

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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[a Newspaper.]

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The Bishop of London recently preached, at Edmonton Parish Church, a sermon on 'Life after Death.' A full report appeared in 'The Christian World Pulpit.' It is a sermon without literary value, probably quite extempore, but full of ardent unction and purpose, with passionate appeals to unbelievers and evildoers. Its literary value is about on the level of this sentence: 'A candle does not go out when you blow it out, it does not really go out, it passes into another sphere, scientists tell us; and if the candle does not go out, is the personality likely to go out?'

But the hurried crude sentences are full of suggestions, some of them mightily destructive of old conclusions. This, for instance: 'Five minutes after death you will be exactly the same person as five minutes before. As a matter of fact, death makes no difference whatever to a person.' Or this: 'What a comfort to know that that dear friend is the same on the other side, still loving us, still caring for us, still praying for us, still the same to us! Why, it is everything.' This is followed by the statement that the 'Happy Land is not "far, far away."' If so, the good Bishop might just as well 'go one better' and join us. It would immensely help him: for, though he quotes with glee Sir Oliver Lodge and others who have made the unseen things real and near, he mournfully confesses that he has no evidence, and must go back to the promise and pledge of Jesus Christ.

But he is a good way on, and it is really refreshing to find a bishop saying:—

You young men and women of to-day have, then, a most extraordinary help in your belief to what we had. We had to hold on tight against science; now you have the world of science on your side to-day; and all the professors of the universities are telling us that the things that are unseen are the real ones, and the things that are seen are the temporal ones.

The literary value of that is rather poor, but it is spiritually significant.

We do not wish to criticise a zealous man's preaching, but we do wonder how the following appeared to thoughtful people:—

The first person we shall see in the other world is Jesus Christ Himself. Do remember that—Jesus Christ Himself with the marks of the cross in His hands and His feet. Do remember that, those of you who are thinking nothing of what He has done; you who spend Good Friday, if there are any such, in mere amusement, if you think that the Person whom you will see probably five minutes after death is your Saviour with the marks of the cross on His hands and His feet, and He will say 'How did My death affect you? This I have done for thee, what hast thou done for Me?'

It is, in its way, pathetic and beautiful, but will it bear thinking out?

The Rev. J. H. Jowett, M.A., has published through Mr. A. Melrose (London) a Sermon on 'Our Blessed Dead.' It is a pretty and pleasant but conventional and rather obvious exposition of the words, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord,' &c. The preacher calls it 'a trumpet-peal by the open grave,' but he mournfully adds:—

I am bound to say that this trumpet-peal does not concern the entire cemetery, but only sounds over particular graves. The beatitude is not for the dead, but for 'the dead who die in the Lord.' Concerning the merely dead we are told little or nothing. All I can say is that down that road the Lord has lit no lamps, and I can see no light, and I have no revelation. All the light is on the other road, which 'shineth more and more even unto perfect day.'

It is this kind of dismal nescience that incites us to push our Gospel 'in season and out of season' upon ministers of religion. For really, what a heathenish confession it is that 'the Lord has lit no lamps' along the way the unbelievers go! 'No lamps,' remember. No lamps even for those who never had a winning chance to be in what the preacher understands by being 'in the Lord'—for those who never properly heard of Him—for those whose reason never grappled with, or could never comprehend or accept the preacher's almost jargon. 'All the light' is for the favoured few!

What a mercy it would be if these 'we are a garden walled around' preachers would join the poorest little Spiritualist circle within their reach! They would learn something, and see the lamps lit on all roads.

In August (from 6th to 10th) will be held at Berlin the Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Progress. It will be a great occasion. The Congress, as explained by its promoters—

seeks to bring into closer union, for exchange of ideas, mutual service, and the promotion of their common aims the historic liberal churches, the liberal elements in all churches, the scattered liberal congregations and isolated workers for religious freedom and progress in many lands. It aims to be a source of encouragement and strength to them in their struggles against dogmatic intolerance and ecclesiastical tyranny. It cultivates large and fraternal relations with the great liberal movements in religion now going on under various names and auspices throughout the world.

The Prospectus shows that many of the foremost theologians and teachers of the world will attend. Amongst them, put down as speakers, we notice the honoured names of Dr. G. Bonet-Maury, Dr. S. A. Eliot, the Hon. Karl Schrader, Mary B. Westenholz, R. J. Campbell, Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, Dr. C. W. Wendte, Dr. Rudolf Eucken, Dr. August J. Dormer, Dr. Rudolph Otto, Dr. George Boros, Dr. Adolf Harnack, Professor P. Sabatier, Don Romolo Murri, Dr. Wilfred Monod, and others of all 'faiths' and from all parts of the world.

A prominent place on the Programme is given to a Declaration by Dr. Otto Pfeiderer, on 'What is it to be a Religious Liberal?' We give the principal clauses of it, as interesting and timely for all lovers of truth and charity:—

Fear, love, and trust in God, above everything else, and love your neighbour as yourself. Approach God as a child its

father, as Christ showed Him to us, as Christ himself approached Him. Deal with the human beings around you as a brother among brethren, as Christ taught and practised; do this and you are a Christian, the child as well as the man, the plain woman of the people as well as the learned professor. Bravely wage war against the sin in yourself and around you, but with knightly weapons.

With all your gentleness, especially towards personal affronts, protect and guard the sanctuary of the Right, the right of others and your own! Do not stand aside, on your dignity, in the struggle of opinions and political affairs, that your garments may not be smirched, but join with your brothers if you believe their cause to be essentially the right one!

Oh, how many brothers and sisters you will then have, whom now you will recognise for the first time! The pious Brahmin, who in fervent prayer turns him to his God; the Israelite without guile, who prays, 'If I have Thee only, I care not for heaven and earth'; Plato, who, describing the divine love, adds, 'If this love were to appear in a human form, what emotions of affection would it not awaken in men'; the heretic of the Age of the Reformation, seeking for truth, whom even a Luther and a Calvin still deemed it their duty to anathematise; the Catholic maiden, who, after heavy misconduct, like Marguerite in 'Faust,' sinks down before the image of the mother of God in shame and penitence; the noble socialistic enthusiast, whose theories you may feel yourself compelled to fight against with all your might, but before whose character and motive you lift your hat in reverence—this whole, great company, lo! they are your brothers and sisters, your spiritual kindred.

The General Office is at Boston, U.S.A. (25, Beacon-street).

We have received two small books by James Allen: one on 'Above Life's Turmoil' (with a cleverly produced portrait), published by G. P. Putnam's Sons (New York and London); the other on 'From Passion to Peace,' published by Wm. Rider and Son, Limited (London). Both of these books are spiritually, mentally and ethically helpful, and their titles exactly indicate their drift. 'Above Life's Turmoil' contains twenty short meditative or homiletic Essays on 'True Happiness,' 'The Overcoming of Self,' 'The Uses of Temptation,' 'Your Mental Attitude,' 'The Reign of Law,' 'The Use of Reason,' 'Contentment in Activity,' and kindred subjects.

The thought of Jesus Christ as the culmination of many revealings of the God in man is 'in the air.' Mr. R. J. Campbell gave expression to it in one of his recent sermons, reminding us that the Thames is not called the Thames along its whole route, although it is the same river. At Oxford it is called the Isis. 'Even so, the Christ eternal, God in humanity, has been known by many names, but has always stood for the same thing—love coming to its own in sacrifice. The name matters less than the fact.'

Mr. Elliot Stock publishes 'He Restoreth My Soul,' by A. H. W. (Canada), a book deserving attention. Written with some 'orthodoxy' at the heart of it, and under the inspiration of a certain amount of evangelical unction and pious fervour, it contains a great deal of good practical common-sense, with racy outlooks upon the Church, the world, and the home. The writer sees in selfishness a 'horrid evil thing,' but the corruption of a good—a God-given instinct for self-preservation. The book is simply but eloquently written.

SPIRIT HEALING.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. A. Rex, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., at the Rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., 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.

CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS.

On Saturday and Sunday, July 2nd and 3rd, I attended the Conference of the Spiritualists' National Union at Leicester, and as I found the proceedings most interesting and instructive, perhaps a few of my 'impressions' may be welcome to the readers of 'LIGHT.'

When I found that upwards of one hundred men and women had travelled from all parts of the country (from Glasgow, Barrow-in-Furness, Paignton, Cardiff, and London, as well as from many of the large towns in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the Midland Counties), I thought, 'Well, these people must be in earnest, and their belief in Spiritualism must be very sincere,' and when I found that the local friends, a mere handful comparatively, had arranged to provide sleeping accommodation for all these visitors, and had in a variety of ways accepted the responsibility of ensuring their comfort, I concluded that they, too, were commendably devoted to 'the cause.'

There was a large party from the Manchester district and another considerable contingent from the neighbouring county of 'broad acres,' Yorkshire, and the executive council had a busy morning on Saturday in preparation for the labours of the day.

Saturday afternoon and evening were devoted to business, and about six hours were occupied in the consideration of a number of reports, proposals, and projects which were deemed of great moment. The tone and temper of the members were admirable and the tact and readiness of the chairman and secretary were conspicuous—above all, their saving sense of humour often brightened what would otherwise have been tedious details.

As an observer, I was struck with the practical and serious spirit displayed, but it sounded odd to hear men talking of 'legislating' for the movement. Some of the proposals were hardly sufficiently far-seeing, but almost invariably the common sense of the meeting led to wise conclusions, and I could not fail to observe and commend the spirit of reasonableness that was displayed. The uppermost idea was—'the good of the cause,' and so long as that thought prevails there is not much to fear.

No impartial onlooker could have concluded that Spiritualists were all knaves or fools. Even a Marriott would have been forced to admit that he was in the company of shrewd, hard-headed, and clever men and women, who were as keen and earnest in their opposition to fraud in the guise of mediumship, and as anxious to 'root it out,' as he could wish. It would have been equally as manifest to him that these sensible men and women were devoted Spiritualists because they knew the genuine from the false, and had supreme convictions regarding the reality and value of the demonstrations of spirit presence and identity which he could not affect.

Another important point that was forced upon me was the growing sense of solidarity among the Spiritualists of the world. Kindly and fraternal greetings were received, and warmly reciprocated, from the Spiritualists of America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and from the Continental comrades who had assembled at Brussels. All this is good, and makes for that universal brotherhood and the federation of the world which prophets and seers foretell.

Surely it is not for nothing that men and women leave their work and homes, travel hundreds of miles, contribute freely to the funds besides bearing other expenses, and sit through five long meetings! Nothing short of a deep and abiding conviction in the correctness of their views, and of the world's need of the knowledge which they themselves possess, would prompt the officers and council generously to undertake all the work connected with the Union and the promulgation of the truths for which they so zealously labour. This loyal devotion is something to be proud of—to be reckoned with—whenever Spiritualism and its opponents come to grips.

It was an inspiration on Sunday to see the large and intelligent audiences and to watch their faces as they listened to the speakers. They readily caught the points of the scien-

tific addresses of Professor Barrett and Mr. Young. It was evident that these were thoughtful people, and that they understood. The speaking was *not* above their heads, and Professor Barrett evidently warmed to his work when he found that his best thoughts were appreciated. When Mr. Morse, in his somewhat critical address, dealt incisively with the obstacles within the movement to its spread, he found that his hearers were not afraid of frank and friendly criticism—nay, more, they were ready and anxious for reform. They wanted clean, rational, and religious Spiritualism—and spiritual mediumship.

Whatever may be the opinion of other people regarding Spiritualism, it was evident that these folk had settled the point—to them: Spiritualism is the strongest religious influence in their lives. It is not merely as a subject for study, for scientific research, for critical analysis and philosophic synthesis—it is the Truth of truths, the Science of Life, the religion of spirit, and the philosophy which explains the meaning and purpose of individuality and experience, reveals human persistence, and emphasises man's progressive realisation of his loftiest ideals and deepest religious dreams, both here and hereafter.

My readers ought to have heard them sing: especially the words of the inspired Lizzie Doten:—

The world hath felt a quick'ning breath
From heaven's eternal shore,
And souls triumphant over death
Return to earth once more.
For this we hold our jubilee,
For this with joy we sing—
'O Grave, where is thy victory?
O Death, where is thy sting?'

It was enough to stir the blood of the most callous—it was abundant proof that Spiritualism had won their hearts: it explained their devotion and their enthusiasm. It was at once a watchword and a triumphant battle-cry—the cry of life over death, of spirit over matter, of faith over fear, of knowledge over ignorance and scepticism.

It was evident in the morning that a strong impression had been made on Professor Barrett, and I was not at all surprised when he commenced his speech at the evening meeting with the avowal that he had been much struck, much interested, and was greatly pleased to observe the spirit which had dominated the proceedings—the fine spirit of brotherliness and love. Evidently he had been touched and inspired also, for his evening address was warmer and his thoughts flowed more freely than in the morning.

Say what we will, emotion counts, sentiment means a great deal; and these people were alive, sympathetic and responsive. They vibrated like a well-tuned instrument to the player's touch—they realised the presence of the unseen; they caught the inspiration and were moved to tears or roused to enthusiasm; they enjoyed a touch of humour and applauded an eloquent period; they were indignant with those who desecrated the sacred office of mediumship and degraded Spiritualism to selfish or mercenary ends, or they were stirred to fine appreciation of great principles. To them their beloved Spiritualism is a God-given revelation from the angel world. Is it any wonder, then, that Spiritualism is a vital force in their lives—a religious faith, a reasoned conviction, a scientific assurance, and that in consequence they are strong, confident, kindly and determined? Well might one of the speakers say, quoting an inspiring spirit's words:—

We are each and all another's,
We can never stand alone,
And for pain or wrong inflicted
We must every one atone.
Let us feel that we are brothers,
That our interests are one—
We shall help each other onward
And the Will of God be done.

CHIEF.

TRANSITION.—Mrs. Alexander Brown, of George-square, Greenock, passed away on June 25th last, aged seventy-two years, after a prolonged illness. She was for forty-five years an earnest believer in Spiritualism, and was highly valued for her bright and loving nature by a large circle of friends.

MEDIUMSHIP: FROM A SPIRIT'S VIEWPOINT.

(Continued from page 329.)

As a medium is an ordinary human being with ultra-ordinary powers, he must be regarded from a twofold standard. As a human being he must be treated as an average man. I mean that people must not expect a medium, simply because he is a medium, to be different from other men, in any affairs connected with everyday life; but when he is exercising his super-normal powers they must not expect that he will only do as other humans do, and rank him as a charlatan if he exercises faculties beyond their comprehension. These two points need to be clearly realised. It is because they are not, that so much fraud is imputed to mediums needlessly. I do not for a moment wish to state that many mediums are not capable of fraud; alas! we on this side know too well that they are, but it often happens that pure psychical power is accounted fraud because it is not sufficiently understood. A medium is not necessarily a man of high morals, and in his life there are most strong temptations, but if mediumship were more understood there would be less chance of fraud.

If a medium has a comfortable income, if he has the respect and confidence of friends, his work can be carried on in a purely scientific and spiritual way; but if his daily bread depends upon his takings, it is small wonder that, when spiritual means fail, he is at times tempted to supplement them by artificial. He finds that by the use of his occult powers, strengthened, if necessary, by man-made means, he can command money. To an undeveloped mortal—I mean morally or spiritually—there is nothing sacred, and to give descriptions of spirits or other similar mediumistic practices seems to him to be as commonplace as to eat or drink. Remember a man is judged by one 'Who trieth the heart and reins.' It is the great Spirit alone who can judge; He who knows the light given to each man's soul. Give instead of blame, prayer that the medium of a low moral nature may be enlightened, purified, and strengthened, and also give your support to any scheme that may be set on foot to better the conditions for the exercise of mediumship.

If you admit that there are things in this universe that cannot be understood by the ordinary bodily senses, cannot you understand that if such things can be, the conditions under which they come cannot be quite ordinary? If a chemical experiment is to be made there is needed, first, the operator, who must understand the materials he handles; then the materials must be to hand at a given moment, and, if the experiment is to succeed, each factor, each ingredient, must be in an exact ratio to all the other factors or ingredients. It is exactly parallel in the case of a medium. The spirit is the operator, the factors on which he is going to experiment (the medium and his psychical powers, and those of the sitters) must be present and must be in order for a definite result to be produced, so that a man still in the flesh can recognise the individuality of the spirit expressing himself. Here, then, is the problem of all spirit communications. The operator knows his business, but unless he has the right materials and can combine them successfully, the result is negative. In the case of a chemical experiment a first failure may be followed by success, so with spirit communications. Try and test, and test and try, comply with conditions, change the medium if necessary, but believe that the ratio does exist, given which the experiment will succeed.

(To be continued.)

INTERMENT.—The mortal remains of Mrs. J. J. Vango were interred at Manor Park Cemetery on Tuesday, July 5th. The service was ably conducted by Miss Florence Morse, who had long been an intimate friend of the deceased lady. There was a large gathering of friends, and the floral tributes were numerous and beautiful. Miss Morse delivered touching and impressive addresses, both in the chapel and at the graveside. The hymns used included 'Abide With Me,' which had been sung at Mrs. Vango's request only two days before her transition, and it was thought that she might have had a premonition that she was approaching the end of her earthly pilgrimage.

'COMMUNION WITH SAINTS.'

A REMARKABLE DREAM-VISION.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there.
There is no fireside, howsoever defended,
But has one vacant chair.

—LONGFELLOW.

Along the shores of the Caribbean Sea—the 'boca triste' the Venezuelans call it, in bittered memory of those long ago sanguinary wars with Spain, when the Spaniards committed the most terrible atrocities towards the conquered natives—stood, about twenty-two years ago, a large mining station close to a small village, Tucacas by name. The station itself was for the output of copper, brought through the primæval forest from the Aroa mines, five thousand feet above the coast line, then worked by a large English company.

It was a weird, mournful coast, with hardly any vegetation, save in the outlying lagoons, where the black mangrove grew thick in the stagnant water, swarming with the poisonous malaria mosquitoes and the millions of minute sand flies, which sting and torment poor humanity, descending in swarms on their habitations in the early mornings, before trade winds rise and blow them away. There the anaconda rears its hideous head above the mangrove bushes and the huge cayman takes up his abode during the hottest time of day, basking in the sun. The nights are as hot almost as the days—the thermometer rarely falling below ninety-seven degrees Fah. in the shade, and the mighty army of locusts periodically darkens the sun as it passes, carrying with it famine and destruction.

The flat, low-lying coast, with scarcely any ebb and flow in the sea, is the most unhealthy along the South American shores, and called, like the West coast of Africa: 'The white man's grave.' Two English cemeteries, 'Campos Santos,' nearly opposite one another, close to the sea-coast, speak for themselves of the many victims yellow fever from time to time has claimed; but here, even the dead are not allowed to rest in peace—the land, or 'calling,' crabs burrow in the sandy soil, unearthing the coffins, making passages through the same, to reach their ghastly contents, scattering the bones and skulls about, until the wind and tide throw them up on the opposite Savannah, where they lie unheeded and unburied, a free study for anyone who sees them, and who, like the legendary Danish prince, immortalised by the great bard, wishes to ponder over the great question: 'To be or not to be.'

For four years I lived there, and, dreadful as the place seemed to me at first, I gradually got to like it, and to like the people in whose midst I lived.

Amongst the many friends I made out there was a very old lady—a native of Curaçoa, the small volcanic island, in whose roomy harbour, amongst other vessels, the steamers sailing between Puerto Cabello and New York stop to take the mails on board. We were next door neighbours, and when I learnt to speak Spanish, which did not take me long, we became great friends, and she used to relate many curious and interesting incidents in her life, more particularly during the time before the emancipation of the slaves.

Amongst other things she told me about the loss of her eldest son, who, she said, was a child of singular beauty of mind and who had never given his parents a moment of anxiety. They sent him to a large school in Valencia many miles away from his home, and in those long-ago days no railway communication with that city existed. During his absence from home his aunt (his mother's sister) spent a few weeks with her relations, and while there she had one night a singularly vivid dream—a dream which so startled her that as soon as she awoke, very early in the morning, she went to her sister's bedroom, rousing her from her sleep. She said: 'I dreamt that Fernando came to me and stood beside my bed; he was dressed in beautiful shining white, and held a bunch of tall lilies in his hand. I spoke to him in my dream and said: "My dear, where are you going like that?" He raised the flowers in his hand and said: "Tell mother I am going to a place where only those enter who have no stains on

their garments." I looked down on my own sleeping-gown and saw a large, dark spot. When I looked up again Fernando was gone.'

'My son is dead,' cried my friend, 'and came to you to tell me.'

Her sister tried to pacify her, but to no purpose; she felt certain in her own mind that her beloved child was no longer amongst those living on earth. As news travelled very slowly in those parts of the world, she had to endure nearly a month of agonising suspense before the sad news was brought to her that her son *had* passed to the everlasting life on the very night on which he had appeared to his aunt in her dream.

While my friend was telling me this, her face was bathed in tears. Her loss was an ever abiding sorrow; for her, time has brought but scanty, if any healing on its wing.

Freemantle Croft,
Nr. Alton, Hants.

M. WOODMAN.

NOTHING HAPPENS BUT THE UNEXPECTED.

[The following was sent us by a lady who has been a Spiritualist for nearly forty-two years.—ED. 'LIGHT']

My cousin, Thomas H. Webb, of Dublin, an occasional contributor to 'LIGHT,' has had thousands of communications from the spirit world. Years ago he and his wife began to sit regularly, if possible every day, using at first a small table that tilted, and afterwards a Ouija board. For a year or two no mortal but themselves knew of their investigations; gradually, however, a few relatives and friends were initiated, and one or two sometimes sat with Mr. and Mrs. Webb. Since the transition of his wife my cousin and his son have most frequently sat together, without other sitters, and many messages have been received from her.

Lately, I had a German guest, a Miss Meyer, who, though very sceptical as to Spiritualism, was interested in the subject, and wished to test for herself the genuineness of the phenomena. Accordingly I asked my cousin to show her his Ouija board and read her some of the communications, all of which he had written out when received. As to a sitting, he told me there would be little use in attempting it, the presence of a stranger being usually deterrent, besides which the power had been latterly growing weaker.

Yet, after talking to Miss Meyer for a while of his own experiences, and showing her some automatic drawings, &c., he proposed their trying with each a hand on the Ouija board pointer. He always keeps his right hand free for noting down what comes. On this occasion his hopes of result were small, while Miss Meyer expected nothing. However, the pointer soon moved, and on his asking, 'Is anyone there?' 'Yes,' was answered. He then said: 'Please spell your name.' And now comes the remarkable part. My cousin is quite unacquainted with German. Miss Meyer purposely looked away from the board, and never knew what was being spelled out. Yet the rest of the communication was in German, and a name was given known to no one in Ireland except herself, that of her maternal grandfather, *Wilhelm Billeb*. She then spoke, and the following conversation ensued:—

A.M.: 'Dost thou come to me?' W.B.: 'Yes.' A.M.: 'Wilt thou give my name?' W.B.: 'Adele.' A.M.: 'Is mother with thee?' W.B.: 'Yes.' A.M.: 'Please name some one who is with thee?' W.B.: 'Dorette.' A.M.: 'Hast thou any message for me?' W.B.: 'Yes.' A.M.: 'Please spell it out.' W.B.: 'Thou art taking baths that are too cold. Mother has something to tell thee. Dorette.' (Spelled out.) A.M.: 'Hast thou a message for me?' D.: 'I am happy.'

Dorette was the mother's name.

It was the case that Miss Meyer had been taking cold morning baths, and feeling chilly afterwards. Since that sitting she has modified the coldness of the water, and with good results.

MIDLAND DISTRICT UNION.—Referring to Mr. F. London's letter in 'LIGHT,' p. 332, Mr. H. A. Terry writes: 'Mr. London's society was not in my mind when making my report.'

FROM THE FOREIGN REVIEWS.

The 'Revue Spirite' is now publishing as a serial a translation, by Professor Moutonnier, of Mr. Stead's 'Letters from Julia' in addition to Léopold Dauvil's French version of Florence Marryat's 'There is no Death.' Paul Nord writes on 'The Role of Spiritualism and Psychical Science in Social Evolution,' showing that they form an element of conciliation between experimental science and metaphysical speculation or intuitive religion, bridging over the gaps between the various conceptions, and presenting Nature as a whole, formed in interdependent parts. They therefore occupy a central position among all branches of work for the progress of mankind. 'Rouxel' gives extracts from Seneca, showing that the Stoic philosopher insisted strongly on the difference between the body and the soul, ascribing to the latter a celestial origin, though he seems to have regarded the soul as semi-material in essence, yet always tending towards the pure spirit from which it derives its existence. Three communications describing the recent Congress at Brussels agree in assigning high importance to the fact of the admission of spirit photographs to the International Exhibition as marking an epoch and constituting a kind of official recognition of the subject.

In the 'Revue Scientifique et Morale du Spiritisme' M. Gabriel Delanne continues his series of editorial articles on 'Direct Writing and Apports,' in the course of which he indicates that such phenomena may not always be produced in the same way, and that in some cases the writing may be done by the projected 'double' or spirit-body of the medium; but he tells us also that 'it is by studying with perseverance, and without preconceptions, the extra-corporeal manifestations of the living being that we shall learn to understand better those of discarnate spirits.' An article headed 'Coincidences' mentions various instances in which men condemned to death have announced the speedy end of their persecutors; and the question is raised as to whether the fulfilment of these predictions depends on suggestion or on a power possessed by the will of the persons uttering them.

'L'Echo du Merveilleux' publishes articles representing Dante as an occultist, astrologer and necromancer, and gives an illustration taken from the Catacombs which appears to represent the evocation of a spirit from the tomb by a man clothed in what seem to be priest's robes.

The 'Revue Spirite Belge,' ably conducted by M. Van Geebergen, General Secretary of the Belgian National Spiritualist Federation, contains an account of the Brussels Congress, and articles and discussions on various subjects of interest to Spiritualists. The Editor makes a crushing reply to a journalist who had spoken of Mr. Peters as a sort of Sherlock Holmes, who, after a brief examination of a stick, a glove, or a hat, would be able to write the complete biography of the owner. But this, as is pointed out, is discounting a real achievement on the score of an imaginary one. No one can test Sherlock Holmes' powers, but Peters we have here with us. He has been known to describe a picture postcard enclosed in an opaque envelope; the card represented a camp with soldiers, and Peters described one of the soldiers at this camp and his tragic end. M. Van Geebergen says:—

The existence of a whole world invisible to our eyes, beyond the limits of our senses, a world swarming with intense life, much more real than our own, is proved by the experience of seers in all ages, and is further demonstrated, even to the most wilfully blind, by a mass of phenomena which must be admitted by every honest investigator.

In 'Psychische Studien' for June, Herr Walter Bormann discusses at some length Professor Münsterberg's asserted exposure of Eusapia Paladino, and ends by saying that no confidence can be placed in his account of the matter, first because the confederate was apparently not a serious researcher, and everything rests on his statement; and secondly because Professor Münsterberg's own account of Eusapia's manoeuvres in withdrawing her foot from her shoe is quite inconceivable, especially as the Professor does not say that his surmise was confirmed by immediate examination. He adds:—

Ten years ago Professor Münsterberg declared that

serious men of science should simply have nothing to do with occult matters; now he experiments, but—how? Still, the truth is coming his way, however slowly and haltingly.

In the July number, Colonel Josef Peter points out that in a letter, subsequently published, Professor Münsterberg directly contradicts, from the evidence of his own senses, his assertion in the original article that Eusapia had withdrawn her foot from her shoe in order to stretch it backwards into the cabinet, for he says that although his laboratory work rendered him highly observant of tactile impressions, he was unable to perceive any difference in the pressure of her foot on his own at the time when (as he asserts) she must have made the change. We may infer that the Professor's sensations are more correct than his reasoning, and that Eusapia did *not* perform the almost impossible and quite incredible feat ascribed to her.

It would appear from an article in 'Die Uebersinnliche Welt' that Messrs. Marriott and Maskelyne have an imitator in Berlin, who professes to show how spirit phenomena are performed. He raises plates by means of indiarubber suckers, depresses the scale of a letter-balance by using a hair, levitates tables by a hook which he catches in his finger-ring, and the public takes it all for granted, not knowing that it has been scientifically proved over and over again that phenomena have been produced without such adventitious aids. A comparison is drawn between real materialisations and those produced by this 'exposer,' and the distinction is clearly brought out between a mere stage effect, without life or movement, and a personage like 'Katie King,' who for the time being literally shared in the life of the occasion, and was subjected to the most stringent tests to prove that she was not the medium, but a separate and independent personality.

THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF SPIRITUALISM.

It is a significant fact that although many persons are disinclined to admit that Spiritualism is a religion, Spiritualist 'Churches' are being established all over the land. That Spiritualism in its 'higher aspects,' to use 'M. A., Oxon's' phrase, has a religious, or spiritual, significance cannot be denied even by those who are mainly interested in it as a scientific investigation. Even the Society for Psychical Research is reaching that stage of inquiry at which, having obtained strong and convincing demonstrations of the presence and identity of Mr. Myers, and other spirit friends, the next step involves questions as to the status, the conditions and experiences of those who communicate from the other side. When the continued existence of any given individual is satisfactorily proved, then of necessity the inquiry resolves itself into the consideration of where he is, how he is situated in relation to others, how his past earth life has affected his state and prospects, and what are his social, moral, and spiritual opportunities.

Most of us do not find it possible to rest content with the mere knowledge of human survival—the whole problem of future existence, association, and experience opens up before the hungry heart, which naturally desires to know whether death means loss or gain—heaven or hell—stagnation or progress—endless misery or God-ward growth. In fact, there is no subject that comes properly within the scope of religion that is not included in the purview of the earnest Spiritualist as part of his Spiritualism.

'THE PROGRESS OF A MYSTIC' is described by the Rev. Holden E. Sampson in a shilling book bearing that title, and published by Messrs. Rebman, Ltd., as consisting of four stages or epochs, those of the Enthusiast, the Scientist, the Wanderer, and the Mystic. The first arouses the desire to solve the problems which perplex mankind; the second brings the student to the point where human knowledge can take him no further, and he launches out into unexplored regions of knowledge, which ultimately reveal a vista transcending anything taught by material science. The epoch of wandering, guided by intuition, may last for years: a time of 'temptations' and 'ordeals,' of mental stress and suffering, of 'ecstasies' and 'rapture,' until the mystic illumination brings assurance and certainty. To this is added a chapter on 'the Scala,' or 'ladder of attainment,' adapted from Mme. Blavatsky's 'Voice of the Silence.'

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CANON HENSON'S SERMONS.

Canon Henson at St. Margaret's on one side of Westminster Abbey, and Archdeacon Wilberforce on the other side of it, are two notable arms supporting the Dean of the Abbey itself in his rationally moderating influence as the representative of 'sweet reasonableness' and peace. Between them something should be done towards bringing a little nearer the time when the Church that calls itself 'National' should be made so, and be thereby made passably honest, by legalising the motley mob who are in possession within its pale.

Archdeacon Wilberforce is a good deal of a mystic and something of a Spiritualist: Canon Henson is more direct, insurgent and matter-of-fact: but both have sympathies with nonconformity and both seem a little ashamed of being inside while the church doors are banged against the prophets who cannot or will not swear to make their messages conform to the Thirty-nine Articles. If they were still more ashamed and uncomfortable, we should think all the better of them.

A volume of 'Westminster Sermons,' by Canon Henson (London: James Clarke and Co.), has been sent to us; and, though just a trifle disappointing because of its over churchy subjects, we very gladly welcome it because of the note of freedom which at all events whispers through it. But Canon Henson can play the clarion when he likes, though it must be difficult at St. Margaret's to do it with such subjects as 'The Historic Episcopate and Intercommunion,' 'Anglicanism and Reunion,' 'Rabbinism and Fraternity,' and 'The Christian's Duty to Respect the General Conscience.' Still, on these and all his subjects, the discourses seem to be written in the sunshine and with the study windows open.

The dominant note in them is UNION. A short preface indicates that this subject was in the preacher's mind in compiling this volume. He evidently wants to lay stress upon the word 'National' in the phrase 'National Church,' and holds that there is an 'older Anglicanism' which recognised this emphasis and which it is desirable to recover and re-establish. He says, with sufficient plainness:—

The question of Reunion, which has filled so large a place in religious discussions during recent years, would at once enter a more hopeful phase, if the prohibitive condition now insisted upon by Anglican authorities (in spite of Anglican history which might seem to disallow it, as involving self-stultification) were abandoned; and negotiations with the

other Reformed Churches were undertaken on a basis of recognised Christian Fraternity. Such recognition, however, involves 'Inter-communion' and in the present state of feeling among the Anglican clergy necessitates a large sacrifice of prejudices and preferences.

Alas, it is precisely 'prejudices and preferences' which dominate everywhere, even in the camp of 'The Anglican Clergy'!

A sermon on 'The Nobility of the Berœans' sets forth, perhaps as well as any other in the book, the desire for a union the result of reasoning, and for inclusion determined by thought. The sermon is, of course, based on the fine saying in the Acts of the Apostles: 'Now these (the Berœans) were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.' As Canon Henson reads this, the Berœans were not commended for their credulity but for their readiness to examine and to decide upon evidence and sense. He does not expressly say so, but it is evidently somewhere at the back of his mind, that something of the spirit of clerical exclusiveness and churchy prejudice is the product of a disinclination to act solely upon examination and reasoning. Thus the Canon sets forth specimen cases of the Church's condemnation of examiners and reasoners, but, oddly enough, while he puts forward the Berœans as models, his specimen cases knock down the Berœans' standard of appeal. They examined and tested things by an appeal to the scriptures, but it is precisely in the appeal to the scriptures that some modern Christians have, according to Canon Henson, gone wrong. When the Church of the seventeenth century condemned Galileo it did so on the ground that his astronomy contradicted the Bible story. When the Church of the nineteenth century condemned Colenso it did so for a similar reason. When a religious panic made the religious public tremble, partly with rage and partly with fear, upon the publication of Darwin's 'Origin of Species' and the 'Descent of Man,' the religious public 'repeated the error of the Thessalonian bigots who persecuted St. Paul.'

One has to read between the lines to see how all this is illustrated by the Berœans, how it bears upon Christian unity, and how it serves as a rebuke to the Christian excluders and bigots. But the lesson has its great uses, when the Canon says:—

Not the Bible, but the observations and reasonings of scientific students of nature, must decide the truth of an astronomical theory. . . . Questions of historical literary criticism could not be determined by appeals to ecclesiastical decisions. . . . The Bible is not the authority in scientific inquiries; and to bring these to the test of scripture is on the face of it to perpetrate an injustice, and, we must add, an act of folly also.

A short discourse on 'Things Essential and Things Non-essential' goes almost to the root of the matter, though the Canon stops, in company with the Thirty-nine Articles, at 'Holy Scripture.' At the English Reformation a religious revolution was, he says, effected. Alike in doctrine and in discipline the whole ecclesiastical system of the country was changed. 'Questions of specific forms of the Christian ministry, of disciplinary procedure, of the mode of public worship, of "establishment" or non-establishment, are ruled out. None of these can be brought within the definition of essentials.' They become questions of expediency.

This is tested by the case of the Wesleyans, and the Canon seems convinced that the Wesleyan community and its ministry might quite well be accepted as in communion with the Church: and this is followed by the larger conclusion, that the principle which would include the Wesleyans

'would manifestly demand a wider application, an application wide enough to bring within our religious fellowship all those "separated bodies" which agree with us in the essentials of faith and morals, and in the reverent use of the sacraments of the Gospel.'

We could not expect a Canon of the Church to go further, though we are persuaded that some even higher dignitaries, in their hearts, do; but we will fill up the measure by plainly declaring that anything short of spiritual union, based on love to God and love to Man, loyalty to God and loyalty to Man, 'the communion of' the saintly, and the fellowship of angels unseen and seen, is failure to reach the fountain head. The Canon stops at a doctrine or two, at baptism and a sacrament. But that is stopping at the letter and at an external form. Beyond these lies the Promised Land of the Religion which Jesus indicated when he said: 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.'

THE NEW MEDIUM IN ROME.

EXTRAORDINARY SEANCE WITH LUCIA SORDI.

After an interval of more than two months I have attended, by invitation, another sitting with the medium Signora Lucia Sordi, of whom I gave an account on pp. 83, 119 of 'LIGHT.' I went with some distrust, for in the meantime certain rumours had spread which threw doubt on the genuineness of the phenomena; but after the crucial proofs which I obtained, and the unquestionable success of the psychical manifestations which occurred in my presence, if I still retained the slightest doubt of their objective reality, I should have to deny the testimony of my senses, and therefore the evidence for any other event in my life.

All the phenomena took place by the light of a photographer's large lantern, placed on a shelf fixed to the wall of the room about four feet from the ground. This light was sufficient to enable me to distinguish clearly the outlines of the other four persons who sat round the table. The room was also faintly illumined by gleams which filtered through the chinks of the shutters, for the sitting took place at 6 p.m., in June, therefore a couple of hours before sunset.

Long experience and various disillusionings have made me very cautious in these matters. I therefore did not omit a single precaution for preventing all possible deception, and during the experiments I did not relinquish for a moment the left hand of the medium, while her right hand was firmly bound to the hand of the other controller. This last precaution was, in fact, superfluous, because, as I have said, I could easily distinguish all the sitters and their movements; and, further, because the most intricate bindings are of no avail with this medium. At the first sittings when she went into the cabinet her hands and arms were firmly bound with stout cord, and secured with many knots and seals, but after a short time the cord was thrown out of the cabinet *with all the knots and seals intact*, and the medium was found completely free.

Sometimes the medium's outer garment was thrown out of the cabinet, and as it was firmly secured to her body by the cords, no one could tell how it had been removed from under the labyrinth of knots, *which had not been disturbed in any way*. Small bells were attached to the medium's clothes, so that they would have sounded in case she had made any attempt to free herself from the fastenings, and yet by some mysterious power she was liberated from them without the slightest ringing being heard. Then handcuffs were applied to the medium's wrists, and they were similarly removed; the same happened to a strait-waistcoat, specially constructed, with a metal belt having a clamp to hold the ends of the cords, so that they could not be detached by any effort.

The medium was finally confined in a corner of the room, enclosed by a strong wooden fence more than two yards high, and with the cross-bars so far apart as to prevent their being

used to climb over it. At the end of the sitting, on lighting up, Signora Sordi was found quietly seated on a chair, or lying on a sofa in trance, *a yard or two outside the fence*. After this the cabinet was discarded as useless, and the medium now sits at the table along with the other experimenters, without falling into trance, and joins in the conversation.

I shall now relate in precise terms the extraordinary phenomena which I witnessed at the recent séance. On two occasions the table, on whose surface our hands rested, took a sudden and rapid flight, and after going half round the room silently returned to its place without striking against any of the experimenters, thus giving proof of remarkable dexterity and precision in carrying out this new kind of gymnastic exercise. I plainly saw it in outline as it passed across a beam of light from the window, and am therefore certain that it was not moved by any visible agency.

Then some small instruments performed evolutions in the air; a bell rang more than a yard above our heads, and a trumpet and tambourine accompanied our singing of a popular melody.

These different simultaneous actions would require more than one person to perform them. None of us moved from his place, nor could have done so without the others perceiving it; who then were the hidden operators? No one could have entered the room; I had searched the house all over and in every corner before the séance, and am sure that there was no one in it except those present at the sitting. The door of the house and that of the séance-room were locked, the keys being left in the locks in order to prevent the use of duplicate keys. No one who has a grain of sense will say that it was possible for any outsider to introduce himself into a small room, sufficiently lighted, and occupied by five persons, without being perceived.

My memory cannot retain all the phenomena of touchings which followed, for often all the sitters were touched at the same time by invisible and visible hands, of various shapes and sizes, but with the natural warmth of the living hand. I could even perceive the beating of the pulse of one of the materialised hands, and I called to mind that a similar experience is recorded by Sir William Crookes.

The rough, strong hand of 'Remigio,' the medium's spirit guide, began to tease me; it held on to me, pulled my coat, pressed my shoulders, tapped me on the back, and after these caprices it left me in peace. But its place was soon taken by a slight female hand, which I was allowed to touch gently, for which purpose I asked my neighbour to release my hand for a moment. I immediately recognised this frail hand by its long, thin fingers, by the varicose veins on the back, as well as by a special movement by which the deceased, whose loss I and my family still mourn, used to express her pleasure in moments of happiness.

After giving me this sign of affectionate recognition the little hand placed itself on my knee, which was painful on account of an awkward fall, and gave it a massage which relieved the pain. I was so greatly moved by this loving and spontaneous act that I begged to be allowed to see the hand, if only for a moment, and immediately there passed across the red gleam of the lantern, which was in front of me, the dark outline of a female hand with the fingers open; the arm was nude and *terminated at the elbow*.

It will be said that I was the victim of an optical illusion produced by the ardent desire and by the reflex of my thought; but this I absolutely deny. First, because I had expected to see an isolated hand, and not one attached to a portion of an arm; and, secondly, because my neighbour, an engineer, saw it in the same way at the same time. Nor can it be admitted that I saw the 'double' of the arm and hand of the medium, for she is a robust and well-nourished woman, while the hand I saw was extremely emaciated, just as were those of the deceased after the long and painful illness which brought her to the grave.

Notwithstanding the repeated proofs of identity which my kindly visitor had given me, I asked for another and final one; not because I doubted, but in order to have an

invincible argument with which to meet the incredulity of others—to be able to assert to everyone, with complete inward conviction, that 'the dead return!' I asked for this proof in English, the native language of the deceased, but not understood by my companions, who therefore could neither influence the result nor even have any idea as to the nature of my request. Speaking calmly, and with apparent indifference, I said: 'If you are really the spirit of E., please pinch the lobe of my right ear with the thumb and forefinger of your materialised hand.' The action was not performed at once, and this showed wisdom, for if it had been done at that moment of intense excitement and varied emotions, I might, on thinking quietly over it afterwards, have regarded it as a hallucination.

Instead of this, when my calmness had entirely returned, and I had begun to feel that the entity manifesting could not be the deceased person it claimed to be, or it would have responded to my request, the little hand came back and touched me, caressed my throat and chin, stopped for an instant on my lips as though imprinting a kiss upon them, and then passing to my ear with a rapid and intentional movement, *it pressed the lobe delicately with the thumb and forefinger.*

On such a phenomenon comment is needless. I will only remark that the spirit of the deceased was evidently intensely desirous of convincing me that she had returned to my side, if only for a brief hour, and of removing from my mind, not crude scepticism, but even the shadow of a doubt as to her identity.

ACHILLE TANFANI.

48, Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome.

SIR WILLIAM CROOKES HONOURED.

The bestowal of the Order of Merit on Sir William Crookes, though probably in no way due to his psychical researches, is the second occasion on which this honour has been bestowed on a scientific man who has not allowed himself to forget that science should include every possible branch of human knowledge. Sir William Crookes, over thirty years ago, bravely exposed himself to all the obliquity which pursuit of our particular branch of knowledge brings upon scientific men; and at that time the prejudice against it was far greater than it is at present. Sir William has not continued his researches; but, as a man of science studying definite phenomena in a scientific manner, it may justly be claimed for him that his results stand as valid to-day as at the moment when they were observed or recorded. In other branches of research—his discovery of thallium, for instance, and the determination, by a highly ingenious process, of its atomic weight—the investigation, once completed, does not need to be repeated; and the same may be said of Sir William Crookes' verification of the fact that in the sittings with Home a force was manifested which could not be accounted for by physical laws, and which, therefore, Professor Crookes (as he then was) called 'Psychic Force.' Equally valid to-day and for all time is his unique series of observations of the materialisation of 'Katie King,' including the positive proofs obtained that the form of 'Katie' was not that of any person then living on earth.

Sir William Crookes has received the Order of Merit in succession to Sir William Huggins, whose work with the spectroscope added a new domain of knowledge to science—the chemical constitution of the sun and stars. Crookes, too, has taken us beyond the forms of matter which we can handle and weigh, by his researches on radiant matter, long before this branch of science was enriched by recent discoveries with radium. His theories on the ultimate constitution of matter seem to have anticipated, in suggesting one primal element, the latest outcome of research. The radiometer, spinthariscopes, and 'Crookes' Tubes' are valuable additions to our apparatus for research. Sir William was president of the British Association in 1898, and has received manifold foreign distinctions.

PERPLEXED INQUIRERS.

Some years ago I was intimately acquainted with a truly good Spiritualist family, but circumstances occurred to cause the severance of the connection. At the time I felt that I would not be doing right to dabble with the occult, but determined that if ever the time arrived when I felt it necessary I would make every possible investigation. That time has now arrived. For the past few months I have been in a state of semi-starvation—this has been accentuated by the most serious and agonising religious doubts—the feeling—as some German pessimist has said, Heinemann, I believe—that human existence is 'a meaningless interruption of nothingness,' yet this conclusion is attended by so much unhappiness that one cannot help asking is such dire sorrow natural? If not, is it true? The above facts I have stated from no wish to advertise my present situation, but merely to prove how very real is my desire to find out the truth for myself.

I may mention one rather curious fact: I am, myself, able to prophesy near future events likely to happen to myself through dreams, intuition, &c. For instance—this is somewhat remarkable: I am a struggling actress, and during my tours I have stayed a few times with a family at L. It is some three or four years since my last visit to them. Within the last week or two I dreamt of a member of the family very vividly. I asked myself the meaning. To-night, just as I had left the paper shop where I had bought 'LIGHT,' and while I was actually looking at the advertisement on the interpretation of dreams, I ran into the mistress of the place at L., who is in London on a holiday. I could not help exclaiming on the remarkable coincidence. This sort of thing has happened several times before. I will give you another instance. The last time I was staying at the aforesaid place I dreamt very clearly that I journeyed by train the whole distance to Ireland. Of course this is impossible, but the remarkable part is this: I mentioned my dream the next day, adding that it was impossible, and that I should never go to Ireland, but within a few days I received a telegram from Ireland, which I tried by every means in my power to avoid compliance with. However, events finally compelled me to accept the offer, with the result that I was actually in Ireland within a fortnight of my dream. Of course such happenings do not appear to me to throw any light on the question of an after life, but I am irresistibly led to make every inquiry now. I have often subconsciously felt that a time would arrive when I should have to do this, and I should be grateful if any of your readers will help to make the pathway to the true light clear to me. I have also been able to foretell meeting with some person I have known, by some intuitive perception occurring during the daytime and dissociated from the dreams of sleep. It seems to me there must be some further explanation of this very brief existence, or of what need or use is a soul's development? And how utterly disproportionate such brief life to the immensity of intelligence accompanying it!

C. L. E.

I am a medical man and a seeker after the truth. I frequently hear sounds as of someone walking downstairs. My wife also hears them, but nothing can be found to account for the sounds. On one occasion I was awakened in the night by someone pulling the clothing from the bed, and I saw a lady in black standing close to me. I tried to catch hold of her, but she vanished. I called my wife's attention to her, but she could see nothing. On another occasion I was in bed and saw a lady in white draperies appear out of the wall. I described her appearance to my wife and she recognised her grandmother, who has been dead some years. My wife says that she could not see anything herself except when she caught hold of me, then she saw something like a misty white shadow. I have frequently tried all ways I can think of to see if there were any messages to come through, &c., but nothing has come of it. My wife tells me that one night quite recently I sat up in bed and reached over her, grasping with one hand, and when she asked, 'What is it?' I replied, 'I want to see that woman's face,' and I tried to grasp her again. My wife could see nothing, but had a feeling of someone being there and an impression of a tall, slender woman in black, but I could remember nothing of this occurrence in the morning. These strange experiences are getting on my nerves and I shall be glad if anyone can help me in any way.

A MEDICAL MAN.

As one of the unfortunates who, after some nine months' investigation, has failed to get proofs, may I be allowed a few words on the matter? I am aware that the period named is not extensive, but, in my eagerness to get into touch with the

spirit world, if such there be, I have prosecuted my inquiries, in one way or another, almost daily. I am not one to flout the experiences of others, I respect the great names which are coupled with the subject of Spiritualism, and I am aware that many sane and intelligent people profess belief in the possibility of communicating with the spirits of departed friends; hence I stick to my search, getting week after week more sick at heart than ever.

I have visited nearly every medium in and around London, have sat in many a circle, both public and private, and have had experiences with table phenomena galore, yet never once have I 'got in touch with' anybody whom I once knew on earth. I admit that all sorts of relatives have been declared to be with me at various times—fathers short and tall, fat and thin, have stood at my shoulder; a fine selection of wives have hovered lovingly near me, and nice old ladies (generally supposed to be my mother, until I say the old lady is alive) with ringlets and a shawl, come to say 'God bless you.' Considering the profusion of Christian names which is fired off along with the descriptions, the only astonishing thing to me is that the mediums do not guess right occasionally, just for a change.

I do not deny the phenomena; tables do rock and tables do answer questions, I freely admit, but that the spirits concerned exist outside of our own minds, I have my doubts sometimes. In circles I cannot deny that mediums become genuinely entranced (at least partially), and that, mixed up with more or less of their own ideas, they give forth utterances which may be due to the spirits of departed people. But oh! the weary hours of platitudes and drivel that one has to listen to in pursuing investigations! Personally, I am inclined to favour table messages as being the most free from thoughts wandering through the minds of the sitters, but then I must confess I have never had a sitting with a really first-class medium, such as Mrs. Piper, for instance, appears to be.

I certainly think Spiritualists claim too much, and are as much to blame in this respect as are persons of the Marriott type, who simply deny everything and coolly ignore the experiences of others. I would really like to know if my case is an unusual one. Are there many others like myself who are really yearning for a genuine message from a departed friend, and who are denied it after nearly a year's patient search? Perhaps Mr. Stoddart will oblige by telling me in what category I come amongst his classification of those who do not get proofs.

A. E. S. CRAIG.

Some three months ago, perhaps a little longer, I came into contact with a Spiritualist of some twenty years' standing. He has led me on step by step to study the question of Spiritualism. I am suffering, probably, from mental indigestion now, having filled up every spare moment in reading. A phrenologist once told me that I was a deep logical thinker. I certainly have tried to unravel some of the mysteries of the so-called revelations of God from an orthodox standpoint, but could never make them fit, and when I pushed my inquiries I was met with the response, 'We have no right to try to lift the veil to the unseen.' I am afraid I feel much like one of old, who said to the Master: 'How can these things be; are they true?'

I am taking in 'LIGHT' through a newsagent here, and am getting a good deal of sarcasm from him because I cannot find better stuff to read. I feel and resent this, and shall obtain my paper from a more congenial source. The vicar of the church with whom I am acquainted advises me to let Spiritualism alone, as so many people lose their mental balance over it. I should like to meet a few kindred spirits, as the few thoughtful people of my acquaintance view these things with incredulity and suspicion. Having been interested so short a time, of course I have seen no phenomena, but my friend has lent me the following books, which I have read: 'Christianity and Spiritualism' by Léon Denis, 'Spirit Teachings' by Stainton Moses, 'Here and Hereafter' by Léon Denis, 'Spiritual Manifestations' by Madame d'Espérance, 'Outlines of Spiritualism for the Young' by Alfred Kitson (I think this will do for the old as well), 'Spirit Manifestations' by Alfred Smedley, and several pamphlets. I am now reading 'Through the Mists' by R. J. Lees.

What can I say but that my whole being has responded to these teachings? The windows of heaven have been opened and I have been carried away on the floods of light. But still I feel the need of evidence. For years I yearned and longed for something satisfying, I knew not what, hungered and thirsted for knowledge, and these teachings are so wonderfully beautiful that I wish I could know them to be revelations from the other spheres. I have allowed my feelings to have full sway so far, but now I should like some sober facts. We are

told to 'prove all things, and hold fast that which is good,' and I feel disposed to push this inquiry as far as my means will allow. I am eager and anxious to get at the truth.

Now I must close, with my best wishes for the success of 'LIGHT.'

F. G. M.

Bexhill-on-Sea.

WHY DO PEOPLE VISIT MEDIUMS?

Mediums are constantly condemned and publicly pilloried because of the strange misconceptions that are entertained regarding them, but those who know something of the painful experiences of 'professional' mediums are generally more sympathetic than condemnatory. The 'Progressive Thinker' recently said:—

One of the bitter experiences endured by the Fox sisters in the incipency of their mediumship was found in the personal selfishness which prompted the coming of their visitors. Leah Fox Underhill records that some wanted the spirits to tell them how to make a fortune, give them the secrets of others, or how to become free from unpleasant domestic relations. Others asked the number of the ticket that would win in the lottery, or what stock to speculate in. Those questions were quickly answered but 'invariably ended in failures.' Such investigation brought the medium in touch with a class of spirits that delighted in deceiving all who asked for that kind of information. 'But, when people sought for communications of a more elevated character, answers were given accordingly.'

How such occurrences emphasise over and over again the non-infallibility of spirit messages and urge testing them in the crucible of the recipients' reason and conscience. Nobility of motive on the part of the sitter invites accuracy of response.

'Nobility of motive on the part of the sitter'! How many of those who denounce mediums can truly say that they themselves are above suspicion, and that their motives were pure, unselfish and spiritual? How many of those who indignantly denounce the 'deception and trickery of mediums' can truly say that they themselves treated the mediums with perfect frankness and sincerity? But, it may be objected, 'fraud cannot be found where it does not exist—and the frauds associated with mediumship have discredited the whole Spiritualist movement in the eyes of the average man.' It is quite true that fraud cannot be found where it does not exist, but the fraud may be on the part of the sitter, or on the part of the spirits attracted to, or by, the sitter, quite as much as on the part of the medium.

Further, it is often said that a man finds what he seeks, and it is certainly true that many a man, with suspicion and distrust in his mind—jealous, opinionated and antagonistic—has seen fraud (or thought he did) where it did not exist. Trifles, innocent in themselves, have been magnified; circumstances, susceptible of quite ordinary explanation, have been misconstrued, and motives and conduct attributed to sensitives which were quite foreign to them, and which indeed were quite unwarranted by the facts, and, knowing this to be the case, we deny that there is anything like the amount of intentional fraud that so many persons so confidently assert to exist.

Experienced Spiritualists will not be at all disturbed by the present onslaught on mediums and the manifestations that occur in their presence—because, as a rule, they themselves at one time entertained very similar ideas, objections, and theoretical explanations, which, however, they were compelled to abandon on closer acquaintance with the facts; and we trust that inquirers will learn how to seek for truth, rather than fraud, and that mediums, by doing their utmost to eliminate conditions which render the fraud explanation plausible, will protect themselves and advance the cause of truth. We would be the last to excuse intentional deceit, but as the influence upon sensitives of the present turmoil of accusation and denunciation cannot be other than detrimental to the successful exercise of their powers, which, as is well known, thrive in an atmosphere of serenity, and good-will, but wither and fail when suspicion and distrust dominate the mental conditions of the sitters, we bespeak from every convinced Spiritualist sympathy and kindly encouragement for the mediums known by them to be sincere and true.

SPIRIT WARNING SAVES A PATIENT.

Miss A. Fürst contributes to 'Sandhedssögeren' the following instance of important help received from spirits, and it is of the nature of a premonition. A private sick-nurse, Miss S., tells the story:—

I was in charge of a lady, Mrs. B., who had been very ill with heart disease. The patient was recovering, and the doctor had allowed me to go to bed that night. But I was constantly prevented from undressing by continually recurring jerks in my arm, which at last became so violent that I took pencil and paper and asked, 'Who is it?' The name 'Carl' was written; this was the name of my deceased brother. 'Shall I stay up to-night?' I asked. 'Yes,' was the reply, given by writing. 'Are there many here who are helping?' 'Yes, many.' After that I sent a message to the doctor and made all arrangements with the idea that Mrs. B. would be worse during the night. Two hours later, and just as the doctor arrived, Mrs. B. had a sharp attack of spasms at the heart; she would certainly have died but for the above described premonition.

JOTTINGS.

That Good Friday falling on Lady Day has not necessarily been attended by a 'mishap' for England, is shown by 'Sepharial' in a letter to the 'Occult Review,' pointing out that, since the change of style in 1752, Good Friday has fallen on March 25th in 1785, 1796, 1842, 1853, and 1864. Such dangers as threatened the country in these years were averted, and the result was favourable rather than otherwise. But we need not infer that the prophecy meant that every time that Good Friday fell on Lady Day there would be 'mishaps' to England. Once is enough!

The pastel drawings by Frau Wilhelmina Assmann, to which we referred on p. 2 of 'LIGHT' for last year, have been exhibited in several large cities of Europe, and aroused great interest. Mr. Hermann Zieger, of Leipzig, has sent us a specimen copy of a reproduction of one of them, which was produced at an exhibition at Amsterdam, causing a great sensation among artists. Mme. Assmann works with great rapidity, in a state of semi-trance, and produces remarkable designs consisting of strange flowers and geometrical forms, with a vivid and striking, yet entirely harmonious and effective arrangement of colouring. As will be seen by a forthcoming advertisement in 'LIGHT,' Mr. Zieger (2, Marienplatz, Leipzig, Germany) will supply this reproduction at the price of 7d. post free.

Mr. James Macbeth Bain's life and work are briefly sketched in the 'Christian Commonwealth' for June 29th. His work may be described as curing people's bodies through their souls, and it is on the spiritual side of his work that he lays the greatest emphasis, keeping the physical healing in the background. We are told that 'from boyhood Mr. Bain possessed the power to heal, but a fuller consciousness of his power and his mission began with his illumination, of which the story is told in the "Brotherhood of Healers" and "The Opening of the Gates." To the work of healing the souls and bodies of men his life is now entirely given.' He was born at Pitlochry in 1860, educated at Edinburgh, graduated in divinity, travelled in several countries, forming spiritual friendships, and is widely known through his lectures and writings, which latter have been said to contain 'the heart of all the cults.'

A writer recently said: 'One thing strikes me as an astounding fact—amid all the columns and columns of matter relating to entirely transient things connected with the late King's death, not one word have I seen with regard to the vastly more important thing—*viz.*, his present whereabouts—this, too, in a country where he had sworn to uphold a certain form of religion. Why?' This is a very pertinent question. The absence of all speculation, or assertion, respecting the present experiences of the late King indicates, it seems to us, the growth of a larger spirit, a more truly catholic faith than was regarded as orthodox fifty or a hundred years ago. The world is beginning to realise that each one goes to his own place, reaps what he has sown, is judged according to the deeds (and motives) done in the body, and will progress to other and larger states according to the degree of spiritual aspiration and fitness. And this spiritual law applies to all alike, irrespective of earthly rank.

The 'Occult Magazine' for July, referring to Mr. Marriott's illustrations in 'Pearson's Magazine' of 'how it might be done,' draws a lesson which is not precisely what he intended to convey, *viz.*: 'These photographs appear to be a good illustration of the fact that the imitation of phenomena by mechanical means is no proof whatever that such means were originally used in their production.'

The King of the Belgians, during a recent visit to the Brussels Exhibition, spent some time in examining the psychic photographs exhibited by the Belgian Spiritualist Federation. Mr. Tuytens, Consul for Venezuela at Antwerp, who has arranged the display, explained the various points to the King, who appeared to be aware of the different theories in explanation of spirit phenomena. He was specially interested by the photographs of materialisations, and asked whether these forms could always be considered as actual images of deceased persons. He also asked, and Mr. Tuytens explained, what precautions had been taken to ensure as far as possible the genuineness of the photographs exhibited. The 'Revue Spirite Belge,' in narrating the circumstances of the Royal visit, says: 'This mark of interest bestowed on our ideas, so violently attacked in official circles, gives evidence of His Majesty's independence of spirit.'

A writer in 'Le Progrès Universel' takes exception to the words in the Burial Service of the Church of England: 'We commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection,' and compares them with the 'superstitious and idolatrous beliefs' which the King at his accession is obliged to disavow, saying also that it is absurdities like this that make atheists, materialists, and believers in annihilation. But, fortunately, there is another meaning to be read into this passage—namely, that the body, when its material elements are dissipated, can have no part in the resurrection; but as the body returns to the material elements from which it was formed, so the spiritual element rises from them and returns to its own spiritual sphere. Many believe that true Christian teaching is opposed to a resurrection of the body, and that even the crudities of popular religion have not been able entirely to obliterate the real meaning, though they have left it woefully obscure.

Cases of 'telepathic' warnings of death are given in 'Psychische Studien' for June. The son-in-law of Prof. Dr. Gustav Jäger died at about 6.30 a.m. At 3 a.m. on the same morning one of his sons was awakened by a rattling of the window of his room; he got up and found no cause for it, and immediately thought that he would receive an intimation from home. Another son was roused at 6 a.m. by the ringing of his bell, also without apparent cause. He also appears to have taken it as an intimation. These sons were in different towns at a distance from their home. In another case a scholar at a seminary had heard that his grandfather was ill, but attached little importance to it. In the evening, as he sat at his books, he heard three distinct raps on the door, and immediately the mental image of his grandfather arose in his mind. The old man died a few days afterwards, and on inquiry it was learnt that on the day on which the knocks were heard he had dreamed of his grandson, and had spoken about him.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Is Imitation Essential?

SIR,—I have just finished reading a copy of 'The Imitation of Christ,' and although admiring many of the sentiments, I ask, Why should we imitate? It seems grovelling to hunt for anyone's footsteps in order to 'walk erect' oneself. Surely it is nobler to originate than to copy. Christ came not as an example, but to impress man with a sense of human greatness, to show him that by earnest striving and spiritual aspiration, he might attain to an undreamed of altitude, for he said, 'Greater works than these shall ye do.' Man must sow his own character, and reap his own destiny. We want a kaleidoscopic heaven, not tier upon tier of conventionalities cut to one pattern. Imagine the monotony and hypocrisy of it all, the showy veneer instead of the deep-rooted unstudied piety, fitting like an old glove. Virtue cannot be forced into any particular channel but must flow naturally and sweetly to the great ocean of infinite truth and love. Then, and then only, will the angels say with pleasure: 'Behold the man is become as one of us.'—Yours, &c.,

E. P. PRENTICE.

Sutton.

The Transition of Mrs. J. J. Vango.

SIR,—I desire to express my heartfelt thanks for the sympathy that has been tendered to me and my family during the sad trial which we have been called upon to bear, and for the letters and telegrams of condolence that have reached me, also for the beautiful floral tributes. Many friends have asked me whether I did not see anything of the approaching trouble. In reply, I can only say yes, but I did not place it with my wife. I felt that one of our children would be taken from us, and my dear wife knew how anxious I was about it. It was kind of my spirit friends not to tell me beforehand, as I should have felt like a man awaiting execution.

My dear wife spoke to me within an hour after her transition and the communications have been frequent since, some of them being very practical, even giving me advice what to do, exactly as she would have done whilst in the body.

I realise quite fully that my loss is her great gain, and it has given me the feeling that I want to work even more than I have done in the past for those who do not enjoy the grand knowledge of spirit return as I do, for without the knowledge and the communications that I have received I feel that I could not have borne the trouble as I have done.—Yours, &c.,

J. J. VANGO.

61, Blenheim-crescent,
Notting Hill, W.

Unrecognised Psychic Photographs.

SIR,—Without entering into vexed questions I am content to affirm that I am convinced from actual experience and careful investigation that many unrecognised 'psychic photographs' are psychically produced, and that they represent or call to mind the likenesses of departed persons. The fact that psychic extras are often not recognised by the sitters has been used by the unthinking as evidence of want of integrity in the medium and stupid credulity in those who, like myself, are convinced that such 'extras' do come, and that not as the result of misapplied genius.

As you are aware, I have taken some interest in this subject, and in preparing a work entitled 'Photographing the Invisible,' I have had sent to me from Australia, the United States, and several places in Great Britain, a large number of photographs, the bulk of which were not recognised by the sitter, or receiver; yet, owing to the fact that they have passed into other hands, not a few have been subsequently recognised. For instance: a lady in Scotland sent a lock of hair to a medium in America, who has since come to this country, and when the print was sent to her she did not recognise the 'extras' thereon. A London friend of this lady followed a similar procedure about the same time. On the print that she received were two 'extras,' the head of a man and that of a woman. By exchanging these photographs it was found that an excellent likeness of the first lady's husband, whom I knew well, appeared on the London lady's card. The two ladies were friends, but that does not explain the fact. Neither of them knew the woman's head, but when Mrs. Coates and I saw the photograph we knew who it was, and so did another, who recognised it as a portrait of his departed wife. He had received a similar (but not the same) 'extra' on his plate, with several roses. That the latter would be given had been promised at a sitting held here, three years before I believed it possible to get the medium to this country.

A number of photographs were taken in Edinburgh, and none were identified, as far as I know, save one. Many of these came into my hands for inspection, and on the photograph of a young lady, an entire stranger to us, we recognised the portrait of one who was in our service, and an infant with her. Our family fully recognised this woman, and knew the history of the child, while months before several were present at a séance when this person was seen and heard, and her message was given to us by a clairvoyante. The medium-photographer was present that night, but that fact does not explain the getting of 'Maggie's' photograph with an entire stranger to us all.

It seems to me that if an exchange could be started and unidentified photographs could be published or circulated for a small fee, a good and most necessary piece of work would be done, as not only would photographs go round and get recognised, but, if there be any 'made' photographs, that too would soon become apparent. There are other important features which would help to throw light on reproductions (i.e., photographs, as 'extras,' of persons and articles, either as 'spirits' or as symbols), on duplications and triplications, of which I have many instances under review, and help us to get at the laws behind these phenomena.—Yours, &c.,

Glenbeg House, Rothessay.

JAS. COATES.

'After Many Days.'

SIR,—The following incident may interest some of your readers.

A year and a half ago my daughter was asked to sing 'O Rest in the Lord' at a large religious meeting. She was rather nervous, never having sung in public before; but as we were on our way there she said to me: 'I have been impressed that my voice is to be used to-night to give a special message to some poor soul in this congregation who is in trouble, and that I am not to be nervous, as I am only the instrument.'

The solo went off well, and we heard nothing more of it until a few days ago, when I met a lady, who said to me: 'I shall never forget your daughter singing "O Rest in the Lord." I went to that meeting feeling miserable and unhappy and fearful of the future, and those words went straight to my heart; they seemed a message sent to me, telling me I was to "rest in the Lord and to wait patiently for Him." I left, comforted and strengthened, and a few days after I received a letter telling me my troubles were at an end and that my "heart's desire" had been granted to me.'—Yours, &c.,

GEM.

Phenomena that are of Value.

SIR,—Once more the 'know it all' folk are furiously raging together and imagining a vain thing. The Maskelynes, Marriotts, Maxims, Münsterbergs, and Moulds are enjoying the notoriety that they can gain at the expense of Spiritualists, but have we not brought it upon ourselves?

It seems to me that we have been trying to demonstrate human spiritual survival by materialistic methods, instead of appealing to the evidences of spirit intelligence and identity. The S.P.R. is on the right track, or I am much mistaken. The physicists quarrel about Eusapia—but when they are convinced of the reality of the phenomena occurring in her presence they attribute them to some physical peculiarity. Table lifting, bell ringing, banjo banging, rope-tying, picture painting, psychic 'extras' may amuse some and gratify the lovers of 'wonders,' but do they afford evidence of human continuity and personal identity?

I am not opposed to phenomena, but I do not value phenomena as phenomena: only as demonstrating the presence of the 'intelligent operator at the other end of the line,' and for that purpose I value the intelligence conveyed, especially when it proves identity, as of by far the greatest importance.—Yours, &c.,

SPIRITUALIST.

Trees and Human Beings.

SIR,—Like Prentice Mulford, I am a great lover of trees. Two years ago, placing my arms round a tree, I told that tree that I loved it. Immediately there came from it a response, not human love, but the love of the tree in a rush of living energy towards me. On another occasion, I stood in a grove of acacias and loved them. At once there came, momentarily, from the trees and the earth in which they grew, the most delicious and strong breath of life and fragrance possible to imagine. I knew a lady who was a great lover of ferns, and the plants grew visibly under her hands.

The great sensitiveness of the vegetable kingdom is shown by the fact that, on occasion, treasured plants yield their life on the passing of their owner. There was a linden tree in Sweden with three stems named after three families. As the families died out the stems died in the same order.

I see nothing curious in these things. When we in the West began to despise all the rest of creation I have no idea, but long ago, when great convulsions of human pride and egotism took place, babies, animals, plants, and metals met around the altar of the Church to receive her benediction. No work of the Creator was then considered common or unclean. The corn, wine, oil, water, fire, so necessary for man's physical needs, she consecrated by certain psycho-spiritual laws that they might minister to his spiritual nature also. The word 'transubstantiation' tells us that long centuries before science had got beyond the now defunct, ultimate atom, the Church recognised the substance that lies at the back of all matter as a divine thing.

Only yesterday I noticed that when the Dominican artist, Fra Angelico, painted the lamb in the arms of St. Agnes, he gave a rounded halo to the saint, and to the lamb rays of light rising from its head. To the mediæval mind, as St. Theresa has told us, 'God was in everything, and everything in God.' For one thousand five hundred years of the Church's history, among all her multitude of saints, there was scarcely one not connected in the popular mind with a pet animal or a plant. Now, how different!—Yours, &c.,

A CATHOLIC.

'The Wyllie Fund.' A Reminder.

SIR,—As Mr. Edward Wyllie is now in London, I trust that subscribers to 'The Wyllie Fund' will call upon him. I know that they will receive the best attention as far as lies in his power. Unaccustomed to our severe weather, Mr. Wyllie has suffered severely in health and in mediumistic powers; but now, with good weather and improved health, I expect from him something like his old form.—Yours, &c.,

J. COATES.

National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—I regret to say that only one donation for the fund has reached me during the past month, namely £1 ls. from Mr. C. G. Rickards, which I have much pleasure in acknowledging.

Now that the holiday season is upon us, may I again draw attention to the Holiday Shilling Fund? For two years we have tried without success to induce Spiritualists to spare a shilling each, out of the money devoted to enjoyment, for the sick and suffering workers of our movement. It would not be missed and would realise a good amount if all contributed.

Will all friends help to make it a success this year?—Yours, &c.,

A. E. BUTTON,

9, High-street, Doncaster.

Hon. Sec.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, JULY 10th, &c.

Prospective Notices, not exceeding twenty-four words, may be added to reports if accompanied by stamps to the value of sixpence.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mr. A. V. Peters gave highly successful clairvoyant descriptions and helpful spirit messages to a large and deeply interested audience. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advt.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, W.—Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave an enlightening evening address on 'Spirit Guidance.'—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—At 11 a.m. Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave interesting answers to questions. On Wednesday Mr. Percy Beard delivered spirit messages. Sunday next, see advt.

CLAPHAM.—RICHMOND-PLACE, NEW-ROAD, WANDSWORTH-ROAD.—Mrs. Jamrach gave an address on 'Spiritualism, the Key,' and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle, Madame Betty; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. P. Smyth, address.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Mrs. Neville gave a splendid address and good psychometric readings. Sunday next, Mrs. Petz. 24th, Miss Morris. September 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, sale of work. A welcome to all.—A. B.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Mr. W. E. Long spoke enlighteningly on 'Obsession and Possession' and 'Psychology.' Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long.—E. S.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mrs. J. Gordon gave an interesting address on 'Spiritualism' and clairvoyant delineations. Mr. Geo. F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, Mr. G. T. Gwinn and Mr. G. F. Tilby, addresses.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—Sunday next, at 10.45 a.m., public circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Abbott. Thursday, at 7.45, Mrs. Webster. Wednesday and Friday, at 8, members' circles.—J. J. L.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—Mrs. Wilson gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; at 7 p.m., Madame Zulbice. Monday, 8.30, members' circle. Thursday, 8.30, public circle, Mrs. Boddington. 24th, flower service.—A. G.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mr. E. W. Wallis gave grand and inspiring addresses. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. H. Boddington, addresses. Monday, 8, and Wednesday, 3, Mrs. Curry. Thursday, 8, public circle.—A. M. M. S.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mrs. Podmore gave an address on 'Spiritualism and its Teachings' and successful clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Leaf, address and clairvoyant descriptions. Monday, 8, members' circle.—N. R.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. Horace Leaf gave an address on 'Unity of Spirit,' clairvoyant descriptions, and spirit messages. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham), address and clairvoyant descriptions.—T. C. W.

CROYDON.—SMALL PUBLIC HALL, GEORGE-STREET.—Mr. J. Blackburn gave an address. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Alfred Vout Peters.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mr. G. T. Wooderson gave an address upon 'Personal Identity.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Miles Ord; at 3.15, Lyceum. Monday, 7.30, ladies' circle. Tuesday, 8.15, members' circle. Thursday, 8.15, public circle.—G. T. W.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL.—Mrs. Imison spoke on 'No Separation,' and gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions. Our organist sang a beautiful solo. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Alice Webb. 24th, Mr. G. T. Gwinn. 31st, Mrs. Mary Davies.—W. R. S.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Mrs. Mary Davies spoke on 'Spirituality and Environments' and 'Do the Dead Return?' and gave well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions. On Wednesday she related psychic experiences. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. J. Abraham; at 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton. Wednesday, Mrs. Podmore.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Mr. Elvin Frankish spoke on 'The Creation of the Soul of Man,' and Mrs. Letheren gave clairvoyant descriptions.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—Miss Violet Burton's eloquent addresses on 'The Grace of God' and 'The Material Life and the Spiritual Life' were much appreciated.

LINCOLN.—PROGRESSIVE HALL, COULTHAM-STREET.—Mr. Manion gave addresses and clairvoyant descriptions, and on Monday conducted meetings.—C. R.

SOUTHSEA.—ABINGTON HALL, ABINGTON-ROAD.—Mr. Herbert J. Nicholls spoke on 'Spiritual Growth' and 'Knowledge versus Beliefs,' and gave psychometric readings.

WINCHESTER.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL.—Mr. F. T. Blake, of Bournemouth, gave a splendid address and clairvoyant descriptions.—R. E. F.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. Harold Carpenter delivered inspiring addresses. Mrs. Street gave clairvoyant descriptions. On the 4th Mr. Street spoke.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Mr. Stafford, president, gave an address and Mrs. Trueman clairvoyant descriptions. Other meetings during the week.—N. F.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, MUNSTER-ROAD.—Mrs. Fielder gave an address on 'Spiritual Healing,' and psychometric readings.—R. J. H. A.

SOUTHEAST.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Mrs. A. Webb gave interesting addresses and well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions.—A. J.

BRISTOL.—52, SUSSEX-PLACE, ASHLEY-HILL.—The president read a paper on 'Duty,' and a visitor spoke on 'Life is Love,' and gave clairvoyant descriptions and spirit messages.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.—Mrs. Baxter gave an inspiring address and answered questions.—B. G. M.

BRISTOL.—12, JAMAICA-STREET, STOKES CROFT.—Mr. Haviland (from Australia) spoke on 'The Gift of Mediumship,' and he and Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Williams conducted meetings during the week.—A. C. O.

PORTSMOUTH.—VICTORIA-ROAD, SOUTH.—Mr. Hector J. Lacey gave addresses on 'The Call of the Spirit' and 'The Manifestation of the Spirit of God,' followed by excellent psychic readings; also on July 6th.—G. McF.

EXETER.—MARKET HALL, FORE-STREET.—Mr. Hanson G. Hey spoke on 'Prayer' and 'Ideals of Spiritualism.' Mrs. Grainger gave clairvoyant descriptions; also on the 8th, after an address.—H. L.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHED HALL.—Mrs. Critchley delivered impressive addresses on 'Spiritualism: What it is and What it is Not' and 'Man's Responsibility,' and gave clairvoyant and psychic readings; also on Monday.—V. M. S.

BIRMINGHAM.—30, JOHN-STREET, VILLA CROSS, HANDSWORTH.—Mr. P. R. Street spoke on 'The Spirit of Infinite Truth' and 'The Christ Problem,' and on the 9th and 11th delivered interesting addresses upon 'Spiritual Auras.'—L.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—Mr. John Walker spoke on 'Life Beyond the Grave' and gave clairvoyant descriptions. On the 7th Mrs. Harvey, of Southampton, spoke and gave clairvoyant descriptions.

SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD.—5, SPENCER-ROAD.—Mrs. Ord spoke on 'Who, What, and Where is God?' July 5th, Mrs. Podmore gave an address on 'Spiritualism in Everyday Life,' and well-recognised psychometric readings.—W. M. J.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STRONE-ROADS, E.—Mr. and Mrs. Smith, of Woodford, conducted the service. On the 7th Mrs. Neville gave telling psychometric descriptions.—C. W. T.

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (OXON.)'

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held *over*, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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