

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

In 'The Humanitarian Review' for December, we observe a trenchant reply by Dr. J. M. Peebles to Judge Ladd who, greatly daring, offered to 'pile up evidence' to support his contention that Christ 'was a pure myth.' That would be a rash assertion at any time, but it is peculiarly so when our militant old Pilgrim is within ear-shot. As might be expected, the venerable Doctor falls on his opponent and smites him hip and thigh. He invites the Judge to

crown his last years by annihilating—blotting out of existence—the Jesus whom Voltaire praised, whom Thomas Paine honoured, of whom Colonel Ingersoll said, 'I place Jesus with the great, the generous, the self-denying of this earth, and for the man called Christ I feel only admiration and respect.'

We are more concerned with the spiritual than with the literal side of the question—with Christ the Principle rather than with Jesus the person. Still, it is refreshing to see the mettlesome activity of our old friend, and we hope he will emerge victorious from the fray. He is certainly better equipped for such a contest than those theologians whose armoury is represented entirely by the contents of bookshelves.

We have to acknowledge the 'Official Bulletin of the International Bureau of Spiritualism' (Liège, Belgium), which contains the 'Scheme of Order' regarding the proposed Universal Spiritualist Congress to be held at Geneva next year. We learn from this that the International Office of the Congress will, through the Spiritualist Press, invite the Spiritualists of the whole world to be present at the Congress. Special invitations are to be sent to all the known national groups, whether affiliated to the International Office or not, and these groups will be requested to elect some delegates to represent them officially at the Congress. The duration of the Congress will be four days.

It may seem somewhat early in the day to discuss the arrangements for an event to take place (probably) in the spring of next year, but a World's Congress of Spiritualists is an event of sufficient importance to justify a long look ahead. We doubt not, indeed, that the prospect of such a Congress will be a subject of pleasant anticipation to many of our readers. The fact that it is to be held in Geneva tempts us to wonder what Calvin would have thought of it all. Would not his fancy have lightly turned to visions of faggots and thumb-screws? There will be something epoch-making about such a Congress, and we hope that the British section of our movement will be well represented there.

Under the title 'The Fire Ordeal,' an evening paper gives an account of some experiments carried on at Dacci by an Indian Yogi, Chakravarty by name. Two members of the Indian Civil Service—Messrs. Nelson and Sawday—certified that they were present when Chakravarty, barefooted and almost unclothed, walked over burning wood and through flames of fire without injury. He crossed and recrossed the fire four times, after which some of his disciples followed his example. Subsequently, at the invitation of the Yogi, four of the spectators stepped forward, each of whom received a touch from the wonder-worker, and thereafter stepped into the fire and passed through it three times unharmed.

As an addendum to this remarkable story, the same newspaper gave the following interesting account of similar phenomena in Spiritualism:—

The famous medium, D. D. Home, gave an exhibition of this character in 1880, when Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Dr. Eugene Crowell, and Mr. Samuel Carter Hall were present, and Dr. Wallace, in reporting the incident, wrote, 'These phenomena are facts of the reality of which there can be no doubt, and they are altogether inexplicable by the laws of physiology and heat.' Amongst modern mediums Mr. J. J. Morse stands almost, if not quite, alone as having carried burning coals in his open uncovered hand round a room without injury.

Spiritualism can supply many a parallel and commentary in connection with so-called supernatural wonders. The story of the fire ordeal, by the way, reminds us that a good many years ago a somewhat similar story was related of wonder-workers amongst the natives of one of the South Sea islands. In this case the performers walked, with bare feet, unscathed over stones made nearly red-hot, which led to the journalistic explanation that, like most savages, they had exceedingly thick soles to their feet, and did not stop long enough on the stones to get burnt! The outlook of the newspaper man has evidently widened considerably since then.

There is an article in 'The Modern Churchman' for December which appeals strongly to us as bearing on a difficulty that besets some of our society workers—we mean the old problem of finance. 'Money, Methods, and Men' is the title of the article, and the author of it takes high ground. Writing of the difficulty of the Church in providing facilities for the training of candidates for Holy Orders, he says:—

Deep thought, strong faith, great courage are required to solve it, and to state the solution. It is easier in a materialistic age to assume that it is very largely a financial question, and to advocate financial schemes for settling it. Finance is not the basis of all things, although good, and still oftener poor, business men think it is. The genius of finance knows that if he grips the minds and hearts and consciences of men, he may, if he will, have their gold, and he does that.

*Mutato nomine*, as the old writers say, and if for 'Church' and 'Clergy' we read 'Spiritual Movement' and 'Spiritual Workers,' there is a lesson in the article which our societies may well take to heart.

We talk of going *away*. What if the change called death will be a going in—a real first knowledge of Nature's soul and secret—an intimacy of the sea and wind and mountain and forest, &c., here only dimly, restlessly and sometimes painfully felt as a yearning distress? What if it be a knowing Nature and Human Nature for the first time—an entrance into the life, that here we only know in shadows, of persons we here only knew as signals, the characters we only knew as smiles or moans? Conceivably it may be all this and more, vastly and divinely more.

The world has, for ages, worried and fretted itself about 'freedom'; and sometimes not without reason: but much of its asking for freedom, and sighing because of the want of it, has been and is rank nonsense. Mighty and sane and true is that massive verse of Edwin Arnold's:—

Ye suffer from yourselves. None else compels,  
None other holds you that ye live and die,  
And whirl upon the wheel, and hug and kiss  
Its spokes of agony, its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness.

Let the emancipated mind ask for nothing: let it shake itself free and go on its way—if need be, alone!

#### DR. PEEBLES ON HOW TO PROLONG LIFE.

Given a naturally vigorous constitution, pure living, high thinking, sufficient exercise, and plenty of fresh air, there seems no reason why, with the mental and spiritual development which accompanies a well-spent life, a man, instead of losing his good looks as he grows old, should not add to them. We are led to this reflection by comparing the beautiful portrait of Dr. Peebles which forms the frontispiece to a little book just issued at a shilling by the Peebles Publishing Co. ('Ninety Years Young and Healthy: How and Why,' by J. M. Peebles, M.D.), with a photograph we possess of the Doctor taken some forty or more years ago. We do not want to make our dear old friend blush, but we much prefer the later likeness. It is certainly a strong testimonial to the value of the regimen he recommends. The Doctor does not see why people should die young. He says: 'Existence in pain or existence devoid of the full and free exercise of all our physical powers and mental faculties would scarcely be desirable; but to live a hundred years and more in this progressive period of the world's history, in the possession of good, sound health, is a consummation devoutly to be desired. A serene and sunny old age, like a well-laden orchard in autumn time, is as beautiful as spiritually blessed.'

In setting forth the 'How' of this desideratum, Dr. Peebles strongly advocates a vegetarian diet, the avoidance of stimulants of all kinds, sensible clothing—and sleep! Sleep, the right amount, and at the right time. He has no patience with the fashionable city life which turns night into day. 'God made the night for sleep, and the light of day for educational and industrial pursuits. To prowl about in the darkness of late unseemly hours, or to sit up and read novels, substituting artificial light for the sun, is to violate God's natural laws. I say to my friends and patients, "Get up; get up at five o'clock in the morning"; and I set them the example! If they want more sleep, I say, "Take it; take all you want! Take eight hours; take ten hours, if you choose; but take them in the early hours of night rather than by daylight. Don't insult Nature." If you get angry, take a bath and go to bed and sleep; if the world abuses you, take extra sleep; if you are dyspeptic and discontented, take a long, sound sleep, and, waking, you will find that all the world is smiling.'

'KNOWLEDGE, and the appreciation of the power of the mind over phantoms of its own creation, and confidence to expel them, are as necessary in menticulture as is the confidence of the gymnast in performing wonderful feats of mental-physical skill. The condition required for growth to emancipation is that of perfect faith and confidence, born of knowledge of the power God has given us to "cast out evil."—HORACE FLETCHER,

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

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

THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 8TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY THE

REV. J. TYSSUL DAVIS, B.A.

(Late Principal of Buddhist College, Colombo),

ON

#### 'OCCULTISM IN BUDDHISM.'

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

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

Meetings will also 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 at 7.30:—

Feb. 22.—Mr. Angus McArthur on 'Spiritualism: A Survey of its Position, Achievements, and Possibilities.'

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.—Sir 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.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, January 30th, Mr. A. Punter 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. Also at 8 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENING MEETINGS.—On Tuesday next, the 30th inst., at 8 p.m., Mr. A. Punter will give clairvoyant descriptions. Fee, 1s. each to Associates; Members free; Visitors, 2s.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On Thursday next, February 1st, at 5 p.m. prompt, Dr. Avetoon will give an address on 'Occultism and Black Magic in India: Personal Experiences.' To be followed by discussion.

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, 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.

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

SOME instructive addresses are being delivered at the Headquarters of the Order of the Golden Age, 153-155, Brompton-road, S.W., on subjects of great interest. Mr. Roy Horniman will speak on 'The Evolution of a Food Reformer' on Wednesday, February 7th, at 3.30 p.m. On February 21st, Dr. Josiah Oldfield will deal with 'Vital Healing,' and on March 6th Dr. Dudley D'Auvergne Wright will take up the subject of 'Sun-light in Relation to Health.'

## REMARKABLE PSYCHOMETRIC EXPERIENCES.

We find in 'The American Spiritualist' a reprint of an article contributed recently by Mr. J. T. Trowbridge, the well-known author, to 'The North American Review,' in which he narrates some of his early investigations into Spiritualism. In 1852 Mr. Trowbridge made the acquaintance of our old friends Mr. A. E. Newton and his wife, and had sittings with them. Mrs. Newton spoke under influence, and was also able to psychometrise objects placed between her palms or on her forehead. Mr. Trowbridge says:—

Once I placed on her forehead a letter from my sister, Mrs. Fidelia Phelps, of Lockport, N.Y. After holding it there for a moment she said, 'How many sisters have you?' I replied 'Four.' 'This letter,' she went on, 'was written by one of them.' I asked, 'Which one?' After some hesitation she replied, 'Not the one who wrote the letter you gave me the other day' (which was a letter from my oldest sister, living in Illinois), 'nor the youngest. Someone says "second, second." Is it your second sister?' 'Go on and describe her,' I said; and she continued: 'She has black hair—dark eyes—there is something peculiar about them—she has some trouble in her eyes.' After much more, which was perfectly accurate as to the personal appearance and character of my second sister, she said that a child, a boy about twelve years old, was present, who called the writer of the letter 'Mother.' That seemed the only positive error, while everything else that had been said was correct, some of it even surprisingly correct. I remarked, 'My sister never had such a child.' The medium seemed troubled for a moment, then replied, 'He insists that he is the son of the sister who wrote this letter, and that he has been several years in the spirit world. Your father and other relatives are here with him.' Before I slept that night I wrote to my sister, relating the circumstances of the interview even to the last apparent error; and in a few days received from her the explanation. She had had, about twelve years before, a son who died at birth—an event of which I, an absent young brother, had, naturally enough, not been informed.

An even more striking case is the following:—

In the latter part of June, 1853, I had planned a trip to the White Mountains in company with Dr. Harris, a dentist of Worcester. Having received from him what I supposed to be a final letter on the subject, I handed it to Mrs. Newton. She passed into her usual state of semi-trance and said presently, 'You will not take that trip with Dr. Harris.'

To my remark that the arrangements were made and could not well be changed, she answered, emphatically: 'You will not take the trip. They say so. They do not explain why. But'—she gave a shudder—'I see a strange thing!' It was some seconds before she added, 'A horrible thing! A man hanging by the neck.' I asked what that had to do with it. 'I don't know,' she replied, 'but it is somehow in the way of your taking the trip.' And she repeated very positively, 'You will not go to the mountains with Dr. Harris.'

As some of her visions seemed to have no special significance, I concluded that this was one of them, but I was impressed by it, as it threatened an interruption of my plans. Two or three days afterwards I saw in 'The Boston Post' this item: 'Dr. Post, a dentist of Willimantic, Conn., has committed suicide by hanging himself to a bedpost.' The coincidence of the words 'Boston Post,' 'Dr. Post' and 'bedpost' served to fix the item in my mind, although I was far from connecting it with Mrs. Newton's vision. The date of the suicide was not given, and I did not afterwards take the trouble to ascertain it, which seems now unaccountable negligence on my part, for upon that depends the question whether the vision was altogether prophetic or merely, in the ordinary sense, clairvoyant. My impression has always been that the vision was received before the incident took place; and I am aware how immensely the interest of the incident would be enhanced if this point could be established.

It was still some days after the item appeared in the 'Post' that I received a letter from Dr. Harris saying 'I find I shall not be able to take the White Mountains trip with you, for the reason that my assistant, whom I expected to leave in charge of the office during my absence, has been called to Willimantic to take the place of Dr. Post, who lately committed suicide.'

We did not make the trip. Whether the suicide antedated the vision or not, the prediction of a circumstance concerning me that came to pass in this roundabout way was sufficiently curious.

'THE creation of a new spiritual atmosphere is not easy. A thinker writing in an attic, a prophet brooding in a desert, changes the world more profoundly and more durably than a statesman ruffling it in the full limelight of the political arena.'

MISS JANE T. STODDART AND SPIRITUALISM:  
A REPLY.

BY L. V. H. WITLEY.

A short time since what was termed 'The Menace of Spiritualism' was descanted upon by Mr. H. J. Bridges, from the extreme rationalist point of view. In 'The Sunday at Home' for January appears an attack from an entirely different quarter, an unfair and misleading article on Spiritualism, under the general heading of 'Dangers of the Day,' from the pen of Miss Jane T. Stoddart, a prominent light in the editorial sanctum of the 'British Weekly'—itself a strong opponent of Spiritualism.

Papers which allow themselves (to put it mildly) to be betrayed into over-emphasis are usually hoist with their own petard. This is strikingly so in the case of 'The Sunday at Home,' for in an earlier part of the same issue which is disfigured by the violent attack just referred to, an article upon Harold Begbie finds a place, and what have we there? Why, the following:—

'The writers who have influenced me most are F. W. H. Myers, Professor William James, and Maurice Maeterlinck.' . . . Conversations with Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, and other men to whom science by no means postulates materialism, but distinctly the opposite, had a profound effect upon him.

So, then, in one and the same issue, the editor of 'The Sunday at Home' inserts an article in which Spiritualist investigators of known probity and patience are spoken of in terms of esteem, and, a few pages later, suffers the faith held by these same men to be held up to derision, and worse; and, further, allows doubt to be cast on the results achieved by the very same investigators who had previously been hailed as men whose labours have helped greatly in the struggle against the materialistic view of the universe!

Coming to Miss Stoddart's contribution, it cannot be better described, perhaps, than as a choice example of potted, smart religious journalism, for in three short columns or so of large type the writer essays to wipe Spiritualism off the face of God's fair earth—or, at any rate, denies that it has any rightful place there.

Now, 'Spiritualism' is one of many examples of giving a dog a bad name and hanging him. Nowhere, so far as can be seen, does Miss Stoddart commit herself to a definition of the horrible bogey which she conjures up, and about which she delivers her tirade. The writer of the article on Harold Begbie has at least a glimmering of the fundamental fact that the opposite of Materialism is Spiritualism, but Miss Stoddart's conception of Spiritualism contains just enough, perhaps, of the half-truth which suggests the lie. The attitude she takes up is as reasonable as would be that of one who said Christianity is the doctrine of everlasting punishment, or of one who should say modern surgery is vivisection!

Miss Stoddart must have parted with her usual insight if she took it for granted that her readers would not notice a most patent omission from her article—that is, any suggestion that Spiritualism comprises in its teaching a host of uplifting and ethical tenets. Further, no numerous, widely-diffused body of people, such as the Spiritualists are, could be held together by anything less than a real religious kinship. Further still, and most important of all, perhaps, the influence of Spiritualism, like the influence of Quakerism, is not by any means determined by the number of people who definitely attach themselves to the particular body, but by its permeation of the general life and thought of humanity. Needless to say, looked at from points of view such as these, Miss Stoddart's shot from her rusty pistol misses its aim altogether—it is far too low, for the game is on the wing. Her standpoint is acceptable only on the assumption that all Spiritualists are fools or rogues, or both, and this is rather a 'tall order' even to readers of 'The Sunday at Home.' Indeed, by the intemperance of her condemnation Miss Stoddart must have so aroused the ever-present sense of curiosity and the latent desire for common fairness in at least some of her readers, that they must surely have made up their minds to see what the Spiritualists have to say for themselves.

So far as one can gather, Miss Stoddart's great bugbear is the

idea that there is any inter-communication, or inter-communion, between one side of the veil and the other; and, strangely enough, coupled with this, occur a number of references to Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' which is quoted from as if, for all the world, it had but to be cited to be regarded as plain, straightforward prose testimony to an actual experience.

Now, no one knows better than Miss Stoddart that, amongst the peoples of the East, as well as amongst tribes in other parts, the belief in the near presence, and helpful or harmful power, of departed spirits takes a very prominent position in national or tribal religion. Further, of Orthodox Christianity itself, the far larger proportion, comprising the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches, definitely teach and practise communion with the dead. And we might go on to narrow down the field until there would scarcely be left a place for the sole of Miss Stoddart's foot, for we could cover pages of this paper with quotations from recently issued books and newspapers (including 'The British Weekly') bearing testimony to the possibility and probability of ministry from those on the other side of the veil to those on this side. The passionate yearning of those living here for some point of contact with those living yonder (if the latter term is not inappropriate) is surely in itself the best possible testimony to the existence of this inter-communion.

But what does Miss Stoddart say: 'Spiritualism is a danger,' forsooth, 'just because it appeals to the noblest instincts.' Nay, she actually has the temerity to compare Spiritualism with the mediæval traffic in indulgences; and, subsequently, with fine disregard of the fitness of things, she calls to her aid a priest of the very Church under whose auspices this monstrous traffic was carried on, no less a person than Father Benson, whose novel, 'The Necromancers,' is referred to, to freeze the blood of her readers! Now, what does 'J. B.,' of 'The Christian World,' a thoroughly up-to-date exponent of that same orthodoxy which Miss Stoddart champions, say of this very Church, a representative of which the latter does not disdain to call in?—

Ultramontane Catholicism, a religion which, in its pulpits, its text-books, its devotional literature, teaches a doctrine of hell and devilry so hideous that the imagination reels before it, which denounces intellectual freedom as a deadly sin . . . which encourages veneration of the saints by stories of impossible miracles.\*

Of course, sceptical Frank Podmore's name is brought in, but one looks in vain for even the mention of such men as Sir Wm. Crookes, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Sir W. F. Barrett, Professor Lombroso, to say nothing of any indication of their favourable views. Even Sir Oliver Lodge's name is simply introduced as one who 'would be the first to warn away inexperienced, excitable young people from this mysterious field of research.'

Passing over a series of similarly one-sided statements, we come to this extraordinary assertion:—

After half a century of effort, Spiritualism has not lifted even a corner of the veil that hides the unseen world. No message has been received from any disembodied spirit. It is not even certain that a clear case has been made out for telepathy—or thought-transfer—between the living.

I pick up Sir W. F. Barrett's monograph on 'Psychical Research,' just issued, and come across these sentences:—

When appraising the most recent testimony in favour of life after death, we should remember that the evidence is being constantly strengthened, not by accumulation merely, but by increased cogency and purposefulness. If we review the past ten years we cannot fail to be struck by the steadily growing clearness of attempts on the part of those who have passed over to improve and multiply methods of communication.

Now, are we to accept the well-considered affirmation of one who has devoted many years to the investigation of the subject, or the *ipse dixit* of a lady who has to call in to her aid the 'Pilgrim's Progress' and 'The Necromancers'?

Further, if Miss Stoddart will obtain a copy of 'The Ministry of the Unseen,' she will find a whole series of 'messages from a disembodied spirit'—messages which have been described as

\*I ask pardon of any individual Roman Catholic reader whose feelings may be hurt by 'J. B.'s' words. I cast no doubt whatever on anyone's sincerity or attachment to his ancestral or adopted faith. What 'J. B.' is describing is his own conception of the official policy of the Roman Catholic hierarchy.

'beautiful' and 'inspiring'; and readers of this paper do not need to be assured that such messages are both numerous and uplifting.

As to telepathy, for a journalist of the standing of Miss Stoddart, acquainted as she must be (or ought to be) with up-to-date literature on the subject, it seems the height of absurdity to cast discredit upon the possibility, even, of so common a phenomenon, so widely known and so fully attested.

But we have not yet come to the end of our consideration of the article with which we are dealing. For the sting is in the tail, and the writer is not deterred from using this sting by the fact that in doing so she gives away her previous case. After affirming most positively that Spiritualism is a 'delusion' and that it deceives sorrow-stricken hearts as it has no foundation in fact, she delivers this parting shot:—

Mr. A. E. Waite is inclined to believe that the séances of Spiritualists may occasionally have placed their frequenters in touch with the lowest type of disembodied spirits.

Now, what does this involve? In addition to throwing up the sponge, as we have already seen it means, it involves, if it indicates anything at all, that the Maker of this world has left the sons of men subject to the influence of depraved spirits, while He has withheld from us the benefits of the ministry and the fellowship of the spirits of the good and the pure. Was ever a more patent absurdity advanced—and that by one who undoubtedly herself believes in a God whose essence is Love? Might He not just as well have given us thorns for grapes and thistles for figs? But that is not His way! Surely no sane person can possibly believe that the door of the Unseen opens *only* to permit of the entrance into this weary, sorrow-stricken world of those departed spirits whose innocent victims may already be suffering the results of the misdoings of the departed!

The very last sentence of Miss Stoddart's article is this:—

We shall do well to keep the doors of the soul shut till we can open them to God.

These words are a further quotation from Mr. A. E. Waite, who is described as 'a Christian occultist,' whatever that may mean. It cannot mean 'mystic,' for no 'mystic' would ever dream of suggesting that the soul is shut away from God unless and until it separates from the body, and that is what the sentence certainly infers or implies. The basic experience of all life is that the spirit can no more shut its doors against God than the sun can go back in its course. Talk about placing God outside His own universe! I always thought it was the materialist who was accused of this, but here we have 'a Christian occultist' actually doing it—or trying to!

I have already indicated that Miss Stoddart takes simply one aspect of Spiritualism—and that, perhaps, the most open to criticism. One would admit the fairness of this if at the same time the other side of the shield had been exhibited with equal candour. But not only is this not done, an uninformed reader would never dream that there *was* any other side. For example, Spiritualism is accused of being a danger and a delusion, and a disappointment to sorrow-stricken hearts, but no reference is made to the hosts of persons who, through Spiritualism, have been saved from despair and worse, and led to believe, not simply in the continued existence of their loved ones, but in their constant nearness and ministry. I take up a letter recently received from a friend, and what is her testimony?—

My new beliefs have filled my soul with delight, and I am most truly happy and most restfully conscious of the fact that the Father holds me and mine, whether in the body or out of the body, in His most tender keeping.

Again, there is no reference to the assistance Spiritualism has rendered in advocating and upholding the anti-materialistic view of the universe, nor any indication that the ethics of Spiritualism are identical with those of the New Testament. For Miss Stoddart to set Spiritualism over against Christianity, therefore, is a misleading contrast; it is rather a question of interpretation of documents and of the facts of life. Personally, I deprecate Spiritualist attacks upon Christianity just as much as I deprecate orthodox attacks upon Spiritualism; and articles such as that I have been replying to are especially to be deplored, because they provoke reprisals and the *tu quoque*, which is so

easy, but which carries us no further. Surely, the best way to annihilate darkness is to spread the light, and the most sensible way of attempting to dispel error is to set forth the truth. There are many avowed, and many unavowed, Spiritualists who maintain their Christian associations, and there are many Christians who have an open or undisclosed sympathy with Spiritualism.

I close, like Miss Stoddart, with a quotation from 'a Christian occultist' (or rather 'mystic'), viz., 'J. B.' of 'The Christian World':—

The true doctrine of the Incarnation is the incarnation of God in humanity. It is the descent of the Divine into the human that the human may ascend into the Divine. . . There is a pressure beneath which is moving man upward—which is steadily re-making him. . . In religion, in man, in the unseen, the bottom fact is God.

### MORE INEXPLICABLE SOUNDS.

I have read with much interest the article on 'Strange Sounds in a House,' in 'LIGHT' for January 13th (page 15).

My sister and I were born in Cornwall. Our house, like that of the writer of your article, was pleasant and spacious. It stood in delightful grounds on the outskirts of a small country town, and was practically in the country.

My father was a great invalid (he suffered from paralysis) and my mother devoted herself almost exclusively to him. From my earliest childhood I remember strange things happening in that house. There would be weird and unaccountable noises both by day and night. In the hall was a large hanging lamp. To light it, the lower part was pulled down on chains, which made a considerable noise. Often in the dead of night we have heard that lamp being pulled up and down, not once, but many times. Then the big bunch of keys that locked all the downstairs doors was picked up off the marble slab, jangled, and doors unlocked with a clatter. But in the morning they were always found shut and locked. Sometimes sounds as of heavy furniture being dragged about awoke us, and occasionally a crash like a falling picture. There never was any picture found down in the morning. Doors would bang and windows and shutters rattle on calm nights, and big water pumps in the scullery would be worked all night.

We had with us old and devoted servants, and it was an 'unwritten law' that nothing was ever said to the 'young ladies' of their (the servants') weird experiences, for fear of frightening us. One old servant took a most philosophical view of it. 'Tain't nothing to do with *we*,' Mary would say. Years after, when we had left, she told me that often she and her fellow-servant would be awakened at night by their door being opened and their bed violently shaken. Once, lying awake, half-dead with fright, they heard a heavy weight apparently thrown over the back stairs, followed by a loud shriek.

We all used to wake up suddenly, paralysed and cold with terror. Nobody slept without a light. Worse still, unseen hands were often laid on us. On one occasion Mary was pulled over backwards. She fainted from fright.

And it was not only the house that was thus disturbed. The garden was haunted by footsteps—heard, too, in broad daylight. Once my sister, lying in a hammock, heard me (as she thought) come up the path and down the bank to her, rustling the dry leaves. She turned round; no one was there! She fled for the house as fast as her legs would take her. I, too, have heard people come downstairs in the daytime, but on going to the hall found nobody there.

Then, again, brisk footsteps would come rapidly down the back drive, up the back steps, and someone would hammer on the door. Many a night have the servants thrown open their bedroom window (over the back door) and looked out possibly in bright moonlight. The same story—nobody.

On several occasions we have heard loud knockings on doors and walls. Occasionally somebody, generally an unbelieving visitor, would go downstairs to investigate, armed with a poker or bootjack, but never saw anyone or anything.

And now for the strangest fact of all. The house was built by my father, from his own design, when he was quite a young

man. He also laid out the grounds, for when he built the house it was surrounded by fields. So the place was quite modern, and never had any tragic happening to account for the 'ghost.' At my father's death the property was sold. But we have heard since that the noises trouble the new owner just as much as they did us, and, not having such philosophical servants, he has the greatest trouble to induce any to stay.

MABEL PENROSE.

36, Hauteville, Guernsey.

### A QUESTION OF EVIDENCE.

BY ANDREW LANG.

I have never had anything to do with the editing of any publication of the S.P.R., and I have only once been present at a meeting of its Council. Again, I have no prejudice against the possible occurrence of 'physical phenomena.' I rather like a poltergeist. But I can scarcely agree with Mr. Dennis Taylor that the evidence for poltergeistish phenomena (occurring in the presence of a supposed medium, professional or amateur) is exactly on the same level as accounts of telepathy or apparitions. Those are subjective, the 'physical phenomena' are objective (unless they are collective hallucinations). For subjective phenomena we can only have the evidence of the subjects, corroborated by testimony from those to whom the subjects may have declared them. We must be guided by the characters of these witnesses, and must reject all that is, for any reason, suspicious, while remembering—in cases filed for reference—the fallibility of even honest testimony, and the probable existence of a percentage of mere liars among the witnesses. But, in cases of telepathy and apparitions, though some witnesses may be liars, while all are fallible, there is only the very slightest chance of deliberate imposture from without. Thus, I am convinced that Jones entered my study, let us say, and I mention it to a friend, but later I find that Jones was in Kam-schatka. I was certainly hallucinated. I *may* have taken Smith for Jones; but nobody palmed off on to me a sham Jones, 'and the same with intent to deceive.' In the case of physical phenomena, a third person, the medium (unless I am my own medium) is concerned. Now, almost all, if not all, professional and many amateur mediums have been caught in the act of cheating, and most, if not all, insist on operating in a bad light, or in the dark.

Here we have an element productive of error which analysis can rarely indeed detect in cases of telepathy and apparitions. Putting the evidence for these as low as you like, there is ground for discriminating between them and physical phenomena occurring (usually in a very bad light) in the presence of professional or amateur mediums. In cases of telepathy and apparitions the percipient or percipients may be liars, drunkards, very short-sighted, hysterical, or self-deceived. But imposture exercised on them by a third person (whether paid or not) is, by the nature of the case, extremely rare. Imposture, in the case of physical phenomena, by a third person, the medium, is extremely common.

I know nothing about the Enniscorthy case. No medium may have been present. If so, my remarks apply only so far as this: any spectator *may* have produced the physical phenomena if they were of the usual kind. Fraud is the most probable explanation of physical phenomena, because they are so often caused by fraud. But how can fraud make me see Jones, who is not there, when nobody but myself is there, when I am alone in a daylight room? A sham spook can easily be made with a sheet and a turnip lantern, in the dark, but that is another affair.

Can Mr. Dennis Taylor really fail to see the importance, as a source of error, of the medium, who usually, even if he or she have occasionally some supernormal faculty, has more than one sort of strong motive for cheating?

SEVERAL communications intended for this issue of 'LIGHT,' including the continuation of 'Remarkable Experiments in Radiography' and replies to Sir Robert Anderson, are unavoidably held over till next week.



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### MESSAGES FROM THE UNSEEN.

'I write down whatever comes to me,' remarked a youthful versifier once to an old literary critic. 'Then you must write a considerable amount of nonsense,' was the gruff reply. 'But,' pleaded the young poet, 'surely it is the way of Nature to produce spontaneously and without effort.' 'In a perfect world, certainly,' replied the critic, 'but this is a very imperfect world. Only the supreme genius—and that is not one man in a million—can produce good literature spontaneously and without effort. What the rest of us produce by simply putting down whatever comes into our minds is for the most part rubbish. We have to prune and select, revise and re-write.'

That little conversational episode recurred to us recently when we had to express an opinion on the subject of certain spirit messages. The recipient wished them to be presented to the world, and, moreover, they were on no account to be altered or revised: he had recorded them, he said, exactly as they came to him. And we had, much against our personal inclination, to be apparently unkind. It was not that we cast any aspersion on the genuineness of the messages. But we found it needful to remind the receiver of the messages that if the giver of the communications was a spirit, so also was the recipient, and equally spiritual beings were all those who might in this world read or hear the messages. The faculty of receiving at first-hand a spirit message was an undoubtedly valuable one, but other qualities of the soul had to be taken into account—perception, discrimination, the critical faculty. Again, as public exponents of Spiritualism, we had another important matter to consider, viz., the strong bias on the part of the general public as regards communications purporting to come from the unseen world. The late Mr. Gladstone, in earth life, made more than one verbal slip in his writings and speeches, but when, some few years ago, a daily paper published a communication alleged to have been given by him as a spirit, the critics of the day eagerly pounced on a split infinitive and a somewhat inelegant phrase (often used by the medium himself in his normal speech) as abundant evidence that Mr. Gladstone could by no possibility have dictated the message. And in the opinion of some good Spiritualists the experiment did more harm than good. However that may be, the incident certainly revealed the highly critical attitude of the public towards messages from the unseen world.

The question, then, is rather a thorny one. Briefly stated, our own opinion on the subject is that the two criteria to be observed in the publication of spirit messages

are (1) evidential value; (2) religious, philosophical or literary value.

The literature of our subject is rich in examples of both classes of spirit messages. It also, we fear, contains a good deal that can be placed in neither category; and we are not desirous to increase the supply. Not that we are at all anxious to conciliate ignorant and prejudiced criticism in the outside world. But there are standards of value that are common to us both. Spiritualists and non-Spiritualists are alike in agreement regarding the greatness of the works of Channing, Emerson and Browning, for instance. And whether their writings emanated from this world or the next, they would be none the more (and none the less) valuable. That is to deal with the question from the standpoint of our second classification of religious, philosophical or literary values.

There are, however, spirit messages, of another class, which come directly under neither of the categories we have mentioned; we mean the homely messages of affection or advice from intimate friends on the other side—family messages. Valuable and consoling as they may be to those concerned, they are, as a rule, of little interest or profit to the outside world. But it is sometimes a little difficult to make this apparent to those immediately concerned. These persons are, quite excusably, under the glamour of spiritual intercourse. They want others to share their joy in the great discovery, little suspecting what a chilling reception their simple goodness of heart would receive from critical and calculating minds. Even sympathetic readers convinced of the truth of spirit communion might be pardoned for a lack of enthusiasm concerning the family messages of complete strangers; unless, indeed, such messages contain something of striking interest and value. No, on general principles we would no more publish these private and personal communications than we would publish our private correspondence. There is a fitness of things to be observed in these as in other matters. We find our old suit of clothes and our carpet slippers exceedingly comfortable by the fire-side, but we would not appear in them at a ball or a reception. Even our best friends would not excuse a lapse of that kind. It would be useless to argue that sartorial distinctions are artificial and meretricious; that a man is no more nor less a man in one suit of clothes than in another. The point is that there are certain standards erected by the community to which it is a matter of courtesy and good taste to conform, even at the sacrifice of a little comfort and convenience.

Similarly, in this matter of the publication of spirit communications, there are certain canons to be observed. And one of these is that we must give of our best. If our best is not up to the required standard, then we must be content to wait until a higher order of message is attained, one that shall be of interest and profit to others besides the recipient and his personal friends.

And always, as we have indicated, we have to contend with the unreasoning bias of the critics of the outer world. An essay or a verse that would be unhesitatingly approved if it came through normal channels would be immediately and liberally discounted if it came touched with the suspicion of emanating from supernormal sources. How otherwise are we to account for the neglect of volumes of illuminating philosophy—those of Andrew Jackson Davis and Maria King, for example—volumes unknown and unappreciated except by thoughtful Spiritualists and a few discerning minds outside our ranks who have discovered these treasures and who lament the cold welcome that the world accords them?

For the present, then, we must be patient but dis-

criminating, learning our own lessons and at the same time educating the public mind. No small part of that education will consist in inculcating the fact that the spirit world is a human world; that, as the great poet who gave us 'Hamlet' and 'Othello' was at times keenly interested in the price of malt, a message from him about malt may be quite as evidential and characteristic as a commentary on his famous sonnets. For the rest, let us accept and judge spirit messages of all kinds on their merits. A diamond is always a diamond whether it is disembedded from a fallen meteoric stone or dug up in prosaic fashion at Kimberley or Golconda.

### INTERESTING INCIDENTS DURING FORTY YEARS OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY E. W. WALLIS.

An Address delivered on Thursday, January 11th, to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 34.)

Inquirers and Psychical Researchers generally would do well to bear in mind that anxiety to secure certain definite results almost invariably defeats its own ends. It is *not* the things we set our hearts upon that come to us—but here, as elsewhere, 'it is the unexpected that happens.' A marked instance of this occurred at Upper Bedford-place. One evening an American lady was introduced to the circle. During the sitting 'Lighthouse' described to her a young man, a sailor, who said he was related to her, and gave the name of 'Harry.' 'Yes, yes,' she exclaimed, 'that is my brother. Can he'—— 'Lighthouse' stopped her, as was his custom, and said, 'Let me tell you all I can. Don't ask questions; you'll break the conditions and put me off if you do.' He continued: 'This young man holds out to you a roll of papers and says, "Don't fret or worry, you will get the papers all right; they are on their way."' At a subsequent sitting the lady thanked me with tears in her eyes. Said she: 'I was anxious about some important papers relating to property, and had been to all the mediums in London. I got many good things, but not the *one* thing that I wanted most. I came to your circle to get away from my thoughts; I was in despair and had abandoned all hope, but when my brother was described I recognised him at once. He always spoke the truth, so I knew it would be all right and did not worry any more. A few days afterwards the papers came, as he said they would.'

One Sunday morning, at Glasgow, a description was given to a lady, an entire stranger, who was so overcome by her emotions that she suddenly rose from her seat and left the room, weeping. A member of the society said: 'I do not object, of course, to the strangers getting descriptions, but I *should* like to know why it is that the Spiritualists are overlooked. I have been a member of the society for many years, but have scarcely ever had a description given to me.' 'Lighthouse' replied that he had not intentionally overlooked anyone, but he was always anxious to help inquirers; at the same time he was quite willing to describe the spirit friends of the members, if those friends desired him to do so. A few Sundays later, addressing the gentleman who had spoken, he described a short, thick-set man, with broad shoulders and a large head, covered with stiff, wiry hair that stood out all round. The man had heavy, shaggy eyebrows, a thick beard, and whiskers which grew right up on to the cheekbones, in fact the hair made a complete circle round his face. He used to wear a dirty-looking apron, and engaged in some occupation which caused him to throw out his arms frequently. After giving this description 'Lighthouse' added: 'He died suddenly—I get the feeling that he went out into the street and fell down dead.' 'Yes,' said the recipient, 'I think I know who it is, but can you'—— 'Stop,' said the control, 'he is showing me the initials "J.M.P." ' 'That's right,' was the reply. 'I

know him, he was the village shoemaker; he was so hairy that he was called "the Badger"; he *did* fall dead in the street, and was taken home on a shutter, and his name was John McPherson.'

At our home circle at Manchester, a lady who was most anxious about an absent brother, from whom she had not heard for some considerable time, brought an old letter written by him, and asked 'Lighthouse' if he would use it psychometrically, and tell her, if he could, whether the writer was alive, as she greatly feared that he was dead. He told her that the writer was a relative, that he was then on the sea, on his way home. He had been unable to write, but she would hear from him within a fortnight. The lady could hardly credit this, and all the sitters were much interested to know if it would prove correct. That day fortnight, when the door was opened to admit her, the lady could not wait until she entered, but excitedly exclaimed, 'I've got him, I've got him, Mrs. Wallis!' She explained that on the day before she had received a telegram from her brother, had gone to Hull to meet him, and then hurried him off to Manchester to bring him to the séance, so that we might all see that what 'Lighthouse' had told her had been exactly fulfilled. (Applause.)

It is sometimes said that mediums should tell of failures as well as successes. Well, here are some instances connected with psychometric delineations which may be interesting. Once, at Millom, in Cumberland, a person in the audience was invited to submit himself for a psychometrical reading, but, after several attempts to perceive his conditions, 'Lighthouse' said: 'I do not understand why, but I cannot get into your sphere—you are a closed book to me.' The sitter rose with a triumphant smile on his face and exclaimed, 'I knew you couldn't do it. I sent my spirit into heaven and if you were a good spirit you would have seen it there!' It transpired that he was an active worker in a small sect in the town and had made up his mind beforehand that it was all devil's work. In America a similar thing happened, but with a lady, who, on returning to her friend in the circle, exclaimed, 'That is the third medium I have "knocked out"!' It is clear that these persons did not understand the nature of the experiment in which they were engaged: they did not realise that by their preconceptions they closed up the psychic avenues of their natures, and that, in reality the failure to give them delineations was a proof of the genuine character of the psychic impression that had been received.

Few of us, I think, realise the subtle character of the psychic conditions which environ us, or the extent to which we exert influence upon others or are affected by them. At Newcastle, some years ago, in a public meeting, the lady organist gave up her chair on the platform to a gentleman who came forward to receive a delineation from 'Lighthouse,' who always desired to touch the hand of the sitter so as to get into immediate contact with the psychic aura. At the close the gentleman said, 'I recognise almost all that you have said, but I have not had and do not now experience the pain in my back to which you refer. All the rest is quite true.' The lady at once spoke up and said: 'But I have suffered as you describe; in fact, I hardly knew how to sit still on that chair, the pain was so great.' In 1882, at Lake Pleasant Camp, in Massachusetts, America, a number of persons gathered for psychometric 'readings.' They sat in rows. A gentleman seated in the front was requested by a lady sitting behind him to hand up her fan. Awaiting an opportunity, he held it for a time and then passed it to me. I was under 'Lighthouse's' control, and in that state, as you know, my eyes are always fast shut—in fact, when, on several occasions, inquirers have lifted the lids they have not seen the pupils at all, the eyes being turned back into the head. I learned afterwards that the first part of the reading was to the effect that the owner of the fan at one time had passed through some very trying experiences: had been all alone in the world, almost starved to death, and had struggled hard against adverse circumstances. The latter part of the description was much more pleasant, and when it was all over, the lady said, 'The last part of what you said was quite correct, but the first part [and this was said quite indignantly] does not apply to me at all; it is altogether wrong.' The gentleman quietly remarked: 'The first part was for me; it fitted me exactly. No doubt it applies to me, as I handled your fan. Some years ago, out West, I nearly

lost my life; for days I was entirely alone and without food, except what I could find as I wandered along, not knowing where I was or where to go for safety.'

These experiences, as you will see, are very instructive, for not only do they indicate the power of the psychic to follow the life-line and read the record of those with whom he can establish psychic 'community of sensation'; not only do they demonstrate that we impart something of our psychic nature to almost everything we touch, but they also prove that when we become *positive*, self-centred, and by prejudice, preconception, or a definite effort of the mind concentrate our attention for a given purpose, we shut ourselves in, and, if we wish to do so, cut ourselves off from others. We are *not* 'open books' that can be read by any or every spirit that 'hovers round' us or chances to pass us by, any more than the errands or intentions of the persons we pass in the street or who sit next to us at meetings are open to be read and known by us. Sensible spirit people, I am sure, are not intrusive Paul Pry's; they will not invade our privacy—at least, those whose company and influence we are likely to desire will not do so—for *they* will recognise all the courtesies of social intercourse. As for the others, we can protect ourselves and, if they will not learn to behave themselves properly, we can 'send them to Coventry.' At the same time it is difficult to say what the spirit people *cannot* do when conditions are favourable and the sitters are genial. One Sunday afternoon a Spiritualist at Walsall gathered a number of friends together for a talk with my controls, but when the time came no one was prepared to put questions. 'Standard-bearer' began an address, and after he had spoken for some forty minutes he remarked that, with the aid of other spirit friends, he had tried to ascertain and deal with such points as the sitters had had in their minds. At the close, when the sitters were asked whether their unspoken thoughts *had* been dealt with, they admitted that they had, and some of them referred to portions of the address which covered the questions of which they had thought. I am confident, however, that unless we meet them on their own level, this power cannot be exercised by low, or so-called evil spirits. When we open the doors of our minds and offer entrance to congenial souls, our own thoughts and purposes being pure and true, they come in to sup with us and to bless us. I have had a large number of instances of helpful spirit ministration, but they are mostly of too private a nature to report. Here is a minor one. When lecturing once at North Shields I intended returning home at mid-day on Tuesday, but about noon on Monday I received an irresistible impression to go home by the night train after the lecture, as Mrs. Wallis was ill. I had nothing to guide me to this conclusion, as she had spoken of being well in the last letter I had received from her. On my arrival I found her thoroughly prostrated and unable to rise. Her letter telling me of her illness was delivered at Shields on the same morning that I arrived home.

It was my privilege to introduce Spiritualism to an elderly man, a Mr. C., who, at first, rather ridiculed me and scoffed at the idea of 'dead people coming back.' When I reminded him that, as he knew nothing about the subject, he was not in a position to express an opinion, he admitted that I was quite right, and after apologising, asked for information. This I gladly gave, and he became an ardent inquirer. Genial, frank, courteous and very accessible, whenever Mr. C. sat with mediums, no matter how imperfectly they were developed, he always received *something*. He possessed what is sometimes called 'developing power,' a helpful influence, and, in addition, his wife, who had passed away some twenty years before, was so delighted that she could communicate with him that she took every opportunity to manifest her presence and assure him of her unflinching love. He said to me one day, 'Oh, Wallis, to think that I have lived in darkness for seventy years when the light of this great truth could have been mine if I had but known!' He envied me because the knowledge had come to me in my youth, and exclaimed, 'How different *my* life would have been if I had known of Spiritualism when I was your age!'

Some of my most interesting and instructive experiences occurred with this friend. He was as good as a father to me and, perhaps, it was due to the affection between us that I often felt his thoughts and he mine, although we were miles apart.

On one occasion, before our marriage, Mrs. Wallis and I talked of paying him a surprise visit, but we were in doubt whether he would be at home. I suggested that I should try and send her psychically to his home, and after a time she agreed. I made a few passes over her and gave her the suggestion to try to ascertain his whereabouts. Presently she aroused herself and said that he was not at home, but would be by the time that we got there. We started at once and travelled from Dalston to Brixton. On turning into the street we saw him standing at his gate. He greeted us laughingly and explained that he had been in Chancery-lane intending to call on a friend, but, acting on a sudden impulse, he had stopped a passing Brixton 'bus, got in, sat down, and then asked himself why he had done so. An 'impression' came to him that he was wanted at home. He said: 'I had just got inside the gate, thinking to myself all the time that there would be no one in the house and I should find that I had come on a wild-goose chase, but looked up the street as a forlorn hope, to see if anyone was coming, when you turned the corner.' He laughed still more when we told him of our little experiment.

One evening, after a sitting with Mr. C., we were talking of leaving him when my hand began to shake. Observing this, he expressed the wish that I should let it write, and, on my yielding, a sheet of notepaper was speedily filled with writing. It was an affectionate letter, written to her husband by one who signed herself Elizabeth R. I knew a Mr. R.; I also knew that he had been married several times, but what the Christian names of his wives had been I did not know. The letter also contained private and personal allusions which were Greek to all of us. Mr. C. sent the letter to Mr. R., telling him all the circumstances. In his reply, Mr. R. said that he understood the communication, but asked if we would inquire *which* of his wives it was who wrote, because two of them had borne the same Christian name. At our next sitting the question was put, and my hand rapidly dashed off, 'His *first* wife, of course!' Mr. R. afterwards wrote that he was quite satisfied; he had put the question as a test, and, in fact, the writing, both in content and style, had strongly resembled that of the first wife. The '*of course*' seems to me to be very human and very natural!

As far as I am aware, I have met with but one instance of wilful deception on the part of a spirit, and as it was ultimately detected, it was of great educational and evidential value. One day 'Lighthouse' told Mr. C. that he clairvoyantly saw a young man who seemed much distressed and confused. He appeared to be in a hospital, but whether he was still in the body or out of it, 'Lighthouse' could not determine. At the next séance 'Lighthouse' said he had been informed that the young man *had* passed over since the last meeting. To make matters clear, I must mention that some time prior to this Mr. C. had gone North to visit a relative—a trustee for some other members of the family. On reaching the house he found the front door unfastened. Acting on an impression, he went to the cellar. There he found that his relative had hanged himself. Mr. C., being short, stout, and old, was unable to get him down, and by the time that help came the man was dead. Shortly afterwards, at a private sitting with Miss Lottie Fowler, Mr. C. was told that this man who had hung himself was present and was exceedingly angry. In the perverted fashion that is so common, instead of blaming himself he held Mr. C. responsible for his death—first, because that gentleman had made awkward inquiries respecting business affairs; and, secondly, because he had not cut him down in time to save his life. Lottie Fowler's control said that this spirit threatened to be revenged, and to do Mr. C. an injury. Naturally Mr. C. was much upset and sought my advice. I urged him to send out kind and helpful thoughts to his relative, and to trust his loved ones on the other side to protect him. As time passed and nothing untoward happened, we forgot all about the man and his threats of vengeance.

Now, let us return to the young man who had been seen by 'Lighthouse,' and who was recognised by Mr. C. as a nephew, who, when last heard of, was in Australia. Thereafter, at intervals, communications purporting to be from this young man were given through different mediums, and at one of Mr. Eglinton's séances a materialised form showed itself which was so lifelike that Mr. C. ejaculated, 'Hullo, D, † Is that you,



my boy?' and spontaneously offered to shake hands with him, but the figure hastily withdrew into the cabinet. However, one day Mr. C. gave me a letter to read that he had just received from Australia. It was written by his nephew. He was not dead after all! He said that he had been ill and in a hospital, hovering for days between life and death, but was now recovered. He had written to his uncle before, but the hospital attendant had kept the stamp-money and destroyed the letters. Naturally Mr. C. was glad that his nephew was alive, but you may imagine his perturbation and my perplexity regarding the manifestations that we had been led to believe were his work. 'Lighthouse's' original statement as to the young man's illness had been proved correct, but, as for the rest, lacking the key to the puzzle, we could not solve it. A week or so later Mr. C. wrote to me from Southampton, telling me his doubts and difficulties and asking for my help—but my mind was as much upset as his own and I could get no impression, no light. Then I remembered Miss Young, a good private medium. To her I went and asked if she would try an experiment in psychometry for me. She kindly consented and soon passed under control. I then gave her the letter and her 'control' described the writer, his unsettled, unhappy state of mind, and said that a spirit lady was very anxious about him. This lady, she said, told her to say that there had been a great mistake, but it could all be explained. Then, suddenly the control stopped, and, looking past me, as if at someone behind me, exclaimed emphatically, 'I will tell, I will tell.' She explained that a spirit man stood near me who was shaking his fist at her, telling her to stop, and threatening her. She further said that the lady wished her to say to me, 'Tell him [the writer of the letter] to come to this medium and we will explain it all.' I recognised the lady described as Mr. C.'s spirit wife and wrote him a full account of my experiment and its result. On receipt of my letter, Mr. C. lost no time. He came up to London, and Miss Young kindly gave him a sitting, at which his wife fully established her identity. She reminded him of the relative who hanged himself, of his threat to have his revenge, and explained that, seeing the opportunity, that relative had impersonated the young man (who was *his* relative also, and bore the same Christian name), and, from his knowledge of family matters, had been able, up to the arrival of the letter, to evade detection. Mr. C. regarded the explanation as a true one. He pleaded with the spirit who had deceived him, told him he forgave him, and received from him assurances of repentance and goodwill. It was a sad, a bitter experience; but when it was over, and he understood it all, Mr. C. said that he would not have missed it for anything. It had shown him, better than anything else could have done, how real, how natural, spirit people are, and how true it is that character and consequences survive and continue to affect us even after death. (Applause.)

As Mr. C. moved out of London for a time I seldom heard from him, but, one day, the thought of him came to me very strongly, and as it returned again and again, I said to Mrs. Wallis, 'I cannot get Mr. C. out of my mind to-day. I feel that there is something wrong with him; I feel as though if I do not go to see him soon, I shall never see him alive again.' 'Then,' said she, 'why not write and say you will call on Saturday?' I did so, and when Saturday came I went to Brixton, uncertain whether I should find him at home, as I had received no reply. When his housekeeper opened the door, I saw that she was much distressed. 'He is dying,' she said; 'the doctor has just told him that he cannot live long.' When I went into his room he knew me at once. His breathing was short and laboured, but he managed to welcome me. As he knew he was about to go I said, 'You know, Mr. C., it is sometimes said that Spiritualism is all very well when one is strong and healthy, but that when death draws near, it will fail to give courage and strength. How do you feel about it? Have you any fear of the change or of the hereafter?' 'Fear!' said he, 'no, not the slightest. I am *longing* for it to be over, so that I can join my dear Fanny.' My spirit friends spoke to him for a little while and then I bade him good-bye and God-speed. The next morning he passed peacefully and joyfully into freedom and life indeed—welcomed, no doubt, by his beloved wife!

(To be continued.)

## IMMORTALITY FOR ALL.

Dealing with 'Immortality as a Motive' 'K. W. H.' in 'The Christian Commonwealth' of the 17th inst., takes up the question: 'Is there anything inherent in the nature of a human individual which necessitates persistence in the particular individualised form?' and answers it by making a distinction between human individuals and human persons. He says:—

While I seem to find in the latter elements which justify a belief in their persistence, I do not find them in the former, and the mark of differentiation between a human individual and a human person is that the latter is, while the former may not be, an 'independent bearer of spiritual life,' to use Professor Eucken's phrase.

This reverses the meaning so frequently attached to the words 'person' and 'individual.' Many thinkers regard the individual as the permanent spiritual reality and the person as the purely transitory expression of the 'ego,' 'self,' or 'spirit,' the physical body being spoken of as the mask through which the living actor expresses himself.

'K. W. H.' deals with the prevalent idea 'that if the world is conducted according to any principle of fairness, another opportunity must be given to the unfortunates to develop themselves or to live up to the highest they know.' This plea, while it does credit to the tenderness of heart of those who urge it, does not strike him as being very cogent. As we do not yet see the whole plan of God he feels it difficult to speak of any particular condition of human existence as unfair, since from the universal point of view that which we deem unfair may be quite otherwise. He suggests that

at one level of the creational process God appears to be working at, say, the production of oaks; at another level he appears to be working at the production of human souls. If through all this unitary process there is a common plan, it would seem that, just as many acorns perish for one oak that grows, so many individualised fragments of soul-stuff may fail to persist in that form for one human soul that may stand out possessed of transcendent and eternal elements. And even if this were so, it would not be possible to lay waste to the charge of God, for the energy which is focussed in each of the myriad acorns which lie beneath the tree does not perish because the acorns die; neither need the energy focussed in a human individual perish simply because it does not rise to the height, so to speak, of a human person. The life which is in a germ that does not fructify may be imperishable, although the form in which it was embodied may be dissolved.

Whether the plan of God includes the endless persistence of every human being or not, 'K. W. H.' holds that—

The true Gospel message to men and women of hampered and broken life is not that there is another world, which will, after death, redress the balance of the present, but that there is within themselves the possibility of an inward kingdom which is immune from world-pressure, and remains integral in spite of all world-misfortune. Some of the greatest souls of the world have blossomed in sadly limited conditions; and if it is true that it is in the nature of the developed human spirit to be a creator of its effective circumstances, then we cannot rightly say of any man, however circumscribed in his outward life, that he is unable to rise to the height of the noblest that he knows.

This is satisfactory as far as it goes, but it seems to us that, when once spirit has become individualised and awakened to self-conscious realisation of its own intelligence, the loss by the entity of that realised sense of personal identity would be equivalent to annihilation. We can no more contemplate annihilation than we can realise creation of something from nothing. Intercourse with discarnate persons has shown that personal conscious survival after bodily death is as true of newly-born babes as of greybeards, of sinners as of saints, so that continuity does not seem to be dependent on personal fitness—at least, not on such fitness as results from culture, experience, education, or even spiritual self-realisation—but upon the fact that the fundamental reality behind, below, within, all personality is the Eternal Self, or Universal Soul, or Divine Intelligence that we call God. Even though we cannot foresee what may befall the entity, or how its modes of consciousness and expression may vary, in the hereafter states, one thing seems probable, and that is that the rational, interpretive, and

intuitional consciousness, which has been won at the cost of so much struggle and pain, will never be lost. It seems probable that the spirit-self will not grow less, but more, and will include, in its ever deepening and enlarging scope, powers of comprehension, and of self-realisation by intelligent conformity with the principles of Being, which will enable it to attain to a joyous consciousness of oneness with the Divine—to that comprehending sense of identity with the All which is indicated by the terms cosmic consciousness or Nirvana.

### THE SPIRITUAL WORLD A REAL WORLD.

Heaven is a state, or condition of being, of our minds and affections. This heavenly state of being presupposes a spiritual world. The Scriptures, while telling us that there is such a world, give us very little information. To obtain some clue to the spiritual world, we must seek in the material world. When we speak of a world—especially of the physical world—we find we have certain definite ideas. We have, in relation to this world, not only the idea, but the knowledge, of substance and form. Science cannot give us the last analysis as to the nature of substance, even as to this physical world, but we know that it is, and that this substance is worked up into a variety of forms, which we see with our physical eyes. So this physical world is real and tangible to our physical senses. Now, I ask, suppose I take away from your idea of this physical world substance and form, what would you have left? Your world would vanish. I think the great mistake has been that we have always opposed spirit to matter. We have said 'Matter has substance, therefore spirit has none. Matter has form, therefore spirit has none.' But if in our conception of a spiritual world we take away substance and form, we take away all that makes such a world imaginable. It seems a necessity that we should conceive of the spiritual world as possessing spiritual substance and form, and as being as real to our spiritual senses as the present physical world is to our physical senses. I believe that is what St. Paul implies when he says, 'There are bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial.' I think, therefore, of a spiritual world as consisting of spiritual substance and a vast variety of spiritual forms—mountains, trees, rivers, flowers, things majestic and things beautiful.

REV. JOHN OATES.

### '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?

In her 'Editorial Notes' in 'The Harbinger of Light,' for December, Mrs. Annie Bright well says: 'God helps those who help themselves, and before this century nears its meridian it is tolerably certain that a new order will have arisen, who, led by scientific investigators and spiritual teachers, will have evolved a soul-satisfying religion instead of the make-believe that is the sole reason for declining faith and empty churches. What people call worship will be a thing of the past. Its place will be taken by a soul-satisfying knowledge of at-one-ment of the soul with the great spiritual forces, called by whatever name, which can alone satisfy the craving of the human heart. It was on a memorable evening, now nearly thirty years ago, that a vivid realisation of the nearness of the spiritual world showed me that it was for lack of this knowledge that the churches were languishing. 'This is what the preachers, many of them earnest and spiritual men, are striving to teach the people, but fail for lack of knowledge,' I exclaimed. It is the unseen which is the real in this wonderful universe, and the realisation of God within that constitutes true religion.'

### ITEMS OF INTEREST.

In these days when pessimists are filling the air with jeremiads about 'degeneracy' and all kinds of prognostications of evil it is refreshing to find a doctor who does not believe that the race is hurtling along the downward path to its pre-ordained doom. Dr. Woods Hutchinson, in his breezy book, 'We and our Children,' gives much sensible and cheery advice to parents. He is a great believer in Nature and is very hopeful for the future. 'He claims that the civilised man is healthier, longer lived, bigger, more law-abiding, less criminal, cleaner, and in every way better than he was even a hundred or two hundred years ago.'

'The Christian Science Monitor' is the name of a daily newspaper published at Boston, Mass., U.S.A., price 2 cents. The distinguishing feature of the 'Monitor' is that while it gives the news of the day it does so in a pleasant, calm, matter-of-fact way. There are no reports of crimes, no shady advertisements, no sensational 'scares,' no unpleasant personalities or suggestions of any kind. We congratulate our Christian Science friends on producing a newspaper that is at once clean, sane, healthy, interesting and newsy. In the issue before us there is no hint of even an attempt at propagandism. The 'Christian Science Sentinel,' Boston, of December 30th, reproduces from our columns (November 4th, 1911), with due acknowledgment, the article by Mr. F. Dixon on 'Christian Science Healing.'

The lecture on 'A New Theory of Apparitions,' by Mr. W. B. Yeates, referred to by Mr. Mitchell on page 47, as reported in 'The Irish Times,' appears to have been in support of what is called 'the Spiritistic theory.' 'Mr. Yeates said there was a case of a medium who was entranced speaking the Dutch tongue, which was unknown to the medium and to everyone present; his describing, amongst other things, himself as a man who had recently died on the Continent. Another case was that of a man who appeared through a medium in London and described the facts of his life and his recent death, all of which facts were verified.' But we are in doubt as to the accuracy of the report when we read that Mr. Yeates said that 'it was becoming an accepted principle of all investigators that trickery was part of all mediumship.' Trickery is no more a part of mediumship than it is a part of any trade or any profession.

The report continues: 'He believed it was the presence of the body which kept man from dreaming perpetually. When escaped from the body he begins to dream. When persons were in the suggestible hypnotic state they were in the same state as ghosts. They were in a state in which the passions of life reproduce themselves in dream. He could imagine a state where there were innumerable different souls thirsting for incarnation, and he suggested those souls rushed into one's dream, and that they took temporary human form.' We fear the reporter has made a hash of the lecturer's ideas, for surely Mr. Yeates must himself have been dreaming if he said this.

'It is amazing how the character of Jesus strikes the minds of different people. To the uncultured atheistic-agnostic, Jesus never lived—he was a mere myth; to the great German Strauss, he was a wise Rabbi; to the great Jewish Rabbi Akiba, he was a magician; to the illustrious Renan, a sublime moral teacher; to Fourier, a warm-hearted Socialist; to Fenelon, the most rapt of mystics; to Thomas Payne, the most sincere of philanthropists; to Muller, the harmony of all history; to Emerson, the transcendental prophet; to Parker, a fellow brother and self-sacrificing reformer; to A. J. Davis, the great Syrian seer; to Mrs. Cora Richmond, the messenger from heaven; to Col. Ingersoll, he was one of the "most generous and self-denying men, for whom I feel only admiration and respect."—DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

A correspondent who resides in India writes: 'The reading of your paper weekly, especially in the solitude of the jungle where I am at present, gives me intense pleasure and enjoyment. It is, perhaps, the only paper which I read through and through. The following thought occurs to me, and I give it to you hoping it will lead to an explanation in your excellent journal: Why is it that amongst the leading men of the day, the real movers of the world, in politics and art, the former especially, we do not find more Spiritualists? The materialists seem to have it all their own way.' We may remind our correspondent that many leading men, though not in the foreground as Spiritualists, are doubtless of our way of thinking but do not feel called upon to proclaim their convictions on these matters.

'H. C.,' a subscriber who resides in Germany, kindly writes : 'I have been, for a considerable time, keenly interested in psychical research, theosophy, occultism, hypnotism and kindred subjects, especially during my twenty years' residence in the Far East. While in Siam, an almost entirely Buddhistic country, I made the acquaintance of a cousin of the famous Dr. Carl du Prel, and through this gentleman, who was present at many of Dr. du Prel's experiments, I obtained a fairly good knowledge of Spiritism, &c. I must confess that at that time I did not know "LIGHT." I only learned of its existence, through a friend, on my return to Europe in 1910. From the very first number which I read I became quite fascinated by its contents. What I like and admire in "LIGHT" is the straightforward and fearless way in which it fights for light in every respect. You surely deserve every praise for the permanent good work which you are doing, and I most sincerely congratulate you on the great success you have already achieved. I am a German—and I am proud of it—but I must say if all Englishmen and all Germans would think as do those who are responsible for the conduct of "LIGHT," there would be no more enmity between England and Germany. I have travelled all over the world and seen many lands and many people, and it is for that reason that I entirely share your ideas about "real civilisation," and firmly believe in an ultimate universal peace—in spite of the sinister outlook of the present time.' We are proud of our correspondent's appreciation, and, in spite of present conditions, preserve our faith in the ultimate triumph of spiritual principles over materialistic fear-thoughts and selfishness. The road to be travelled is, we know, long and hard, but we shall never lose heart or hope. 'Ever the truth comes uppermost and ever is justice done.' It is our joy to be found fighting on the side of righteousness and progress.

#### SPIRITUALISM IN SCOTLAND.

The annual meeting of the Scottish Spiritualists' Alliance was held on the 20th inst., in the rooms of the Glasgow Association, Elmbank Crescent. Delegates were present from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Motherwell, Greenock and Bonnybridge. After a full report on the year's work had been read by the secretary, the following appointments were made for the ensuing year : President, Mr. J. M. Stevenson, Dundee ; Secretary, Mr. J. M. Stewart, Glasgow ; Assistant Secretary, Mr. J. Winning, Motherwell ; Treasurer, Mr. J. Slater, Glasgow. At a social meeting which followed, a handsome suit-case was presented to Mr. G. P. Young from the Scottish Societies in recognition of his long service to the movement. Mr. Young leaves for Canada early in March, and carries with him the good wishes of the Alliance for his future success.

The report states : The Alliance stands for pure Spiritualism and discountenances all that tends to lower it in the public esteem. It is pleasing to note that Scottish representative officials are endeavouring to present the truth and beauty of our philosophy and phenomena in a dignified manner, calculated to attract those thoughtful persons who are ready and anxious for light on the subject of after-death experiences. The Alliance has been in existence for eight years, and has been gradually widening its influence, linking up and binding societies into one harmonious whole. There is, however, a great and far-reaching work before it. Scotland has large tracts of soil virgin to the Cause, which it is felt will not be properly covered until a paid organiser is secured, and the attention of the new executive is directed towards this matter, as essential to the true and permanent success of the movement in Scotland. Spiritualism gives us larger views, and life becomes richer and more interesting than formerly. With thankful hearts let us account it a privilege to be associated with and to work for the movement, and go forward with renewed vigour and enthusiasm.

(Signed) J. M. STEWART.

As fifteen million men and women above the age of sixteen will shortly be compulsorily insured against sickness and disablement, it is most important that they should understand the provisions of the instrument by which this insurance will be brought about. To people unaccustomed to their study, the language in which our statutes are framed presents almost insuperable difficulties. In the present instance these may be readily removed by the purchase for 6d. of a small paper-covered volume entitled, 'National Insurance Act : A Full Explanatory Digest, by "An Old Parliamentary Hand"' (Wm. Macdonald and Co., 160, Fleet-street, E.C.). The object of the writer is to translate the Act into a plain narrative, sufficient for present use and future reference, and which 'the man in the street' will be able to understand without getting a headache in the effort.

#### 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.*

##### Spiritualism in Ireland.

SIR,—I enclose you cuttings from the 'Irish Times' and 'Daily Express' in reference to a lecture by Mr. W. B. Yeates, 'A New Theory of Apparitions.' Here in Ireland we need all the help that can possibly be obtained to spread the knowledge of Spiritualism. Your English readers cannot fully appreciate the many difficulties and obstacles that have to be contended with in this country, or realise how difficult it is for us here in Dublin to get an opportunity of hearing a good medium. There are a number of friends in this city who would welcome the opportunity of meeting those who have mediumistic gifts, and any mediums who might be visiting this city would receive a cordial welcome. We are fighting against big odds, and a little help encourages and stimulates us.—Yours, &c.,

W. G. MITCHELL.

68, Serpentine-street, Sandymount, Dublin.

##### The Society for Psychical Research 'Journal.'

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to an article in 'LIGHT,' for January 20th, by Mr. Dennis Taylor, in which he alleges, in speaking of the S.P.R. 'Journal,' that 'any articles or letters which profess to find a fraudulent interpretation of Spiritualistic phenomena, however ridiculously far-fetched they may be, are readily and even credulously accepted and published, while any communications taking the opposite point of view, trying to show the essential inadequacy of the suggested fraud as the sole explanation, are declined or suppressed, unless they happen to emanate from members of the Council or other privileged persons.' I may point out that the very occasion which led to Mr. Taylor's protest was the appearance in the 'Journal' of a communication coming under his second category.

I am afraid that it is impossible to devise any system of editing under which the opinions of editors and contributors as to the worth of articles offered should invariably coincide.—Yours, &c.,

ALICE JOHNSON,

Editor, S.P.R. 'Journal' and 'Proceedings.'

20, Hanover-square, London, W.

##### A Good Proof of Spirit Presence.

SIR,—I have great pleasure in sending you an account of one of the best proofs of spirit return that I have ever received. About a fortnight ago I had a private sitting with Mrs. Place-Veary, at which her little coloured control gave me clairvoyant descriptions. Amongst others she described an old friend who had passed over some five years ago. To prove his identity he promised to materialise to my little girl in the circle. This was on a Friday morning. On the following Thursday we had our home circle, when to my great surprise and gratification my little girl saw my friend, but not quite clearly enough to describe him. Perceiving this, he formed his full name so clearly that she spelled it out, viz., Percy Vinstanley, the only error being the substitution of V for W, the name being Winstanley.

I regard this as one of the best proofs of spirit return I have ever met with, especially as the child is only ten years of age. We had purposely refrained from telling her of my séance with Mrs. Place-Veary.—Yours, &c.,

ROBT. CONNOLLY.

Fordsburg, South Africa.

##### 'The Antiquity of True Religion.'

SIR,—Max Müller shows in his 'What Can India Teach Us?' from his study of the Vedas, the most ancient literature (if that can be called literature which was handed down for thousands of years by memory solely) in the world, that the Aryas, the remote ancestors of the Hindus, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Celts, Teutons and Slavs, believed in immortality, and worshipped and made sacrificial offerings to their ancestors some fifteen hundred years B.C., and probably long before that ; in any case centuries before the rise of Buddhism.

Appended are a few extracts from his translation of the Upanishads, the Vedanta or philosophical portion of the Veda, which may prove of interest to your readers ;—

'Men who are fools, dwelling in ignorance, though wise in their own sight, and puffed-up with vain knowledge, go round and round, staggering to and fro, like blind led by the blind.

'The Self, the Knower, is not born, it dies not ; it came

from nothing, it never became anything. The Old Man is unborn, from everlasting to everlasting; he is not killed, though the body be killed.'

The esoteric teaching was that there was one God above all gods or devas, the Atman, the Self, far more abstract than our Ego—the Self of all things, the Self of all the old mythological gods—lastly the Self in which each individual self must find rest, must come to himself, must find his own true self.

'As the sun, the eye of the world, is not contaminated by the external impurities seen by the eye, thus the One Self within all things is never contaminated by the sufferings of the world, being himself apart.

'There is one eternal thinker, thinking non-eternal thoughts; he, though one, fulfils the desires of many. The wise who possess Him within their Self, to them belongs eternal life, eternal peace.

'When all the fetters of the heart here on earth are broken, when all that binds us to this life is undone, then the mortal becomes immortal, and obtains Brahman.'

One poet sings: 'He rules as god over the whole world; all creatures rest in him; he is the life of all that moves and rests.'

—Yours, &c.,

A. K. VENNING.

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

#### Battersea Lyceum.

SIR,—The kindly response to our appeal in 'LIGHT' for the Lyceum children enabled us to give them, on the 15th inst., a bountiful tea, with fruit and sweets and bon-bons, which were provided by the generous gifts of Mrs. Puckle, Mrs. Ellis, Mr. Hibberd, and Mr. Irving-Bell. A Christmas tree loaded with toys, presented by Miss Heywood and her friends, delighted the poor children beyond anything. Solos and glees were well rendered under the direction of Mrs. Newman. Miss Heywood and Miss Smith (the conductor) distributed the toys at the close. Special thanks are due to Mrs. Thomas, who kindly undertook the management of the tea.—Yours, &c.,

ANNIE BODDINGTON.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

'OMNIA VINCIT AMOR.'—As reincarnation and pre-existence have been pretty fully discussed in 'LIGHT' of late, we cannot now find space for their further consideration.

JOHN J. GURNETT.—Thank you for your article. We regret we are unable to use it.

A. K. VENNING.—Sorry to say the number of 'LIGHT' to which you refer is out of print. All good wishes to you.

A. VEEVERS.—Pleased to hear from you again. Something will come of Spiritualism: it is coming all the time, and that something is a truer outlook on life, a more spiritual ideal, a broader, deeper, and wiser spirit than formerly.

E. O. RUDEBECK (Sweden).—Thank you for your letter. Sorry you cannot give a better account of the movement, but hope brighter days are just ahead.

H. TORRIANO (Montana, U.S.A.).—The lady to whom you refer has gone to live in Australia. Her present address is unknown to us.

'VERAX.'—We have received three replies to your inquiry (page 23). One correspondent attributes the lines to Burns and the others to Robert Louis Stevenson, 'without doubt.'

Two sisters living in North-West London, desirous of realising the truth of Spiritualism, would like to join a private circle with a view to earnest investigation. Letters should be addressed 'I. and R.,' c/o. 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

'W. F.'—Many thanks Belize is in Central America, of course. 'Lighthouse,' however, lived very much further south.

#### MANOR PARK SPIRITUAL CHURCH.

Mr. G. F. Tilby, presiding at the annual meeting of members on the 17th inst., and commenting upon the reports of the secretary, treasurer, and auditors, expressed his extreme pleasure with the eminently satisfactory financial condition of the society, which he regarded as evidence of real interest and sincere devotion to the cause of spirit return on the part of the retiring secretary (Mr. A. H. Sarfas) and other officers; the substantial balance in the hands of the treasurer on account of the building and allied funds being an exceptionally encouraging sign. After a hearty vote of thanks to the retiring officers, the following were elected for 1912: President, Mr. Thomas Brooks; vice-presidents, Messrs. G. F. Tilby, J. A. Cockman, and C. W. Turner; secretary, Mr. A. H. Sarfas; assistant secretary, Mr. H. Perkins; treasurer, Mr. Joseph Coote; auditors, Messrs. P. Fuller and C. W. Turner; librarians, Mr.

P. Fuller and Miss L. Trimmer; stewards and committee, Mesdames Sarfas, Bucham, Stanborough, Plater, Wilkins, Benbow, Goater, Greenham and Harrod.

C. W. TURNER

(Vice-President).

#### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, JAN. 21st, &c.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mr. Leigh Hunt kindly gave clairvoyant descriptions, which were most successful. Mr. Douglas Neal presided.—15, Mortimer-street, W.—On the 15th inst. Mrs. Mary Davies gave fully-recognised clairvoyant descriptions to members and friends. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advt. on front page.—D. N.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Mr. W. Underwood gave an address on 'Revelation' and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., open circle; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Mr. Smythe. Thursday, at 8.15, public circle.—H. M.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave inspiring address and 'Morambo' answered questions; audience delighted. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Leaf, address and clairvoyant descriptions.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mr. and Mrs. Roberts conducted the evening service. On Sunday next, service at 11 a.m. At 7 p.m., Mr. H. Boddington will give an address.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mrs. Miles Ord gave an address. Sunday next, at 7, Mrs. Mary Gordon; Lyceum at 3 p.m., and on Wednesday at 7. Thursday, February 1st, at 7.30 p.m., our next social. Circles as usual.—G. T. W.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn gave an interesting address to a good audience on 'God made Man for Incorruption.' Mr. E. P. Noall presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address by Mr. J. A. Neville.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MANSION HALL.—Services conducted, under control, by Mr. W. E. Long, who, on Sunday next (January 28th) will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of public work in South London, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. Annie Riley gave interesting addresses and good clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, and on Monday, at 8 p.m., Miss Florence Morse will give addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, members' circle.—A. M. S.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST.—Mrs. Mary Davies gave excellent addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Jamrach, also Monday at 8, 1s. each sitter. Other weekly meetings as usual.—A. C.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, and evening, Mrs. Alice Webb gave good clairvoyant descriptions. We thank friends for their support at our Social on Saturday last. Sunday next, morning, Mr. Stott; evening, Mrs. M. Scott. 29th, Mrs. Podmore, séance in aid of Building Purchase Fund. February 4th, Mr. Horace Leaf, at 7. Usual circles.—A. C. S.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mrs. A. Jamrach gave an address on 'The Spiritualist's Conception of God' and excellent clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. Cuthbert kindly sang. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Podmore, address and clairvoyance. Monday, at 8 p.m., circle. Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m., astrology class. Friday, at 8.30 p.m., healing circle.—N. R.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—Morning, Mrs. Hayward read a paper on 'The Spiritualist Wife and Mother.' Evening, Mr. T. Olman Todd addressed a large audience on 'Miracles of the Ages.' Solo by Miss Violet Sames. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., Mrs. Connor, 'The Spiritualist Child'; 7 p.m., Mr. Todd, 'Foregleams of Immortality'; 29th, free concert. February 1st, Mr. J. Wrench.—A. T. C.

SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD.—4, CAMBRIDGE-ROAD.—Mr. C. W. Turner spoke on 'Our Spirit Messengers.' Solo by Mrs. Thornley. 16th, Mr. C. T. Brown related 'Reminiscences of Thirty Years of Spiritualism.' Sunday next, at 7, Mr. Savage; soloist, Mr. R. Peel. Tuesday, at 8, Mr. Horace Leaf. Developing circle, normal class and Lyceum starting shortly. Helpers needed.—C. E. S.

HOLLOWAY.—PARKHURST HALL, 32, PARKHURST-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. A. Graham gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Evening, Mr. A. Graham, and addresses by the Lyceums' London District Council Delegates—Miss Morris and Messrs. Clegg and Percy Smyth. 17th, Mrs. Podmore gave psychometrical delineations. Sunday next, morning and evening, 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Davies, Wednesday, 31st, Mr. A. Jamrach.—W.C.