase which has no meaning. Spirits are discarnate beings who are very much alive.

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.

Christian Science Teachings.

SIR,—Referring to the article in 'LIGHT,' of January 29th, entitled 'The Unveiling of Christian Science,' permit me to say that whatever interest the recent expulsion of Mrs. Stetson from the church in New York may have aroused, the one salient feature of the episode is the proof it gives of the fact that the manipulation of the human mind through 'suggestion,' thought-transference, or any similar means, does not enter into the practice of Christian Science. Christian Science teaches emphatically that God (good, the one Mind) is infinite, omnipotent, and that therefore, as Mrs. Eddy says on page 192 of 'Science and Health,' 'Evil is not power,' consequently a correct understanding of the teachings of Christian Science protects one from the supposititious power of evil, in whatever form it may claim to be manifested. Through a correct understanding of these teachings one finds also that it is impossible to be party to evil in any form whatever. In good there is no evil, and to the extent that God, or good, is proved to be infinite and omnipotent, evil is proved to be a negative, false belief and wholly untrue, unreal.

Without a knowledge of the truth a mistake cannot be corrected, consequently an episode such as the one referred to is a proof of the growth of Christian Science, and of a clearer understanding of its teachings.—Yours, &c.,

ALGERNON HENRY BATHURST.

Assistant.

[If Christian Science protects its votaries, and teaches that evil has no power, and that no one can be a party to evil, why all this outcry against Mrs. Stetson and 'supposititious' Malicious Animal Magnetism? Why are Mrs. Eddy and others so nervous about what is 'wholly untrue, unreal'? Is it because they themselves need 'a clearer understanding' of their own teachings?—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

Signs of the Times.

SIR,—Careful readers of 'LIGHT' must agree that its columns have been responsive to the last cry of Goethe for 'Light! more light.' Since Stainton Moses edited 'LIGHT' an illuminating spiritual growth has been faithfully studied and steadfastly maintained, touching human hearts everywhere.

Considering the progressive enlightenment which I have watched developing for more than sixty years, I am so impressed by the article headed 'Direct Writing and Apports,' on page 59 of 'LIGHT,' for February 5th, where I read a spirit message signed 'Andrea,' that I have got this message by heart, feeling in the utterance a wisdom, a timely significance very valuable just now when there is so much waste of effort in wordy demand for veridical proof, abundance of which has already been accumulated.

Now, as to this message being what it purports to be, accepting F. W. H. Myers' remark (*vide* 'Phantasms of the Living,' Introduction page lxiii.) that there is difficulty in determining whether the message does, in fact, correspond to some action which is going on in some other place, or on some other plane of being, I maintain that if, as might be, Dr. F. Breton, President of the Psychological Society of Nice, and his collaborating witnesses, were called into court and testified to what is stated in the article to which I am referring, their testimony would prove that 'Andrea' is, as he said, a spirit doing what no human being could do, and that there is error in 'trying to explain the inexplicable.'

But I have said there is abundance of accumulated proof of the actuality of much that has been declared to be 'impossible.' The pages of 'LIGHT' teem with evidence showing the fallacy of determining that what has been cannot be. I turn over to page 67, and there I find the letters of Colonel Bagbie and 'A. V. E. P.,' illustrating my contention that there is proof and to spare of what is considered as being, if not fraudulent, certainly improbable.

These accounts are not dismissable, they are signs of the times. They justify Mr. Withall's speech when he introduced Mrs. Despard to the audience at Suffolk-street, on January 27th. A great mental change is in progress. In this mental evolution we have all our old institutions called up for review.

Audacious denial of what is and has been and of what becomes more manifest day by day, is generally due to ignorance and to a contemptuous insularity, dangerous but superficial—for among deep thinkers there has arisen a disposition to re-

consider all life-problems. It is another sign of the times that scoffing at Eastern teaching is passing out of fashion. Thoughtful preachers, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Rhondda Williams and world-wide exponents of human solidarity agree in desiring the unity expressed in the Eastern teaching, that the first step towards the ladder up to perfection is to destroy the sense of separateness, and with it the fancied superiority of factious partisanship.

Here, everywhere, a concordance is being reached, that religion is recognition of duty as a divine command; an aspiration of the finite to the infinite, whence it proceeded, whither it goes; a surrender to the will of God. These are the essentials of a perfection complete in itself, free from destructive surplusage of sect and superstition.—Yours, &c.,

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Dr. J. M. Peebles and Reincarnation.

SIR,—Dr. J. M. Peebles, in his letter on reincarnation ('LIGHT,' page 66), attempts to prove that 'Mrs. Besant, after wading . . . into the mazy marches of Blavatsky theosophy, is now graciously ascending the mountain summits of the higher Spiritualism,' by presenting a fragmentary quotation from page 112 of Mrs. Besant's book, 'The Changing World.' May I, in justice to Mrs. Besant, present to your readers the exact quotation? It runs thus, speaking of reincarnation: 'You must make room for post-mortem evolution, and the very moment you adopt that, *that moment you have adopted the principle of reincarnation*, even though you may choose to carry it on in other worlds rather than in the present.' I italicise the words omitted by Dr. Peebles. To make her own position quite clear, Mrs. Besant adds in a footnote: 'The *principle* of reincarnation is accepted in this sense by many Spiritualists who deny that man returns to earth. With them another line of argument would be followed to prove the necessity of reincarnation on earth.'

Comment is needless! Mrs. Besant loses no opportunity of proclaiming her adherence to Madame Blavatsky's teachings and her gratitude for the light and help she gained from her. As to the need for rebirth, that question has been dealt with again and again in your columns. The answer is briefly this, that it is not possible in one life to assimilate all the experience, progress and evolution to be gained in this world. Hence the necessity for reincarnation.—Yours, &c.,

ELIZABETH SEVERS.

[On p. 321 of 'LIGHT,' for 1909, we quoted the passage referred to by Dr. Peebles and by Miss Severs from a report of one of Mrs. Besant's lectures in St. James's Hall, and remarked that this was 'a wide departure from the stock theosophical argument that *only* by re-embodiment on the earth plane can the Ego complete its training through varied experiences,' and that it seemed as though Mrs. Besant had 'come over to us, and admitted the possibility of continued evolution without the necessity for reincarnation in the only sense in which that word is commonly understood.' Spiritualists, from Andrew Jackson Davis downwards, believe in re-embodiment on the spiritual planes, but they deny that in doing so they 'adopt the principle of reincarnation.' Nor are they convinced that it is necessary that every individual should 'assimilate all the experience to be gained in this world.' With A. J. Davis they consider this world as the initial one, in which to *begin* the career of noble development.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Psychometry or Reincarnation?

SIR,—In occult matters I claim to be but a beginner, nevertheless, 'out of the mouths of babes,' &c., is a good old adage. One of the chief difficulties that a seer has to contend with is the idea of time and space, for although both exist for his brain, neither exists for his clairvoyant faculty. In my opinion, which is based on observation and seership, we are surrounded by what I call a photo-phonographic fluid. On, or in, this fluid are registered all actions and all words, and even thoughts. Most people are consciously or unconsciously psychic at times to some extent and psychometrically come in touch with this photo-phonographic fluid. It is a fact that if a large piece of wood is thrown into a bowl of water in which a few splinters are floating it will attract the little splinters to itself, and unless they are agitated the splinters will become almost parts of the piece of wood itself. The mentality of man acts in the same way to some extent. A disciple soon becomes mentally like his teacher even in ordinary circumstances. This tendency is increased greatly if the disciple is also a psychic: for not only does he copy his master but he also 'takes on his conditions.' Now, if by the shock of death the mentality, aura, soul, call it what you like, of a great man is thrown into

or registered upon this 'fluid,' his admirers are attracted to him psychometrically in proportion to their psychic powers. Anyone who is slightly psychic is liable to come into psychometric contact with a great mentality even when practically ignorant regarding him or her. Thus, little Miss Brown, of Peckham, is at times psychic, but does not know how to control her faculties. When these are at work they are drawn like a splinter to some great personality of whom she has read, say Cleopatra or Mary Magdalene (nearly all lady reincarnationists 'remember' having been one or the other). Certain magnetic waves from Cleopatra are absorbed by Miss Brown, certain conditions are transferred into her mentality—natural inborn conceit does the rest—and over a cup of tea she tells her friends: 'Once I was Cleopatra.' She will 'remember' all the dresses she wore, what a nice man Antony was, and how lovely the Nile looked at night—but she never 'remembers' a sentence of her previous mother tongue.

This reincarnation sensation can also work forward as well as backward. It will be granted that one cannot 'remember' a pain that has not yet been felt, even if we grant that little Miss Brown can 'remember' the pain she bore as Cleopatra when the asp stung her bosom, but I frequently feel pains, psychometrically, that are going to be felt by someone else, and, at the time, I feel that I *am* that person. It seems probable, therefore, that when Miss Brown recollects the sting of the asp, she 'remembers,' or perceives psychometrically (backwards in time), in the same way that I 'remember,' or perceive (forwards in time), only she fails to separate herself from her 'memory' and I do not. No one will say that I am the watchman at Mappin and Webb's, and yet, some days before that unfortunate man was attacked, I felt the blow that he received, but I did not think that I was someone else pre-carnated, and if the reincarnationist would 'sit back and look at the picture' instead of allowing himself, or herself, to drift into it, he would realise that he was reading a life-record in the astral light (as he calls it) and *not remembering his own past life*.—Yours, &c.,

VINCENT N. TURVEY.

A Curious Psychical Experience.

SIR,—On a recent Saturday evening, before going to a place of amusement, my wife asked me to call at a shop and get her some pills. After the entertainment, as I left the building, I suddenly became conscious that I had something to remember, but *what* it was I could not recall, I had forgotten it completely. I went into a quiet side street to think and endeavour to draw to my memory what it was I had to do, but all my efforts were fruitless. I then sent my thoughts along the street until I reached my home, mentally, banged into the door, went inside, and said: 'Tell me what it was you asked me to do'; then it came to me in a flash what I was to get. When I reached home, my wife said: 'You came home to-night mentally.' I answered, 'Yes.' Then she said that just before she heard my knock on the door, she found herself unconsciously saying, 'Remember my pills.' Then she realised what she was saying, and that the knocking at the door was done by me. Recently, on two occasions, I have purposely tried to bang the door, and my little boy of five years of age went to the door, hearing the noise at the same time as my wife. Can anyone explain what made my wife unconsciously repeat her words, and how my mind, or mental picture, affected the door, causing the noise?—Yours, &c.,

Norwich.

H. M. D.

Psychometric Sensitiveness.

SIR,—Mr. F. T. Lee, in his letter on page 80 of 'LIGHT,' asks for an explanation of his ability to 'sense' the 'health conditions' of other persons. Perhaps the following suggestive statements may help him.

When making experiments in psychometry the sensitive is brought, at first through physical touch, into harmonious relations with, and becomes conscious of, an aura or atmosphere surrounding the object or person. In this aura, as in a mirror, if clairvoyant, he sees reflected the history of the object, and to the extent that he can bring himself into rapport with it, he realises its significance in connection with the emotions and other associations with the personalities of its possessors. All this is 'sensed' subjectively, and the sensitive may attain to such a 'community of sensation' as to merge his own personality in the aura of the object (or person), and himself feel the pains and pleasures which he describes. These experiences are most perfect when sympathetic and harmonious vibrations of the psychic, or etheric, force have been established between the psychometrist and the object or person experimented with, and when he has attained to the ability not only to perceive but to interpret the sensations or impressions which affect him. The

clearness of his perception and fulness or accuracy of his interpretation of the significance of the influences will be in exact proportion to the completeness with which he loses himself in and becomes identified with the psychic conditions which he 'takes on,' or responds to. We appreciate the beauty of a poem or a picture only in so far as we can place ourselves in sympathy with the thought or emotion of the poet or the painter—so far as we can think the same thought or experience the same emotion—and in the same way all success psychically depends upon the ability of the sensitive to identify himself with the object or to think and feel the same as the person. To some extent this power may be attained by intellectual cultivation, but it is more often the result of a development of that subtle spiritual faculty which we call intuition, and the motives which will best open this inner realm to the sensitive are sympathy and love.

Mr. Lee will find this subject more fully dealt with in part three of 'A Guide to Mediumship,' by Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, if he does not find his answer in what I have said above. He should learn how to be positive as well as sensitive.—Yours, &c.,

PSYCHIC.

A Request for Books.

SIR,—The committee of the Westcliff and Southend Spiritualists' Association desire to ask if any readers of 'LIGHT' have any books on Spiritualism that they would care to give, or sell at a nominal price, towards the formation of a library for this society. We have many inquirers for such literature and feel that a lending library would be a great acquisition to the cause here.—Yours, &c., (Mrs.) A. JORDAN.

Séance Hall, Broadway,
Southend-on-Sea.

Spiritualism in Canada

SIR,—As I am about to leave this country for Canada I shall be glad if any of your readers will give me, through 'LIGHT,' or directly, information respecting Spiritualist journals, societies, or individual Spiritualists in that country, so that I may be able to keep in touch, if possible, with the movement there.—Yours, &c., P. L. CHAMBERS.

'Fairview,' College-road, Maidstone.

Spirit Photography.

SIR,—Referring to my letter in 'LIGHT' of December 25th, p. 624, why does not someone test the matter? Can reversed portraits, at all similar to those which Mr. Wyllie obtains, be engineered on the material plane by printing from the glass side of negative, or by any other means? Would it not be worth while, in view of the opposition of such papers as the 'Times' and 'Daily Mail,' to appoint a small committee to test the question? We must get at the facts on the physical plane if we are ever to learn anything about higher ones.

There is another point worthy of note about Mr. Wyllie's spirit pictures, or 'psychic extras,' as they are called, which has not received the attention it deserves as proof of the genuineness of his mediumship, viz., the 'psychic extras' are never repeated to different people, although they frequently are to individual sitters.

For instance, I must have seen hundreds of his photographs, but have never seen an 'extra' duplicated except on my own. On my own photographs the same portraits have come again and again several times—one especially many times.

If they were the work of fraud it would require a very good memory on the part of the operator to work this successfully, whereas Mr. Wyllie, as anyone who is acquainted with him is aware, has about the most wretched memory of any man living. Again, if fraudulent, where do these extras come from? From the medium's imagination? He must have a very wonderful one in that case.—Yours, &c.,

A. K. VENNING.

Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

MRS. NORTHEK WILSON writes to say that she is undertaking a tour for spiritual work as far West as the Rocky Mountains. The Salon of the Golden Key will be closed until her return, and she warmly thanks members and friends for their kind support.

A PORTRAIT of His Majesty the King, in his Coronation robes, recently painted (by command) by Mr. Joseph Mordecai, and now hung at St. James's Palace, is expected to be on view at the forthcoming exhibition of the Royal Academy. Mr. Mordecai, who has thus been honoured, is the husband of the well-known clairvoyante, 'Clairibelle.'

SOCIETY WORK.

Notices of future events which do not exceed twenty-five words may be added to reports if accompanied by six penny stamps, but all such notices which exceed twenty-five words must be inserted in our advertising columns.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—On Sunday last Mrs. Place-Veary gave successful clairvoyant descriptions and helpful spirit messages to a large audience. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided.—*Percy Hall*.—On the 7th inst. Mr. G. R. Symons delivered a reverent and spiritual address on 'God is a Spirit, which was much enjoyed. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. P. R. Street (of Reading) delivered an interesting address on 'Belief in God,' and gave auric readings. Sunday next, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, trance address.—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mr. P. R. Street delivered a fine address on 'The God Man,' and gave auric readings. On the 9th inst. Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave clairvoyant descriptions and spirit messages. Sunday next, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, trance address.

CENTRAL LONDON.—11, St. MARTIN'S-COURT, W.C.—Sunday next, at 3.15 p.m., Mr. John Kelland; at 7 p.m., clairvoyant descriptions.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—MILTON-STREET.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. A. H. Sarfas gave addresses and successful psychometric delineations. Speaker on Sunday next, morning and evening, Mr. E. W. Wallis.—H. E. V.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—On Sunday last Mr. R. King gave an address on 'Telepathy,' and answered questions. Mr. R. Wittey kindly sang. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. A. Wilkins. Saturday, 19th, at 7 p.m., social evening. Monday, 8, Mrs. Podmore.—N. R.

CLAPHAM.—RICHMOND-PLACE, NEW-ROAD, WANDSWORTH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. R. Boddington gave an address on 'Spiritualism: Science, Philosophy, and Religion.' Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Osborne.—C. C.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last the Lyceum delegates, Mr. Percy Smythe, Mr. Trumble (of Plaistow), and Mr. Barrington (of Tottenham) gave beautiful addresses, full of enthusiasm. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Neville; at 3 p.m., Lyceum. All welcome.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Jackson spoke on 'What Shall I Do to be Saved?' Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Maunders, address, Mrs. Wesley Adams, clairvoyante. Monday, 7, ladies' circle. Thursday, 8.15, public circle.—W. Y.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. A. J. Neville gave an interesting address on 'Are we Progressing?' Mr. George F. Tilby presided. Mrs. Beaumont gave successful clairvoyant delineations. Sunday next, Mr. W. H. Shaddick on 'Facts versus Fancy.'

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. J. Kelland conducted the services. Sunday next, at 10.45 a.m., circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Baxter. Thursday, 7.45, Mrs. Neville. Tuesday, healing circle. Wednesday and Friday, 8, members' circles.—J. J. L.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave uplifting addresses, answers to questions, and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Jamrach, addresses and clairvoyant descriptions; at 3 p.m., Lyceum. Monday, 8, Wednesday, 3, Thursday, 8, meetings.—A. M. S.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last Mr. A. Richardson spoke on 'Love, and the Ministry of Angels.' Mrs. Waring sang. In the evening Mr. E. W. Wallis gave an address on 'Spiritualism Explained,' in answer to the Rev. Frank Swainson. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. A. W. Jones; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Blackburn; Wednesday, Miss Sainsbury.—J. F.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, MUNSTER-ROAD.—On Sunday afternoon last Mr. G. T. Brown opened a discussion on 'The Attitude of Spiritualists to the Churches.' In the evening the London Union speakers, Messrs. Brown, Clegg, Gwynn and Todd, gave brief addresses. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Walker, trance address and clairvoyant descriptions; at 3 p.m., Lyceum. Wednesdays, 8, circle.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL.—On Sunday morning last Mrs. Webb gave clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening Mrs. Webb gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Solo by Mrs. Dupé. On the 10th inst. the social evening for Mr. Millard's benefit was successful. Sunday next, Lyceum Anniversary; at 11.30 a.m., Miss N. Brown; at 3 p.m., open session; at 5 p.m., tea; at 7 p.m., addresses, solos, &c.; Thursday, 8, Mrs. Wilson.—C. J. W.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Abbott gave an earnest address on 'What is Life?' Mr. J. Adams presided. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Harry Pye, address.—H. B.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Blackburn spoke on 'Practical Religion,' and gave psychometric delineations. Mr. Welbelove sang. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton, trance address.—T. C. W.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—On Sunday last Mrs. Mills gave an address and psychometrical readings.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—14, HARCOURT-AVENUE.—On Sunday last Mr. W. Millard spoke on 'Spiritual Desires.'—H.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mrs. Beaurepaire gave beautiful spirit messages.—E. S.

WILLESDEN GREEN.—42, LECHMERE-ROAD, N. W.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Walsh spoke on 'Man, Know Thyself' and Madame Esma gave clairvoyant descriptions.—W.

LINCOLN.—ARCADE, UPPER ROOM.—On Sunday last Mr. Hardiman spoke and gave clairvoyant descriptions, and on Monday conducted meetings.—C. R.

WINCHESTER.—MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday evening last Captain Greenaway, of Cowes, gave an interesting address on 'Where are the So-called Dead?'

EXETER.—MARKET HALL, FORE-STREET.—On Sunday morning last Mr. G. West spoke. In the evening Mrs. Grainger gave an address, also clairvoyant descriptions at each service.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—On Sunday last Miss F. Sainsbury gave an address on 'Spiritualism: Its Use and Abuse,' and convincing clairvoyant descriptions.—J. W. M.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES-CRESCENT, N.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Neville gave an interesting address and psychometric delineations.—J. A. P.

PORTSMOUTH.—VICTORIA-ROAD, SOUTH.—On Sunday last Mr. Lacey gave addresses on 'Spiritual Healing,' in connection with our new 'Healing Centre,' and well-recognised psychic readings, and on the 9th inst. clairvoyant descriptions.

SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD.—5, SPENCER-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Pitter gave an address entitled 'Thy Kingdom Come,' On the 8th inst. Mrs. Jamrach gave an address on 'Experiences,' and psychometric delineations.—W. M. J.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.—On Sunday and Monday last Mrs. Litt delivered impressive addresses on 'How Pure in Heart' and 'Personal Responsibility,' and gave psychometric readings.—V. M. S.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. G. R. Symons gave addresses, and Mrs. Street, clairvoyant descriptions. Other meetings during the week.—A. H. C.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Bradman spoke and Mr. Richards gave clairvoyant descriptions. On the 9th inst. Mrs. Davis spoke and gave psychometric readings.—G. E. R.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STRONE-ROADS, E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Podmore gave an address on 'Phenomena Seekers,' and excellent clairvoyant descriptions. On the 10th Mrs. Neville, under control, gave clever psychometric delineations.—C. W. T.

LITTLE ILFORD.—CORNER OF CHURCH-ROAD AND THIRD-AVENUE, MANOR PARK, E.—On Sunday last Miss Violet Burton gave an address on 'Life Immortal.' On the 9th inst. Mrs. Neville gave well-recognised clairvoyant and psychometric readings.—M. C. A.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL-AVENUE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. A. Punter spoke on 'The Need of the World' and gave well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions. On the 10th inst. an address by Mr. H. Mundy was discussed.

BIRMINGHAM.—30, JOHN-STREET, VILLA CROSS, HANDSWORTH.—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. George Featherstone gave fine addresses on 'The Coming of the Kingdom' and 'The Perfect Way.' On Saturday and Monday he psychically diagnosed ailments. On the 17th Miss Coleman gave a trance address and clairvoyant descriptions.—F. L.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'Verses in Twilight.' By the REV. P. W. DE QUETTEVILLE. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. Price 2s. 6d. net.
- 'The Christ of the Holy Grail.' By JAMES MACBETH BAIN. Theosophical Publishing Society. Price 2s. 6d. net, post free, 2s. 9d.
- 'Suggestions for Increasing Ethical Stability.' By MARY E. BOOLA. C. W. Daniel, 3, Amen Corner, E.C. Price 2s. 6d. net.

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