

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

In the May issue of 'Healthward Ho!' Mr. Eustace Miles's bright and progressive monthly magazine, Mr. Frederick Thurstan continues his series of essays on the 'Mysteries of Life in Nature.' On this occasion he deals with 'The Mystery of Hibernation, and a Fourth State of Consciousness.' We, and we doubt not many others, have frequently felt on bleak and dreary days that we would like to withdraw from the external world, not to re-emerge until more genial conditions prevailed. We have, in fact, been tempted to envy the hibernating animal! Mr. Thurstan shows that this withdrawal can actually be achieved by a knowledge of psychic science—although, of course, the correspondence to the hibernation of the lower animals is on a vastly higher plane of consciousness. It really amounts to the induction of the state known as Stativovism or (in India) as Yoga. Mr. Thurstan writes:—

Personally, as a student of both these systems, after a regular practice extending over thirty years, I feel I can affirm the usefulness of the practice. It is like having the power, when the outside world is cold and bleak, of withdrawing to the firelit cheer of an indoor home where we can draw down the blinds on the desolation and tedium without, and enjoy at our own sweet will the warmth and the life of our own individuality and our own divine creativeness.

This same issue of 'Healthward Ho!' contains a slashing attack on Occultism and Occultists from the pen of Mr. Edgar J. Saxon. In the course of some severe strictures Mr. Saxon says:—

My quarrel with occultism is not that it produces unusual experiences, but that those experiences usually produce a mental squint. My complaint is not that the spiritual cosmos of the occultist is invariably queer and lop-sided, but that it is not even so beautiful or thrilling as the visible cosmos which all men can see.

And then follow denunciations of 'gossiping ghosts,' 'inane table-rappers,' 'cabalistic jimcracks,' and so forth. We have heard it all before, and our 'withers are unwrung.' As the Scots say, 'It is cauld kail het again.' But inasmuch as Mr. Saxon has included 'LIGHT' in his indictment, let us say at once that 'LIGHT' has consistently stood for a sane and rational handling of the problems of the occult, and its conductors have always sought to preserve the balance between the claims of the two worlds. Many of its writers are as keenly alive to the value and importance of great art and classic poetry as is our critic. But they try to take an 'all round view' and 'call nothing common or unclean.'

We have received from Messrs. Chatto and Windus 'The Poetical Works of George MacDonald,' in two elegant

little volumes. A wise, strong, kindly soul with a deeply religious outlook on life, the author of 'David Elginbrod' has won an abiding place in our national literature, and this new edition of his poetry will be welcomed by all lovers of his work. His poems are mainly of the lyrical order—a mingling of delicate fancy and intuition with the quaint, homely wit and wisdom of the Scot. Withal there is a vein of mysticism in the work, for George MacDonald was veritably of those who have seen the vision. We would like to quote copiously from the poems, but must content ourselves with a few lines from the sonnet entitled 'Subsidy.' They are full of insight and meaning:—

Thine is a ruinous hut, and oft the rain  
Shall drench thee in the midnight; yea, the speed  
Of earth outstrip thee, pilgrim, while thy feet  
Move slowly up the heights. Yet will there come  
Through the time-rents about thy moving cell,  
Shot from the Truth's own bow and flaming sweet,  
An arrow for despair, and oft the hum  
Of far-off populous realms where spirits dwell.

Here is a characteristic passage from one of the last addresses delivered by Mr. J. Page Hopps. He had been speaking of the loneliness of Jesus, and of the way in which the world ever neglects its Christs:—

Jesus himself, if he were here, would be neglected when he was not laughed at. There is no doubt about it. And yet every good and honest man ought to want to stand by the Christs—to put up lights to guide them in the path; but no; the vast majority of even good and honest men rather prefer to isolate them, and quietly stifle them.

But there is something else in it: and that is fear. Jesus made the rulers of the Jews and the mob frightened. They took him for a subverter, an iconoclast. Did he not venture to supplement Moses, and dare to claim a mandate from God? Did he not even dare to say that you could find God and worship Him outside of Jerusalem; and without the orthodox worship of the synagogue? A man who could talk like that must be dangerous! Watch with him? No; watch him, and then crucify him! It is so to-day. The message of the heretic is not even listened to, and there are scarcely any who will watch with him for one hour—even though it is certain that his heresy is only the anticipation by a few years of the faith—of the Christ that is to be.

Spiritualism enables us to realise that the real man is not the body but the indwelling spirit, which is essentially divine but is limited in its power of expression by its ignorance and the inability of the body to respond fully to its claims. Speaking on 'The Divinity in Man'—should it not be of man?—the Rev. G. W. Stone, as reported in the 'Christian Register,' said:—

Man is of divine origin and endowed with the divine nature. . . . When we speak of the divinity in man, we mean, therefore, man's capacity for goodness, justice, and righteousness, for these are all divine attributes. The quantity and quality of these attributes in any man determines his divinity. Observe how this standard not only simplifies religion and every relation affected thereby, but also how it cuts from under the current systems of theology and worship the foundations upon which they rest; how clearly it demonstrates that no church, no cult or organisation can come between the individual soul and the God who made it. No combination of earthly power, wealth, learning, or other influences can usurp the function of the spirit, which comes from the source of all spirit, and save a man from

the consequences of his own actions, be they good or bad. Churches and organisations may help a man to help himself, but substitution, so far as results are concerned, is impossible.

Consciousness and personality offer to the metaphysician a field of infinite possibilities, and since F. W. H. Myers' great work on this subject it has become the fashion for writers to deal with them from all sorts of view points. Hypnosis, telepathy, sub-consciousness and other terms, which a few years ago were looked at askance, are becoming as familiar as household words, and are being tossed about much as stage jugglers toss balls and other articles into the air merely for the purpose of showing their dexterity and skill in catching them. It is all very interesting and we do not complain; on the contrary, we rejoice because we detect signs everywhere that the truths which the facts of our experience have emphasised, where they have not revealed them, are winning recognition all along the line. If the philosophers choose to take their own way of advance to our position we cannot blame them. So long as they come it is of small importance how they reach our standing-place.

Miss E. M. Rowell, writing in the 'Hibbert Journal' on 'Personality,' endeavours to elucidate the mystery of the 'Self,' and after many interesting and suggestive propositions and illustrations, together with much clever analysis, she arrives at the conclusion that 'these selves: myself, yourself, are not very satisfactory, but then they have not yet attained to the full measure of personality,' and ends with the confession that any attempt at an explanation of personality is foredoomed to failure. No wonder! To attempt to explain that which is but imperfectly revealed, and may at any time prove to be far greater than has ever been glimpsed, is on a par with the attempt to lift one's self by the ears. We may, however, fully agree with Miss Rowell's belief that

personality is the one reality of the universe, that it is all-present and all-prevailing, that it is at the back of all being, revealing itself more or less adequately according to the different media it uses, and therefore it would seem that it is not personality at all which requires explanation, but all the other things and modes of being.

Referring to the recent lamentations about the decline in church attendances, the Baptist 'Standard,' of Chicago, U.S.A., says 'it may seem somewhat foolish to suggest that possibly we already have more church members than is for the best interests of the Kingdom of God'; yet it goes on to affirm, with all frankness,

we over-emphasise the importance of getting people into the Church when compared with the stress laid upon the momentous task of securing Christian living on the part of those who are already within the Church. We need to realise that the policy of *laissez faire* which we so generally follow in regard to those who are church members is radically wrong. We need to address ourselves to the great work of bringing the life of our church members up to a much higher level. We need to recognise clearly the fact that we do not so much need more members as we do better ones; that if the Church is to have power over the world to win it for God, it must be through the high qualities of Christian character exemplified, rather than by mere show of numbers.

This will bear a good deal of thinking about. Surely religion, to be of any value, must affect motive, conduct and character.

Apparently vibrations lie at the back of everything, from Electrons to Budgets, from atoms to brain-thoughts: and it would not surprise us if vibrations, properly regulated, cured half our fleshly ills. But 'there's the rub'—*properly regulated*.

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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

MRS. MARY SEATON'S LECTURE.—Monday, May 29th—'The Moral and Spiritual Uses of Psychic Powers.' Admission 1s. The Council and Mrs. Mary Seaton jointly invite MEMBERS of the Alliance to attend this meeting free of charge.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, May 30th, Mrs. Place-Veary will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

DRAWINGS OF THE PSYCHIC AURA AND DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASE.—On Wednesday next, May 31st, 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.

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, June 2nd, 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.

### MR. W. J. COLVILLE'S LECTURES.

A Series of Lectures will be delivered by Mr. W. J. Colville at the Rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on the following Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, commencing at three o'clock. Admission 1s.

#### SYLLABUS.

Thursday, June 1—'The Marvels Beyond Science.'  
Tuesday, June 6—'Healing Efficacy of Light and Colour.'  
Thursday, June 8—'Telepathy and Premonitions.'  
Tuesday, June 13—'Seership and Prophecy.'  
Thursday, June 15—'Spiritual Unfoldment: Is Intuition Educable?'

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Mr. W. J. Colville jointly invite MEMBERS of the Alliance to attend these meetings free of charge.

TRANSITION.—We learn with deep regret that Mr. Frank Wilkinson, the son of Mr. Albert Wilkinson, of Nelson, Lancashire, was suddenly killed at Rawtenstall on Friday, the 19th inst., by the collapse of a new picture palace, which his father was having built there; four iron girders and a quantity of scaffolding falling to the ground. Mr. Albert Wilkinson is the President of the Spiritualists' National Union this year, and has worked ardently for Spiritualism for many years. We tender our sincere sympathy to him and his family in their tragic bereavement.

THEOSOPHY.—Many readers of 'LIGHT' will be pleased to know that Mrs. Annie Besant will deliver a course of five Sunday evening lectures in the Queen's Hall, Langham-place, W., at 7 o'clock each evening. Her subjects will be: 'Impending Physical Changes,' June 11th; 'The Growth of a World-Religion,' June 18th; 'The Coming of a World-Teacher,' June 25th; 'Social Problems: Self-Sacrifice or Revolution?' July 2nd; 'Religious Problems: Dogmatism or Mysticism?' July 9th. Particulars regarding admission may be obtained from the Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond-street, W.

MR. WALTER APPELYARD, of Sheffield, sends us a copy of his poem entitled 'The Cripples and the King,' which was written by special request, dedicated to Sir W. Treloar and recited, by a member of the 'Royal Divorce' Company, at a matinée performance, at the Empire Palace, Sheffield, on the 13th inst., in aid of the 'Sheffield Independent' fund on behalf of the King Edward Memorial Crippled Children's Home. A site for the 'Home' has already been given by the Duke of Norfolk, and a gift of £5,000 by the author's brother-in-law, S. Meggitt Johnson, J.P., should go a long way towards securing the success of the proposed memorial, which, we trust, will be, as Mr. Appleyard in his earnest appeal suggests, 'a haven of sweet rest, a harbour of sure refuge, by angel presence blessed.'

## 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.

(Continued from page 236.)

That many causes must be assigned to all these changes of ideas will be manifest : I can only briefly allude to them.

First, there is the fact that the civilised human race has been steadily rising to better and worthier ideas on such subjects as justice, the punishment of crime, and the treatment of outcasts. This has had an enormous effect in the re-modelling of theological teaching. There are many who regard the State's effort to inculcate the principle of the sanctity of human life by the doing of the very same thing—in cold blood—which they condemn on the part of a murderer, as an act of barbarism, not countenanced by Jesus, who superseded the law, 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' by better teaching. There are many who think that punishment for crime should have as its aim the restoration and betterment of the criminal—after he has suffered the penalty of his offence. These people support the efforts which are made to meet discharged prisoners at the prison-gate, and to help them to better things. There are many who cannot enjoy their comfortable home and innumerable privileges, without doing something to ameliorate the condition of thousands of the 'submerged' who stand as the menace and disgrace of our boasted civilisation. How, we ask, is it possible for this age—with its better conception of justice, of pity, of concern for others, and its altered idea as to the end of punishment—to believe, as our forefathers did (or thought they did), that Infinite Love will punish finite offences with infinite penalties ; and will punish, not to better or uplift men, but to irretrievably condemn and ruin them ? Thus the upward trend of general modern thought has rendered incredible the teaching of the past.

Again, the advance of the science of psychology has played an all-important part in bringing about this change of ideas. So long as science was materialistic, it was natural that the masses should largely be influenced by the materialistic conceptions of scientific thinkers. Science in the past had nothing to tell men about a hyper-physical universe, or of the spiritual mystery of their own interior being, and so the religious anthropomorphic conceptions of God, and the semi-materialistic idea of ourselves and our environment were left unchallenged. Science was supposed to be in direct opposition to religion, and religion regarded science as a hopelessly Godless study of mankind. You all know what was the attitude of Christians towards the geologists, when they said that this earth was not made in six days of twenty-four hours each. You know the choice epithets which were hurled at Darwin, and the frantic alarm there is to-day in Vatican circles because the old-world thought (like the old woman with the broom on the sea-shore) cannot sweep back the incoming tide of Modernism which spells fuller light on, and knowledge of, hitherto but dimly-perceived truths. But what an astounding change has come over the scientific world ! Our leading scientific men are not Materialists—not even Agnostics as to the spiritual constitution of man's being. They have taught us, and are still teaching us, marvellous truths about our spirit-self. Who, for instance, can have read the writings of Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. Thomson J. Hudson and many others, without realising that the words of David—written long ago in the 'twilight' of knowledge—'I am fearfully and wonderfully made,' are, because of the present-day efforts and investigations of science, more grandly understood than ever they were ?

Theosophy, the study of Psycho-Therapeutics, and other systems of thought have each and all of them done something, and something important, to promote a better conception of truth ; but I do not believe that any one, or all of them collectively, embodies the full expression of truth. The whole body of

truth is too big to be compressed within the limits of any particular system of teaching.

Pre-eminently among the various sources from which light has emanated or been cast upon Christian truth, I place *Spiritualism*. I think that to Spiritualism more than to any other sphere of modern thought, inquiry, and belief, we owe it that the ideas of Christian truth are not to-day what they were in the past.

In the first place, Spiritualism has given to the age a new conception of the world of spirit. The life into which we pass at death is no longer regarded in the light in which it was. The Roman Church, as I have already stated, practically divides that life into two sections or spheres—the Roman Catholic and the Demoniackal. The other schools of Christian teaching have done much the same thing ; by them it has been regarded as a Paradise and an Inferno ; the spiritual abode of saved souls and of lost ones. Fifty years ago nothing was considered as being more 'unorthodox' than to suppose that in the spirit world was another class who were not good enough to go to heaven, and not bad enough to be consigned to hell. The teaching of Spiritualism has upset for countless numbers of thinking people this old, restricted notion. That teaching has emphasised the truth which is so essentially reasonable, *viz.*, that in the world of spirit are 'all sorts and conditions' of men and women, from the Christ of God down through all the standards of moral excellence, down through all the grades of moral and spiritual imperfection and non-development, to the poor wretch who has gone hence and left behind him only a name of infamy and shame. In a word, Spiritualism has enormously helped us to understand that the spirit world is, like this world in which we live, a world exhibiting infinite variety ; dissimilarity in environment, different degrees of attainment, different minds, different characters, different experiences, and different platforms of consciousness and life. (Applause.)

Again, Spiritualism has undoubtedly given to this age a new conception as to the possibilities connected with spirit life. We have discarded once and for all the notion, at one time so common to Protestant theology, that the spirit world to which we go at death is a sort of big waiting-room in which we do nothing but meditate on the future, and wait for the call which shall make us blissfully active in heaven, or sufferingly so in hell. Spiritualism is leading millions to think of the world beyond as a domain of intense activity. There is nothing which, in the past, has more intensified the dread of dying to those whose life has been one of mental and other activity, than the thought that to die involves inactivity. The Bible statement that 'they rest from their labours' is true ; but it does not mean cessation from work, but only from painful, laborious effort. No Spiritualist conceives of life behind the veil except as one full of engrossing work, full of pleasing activity, and Spiritualism has impressed that thought on the mind of the present age in a way which was not dreamed of by those who could conceive of no spiritual ministry save that of angels.

The thought which was scouted in the past generation as being absurd and even profane—I mean that of the possibility of communication between mankind in earth-life and mankind in spirit-life—is now regarded by tens of thousands of level-headed, practical, common-sense individuals as a perfectly sane and credible one. The exponents of Christian truth, with their professed belief in the statements of the Bible, ought to have rendered it impossible for any Christian to doubt the possibility of communication between the two worlds. But they have not done so. Teaching that it is impious to question the truthfulness of Bible-records—that angels, and Samuel, and Moses, and Elijah, and a 'fellow-servant' of St. John came from out the spirit-world to men still incarnate in physical bodies—these expounders of a fact indissolubly bound up with the Christian religion have accounted it equally as impious to admit that the great Father-God, who always 'blesses man through man,' should countenance such a thing as allowing dear ones, knit to us by ties of love and friendship, to come to us, and influence and help us to reach the enhancement of being to which they have attained.

I remember a good and worthy man once saying to me, 'You—a sensible, practical man (as I have always taken you to be)—surely do not believe that the dead come back.' 'No,' I answered,

'dead things can do nothing. But answer me this: Do you regard those who have physically died as dead?' 'Well, no,' was the reply; 'they live, undoubtedly—Jesus said so—but they cannot come back. The great poet spoke of the "bourne from whence no traveller returns."' 'Shakespeare,' I replied, 'said a great many things which are true; but he was rather "behind the times" when he said that. As a believer in Christian truth, I prefer what Jesus said to what Shakespeare said. Will you answer me this? Did Moses, on the Mount of Transfiguration, centuries ago, come back?' 'Oh yes,' he answered, 'the Bible says he did.' 'Just so,' was my rejoinder, 'and the Bible tells the truth. But I will ask you another question; it is this: If, on your own admission, communication between this world and the spiritual universe was a fact long ago, which to deny is a sign of unbelief and wickedness—why cannot you imagine that such communication is possible now? The testimony we have as to present-day inter-communication is a thousand times greater than that relating to the spiritual inter-communication narrated in scripture. You say, "Ah! but that happened in the long ago." Of course it did; but what has that to do with the question of its being possible now? What has been, can be. When you deny the possibility of discarnate beings coming to those who are incarnate, because we live in the twentieth century, where is your consistency in saying so often in church, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be"? Do you suppose that a new order of things in respect to the facts or possibilities of the spiritual world came into force after Bible times?' I think I gave him something to think about, even though he did not agree with me.

How altered the ideas of mankind in the present age have become! I could give you scores and scores of instances of persons (standing within the circle of family relationship and personal acquaintance) who have seen and spoken to those who had gone hence. Men and women in all stations of life—lawyers, clergymen, business men, working men—have alike, by letter or by word of mouth, borne the same testimony. An eminent judge, sitting in his judicial robes and conversing with me in an ante-room of an assize court, told me he had seen his own daughter after death, and that nothing would shake his conviction as to the manifestation being an objective reality.

Spiritualism, by its persistent investigation of psychic phenomena, by its openly-proclaimed insistence that inter-communication between the two worlds is a present-day fact, has brought great masses of our fellow-beings to realise that 'there are more things in heaven and earth' than had been previously 'dreamed of in their philosophy,' and has made many of them, as Christian men and women, understand a mighty truth interwoven with religion—a truth fundamental to a right understanding of our place in a great universe—a truth which mankind in all ages has clung to, in spite of the incredulous frowns and disapproval of the teachers of religion.

There comes to my mind, in conclusion, the thought of a particular way in which the teachings of Spiritualism have uplifted the religious ideas of the present age. It has helped us to form a truer and grander notion of God and His purpose.

Here on this earth we live in the valley of human experience. The mists of ignorance, and the dark shadows of trouble, sorrow and mystery lie thickly around us. Many have felt the chilliness of soul which comes from these mind-enwrapping mists and shadows. And yet, sharply defined on the landscape of true Christian teaching stand two magnificent, towering heights of Divine truth: the unchangeableness of God, and the fact of His purpose of ultimate good and blessing for the entire human race. There they have stood, through the centuries, indicated, charted, declared; in the text-book of Christian thought and aspiration, the Bible; but the mental obscurations of past religious thought have prevented them from being discerned. Such glorious declarations of eternal truth as 'the Father of lights, with Whom can be no variation, neither shadow of turning'; such truths as those placed by Jesus in the very forefront of His gospel: 'God so loved the world' and 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me,' and such truths as St. Paul and others in the Bible taught—'God shall be all things in all beings,' 'The times of the restoration of all things'—these truths, I say, the teachers of the past have read and preached and written

about, and have understood them to mean exactly the opposite to what they state.

Spiritualism has helped me, as it has done countless numbers of others, to rise to a grander conception of our Father-God; it has helped us to be thrilled with a mighty, inextinguishable hope, begotten of the conviction that God is unchangeable, and His purpose of ultimately stamping out the sin and unhappiness of every one of His creatures, and establishing them in everlasting order and blessedness, is unalterable; helped us to read the scriptures without the bedimning mediumship of old theological preconceptions, and to see therein a fuller glory of truth, perceived in the past by the Origenes, the Kingsleys, the Farrars, and others who were branded as the 'heretics' of their day, but not then perceived by the Christian world at large.

Yes, Spiritualism has done much—very much—towards the better understanding of those grand basal facts which are inseparable from the Gospel of Jesus. It has helped men and women to see with clearer vision the Great Spirit Father-God, in whom we live, move and have our being, and that vast spirit-universe of which we *now* are, and ever must be, a constituted part. As a Christian Spiritualist, I have one great hope—one great conviction of what will be—*viz.*, that Spiritualism, which has done so much for Christian teaching and for the world at large, in searing away the 'bugbear' of death, and in helping us to better realise that which a magnificent Christ really taught, will recognise fully what that Christ is in the light of spiritual verities. 'I am the *Light* of the world,' He once said. His words are in no sense more applicable than in respect to that vast world in which Spiritualists believe. Spiritualists, I think, will wield a mightier, more uplifting and enlightening influence on the minds of men and women when in the forefront of Spiritualist thought there is placed and realised a glorious Jesus, Who was once an unincarnate Spirit—the One, the nearest to God; Who for us men and our salvation became incarnate, to teach us that Divine love could dwell in a human body; Who is now the discarnate One, from Whom, in His enhanced life and spiritual potentialities, there is streaming to you and to me—and to every soul who, by the God-turned look and by love in the life, attunes himself—a mighty spirit-force, a mind-force, which, in the grandest sense, will adjust us with the spiritual, and equip us for our everlasting destiny of good. (Loud applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN said he hardly thought the audience anticipated such a splendid address and such an open avowal of spiritualistic faith. He congratulated Brockenhurst on having such a vicar.

Questions being invited, a lady asked whether—seeing that Mr. Chambers believed that men were often better than the ideas they held about God—he believed in that dreadful thing, the crucifying of Jesus.

MR. CHAMBERS replied that he regarded the crucifixion as a magnificent sacrifice, but he did not accept the idea that its object was to make God sweet-tempered.

Another questioner wondered why, if communion with the departed was a good thing, Jesus and his apostles never recommended it. And was there any record of Jesus or any of his apostles communicating in modern days through mediums?

With regard to the latter question MR. CHAMBERS did not know of any such record. As to the former, he pointed out that there were many good things which Jesus did not specifically recommend. The perception of a truth in one particular age might not be desirable, but, as the world advanced, the truth in regard to which there had been silence was presented and received.

DR. WALLACE, in moving a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer, said: I have been present and listened to various clergymen, but I do not think I have heard one who has been more in sympathy with our position. I regard our friend as one of ourselves; there is an idea that he is not likely to be a bishop! He is not like some theologians who do not follow the injunction to add to their faith knowledge, but who keep instead to dogmas formulated when prejudice was a predominant factor. I rejoice to think he is going to publish this address.

MR. WILKINS said he had great pleasure in seconding the motion, because he regarded the lecturer as a courageous, open-minded and big-souled man.

The vote was carried with acclamation

## PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER.

It is not often that we find correspondents writing to the papers on subjects so remote from the common run of social topics as the Fourth Dimension. We welcome, therefore, the appearance in the weekly edition of 'The Westminster Gazette' of the 13th, of the letter by Mr. Edward Haviland of which we give the following abridgment :—

The Fourth Dimension of space is of no interest to the man in the street, who belongs to the Third Dimension ; but there is a large class of men and women in the kingdom who are much interested in it. . . . Two hundred years ago the theory of the existence of beings in the Fourth Dimension of space was given form by Immanuel Kant, philosopher and mathematician. Briefly put, it was suggested that as we knew of the existence of beings who could not do what we could do, so there must exist beings who could do what we could not do, further stages of the same progressive thought probably existing, but not within our scope of reason. The proof of such beings would bring such happenings as miracles within natural law, and they would be miracles no longer. . . . The man in the street scoffs at the idea that a piece of cord can be taken, the two ends fastened and sealed, and in daylight, under the strictest scientific watchfulness, a knot could be tied in that cord, and a knot that he could not undo without cutting the cord. It is impossible to beings of the Third Dimension of space, and that is where he belongs. It has been done, however, and done several times over in the presence of Professor Zöllner (Leipzig University), and is illustrated in a book called 'Transcendental Physics,' with other startling phenomena impossible to the man in the street. I may add more than that. Thirty years ago I became interested in this subject from a purely scientific point of view, through reading Professor Zöllner's work, and I had the opportunity to repeat many of his experiments. My repetitions were quite successful. I was seeking to satisfy myself on these points, and took very good care that no fraud or trickery entered into my tests. I had knots tied in endless loops of tapes and string, and I had rings, turned out of solid woods of different species, interlinked without breaking or disturbing the fibres of the wood, and all these 'impossibilities' were done in broad daylight, the various objects never having left my possession.

Zöllner has had his experiments verified by others ; I only mention mine as they give me authority to speak with some knowledge. No one by ridicule or argument can take that knowledge from me ; nor can I convince the man in the street, without similar ocular demonstration, that Zöllner's experiments were genuine and successful by quoting mine. The subject is worthy of much attention. It receives little or none at the present time. We are all busy making and losing money, and the subject that does not involve monetary profit and loss can wait for the millennium. Zöllner has proved the existence of beings who can do what we cannot do and to whom our impossible is possible. That they are intellectual beings is also proved. They understood his request and carried it out. They would teach us more if we would give them the opportunity.

Extraordinary phenomena occur all over this world and among all nations, savage and civilised. These phenomena are generally classed as occult and supernatural. They are occult only because of our own denseness and apathy, and supernatural only because our understanding of natural law is based on our limited knowledge. It is purely a scientific subject, but is a science of its own. Chemists, electricians, mathematicians, and other scientists can all give very valuable help, but the fact that they are individually eminent in their science should not give any one of them pre-eminence over another. The subject has not yet been raised to an acknowledged science, because it has been submerged and cursed under the cloak of religion. There is much to learn. Zöllner has pointed the way for experiment, and through experiment comes knowledge.

Darcy B. Kitchin, writing in 'The Westminster Gazette' of the 20th inst., offers Mr. Haviland one hundred pounds if he will make good his claims by repeating the experiments 'that he has successfully performed.' Mr. Haviland did not say that he performed the experiments, but that the phenomena had occurred in his presence under his own test conditions.

'Jaques,' another correspondent, writes : 'Grant that matter is a collection of particles not in contact (which every scientist does), and that these particles can be controlled at will by a higher intelligence (which every scientist does not), and it is no more difficult to conceive the disaggregation of the particles which make up the body of the present writer and their re-materialisation or recombination in some startlingly other country or planet than it is to conceive the tying of a knot in one strand of an endless circle of string.'

## 'LAYING A GHOST.'

We wonder whether the spirits of those who once tabernacled in the flesh are not sometimes tempted to smile—perhaps a little sadly—at the queer ideas which their surviving relatives and friends entertain with regard to them, although perhaps we have improved in some respects. Take, for example, the notions prevalent at one time as to the proper method of dealing with persistent intruders from the 'beyond.' These are thus set forth by Mary L. Lewes in her newly published book, 'Stranger than Fiction' (Wm. Rider and Son, Ltd., 164, Aldersgate-street, E.C.) :—

It is not everyone who is acquainted with the precise meaning of the expression 'laying a ghost,' which Brand in his 'Antiquities' advises as the best remedy for cases of troublesome hauntings. 'Sometimes,' he says, 'ghosts appear and disturb a house without deigning to give a reason for so doing ; with these the shortest way is to lay them. For this purpose there must be two or three clergymen and the ceremony must be performed in Latin. . . . A ghost may be laid for any time less than a hundred years and in any place or body, as a solid oak, the point of a sword, or a barrel of beer, or a pipe of wine. . . . But of all places the most common and what a ghost least likes is the Red Sea.' From another authority we learn that seven parsons are necessary to this weird performance. They must all sit in a row, each holding a lighted candle, and should all seven candles continue to burn steadily, it shows that not one of the reverend gentlemen is capable of wrestling with the uneasy spirit. But if one of the lights suddenly goes out, it is a sign that its holder may read the prayers of exorcism, though in so doing he must be careful that the ghost (who will mockingly repeat the words) does not get a line ahead of him. If this happens his labour is lost, and the ghost will defy his efforts and remain a wanderer. In some parts of the country it was believed that only a Roman Catholic priest could lay a ghost successfully.

Some day, possibly, the fear of the ghost, like the fear of the personal devil, will die out and give place to the intelligent recognition that the ghost, so-called, is simply an exanimate human being. With the departure of that fear will also disappear, we trust, the obsessing dread of being obsessed by alleged Satanic agents, or so-called evil spirits. Fear is a mocker and leads to all sorts of irrational absurdities, both in thought and practice. A good dose of 'sanctified commonsense' and purposive spiritual thought—strong, confident, rational and loving—will clear away these goblins grim and ghostly terrors and reveal that the encompassing 'witnessing spirits' are mostly friends, and that the others are powerless to harm us—unless we place ourselves in their power. But the fact is, there are, comparatively speaking, few persons who are malevolent, either in this world or the next. Most people are either in need of help, or willing to help when they can be of real service.

WE shall publish in our next issue a report, which we have just received from Mr. A. V. Peters, of the first Scandinavian Spiritualist Congress, held at Copenhagen on the 12th inst.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Under the auspices of the Society of Southend Spiritualists, Mr. T. O. Todd will give a series of four Sunday evening lectures at the Spiritualists' Hall, Milton-street, during June, commencing on the 4th, at 6.30, when his subject will be 'The Temple not Made With Hands.' On the 11th he will deal with 'The Prophets in the Temple,' on the 18th with 'The Miracles of the Ages,' and on the 25th with 'Foregleams of Immortality.' Each Sunday, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. Todd will deliver an address in the same hall, and will answer questions arising out of the above lectures. Every effort is being made to insure large audiences to listen to these expositions of spiritual philosophy and religion.

DAYLIGHT HAUNTING PHENOMENA.—The 'Daily Chronicle' of Monday last gives an interesting account of some strange noises that have been heard at a furnished villa on the outskirts of Woking, Surrey. These noises resemble a loud shriek, as of a woman in pain or terror, followed by a low moan. They occur during the day, but cannot be located, appearing to come from the roof of the hall, or other parts of the house. They have occurred almost daily since the 4th inst., and have been heard by a number of persons, including Mr. Gerald Balfour, who has paid several visits to the house. It is stated that several mediums have volunteered their services to investigate the matter. A dog is said to retreat into the dining-room and growl when he hears the strange sounds.

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### TIME AND SPIRIT LIFE.

An objection sometimes raised against the idea of an immortal life, even by those who are favourably disposed towards it, is expressed in the question, How shall we spend our time? One realises easily the significance of the inquiry. Involved in it is a consideration of the fact that time in this life is largely taken up for most of us in purely material concerns: the maintenance and care of the body, the provision of the needs of life not only for ourselves but for those dependent on us. The busy man especially feels that if by any sudden change of circumstance the main necessity for his mental and physical activities were removed he would be in a strange quandary. He sees that those whom the chances of life have endowed with leisure are apt to be bored with it and to find their lifelong holiday an extremely dull one. And so, unimaginative but practical, when invited to contemplate an endless existence in another world he asks, with comical bewilderment, how it is intended that he shall fill up his time!

To reply to such an inquirer by telling him of the task of self-improvement, of labour for the benefit of others in the direction of moral teaching and training, is only very partially to solve his problem. Even with his limitations in the matter of spiritual perception, he feels that if time is a factor in the spiritual life, such occupations as are attributed to spiritual beings must still leave void and untilled spaces. To the Oriental mind the problem would present little difficulty and would probably involve the idea of a life devoted to the passive reception of sensations. But the Western mind, positive and dynamic in its energies, is not to be appeased with such theories. Even when the explanation is based provisionally on the idea of long periods of time the questioner feels that it is inadequate. And when it is related to the idea of endless time it becomes hopeless indeed.

To us it seems that the question can only be rightly approached by the endeavour to dismiss the idea of time altogether. We must, to give a new meaning to an old phrase, dispose of our time! It is not an easy task even to a mind versed in subtleties and abstractions. We are to think of time as a concept, as a condition peculiar to our material universe and to our limited range of perceptions. To assist in this effort at 'high thinking,' we may pause to consider the question from the standpoint of the emotions. In the emotional life, time becomes a very relative matter. To the mind in ecstasy—whether of bliss or misery—a

thousand years may be as a day, or a day as a thousand years. In that well-known poem, 'The Faithful Soul,' Adelaide Procter has beautifully expressed the idea. The spirit condemned to a thousand years of penance finds that the period passes, as it were, in a moment, distilled to one burning drop of agony—the agony of separation from a loved one on earth. (We are quoting without the book, but we think our memory correctly reproduces the story.) Thus we may gain a hint—even more than a hint—of time as an illusion of the senses.

Let us next reflect for a few moments on another concept of our physical existence—Space. It may seem a digression, but it is not so in reality, for to the advanced thinker Time and Space are identical. Time, he sees, in the last analysis, to be merely a term used to denote the distance which apparently separates events and is therefore Space on another plane of thought—Space being the distance between objects. As a writer on the subject in a recent issue of 'LIGHT' (No. 1,579, p. 170) well expressed it, our universe is a 'universe of relations.' If, to use a homely illustration, the earth were suddenly reduced to the size of a schoolboy's marble, everything else being diminished in exactly the same proportion, we should be absolutely unconscious of any change.

In a small degree, this relativity whether of time or space is brought home to us as part of the experiences of ordinary life. To the man a year is a brief period; to the child it appears a vast extent of time. And how utterly dwarfed in size and importance is the native village to which one returns after years spent in great cities!

Little as they can tell us (in a literal or absolute sense) of the conditions of their life, spirit communicators are practically all agreed on one definite statement concerning the world in which they dwell, *viz.*, that it is a world in which time and space are not. Even that statement, definite as it is, is only intelligible to us to the extent of such hints and clues as we can gather from a close analysis of our own world of shifting and mutable impressions. Some subtle thinkers have alluded suggestively to the operations of Nature on the consciousness. To us it appears rather a question of the operation of consciousness on Nature. How splendidly our greatest poet handled the matter in one of its phases:—

There's nothing either good or bad,  
But thinking makes it so.

There we have it: not long or short, near or distant, good or bad, except in so far as it is determined by its presentation to our consciousness. A man may live a brief and vacuous life of threescore years and ten, or pass from earth after a full and splendid career of half that period. Truly—

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;  
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.

And so thinking, we arrive, in a partial and fragmentary way, at something approaching apprehension of the meaning of Time here and its absence (as a factor in consciousness) in the life of the spirit. We see (in the final analysis) that the disembodied spirit has passed to a world in which there is a cessation, not of Time, but of the sense of it. And to the next practical-minded inquirer who asks how he is to spend his time in spirit life one may fairly retort that he is begging the question. He is (in a manner) assuming the possibility of the corruptible dwelling in a realm of incorruptibility; and, incidentally, we might meet his question with another, 'What is time?'

'You are as much in the spiritual world now as you ever will be,' said a spirit communicator once to an investigator. 'You will never understand the conditions of spirit life until you have passed through the change of death,'

remarked a spirit visitor on another occasion. Each of these dicta, although apparently contradictory, is doubtless true. The consciousness that persists beyond death is the same consciousness, but there is a change in the outlook—the lenses of vision, so to speak, are readjusted.

Only in moments of exaltation—those trances of the soul—can we in this world get appreciably near that state of consciousness which transcends the time-sense. It was doubtless amongst the beatific experiences of St. John when, on Patmos, he was ‘in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day.’ We recall his vision of the ‘mighty angel’ who proclaimed ‘that there should be time no longer.’ And just as the ministry of angels has never ceased from his day to ours, so there have never been wanting mystics and seers who, while still in the body, have experienced states of consciousness transcending the limits of the physical senses. Wordsworth, who gained ‘the vision’ through his love of Nature, tells of

a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air.

Even in terms of Time and Space Wordsworth was able to express a sense of something that overpasses both. To-day, as we have reason to believe, in an ever-increasing degree, these hours or moments of spiritual exaltation come to most of us. And then we get glimpses of a realm of spiritual possibilities where (as Oliver Wendell Holmes expressed it), ‘dull as we are now [we] may sail in vast circles round the largest compass of earthly intelligences.’ Thus—although we can never while in the body attain a true comprehension of the nature of the *e* that awaits us—aided by reason, imagination and ecstasy we can faintly conjecture something of that state in which ‘Time that made us and shall slay’ has no longer power over us. For the Spirit will ‘have made all things new.’

### LIFE ON THIS AND OTHER WORLDS.

AN ADDRESS BY MR. E. E. FOURNIER D’ALBE, B.Sc. (LOND.).

On Thursday evening, May 11th, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Mr. E. E. Fournier d’Albe, B.Sc. (Lond.), delivered an Address on ‘The Essential Conditions of Life on this and other Worlds’ to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. H. Withall, the vice-president, occupying the chair.

MR. WITHALL, in introducing the lecturer, said: ‘Everyone must be deeply impressed with the change that is taking place around us. We are roused in the morning by the sunlight streaming in and the singing of the birds. Nature, a short time ago dark and dreary, has awakened to beauty of form, colour and perfume. When we look at this we cannot help asking, “What has been the cause of this change?” It is all very well to say “It is life,” but what is life? You may say “God,” but that answer does not carry you far unless you can accept the view taken by Eastern thought long ago, that there is nothing but God—God ever seeking manifestation—and that through these changing conditions the manifestation takes place. This view is being accepted to some extent by our scientific men. Our lecturer to-night is one of those who have pretty well bridged the gulf between science and religion. He has looked at our subject from the point of view of science, and has attracted to it the attention of people of a scientific turn of mind.’

MR. E. E. FOURNIER D’ALBE said: ‘What shall I do to be saved?’ It is an ancient question, more ancient than the gospels, a question which goes back to the hoary ages of our wild and struggling ancestors, who fought their great fight with numberless enemies, and handed down to us such a liberal measure of security that we are often tempted to forget that such security is ultimately based upon force, and not upon the good-will of our rivals.

‘What shall we do to keep that which we hold, to preserve our individual integrity against the ever-threatening powers of dissolution and re-assimilation which encompass us? How shall we preserve that life which we inherit from the origin of all things, that individual life towards the fashioning of which untold ages have contributed, that life which is interwoven with the blood and tears, the sorrows and joys of all humanity? What is it that really matters? What are the essential conditions of existence, without which all life is impossible, both here and hereafter?’

These are some of the many ways in which this most vital of all questions may be put. Let us see what answers have been given or attempted, and then proceed to some new considerations which may bring us a step nearer to a definite solution of the problem.

When Thoreau, the American transcendentalist philosopher, built his hermitage by Walden Pond, he deliberately set himself to reduce life to its lowest terms, to find how much man can do without and yet live and be happy. The result of his investigations was that man requires four things, these being fuel, food, shelter, and clothing. And these, he maintained, could be in a sense reduced to a single essential, *viz.*, fuel. For food is but fuel burnt internally, and shelter and clothing are but economisers of fuel.

I was nineteen when I first read Thoreau’s ‘Walden,’ and it made a profound impression upon me. I may say it coloured my whole subsequent life. Nevertheless, I have since perceived the utter inadequacy of Thoreau’s modern monasticism. Thoreau himself, indeed, returned to civilisation after two years’ retreat. He felt, no doubt, that solitude, however it may deepen our intuitions, does not in the long run make for mental or bodily health. Our social faculties get atrophied by disuse, and when these decay the individual, so far from being spiritualised, stands in danger of becoming brutalised.

In searching for the essential conditions of human life, we must therefore at some point bring in a social element, something which places us in relation with our fellow creatures.

But before we enter upon that subject let us ask ourselves some questions concerning the physical basis of life, that indispensable foundation of all social intercourse. Thoreau was right in giving fuel the first place among the essentials of physical life. What he calls fuel a biologist would call energy. The power which we expend in living, moving, and even in thinking, must be taken from some source of energy. We cannot create or destroy energy; we can only utilise it, store it, and direct it into certain channels. Fuel is stored energy. It is, in fact, stored and accumulated sunlight, and when we burn coal we are consuming the power of that sunlight which shone upon the earth at a time when Amphibia ruled the land and waters, and man was yet undreamt of.

The sun, therefore, is the sustainer of physical life. It is also the driving power behind our industrial life, for furnaces, windmills, and water-mills are all indirectly driven by the sun. There are only two sources of energy known which we do not owe to the sun. These are volcanic heat and tidal power, and both these are slowly frittering away the internal heat and the rotatory energy of the earth itself, with the ultimate result that the earth will be cold throughout, and the sun will hang perpetually in the sky of one hemisphere, like the earth in the sky of the moon, leaving the other hemisphere in perpetual night.

The sun, then, is the chief source of energy, and suffices for all the needs of human, animal, and vegetable life. It is one of the few things essential to all organisms alike. For we soon find that what is essential to one organism is often not indispensable to another. The most characteristic difference between plants and animals lies in the form in which the necessary energy must be supplied, the kind of fuel, so to speak, which fits their furnaces. Plants can build up their substance out of simple inorganic compounds (water, carbonic acid, nitric acid, and ammonia), although in the process of absorbing nitrogen from the air they require, as recent researches have shown, the co-operation of a countless army of bacteria.

Animals, on the other hand, must have their fuel more elaborately dressed before they can utilise it. They must

have it in highly specialised forms, and these are provided by the vegetal kingdom. Even carnivorous animals depend indirectly upon the vegetal kingdom for their food.

Plants can absorb energy directly from sunlight. We can only utilise the 'bottled sunlight' furnished to us by plants. But even when we have got the stored sunlight we require something wherewith to liberate its energy. We must be able, so to speak, to draw the cork. We must have a supply of oxygen, so that the affinity which oxygen has for carbon compounds may be used as a driving force for our elaborate organic machinery.

Take, then, your human machine, with its two hundred bones and three hundred muscles, a complex and most ingenious structure, fitted with ties and struts and levers and ball-and-socket joints, all built up in a few months without haste, without waste, without even a scaffolding, growing from within outwards, growing imperceptibly and 'unconsciously,' and not waiting to be 'inaugurated' on completion, but working from the very first as a separate organic structure, with an aim and purpose of its own. What marvel of engineering can even remotely compare with this standing miracle? And yet, with all this superb skill and energy in daily procession before their eyes, there are actually, I believe, pessimists in this world!

Our physical life requires, then, a source of energy which, ultimately, is the sun. It requires its energy in a highly specialised form, derived from plants or other animals. And it also requires oxygen in sufficient quantity for combustion, but sufficiently diluted with nitrogen to prevent that combustion becoming too rapid. This combination of conditions furnishes our motive power. The machinery is that structure of two hundred levers and three hundred ropes which we call our body. The digestive system is our chemical transforming laboratory, and our respiratory and circulatory system is the apparatus for bringing new energy into every part of the machine.

So far we have a complete automaton, very much resembling a highly complex machine, boiler, and engine combined. It is capable of carrying out a series of movements and sustaining them almost indefinitely while the supply of fuel lasts. It reacts upon stimuli in the manner beloved of the materialistic biologist. But there is no co-ordination, no immanent purpose, no unifying and controlling intelligence. When this controlling intelligence is added, when it is put in command of a still more complex intelligence department consisting of sense organs, nerves, brain and ganglia, then we get the complete human being.

But what I wish to emphasise is that this controlling intelligence is not 'added.' It grows, gradually and imperceptibly, with the growth of the body. Not only that, but we may say that it builds up the body. The human spirit is itself the Master Builder. When we stand lost in admiration at the ingenuity and mastery of detail evinced in the design of the organism, we owe the greater praise to that spark from the divine which dwells in every human spirit and enables it to compass those wonders which surpass all mechanical and scientific achievement.

And so we have the complete human individual, endowed not only with a most intricate organism, but with faculties of memory, thought, speech, and emotion inherited from an interminable line of ancestors, and all adapted to some end of actual life.

These faculties perish sooner or later when they are not exercised. As the faculties are an essential part of the human individual, their decay would mean the decay of the individual in question. We therefore find as a third essential of human life the provision of opportunities for exercising inherited and acquired faculties in such a manner as to be consistent with the healthy physical life of the individual. This implies their harmonious actuation, and it implies, in many cases, their temporary abeyance and dormancy.

You will find, on reviewing the ground traversed, that we have found three essentials of human life, which may be called: food, education, and work. The first includes a source of energy, made available to us by plant and animal life, but

ultimately derived from the sun. The second, taken in its widest sense, means the development and co-ordination of faculties for physical and mental activity, which may control the inherited organism and enable the individual to act upon the world; the third means the provision of opportunities for exercising those faculties.

And here let me deal at once with an obvious objection. If, you may remark, food, education, and work are the three essentials of life, then why do we ever die while those three essential conditions of life are abundantly fulfilled? With my answer to that objection I think you will readily agree. What is the natural process of death but the exercise of an inherited faculty? The faculty of dying is not possessed by all organisms. We have probably evolved it in the interests of the species and, as we believe, in the interests of the individual as well. For aught we know, the life after death may be based upon the same three essentials—a supply of energy, a set of faculties, and an environment in which to exercise them. The transition to the higher life may well render us less dependent upon our fellow creatures for suitable forms of condensed energy; it may enormously enhance the range of our faculties, and it may give them a much wider scope. We may, therefore, at present at all events, regard that transition as a stage in a normal and continuous progress, a rung on the ladder which leads to the attainment of immeasurable heights.

When we speak of the essential conditions of life we must be careful to specify what kind of life we refer to. To be quite correct, indeed, we must define what we mean by life itself. So far I have dealt with human life only, and with none but the terrestrial phase of that. A special interest attaches, naturally, to future phases, to the conditions of life after death. But as the investigation of those is surrounded with great difficulties, it is best to widen the scope of our terrestrial inquiry, and to seek for some more general aspects of life from which we may draw conclusions with a diminished risk of error.

(To be continued.)

## STIRRING MAY MEETINGS IN LONDON.

The tenth annual convention of the Union of London Spiritualists at South Place Institute, E.C., on Thursday, May 18th, was the most successful of the series. The meetings, which were all well attended, were ably conducted by Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, the president of the Union. The pleasure of the audiences was greatly enhanced by the really fine singing of Mesdames Charlton and Beaurepaire, and the services of Miss M. Gwinn at the organ. At the morning session Mr. W. T. Stead gave an interesting address on what he had learned at Julia's Bureau. At the close of his lecture he was bombarded with questions, to all of which he gave apt and good-natured replies that maintained the interest of the audience to the end.

MR. STEAD said that perhaps the most important thing he had learned was that all human beings were 'amphibious,' because they dwelt in two elements—they lived both in physical bodies and in the spiritual world. There was not a materialist in the world who could live a week if in the course of that week he did not go into the spirit world. We entered the spirit world when the body was wrapped in slumber. He (Mr. Stead) knew a lady who got communications from her deceased son through planchette. Uniformly the boy said that when his mother slept she was with him in spirit. When writing messages he would say, 'Mother, I told you that last night. But I forget—you do not remember those things when you return to your side.' The discovery of the fact that we lived consciously, partly in the spirit world and partly in the physical, came to Mr. Stead as a great relief in view of the sense of sorrow and separation that was felt by our departed friends. If they were able to communicate with us when we slept, their sense of sorrow and separation could not be as keen as that of ourselves, whose physical part had no memory of what passed in sleep. Another discovery that to him was partly a relief, though he did not know how his hearers would regard it, was this: two or three years ago he used to think that the friends on the other side were

always longing to communicate with us. He had learned now that while those with whom we had bonds of affection and sympathy wished to communicate with us, not only when we slept, but at other times, the great majority did not care to do so. This was the only important point on which Julia had made any correction in the revision of her letters which he hoped shortly to publish. When she first wrote, she thought everybody on her side was anxious to communicate. But she had learned that the desire to communicate did not last. She had written that with more experience she had found that the number who wish to communicate is comparatively few. When emigrants arrive in a new country, their hearts are in the old world. They long to hear from the old home, but after a time new interests arise and they gradually cease to correspond. So it is with those who pass to spirit-life, which is even more absorbing. She said :—

When the family circle is complete, when those we love are with us, why should we want to communicate? Our life lies on our own plane. But that is no reason why you should not use your best efforts to establish a Bureau. What my Bureau will do will be to enable those who have newly lost their dear ones to have messages. The first important work of the Bureau will be the evidence it will afford of the reality of this world. How immense, how multifarious will be the results of the recognition of that reality. It will revivify and re-energise the whole religious and ethical systems of the world.

The Bureau, said Mr. Stead, had been in existence a little more than two years. When he and his friends started it he said, 'If we can get communications satisfactory to the bereaved in one case out of every ten it will more than justify the attempt.' As to the *modus operandi*, the Bureau was formed conducted and directed by Julia herself. She gave directions through one or other of her secretaries—of whom he was one. Sometimes they were directed by clairaudient voice. The fundamental idea was to say to everyone mourning his or her dead: 'If you wish to communicate with your departed friends and think that they wish to communicate with you, then kindly read what Julia has written, and if, having read, you still wish to communicate, fill in a form making a definite application.' When the application was received it was submitted to a psychometrist, who wrote a report as to whether the impression received was favourable or otherwise. Then the application was passed on to the two secretaries, who, each acting by automatic writing and not knowing what the psychometrist had said, took Julia's direction as to how it should be dealt with. They had had in the two years five hundred applications from all parts of the world, and with but one exception Julia had never said to one secretary 'Accept' and to the other 'Reject.' In the one solitary instance one of the secretaries took the application in a hurry and probably supplemented her automatic hand with her own mind. Of the five hundred cases submitted only two were rejected outright and both by the two secretaries independently of each other. In one of these the writer seemed very earnest and serious and came over from America on purpose to get a communication. It seemed to Mr. Stead to be a very promising case, but Julia said 'No.' The man then called, and turned out to be a lunatic. There had been very few attempts to hoax or make fraudulent applications.

In two cases something of the kind was attempted. One was the case of a man who never made application at all, and who was informed that the Bureau was not a general information Bureau. The other case was that of a wealthy man, who, having a feeling against Mr. Stead, sent a person to offer him one hundred pounds to get her into communication with her dead friend. Mr. Stead informed her that they did not undertake those things for monetary considerations. He found afterwards that the thing was a plant, got up with a view apparently to prosecuting him for obtaining money by false pretences. One curious application came from a man who professed to desire communication with the spirit of his wife. His real object, however, was to satisfy himself that there was no future life, as he had been haunted for many years by the dread of a future eternal hell. He got a good and comforting message from his wife which dispelled his fears. That man passed over into the spirit world before the case was completed. To many breaking hearts the Bureau had been as an angel of resurrection, telling

those whose eyes were blinded with tears not to look down at the tomb, for those whom they loved were not there.

Out of the five hundred cases which the Bureau had considered, one hundred and twenty-six had never returned their final reports as to the results of their sittings. Of the remainder, one hundred and seventy-one wrote stating that they were confident that they had been brought into communication with their dead relatives. Eighty replied to the effect that the sittings might have been successful, but that they were uncertain, and fifty-three reported definitely that they did not get into communication with their dead. The successful results were more numerous than they had anticipated, and were such as to demolish the idea that telepathy could account for or explain in any way the messages that had been given. The request for specification by the applicant of the tests expected or desired was intended to give a good wide field for the operation of telepathy. If a sensitive took up the case and filled all the tests on the paper, people would say 'Oh, it's telepathy!' So, in addition, the man was asked to fix his attention on something that had nothing to do with the case and see whether the sensitive got that. The sitters said that when they did fix their minds on a thing they never succeeded in getting it. Further, the tests they got were not the tests the applicants had written out, and telepathy did not apply as an explanation of the facts. Having established intercourse with the other world, efforts should be concentrated on improving the channels of communication.

In moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Stead, Mr. E. W. WALLIS said that all present must agree that they had had an intellectual treat. Old Spiritualists would feel encouraged by the fact that of the five hundred applicants to Julia's Bureau nearly one third were satisfied that the response demonstrated that they had been in communication with their spirit friends. What Mr. Stead had learned had supplemented and confirmed what Spiritualists had been affirming during the past sixty years.

The motion, having been seconded by Mr. Percy Street, and supported by Mr. Herbert Burrows, was carried unanimously.

In responding, MR. STEAD uttered two words of advice. The first was never to be ashamed of the name 'Spiritualist.' When a name was under a cloud the great thing was not to wince or try to dodge it but to wear it and be proud of it. The second was not to be hard on mediums. It should be remembered that mediums were more sensitive than other men and women and more liable to be affected by the conditions surrounding them. It was our duty to treat them better, and when they did fall—and we all fell sometimes—to help them up again.

At the afternoon meeting, after an invocation by Mr. D. J. Davis, a large number of excellent clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mrs. Podmore and Mrs. Place-Veary, almost all of which were recognised.

At the evening meeting Mr. Alcock Rush offered an invocation, and after a few appropriate words by the chairman, Mr. Percy Street gave an able and thoughtful address on 'The Message of Spiritualism to Humanity,' which was frequently applauded and much appreciated. We hope to give Mr. Street's address in full in next week's 'LIGHT.'

MRS. ANNIE BODDINGTON remarked that they could truly say that they had met together in one place with one accord, their object being to demonstrate to the world that they were a people to be reckoned with. She had been met with the statement that Spiritualism was calculated to make people insane and render them unfit to live as other people lived. They would all agree that Spiritualism had made them saner men and women. It had shown them how to live their everyday lives. She saw a lady present wearing a white bow. It signified that its wearer was trying to help to reform her brothers and sisters. She could not imagine a Spiritualist who was not a total abstainer; and hand in hand with alcohol went smoking. They could not make Spiritualism what it ought to be unless they stood for purity in every shape and form. Years ago it had been a great trouble to her to abstain from a glass of wine, but she saw quite clearly that if she was to be a true Spiritualist she must refrain from anything that would bring discredit on the cause. She felt that Spiritualists needed to take a broad outlook. A little while ago someone wrote to the Spiritualist papers about the peace question—as if Spiritualists had not

always been praying for peace! Christians had always been praying for peace—'Let there be peace in our time, O Lord'—and supplying at the same time the most excellent weapons for war! She urged on her hearers the necessity of standing shoulder to shoulder for the great peace reform. Spiritual truth might be likened to a huge diamond. Everybody chipped a piece off, polished it and thought it was going to shine brighter than anybody else's piece. Spiritualists ought to be glad to know that, no matter what people called themselves, they had their little chips of this great diamond. The more they rubbed them the more they would shine, and the sooner they would all arrive at the great temple of Truth. To some that temple seemed a great way off at the top of a very high hill. But there were many ways of ascent. People were climbing upward by various paths and they would all meet at the top. Spiritualists recognised that there was one universal truth, and through all garbs that truth would eventually shine forth and we should 'know as we are known.' There were people who professed to have found the most advanced teaching that had ever been heard of or listened to. Let them go on saying so. Whatever it was—New Thought, Mental Science, Christian Science, or what not—there was nothing that could be heard to-day that had not been known for many years by the students of Spiritual Science. It was a law of life that we should go onward and upward, and if we kept ourselves in touch with all the thoughts around us we should find that the great universal spiritual truth was permeating the whole world. No matter what labels people put on themselves they were travelling in one direction—to the great white temple of Truth. A few years ago, realising the many differences in thought among Spiritualists and that all must think for themselves, she regarded the idea of a Spiritualist organisation as a forlorn hope. But events had forced her to realise the need of organisation, provided that they clearly understood what they were working for. They were the people who were destined to fulfil the prophecies. To-day they were practically teaching the professional Christians their own truths. Let them be true to the God who was in all. 'All are but parts of one stupendous whole.' It was for them as Spiritualists to stand shoulder to shoulder, proving that they lived to make the world better than they found it, and they could only prove that by living lives to the honour and glory of God. (Loud applause.)

MR. E. W. WALLIS said that, in listening to the speeches and songs that had already been given, he noticed the same thought running through them all—the desire for light. As 'whatever doth make manifest is light,' spirit manifestations, such as had been mentioned by Mr. Stead, shed light in the valley of the shadow of death, and Spiritualists could run their trains of thought right through into the bright beyond. One misconception Spiritualists had to meet was that they were other-worldly, and took too little interest in this world. Knowing that life was continuous, they took the deepest and keenest interest in everything that made for progress in this world, because that was the best preparation for the next. If it were true that the universe was guided by spiritual powers, then this was a spiritual world, and we were spirit people now. Men used to be taught that they must not trust themselves or their own depraved and fallen nature; but numbers of people now realised that unless they trusted themselves they could not trust God; for if God were the All-Father and had endowed us with His attributes that we might grow more and more into His likeness, it was only by trusting the God in us that we could trust Him at all. With regard to the growth of Spiritualism, Mr. Wallis had recently read that the first Spiritualists' May meeting was held in 1874. There were then about thirty organised societies; now there were nearly three hundred. Let them look, too, at the immense change in the thought of the world in regard to the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, human responsibility and eternal progress. These main principles of Spiritualism were now being proclaimed everywhere. It was hardly possible to find a preacher who believed in the eternal punishment of sinners. The spirit of kindness was growing. Men were not so bitter and condemnatory as they used to be, and a better, more brotherly state of feeling prevailed. As we were conscious of being ourselves to-day, so we should still be ourselves when we got out of the body. Spirit

people taught that the future life was the sequel of the present, and that the consequences of motives and deeds, good and bad, determined our status there until we grew to higher and better conditions. As we were pilgrims towards the goal of perfection it was our business in life to make the fullest use of our powers; to express ourselves in every possible way for the highest and the best, and for the good of all. Nothing preached so loud as example. It was well to stop worrying, to banish fear-thoughts. 'The time to be happy is now, the place to be happy is here, and the way to be happy is to be happy.' Spiritualism had made him an optimist. He did not believe in looking at the dark side. It was a good thing to be alive to-day. This was God's world, and He had made it very beautiful. The world had its tears, but it had its gladness and beauty. Let them think of how the race had risen; of the men and women who had toiled and suffered that we might be free. There never was a time when so many people were so wise and strong and loving as to-day. It was good to feel the joy of living and to express it. We ought all to delight to live full and useful lives. Ella Wheeler Wilcox had said that there were two classes of people—the leaners and the lifters. He wanted to be a lifter; to help to lift mankind to freedom. There was much work to be done. Let them think of the shameful fact that seventy thousand people died every year from excessive drinking; let them think, too, of that other shame—that army of outcast sisters wandering the streets of this great city; and of the fallen men, often worse than the women. Something had to be done, and everyone could help. He was proud of the fact that individual Spiritualists were in the front ranks of every reform. He did not believe the crime of the world was greater, but we were more sensitive, and knew more about it than formerly. We sympathised with the sufferers in a more practical way. There were many signs of progress. Think of how the opium traffic had been put down by the Chinese. What a splendid work had been done for the aged poor by the old age pensions! Another great step forward was about to be taken in the great scheme of insurance just put before Parliament. Surely we were becoming more human, more helpful! He was glad to be alive, not only because of what was being done, but because it was the promise of greater good to come. There were people who feared that if Spiritualism were fully demonstrated and widely known, the prospect of the beauties of the other world would be too great for many, and that they would commit suicide to get there quickly to enjoy its delights. They would be making a great mistake if they did. They would not be ready. The joys of life there had to be earned by faithful service here. While he looked forward hopefully to meeting the friends he loved and esteemed, he was in no hurry to go. He wanted to live as long as he could be useful, and to die in harness. Religion, if it meant anything, meant loving-kindness. It could only be expressed in service to humanity.

Religion now means something high and broad,  
And man stood never half so near to God.

All the world over, there had been growing up the sense of brotherhood. Many prophetic souls had caught glimpses of a coming federation of the world. Some of us a few years ago felt downhearted because of the recrudescence of militarism. But a change had come over the spirit of the dream, a re-action had set in after the South African war and, most of all, the splendid example set by our rulers in handing over to the people of South Africa the right to self-government, had tended to change the thoughts of men.

And now we had the glorious proposal from America that disputes between this country and the United States should be submitted to a tribunal for arbitration. Spiritualists believed that in the other world there would be no war—that there 'ever the truth comes uppermost and ever is justice done.' Why should it not be so here? We knew that natural laws reigned in the spiritual world and spiritual laws should reign in the natural world. It afforded him the sincerest pleasure to move:—

That this Annual Convention of Spiritualists, meeting in London, regards with sincere approval the efforts now directed to the maintenance of peace between nations, and cordially welcomes the Taft-Grey proposal as a contribution of great value to the accomplishment of that end.

It had been suggested that if the resolution met with the approval of the meeting copies should be sent to the Prime Minister and Sir Edward Grey. He would take the liberty of suggesting that one should be sent also to President Taft.

MR. PERCY STREET, in an eloquent and forcible speech, speaking as one who had borne arms in actual warfare and had known from experience something of the horrors of deadly strife, warmly seconded the resolution which, when put to the meeting by the chairman, was carried unanimously amid loud and prolonged applause.

THE CHAIRMAN announced that the day's collections amounted to £13 16s., which would be devoted to carrying the light into dark places. He hoped one effect of that day's meetings would be that if there were any Spiritualists present who had not formed a society they would do so, that those who were already members but did not show much interest would wake up to their duties, and that those who were doing well would be inspired to do better. In conclusion, he asked Mr. Knox, of Durban, South Africa, who was present, to take back with him the fraternal greetings of that meeting. Mr. Knox briefly and happily acknowledged the pleasure it had been to him to be present, and testified to the inspiration he had received during the day. He felt sure that the kindly interest and sympathy expressed by the Chairman in the work and welfare of the Spiritualists in South Africa would be greatly valued and warmly reciprocated by them.

### 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.*

#### Mr. Hereward Carrington and Fraud.

SIR,—Mr. Carrington calmly states in 'LIGHT' of May 13th, p. 226: 'I said there was a slit in the door behind Miss Bangs. There is (or was) no such slit. What I meant was *under* the door—between the lower edge of the door and the strip of wood over which it closes. . . . (2) As to the "strip of wood dividing the windows" I might have expressed this more clearly. There is one window, as Admiral Moore says. . . . There are four panes of glass. These panes of glass are divided by a strip of wood about an inch broad. This was the strip of wood I found freely punctured with tiny holes,' &c.

Here are strange admissions. 'In a door' means 'under a door'; 'windows' mean panes of glass!

I will deal with this portion of his letter first. I examined this room in 1909, three months before Mr. Carrington's alleged visit, and in 1911. Nothing had been altered. I assert without the smallest fear of future contradiction that (1) under the door there is a space of a trifle less than one-third of an inch uniform throughout its entire breadth (no tapering); (2) that this space over the threshold is no more than sufficient for the rug which is laid over the threshold; should the Bangs Sisters ever put there a Turkey carpet, or even an Axminster with felt underneath, they would have to cut the threshold away or cut more wood from the bottom of the door; (3) the battens which separates the panes of glass is not an inch thick, or nearly that; (4) there are no suspicious holes in it; (5) this window is in full view from Wood-street, the Bangs Sisters' house being at a corner!

Now we go on. 'As to my being at Chicago at the time.' . . . This is a 'red herring drawn across the trail' with a vengeance. I have never said he was not at Chicago. He was there, and I have no doubt had a good time. The question is: 'Was he ever inside the Bangs' house?' I believe not, for his plan is wrong and his subsequent attempts at explanation are childish. 'Or would the canvas which I bought from the Bangs Sisters at the time, and still have, convince Admiral Moore?' . . . Answer: No, it would not convince Admiral Moore, who knows that there are several stores where these canvases can be bought in Chicago. I understand that the Bangs Sisters did not sell him any canvas. Let him produce their receipt for the money he paid for it!

I have no personal animus against Mr. Hereward Carrington. I do not know him personally. If he can give a correct plan of the room and state what furniture is in it, which I believe it is not in his power to do, I am not going to press him hard as to errors of an inch or two here and there, I may come to the conclusion that he has been inside the house. But even then we shall not have got very far; for the mistakes he has already made in his article, and his letter to which I am now replying

place him in the very worst light as an observer of psychical or any other sort of phenomena.

As Mr. Carrington contributes to 'LIGHT,' and is agent for 'The Annals of Psychical Science' in the United States, was it not reasonable to suppose that he had read my charges against him in your issues of December 17th, 1910; March 25th, 1911; and April 1st, 1911? If anybody ought to have sent him these papers, it was the editor of the magazine in which he published his disingenuous article.

He mentions Mr. Francis. I have a letter from that gentleman, dated September 16th, 1909 (three months after the visit of Mr. Carrington to Chicago), in which he says: 'I wish to say to you in all candour that I believe that their [the Bangs Sisters] spirit paintings are genuine productions originating from the spirit world.' The italics are those of Mr. Francis. I will deposit the letter with you if you desire it.

The last two paragraphs of Mr. Carrington's letter contain another 'red herring.' The Carrington-Abbott-Marriott trick is well known in England. I have seen it often, and it surpasses in skill almost every conjuring trick I have ever witnessed. When my friends ask me how the Bangs' pictures *appear* to come, I say: 'Go and see Dr. Wilmar's spirit paintings.' But the conditions no more resemble the Bangs Sisters' conditions than a locomotive boiler resembles a tea-pot. The operator must have a heavy easel and the picture comes on the wrong canvas. The method is known to me, and was known to me before I met Dr. Wilmar. It was found out by an exhibition of my own models and by one of our best trance mediums (whose modesty prevents me naming him) about the time it was discovered by Mr. David Abbott.

I respect Mr. Abbott. He candidly owns that all his theories about the Bangs Sisters' pictures previous to 1909 were entirely erroneous. I ask myself this plain question: Why has not this diligent conjurer been to sit with the Bangs Sisters? He lives within a reasonable distance. If he does sit with them, he will find his latest theory as rotten as his previous ones.

In conclusion, I have only to say that the Bangs Sisters do not sit for 'slate writing'; that no psychic in the United States I have met cares a button whether Mr. Hereward Carrington believes in them or not. He has no influence and cannot forward the tenets of Spiritism by a hair's breadth.

I have not yet done with this S.P.R. expert, but my letter is, I fear, already too long; I can wait.—Yours, &c.,

W. USBORNE MOORE,  
Vice-Admiral.

8, Western-parade, Southsea.  
May 13th, 1911.

#### 'Light' and Reincarnationists.

SIR,—Your article on p. 223 must give satisfaction to all Theosophists in settling the question that the attitude of 'LIGHT' towards the subject of reincarnation is not antagonistic, but inquiring. It goes without saying that proof is needed for the various statements put forth, which the average man, even the average Spiritualist, much more the average Theosophist, cannot hope to prove for himself. A great deal must always be a matter of faith with the rank and file; all cannot be in the forefront of exponents, whether it be in science, or art, or religion. Scientists from time to time tell us wonderful things, and we accept their statements, listening with respect to, but little understanding of, their methods of discovery. If a man from among these appeared to-day, saying that he had lighted on the fact that *within himself* was an instrument of finer accuracy and greater delicacy than any in his laboratory, that by means of this instrument he could fathom yet deeper secrets of Nature, unfold more subtle workings, surely he would be given a reasonable hearing. This is really what the advanced Theosophist has done, so that when you ask 'How does Mrs. Besant know?' the reply is that she has discovered *within herself* certain faculties, which enable her to acquire information that is normally out of the ordinary person's reach. There is no claim to the possession of anything specific by a particular person, merely that the powers latent in all men are developed in a few cases. It is by these means that investigations are made as to the cosmic plan, the relative workings of globes and humanity's place thereon. The same is to be said of Mr. Leadbeater, who bases his assertions upon after-life condition on the scientific research which the expansion of these inner faculties enables him to pursue. It is really the work of the Spiritualist carried to higher flights, his methods reduced to a precise scheme, elaborated, and lifted out of the sphere of chance. He, the Spiritualist, bases his beliefs on knowledge acquired by closest and most intimate inquiry; he has proved beyond all manner of doubt to the materialist and sceptic that this physical earth-life is not the only state of consciousness known to man, that life exists after the gate of death has been passed by the mere body of dust, that man lives and *thinks and loves* as truly after physical death as before it. He has done a great work; least of all does the Theosophist disparage the immense debt which thousands of doubting souls owe to his

labours. The Theosophist goes farther in the same school, that is all. A medium has certain powers; what are these powers but a showing forth of faculties inherent in every man? The functioning of these activities is often sporadic, sometimes chaotic, owing to the fact that the person has simply found himself in possession of these abnormal qualities, and uses them haphazard. The theosophical method is to make skilled workmen of such as have the capacity for development, and the will to submit to systematic training. A medium, making himself a link between this world and another, gives us a message from one who has gone over to the other side, and work of this kind is the limit of his capacity; but a trained occultist can as easily bring us a message from another globe in the solar system. It is a matter of degree more than of difference. The Spiritualist takes his teaching from *untrained* psychics, the theosophical student from *trained* occultists, and their methods are at least as reliable as those of the trained scientist whose assertions we do not question, although we do not always grasp the rationale of his mode of acquiring knowledge.—Yours, &c., E. P. F.

SIR,—Your courteous article is a logical and effective reply to the charge made against you. It is, in my opinion, very necessary that a firm stand be made by the chief Spiritualistic journal of the world against all forms of undemonstrable belief, of whatever kind of literary fascination. We have had more than enough of authoritative teaching, and our best efforts now should be to tread safely the path of reason and evidenced truth. The quotation from Mrs. A. Besant's article on 'A Solar System' is an extreme instance of what we are expected to believe, when once the authoritative priesthood of an exoteric teaching are allowed to speak unquestioned. If Mrs. Besant's statement on 'A Solar System' were true, it might not be any more serviceable to the majority of mankind than the reading of Newton's 'Principia' would be to a cheese-mite.

Thirty-five years ago the writer had the privilege of combating Mrs. Besant's eloquent dictum on steam-roller materialism. She was very much on the earth in those days; now she has, apparently, risen to the intimacy of divine lords of planetary systems. If this belief of Mrs. Besant is anything better than pure romancing, let us by all means have something in support of the assertions other than pen, ink, and paper evidence.

It is, I contend, the stern duty of Spiritualists to criticise all teachings that are based on personal assertions and call for receptive faith. We have to defend the young and the inexperienced.—Yours, &c., J. W. MAHONY.

1, Bishopston-road, Bearwood, Birmingham.

SIR,—You are certainly justified in the reply given to your correspondent. Dogmatising is not the way to convince unbelievers, and no one cares to waste time uselessly speculating when more profitably employed in dealing with the proven facts of Spiritualism. It is not the Spiritualist who 'sneers' at reincarnation but the outsiders who see not only the best, but likewise the folly and absurdity of the game. Truth can never be 'sneered' out of court; therefore, if (?) Theosophists are its exponents, there is nothing to fear.—Yours, &c.,

E. P. PRENTICE.

[Several interesting letters on this subject, and on others, are unavoidably held over for our next issue.—ED. 'LIGHT']

#### Spiritualists' National Fund of Benevolence

SIR,—Kindly permit me to acknowledge the following donations received during April, viz.: 'A member of the Market Hall Society, Exeter,' 2s.; Mrs. Stett's Circle, 4s. 6d.; Mr. C. G. Rickards, 5s.; Mr. F. Tomlinson, £2 2s.; Collection taken at the Celebration Meetings, Manchester, on Good Friday, £3 7s. 6d.; Mr. J. Briggs, 8s.; Miss E. L. Boswell-Stone, 5s. Total, £6 14s.

Mrs. Twelvtree, of Nottingham, has kindly volunteered to give her services to the F.O.B., to help an old Spiritualist who, through no fault of his own, has fallen on evil days, and communications may be made direct to her or through me. I shall be pleased to hear from any medium who would like to assist the fund in a similar manner, as already several are holding regular sésances and the proceeds go to help our sick and aged workers.

A. E. BUTTON,

9, High-street, Doncaster.

Hon. Secretary.

#### Spiritualists and the Peace Question.

SIR,—The deliberate slighting of Spiritualism by those responsible for the convening of committee and public meetings on the peace question, which should surely be regarded as undenominational, continues, and the North, where Spiritualism has just recently been under the lash of clerical vituperation, furnishes a glaring example. On Friday last (May 19th) a meeting, described by the Press as 'representative of all religious

denominations,' was held here under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor, but, so far as I have been able to ascertain, no representative Spiritualist was present or was invited. What renders the position more anomalous is the fact that the local chairman is a Unitarian minister. I wonder how Anglicans, Catholics, &c., reconcile his presence at the meeting with the exclusion of a community whose theology differs but little from that which he professes.

Perhaps something may be said and done concerning this and similar vitally important matters at the coming conference.—Yours, &c., JAMES LAWRENCE.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

#### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MAY 21st, &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*.—Miss Florence Morse gave clairvoyant descriptions, many being fully recognised.—15, *Mortimer-street, W.*—On the 15th inst. Mrs. Mary Davies gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided at both meetings. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 67, *George-street, W.*—Morning, Mr. E. W. Beard, under control, gave an address on 'The Need of the Spiritualist.'—22, *Prince's-street*.—Evening, Miss McCreadie gave clairvoyant descriptions. See advertisement.—E. C. W.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mr. Sarfas gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mrs. Annie Boddington, address and clairvoyance. Other meetings as usual. Thursday, June 1st, Mrs. Roberts, of Leicester.—G. T. W.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. Harry Brooks gave an interesting address on 'The Relation of the Physical to the Physical.' Mr. E. P. Noall presided. Sunday next, address, Mr. J. Gambril Nicholson.—W. H. S.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Madame Hope gave successful clairvoyant descriptions to a large audience. Sunday next, at 7, Mr. Frederic Fletcher will lecture on 'The Power of Thought.'—T. B.

SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD.—4, CAMBRIDGE-ROAD.—Mr. N. M. Johnson spoke under control on 'Realities.' On the 16th inst. Mrs. Jamrach gave an address on 'Science and the Soul,' and excellent clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Nurse Graham. Will friends kindly note change of address?—J.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mr. H. Boddington gave helpful and interesting addresses. Sunday next, Miss Florence Morse, addresses and clairvoyance. Monday, at 8 p.m., clairvoyance. Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, circle.

BRIGHTON.—OLD TOWN HALL, HOVE, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET, WEST.—Excellent addresses and clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mrs. Mary Davies. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., public circle; 7 p.m., Mrs. Curry. Monday, at 3 and 8, also Wednesday, at 3, clairvoyance by Mrs. Curry. Thursday, at 8.15, circle.

BRIXTON.—KOSMON HALL, 73, WILTSHIRE-ROAD.—Miss Lucy Thompson gave a beautiful address, followed by clairvoyant descriptions by herself and Mrs. Johnson. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Everth, address, followed by clairvoyance. Public service on Wednesday at 8.15.—K. S.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. H. Leaf, under control, gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Underwood, address and clairvoyance. Monday, at 8, circle. Tuesday, at 8, astrology class. Friday, at 8.30, Mr. Hawes' healing class.—N. R.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Morning, Mrs. Cannock spoke on 'Harmony,' and at the evening service related her 'Experiences.' Her clairvoyant descriptions were good. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis, subject at 11 a.m., 'Seers, Prophets and Priests'; at 7 p.m., 'The Coming Spiritual Religion.'

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, Mrs. Comerford spoke under control and gave good clairvoyant descriptions. Evening, Mr. R. Boddington gave a stimulating address and answered questions. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., circle; 7 p.m., Mr. D. J. Davis. Thursday, June 1st, Mrs. Neville. June 4th, evening, Mr. J. Macbeth Bain. July 2nd, anniversary, Mr. E. W. Beard.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. Abrahall gave an illuminating address on 'Spirit Helpers,' and Miss Jose good psychometric readings. Evening, Mrs. A. Jamrach spoke on 'The Humanity of Jesus' and gave clairvoyant descriptions. 17th, Mr. Davies spoke on 'Progression,' and Mrs. Mary Davies gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., Mr. J. Abrahall and Miss Jose; 7 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington. Wednesday, Madame Maria Scott. June 4th, Mrs. Mary Davies.—J. F.