

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

To all our contributors during the past year; to our staunch subscribers who have supported 'LIGHT' for many years; to the new readers who have found in 'LIGHT' helpful ministrations that have encouraged them to continue to read its pages, and to those 'Light Bearers' who have generously endeavoured to assist us to increase our usefulness by an increased circulation, we tender our warmest thanks for their helpful services—and, as gratitude is said to be 'a lively sense of favours to come,' we heartily invite their continued co-operation in 'spreading the Light.'

The letters which reach us are often full of human interest, and although there are many which we are unable to print we can assure our correspondents that we value their communications and appreciate their friendly feelings. Quite recently we received an intensely interesting letter from a North countryman, who is nearly seventy years of age. For almost forty years he has been a Spiritualist, and an outspoken one. A critical rather than a credulous man, he was convinced in private circles, and has witnessed nearly all kinds of phenomena, having sat with most of the mediums who have been known to the public. Spiritualism, he says, preserved him from atheism, and gave him a high sense of the sacredness of this life. Heavy trials have befallen him, but he holds his own in a brave and commendable way. Happily married, to a wife who was beloved by all who knew her, he had to see her gradually fail in health, in spite of all that medical skill could do for her, until she became bedridden. For twelve years she was unable to move a limb and was hardly ever free from pain, but was always cheerful and bright. Before she was released she was visited by many ministers and others, and in spite of her sufferings she talked to them about the future life in such a way that many were moved to tears and declared that she was doing a great work for God. 'I have great cause to be thankful for many things in life,' he writes, and we congratulate him on his brave spiritual outlook.

We have, for years, been trying to illustrate, by an example, the value of plain and simple language, and we believe it has been appreciated; but it is astonishing to notice how many people still think that out-of-the-way words are necessary in order to express great thoughts or tell great facts.

W. H. Carruth, himself a master of virile English, tells of a well-meaning but prim lady, who said to her Sunday School class about the word 'Love': 'Now, I suppose none of you could give me the definition of this word as found in

the lexicographies.' We hope it is not true, though we did once hear of a man who translated the beginning of the twenty-third Psalm thus: 'The Deity is my pastor; I shall not be indigent. He causeth me to recumb in the verdant lawns,' and so on. It is all very stupid—quite as stupid as the behaviour of the young man from (say) Peter Robinson's who, at a little evening party, thinks it necessary or nice to put on amazing airs. All the really higher grades and states go with self-possession and simplicity; and always a certain amount of quiet humour.

Most of us are familiar with the type of intellect which, in dealing with the facts of life, finds everything either black or white, and constructs its philosophy accordingly. It simplifies matters tremendously, and makes a great impression on those minds which are impatient of subtle differentiations. It is a good system, in its own place, but there inevitably comes a time when the progressive mind finds that things cannot be classified in this rough and ready fashion. We see examples of this in our movement. At first an inquirer conducts his researches on the basis that there are two orders of intelligent beings, viz., men and spirits, and makes his deductions accordingly. Later comes a dawning perception of the fact that a spirit is very much a man, and a man very much of a spirit. At that point he has taken a very important step, and one fruitful of much in the way of clearer perception and understanding of matters thitherto found bewildering. Subsequently, it may be, he enlarges his classification, and divides his universe into intelligence (man, incarnate or discarnate) and non-intelligence (Nature). Later still, if he is progressive, he finds even this classification inadequate and discovers that intelligence is universal, governing the movements of all, from the lowest atom to the highest spirit. And then he has gone a considerable way towards solving the problem of existence.

'Entering into the silence' has long been a familiar phrase, but we doubt whether it has had, for 'the general public,' a substantial meaning, though there are half-a-dozen meanings which have substance in them. The most useful meaning is the simplest—that which makes it signify the withdrawal of the mind from eternal happenings, and its concentration upon principles and the things that abide. Happenings are always shifting and clamorous: principles and things that abide are unshaken, imperturbable, silent. They lie in wait for hours of reflection; they change not; they pass not; and they are in the silence because they are the realities behind the appearances, the abiding behind the vanishing.

To be able to escape from externals that harass, to internals that soothe, is a great art; and to exchange circumstances for foundations is often the same thing as exchanging the human for the divine; and so it comes to pass that entering into the silence is to find and commune with God. But it is God in the soul, after all.

We referred some time ago in these Notes to the wonderful resourcefulness of Nature in supplying the place of a missing or defective bodily organ. Mr. Walter Devoe, in the November 'Nautilus,' in an article entitled, 'Your Creative Intelligence,' says:—

The flesh can do nothing of itself; it is the creative power that forms cells and acts upon them intelligently with a purpose learned from the Wisdom of the Eternal Mind.

And he goes on to refer to the fact that Dr. Kellogg, the noted surgeon,

cites cases where life has built a new liver lobe and substituted a new pyloric orifice for one that had been cut out. It has shown its ability to make the best use of the remaining half of a stomach, and has got along without a large part of the colon. I have seen cases where faith has lengthened a shortened leg two inches and made it normal, actually growing new bone substance to accomplish this miracle.

Testimony to the reality of the creative soul flows in on us nowadays from all directions, and we are always glad to receive it from whatsoever quarter it comes.

The fourth annual report of the Penal Reform League, of which a copy has been sent to us, refers to the statement by the Head Constable of Liverpool that there is 'a general decline of personal honesty in many relations of life.' We should attribute this lamentable fact less to any decadence of character than to the increased severity of the struggle for existence. And that, indeed, is very much the standpoint of the compilers of the Report. But they also refer, in this connection, to the fact that the tendency of much so-called religious instruction is to depress the spiritual vitality of the young. There is a great deal in that point. Anything that unduly exalts the importance of the material side of things—physical well-being, and its increasing needs or imaginary needs—is bound to have a corroding effect on character. In combating these tendencies the Penal Reform League is doing good work, and we gladly recognise it as one of the many modern agencies that are working towards the amelioration of life—a hopeful sign.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

NEW YEAR'S SOCIAL GATHERING.

On Thursday, January 4th, at 3 p.m., A SOCIAL GATHERING will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., for Members and Associates. Tea will be provided during the afternoon. At 4 o'clock a spirit control, speaking through Mr. Percy R. Street, will deal with 'The Sunshine of Spiritualism.' Admission: Members and Associates *free*; Visitors, 2s. each. No tickets required.

Meetings will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings, next year, at 7.30:—

- Jan. 11.—Mr. E. W. Wallis on 'Interesting Incidents During Forty Years of Mediumship.'
- Jan. 25.—Mr. Herbert Burrows on 'The Soul Problem and the Spiritual Universe.'
- Feb. 8.—Rev. J. Tyssul Davis, B.A., late Principal of Buddhist College, Colombo, on 'Occultism in Buddhism.'
- Feb. 22.—Mr. Angus McArthur.
- Mar. 14.—Mr. Walter Appleyard on 'My Reasons for being a Spiritualist after Many Years' Experience.'
- Mar. 28.—Mr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe, B.Sc., on 'The Frontiers of the Soul.'
- Apr. 11.—'Cheiro' on 'Personal Experiences of Psychic Phenomena in India, America, and other Countries.'
- Apr. 25.—Prof. W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.
- May 9.—Rev. T. Rhondda Williams.

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

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., daily, except Saturdays, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura. For full particulars see the advertisement supplement.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday, January 5th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience 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.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday, January 9th, Mr. A. Peters will give clairvoyant descriptions at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Associates; Members *free*; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each. At 8 p.m. Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham) will give clairvoyant descriptions—admission as above.

FATE, OR EVOLUTION?

BY HORACE LEAF.

The average British mind finds it extremely difficult to believe in fate. Both religion and science attach great importance to will, energy, and foresight, and have thus strengthened belief in personal power to make one's own destiny. The father urges his son to study attentively that he may better equip himself for his future career, and thus insure success; whilst it is almost an axiom that the energetic carve their way to success at the expense of the less industrious. To seize opportunity by the forelock is, in the opinion of the ambitious, one's bounden duty.

But though there appears to be much truth in all this, there is ample evidence to prove that fortune and misfortune often depend largely on influences or on circumstances beyond the control of the individual. Some great poets lisped in verse. Honoré de Balzac, who by some is considered the greatest of French novelists, was so obsessed by his imagination and love for his work, that he lived, in his early days, in dire poverty in a garret, working eighteen out of every twenty-four hours, and in consequence undermined his health. Napoleon gained many of his early victories when a young child, playing with toy soldiers on the floor. The elements of success were within them and forced themselves out. Time reversed the process and took them by the forelock. The same thing may be said of many of the most successful people in all spheres of activity.

To the possession of the natural qualifications which are essential to success must be added opportunity. No observant person who has mixed with the poor can have failed to see the natural ability of some individuals among them rendered useless and even harmful to their worldly success through lack of opportunity for its right exercise and development. As we walk through a burial ground we cannot but feel with the poet that,

Perhaps, in this neglected spot, is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire:
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.
But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll:
Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

The obverse is equally true. Many persons whose names are reverently remembered to-day, and will continue to be so by posterity, were more indebted to circumstances for their fame than to their own efforts. The truth of this is remarkably borne out by a study of English genius. In order that we may the more correctly estimate personal ability, we will omit all royalty and persons who have inherited titles. What is the result? We find that barely three per cent. of our men of genius have been artisans and unskilled, whilst practically the whole of the

remaining ninety-seven per cent. come from the educated classes. As these figures apply only to the period preceding the second half of the nineteenth century, we must expect, through the introduction of free education since that time, an increase of genius or brilliancy amongst the working class in future.

Some persons, notwithstanding marked inability, invariably get on. It is said of such, 'Everything they touch turns to gold.' Others, be they ever so gifted, cannot succeed, strive as they will. So that it may be said with some show of truth that success and failure attend alike both the dishonest and the honest, the lazy and the energetic, the careless and the careful, the inept and the apt. Sometimes the wise man is born poor, and the foolish man rich; sometimes *vice versa*.

Some explanation, other than personal effort, is needed to account for this, and we are not without peculiar instances which offer fate as that explanation.

In the fourth century, B.C., two Romans, Hillarius and Patricius, sought by means of table-tilting to ascertain the name of the successor of the Emperor Valens. 'Theod' was spelt out. Concluding that Theodorus was intended, they proceeded no further with their inquiries. The authorities, however, hearing of the matter, forced them to reveal the table's message, with the result that Theodorus and other persons whose names commenced in a similar way were put to death. Nevertheless, the table proved correct, for after the defeat of Valens by the Goths, and his death, Theodosius was proclaimed Emperor.

Apparitions have frequently played important parts in revealing the fate of individuals, as, for instance, when the spirit of the Marquise de Rambouillet, who had been killed in Flanders, is said to have appeared to his friend, the Marquise de Precy, and informed him that he would be killed in the next engagement, which actually occurred.

There is the well-known historical case of the fulfilment of the compact between Lord Tyrone and Lady Beresford, that whoever died first should appear to the other. Lord Tyrone died first, and appeared to the lady in spirit and informed her that she would die on her forty-eighth birthday. Notwithstanding an apparent discrepancy, due to some confusion on her part respecting her age, the prophecy was fulfilled.

In recent times there is the remarkable case of Mr. Lane's dream, on the morning before the incident occurred, of the murder of his colleague, Mr. William Terriss, at the Adelphi Theatre; also the well-known case of Mr. John Ball's dream, repeated three times, of the assassination of Mr. Perceval, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Both these incidents transpired precisely as they had been seen in the dreams.

The experience of Spiritualist mediums adds amply to the store of evidence. It soon becomes apparent to the medium that at least something of the nature of fate is associated with people. The accurate foretelling of events, both trivial and important, which are to occur at more or less remote periods, seems to supply conclusive proof. The incidents are often so disconnected from present circumstances that they cannot be judged by either mediums or spirits as arising from them. Mediums are often recipients of interesting accounts which strengthen the position.

A young lady once dreamed that she saw a man standing out clearly against a perfectly black background. He was smiling pleasantly, and had a most fascinating influence. Nothing else was visible to the dreamer; but she felt that if ever she met that man she was to beware of him. A few months later, when at a ball, she was introduced to a gentleman, to whom she was strongly attracted. She felt that they had met before, but he assured her that such was not the case. Matters developed, her life was spoilt, and only then did she realise that he was the man of her dream.

A young Devonshire lass attended a wedding. At night, on retiring to rest, she placed, in accordance with an old custom, a piece of wedding cake under her pillow, at the same time expressing the wish to see her future husband in a dream. She dreamt that she saw a man, dressed in a certain manner, open a pair of folding doors. She marked well his dress and features, and remembered them distinctly upon awaking. Seven years later, when in London, she was invited to a party. On her arrival at the house, the door was opened by the man of her dream, dressed

precisely as in the vision, although the door was different. In due course they were married.

Several years ago a young actress visited a famous astrologer and mystic. He requested her to look in the crystal and see her future husband. She looked, and saw a man in a blue reefer jacket walking towards her down a street. A few years later she met that man, dressed in exactly the same manner and in the street seen in the crystal.

What is the explanation of these and similar cases? Fate, in the ordinary meaning of the word, is difficult to accept and very unsatisfactory. It belies common experience and opinion. All normal people feel they possess, and that it is only right that they should possess, the power of choice. Yet we cannot ignore the binding influences of general circumstances. Power of choice, however, need not in any way hinder the possibility of future events existing in time and, as it were, awaiting our arrival, as we move through life towards them, just as electricity and X-rays and radium existed before man discovered them and put them to use. Man discovers ideas by developing to them. Much of what is to-day common knowledge was unknown to the past, not because it did not exist, but because people were not sufficiently evolved to apprehend it. Sometimes an idea is lost, as when a person dies with knowledge of a valuable secret process. But it is not considered that it is destroyed and beyond recovery: it is conceived as existing still, although the man is gone, and, acting on that conviction, other people make efforts to discover it.

Ideas are eternal and indestructible, discovered and not created by man.

A brief consideration will show that the same applies to actions and events. What a person is going to do to-morrow, or at any future time, is going to be done by him notwithstanding his choice. It is reasonable to believe that, just as past events exist in time, future events do also. It must be so if there is a Supreme Mind which contains knowledge of all things.

Some persons are able to foresee important changes in people's ideas; so also are some able to catch an occasional glimpse of the record of the future. How this may be achieved may be a mystery as obscure to the seer as to any other person. That it is done is substantiated by evidence which, although limited in quantity, is as satisfactory in quality as the most scientific mind can demand outside personal experience.

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF DEATH.

'Death will give us far more than it takes away,' says 'K. W. H.' in 'The Christian Commonwealth' for the 13th inst. 'It will provide for the up-gathering of life-experience.' He likens it to the arrival at an inn, after a long tramp, of a traveller, who, to a little company, including one or two friends, all full of eager welcome, tells of the day's doings—the zest of sunrise and early morning, the heat and burden of the day, the softness of the lengthening shadows as he passed through the golden autumn fields. 'Death,' he says, 'will be like that, more beautiful, more solemn, and more deeply glad than that—but something like it, for it will be a great recollection, a resting place on the open road. In death you will possess your life in a way you have never possessed it before. And it will provide for an expansion of life.' Such expansions come when the boy leaves home for school, when he leaves the country town to go to business in London; or when a maiden, leaving those she knows, hands her future into the care of one of whom she can know but little; or when a man is confronted with a great sorrow or a heavy disaster—we have all known such crises, but the truth is

we lost a smaller self to find a bigger self. Death will be another crisis in the ascending life; when we shall be able to see both sides of it we shall see that it provided an enlargement and expansion of life. . . . It will be a most penetrating experience, full of strange light and power. But there need be no fear. The lowliest may meet it with uplifted head. About the Breast of God, in characters of light supernal, hovers the word Life; and engraven on the palms of His ingathering hands is the word Death.

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APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

THE 'MENACE' ONCE MORE.

We trust that in our reply to Mr. Horace J. Bridges' letter, 'The Menace of Spiritualism,' in 'LIGHT' of 18th ult., we made quite clear to him the groundlessness of his fear of the consequences which would ensue if the public in general were converted to our interpretation of psychic phenomena. We have no reason whatever for apprehension in that direction. The public in general is far too busily occupied on matters nearer to its heart and to its necessities. Besides, it is hardly necessary to point out to a man of our critic's knowledge and experience that Spiritualism is by no means popular. The very name of it inspires distrust in the mind of the man in the street, and only those of strong convictions and a measure of that not too common commodity, moral courage, will publicly attach the label to themselves. It is true that with the advance of science a different attitude is being manifested by thoughtful observers, but the man who bluntly proclaims himself a Spiritualist is still very much in the position of the first users of the umbrella, or the pioneers of other social innovations—a target for gibes and brickbats. We feel sometimes like the philosopher who made a practice of wearing a dilapidated hat in public: he said it kept away his false friends. The difference is that although a profession of faith in our subject has certainly a somewhat similar effect, there is something more in it than a mere willingness to appear eccentric. It is—though we say it ourselves—a criterion of sincerity and conviction. There are many who have adopted our views in secret—and we cannot in the present state of social education find it in our hearts to blame them. When a creed has become strong and popular, it usually loses some of its pristine virtues, and the time arrives for a fresh advance movement, with new pioneers to bear the slings and arrows of the followers of the old order. We need not labour the point; illustrations abound.

And this brings us to the question of mediums and psychics. We fear no sudden multiplication of these. Our complaint is rather that the treatment accorded to them by a Philistine community tends in the other direction, and prompts them to limit, to conceal, or even to suppress, their gifts. For Mr. Bridges should remember that mediums and psychics are born, not made. Nature must bear the responsibility for their appearance; and as for their infirmities, these are very largely the product of the harsh and discordant conditions in which they are compelled to live. The world of to-day is a hard one for sensi-

tive souls. It would sour the temper of a seraph. An archangel could hardly pass through its ordeals with an unblemished character, especially if he were the cynosure of jealous and critical eyes and of minds willing and eager to pick holes in his reputation.

On the question of the sacredness of the human soul, we said that our movement proclaimed both the soul's reality and its sacredness. Surely the best way in which to assure respect for the human being—both his own respect and that of his fellows—is to prove his innate divinity. If anything more than that realisation by humanity at large is required to add to the dignity of human life, to establish the 'sacredness of the soul,' we have yet to hear of it.

We dealt, perforce, in a fragmentary fashion with the question of the privacy of the human being in relation to supposed hordes of unseen 'Peeping Toms.' As we said, it is a deep and wide question—it relates to matters of perception and cognition on different planes of being. Mr. Bridges, however, may dismiss from his thoughts any idea of unseen onlookers of the character suggested by Mr. H. G. Wells' 'Invisible Man.' How far can we mortals—even the psychics amongst us—peer into the comings and goings of the people on the next plane of being? We have to look—if we can look at all—through the obstructions of the physical world. They have to pierce the obstructions of their world to behold us. And in the final analysis they could only see us, in the positive and immediate sense, by again assuming the garment of mortality and using the physical brain. Our world is as much a spectral, shadow world to them, as theirs is to us. Good or bad, spiritual beings can hold no commerce with us unless we desire it, and not always then. A mental state or attitude 'bangs, bars and bolts the door' against all intrusion. That is a fact in this world, as every sensitive person knows when he has to deal with minds of the positive, isolated, unapproachable type. The question, then, is a deep one. If our treatment of it disabuses our friendly critic's mind of the idea that 'spirits' are simply invisible persons who can enter our houses surreptitiously and spy upon us as unsuspected intruders in the flesh might do, we shall have said enough. On the question of poetical testimony for or against our doctrines we said all that was necessary, and need not recur to it. But we would like to add to our remarks on the 'sacredness of the normal.' We indicated in our last article on this subject that on the large question we agreed with Mr. Bridges that the normal soul is the great soul. And in saying that we did not lose sight of the fact that Mr. Bridges' plea for the 'normal' as against our facts rather suggested the idea that this was a world of Shakespeares, Miltons and Sidneys whose sublime ideals were in danger of subversion from our activities. We know, of course, that this was not what he meant.

But in his remarks on this point he seems rather to have confused the study of phenomena with the higher side of the matter—its philosophical and moral aspects. A person may be a good Spiritualist—thousands of persons are—without having once come into contact with the physical evidences of other-world realities. Such evidences are a necessity for some minds—Doubting Thomas has many followers. And even the mediums are not so black as they are painted! On page 79 of his latest work, 'Religion and Modern Psychology,' Mr. J. Arthur Hill admits that 'this matter of the undesirable character of mediums has probably been exaggerated.' And he adds:—

Many of them are admirable people whose characters would serve as useful models to ourselves.

Let us say, in conclusion, that Spiritualists and their

like are endeavouring, in circumstances of difficulty, to uphold a truth, or, at any rate, to testify to its existence, for truths need no upholding. In doing so they have no material ends to serve, for their rewards, in the worldly sense, are poor and scant. They do not agree on all points—how should they?—but they are united on fundamental issues—the reality of a future existence for mankind, and the possibility of communications between the two worlds. Their conceptions of the nature of the next life may range from the homely and commonplace to the ideal and mystical. But they have a truth, and science and philosophy are slowly but surely finding it out.

'THE PLAY OF GOD.'

The November issue of 'Prabuddha Bharata' is a 'Sister Nivedita' number. It gives 'a characteristic article,' which she wrote in June, last, on 'Play,' a subject very appropriate to this season of festivity when we all deem it permissible to unbend, to forget our dignity, to participate in home pleasures, and enjoy the merriment which makes Christmas and the New Year such a time of delight for the young, and gives them happy memories in the later years of their lives. Sister Nivedita (Miss Margaret Noble), whose passing was noticed in 'LIGHT' of November 18th (p. 549), says:—

How many of us have thought for a moment of the essentials of play, that we might understand how profound was the thought of the ancestors that made the Universe the play of God?

We may have watched the play of animals, or the play of babies. What is it in these that so attracts us, that makes so deep and delightful an appeal to the grown-up heart? Birds, kittens, young goats, and little children, all these cross our path in their aimless, purposeless activity, going hither and thither, they themselves care not where, pursuing after this and that, they themselves know not what, and every time we see them some reflection falls upon us of their own inexplicable delight. We are swept, as it were, into the vortex of their bliss. Their divine carelessness of care, their gurgling laughter, for the nonce is ours. Our tired hearts forget themselves. For an instant again, even the oldest of us—nay, the oldest the easiest—becomes a child, and *we play*. What, then, are the essentials of play? Said Schopenhauer—exercise of the will, in complete freedom from self-interest. But in truth, it must not only be a selfless, it must also be a joyous exercise. The delight of play is of its very essence. And this smile of a child at play, this overflow of bliss, without motive or purpose, our philosophers have thought of as the thing most comparable to that dream of God that we call the Universe!

Play, in this, its spiritual essence, play as it expresses the individual soul, is a conception, more than any other, characteristic of the Indian people. It is expressed in their poetry, and in their drama; it dominates their humour: it interprets for them the whole of animal life: and above all, it sweetens and enlightens the life of the home. Where an unloving ear might hear querulous complaint, or soreness of spirit, the Indian mother, the Indian child, hears the cry for love. Where another might see naughtiness or self-will, they recognise only fun.

This unwillingness to take life seriously is, in the eyes of more serious peoples, a bar to discipline. But would it not be worth while to inquire whether play has or has not a discipline of its own? The play of birds and of kittens is, as we know, simply a schooling. So is the restlessness of the baby, still in its mother's arms. How many are the lessons that we can remember learning, never to be taught again, in our own childhood's play! How many are the secrets, in this kind, that only mothers know!

But rising to a higher grade of play—the socialised game—such organised play as may be seen in European cricket or football, in tennis, or Badminton, or even in croquet, which are the elements of discipline that we may find here?

In the very highest forms of play, the energy of the individual is completely subordinated to a communal end. One plays, not for one's self, but for one's 'side.' Remotely, one plays for all, since any overwhelming exhibition of skill, on one side or the other, would end the game, and put a premature term to all delight. Emulation is indeed the great motive in a game of skill; but it is benevolent, not malevolent, emulation; and it is emulation of a standard of excellence, not of person against person. All sorts of qualities of co-operation, mutual aid, presence of mind, regard for the interests of others, are called for, and developed by good play. It is by no means dependent on selfish ambition.

If we watch a family or a group at play, we shall see that the playing-place is holy ground, governed by rigorous, though it may be only semi-conscious, conventions of its own. The first of its conventions is equality. Son may play against father, sovereign against subject, but as long as the game lasts, only skill determines the difference of their ranks. The distinctions of the world are upset, abolished for the nonce by a convention that over-rides them. Fearless and frank avowal of skill, play to the height of one's own ability, for the benefit of all who fight under the same banner—this is the law of the player in the socialised game.

The second law of the playground is gaiety and cheer. Here, there is to be no grim and sordid grasping at gain. Victory and defeat must actually be the same, for the sake of sheer good manners. The man who seizes his own advantage too greedily, or shows the slightest scowl at his own loss, is labelled 'cad' inevitably, in all the play of all the civilisations of the world. Play must never be taken seriously, as we say, though a man must put into it his utmost of high endeavour. The player must maintain an attitude of light-heartedness, of detachment. He must always be ready, in the name of courtesy to forgo a great advantage. And never must there be caught, on his face, or in his air, the slightest trace of personal exultation.

The ideals of the playground overflow into life itself. 'No gain but honour' becomes everywhere the watchword of the noblest lives. And the ideal itself crystallises to its own soul and essence: honour is conceived of, not as fame, or social comprehension and sympathy, but as innermost honour, something that is to mantle us secretly, in the hour of prayer—a light burning within the oratory, and lighting up the image—a secret between ourselves and God.

The ideal of the playground is the ideal of the knight, the *kshatriya*. Only he who has caught the spirit of play knows how to live. He alone has true courtesy. He alone has true courage. He alone has freedom from self-interest. For the love of honour and the delight of contest are not selfish motives. And when old age calls the perfect knight to surrender the weapon or the tool that has been the plaything of a lifetime full of joyousness, it is he, the Bhishma without fear and without reproach, who can lie back upon the bed of arrows, and smile like a tired child into the eyes of Death.

Evidently Sister Nivedita was a sane and sensible woman,—a level-headed Spiritualist—as well as a strenuous worker for humanity. It has been well said that it is our British fondness for play that is the secret of our success. Be that as it may, the old adage holds good:

Work while you work, and play while you play;
That is the way to be happy and gay.

IMMORTALITY IN THE LIGHT OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

The ever-growing intellect of man reveals to him that facts demonstrated by the slow experimental methods of science may be supernormally perceived. Although most scientific students have hitherto shrunk from entering the realm of the occult, the hidden forces of the soul have been so insistent that science has been compelled to turn its attention to the phenomena presented. In his new book on 'Psychic Phenomena, Science and Immortality,*' Mr. Henry Frank, in commenting on this attitude of science, says in reference to psychic phenomena:—

These phenomena, if they be actual, cannot be ignored on the lame plea that science has no concern with fables, myths, and superstitions. It is the one business of science to analyse, dissect and comprehend the nature, origin and purport of whatever forces may have compounded the ignorance of man, no less than the forces which have enhanced his intelligence.

And science has awakened to the fact that this is its duty. If in the past scientists have spoken arrogantly and dogmatically, it may be put down to the cocksureness of youth. With the passing of time even egotism mellows. Science has its dogmas no less than religion, and science frequently discovers that its dogmas have to be reconstructed. The study of the soul is as much the business of science as is the study of the body. However keen the intuition may be, it is never so convincing to the matter-of-fact man as are the deductions of science. He wants facts. As the writer sagely remarks:—

The mistake through all the centuries, encouraged by meta-

* 'Psychic Phenomena, Science and Immortality.' By HENRY FRANK. 10s. 6d. net. T. Werner Laurie, Clifford's Inn, Fleet-street, London.

physical, religious and occult notions, has been, that a genuine knowledge of the soul, whatever it might be, could be acquired alone through the intuition, or from some supernatural source. The insistence that the soul is purely spiritual, meaning by that a something wholly extraneous, and unrelated to material substance or organisation, has been the rock on which idealism has always foundered.

What Mr. Frank has failed to grasp is: that Spiritualism is something more than the phenomena which constitute its base. It is a philosophy of life built upon deductions drawn from these phenomena. Nay, more, its seers—and we use the word in its deepest meaning—have given out facts which science is now confirming by laboratory research and experimentation. To illustrate from the work before me. Mr. Frank in one place quotes a passage from M. de Manacine's 'Sleep: Its Physiology,' wherein that author states that 'from the chemical reactions involved (in the body) and the physiological and pathological facts, we have good reason to believe that there is actual light produced within the body.' Students of A. J. Davis's 'Harmonial Philosophy'—which, by the way, is a supernormal production—will remember his glowing description of the interior of the human organism as seen by him clairvoyantly when in the magnetic state. The description is given in Vol. III., 'Great Harmonia,' pp. 113-119. Incidentally, as the vision continues, another fact is mentioned—a fact that is made a great deal of by Mr. Frank—namely, radio-activity, for the vision extends from persons to Nature herself, and all the glowing emanations from matter are described by the seer. This was written in 1852, and its confirmation by science is comparatively recent. Moreover, A. J. Davis is not alone, as Hudson Tuttle, in speaking of the spirit's home in the 'Arcana of Spiritualism,' testifies to the same fact, which shows how closely the reality of radio-activity—which he speaks of as emanations—was apprehended.

That the spirit-body is evolved within the physical has been the teaching of Spiritualism from its inception. Even St. Paul mentions it, and tells us of a natural body and a spiritual body, but 'first that which is natural, and then the spiritual.' After all, science seems to be treading in the footsteps of the seers. This fact of the development of the psychic body with the physical is referred to by Mr. Frank as follows:—

We now learn that, even before the body is dissolved in death, there already evolves within it a subtle substance which seems to act as the especial instrumentality of this exalted consciousness. (That is consciousness wherein dwells pure reason.) Within the substance of cell we find the physical groundwork of the spiritual planes of consciousness, or the psychic activities. The outer substance of the cell is the instrument of objective consciousness, the realm that appertains to the muscular and peripheral activities. Deeper within the cell, so to speak, the plastic centre, we find the pure substance, the nucleal plasma that acts as the instrument of the subjective consciousness; the consciousness that relates to pure intellect and formative thought, while around the cortical cells and all-enswathing them, as a golden light, we discover the super-substantial, ultra-material, radio-active emanation, that constitutes the direct instrument of sentience, volition, and self-consciousness in its supreme state.

That is good, but when the writer states that survival of death 'seems to depend on the tenacity of the self-consciousness, the strength of the personal will, the potency of the character, or the determinism of integrated individuality,' he introduces a jarring note. Calvinism dressed up in scientific language is no less repugnant than Calvinism set out in theological phrases. Besides, if, as the author contends, 'On the potential permanence of the individual, or the primary ego, rests, then, our hope, the foundation of the science of life, and the prophecy of future existence,' it seems to us that immortality must be a law in Nature, and, if so, all men will survive the change of death, whether their character or will be weak or strong.

It is a pity the writer has not a larger and more extended experience of psychic phenomena. Laboratory séances, while interesting to the scientists, and valuable because of the elimination of the emotional element, are rarely so productive of good results as séances held in the home. Tests are good as far as they go; but tests introduce an atmosphere of suspicion, and this tends to neutralise power and render the results meagre. The radio-activity of matter and the release of energy by the corpuscular

body may, no doubt, be the mode of motion used in the production of some phases of psychic phenomena; but you cannot get to the inner meaning of these phenomena by discussing the mode of motion or the seat of the energy.

The crux of the problem in psychic phenomena is the controlling will. The subconscious mind is, no doubt, a very wonderful realm, but it is neither omnipresent nor omniscient, and the theory of the subconscious self is being ridden to death when it is dragged in to explain the source of the will and intelligence so frequently displayed in these phenomena. The Spiritualist, while interested in all the scientific investigation of psychic phenomena, is more concerned with discovering and establishing the identity of the intelligence controlling them. And it is a fact that information is sometimes given that can only be explained on the ground that it emanates from one who once lived on earth but is now an inhabitant of the meta-etherial realm. The three chapters on the 'Tentative Scientific Explanation of Psychic Phenomena' are the least satisfactory in the book. The author's deductions from science do not seem to give him a confident assurance of man's survival of bodily death. The concluding chapter is a gem, but, with all its beautiful rhetoric and keen logic, there is a note of uncertainty. We feel sure a close and patient personal study of psychic phenomena would give Mr. Frank what he seems to desire, definite knowledge on the question, 'If a man die, shall he live again?'

The author deserves well. He is sincere. His book is well written and is as interesting as a novel. It grips the attention at once, and holds it to the end. It is thought-provoking, and the new views of matter and force enunciated therein show how far science has travelled toward a spiritual interpretation of the universe.

W. H. EVANS.

'LIGHT': 'TRIAL' SUBSCRIPTION.

As an inducement to new and casual readers to become subscribers, we will supply 'LIGHT' for thirteen weeks, *post free*, for 2s., as a 'trial' subscription, feeling assured that at the termination of that period they will find that they 'cannot do without it,' and will then subscribe at the usual rates. May we at the same time suggest to those of our regular readers who have friends to whom they would like to introduce the paper, that they should avail themselves of this offer, and forward to us the names and addresses of such friends, upon receipt of which, together with the requisite postal order, we shall be pleased to send 'LIGHT' to them by post, as stated above?

KIDDERMINSTER, STOURBRIDGE, AND DUDLEY.—'T. J. W.,' whose home is about equi-distant between these towns, would be glad to make the acquaintance of Spiritualists at or near any of them, and to be introduced to a developing circle. Letters sent to the care of the Editor of 'LIGHT' will be forwarded.

USEFUL BOOKS.—Regularly with the advent of a new year appears the series of invaluable books of reference which bear the imprint of A. & C. Black, Soho-square, W. Foremost among these is that remarkable compendium of biographies of living notabilities, 'Who's Who?' (10s. *net*). Here may be found, alphabetically arranged, brief digests of the careers of some twenty-four thousand men and women who have in various walks of life made their mark on the history of the time. As a supplement to this volume, Messrs. Black issue the 'Who's Who Year-Book' (1s. *net*), which contains lists of Church dignitaries, judges, lawyers, M.P.'s, &c. Anyone who is not sure as to the name of the M.P. for a certain division or of the Dean of a particular place, can turn it up in this book and then look for biographical details in the larger one. Next, if not equal, in importance comes the 'Englishwoman's Year-Book' (2s. 6d. *net*), now in its thirty-first year of issue—a work which well merits the title of the 'Woman's Whitaker,' containing, as it does, invaluable information, ranging over every department of life, in regard to careers open to women. Lastly, we have a little book that makes its appeal more particularly to the wielders of pen and pencil. Those who are puzzled as to how to place their literary or artistic wares will especially welcome 'The Writers' and Artists' Year-Book' (1s. *net*), for within its covers they will find lists of English and American journals and magazines, with details as to the kind of matter and the class of illustrations required, and also, where possible, the rates of payment, with much other useful information besides.

TELEPATHY AND THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE CONTRASTED.

In the course of a long and interesting article in 'The Progressive Thinker,' Dr. A. J. McIvor Tyndall deprecates the too common practice of ascribing prevision, premonition, prophecy, everything of an occult nature, to telepathy, without apparently realising what the word means. He gives the following definition and illustration :—

Telepathy differs from thought-transference in this one essential: In telepathy, the person transmitting the message may or may not be conscious of so doing—that is, the soul sense may send out, to another, feelings, desires, or soul knowledge, without really desiring so to do, or without the mind having been made aware of what is taking place.

Some time ago I had an experience of this kind. A friend came to me and said that he was going out on a hunting trip and would be away for two days. I thought nothing of it at the time, except to think that I would like to accompany him. That night, as I was falling asleep, I was startled to see before me, as though in the room, my friend, with a terrified look on his face. He seemed to be looking into my eyes; and as he held my gaze, I became conscious that a snake had its fangs in his hand. I seemed to realise that it was a rattlesnake, although there was nothing to tell of the fact. I had not been asleep, and the impression came to me that I ought to go to the telephone, and let him know of the impression. I finally decided not to do so, however, and dismissed the vision from my mind.

The hunting party returned in due time, and my friend called me up over the telephone, to let me know of their return.

I confess that although I had tried to dismiss the vision from my mind, I was greatly relieved to hear his voice, and find that he was safe and well. But the peculiar thing about it all is that on the morning of their first day out my friend had encountered a rattler. He had a very narrow escape from its fangs. As he made a step forward in a path, he heard a peculiar sound, like a hiss, and looked down to see a rattlesnake coiled to spring. He jumped aside, and the snake struck the ground just beyond reach of his hand.

On questioning him I learned that as far as my connection with the affair was concerned, he had not thought of me at all. Besides that, the vision came to me on the evening before the party started out.

Now, my explanation is this :—

When my friend came to say good-bye to me, his subconscious mind—or soul—conveyed to my subconscious mind the exact picture of the incident, in order that I might warn him of his danger. Being objectively engaged, this knowledge could not effectually reach my conscious mind at the time, but as I became calm, and free from the material thought-atmosphere of the day, this soul-knowledge became externalised through the outer mind.

The fact that it appeared to me as a reality that his hand was bitten merely shows the effect of the mind in transmitting the message.

The mind of the man who was most concerned—my friend—could not transmit the message at all. My mind only succeeded in doing so imperfectly.

Now, if the message had been conveyed to my mind during its occurrence, instead of before, and because my friend's mind had been conscious of my existence, it would have been a case of thought-transference, instead of telepathy.

Telepathy may be defined as the transference of impressions, feelings, and knowledge from soul to soul, as distinct from the transference of a specified thought from one mind to another.

MERE intellectual enlightenment cannot recognise the spiritual. As the sun puts out a fire, so spirit puts out the eyes of mere intellect.—WM. HOWITT.

THERE is no use trying to deny the fact: nine-tenths of the church people, preachers and all, are Spiritualists, if they only understood that it means immortality, the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, the universality of spirit.—'The American Spiritualist.'

DR. PEEBLES is ever optimistic. Writing in 'The American Spiritualist' he says: 'The coming Spiritualist will be scientific, rigidly moral and deeply religious. But his religion will be humanitarian and not sectarian; it will be trustful, reverent—a life rather than a creed. He will live in the light and the liberty of manly thought, conscious integrity, courageous self-denials and holy endeavours. On his breastplate will be invisibly written, not only a knowledge of a future existence, but consecration to the good, enthusiasm for the right and a deep unselfish love for a world-wide humanity.'

SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

Writing in 'The Harbinger of Light' some time ago, Mr. W. H. Terry said :—

Exception is taken by many people to the necessity of a medium or intermediary to bring them in contact with the spiritual world. This may be excusable with the materialist, but is much less so with the orthodox Christian, who is supposed to be familiar with the Bible, and especially with the New Testament; for in the latter the Apostle Paul, in exhorting the Corinthians to covet 'spiritual gifts,' describes their diversity and indicates clearly that they are not usually combined in one person. His list is a comprehensive one, viz: The Word of Wisdom; The Word of Knowledge; Faith; The Gift of Healing; Working of Miracles; Prophecy; Discerning of Spirits; Divers Tongues; and Interpretation. These may be made to cover the whole ground, and have been expressed and paralleled in modern mediumship, though the phenomena that were deemed miraculous in the past are not recognised as such by present-day Spiritualists who believe that the (at-present) inscrutable wonders, which have been testified to by the highest scientific authority, are not supernatural, but manifestations of higher laws pertaining to the spirit world.

That Paul realised (as in our day) that all did not consciously possess these numerous gifts is apparent from his questions in the 29th verse: 'Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gift of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?' Hence we have mediums for the transmission of knowledge and wisdom in our inspired speakers and writers, such as the manifestation of the gift of healing in the Zouave Jacob, Dr. Newton, Geo. Milner Stephen, and numerous others of less note and the workers of (so-called) miracles, from D. D. Home through a very long list down to the present day. The discerning of spirits is an everyday occurrence with many good mediums, who describe and identify spirits known to the enquirer. And the gift of tongues has been manifested in many instances, one of the earliest being through Judge Edmonds' daughter Laura, who conversed, under spirit control, in Swedish and other languages of which she was quite ignorant in her normal state.

It is highly probable that Paul, in speaking of these gifts, looked upon them as specially conferred, as doubtless do many Christians who recognise them at the present time, but we take it that they are aptitudes or qualifications inherent in individuals, and are developed by application on their part, or stimulation by spirits; as they can be by the mesmeric or magnetic action of a spirit in the body. The term 'gift' is applied in the same sense as we apply it to a person having an aptitude for music, painting, or oratory, which is often manifested without tuition. The faculty of mediumship, though latent in many persons, may never become manifest for want of stimulation, as with a seed or germ in a cold and shady place unwarmed by the sun rays. Nevertheless, while agreeing with Paul, in making known that the gifts referred to are not so rare as they are generally supposed to be, we would not advise the cultivation and development of them for purely selfish motives, for in such cases their utility becomes inverted, and in many instances they become a curse instead of a blessing; but we can heartily endorse his admonition to 'covet earnestly the best gifts' for spiritual uses.

AN INTERESTING COINCIDENCE.

Coincidences are always interesting, so are dreams which come true. Mr. F. C. Constable kindly sends us the following striking coincidence which has been supplied to him by a lady, Miss G., who, having told him the story personally, has written it out at his request. Miss G. says :—

A great friend of mine some years ago—we will call him Mr. A.—gave me for a joke one Easter Monday a little toy fluffy chicken, and said: 'Here, you are to keep this, and if I am ill you will know because the chicken will be ill too.' I put the chicken on the mantelpiece, where it stood for a long time. One afternoon when I and my mother were in the room, the chicken, for no visible reason, fell off the mantelpiece. When I picked it up its foot was twisted quite round. In fun I said: 'Oh! mother, Mr. A. must have hurt his foot.' She laughed and said: 'Put down the date, and when next you see him ask what he did to his foot to-day.' Well, when I next saw him, some months afterwards, I asked him what he had done to his foot on the date in question. He was very surprised and said: 'I sprained my ankle playing cricket; but how do you know?' I told him that the chicken had fallen down with a turned-round foot; at which we both laughed—and that is all my story, which is quite true.

JESUS AND THE ESSENES.

The purpose and scope of Emil P. Berg's 'The Spiritual Biography of Jesus Christ' (two volumes, 3s. each, *net*, A. H. Stockwell, 29, Ludgate-hill, E.C.) are fully indicated in the introduction. Mr. Berg explains that his admiration for the small sect of Essenes—which both Philo and Josephus praised so highly for their piety, wisdom, and learning—led him gradually to associate this pious sect with Jesus. 'There appears,' he says, 'to be no one (humanly speaking) to whom belongs the credit for having prepared our Lord and moulded his youthful mind for his high vocation so much as these pious reformers and saintly devotees.' He concludes, therefore, and seeks to show, that the supposed first, or primitive, biography, from which the synoptic writers afterwards drew very freely, may reasonably be claimed to have been the work of one or more of the saintly Essene scholars in the monastery in Palestine, where he conceives Jesus had been brought up. The same train of thought leads him to locate the author of the fourth Gospel as having also been one of the Essene community. By the exercise of the ideal faculty, Mr. Berg recreates the past. The reader is invited to be present in imagination at the opening of some memorial services in the monastery twenty-five years after the death of Jesus, when the brethren resolve to collect material for reducing to writing the oral reminiscences of the Master's words and actions. Attending the various meetings, one hears the reports of the delegates from Galilee, Jerusalem and the Diaspora, and the comments and discussions thereon, and so is introduced not only to the old story in a new and very interesting form, but to the divergent views of the different schools of thought at the time regarding the person and mission of Jesus. Mr. Berg puts his own ideas into the mouths of Apollos and the venerable superior of the monastery. Both teach a pure monotheism. Jesus is spoken of by both simply as the 'true revealer of God.' Concerning the Deity we have the following striking thought:—

Only a supra-personal God can satisfy the soul's deepest feeling and longing to realise a perfect ideal. The likeness to this ideal is the goal of all mental, moral, and religious progress. . . . Individuals are, as it were, cells in a spiritual organism, the soul of which is God.

The book is a most attractive treatment of a great subject.

Similar ideas are enunciated in another new work by Mr. Berg, 'The Conversion of India' (cloth, 3s. *net*, Stockwell, Ludgate-hill, E.C.). In the view there expressed 'the ancient dogma of the Trinity has done more than anything else to hinder the progress of Christianity in so-called heathen lands, especially in those with an old civilisation like that of India':—

If you wish to preach the gospel in India, let it be understood that in doing so you preach, as Jesus did, God only as the One Creator, Upholder, Saviour, and also our divine Father in Heaven, who abhors idolatry and polytheism. After this message has penetrated the masses and turned them from Polytheism and Paganism, your converts may then get the other lessons which they need. They will come to admire, love and follow Jesus, and imitate his beautiful example of a life lived for God and for his brethren upon earth.

Mr. Berg presents his ideas 'without prejudice,' as the lawyers say, suggesting his conclusions rather than seeking to enforce them.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The Rev. Charles Hall Cook, of Denver, Colorado, U.S.A., writes: 'I have said dozens of times on the platform that the evidence is overwhelming that psychic, or supernatural, photographs are the work of invisible intelligences, or, in other words, are produced by spirit-personalities in the discarnate state, and that the effects produced by them on the photographic plate are not intended to be the likenesses or pictures of the spirit-personalities as they actually (perhaps normally) exist in the discarnate condition, but are likenesses or pictures of them as we knew them whilst living here in the body, and are thus manifested for the purpose of recognition or identification.'

Writing on December 10th, 'C. D.,' of Torquay, said: "LIGHT" is full of good things this week. Independently of the

exceedingly fine lecture by the Rev. Edgar Daplyn (which in itself is worth the whole paper), it teems with grand articles of truth. I think I am one of the oldest subscribers, having taken the paper ever since "The Spiritualist" dropped, and after I have finished with it I always send it on to my brother, who is a doctor at St. Louis, U.S.A., and has only of late been convinced of our grand Spiritualism. He says it is the finest paper going, and he enjoys it very much. I have been trying amongst people I meet to get them to take "LIGHT" regularly, and hope soon to succeed in getting you subscribers. I get "LIGHT" from Smith and Son's agent here.'

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.

Sir Robert Anderson and Spiritualism.

SIR,—I greatly appreciate your courtesy in sending me a copy of 'LIGHT' for the 23rd inst., and calling my attention to the article it contains, criticising the paper on Spiritualism which I contributed to the Press organ of the Young Men's Christian Association. But it would be an unreasonable demand upon your courtesy were I to ask for space in your columns to reply to the criticisms in question. This much, however, I trust you will allow me to say. An element of unintentional unfairness marks the entire article. For it ignores the fact that my paper is addressed to readers who share my belief in Holy Scripture; and the Scriptures supply the answer to all the questions raised. Should this statement be challenged I would take the liberty of referring to my book, 'The Silence of God,' which has attracted notice on both sides of the Atlantic. Though published some fifteen years ago it is still current, a new edition having been issued a few weeks ago.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT ANDERSON.

Linden Gardens, W.

December 26th, 1911.

St. Paul's Injunctions Respecting Women.

SIR,—In your interesting article in 'LIGHT' of December 9th on I. Cor., xiv., you think Paul in verses 34, 35, forbids women prophesying. I submit you are mistaken: he is not referring to prophesying, but to women chattering and disputing at religious meetings, debating subjects, &c. Hence his injunction to ask their husbands at home. This is borne out by the testimonies of missionaries, who say that the same trouble arises in congregations in the East at the present day.

I. Cor. xi., 5, shows that Paul contemplates women prophesying, and lays down a rule of conduct in connection with it.—Yours, &c.,

J. W. MACDONALD.

15, Camden-street,

North Shields.

[Our correspondent may be right, the two passages seem rather contradictory. The one says that women must 'keep silence in the churches,' as it is 'not permitted unto them to speak'; the other speaks of their praying and prophesying, but says nothing about whether in the church or out. The context in Chapter xi. shows Paul's estimate of the relative position of woman: Man is 'the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man.'—Ed. 'LIGHT']

Was it a Spirit Voice?

SIR,—The following incident which happened to a friend of mine, not a Spiritualist, may interest your readers. Nearly twelve months ago my friend lost a sister, to whom she was greatly attached. The sister died somewhat suddenly, leaving a boy about five years of age, who was taken charge of by my friend. Three nights ago my friend retired to rest about midnight, but somehow or other could not sleep. Suddenly she heard the voice of her little nephew singing a Christmas hymn. Not wishing her husband to be disturbed, she went to the boy's bedroom, and to her astonishment found him sound asleep. Returning to her own room, she again heard him singing (this time it was the 'Adeste Fideles') in conjunction with his mother, whose voice my friend instantly recognised (to her great astonishment and intense delight) as the voice of her very dear sister, who had passed over.—Yours, &c.,

G. E. T.