

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

At the recent Universal Congress of Religious Thinkers at Berlin, Kristofer Janson, of Christiania, gave an address on the religious views of Björnson and Ibsen. Björnson he described as an ardent agnostic, made so after his discovery that he had been 'cheated' by orthodox theologians concerning the Bible. After being undeceived as to the infallibility and divine authority of the Bible, he went to extremes, and ended by denying a future life. But, with a poet's blessed inconsistency, he goes into raptures over the translation of a king, and says:—

The spirit-world's society
Surrounds, like clouds, our life.

And, as for Christianity, in one of his writings he presents a Christianity of his own, separated from the conventional creeds and the conventional Church. He says:—

It is wholesome, once in a while, in the land of a State Church, to remember what Christianity is. It is not an institution, still less a book, least of all a priestly robe or a house. It is a life in God, according to the precepts and example of Jesus. Maybe there are people who imagine they attack Christianity when they examine the history, origin, or morality of a dogma. I don't think so. Honest investigation can only make it grow. Christianity, with or without its apparatus of dogmas, will, in what is the kernel of it, remain for thousands of years after us. There will always be spiritually-minded people, who through it will become nobler, some of them even great. I respect all of them.

As for Ibsen, Janson finds it difficult to place him as to religion, but he says, with quaint simplicity: 'He was altogether too intelligent a man to be orthodox.' But he did not deny with Björnson, and seemed pleased to dally with the thought of the unseen 'helpers and servants': and Janson adds the piquant statement that when, some years ago, he gave some lectures at Christiania on Spiritualism, Ibsen was present, 'and after the lectures he stepped up to the platform, in full view of the audience, and took my hand and thanked me.'

Those who are interested in dreams—and who is not?—will do well to read Mr. Havelock Ellis's valuable work, 'The World of Dreams,' published by Constable and Co., 10, Orange-street, Leicester-square, W.C., price 7s. 6d. *net*. The titles of some of the chapters will give a fair idea of the nature of the contents: 'Emotion in Dreams'; 'Aviation in Dreams'; 'Symbolism in Dreams'; 'Memory in Dreams'; 'Dreams of the Dead.' Mr. Ellis does not question the existence of telepathic and other abnormal dream experiences, but he has not met with any dreams that clearly and decisively belong to this abnormal class. Consequently he deals almost entirely with the funda-

mental elements of the subject. In his opinion, dreams, 'rightly understood, may furnish us with clues to the whole of life,' and in his concluding chapter he says: 'Dreams are true while they last. Can we, at the best, say more of life?'

The chapter on 'Dreams of the Dead' interests us most. Mr. Ellis alludes to the frequency with which the probable influence of dreams in originating or confirming the primitive belief of men in a spirit world has been set forth, and in this connection refers to 'a special mechanism in the typical dream of a dead friend, due to mental dissociation during sleep, which powerfully suggests to us that death sets up no fatal barrier to the return of the dead.' 'In dreams,' he points out, 'the dead are thus rendered indestructible: they cannot be finally killed, but rather tend to reappear in ever more clearly affirmed vitality.'

Our author illustrates his subject with particulars of a large number of dreams, many of them his own, and accounts for them, or attempts to do so, on rational lines. On page 207 he tells us of a clergyman who often discussed the life beyond the grave with a lady, a close friend. The latter, who was a highly-strung Englishwoman, with many of the psychic characteristics of the Celt, agreed that if she died first (which was probable, as she was the victim of a mortal disease), she would appear to him. About three days after her death the clergyman dreamed that she had come back to him and was discussing a matter which he had wished to speak to her about before her death. He says:—

In the dream it was perfectly clear to me that she was a dead woman back from another sphere of existence. For some weeks after this I had similar experiences. They were never dreams of the old life and friendship before death, but always reappearances from the other world. Of course, it may be said of this experience of mine, that it was merely the result of expectation. But I have found that the things most on my mind are rarely the subject of my dreams. Moreover, these dreams formed a series, lasting for weeks, and all of the same character, though the conversations differed!

We can entirely agree with Mr. Ellis that 'dreams of this sort must certainly have come to men ever since men began to be. . . . The repercussion of this kind of dream through unmeasured ages cannot fail to have told at last on the traditions of the race.'

The 'Freemason' for April 8th gives us a strong address on 'The Sacred Symbol! God! The Great Architect,' delivered by Colonel R. H. Forman, to the Grand Lodge of Scottish Freemasons in India. The worthy Colonel regards the assumption that any one religion has a monopoly of Divine Truth as a human fiction, born of man's vanity and pride. He says:—

It is supremely marvellous that wise men are unable to see that the ray of truth which has shone even unto them, and which they have done their best to obscure, is but one of many which have been shed by the Sun of Truth on the world. Divine Truth is too clear a light to be tolerated by human eyes. It must be tempered by an earthly medium, conveyed through a human vehicle and darkened somewhat, lest it blind the unaccustomed eye. . . .

Each man should strive to see the truth in his neighbour's belief, and learn that best of lessons, to dwell on the good rather than the evil. . . The Masonic hope is that the time draws nigh when these sublime truths, of which the craft is the exponent, rational and noble as they are when viewed from the standpoint of reason, shall wipe away from God's earth the sectarian jealousy and theological bitterness, the anger and ill-will, the rancour and pharisaic pride which have disgraced the name of religion, and have rendered theology a by-word amongst men. . . To Freemasonry the fatherhood of God is all-sufficing—tender, pitiful, universal—and even as the Father pitieth His erring children, so does she inculcate, in humble, reverent imitation, that tolerance for divergence of opinion; that charitable construction of doubtful words and deeds; that kindness in intercourse; that readiness to help, without desire for recompense; that courtesy and gentleness of demeanour, patience under misrepresentation, and honesty and integrity of purpose; that sympathy with sorrow; that mercy, pity, and tenderness of heart; that respect for authority and for the rights of the weak and frail: these and kindred qualities which she sums up in that word of Supreme Masonic import—Charity.

Mr. R. A. Scott-James, in the course of one of his recent reviews in the 'Daily News,' mentioned the fact that 'the history of Christianity has been the history of successive partial perversions of the original Christian spirit,' and gave the following forcible examples:—

Christ preached humility, but the Church has generally been maintained with pomp and show, and by the power of proud clerics. Christ preached the dignity of poverty, but the modern Christian nations admire wealth far more than do the Moslems or the Buddhists. Christ denounced pharisaism, but perverted Christianity returned to the hypocrisy denounced by the Founder of the religion. And similarly Christ, so far from emphasising the doctrine of 'original sin,' in the superstitious sense of the term, sat at table with publicans and sinners; it was left to the all-powerful temporal Church of the Middle Ages to trade upon the idea of the inherent weakness of human nature.

There is far too much truth in this to make it palatable reading; but why does Mr. Scott-James use the word Christ when he really means Jesus?

A certain Althea A. Ogden writes thus blythely of this blessed resurrection time. We never heard of her before, but hope to hear of her again:—

Fair Spring tripped lightly o'er the sod
With new commission straight from God
To resurrect the Earth;
'Arise, arise,' she cried full loud,
'Cast off your swathing winter shroud
And banish cold and dearth;
'Throw forth your leaves, O barren trees—
Pour out, O birds, your melodies,
And praise your Maker's worth.'

O heart of man, shall you alone
This resurrection time disown
And sit here dumb and cold?
Lift up your voice in grateful praise
To Him who blesses all your days
And sends you joys untold;
Let your pulses beat in tune
With Nature's great mysterious rune
That bids all life unfold.
O man and earth, both roused from sleep,
Together God's true Easter keep.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

At the meeting of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, held on Thursday, April 27th, the following resolution was passed unanimously:—

The Council learns with sincere regret of the 'passing' of the Rev. John Page Hopps, and desires to record its high appreciation of his valuable services as a member of the Council almost from the commencement of the Alliance, and to express its deep sympathy with Mrs. Hopps and his family.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, MAY 11TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MR. E. E. FOURNIER D'ALBE, B.Sc. (Lond.),

ON

'Essential Conditions of Life in this and other Worlds.'

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

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

The last meeting of the present season in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), will be held on Thursday evening, May 25th—Mrs. Mary Seaton, of Washington, U.S.A.: 'Spiritualism and Theosophy: their Similarities and Dissimilarities—from an Onlooker's Viewpoint.'

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

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, May 9th, Miss Florence Morse will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

DRAWINGS OF THE PSYCHIC AURA AND DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASE.—On Wednesday next, May 10th, and succeeding Wednesdays, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., Mr. Percy R. Street will give personal delineations by means of the colours of the psychic aura of sitters, and will diagnose disease under spirit control. Fee 5s. to a guinea. Appointments desirable. See advertisement supplement.

MEDIUMISTIC DEVELOPMENT.—On Thursday next, May 11th, at 4.50 p.m., Mr. George Spriggs will conduct a Class for the Development of Mediumship, for Members and Associates.

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, May 12th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of general interest to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

MRS. MARY SEATON'S LECTURES.

MRS. MARY SEATON will commence a series of special afternoon lectures on 'Spiritual Science and Healing' on Thursday next, May 11th, at 3 p.m., when she will deal with 'Methods of Healing' and illustrate them by treating a patient.

SYLLABUS.

Monday, May 15—'The Psychology of Faith: the Key to the Inner Treasure.'

Thursday, May 18—'How Invisible Thoughts become Visible Things.'

Monday, May 22—'The Relation of Spirit to Soul.'

Thursday, May 25—'How to Heal Self and Others.'

Monday, May 29—'The Moral and Spiritual Uses of Psychic Powers.'

ADMISSION 1s. EACH.

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Mrs. Mary Seaton jointly invite MEMBERS of the Alliance to attend these meetings free of charge.

REMARKABLE PHENOMENA IN ST. PETERSBURG.

The following interesting report is translated from 'Les Annales' for March last:—

My first séance with Jean Gouzik, a former Polish workman, who is thirty-five years of age, and extremely reticent, was in a circle composed of doctors and engineers: it had been sitting several months. The telekinetic phenomena were particularly good, but all the registering apparatus had been broken by the mediumistic force owing to the violence of the contacts. There were blows of a fist, the breaking of a watch chain, &c. Everything which had happened previously had been communicated to me by a member of the committee. On the evening when I was present the medium was fatigued. I arrived late, and nothing happened for an hour. I said to myself that I was losing time, when suddenly a hand pulled me strongly by the sleeve. I was at the other end of the table, about six feet from the medium. A long shudder which I experienced, and which I attributed to influenza, preceded by a fraction of a second this contact. I did not at that time know how frequently this sensation occurs at séances; it was not, therefore, an auto-suggestion. I was then placed on the medium's right. I held his right arm and leg tightly, and someone else held his left side, Gouzik acquiescing. The darkness was complete. There were twelve of us round the table, which was nine to twelve feet long and about six feet wide. A large candle and several apples were on it, and a large heavy black cloth hung behind us about half a yard away. We waited about ten minutes, at the end of which time very rapid raps were heard, hands held the lapels of my coat, and the curtain was rolled round my head. There was a noise of apples dancing on the table, then a noise of breaking, and something hit me on my forehead. We lit up; the candle was broken into three parts, the curtain was rolled into a cord, I had a big lump on my forehead, and an engineer sitting nine feet away had a contusion on his lower lip. He had received a shock at the same moment as myself, and also from the candle. The room in which this happened was in an isolated summer-house at the doctor's. It had been carefully inspected, and closed at each séance. The sitters were serious people, desirous of knowledge. Habitually they very respectfully invoked someone whom they called Schwartzenberg.

Sixteen months later I was again at a séance with Gouzik, with three ladies and six gentlemen. The usual precautions were taken. The darkness was not so great but what things could be vaguely distinguished. During the first forty minutes nothing happened, but later several of us felt that we were gently touched. I felt several times a big cylinder press me gently, but forcibly, in the lumbar region. I was holding the medium strongly, when a strong force came vertically from below and lifted the arm of the medium with mine. Twice we pushed back against this upward pressure, but it opposed our efforts strongly. The resistance was fluidic, and different from anything which could possibly be imagined to be a material body. I changed my place and sat on a sofa on the medium's left. The cylinder came again. I was sitting with my back against the thick covering of the sofa so that nothing could be insinuated between it and my person, and yet this cylindrical form touched me as if it found no obstacle in the material of the sofa. My neighbour on the left had the same sensation at the same time. Two telekinetic phenomena occurred: a very heavy wardrobe, about three yards to the right, and behind the medium, was noisily and slowly moved about eight inches; and the heavy cloth that was placed near me, a yard behind and to the left of the medium, slowly moved, as we watched it, about three yards to the right of the medium.

In another sitting, at which there were present three ladies and five doctors, or engineers, we saw in comparative light a heavy cloth displaced by about a yard. Those who felt that they were touched thought it was by the head of a little dog. Once, on repulsing with my arm, which held that of the medium, something that was above my head, I felt the warm contact of the upper lip of a little dog. The other sitters saw nothing, although they could have distinguished anything

which would have been visible to the eye of a human being. The medium Gouzik is of frail physique, but physically sound, and has been a workman for twenty years. When fifteen years of age he lost his situation because in the common sleeping-room at night there were raps and the breaking of furniture. He is extremely simple, and lends himself willingly to any control. There have been séances at which nothing happened, and in my case the events took long to happen. The telekinetic phenomena are not very powerful, although very good evidence as proofs.

SEEING AND BELIEVING.

The 'Wimbledon Gazette' of April 22nd contains a report of a striking and original sermon preached by the Rev. G. T. Sadler, on the evening of Easter Sunday. Mr. Sadler does not agree with those of his brethren who believe in Christianity and the resurrection 'because a body rose out of the grave, as they think.' He regards it as 'a very doubtful fact, and full of difficulty.' We agree, but when he extols belief without sight, and says that 'the blessed people are those who have not seen and yet know,' he is on very unstable ground. He tells us that in the references in the Gospels and Epistles to the after-death appearances of Jesus and of 'any appearances that are unearthly, such as the appearances of angels,' a Greek word is used which has a different meaning from that which means to see with the outward eyes, and that this word denotes 'inner vision or spiritual discernment.' Apparently the reverend gentleman is not disposed to regard it as actual perception, such as the clairvoyant enjoys, but as a mystical, or purely subjective, experience—an experience of the human heart, which he says 'can be shared by everyone: the God-consciousness which every one of us can come to realise. That is the foundation of Christianity.' Again, we read, 'I do not think we are on sure ground when we say that Jesus is alive because there was a story of an empty grave amongst the early Christians,' but we fail to see how the affirmation that Jesus is still alive is on firmer ground when it is based upon a subjective experience, which, according to the preacher's own theory, may be but a telepathic 'transference of thought from one person to another.' Mr. Sadler had better try again.

When the preacher maintains that because Christianity is based on spiritual discernment (and this applies to any religion with truth in it), therefore no outward evidence of continued existence beyond the grave is needed—that that also is simply a matter of spiritual discernment—he is affirming something which human experience disproves. Many of the noblest, purest, most Christlike men have been unable to feel assured of the fact of a future existence. If conviction of that fact were the necessary consequence of 'entering into the spiritual values for which Jesus stood,' as Mr. Sadler declares it is, these true souls would surely have attained to it. Mr. Sadler told his hearers that by this experience and this alone could they be sure that their loved ones who had passed 'beyond these voices' were still alive—there was no other way! But since hosts of persons have obtained that assurance by direct evidence, Mr. Sadler is manifestly mistaken. He believes that what purport to be communications from discarnate spirits are thought-transferences from spirits in the flesh. But why seek such an explanation, and why limit its application to modern times? If it is true now, it will apply equally to the recorded instances of similar phenomena in sacred writings. Further, if what was once regarded as incredible has been shown to be true: if thought can be shown to pass between spirits in the flesh without any ascertainable natural means of transmission, why is it any more difficult for a believer in continued existence to conceive of its passing from a discarnate to an incarnate spirit? Mr. Sadler's explanation is more improbable than that of the Spiritualist, seeing that it involves the presumption that our subconscious selves are not only cunning liars, passing themselves off for other people, but are also able to impart information which only those other people possessed. If Mr. Sadler has not come across such cases, that only means that his information on the subject is as yet gravely defective. We would suggest that he carry his investigation further.

THE VOICES.

BY VICE-ADMIRAL W. USBORNE MOORE

(Continued from page 196.)

Monday, January 16th, 1911. Half an hour's sitting with Mrs. Wriedt alone. 'Dr. Sharp' came and said he thought we had better put it off as I was not well enough; but, eventually, he allowed 'Iola' to come in. My guide stood before me in phantasmal form and gave me much information about past family history.

Monday, January 16th, 1911. Dr. John and I sat with Mrs. Wriedt from 4.50 to 5.50 p.m.

First came a childish voice to me: 'I am Ada Newton and I want you to tell my Poppa that brother has taken from me the ring he gave me, as he wants to give it to Poppa himself.' Question: 'What was the ring like, dear?' Answer: 'It was a little, thin, gold-banded ring.' Question: 'Was there any mark on it?' Answer: 'Yes, inside there was a "one" and a "four" and a "k."' Question: 'Mrs. Wriedt will tell your mother, dear.' Answer: 'I want *you* to tell my Poppa.'

Interval of quite fifteen minutes. Then 'Dr. Sharp' came. He asked me if I was not feeling bad in the legs. I said 'Yes.' He said I was often drawn upon, but ought to recover my magnetism ten minutes after leaving the séance room, adding, 'You will be all right if you take that medicine.' (Thanks to Dr. John I had doubled my ordinary gout prescription at 9 a.m.). I said, 'I believe I have what is called the "healing gift."' 'Not much now,' he replied. 'Too much of your vitality is gone. Ten or twelve years ago you had that power.'

Then came two spirits together—a sister of Dr. John speaking loudly through the trumpet, and 'Iola' in the direct voice. I explained to the latter how I had come to understand some of her conversation in the morning: the voice of Dr. John's sister effectively prevented anyone hearing my guide's talk with me, for the two conversations went on simultaneously for ten minutes.

Next Dr. Graham, formerly a personal friend of Dr. John, and a famous physician in Toronto: he passed over eleven years ago. He said: 'Wasn't that an excellent operation this afternoon? Did you notice how careful he was not to pull the bowels and kidney too much to the left, so as to avoid straining the connection with the bladder? I have never seen an operation better performed. What skill! Are you going down to-morrow? You should do so.'

(At three o'clock Dr. John had returned from witnessing the important operation of Nephrocolopexy at the hospital. He was much interested; the operation had been conducted by the man who invented it, and it was successful. He took the advice of Dr. Graham and altered his plans, remaining another day, and attending the hospital the next morning.) The séance closed with a visit from 'Iola's' mother. The atmospheric conditions were perfect.

Mrs. Wriedt and I communicated with Mrs. Newton over the 'phone about Ada's message. The real truth was explained to me by Mr. Newton on January 22nd, 1911: On December 29th, 1910, at one of Jonson's sêances, Mr. Newton gave his daughter in spirit life a small ring, which she took away with her into the cabinet. Presently she returned, and exhibited the ring on her finger. Mr. Newton gave her instructions to find the original owner of the ring in spirit life and give it to her; it once belonged to a lady very dear to him. He went on to say that he did not know of any mark inside the ring; but, if there was, he felt pretty sure it had been so much worn that it would not now be visible.

Fate willed it that I should be a witness of the closing act of this touching little incident. By an accident I was able to attend a sêance at Jonson's on February 3rd, in company with the Newtons. Their son materialised, and approached his father, saying, in very low tones, 'Grandma Newton sends her love.' The father held out his hand; the ring was dropped into it. He immediately handed it to me, and when I got sufficient light to examine it, I found it exactly as described by Ada, and inside '14K.' Ada came after her brother, but was hardly able to speak.

I am told by those who were present that the materialisation of Ada on December 29th was a most beautiful sight; she had a wreath of flowers on her head and brought flowers in her hands. On February 3rd (when I saw her) she was also very pretty. The point of this story is that the 'little thin, gold-banded ring' had been worn all her life by Mr. Newton's mother. This fact was unknown to the Jonsons and to Mrs. Wriedt. I felt gratified at being allowed by the spirit guides of the Newtons to participate in this neat test.

Tuesday, January 17th, 1911. Sat with Mrs. Wriedt alone at 11 a.m. The only spirit that manifested was 'Iola,' with whom I had a brief conversation—it was, practically, a failure.

At 4.50 p.m. we tried again. 'Dr. Sharp' came, and 'Iola.' We had a discussion on the impressions that have appeared during the last seven years on some of my old photographs. She declared that the power to do this was derived from one of the members of my household who is a psychic. 'Dr. Sharp' advised me not to sit the following day as I was too weak. By this time I was so depleted that I could barely stand on my legs, and I took his advice.

Sunday, January 22nd, 1911. 2 to 4 p.m. With Mrs. Wriedt. The party consisted of Miss Ada Besinnet, the famous young medium of Toledo; Mr. and Mrs. Murray Moore, her adopted parents; two of their friends in Detroit, and myself. It is a singular fact that the Moores and their charge had never met Mrs. Wriedt, and it was reserved for me to bring them together. I sat next to Miss Ada. Her control is an Indian called 'Black Cloud'—he speaks through her mouth. She was falling into trance by my side when I heard a low voice: 'Me no send you to sleep. Me . . . go.' The young lady remained awake from this moment to the end of the sitting.

'Dr. Sharp' came twice, and about ten spirits of relatives and friends of the party satisfactorily identified themselves.

My guide came early and had a talk with Miss Ada, then went to the other end of the circle and identified herself to Mrs. Moore. She and Miss Ada sang together a bar or two of an Indian song. Another spirit sang a few bars of 'Home Again' with the young psychic. 'Silvermoon' turned up again (he often functions in Miss Ada's sêances), giving his war-whoop, talked a little, showed his illuminated disc and disappeared.

To me the most interesting feature in this sêance was the demonstration of an Indian girl called 'Pansy.' 'Pansy' had been one of the familiar spirits of Maggie Gaule; and since that psychic's lamentable death in 1910 was more or less free to move about on her own account. Her present occupation seems to be to follow Professor Hyslop in his investigations and to make fun of him. After announcing herself she said she came with Chief Jim (James Hyslop). She went to Mrs. Moore and said: 'I want to tell you something, but you no tell anyone else, a secret between you and me. Now' (turning the voice to us), 'you people put your fingers in your ears while I talk to squaw.' (Of course we did nothing of the sort, but listened attentively.) 'Do you know who put ideas into your top knot to answer Chief Jim?' (A roar of laughter from all.) 'I tell secret to squaw' (indignantly). 'You people no listen; put your fingers in your ears, I tell you.' Then to Mrs. Moore: 'Do you know who put those things into your top knot to say to Chief Jim? It was Maggie Gaule.' She said several other funny things, which delighted the whole party (James Hyslop had just left Toledo after an exhaustive examination of Miss Ada Besinnet and had engaged in several discussions with Mrs. Moore, who often combated his arguments.) Atmospheric conditions perfect.

Monday, January 23rd, 1911. With Mrs. Wriedt alone 7.10 to 8.10 p.m. After twenty minutes' waiting I had a long talk with my guide. She said: 'How I wish I could write a little letter to you occasionally, and put it in the care of Miss Searle.' (I am sure Miss Searle will forgive me if I say that I could not, for a minute or two, understand what 'Iola' meant.) Question: 'I do not quite understand.' Answer: 'Miss Searle; the little post-office.' (The nearest post-office to my house is a shop kept by a Miss Searle. I consider this as a remarkable test, as it is evidence of my guide's familiarity with the neighbourhood in which I live.)

Again, 'How I wish we could take a little walk along the

path from Southsea to Portsmouth.' (This is also a good test. Once and once only I walked with 'Iola' from Southsea to Portsmouth. This was in 1861, and the present fine road was not then made; there was merely a path.)

'Dr. Sharp' came and straightened out some of the talk which I did not understand. Atmospheric conditions perfect.

Tuesday, January 24th, 1911. With Mrs. Wriedt alone 5 to 5.40 p.m. Catherine came for a few minutes; then 'Iola,' who sang a few bars of a song. Question: 'If I place a line of cards on the bureau in my room, can you take up one of them?' Answer: 'I cannot do that because you are not a materialisation medium.' She then gave me a report of my wife's health, which I found out afterwards was correct.

I then referred to Mrs. Georgia, who was in hospital at Rochester. She said, 'She is much better.'

Question: 'Do you think her power will return?' Answer: 'Oh! certainly, as her physical strength returns.' Question: 'Is it worth while my going to Rochester?' Answer: 'I think not. She would not have sufficient power.' Question: 'Do you see much of —?' (my married daughter). Answer: 'Every day.' Question: 'Do you know which of her children was born on your birthday?' Answer: 'The second' (correct). Question: 'What is her name?' A pet name was given which was correct.

Thursday, January 26th, 1911. Atmospheric conditions bad. An old farmer, Mr. R., came to visit Mrs. Wriedt and (I think) with the hope of a sitting; there was also another visitor, whom we got rid of. Finding Mr. R. was very deaf, especially in his left ear, and a very good sitter, I suggested to the psychic that he should join in a séance to help me out a little with his magnetism. He was invited and given the seat of honour next to the flowers, while I sat on his left and the psychic opposite. Time, 2.30 to 3.30 p.m. 'Dr. Sharp' came for a few minutes and then sent my guide, who talked for some twenty minutes, standing in front of me—a thin, small phantom. Mr. R.'s son came in and talked to his father independently of the trumpet at the same time that 'Iola' was talking to me—two voices at one time.

Soon after a voice came: 'William—William.'

Question: 'Yes; what is your name?' Answer: 'Roberts.' Question: "'Roberts,' you mean.' Answer: 'No.' Then a voice in my left ear from my guide: 'It's all right. It is "Roberts."' Question: 'How are you, A.?' (calling him by his Christian name). Answer: 'Am I intruding?' Question: 'No; very glad to see you.' Answer: 'William, you have no idea how much we are all trying to help you. I thought at first you would consider me intruding.' Question: 'No, A.; glad to see you.' Answer: 'I will come again some day. Good-bye.'

(The last visitor was a connection of mine by marriage, but we were practically strangers. A curious point in the interview was that he gave the name by which his family was known in the early part of last century. We had quite a conversation about his daughters in spirit life, and they both came and talked to me.)

An acquaintance of Mr. R.'s, who only died about a week ago, came to him and talked volubly for about five minutes.

Then came Sir W. W., to whom I said: 'Well, Sir W., I have had a talk with you before; you brought Mr. Gladstone the other day.' Answer: 'Yes, I was glad to do so; he was our Premier on earth and is a Premier here.' Question: 'You and I did not agree on this subject when you were on this plane?' Answer: 'No, but I am now much obliged to you, and glad of the correspondence which took place then. I wish you every success. Good-bye.'

There were many good spirit lights, some the size of half-crowns. (As I anticipated I was not drawn upon at all during this sitting, but Mr. R. went downstairs, threw himself into an arm-chair, and slept for an hour and a half. At tea I told him how much he had assisted me, and he said, 'Waal, waal, I had a powerful lot taken out of me, but if it did you any good I guess I am real glad.')

Friday, January 27th, 1911. With Mrs. Wriedt alone, 9.30 a.m. to 10 a.m. Atmospheric conditions bad; thaw and a little rain. Plenty of flowers on the table.

The psychic said: 'I see a short, thick-set man, with a beard; he is good looking; he tried to etherealise.' (Not recognised.)

My guide attempted to materialise near the flowers and about the room; she tried hard to show her face; after nearly fifteen minutes' waiting she spoke for some twenty minutes about matters of no interest to my readers, but convincing to me, as all her utterances clearly showed that she was acquainted with all my actions and had knowledge of what was going on at my house (proved later).

Mrs. Wriedt said: 'I see the name of Stone.' A voice: 'My name is Stone.'

Question: 'I only know of one "Stone." He was Astronomer Royal at the Cape of Good Hope.' Answer: 'I am he, and I am very glad to be here this morning. I thought I would come on the strength of our old acquaintance. Mr. Gladstone told me of you; he is much interested in these phenomena.' Question: 'Is G. right in supposing there are stars (of the first magnitude) which have no parallax?' Answer: 'He is.' Question: 'I have lately spoken with Sir Isaac Newton, and he said: . . . ' (See 'Kaiser' séances). Answer: 'Ha! ha! Newton would find that pretty hard to explain himself.' Question: 'Is there a planet beyond Neptune?' Answer: 'Yes, but it is uninhabited.'

I mentioned Galileo, and Stone said: 'Ah! he is a well-known spirit here.' Question: 'Do you know anything of Mars?' Answer: 'Mars will some day be connected with the earth by electricity. The inhabitants are small, short and dark; they have organisms to withstand the rarified atmosphere and intense heat. I am still working on astronomical problems. Good-bye.'

(To be continued.)

CAN LIVING PERSONS COMMUNICATE BY RAPS?

Having been asked if she believed it possible for a living person to communicate by means of the table, as do spirits, Mrs. Bardelia, a well-known Continental medium, contributes the following incidents from her own experience to the 'Revue Spirite,' for January, which journal states that they occurred under the observation of Dr. Gustave Le Bon, and that their authenticity cannot be called in question. Mrs. Bardelia says:—

Three years ago I went to St. Petersburg. My first visit there was for the Spiritists of that city, where we had quite a remarkable table séance. How did this fact become known in that large city, the capital of Russia, which is a sort of small province? I do not know. Great was my astonishment, therefore, when, upon arriving at my apartments the next day, the manager of the hotel at which I was stopping asked me to grant him the favour of a séance; to the end, he added, of dispelling an indecision. I granted the request, and that afternoon at 4 o'clock we were seated at the table. Mr. R. was thinking particularly of his father, who had recently passed out, and from whom he was eagerly desiring a message. Nor was he satisfied when, with the aid of the alphabet, the first raps spelled out a name quite different from the one he expected. The family name shortly followed, and he exclaimed: 'Why, that is the name of my best friend; but he is certainly not dead, for I just lately heard from him from a hotel in Moscow, where he is employed.'

As much surprised as Mr. R., I sought further information, when we obtained this strange message: 'I am not dead, but in a state of coma; I shall die to-night.' 'Are you at your hotel?' asked Mr. R. 'No, at the hospital,' was the reply. The raps ceased.

Mr. R., still sceptical, announced his intention of telephoning at once to Moscow for the purpose of verifying the truth of the message. About an hour later he returned, very pale and greatly excited. The hotel where he had telephoned asking to speak with his friend had answered that, delirious and dying, the gentleman inquired about had been removed to the hospital that morning, and it was not expected that he would live the night through, thus verifying the message.

This instance hardly suffices to prove that the living can communicate by raps, because the gentleman was dying and in a state of coma, from which, apparently, he did not recover.

A CORRESPONDENT who lives in a little village, six miles from the nearest town, writes: 'I have been a reader of your valuable paper for twelve years. I generally fly to it when unusually depressed, and always find something cheering. I am a firm believer in spirits, and have often been told by clairvoyants of my little child, who is always with me, and have also been much benefited by healing mediums. The one or two people to whom I have talked on Spiritualism here have almost considered me an "Atheist," so it is seldom that I mention my religious views to anyone, and "LIGHT" is a great comfort to me.'

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PROFESSOR GARDNER INDICTS SPIRITISM.

In an article in 'The Hibbert Journal' for April, Professor Percy Gardner, of Oxford, deals with 'The Sub-conscious and the Super-conscious,' and makes what in some respects is a noteworthy contribution to the ever-growing literature on this subject. His main contention is for the superiority of the conscious man over the sub-conscious. Indeed, with him the sub-conscious is suspect, and he makes the distinction, which we have frequently made, between the sub-conscious and the super-conscious. Admitting that 'No one capable of understanding the nature of evidence could now deny that hypnotism has brought to light unsuspected powers of the human spirit, and has proved how large a part of our life and personality never comes to the surface,' and that 'dreams, motor automatisms, trances, ecstasy and the like must be taken into account by anyone who hereafter may write on psychology,' he says we must 'grasp and hold fast the notion that there is a higher and lower in the unconscious life, that it has a scale which is at bottom ethical,' otherwise 'psychical phenomena may be the means of leading us to moral ruin.'

The labours of Dr. Rhodes Buchanan and Professor William Denton are accepted and justified when our author admits the facts of psychometry, but without using that name, and says: 'Theologians have talked of recording angels who entered in their books all deeds and words of our lives to be set forth against us in a great day of judgment, but now we see that angelic agency is not necessary; that we are our own recorders, and bear within us an ineffaceable record of the past. . . . We seem to see, from the way in which events of the past are by sensitives drawn from an unknown source, that even the death of the body may not obscure or efface those records.' His chief concern, however, is with the ethical aspect of Spiritism, in regard to which he says:—

If Spiritism were an embodiment of noble ideas as to God and man, and set us in the way of a life directed to worthy ends, men would not haggle over flaws in its evidence. In fact, most religions are based on far less of ascertainable fact. But does Spiritism meet this test? I think not. We shall in vain search the Spiritualist literature of our time for the great ethical ideas which have in the past history of religion made up, and do still make up, its life-blood. It does not tell us of sin and forgiveness; it does not represent the path to heaven as a steep and difficult one. It does not dwell on the nobleness of self-sacrifice, of the daily and hourly need of divine grace, without which man is a poor phantom. It reflects nothing but a vague religiosity, and represents all men as alike on the way of salvation. . . . The future world revealed by Spiritualists is a fair reflection of their own belief, but no great revelation to man. . . . Nevertheless, in some ways psychical investigation has been valuable. It has set aside, it may be hoped for ever, those merely mechanical notions of inspiration and infallibility which satisfied many Christians of past generations.

Professor Gardner's indictment has just sufficient basis to make it appear well drawn, and an appearance of truth

that gives it a sting, but as it is based on erroneous premisses, his conclusions are unfair and unjustified. The moral and spiritual value of the messages from the unseen necessarily depend on the status and purpose of the manifesting Intelligence. But hitherto psychical investigation has been undertaken mainly with a view to ascertaining the truth regarding the dispute between materialism and religion as to whether death ends personal life or is but an incident in an eternal career. Spiritualism, therefore, is primarily concerned with a matter of fact, viz., the opening up of avenues of intercourse with exanimate human beings. The communicators, endeavouring to meet the wishes of inquirers, have aimed at giving proofs of personal survival rather than ethical revelations, and have succeeded so far that even Professor Gardner admits that 'most religions are based on far less of ascertainable fact.' High principles and helpful teachings, however, have frequently been given with very beneficial results.

To say that Spiritualism has no ethical standard implies that it is not amenable to and does not accept the ethical standards already in existence, which is not true. The central claim of the Spiritualist may be presented almost entire in Professor Gardner's own words: 'The death of the body is only a crisis in the life of the soul, changing its conditions but not its nature, and each soul embarks on the new life, bearing with it an indelible and infallible record of its good and evil deeds done in the flesh.' And, we may add, going on in its new life hampered and hindered or aided and strengthened by the results of those good and evil motives and deeds, in so far as they have affected character; but destined, sooner or later, to advance to higher and purer states of conscious response to the Divine Purpose—purified by pain and uplifted by love—attaining 'the full measure of personality by the paradoxical way of self-relinquishment,' as another writer puts it.

The fact is, Spiritualism recognises, as does Professor Gardner, that man is a progressive being; that his 'conscious personality has gradually, through unmeasured ages, been brought about by a slow organisation of the unconscious to serve the ethical needs of the race,' but it goes further and affirms that this evolution and education of consciousness continues after death—ethical principles governing personal progress there as here.

The bias of our critic is made apparent when he says: 'No man of sound judgment would value a statement uttered by a sensitive in a state of trance more than the well-weighed words of a wise and good man.' What, not if the statement of the sensitive were demonstrably true? And again we get a limited and prejudiced view in the following passage: 'In the mesmeric or Spiritualist trance the sensitive loses the conscious life to become the medium by which certain unexplained intelligences operate. And the more often this takes place the more completely does the sensitive lose in power of will and character, becoming possessed, the prey of other forces.' But what if the sensitive surrenders voluntarily and makes this temporary 'self-sacrifice' for the good of others?

It is not true that sensitives necessarily lose in power of will and character as the result of their entrancement. Many sensitives have been healed in body, strengthened in will and character, and spiritually ennobled as the result of their association with spirit intelligences. It is all a question of right motives and wise methods.

We imagine that Professor Gardner cannot have an extensive acquaintance with Spiritualist literature, or else his eyes have been holden so that he could not see. When he says that 'it does not tell of sin and forgiveness or

represent the path to heaven as a steep and difficult one,' &c., we can only conclude that his point of view is different from ours, that his glasses have been coloured by preconception. Possibly Mr. Raupert is responsible for that, since the Professor refers with approval to that gentleman's recent book, and appears to base upon its prejudiced assertions his own unwarrantable statement that: 'If on the whole the best, the only safe, test of a creed be the character of those who hold it, this test is one which Spiritism cannot pass.' This we emphatically deny. The testimony of the high and honourable life-records of leading Spiritualists the world over, as, too, of thousands of men and women of all classes of society to whom Spiritualism has been a teacher and a revealer—giving them light and inspiration, strength and blessing, such as they failed to get elsewhere—disproves this inaccurate and uncalled-for condemnation.

We believe that Professor Gardner desires to be unbiassed and just, and we suggest to him that he should apply, in this connection, his own admission that psychical investigation has shown that 'all inspiration, *even that which is most divine*, must work from within outwards and must suffer in its passage through human faculties from the limitations and weaknesses of those faculties.'

SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

AN ADDRESS BY THE REV. ARTHUR CHAMBERS.

On Thursday evening, April 27th, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, the Rev. Arthur Chambers delivered an Address on 'Spiritualism and the Light it casts on Christian Truth' to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. H. Withall, the vice-president, occupying the chair.

THE CHAIRMAN, in introducing the lecturer, said that one of the great difficulties which Spiritualists experienced when they wished to let others share the advantages of their faith was to find the inquirer with the open mind. The child who was fortunate enough to have a mother who understood her duties and responsibilities received valuable ideas that became the foundation of future character. Most men or women who had done useful work in the world had acknowledged their indebtedness to the influence of their mothers. Unfortunately some mothers regarded the claims of social functions before those of motherhood and delegated their responsibilities to others. These teachers often endeavoured to assert their authority with disobedient children by telling them of dreadful things that would happen to them in the future, and backing up their predictions by texts from the Bible. Generally there remained with the child a morbid dread of the after life. Mr. Chambers, in his books and his sermons, had pointed out that the texts that were the backbone of these dreadful statements were often mistranslations, and had brought forward other texts which threw quite a different light on the subject. He had thus given help and relief to many perplexed and anxious persons. He, Mr. Withall, trusted that Mr. Chambers would be spared to continue his good work for many years.

MR. CHAMBERS said: Probably the most notable characteristic which differentiates the present age from that of forty or fifty years ago is the tremendous change which has taken place in regard to religious thought and teaching. The men and women of to-day are not holding the religious ideas which were held a generation ago. Something has removed them to another plane of thought and perception. Unexpectedly, secretly, mysteriously, tentatively, gradually—but surely, effectively, and demonstrably,—influences have been at work which have remodelled, and are still remodelling, the religious conceptions of mankind.

This is true of those great religions outside the domain of Christian faith—such as Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and Judaism—religions so stereotyped and inflexible in their teachings as to make it appear unlikely that they could undergo modification or change. This is true, in a far wider sense, of

the Christian religion. None of the faiths of mankind at the present day has escaped those influences which have brought about a recasting of ideas; no faith more than the Christian faith has felt the effect of those influences.

It is on this latter point that I am privileged to speak to you to-day. I have to try and show you that a great light has been cast upon Christian truth in such a way as to make the conceptions of Christians of this age very different from the conceptions of the past; and I shall, moreover, speak about one of the great influences which has contributed to this result.

CHRISTIAN THOUGHT, PAST AND PRESENT.

There are not a few good and sincere Christians who are terribly shocked at the mere thought of the possibility of there being a contrast between the Christian thought of to-day and that of the past. To tell them that the conception of truths which are crystallised in the Christian religion is—on the part of enlightened men and women to-day—very different from what it was when their fathers were young, causes them genuine anxiety and distress. They regard it as a sure indication of religious indifference and waning faith. From their standpoint, this attitude is perfectly logical. They have been taught, and have schooled themselves to believe, that the declarations of Christ and his apostles constituted a full and complete and final revelation in regard to Christian truth; that no fresh light on the subject would ever, on this side of the grave, be vouchsafed to men; that no better understanding of the Master's teaching would ever be forthcoming; and that it also savours of presumption to suppose that we of to-day have clearer conceptions of Christian truth than had the early and mediæval Fathers of the Church. By such persons the mention of 'contrast' between the Christian ideas of the past and the present is disposed of in the following simple way: 'There can be,' they say, 'but a certain true set of conceptions with regard to Christian truth—viz., those which we accept; and therefore any other conceptions, modern or otherwise, which do not coincide with ours, cannot be Christian at all. The modern ideas of Christian truth are heretical and non-Christian, and therefore it is no question of contrast whatever.' That is the position taken by the Roman Church, by many of the sects of Christendom, and by a considerable number of sincere, but fearful, individuals. The Christian faith is supposed to be endangered if it be admitted that it is possible for fresh light to be cast on Christian truth.

Well, we are of the number of those who believe that it is the purpose of God, as the ages roll on, that fresh light should be cast on Christian teaching, and that we whose conceptions of Christianity are, in some respects, variant from the ideas of some of the churches and some of the teachers, are as much entitled to label our thoughts 'Christian' as they were. Nay, more so, I think; inasmuch as the Christian religion, in the light of modern thought, is a grander thing than it was without that thought. And for the following reasons:—

If the Christian religion discloses certain great truths concerning God, His purposes, ourselves, our spiritual environment, and our hereafter, it is reasonable to suppose that man's perception and understanding of those truths will become clearer and fuller as time goes on and his knowledge of things becomes more extended. We appeal to other departments of truth in support of this assertion. Millions of years ago God revealed to the dwellers on this planet, in His book of the sky, a stupendous truth concerning our earth in relationship to the Solar system. Well, what happened? Generation after generation of thoughtful and observant men looked at that book, and were fully convinced that they perfectly understood the truth which God had written there. It was all so plain, they thought; the earth was the centre, and the sun and the planets revolved around it. What was it that caused men, after fourteen centuries, to discard the Ptolemaic theory and to adopt that of Copernicus, the father of modern astronomy? Had the truth been altered? Not at all; men at length had only come to rightly understand it by the inletting of fresh light on the subject.

We believe that the case is similar in regard to Christian truth. In the text-book of Christianity, the Bible, are written

mighty truths concerning God, ourselves, and the spiritual, spoilt for many who are living in modern times because the men of the past who read the book, read into it their misconceptions of truth. Is it not reasonable to believe in regard to those truths enshrined in the Bible, that as time goes on, and man's moral nature becomes more Christlike, and the wonders of being are made more manifest to him, there will come a clearer, a better, a more perfect estimation of Christian truth? Nothing, to my mind, can be more inconsistent with our experience of things than to imagine that divine truth, or any other truth, has been so communicated to man as to make it incapable of fuller illumination as fresh light is flung upon it.

But again; we base our belief that light has been, and is being, cast on Christian truth, on the fact that Jesus and those who received their teaching from him most distinctly asserted that this would be the case. What is the meaning of the Master's words, spoken to those whom he had been teaching for nearly three years: 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now'? What is the meaning of St. Paul's words: 'We know *in part*'; 'Now we see in a mirror, darkly'; and a host of other passages in the Bible which proclaim man's limitation in understanding divine truth? Surely this, that as our race emerges from the infancy of thought and idea to wider knowledge, fuller experience, and the more comprehensive grasp of things, there must be, there will be, the better understanding of truth. If this be true we shall expect that there will be a mighty contrast, in the direction of advance, in regard to Christian truth, between the conceptions of those who are in the vanguard of religious thought to-day and those of the thinkers of the past.

PAST AND PRESENT IDEAS OF GOD.

In nothing, probably, has the intellectual advancement of mankind been so well demonstrated as in the betterment of conception concerning God.

As to His Being.—If we get back to the times before the Christian era we are struck with the anthropomorphic ideas which were held in regard to Him. Even the most favoured of religious races—the Jews (if we exclude a comparatively small number of them, the prophets)—had but a poor and unworthy idea of the Being of God. He was superior to the tribal gods of surrounding nations, but He was thought of much in the light of a magnified Man; the feelings, the characteristics of a man were attributed to Him. 'The Lord is a man of war,' thought the religious warrior of those times. He could 'repent' of what He had done. He could 'love Jacob and hate Esau.' He could call to His aid a lying spirit to compass the death of Ahab. In accordance with the character of Eastern vengeance He could wreak destruction upon unoffending women and children, because He was angry with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. In a word, He was viewed, even by the favoured Jews, as one alike in many respects to the men who thought of Him. There, in those far-away times, stood the truth about the Being of God as it stands to-day—'as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.' But did men realise it? Will anyone say that there was no need for fresh light on this great truth? You know what happened later in the world's history. The Christ came as the declarer of what God is. 'God is Spirit,' said Jesus, and in those three words he proclaimed the first and mightiest of all truths.

'God is Spirit!' It voiced an incontrovertible, an unassailable truth. It divested God of any likeness to man in his passions, faultiness, and caprice. It made Him transcendent and immanent, a being who can only be reached and touched when the spirit in man is energising on the Christ plane. Look down the centuries from the time of the Master. Do you think this mighty truth about the Being of God has been adequately grasped by the churches of the past? Were the old anthropomorphic notions of Him abandoned, after the Christ had told men the truth? I think not. Was it the conception of a great Spirit-God which prompted popes and cardinals and inquisitors to torture and burn their fellows because some dogma or another was not accepted by their victims? Was it the conception of a Spirit-God that made Queen Mary of England say: 'How can it be wrong for me to make heretics suffer in the

flames for five minutes when God will torture them for ever and ever?' Was it the conception of a great Parent Spirit of us all, which in the past—in spite of the Christ—split up Christians into innumerable camps, and made men and women who worshipped Him ban and persecute and hate each other?

All this and a great deal more must surely bear attestation to the fact that the cardinal truth of the Christian religion—the truth which the Christ put into the forefront of his teaching—has been in the past but imperfectly realised.

We turn now to the thought of the present age in respect to the Being of God. What do we see? That a great change has come over the minds of men. The anthropomorphic characteristics formerly ascribed to God are being flung aside as being incompatible with the thought of Him as the Parent Spirit of the universe. A better understanding of what Jesus meant when He said, 'God is Spirit,' has caused men to realise the immanency of God as well as His transcendency. We are beginning to grip the significance of the spirithood (if I may coin the word) of God—to understand what Jesus really meant when he said, 'God so loved the world'; what St. Paul meant in those words, 'We are also His offspring,' and 'There is one God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in all.' And with this extended idea of God as spirit has come the abandonment of notions which disfigured the Christian teaching of the past. Our outlook upon God as to His Being is better and grander than it was. The representations of Him as an old man looking down from the sky, as seen in the woodcuts of old Bibles and in the paintings of old masters, shock us. The conception of mankind has 'moved on.'

But turn to another feature of contrast as to the past and present ideas of God—I mean the ideas entertained as to God's character and purpose in regard to mankind. The contrast is enormous.

Forty years ago, when I was a lad of seventeen or eighteen, I passed through a tremendous mental experience. I had been brought up in the Christian faith, and accepted (or thought I accepted), without thinking, the religious teaching current at that time. Some writings of men who were regarded as exponents of the truth of God and were ardent teachers of the doctrine of everlasting punishment, fell into my hands and set me thinking. By notable divines in the Roman, Anglican and Nonconformist Churches, the doctrine of the restricted purpose of God and unending woe for the bulk of the human race was set forth in all its unvarnished horror and pitilessness. I am not going to quote the particular passages which distressed me and plunged me into the deepest gloom and despair in respect to religion. I have given them in one of my books, 'Our Life after Death,' on p. 211 and onwards. I have only to say that in consequence of such fearful misrepresentation, for nine months or more my faith in God and His goodness left me; only to return and remain, when, in the light of fuller knowledge, I could regard such conceptions of God's character and purpose as the outcome of perverted imagination and a non-realisation of eternal truth.

When I tell you that I have in my possession hundreds and hundreds of letters, sent to me from all parts of the world, expressive of the relief, the comfort, the incentive to fuller trust in God, the infinite brightness and hope which have come to the writers, because of their better realisation of what God is and purposes, will any of you deny that new light has been cast on Christian truth in respect to what we have named? But individual opinion counts for little in our estimate of the thoughts of mankind as a whole. We accept the general consensus of widely-extended Christian present-day thought on this subject. To what does it point? Surely, to *this*: that on the subject of God's character and purpose, a mental revolution has somehow or another taken place. As to His character, is it too much to say that the theologians, from Tertullian to Pusey, from Augustine to Calvin and Spurgeon, have made Him revengeful, merciless, pitiless, unjust, and unloving?

The doctrine of unending torment and misery rests on no other supposition. No God who is *not* revengeful, pitiless, unjust, and unloving, would punish His creatures—not to recover and bless them, but to ruin them everlastingly. No God but one so described could tolerate for all eternity the sufferings of those whom He has declared He *loves*. The past

conception as to God's character amounts to a foul slander on Him. What! Am I, according to the teaching of His beautiful, compassionate, and loving Christ, to 'be perfect even as the Father in Heaven is perfect'? Well, all I have to say is that, if the standard of my perfection is to correspond with the attributes of God's character, as He has been represented in some of the predominant theology of the past, you would not sit here and let me speak to you to-night. (Applause.)

(To be continued).

'THE THEORY OF A "LOST SOUL."'

'Thoughts on Things Psychic,' by Walter Winston Kenilworth (R. F. Fenno and Co., New York), gives us the impression that it is the work not only of a clever writer, but of a genuine seeker for truth. Mr. Kenilworth's opening essay, 'The Theory of a "Lost Soul,"' however, does not recommend his philosophy. He tells us that 'even in theological misconceptions there are grains of truth.' Such a misconception is the idea, obtaining in most religions, of hell and the eternal punishment of 'lost souls.'

Though that idea, with its pit of darkness and everlasting fire, is largely due to racial hypochondria, it contains elements of truth. Evil is followed by evil. . . . The fate of a 'lost soul' is really worse than the imagination can picture. According to spiritual science a 'lost soul' is the perishing of personality, the most dreadful event the spirit of man can experience.

Mr. Kenilworth goes on to draw a horrible picture of the human being sinking back into the brute—a creature human no longer, whose living force is 'a putrescence defiling the mental atmosphere with evil influences and doomed to final corruption.' But this is not all:—

In time, the pall of death covers the physical life of the man-brute. He finds himself in a new form, a thing of tremendous power. His greatest delight is in sending his influence to sensitives in low vibration on the earth plane. Goading them to depravities of indescribable character, he vampirises on their sense enjoyment, or debauches himself in the psychopathic criminal state which often leads the sensitive to murder or self-destruction. Spiritual teachers claim that such a demon can reincarnate, that enough of the mental elements remain for physical manifestation. Such a birth brings into expression the monster whose criminal insanities shock humanity. In terms of natural law, the force which this monster utilises finally exhausts itself and, as it is gradually more and more spent, vitality recedes. That, too, is spent, and the lurid flame which spreads infection and riot is extinguished. The elements which composed the original personality are dispersed in universal substance and force, to be kneaded and purified to the uses of developing life. Such depravity is not of sudden origin. It is the climax of lives of perversion, spiritual blindness and shocking iniquity.

And what is the great Disposer of events doing meanwhile? Philosophy, Mr. Kenilworth informs us, has modified the theory of a personal God. If this ugly 'theory of "lost souls"' be indeed the last word of spiritual science, philosophy need not stop short at modifying. It may as well go the whole length, and substitute blind, mechanical force. In place of the vindictive deity of the old theology, Mr. Kenilworth has given us a Supreme Ruler who cannot rule, who has either no foresight or cannot prevent the evil He foresees. We are not sure whether the idea of blind force would not be preferable to that of a miserable, helpless father who, unable to open the eyes of his rebellious children to the folly of the course they are pursuing, and having exhausted all the means of correction with which he is acquainted, is compelled to acquiesce in their self-destruction. A truly lame and impotent conclusion!

UNDER the heading 'The Needs of the Hour,' 'The Progressive Thinker' says: 'We need more devotion. We need more consecration. We need more loyalty. We need more self-sacrifice in our ranks. With the light that has come to us, has come a great responsibility to pursue the work that should ever be our aim, and for that we should labour. When we forget that Spiritualism has come to us, not to draw the spirit world to us, but to lift us up that we may come into touch with a higher life, then our devotion becomes a matter of a mere superficial action and no longer represents the heart's emotion.'

THE 'INTUITIVE SELF.'

'Personality and Telepathy,' by F. C. Constable, M.A. (Kegan Paul), is a closely-reasoned attempt, extending to over 320 pages, to prove—as the author explains in his Introduction—that 'we have human experience of our existence as (relatively) spiritual selves.' The discovery of telepathy has introduced a new factor in reasoning, enabling Mr. Constable to assume that 'as human personalities we are so related to the external that we have human experience of it otherwise than through the normal organs of sense.' He makes the human personality (the subject or psychological 'I') 'a partial and mediate manifestation in our universe of a spiritual self.' This spiritual self he terms an intuitive self, and does so for the following reasons:—

All human thought is based on (emanates from) intuition. And as human thought is active, intuition must be active, and must be actively presented to the subject (the human personality). Now, sensibility is passive, and so intuition (which is active) cannot be referred to (cannot emanate from) sensibility. What, then, is the origin of this active presentation of intuition to the subject? I argue that a personality of intuition (an intuitive self) must present intuition to its subject—that is, to the human personality which exists as its (the intuitive self's) partial and mediate manifestation in our universe. I hold that this active presentation of intuition is not a general presentation to humanity from God, Nature, or the Unknown, but from intuitive selves to their manifestations in our universe, because (as I try to prove) each one of us has, as a human personality, human experience of existence as a spiritual or intuitive self.

The first part of Mr. Constable's book is mainly concerned with Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason'; the second and third parts deal with (assumed) facts of human experience, and the proof essayed is that 'they are explicable only if the intuitive self have real (relatively noumenal) existence.' If his attempt to prove that we exist as intuitive selves be held successful, he does not think Spiritualism is affected in any way—unless it be held that a good foundation is thereby laid for some theory of Spiritualism. He puts the point thus:—

As spiritual selves we are timelessly in communion with the disembodied; but this communion transcends human thought, human reason. As human personalities we cannot be in full communion with the disembodied, just as (in lower degree) there can be no full communion between the mind of a child and the mind of a philosopher. If, however, human thought be not lost, but merely subsumed under the intuitive thought of the disembodied, then the disembodied might have power to communicate with us on the level of our conditioned universe. I, confined from birth in a prison-house, cannot communicate with those at liberty. But if those who are at liberty have power to place themselves within the limited confines of my prison-house, then we can communicate *subject to my conditions*: we can communicate, but the freedom of our exchange of thought must be subject to *my* limitations of thought—to *my* human experience gained in the prison-house.

Spiritualists will sympathise with the following eloquent passage:—

We have advanced so rapidly in knowledge of that command over the forces and material of Nature that humanity is in danger of being stifled in a soulless atmosphere of the intellectual. Where the false gods of rank, wealth, and power are set up for worship, the ideals of the soul in man lie sullied in the dust. If human experience could be shown to prove to us that we exist as spiritual selves—spiritual selves which survive earthly death—would not such a proof introduce a new factor for the spiritual advance of humanity? If it were brought home to all of us that our earthly life of mean distinctions in wealth, rank, power and intellect is but a passing phase, and that each one of us enters, on the dissolution of body and brain by death, a new life of the spirit free from such evil conditions, should we not all be drawn together more closely in full love and respect? Should we not more clearly understand that for us, even on earth, the spirit rather than the body must be cherished? Would not religion, itself, be given thereby a new and stronger human foundation for belief?

Mr. Constable dedicates the book 'To my friend, Edmund Gurney,' and at the close of his Introduction pays a warm tribute of gratitude to the Society for Psychical Research. He appends at the end of the volume a very full index or digest of the argument.

'DAGONET' AS A SEER.

In 'LIGHT' of April 29th we quoted some paragraphs from the 'Referee.' Mr. G. R. Sims ('Dagonet') related in his own quaint fashion some remarkable instances of fulfilled dreams which, as occurring to a member of his own family, had come under his immediate observation. In the same paper, on April 30th, 'Dagonet' tells of a verified vision of his own which happened recently while he was sitting on the lawn of a riverside hotel at Cookham.

'While I sat day-dreaming in the sunshine,' he writes, 'I saw a child fall into the river. It was one of those dream-pictures that shape themselves no one knows how or why, last for a moment, and then vanish into thin air.'

'I told three people of my "vision." Although I could not get the vision out of my mind, I refused to accept it as a presentiment of evil.'

Later in the day, when the party were about to order tea, the waiter entered in a state of heat and excitement. 'I've just been helping to rescue a child,' he said. 'Some Cookham children were playing on the towpath yonder, when one of them—a little girl of five—fell in. . . . Fortunately, a boat was close by, and we managed to get her out. But we were only just in time.' Thus the waiter; and 'Dagonet' adds, 'Can anyone tell me why four hours before the accident happened to a child who was an utter stranger to me, I should have seen it and been so impressed by it that, having a child with me, I was anxious all the time I was on the water with her?'

As it is one of the functions of 'LIGHT' to deal with these problems we will endeavour to answer 'Dagonet's' question, although from the circumstances of the case our explanation must be rather of a suggestive than of a positive nature.

In the first place, then, 'Dagonet' was drowsing or 'day-dreaming'—a state which seems to leave the mind hovering between the material and the psychical worlds, and in just that condition when it is most susceptible to 'flashes' of insight or prevision. Thus much we know. But why should an impending disaster to an 'utter stranger' be revealed in this way? Well, that opens up a large question. On the deeper philosophical side of the subject we could say a good deal about this matter of 'utter strangers,' who may be, and are in the great economy of the universe, linked with us by ties much closer than we dream of in our superficial thinking. We will leave that aside, however, and present the questioner with two views of the matter, one of which, we are persuaded, must be true. Either the 'coming event' was shadowed on the mind of the seer fortuitously by reason of his being momentarily in contact with a higher plane of consciousness, or some dweller in the unseen world, interested in 'Dagonet' and his probings into psychical phenomena, impressed the vision on his mind that the dream scene and its fulfilment might be of profit to him as a hint or an illustration. Implicit in the vision was (as the seer mentions) an impression that it was not a presentiment of evil, and that, too, proved to be the truth, for it boded no harm to the child with 'Dagonet,' while the child directly concerned was saved.

We hope that our genial friend will experience and record more happenings of a psychical character. It helps our own work.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a Conference meeting with the Battersea Society, Henley-street, on Sunday, May 7th, at 7 p.m. Speakers: Messrs. G. Tayler Gwinn, J. Edwards, of Croydon, and F. Noall, of Stratford.

FOR PURITY.—We have just received the second number of an interesting little quarterly magazine, 'The Alliance of Honour Record' (Morgan and Scott, 1d.). The movement of which it is the organ is inter-denominational in character, its objects being to impress upon men and youths the necessity of leading pure lives, to unite them in a world-wide effort of purity and a chivalrous respect for womanhood; and to promote the welfare of young men by circulating literature with a view to counteracting the manifold temptations to impurity of thought, word, and deed. Dr. Harry Grattan Guinness is the president, and the vice-presidents include the names of many leading men in both the Anglican Communion and the various Free Churches. The headquarters of the Alliance are at 10, Leysian-buildings, City-road, E.C. Members, men or youths above eighteen, subscribe 1s. annually; youths above fifteen and under eighteen subscribe 6d. as Associates.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

An exceptionally large number of 'May meetings' will be held in London this year—indeed, they are not confined to May, but began in April and will run on into June. The meetings of the London Spiritualist Alliance at Suffolk-street on May 11th and 25th will be unusually interesting. The annual convention of the Union of London Spiritualists at South Place, Finsbury, E.C., on Thursday, May 18th, promises to be a great success. Mr. W. T. Stead is expected to be the speaker at the morning meeting, and it is anticipated that there will be a large audience to listen to him. Clairvoyant descriptions will be given in the afternoon by two well-known mediums and several speakers will deliver short addresses at the evening meeting. Fuller particulars of these meetings are given on the front page of this issue.

The members and friends of the Marylebone Spiritualist Association will be pleased to learn that a comfortable and suitable room has been secured for the Monday evening meetings at 13, Mortimer-street, a few doors from Cavendish Rooms. The report and balance-sheet for the year just ended record a good year's work, and the Council, while tendering their hearty thanks to all workers on both sides of life, bespeak the continued generous assistance of the members and associates. 'It is vitally necessary that the Sunday meetings be accorded increased support,' and it is hoped that 'regular attendance and financial assistance' will be the rule during the coming year. Every effort should be made by the supporters of this society to induce their inquiring friends and acquaintances to fill the Rooms. Nothing succeeds like success, and earnestness and enthusiasm on the part of the members and friends greatly encourage the Council in their zealous efforts 'to promote the spread of the glorious truths of Spiritualism.'

A remarkable state of things was revealed last week at the Spring Assembly of the Baptist Union, when the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare presented a report which showed a decrease in church members of nearly four thousand, and of Sunday school scholars of nearly three thousand. This, too, in spite of the fact that there has been an increase of eighteen churches, twenty chapels, and over five hundred teachers, and nearly eight thousand additional seats. We cannot believe that religion is dying out of the hearts of the people, or that they are less concerned for truth and right, purity and goodness. What, then, can be the reason of this remarkable tendency away from the churches? Can it be that sectarian theology is being outgrown?

Mr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe will be gladly welcomed to the platform at the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, on May 11th, when he will address the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance on 'Essential Conditions of Life in This and Other Worlds.' His two former addresses were so original and suggestive that another treat is confidently expected, especially as the subject chosen is both practical and interesting. We know something, or think we do, of the conditions essential to life in this world, but we know so little respecting those of life in other worlds, including the after-death realms to which so many of our revered pioneer workers have recently departed, that any fuller light on this important subject will be most welcome.

Those Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance and other friends who had the pleasure and profit of listening to the addresses delivered by Mrs. Mary Seaton in June of last year at 110, St. Martin's-lane, will be interested to know that they will be able to renew their acquaintance with the lecturer and listen to her luminous expositions of spiritual science during the present month, as announced on page 206. We hope the rooms will be crowded on each occasion. The opening address on the 11th inst. will be especially valuable to all students of healing.

Rabbi Charles Fleisher, Cambridge, Mass., speaking to the Spiritualists of Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., said: 'What I am sure of is that we are living in eternity now, and that it needs not death to translate us thither. It behoves us, therefore, to live always on the eternal plane, laying stress on those things that last. Thus the present life becomes worthy of the eternity which precedes birth and that which follows death, and this span of threescore years and ten serves easily as a bridge to cross the chasm of this conscious life.'

Those who are in doubt as to the influence of Spiritualism, and who dwell on its 'dangers' to the exclusion of all thoughts as to its benefits, should read what the late Professor James

said when referring to Miss A. M. Robbins, *viz.*: 'From a state of doubt she has won,' through her experiences in psychical research, 'faith in human survival'; and what Miss Robbins herself says on the subject: 'Inexpressible is the joy of having found a confidence that replaces fear—a trust that takes the place of doubt, a composure wrought out of agitation, light that banishes darkness, and freedom that breaks down all prison walls.'

Progress is ever the result of the well-directed energy of those persons who, having intuition and ideals, dare to be original. But, as Mr. P. Galloway says: 'We are too often slaves to reason, and lack imagination. Perhaps it is because of our continual digging in the dust-heaps of past ages that our eyes have been blinded to the light in front. Out of yesterday came to-day, I grant, and to-morrow may be as to-day forges it, but this hanging on to yesterday is the despair of to-morrow. The true inspiration is begotten to-day, not yesterday, and if from to-day to-morrow is born, our continual inquiry should be as to what bit of the dead past can be cut away so that to-morrow shall breathe more freely.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion.

Identity Bureau: Confirmation Wanted.

SIR,—At a séance, held on March 1st, a spirit controlled who described herself as Lady Daulby (or Dolby), of Daulby Hall, and said that she passed over one hundred and twenty years ago, that her husband's name was Henry, that she had cared for the flattery of her lovers, whose 'love' she found was vice, more than she cared for her husband and children. Her priest, Father Ambrose, also lamented that he had wasted his life saying prayers, unmeant, instead of making the world bright.

Any information as to above would be welcome.—Yours, &c.,
INVESTIGATOR.

SIR,—Information as to identity is desired respecting a communication given by means of the 'Ouija' at a séance held in Germany. The spirit gave the name of Phineas Netley, and said that he was a Quaker and had lived at Chester. He refused the suggestion that it was an English town, and said that he meant Chester, in Pennsylvania, U.S.A. We consulted a Gazetteer, and found, to our surprise, that there is a Chester in Pennsylvania, and that it is a stronghold of the Quakers. Can any of your American readers help us in this matter?—Yours, &c.,
O. S.

SIR,—The members of a small circle are trying to get communications from spirits respecting their past earth-life experiences with a view to obtaining proofs of identity, and we shall be glad if any readers of 'LIGHT' can ascertain for us if there is any truth in the statements made in the three following messages:—

Anne Doble—lived in the South of England at Newton Parva and was a spinster of some little age. Her tomb is in the parish churchyard. The date of her passing over is 1775.

James Williams—late address 123, Great West-street, Birmingham. No further particulars as yet.

Edward Godwin—naval captain, passed over at Madeira in 1907. Home in Llandudno. Left wife and posthumous child, a girl. Wife lived in Rhyl, Wales. Passed over in August last, suddenly.—Yours, &c.,

Cape Town, South Africa.

K. G.

'The Problem of Pain.'

SIR,—Mr. Fraser Hewes tries in vain to defend the statement which he made in 'LIGHT' of March 25th, *viz.*: 'Professor Pembrey, in his evidence before the late Royal Commission, stated that the most merciful course was to inflict so much suffering that the animals fainted.' Here is a statement that is not substantiated, and Mr. Fraser Hewes does not mend matters by giving us one more selected snippet from Professor Pembrey's evidence.

Your other correspondent raises the question whether anti-vivisection literature is generally accurate. Let me quote what Mr. Stephen Coleridge says on this point, for he represents the largest and the richest of the sixteen or more anti-vivisection societies in this country. 'Time after time,' says Mr. Coleridge, 'has this sacred cause been undermined and betrayed by its professing friends by their reckless habit of making erroneous statements.' And again, 'There happen to be small anti-vivisection associations whose chief occupation is the dissemination of quite inaccurate pamphlets.' And again, 'As representative

of the National Society I have again and again written to the representatives of some of the smaller anti-vivisection societies, protesting in plain terms against their publication of inaccurate statements.'—Yours, &c.,

STEPHEN PAGET,

Hon. Secretary, Research Defence Society.

21, Ladbroke-square, London, W.

April 27th, 1911.

SIR,—The case mentioned by Mr. Fraser Hewes in 'LIGHT' of March 25th of a dog dying of fright, after seeing vivisection performed on other dogs while awaiting his turn, was related in the 'Daily Mirror' of November 20th, 1908, as an item of news, the occurrence being said to have taken place 'a few days ago.' Mr. Stephen Paget thinks that 'we need not believe these stories.' I should be the last to affirm that absolute credence should be given to everything that is retailed in the newspapers, but I do not, like Mr. Paget, limit my scepticism to whatever does not suit my views.

Not having read Mr. Fraser Hewes' first letter, I am unable to comment on his quotation from Professor Pembrey's evidence, but I do know that Mr. Paget has repeatedly declared in the Press that some evidence given by Professor Pembrey on the broad question of the infliction of pain upon animals referred only to some particular experiments on rats—a statement which can easily be disproved by quoting the evidence. This, if Mr. Paget still maintains his misstatement, I will supply to your columns as the easiest way of settling the matter.—Yours, &c.,

BEATRICE E. KIDD,

Secretary, British Union for Abolition of Vivisection.

32, Charing Cross, S.W.

What Spiritualism Has Done for Me.

SIR,—About six years ago I came to Westcliff-on-Sea to live, in the hope of saving my husband, who was suffering with consumption, but after nearly three anxious years of unceasing care and nursing his sufferings ended and I was left a widow. It is impossible to describe the awful sense of desolation that came upon me. I was alone! my dear husband gone, no children, no friends; and, to add to my misery, my home was sacrificed, and beyond a few shillings a week I had no means. My cup of sorrow was, indeed, full. I could not hear the name of God without a shudder, and I reviled Him in my hopeless despair.

About two years ago I took a room in Southend, and shortly afterwards a Mr. and Mrs. Jones, strangers to me, rented apartments in the same house. They took an interest in me, and we became friendly. I knew nothing whatever about Spiritualism, neither did Mrs. Jones, but Mr. Jones had attended the Spiritualists' Sunday services in Milton-street on two occasions, and one Sunday evening he persuaded Mrs. Jones and myself to go there with him.

After listening to a beautiful address, which brought me much comfort, I received a clairvoyant description, which, owing to its being all so new to me, I did not at the moment recognise, although I did so afterwards. A further description and proof were given me later on. Only a month after this Mr. Jones was taken suddenly ill, and expired a few minutes after his removal to the hospital, which is close by.

Some time previously Mr. Jones had remarked to me, on seeing a portrait of my husband, that the face was familiar to him, but nothing further was ever said about it. On the Sunday following the passing over of Mr. Jones, I attended the Milton-street Hall, and a clairvoyant gave me a description of my husband. He was described as holding out a little red-covered book with gilt letters on it, and as opening it at a certain page and pointing to a note written there. I recognised the book as one of my husband's pocket diaries. On reaching home I searched, with the assistance of my landlady, among my husband's papers and found the diary for 1903, which was the one he showed to the clairvoyant. On turning to the page he had indicated, I found the name and former address of the Robert Jones of whom I have been speaking. The purpose of this vision was clearly to convince me of the reality of my husband's existence in spirit life and of his nearness to me, and I was so deeply impressed that I sat for automatic writing as advised, and I now receive a written communication from him every day. He says that he was always near me, and, failing other means of convincing me of his presence, had influenced Mr. Jones to get me to the hall, where he presented himself for description by the clairvoyant. He now brings to me many spirit friends, whom I see and recognise, and I am blest and comforted by much good advice, which is most helpful to me. I am under a course of spirit training in drawing and am able to sketch with closed eyes.

The whole tenor of my life has been changed by the know-

ledge of the survival of personality and consciousness after bodily death afforded me by communion with my dear husband. I, who was formerly a deplorably miserable woman, am now, although still in the poorest circumstances, happy and contented, and instead of reviling God I offer Him praises for bringing to me the blessings of Spiritualism.—Yours, &c.,

(Mrs.) FRANK ANDREWS.

Southend-on-Sea.

'Spiritual Science': A Difficulty.

SIR,—I think your correspondent 'A Commonplace Woman' misunderstands Sir W. E. Cooper's meaning. She refers to his book, 'Spiritual Science' (pages 172-3), and then says: 'As a tiny instance of the kind of thing I mean, one spirit says, "Man gets what he asks for and no more."' She feels this to be a depressing doctrine, but I think that if, as Sir W. E. Cooper suggests in his reply to her letter, she carefully studies the context, she will understand that it is shown that love is the ever-ruling principle by which the Supreme Power—the ever-loving Father—works. I take it that the meaning of the sentence to which she takes exception is that man cannot be given more than he at the time can aspire or vibrate to.

I have myself received high, beautiful, and comforting teaching through impressional writing from some of these 'Shining Ones'; indeed, nearly all knowledge of 'spiritual science' which I have gained has come to me in this way. Possibly it may make things a little clearer to your correspondent if I give a short extract from a communication in reference to man receiving just as much as, and no more than, he asks for (or attains to):—

'He (man) is ever in touch with a higher Power, and in his need can draw upon the knowledge wherewith he can make further progress until he vibrates to a condition which had been previously impossible to him. So, again, in the after-life, he cannot assume to vibrate except in so far as he is in accordance with the high tone surrounding the spheres wherein is peace, joy, and knowledge of that which constitutes high and noble attainment. He can in no way enter unless he so fit himself by his life and environment; in his necessity he receives *only what he can vibrate and attain to*. Thus to endeavour to consider the truth, the attainment of which is still beyond him, would in itself only befog and hinder his spiritual efforts and thus destroy the good whereby alone he can progress to the fields beyond.'

Of the greater knowledge of, and insight into, this beautiful 'spiritual science,' I am told that to those who possess such knowledge it is necessary—

'ever to help us with the good work and awake in others the desire and need for higher and diviner truth. Thus in your ability' (i.e., by the greater knowledge) 'aid those on earth, further the love of mankind and the Kingdom of God on earth. We would impress the necessity of materially helping and aiding the Divine Law which necessitates the attitude of loving-kindness and gentle forbearance to all men, thus destroying the power for evil—and continuing the Power of *Love*, wherein is centred the inevitable attitude necessary for the spiritual enlightenment of man on earth and hereafter.'

The whole teaching has been Divine love and unselfish serving; but, as on earth, so in the higher spheres, personal effort and desire—*asking*—is absolutely necessary for real progress and development. Trusting this may be some help to 'A Commonplace Woman' in her difficulty.—Yours, &c.,

AN ORDINARY WOMAN.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

'M. H.'—Only a very prejudiced or a very ignorant person will presume to declare that there is no real clairvoyance.

'R. O.'—We do not know of any Spiritualist meeting place at either Willesden, Harlesden, or Kensal Rise.

We have several times published the following Notice, but recent experience shows that, by many of our readers, it has either been overlooked or forgotten. We therefore repeat it once again:—

SPECIAL NOTICE.—The contributions of original poetry which we receive every week have become so numerous as to be quite embarrassing. To read them all, to give them all an impartial consideration, and to feel in the end that by the necessary rejection of many of them we have wounded the susceptibilities of friends, is weary and unpleasant work, besides occupying an amount of time which we can ill afford to spare. We have accordingly been driven, reluctantly, to the decision to accept no contributions of original verses in the future.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, APRIL 30th, &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*.—Mrs. Place-Veary gave well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions and helpful messages.—*Percy Hall, 3, Percy-street, W.*—April 24th, Mrs. Podmore gave successful clairvoyant and psychometric descriptions. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided at both meetings. Sunday next, see advt.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street.—At 7 p.m. Miss Florence Morse gave answers to written questions, followed by clairvoyant descriptions.—67, George-street, W.—Morning, Miss Florence Morse gave an address on 'After-Death States.'—E. W.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Miss Violet Burton gave an address. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Neville. Circles: Monday, at 7.30, ladies'; Tuesday, at 8.15, members'; Thursday, at 8.15, public. Lyceum: Sunday, at 3; Wednesday, at 7.—G. T. W.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. Jamrach gave earnest addresses, followed by good clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. J. Macbeth Bain. Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3 p.m., Mrs. Clark, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, members' circle.—A. S.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. R. Boddington's addresses on subjects from the audience: 'Spiritual Progress' and 'International Peace from a Spiritualist Standpoint,' were much appreciated. Mr. E. P. Noall presided. Sunday next, address, Mrs. A. Boddington.—W. H. S.

BRIGHTON.—OLD TOWN HALL, HOVE, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET, WEST.—Mr. Karl Reynolds gave instructive addresses. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Curry. Monday, at 3 and 8 p.m., also Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Curry. Thursday, at 8, circle. 14th, Mr. W. E. Long.—A. C.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—Mr. Baxter spoke on 'Man.' Sunday next, an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Tuesday, 9th inst., monthly social. Wednesday, 10th, children's service of song. Thursday, 11th, Mrs. Mary Davies.—H.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Morning, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under control, dealt ably with written questions. Her address on 'Spiritualism the Interpreter' in the evening was much appreciated. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Miss Florence Morse.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, public circle. Evening, Mrs. Effie de Bathe addressed an appreciative audience on 'Practical Truths from Zodiacal Triplicities.' Sunday next, Mrs. Imison. Sunday, May 14th, morning and evening, and Wednesday, 17th, at 8.15, Mrs. F. Roberts, of Leicester. May 13th, social evening; all welcome.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. E. W. Wallis's first visit was much appreciated. Powerful address on 'The Message and Meaning of Spiritualism.' Solo by Miss Welbelove. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Effie de Bathe, lecture on 'How Clairvoyants see Spirits,' illustrated by original paintings.—T. B.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mrs. J. Neal gave a good address and answered questions. Sunday next, Mrs. Mary Davies, address and clairvoyant descriptions. Monday, at 8, public circle. Tuesday, at 8, astrology class. Friday, healing class.—N. R.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. J. Abrahall spoke on 'Consciousness of Spirit Presence,' and gave psychometric readings. Evening, Madame French dealt with the 'Ministry of Angels,' and gave good clairvoyant descriptions. April 26th, Mrs. E. Neville, under control, spoke of 'Spirit Life Experiences,' and gave excellent psychometric readings. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Miss Venning; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Kelland. Wednesday, Miss Nellie Brown. 14th, Mr. G. R. Symons.—J. F.

CLAPHAM.—HOWARD-STREET, NEW-ROAD.—Mr. C. Cousins gave an address on 'The Fulness of Joy.'—C. C.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—MILTON-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street spoke in the morning on 'Thoughts about Thought,' and in the evening on 'Are the Messages from the Dead Genuine?'

SOUTHEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—Miss J. Morris gave eloquent addresses on 'Prayer' and 'Humanity's Debt to Spiritualism.'—J. W. M.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Mr. Abrahall gave an address on 'Evolution and its Relationship to Revelation,' and Miss Stevens sang a solo.—A. B.

BRISTOL.—16, KING'S SQUARE.—The president gave an address on 'Spiritualism as a Religion.' Members' circles as usual.—A. L.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Mr. W. Rundle gave addresses on 'Rich and Poor,' and 'Resurrection.' Solo by Mr. Golding.—A. B.