

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe,

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

February Fair-Maid, February Fill-Dyke. We have entered what Henley called the 'Moon of half-candied meres, of flurrying, fading snows.' But already the feel of spring is in the air, a subtle influence that no wintry condition of the atmosphere can wholly efface. There is a dim, purple haze in wood and coppice, a hint (in colour) of the myriad buds in the early stages of development. The quickening life under the soil is manifesting itself above-ground in legions of tender shoots. Every year we see the progress of the higher world epitomised more or less truthfully in the phenomena of the material one. We say 'more or less truthfully,' because, as some philosophers have discovered with annoyance, there are instances in which analogies drawn between the two worlds break down in a disconcerting fashion. But there is something spring-like in the spiritual atmosphere just now. Thought buds are multiplying at a great rate, and new growths, strange and unshapely in some cases, but full of promise, are thrusting above the dark soil of the world's grosser life, and though there are 'unkindly rains, wild skies and troubled vanes,' these, too, are amongst the signs of Spring—as much in the moral as in the physical world.

'The Open Road' for January maintains the standard of general excellence exhibited by this little magazine in the past. It is free, broad, cultured and original in its philosophy, and, as the organ of a band of fearless writers and thinkers, more or less distinguished, it throws its light from many facets. In the January issue we turn to the first of a series of articles, 'Metaphysics Made Easy,' by J. Irvine Presslie, as being especially allied to our own subject. Mr. Presslie remarks, with great truth, that certain important discoveries in the domain of philosophy are ignored because they have been written about in 'a very learned, involved, academic and mystifying style.' Says Mr. Presslie, summarising certain philosophical conclusions regarding the human spirit:—

There is no life in the body or brain *by itself*. They are only alive while this spirit condescends to inhabit them. This spirit, or soul, then, evidently contains the principle of life, which it brings with it when it enters a body and brain, and takes away with it when it goes.

That is a plain, simple statement of a fact recognised by the philosophers, but so clouded by the learned terms in which they have expressed it that it was practically lost to the mass of mankind. Kant, for example, could find no better term in which to express the idea of the self-existent spirit of man than the 'Thing-in-Itself,' while

Schopenhauer called it the 'Will.' In his very effort to be clear, precise, and definite the great thinker sometimes defeats his own ends.

But we must not blame the philosophers. They do their part in their own way. The discovery and diffusion of truth needs several different kinds of minds. (It takes a number of men, as we used to be told, to make even a pin.) There is, for example, the original (creative) thinker who discovers a truth, thinks it into coherence, and expresses it as exactly as he can, using the highest resources of language for the purpose, so that at the outset it is only intelligible to intellects of the same order. Then comes the critical and analytical mind which turns the truth about, tests it, argues about it, and is subsequently joined by others who melt and mould and hammer at it until only a truth could possibly survive the ordeal. In due time comes the generalising, synthetic mind which sees how the truth will fit into his general scheme of ideas, and, finding it valuable, forthwith begins to preach it and popularise it. And finally it is in shape for popular consumption, and appears in our halfpenny newspaper as a matter of received opinion. If we took it in that shape and compared it with the original expression of the idea by the original philosopher, we should be mightily astonished. What a transformation! But the change would have been only in form; the essential truth would remain. All the truths in Spiritualism have been and are going through that process. We see evidences of it every day.

Having alluded in some recent 'Notes' to the belief in fairies, we have found it an odd and pleasant coincidence to light upon an article on the 'Spirits of Nature,' by Dr. Franz Hartmann, in the January issue of 'The Occult Review.' Dr. Hartmann writes of the Undines, the water nymphs, which he describes as the loveliest spirits of Nature; the Sylphs, or spirits of the air, and the Salamanders, the fire spirits. Some of the most beautiful apparitions, he remarks, are found in the flower kingdom, and he tells a pretty story of the appearance to a friend of his own of the spirit of a campanula. The friend kept the campanula in his room, and on awaking one morning beheld the flower spirit which had

taken the shape of a most beautiful female form enveloped in a transparent violet veil. The face of that angelic being had an expression of indescribable loveliness and innocence, while she was looking at me with her blue eyes full of spiritual light, affection and tenderness.

Truly, a most rare vision. We find ourselves so moved by the poetry of the idea that we cheerfully forbear to resort to any psychological analysis of the experience. Was it not Keats who complained that Science had ruined for him the beauty of the rainbow?

We remember how some years ago we were shown some photographs of a collection of mandrakes from Palestine, owned by a certain famous Turkish Pasha,

We wondered over them at the time, and we still wonder. For those strange plants had all taken human shape. Had we not been told that we were looking at pictures of roots of plants grown under natural conditions, we could readily have believed that they represented, more or less, crude models of human figures. To the scientist mandrakes are merely curious freaks of Nature. But the thing is very suggestive. We have our own ideas on the subject of Nature spirits, but have no hostility to the idea that the spiritual elements of fire, earth, water, flowers and trees may take strangely human shapes in the mind of sympathetic seers. The story of the spirit of the campanula is beautiful enough to be true, on one plane at least.

To refer again to 'The Occult Review,' we were interested to find in it two letters flatly contradicting the statement by a correspondent in a previous issue of the journal that the tricks of Houdini, the conjurer, are accomplished by spirit agency. One of the replies to this remarkable statement is by Mr. Hereward Carrington, who mentions that he knows Houdini personally, that the wizard's feats are 'the result of ingenuity, skill or trickery'; and 'all his escapes [from sealed boxes, handcuffs, &c.] are due to clever work and nimble wit.' So we should have supposed, and we quite shared Mr. Carrington's 'amazement and amusement' when we saw the original statement that Houdini was a medium, and his jugglery the result of psychic agency. Really, we are impatient of the attitude of mind that grasps at spirit agency to account for everything that it cannot explain on purely natural grounds. The incarnate spirit is quite able by means of peculiar gifts and long training to accomplish on the stage feats that to the uninitiated may easily appear superhuman.

Dealing with a recent work on Maeterlinck, a writer in the 'Times' (Literary Supplement) remarks that—

Maeterlinck's weakness can be briefly described by saying that he is a mystic who is devoid of passion.

It is true that we are accustomed to associate the ecstatic note with the utterances of a mystic, and to distrust those mystical revelations which are marked by a dispassionate and detached mood. But although a cold mysticism may be none the less a real one, we are disposed to agree with the 'Times' critic that by reason of his calm and temperate utterance we are tempted to

overlook the way in which Maeterlinck is always giving away his position with his constant '*peut-être*,' '*c'est possible*,' '*il est extrêmement probable*,' forgetting that the whole point of his sacrifice of the powers of reason could only be the belief that *intuition gives us certainties instead of probabilities*.

(The italics are ours.) That is a statement which goes to the root of the matter. Truth is never so vitally realised as through the intuitions.

American newspapers announce that Mr. T. W. Stanford, of Melbourne, Australia, has made a gift of one million dollars to the Stanford University, California, half of which sum 'is to be used for the investigation of psychic phenomena, Spiritualism and kindred subjects: in short, to found a chair for the study of the occult.' We hope it is true and that the investigation will be carried out on truly scientific lines—that is, in harmony with the laws and conditions of spiritual science, and in the genuine truth-seeking spirit. Mr. Stanford, whose devotion and patience are well known in connection with the Bailey séances, believes, it is said, 'that the only way to find out the truth regarding Spiritualism is to interest

learned persons and let them conduct impartial investigations.' Yes, if impartial, but with the example of the Seybert Commission before us, we have our doubts!

The letter from Mr. Andrew Lang, which we print on page 72, will be read with interest. Had we had any premonition of the fact that Mr. Lang would attach so much importance to the paragraph to which he refers we would certainly have verified our references more closely. But 'LIGHT,' as we may remind our correspondent, is a newspaper rather than an official record of 'Philosophical Transactions,' and, like other newspapers, it draws occasionally from its contemporaries. The original report on which we based our paragraph appeared in the 'Evening News' last month, and, as we noticed at the time, was printed also in other newspapers. Moreover, as regards one of these newspapers, we had reason to believe that the item was passed for publication by a gentleman who is by way of being an expert in psychical matters. Mr. Lang, too, will hardly have failed to observe that we referred, in the next paragraph to that which he quotes, to two extremely well-attested examples of the fire test which could at least do duty as collateral evidence. We have the best reason for being familiar with the reputation which certain evening papers bear in Scotland, but there are 'occasional deviations' into accuracy of statement, and we believe it is so in this case. However, as Mr. Lang manifests such a laudable desire for further information, we will make inquiries into the matter, and if we can obtain more details, will hasten to furnish them. As regards the Rope Trick to which Mr. Lang alludes, without wishing in any way to reflect upon the veracity of the 'respectable, elderly Earl,' we may say that we have a fairly clear recollection that a widely printed account of this feat of Hindoo jugglery, some years ago, was subsequently exposed as a hoax engineered by a practical joker in India. But in this case the newspapers were more sinned against than sinning!

'Creative Thought: Being Essays in the Art of Self-Unfoldment,' is the title of a new book by Mr. W. J. Colville (W. Rider & Son, 164, Aldersgate-street, E.C., cloth, 3s. 6d. *net*), which embodies the substance of lectures delivered by him in this country during his visit last summer. They cover a wide field, dealing with mental healing, mental suggestion, the power of the spoken word, sleep, dreams, visions, the law of attraction, our bodies, the spiritual man, true views of occultism, concentration of thought and the control of memory, the human aura, psychical development, idealism and realism, genius, religion, science and philosophy, destiny, &c. Mr. Colville relates some interesting personal experiences of mental healing, respecting which he says: 'No matter how impressive a theory may be, in order to make the teaching vivid it is essential to introduce some concrete illustration.' To all those who are familiar with Mr. Colville's lines of thought and teaching, his book will need no recommendation, but to those who do not know them and who desire to study the subjects with which he deals, we can heartily commend the work. In it they will find luminous thoughts, clearly and forcibly expressed, and sentiments which will prove helpful and spiritually inspiring.

Mr. William Force Stead calls his book of lyrics 'Windflowers' (stiff covers, 2s. 6d. *net*, Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C.), and the title well suggests some of the delicate fancies it enshrines, pure and light as wild anemones swayed by soft breezes in some woodland dell. The

little poem that tells how 'sweet wild April came over the hills . . . his raiment was all of the daffodils,' has a joyous lilt about it that quickens the reader's pulse as with a breath of coming Spring. But Mr. Stead's verse is not entirely devoted to Nature. There is something that appeals to him even more than the Springtide and the flowers. All the light, and wonder, and beauty of Nature, and something far beyond, the poet discerns in that 'Mystery of Mysteries,' womanhood at its best—noble, true and sweet. In turning these pages the worshipper at that shrine will hear many a strain to which his own heart will supply an echo. With our singer he may, in thinking of some sweet woman's purity and goodness, be able, even in the dreary 'city street shadowed with sin,' to 'breathe new air, walk in new light.' But he will not think his own little life represents the universe. He will learn the lesson conveyed in the brief poem, 'The Shuttle Moves':—

The shuttle moves and weaves a web,
Whereof, in all the vast design,
Our little lives can only see
One broken line;
Or single shade of all the hues
The vast design doth interfuse.

The weaving of a milliard threads
On this great loom would hardly be
The corner of an arabesque
Or fleur-de-lis:
O fools, that think to judge of all
From the one thread whereon ye crawl!

Mr. Stead dedicates his book 'To my Father, with gratitude.'

A PROPHETIC VISION.

The following incident is narrated by Mr. Alfred J. Pearce in the correspondence columns of 'The Occult Review' for February:—

In the month of April, 1855, my father, the late Dr. Charles T. Pearce, M.R.C.S., Eng., was entreated by a gentleman to visit his daughter, a young lady about twenty years of age, who had been treated for several weeks for congestive headache and insomnia by an old-school physician, aided by a specialist, without success, and was in a very weak and exhausted state. . . . On examining the sufferer, Dr. Pearce was of opinion that sleep could only be safely induced by means of mesmerism. . . . With the, at first, rather reluctant consent of the parents, my father soon put the patient to sleep, about eight o'clock p.m. On the following morning at eight o'clock he awoke her and she said she felt greatly refreshed by the sleep, but still had a great deal of pain in the frontal region of the head. 'But, doctor,' said she, 'I have seen your mother, and she took my head in her hands, and said to me, "You have an abscess forming on the brain, and it will break on the first of May. If it does not, you will be in the cemetery soon after."' My father replied to this effect: 'I cannot understand how you could see my mother, for she is in London, a good many miles away from here.' However, soon after he returned home, he received a telegram informing him that his mother had died suddenly very early that morning. The fear that an abscess was probably forming had been expressed by the physicians in attendance to the parents, but the sufferer had not been permitted to know of this. For several subsequent evenings the mesmeric treatment was necessarily continued, homœopathic medicines being given in the daytime. One evening my father had unexpectedly to take a long journey, in consultation with a medical friend in another case, so he asked a colleague, Dr. R., to mesmerise Miss J. that evening, which was done by him. On the patient being awakened the following morning, she said to my father, 'Never send that doctor again to mesmerise me, for I saw some wicked spirits.' Although improvement was maintained steadily for some fourteen days, on April 30th Miss J. became very much worse, and there was ground for apprehending a fatal issue. On May 1st there was evidence of the bursting of the abscess, in the profuse discharge which took place through the nostrils, and in a few days afterwards the patient quite recovered. . . . I was in my fifteenth year at the time of this occurrence, and I often heard my father recount, in subsequent years, the experience to friends who were sceptical in regard to mesmerism and prophetic visions or dreams.

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 22ND,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MR. ANGUS McARTHUR,

ON

'Spiritualism: A Survey of its Position, Achievements, and Possibilities.'

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:—

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, February 13th, Miss Florence Morse 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. [No EVENING MEETING.]

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On Thursday next, February 15th, at 5 p.m. prompt, Mr. Horace Leaf will give an address on 'How to Develop Clairvoyance,' with clairvoyant descriptions.

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.

THE contents of 'The Quest' for January (J. M. Watkins, Cecil-court, Charing Cross-road, W.C., 2s. 6d.) are unusually interesting, including, among others, valuable articles on 'Folk-Tales and Ancient Pagan Religion of the Georgians,' by Prof. J. Javakishvili; 'The Doctrine of "Die to Live" in Hegelianism,' by L. A. Compton-Rickett; 'The Unbelievable Christ,' by R. Hopkyns Keble, M.A.; 'Is the New Testament Jesus Historical?' by Rev. K. C. Anderson, D.D.; 'The Ideal Life in Progressive Buddhism,' by G. R. S. Mead, the Editor; 'Mary Everest Boole,' by Rev. G. W. Allen; 'Contemplatives,' by John Masefield; and 'Henri Bergson: A French Impression,' by Eric Clough Taylor.

THE 'JOURNAL' OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

A PROTEST BY A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY.

By H. DENNIS TAYLOR.

'Members are invited to send contributions as to facts arising within their own observation, or critical discussion of the results already obtained by the Society.'

Such is the seductive announcement invariably printed on the top of the first inside page of the cover of the Society's 'Journal,' and my last article (on page 27) gave an illustration of how closely it is acted upon in practice. Now, in reply to Miss Johnson's letter in your issue of the 27th ult. (page 47), in which, at first sight, she seems to score a point against me, I would observe that since Sir William Barrett, in narrating the Enniscorthy case in the 'Proceedings' for August, 1911, had so largely cited Mr. Murphy as one of the principal witnesses to the phenomena, it is difficult to see how the Editor of the 'Journal' could possibly refuse to allow Mr. Murphy to reply to Major Moore's criticisms of his evidence as quoted by Sir William.

But the editorial comments upon his letter, quoted in my last article, suggested strongly that Mr. Murphy's letter was printed as a privilege rather than a right, and betrayed a degree of scepticism and doubt as to his reliability as an observer and of the *bona fides* of the principal witness, Randall, which is extremely discouraging to possible future witnesses to similar occurrences; while my letter, written partly in Messrs. Murphy and Randall's defence, which obviously came under the head of 'critical discussion' mentioned in the delusive legend heading this article, was arbitrarily suppressed.

Here I feel I may most fitly reply to our President's article in your issue of the 27th ult. In the first place I think Mr. Lang far too lightly assumes in his article, and also in his introduction to 'Crystal-Gazing,' by Northcote Thomas, that all apparitions and visions are subjective phenomena *only*, and I conclude that he cannot have paid me the compliment of reading my articles in the 'Annals of Psychical Science,' to which I shall refer below.

But whether such phenomena are subjective only or not furnishes no ground for discriminating between the evidence for them and for obviously physical phenomena, provided that allowance is made in both classes for possible or probable motives for cheating or lying on the part of any of those present when the occurrence took place. Mr. Lang's article seems to me to amount practically to the almost obvious statement that fraud, *if it exists*, can be much more easily detected in the case of asserted physical phenomena than in the case of asserted apparitions or visions; but what I was contending for was that cases wherein physical phenomena have occurred without there being the slightest proof of bad faith on the part of any of the witnesses, must rank at just the same evidential value as the similarly sifted evidence for apparitions or telepathy, &c., and I see no reason at all for changing that view. It may here be objected that a new element has to be considered in the case of reported physical phenomena, *viz.*, mal-observation, on the part of an honest witness, of phenomena really produced by trickery on the part of one of the witnesses or other persons present; but in that case it is obvious that the tricking witness must have deliberately lied in his testimony, so that it all comes back again to a matter of the trustworthiness and integrity of all the witnesses concerned, just as in the case of apparitions and telepathy. It is all a matter of human testimony.

I was not proposing to discuss the knotty problem of phenomena occurring in the presence of mediums who are justly suspected or have been actually convicted of fraud, and quite agree with Mr. Lang that they must be considered in a separate category. But I cannot follow him in his sweeping assertions as to nearly all mediums being dishonest, for I believe that this too commonly held opinion originates chiefly in that *a priori* bias of scepticism with which psychical subjects, so profoundly new to scientific contemplation, are naturally regarded. I believe that many psychic researchers defeat their own ends by their

own ultra-scepticism; they fail to see certain things because they do not want to see them, and interpret many incidents as fraudulent which are not so.

I would point out to Mr. Lang that there was not supposed to be a medium—that is, one known as such—present in this Enniscorthy case, and it would be a poor sort of procedure to first find reasons for supposing Randall to be a physical medium, and then, for that reason only, to assume his evidence valueless—a piece of reasoning in a circle that has too often been adopted. Let us take all reasonable precautions against fraud, but not be betrayed into the bad form of insinuating fraud when there is not the slightest proof of its existence, and when all the testimony points to the integrity of every witness concerned, as in this Enniscorthy poltergeist case.

In conclusion, I would like to call attention to another matter—*viz.*, the manner in which selection is made of contributions to the S.P.R. 'Proceedings.'

In 1909 I submitted to the Society a (perhaps too long) paper in three parts, called 'The Physiological Limits of Visual Hallucination,' in which, accepting what is known of the laws of optics, and known or conceivable of the physiology and structure of the human brain and visual organs, according to the best authorities, I showed that many cases of apparitions, usually assumed to be purely subjective, must really have an objective basis or correlative external to the percipient, although, perhaps, in some other cases, such as crystal visions, the apparition is first projected subjectively. This paper was only submitted to one reader, described to me as an eminent psychologist, who, because the conclusions I arrived at ran counter to his own theories as to the omnipotent powers of mental suggestion, advised that the article be not published. Naturally I protested strongly against such a 'one man' censorship, and had the article published in 'Annals of Psychical Science' for 1909-10. I can conceive of nothing more unfair and unsportsmanlike in a scientific society than to trust a new paper to only one referee, who may be prejudiced. There should not be less than three referees, two being preferably of opposing views, and the third acting as umpire in case of disagreement. This is especially necessary in a society, like the S.P.R., dealing with matters on which there prevails such an *unusually* wide range of views. Had my paper been refused publication by at least three such referees, I should then have loyally accepted the verdict.

For my own part, if I were entrusted with the sole responsibility of judging a paper submitted for publication and found its conclusions contrary to my own pet opinions, I should nevertheless, provided the arguments were well sustained and founded on some show of real facts, certainly recommend its publication, and then proceed to write a paper to demolish it. The editorship of the 'Proceedings' of a scientific society is obviously on an entirely different footing from that of a magazine or journal that is run for pecuniary profit. In the former case the editorship is a position of impartial trust towards all its members and associates, so that all the diversities of view prevailing among them shall find adequate expression whenever it is honestly sought.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—A. E. Greatrex. Will you kindly send us your present address?

WE understand that 'Submerged Atlantis Restored,' by Mr. J. B. Leslie, published at four dollars, can be obtained for a limited period for three dollars, from the author, at 166, South Sage-street, Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

In the 'Sussex Daily News' of January 26th two lectures were reported in parallel columns which formed a striking contrast. Mr. J. J. Jones, pinning his faith to a literal interpretation of certain passages of Scripture, tried to show that the dead are all asleep, 'they know not anything,' and will so continue until the Resurrection and Day of Judgment. This view, he held, would sweep away the ground from all who traded on the fears of ignorance. Purgatory, Spiritualism, theosophy, ghostly superstition, including prayers to departed saints, would all cease. Side by side with this were the opinions, respecting evolution and reincarnation, of Mr. H. G. Massingham, a Theosophist, who claimed that these were 'Christian doctrines.' We are reminded of the fabled chameleon. Surely it is about time that 'doctrines' were left alone and 'facts' had a fair hearing.

MENTAL HEALTH OF THE PSYCHIC.

By ALBERT GRESSWELL, M.A., OXON.

'If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God.'—John vii. 17.

Some years ago, in the columns of 'LIGHT,' the writer drew attention to the paramount necessity that exists for the maintenance of the mental health of psychics, but, so far, he has seen no evidence that the important bearings of the subject have been fully realised. We read of the loving care taken of mediums in past ages, and of the seclusion in which they were kept, in order that they might develop and utilise their great gifts for the benefit of humanity. Their utterances were listened to with respect and gratitude; but while there was true wisdom shown in their treatment, it seems probable that they were at times too closely guarded and shielded from practical experience of the world outside. To-day, on the other hand, the public is largely regaled with so-called spiritual romances of a morbid character. In the columns of some journals we often read short notices of such gruesome stories. Most of them are weird, far-fetched, and bear little resemblance to truth. Indeed, they are unhealthy, and can only appeal to unhealthy minds. There are, however, exceptions. A notable production of the best kind is the spiritual romance or allegory entitled 'The Road to Avalon.' The writer of this allegory, Coningsby Dawson, reveals the spirit of a true pilgrim, poet, and Spiritualist. In describing in very eloquent language the path to Avalon, the author perhaps paints Lilith too alluringly, but this does not in any way detract from the value of the teaching. The book does not deal with any of the evils of modern social conditions, nor with the world of religious bigotry, but it is open-minded and healthy. If all spiritual romances were as good as this we should have great occasion to rejoice.

It must be borne in mind by those who wish to advance in spiritual knowledge, that in addition to healthy reading, due attention must be paid to such matters as fresh air, cleanliness, right diet—in fact, to everything that is conducive to bodily welfare. In order to have a healthy mind one must endeavour to preserve a healthy tone of body. In a climate like ours it would, perhaps, not be possible to partake of our food in the form that Daniel did; yet this would be more reasonable than the method some adopt in their daily routine. It must be remembered, too, that mental excesses, such as hate, anger, envy, jealousy, and passion, not only injure and degrade the mind, but render it incapable of receiving and expressing the highest spiritual truths and gifts. Moreover, they injure the bodily health also. Vain expenditure of effort in anger, aimless movements, kicking against doors, &c., are not only so much work lost, but are occasions of harm to those who indulge in them. In the same way there is harm in artificial emotionalism in religion. We must be temperate in all things.

Although Dante was one of the greatest of men and wrote some of the most beautiful thoughts conceivable, there is no doubt that when writing some parts of his works, he was in a state of bad mental health, rendering what should have been harmony inharmonious, and untrue to the highest. No doubt were he living to-day he would be advised a course of cold baths, a change of air and of thought-diet as well as of bodily food. It would seem that Sophocles was mentally sick when he wrote *Œdipus*. The tragedy is really ludicrous. *Œdipus* was obsessed by a mistake made in entire innocence, and needed but a few words of spiritual advice and friendly help to recover his balance. No one can call these unnatural, weird scenes elevating. What we want is mental sanity in spiritual matters. Spiritualism stands for sanity.

Quite recently we read of a nun in Italy who manifested clairvoyant powers. The Pope himself was so interested that he sent a kindly messenger to interview her. One can only wonder what Mr. Raupert would say to this manifestation of the truth of the Spiritualistic teachings. He would do well to remember that those who say they have been hurt by spiritual exercises have almost invariably brought the harmful influence with them.

The Eugenists of to-day picture a new race of mankind, healthier and stronger than we are; but they rely too much on materialistic methods, and invariably fail to realise that the spiritual powers cannot be manipulated in the manner they propose. One wonders how they would have dealt with Sir Isaac Newton. Would he have been allowed to live? The mental faculties must be trained and kept in health, and then the spiritual powers will be enhanced and work in harmony with spiritual laws, of which we are, as yet, only partially cognisant. But if the spiritual powers are allowed to wither away, no amount of mere intellectual acuteness will save the people.

In this connection it seems necessary to point out that nineteen out of twenty cases of supposed fraud on the part of clairvoyants are due, not to fraud, but to indifferent mental health rendering the mind of the psychic defective in operation and incapable of manifesting anything more than automatic processes. In the 'Times,' a few days ago, we read that 'Nobody believes in witches to-day.' This is a misleading statement, as it all depends on what is meant by the term 'witches.' According to Spiritualistic teaching a witch is a woman who has clairvoyant powers, but who, being morally unhealthy, uses the knowledge which she thus gains in an unhealthy direction, i.e., for the perpetration of wrong. Where the mind is sane and the motive true the power is used for good, and the woman becomes a prophetess, like Joan of Arc.

In conclusion, the world is now beginning to realise that the true, practical, intelligent medium is the benefactor of his race; he is the doer of the great things of the world; he is God's witness of what He will accomplish. The term 'dreamers,' which was formerly applied to both the practical and impractical, is now being used only of those whom it truly describes—the impractical, the laggards behind, the lazy, the men and women who, timid themselves, would influence others to be so likewise—not of those splendid seers of visions who catch glimpses of eternal truths and sweeten and beautify life with their glowing faith and spiritual fervour.

'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?

TRANSITION.—The many friends of our esteemed contributor, Miss H. A. Dallas, will learn with deep regret of the passing, on January 29th, in his sixty-fourth year, of her brother-in-law, Dr. Abraham Colles. Dr. Colles, at the time of his decease, had been for many years an earnest Spiritualist. In May, 1905, he delivered an address to the London Spiritualist Alliance on 'The Pursuit of Spiritualism: Shadows by the Way.' We tender our sincere sympathy to his relatives in their bereavement.

Two books by Dr. Charles Reinhardt are announced by Stead's Publishing House, Kingsway, W.C. The first, 'Science and the Soul,' is a two-shilling edition of the volume published last spring, entitled 'Faith, Medicine, and the Mind.' The Editor of the 'Review of Reviews' described it as 'one of the most lucid and luminous discussions of auto-suggestion, hypnotism, and similar phenomena that you will find anywhere in print.' The second book is a new shilling edition of 'Diet and the Maximum Duration of Life.'

MR. AARON WILKINSON writes: 'As it is apparent that my identity under the pseudonym of "Watson" in Mr. J. Arthur Hill's book, "Evidences in Psychical Research," has been generally discovered, I beg to inform your readers that my services are not available for private sittings, as my work is now chiefly of a public character. I may also state that of late the power for automatic writing seems to have left me except in isolated cases. I trust that my numerous correspondents will accept this as a sufficient explanation.'

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

'SPIRIT MESSAGES.'

A fortnight ago in the article, 'Messages from the Unseen,' we defined, in general outline, the attitude of 'LIGHT' towards the question of publishing spirit communications. And now our conclusions, as therein set out, are put to the test by a volume of what are boldly entitled 'Spirit Messages,' by the late Dr. Hiram Corson, M.A., Professor Emeritus of English Literature in the Cornell University. (The Austin Publishing Company, Rochester, New York, \$1.25.) It is described by the publishers as 'the last literary legacy of the late Professor Hiram Corson to the world.' And they add:—

From every standpoint of criticism this is a most noteworthy publication. The long and honourable professorship of the author at Cornell University, his authority and standing in the literary world as author, lecturer and interpreter of Browning, the unique character of the messages purporting to come from Mr. (? Mrs.) Browning, Robert Browning, Lord Tennyson, H. W. Longfellow, and from many other eminent men, the strong and lucid introductory essay of the Professor, and the valuable and pertinent prefatory note of Dr. Eugene Corson, all combine to make this a remarkable book.

The hardened reviewer is naturally shy of accepting the appraisal of any book by its publisher, but we quote the description, because, in this instance, it conveys in brief some idea of the character of the work, and we cordially endorse the verdict that it is a remarkable book. It is the more to be regretted, therefore, that the publishers were not more careful in the work of publication. Pages fifteen and sixteen, for example, are not only out of their place but are upside down. But this is a disfigurement that may be limited to our own copy.

We have given close and earnest attention to the contents of the volume, and are, on the whole, very favourably impressed with it. Having regard to the circumstances of its authorship, it would be 'a remarkable book' from any point of view; but there is something about the atmosphere and the spirit of it that strongly appealed to us.

The introduction (an enlargement of an article by the Professor which appeared in 'LIGHT' on July 9th, 1910) is a scholarly piece of work, calculated to give pause to hasty and uninformed critics. And, despite the sympathy and interest with which we have read the 'Spirit Messages,' we feel that they needed some such preliminary statement as this Introduction, combined as it is with a Foreword by Professor Corson, and a Prefatory Note by Dr. Eugene R. Corson, his son.

The book is dedicated to Mrs. Minnie M. Soule, the medium through whom the messages were delivered, and

in this connection we may quote from Dr. Corson's Preface:—

Not all the messages received by him (Professor Corson) through Mrs. Soule are included in this volume. He has left out some which seemed to me of greater evidential value. He chose them as he would have chosen selections from literature to make up a manual for reading. . . . What determined his choice was that he esteemed their worth, not to the sceptic but to the believer. Fully convinced himself of the reality of spirit communication, he simply would share the messages which seemed to him best worth the sharing.

That, indeed, is the key-word of the book: it is a book for the initiated, not for the outsider, for the understanding and sympathetic reader, and not for the mere man of the world. But we really cannot help complaining of the slovenliness which allowed Prefatory Note to go forth as 'Prefactory Note' (in several places), and Foreword as 'Foreward.' A thing that is worth doing is worth doing carefully—even for 'believers.' With every desire to be indulgent, the slap-dash methods of our good American friends wring from us a groan occasionally!

Now for the messages. They comprise communications from several members of the Professor's family—messages of affection, descriptions of their life on the other side, and naïve little touches of philosophy—and (amongst the famous names) from Goldwin Smith, Walt Whitman, F. W. H. Myers, Phillips Brooks, Robert Browning, Mrs. Browning, Lord Tennyson, Longfellow and the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.

And now let cynics rage and critics roar! We are for the most part totally unacquainted with the mannerisms which marked the private speech and correspondence of most of these distinguished personages, so that, on that side at least, we are unable to resort to any touchstone of evidence. But this did not apply to Professor Corson. As a distinguished literary man, he knew several of them as personal friends, so that (on the spiritual hypothesis) there was no inherent improbability in the idea of their paying him friendly calls from the higher world. And he was quite convinced of their identity.

Our critical friend, Mr. Bridges, a few weeks ago suggested that many alleged spirit messages might be the composition of any 'commonplace duffers' in this world. But it is worth remembering that great scholars (unless they are insufferable pedants) speak and write in a very commonplace manner in domestic and friendly surroundings. We have heard a great orator, after regaling an audience with noble eloquence, unbend amongst his intimates to the extent of indulging in quite vulgar slang. And we were not in the least horrified. We did not feel that he had shown any 'startling deterioration in character,' or that we should 'abandon our standards' in regarding him as a great mind. It was simply that he had stepped off his pedestal for the time—that pedestal which the uninformed critic of Spiritualism demands that he must in the next world constantly occupy or for ever hold his peace. It would be a melancholy fate, that—and we commend the point to the attention of Mr. Bridges and some of our other critics, without in the least impugning their right to challenge the authenticity of messages put forward as specifically evidential when they are not so.

As we have shown, no claim is made on the evidential side for the messages contained in the book under review, but even as we are writing we note a significant passage in a long communication purporting to have been received from Mr. F. W. H. Myers:—

There has been no care taken of the mediums; and until there is, scientific demonstrations are very nearly useless. But

the heart-to-heart evidence may go on unremittingly and unceasingly.

That is worth thinking about because (whatever its source) its truth is a matter of knowledge and experience amongst us.

Dealing generally with the various messages, to our thinking they ring true. There is a note of sincerity and unaffectedness about all of them. Some of them struck us as decidedly characteristic of the givers, even allowing for the limitations of utterance entailed by the conditions in which they were received—limitations which none understand better than the experienced Spiritualist. Nowhere could we detect anything strained or unnatural. With every desire to be strictly impartial, we were fain to admit that some of the messages from those with distinguished names were very much what we should have expected from them in the circumstances. Withal, there is not one that, divorced from its setting, we should put forward as containing, for the outside observer, entirely intrinsic and convincing evidences of its source. There is always the conditioning influence of the minds of medium and sitters to be considered, and that is a matter concerning which the outside observer is at present in a state of almost invincible ignorance.

We propose to give further consideration to these spirit messages in a future issue. We feel that they are fully worthy of it.

THE SOCIAL PROBLEM AND THE SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE.

By HERBERT BURROWS.

An Address delivered on Thursday, January 25th, 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 57.)

To-night, of course, I am taking the spiritual universe for granted. It is not my business to argue against the materialist. This is not the occasion for it. Suffice it to say that the old hard and fast crass materialism, whether in science or philosophy, is dead and buried. There is no more room for it in human life, as we are beginning to know that life. But it may be well to remind you that even in human physiology the idea no longer holds. I will give you one quotation from a text-book on which I have drawn for some of my other illustrations:—

In many respects the body may be regarded as a mechanism, controlled by external circumstances, and converting the potential energy of food into the kinetic energy of warmth and movement.

This comparison is further justified when we find that in all processes of the body there is no creation of energy. All energy possessed by the body is derived from the potential energy contained in the food, which in its turn represents the stored-up energy of the sun's rays.

On these accounts many have thought that no other factors were at work in living bodies than the intermolecular relations which comprise the laws of physics and chemistry, and that even the supreme facts of consciousness might be explained in this manner. But past experience warns us to be very careful before accepting purely physico-chemical conceptions of any vital phenomena. Again and again, as we shall see when discussing the processes of absorption, secretion, respiration, &c., have purely physical explanations been put forward, only to be overthrown by further investigation.

In fact every cell in the body, like a conscious being, seems to have a power of selection, a power to eschew the evil and choose the good, the good being that which is necessary to its preservation as a unit of the cell community. A layer of living protoplasm, one twenty-thousandth of an inch in thickness, is able to take up materials on one side and discharge them on the other, in direct opposition to all known physical laws of diffusion and osmosis.

We may discover the functions of a living cell and the conditions of its activity, and, in general terms, the source from which it derives its energy; but beyond this, we have been foiled in all attempts to find out how the cell uses the energy of the food for its own aims. It does not at present seem likely that any physico-chemical hypothesis will ever explain how all the physical and intellectual peculiarities may be transmitted from father to son through one single minute cell, a spermatozoon, five hundred millions of which would hardly occupy one cubic millimetre.*

If there be any materialist here to-night I would warn him, in Professor Starling's words, to be very careful in the conclusions he draws from his physiological material science! (Hear, hear.)

What relation has all this to the Social Problem? Let us see.

What is the social problem? This fact, that in our present so-called civilisation very many of the conditions of our social life tend, not to the improvement, physical, mental, moral and spiritual, of the individual and the race, but to the deterioration and degeneration of men, women and children, and this not in one class, but in all. That in our social system justice and brotherhood are very often conspicuous by their absence. That instead of unity there is chaos, instead of harmony, disorder; instead of unselfish co-operation for the common good, selfish competition for the individual material advantage; instead of mutual self-sacrifice, the trampling down of the weaker by the stronger in the race of existence; instead of fellowship, which is life, the lack of fellowship, which is death. None of you will care to deny that this description I have given in general terms of present-day society is in the main true. Of course, there are redeeming individual features, but, broadly, my outline is correct. None of you will say that in present conditions we are producing the best all-round human beings or providing those generally good human conditions which tend to develop the best physical organisms or the most highly cultured mental, moral, and spiritual entities—in a word, none of you will defend our present system of society. What, then, have the believers in a spiritual universe—in a universe of law and order and harmony and beauty and unity and light and progress—to say to the social conditions of our time?

It is quite possible that some of you may say that as the spirit is all, the one reality, and therefore the most important thing, being the permanent, the other conditions of the body matter but little, and may be, if not absolutely ignored, still comparatively neglected—that they are but the passing transient things, and that our attention should be almost wholly centred on the spiritual life. I do not believe either in the premiss or the conclusion. The bodily life is a very important thing, and cannot safely be neglected without endangering the true manifestation of the mental, moral and spiritual. I do not ask you to believe in the theological Trinity—that is a matter for yourselves—but I do ask you to believe in the human quaternary, because that is a matter which affects us all. The bodily, the mental, the moral, the spiritual are so inextricably intertwined with each other that we cannot neglect one without harming all. If the object of true life be the all-round harmonious development of the individual as a whole, the fullest growth of every possibility, capability and faculty which makes for good, then what I say is but, of course, a truism. And that to me is the only real object of the true life.

What conclusion, then, do I draw from this? That the believer in the spiritual universe, who believes first in the great law of unity, that we are all members one of another, inseparably linked together by bonds which will be either golden cords or leaden chains, as we make them, and then in the further great law of brotherhood in the spiritual life on all planes, is in duty bound to try to carry out these conceptions of unity and brotherhood in the life here as well as in the life beyond. Nay, I will go further, and affirm that if the laws be not carried out here, then, for the professed believer in the spiritual life, the road to progress in the beyond will be, if not insuperably difficult, so toilsome that the progress will be incalculably delayed. You cannot violate law on one plane and then expect that violation to have no effect on the next. (Hear, hear.)

*Starling's 'Elements of Human Physiology' (1907), page 23.

So far as regards the social problem, then, the question resolves itself thus: Human life—the life of man, woman, and child—has infinite latent possibilities, because to you those possibilities are unending. Is it, or is it not, your duty to see that on this plane of existence those possibilities shall, as far as lies in your power, be given the fullest opportunity of development here and now? You agree to the full, it is your rooted and grounded faith, that in the spirit world one of the dearest privileges and duties of the emancipated spirit will be the helping, the succouring, the comforting of those who, from some cause or other, are lagging behind, and have not been able to see the light so closely as yourselves. One of the chief *raison d'être* of Spiritualism would fail if you did not believe that returning spirits could bring peace and consolation to those who are left behind. Why wait till you get to the other side to begin this beneficent work—why not commence it here and now? Other people, who do not believe in the spiritual universe, are doing it. Surely it is incumbent on you to do your share.

It is not an easy task. I know that many of you are individually and in unobtrusive ways trying to lift the burden of the world. But, unfortunately, the social problem has now grown to such dimensions that it cannot be solved by any individual efforts, however good or well-intentioned. It must be dealt with in the mass by the co-operative effort of the community at large, of which you are part, although, of course, individual effort must always have its due place and share. In fact, co-operative communal effort is but combined individual effort, differing only in this, that instead of, as in the latter, the efforts being devoted to many ends, often conflicting, the combined effort is the wisdom of the whole directed to that point at which it will have most effect and is likely to be of most service.

I shall not be surprised to find that for the last few minutes some of you have been uneasily muttering in your inmost minds the dread word 'Socialism.' Well, as most of you know, I am a Socialist, and I am proud of it, because I believe that at present the Socialists are the only people who have really gripped the economic side of this social problem, and who realise how much the true development of the mental and the moral depends on the proper solution of the physical and economic. But I think I may fairly say that I have not approached the subject this evening in any narrow or party spirit—at least, I have tried to avoid that. It is a subject on which I feel very keenly from all standpoints, and especially because I so strongly feel that it is but a mockery to try to approach the people on mental, moral, or spiritual grounds while they are left in social conditions which make the manifestation of these essential qualities, if not entirely impossible, yet most terribly difficult. (Hear, hear.)

Let me, in conclusion, give you one or two examples of what I mean.

Take the housing question. Not a quarter of a mile from this place (you need not go to the East End for it) are dens—you cannot call them houses—which are hardly fit for animals, let alone human beings. Men, women, and children crowded together in conditions which make even the semblance of decent physical life impossible, to say nothing of the mental, moral, and spiritual. What are you doing to alter and improve those conditions? To-day and every day little children and women, aye, and men, too, but especially the women and children, are being sweated almost to death by the selfishness of other men and women. What are you doing to alter and improve their condition? To-day hundreds of thousands of decent men and women, who would work honestly if they could, are tramping town and country with no work to do, daily deteriorating and sinking lower in the human scale, while bitterness and despair are daily growing in their hearts. What are you doing to alter and improve their condition? To-night as you leave this building to go to your comfortable homes you will brush by (I hope not disdainfully) the skirts of your sisters who often are selling their honour and their bodies for bread. What are you doing to alter and improve their condition?

Of old it was said, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' To-day that question is forced on all of us with increasing and ever-growing persistency, and the answer is, 'Yes, a thousand times yes!' Not only the keeper of your brother in the gutter, but of your sister in the streets of Piccadilly.

Why am I insisting so on this to you? Because this life is the feeding ground of those souls who presently will pass over to that other side in which you so strenuously believe. Presently you will have to meet them there, and woe to you if, when they then come to you with their griefs and their tears, their sorrows and their sins still thick upon them, and say to you, 'Were you not on earth my keeper?' you have to veil your faces in agony and cry aloud in the anguish of your souls, 'Alas, my brother! alas, my sister! I did not know, but I did not try to learn; to me the great law of unity, of brotherhood, of sisterhood, was as but an idle dream!'

In spite of my extreme Socialism, I have purposely refrained from even hinting to you my Socialist remedies. That was not my business. My task to-night was to attempt to show you something of the way in which I regard these two great twin subjects, to point you to what I believe to be certain fundamental and universal conceptions if life physical and spiritual is to be made a consistent and coherent whole, and above all to impress on you, in a humble but fervent way, that in brotherhood and sisterhood carried out to their fullest extent, to be worked out by each of you by the most careful thought and patient study on every plane of life, lie the only real solutions of the social problem, the only guarantee for the physical regeneration and the spiritual emancipation of humanity at large. (Loud applause.)

At the close of Mr. Burrows' address the Chairman invited questions and comments.

MR. J. L. MACBETH BAIN, as one who had gone about a great deal, speaking on Spiritualist platforms throughout the country, wished to assure the lecturer that on no platform could he enunciate Socialist principles with greater ease than on a Spiritualistic one. The Spiritualist movement, wherever he (Mr. Bain) had gone, was essentially Socialistic. 'All true Spiritualists,' exclaimed Mr. Bain, 'feel that we cannot be true Spiritualists if we are not Socialists!'

In reply to other speakers, Mr. Burrows said that he did not deny the importance of earnest and rightly directed individual effort, but the social problem had grown too big to be dealt with in that way. Side by side with individual effort must be communal effort—the effort of society as a whole. He instanced the feeding of the ragged, half-starved children in the schools. It was absolutely cruel to the teachers to compel them to try to stuff learning into children whose stomachs were empty. Thirty years ago Mrs. Besant and himself started the system of providing meals for the children, but their individual effort could do very little. Millions of meals were now provided by the London County Council. The Act that enabled the Council to do this was unfortunately robbed of half its effectiveness by the insertion of 'may' instead of 'shall,' and they were trying to get this altered. But here was where the principle which he had been speaking of came in. The physical condition of the children must be attended to. Neglect the body and the mind could not function properly, and if the mind and body suffered the spiritual part suffered also. In dealing with the question how individuals could help, he said that 'Care Committees' were appointed to see to the feeding, clothing, boots, work, &c., of the children. If any of his hearers lived near an elementary school he advised them to learn whether a Care Committee was being appointed, and in that case to go to their County Council member and see if he could not get them put on it. If they wished to help in solving the housing problem, or that of the unemployed, they could, no doubt, if they looked about them, find organisations in their own districts which would be glad of their aid. He did not wish them to take for granted anything he said, but, first of all, to study the social problem for themselves and then set to work. There were openings everywhere. He wanted to stir in them a divine discontent. It was idle to say that the country could not afford to spend money on education, the abolition of the slums, and the improvement of the condition of the people. There was quite enough money. The wealth produced in this country last year was two thousand million pounds. It was, he owned, often true that the people made the slums—that when decent accommodation was provided for them it rapidly became a slum. Yes, but what made these people what they were? It was the

conditions in which they had been compelled to exist, and to which they had become accustomed, that made them so hopeless and helpless, and that was why he was so anxious that the children should be reached and taught, for the future of the nation depended on the well-being of its children. He had no fear but that the best in them would respond.

Mr. WALLIS, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Burrows, alluded to the excellent and up-to-date educational work done by the Spiritualist Lyceums throughout the country.

The resolution, having been seconded, was carried unanimously.

NOTES FROM ABROAD.

In the January number of the 'Psychische Studien' Hans Hânig, Card. Phil., writes an interesting article on Spiritualism, of which we should like to quote the introductory words: 'As far as I can judge, Spiritualism has shed a new light on the various problems of human life; it has taught us to look from quite a different standpoint at the question whether there is within us a second life which begins its real existence only after death. Spiritualism has not only unfolded before our eyes many highly interesting phenomena, such as clairvoyance, thought-transference, &c., &c., but we owe to it a firmer footing on religious grounds amidst the storm and stress of our age, because through it we recognise that the road into the mysterious darkness of the hereafter may, after all, not be quite so impenetrable as our preconceived ideas had led us to believe.'

In the 'Uebersinnliche Welt,' Colonel Peters gives many authentic proofs of spirits leaving imprints as of burning from their hands and fingers, not only on various kinds of cloth or linen, but even on wood. A remarkable story dealing with the latter is taken from an old manuscript belonging to a monastery in the Black Forest. Counsellor Steinlin, a wealthy man who had passed away on September 9th, 1625, was evidently not at peace in the beyond. On the 25th of the same month he appeared to a tailor, Simon Blau by name, and entreated him to have Masses said for the repose of his soul. The tailor agreed to do so, upon which the unhappy counsellor asked him to shake hands in order to ratify his promise. Simon Blau, instead of shaking hands, held towards the counsellor a wooden chair, on which the apparition left the burnt impress of his hand, showing distinctly the outlines of the five fingers. Colonel Peters quotes another instance where the forefinger of the hand seemed somewhat small in comparison with the other fingers. On inquiries being made, it was ascertained that the apparition, who had left a burnt impress on a piece of cloth, had in his earth life undergone a surgical operation by which he had lost the tip of his right forefinger.

'Le Mouvement Psychique' announces that an association has been formed with the object of putting investigations with regard to the divining-rod and its use on a firm basis. This association is the outcome of a congress lately held at Hanover, and already many eminent and scientific men belong to it.

In the January number of the 'Neue Metaphysische Rundschau' it is stated that the late German Emperor Frederick, when still Crown Prince, had the following facts foretold to him. The prophecy is based on cabalistic calculations: The clairvoyante took a piece of paper on which she wrote the date of the Prussian revolution—1849. Underneath, in a vertical column, she put the figures of that year and added the whole together. This gave the year of the Franco-German War, 1871, which she predicted would see the birth of the German Empire. Again she wrote vertically the figures underneath this last date, and thus got the year 1888. For this year she predicted the death of the Emperor. Then the Imperial visitor asked one more question: 'How long will the German Empire exist?' The clairvoyante then added the figures of the last mentioned year together, as before, and the sum total amounted to 1913. So far the clairvoyante has proved correct. But, of course, time alone will show whether she has given an equally correct answer to the last question.

D.

MADAME E. D'ESPERANCE, writing to Mr. E. W. Wallis with reference to his experiences with the miners in the North of England, says: 'Your remarks as to the people in the North, the miners, I can heartily endorse: a finer lot of men, and women too, never lived. Many times in later years I have talked with so-called clever, intelligent investigators, but never any that had the intelligent, practical understanding of phenomena that those men of Seghill and neighbourhood possessed. I often recall with admiration the earnest work they did, and the pleasure one had in working with them.'

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 53.)

Of late years I have been able at times to give psychometric readings normally, and have occasionally given clairvoyant descriptions of spirit people with success, but I fully recognise that the power to do this is a result of the years of experimental training under spirit influence and guidance. On September 14th, 1895, a special representative of 'LIGHT' reported that he had been present when a few friends met at Lilian Villa, Hendon, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, Mr. Dawson Rogers being one of the company. I was also a visitor on that occasion. The representative of 'LIGHT' says:—

Amongst the company was a vivacious American, a stranger to us all. In the midst of the animated description of his adventures abroad, Mr. Wallis asked for silence, and said he thought he could tell the American something that perchance would interest him. With eyes closed and attention bent to his essay, he then described, in measured words and without any hesitation, a man; and so exhaustive, minute, and clear in detail was the description that anyone knowing a person who answered to it could have no room left for doubt that the picture was drawn from the life.

There was a tear in the American's eye, and he was filled with wonder, as well as deeply touched.

'Marvellous,' he exclaimed; 'you have described exactly, feature by feature, my brother who died suddenly very recently at San Francisco, California.'

Mr. Wallis: 'Give me something that you have constantly about you, keep quite quiet, ask no questions, and I will see if anything can be done.'

Taking the American's watch in his hand, and pressing it occasionally to his forehead, he gave the story of its owner's life, detailing boy and manhood, accident and vicissitude, troubles business and domestic, sicknesses, losses and gains. It was as if he were reading, slowly and carefully, like the good boy at school, a book whose leaves were the life of the man before him; and when he had done, nothing remained but to assent and confirm. With here and there a little item lost to recollection, the picture was a true one, remembered well in the main, and unquestionably accurate.

It is frequently urged that it is unkind to desire to communicate with our friends on the other side: that it holds them to the earth, retards their progress, and I know not what else. There may be a small degree of truth in this, if we are selfish in our longing for their companionship and make constant claim upon them, but when they come to us with loving thoughts and with desires to help, comfort and cheer us, I fail to see how such ministrations can injure either them or us. However, let me give you an experience that bears on this point. Visiting a Midland town, I found I was to be the guest of a young man who had recently lost his wife. I soon realised that he hoped to receive some 'test' through my mediumship, so I took an early opportunity to tell him that I was not a test medium. I knew that while he was so anxiously expectant it was improbable that anything could be given to him, and as I did not anticipate that he would receive any message through me I wanted to save him from disappointment. We roomed together and, on the second night, when he knelt at the bedside to say his prayers, I asked mentally: 'If there is any spirit present who can give me anything for this man, please give it to me now.' A feeling as of an electric shock passed through me and my attention was attracted to the corner of the room. There I saw a small silvery light, shaped like a cross, floating near the ceiling. It slowly sailed downwards and settled on his forehead. When he rose I mentioned the fact that I had seen this cross settle on his forehead. He was so overcome with his emotion that for a time the tears rained down his face and he could only ejaculate 'My God, my God, come at last!' When he grew calm he ex-

plained that before her passing he had asked his wife to try to return to him and make her presence known. 'She was a good Christian believer,' he said, 'and I told her I would not ask her to do anything that was wrong or that would harm her, but that if she was permitted, and could do so without injury, I should be delighted if she would give me some sign that she still lived. She promised, and,' said he, 'I bent down and kissed her, and, making the sign of the cross on her forehead, said, "Let this be the sign."' He had attended many circles and had had partial fulfilments of the promise, but never before the full sign. The compact was made entirely between themselves, and had never been divulged until it was related to me. Can you wonder that he was thrilled with joy and delight? (Applause.)

Early in 1902 Mr. J. B. Shipley, who was then living at Geneva, and a stranger to us all, wrote to Mr. Rogers. He said he had read in 'LIGHT' with much pleasure and interest the answers to questions given through my mediumship at a meeting of this Alliance. He wished to learn more about Spiritualism, and, if possible, to open up communication with his wife who had recently passed away. Mr. Rogers suggested that I should reply. While writing I felt that a spirit was present and set down in my letter the impressions I received regarding her. When Mr. Shipley answered my letter he enclosed a portrait of his wife, but on seeing it I felt that if that was his wife my description of her had been wrong; for the portrait appeared to be that of a large, full-featured lady, while my psychic perception had been of a small *spirituelle* person. However, Mr. Shipley said he did not like the portrait, for it was 'almost a caricature'—as his wife *was* a small woman; but it was the only one he had. He also said:—

I am indeed grateful to you for your letter, and if my assurance that this is the case can give you one hundredth part of the pleasure and joy that I derived from yours, you will feel repaid indeed.

Your description of my wife is absolutely correct in every particular; I repeat your words in case you have not a copy of the letter. My wife was, you say:—

'A bright, intelligent, capable woman, with more spirit than physical vigour. She seems to me to have a *directness*, an intuitive perception, that was really remarkable, and to have been artistic, with good appreciation of colours, form, and harmony. Quick, constructive, full of plans, she lived far more on the soul-plane than upon the earth. The body—while it afforded her a sensitive instrument—was lacking in the vigour and stamina that are so necessary for the maintenance of all-round health. If I am correctly interpreting the impressions I receive, I think she suffered in her head, and that there was trouble with her breathing—but I don't get that very clearly, so I will stop.'

Elsewhere you say 'she was persistent, and is so still.' Had you known my wife intimately during her whole life (and I cannot suppose that you ever had the remotest acquaintance with her) you could not have used more accurate, well-chosen words to describe her. I cannot even comment on your words so as to give a clearer picture. As a matter of fact, during her last illness of six months' duration, she was tormented by a long series of complicated derangements of the bodily functions, including pains in the head, and especially difficulty in breathing, as you may imagine from the fact that she had to be propped up in a sitting position in bed or reclining-chair during that whole time, to enable her to breathe.

Last year, shortly after the passing of our friend, the Rev. J. Page Hopps, I had an experience which I narrated in 'LIGHT' of April 22nd. I distinctly heard him speak to me. I had thought about him a good deal during the day, and on retiring found myself unable to sleep. Restless and depressed, I lay and pondered over many things, until at last, wearied out, I fell into a quiescent state, and in that calm my inner senses awoke and I heard the familiar tones of his voice. At first they were like whispers from afar, but as I listened they became more distinct and I heard him say, 'I am all right, my boy.' Then, after a pause, 'We will help you,' and, with emphasis, 'It is better.' Then again I lost his words and could only catch an indistinct murmur. But I had heard enough. Comforted and gladdened, I mentally repeated his words, determined that I would not forget them, and straightway fell asleep. Not many days later I awoke in the early morning as from a

dream, with the feeling that I had just left Mr. Hopps—that he had been telling me something about a review of a book. I could not recollect clearly whether it was that he regretted that he had been unable to write a review of some book for 'LIGHT,' or whether it was that he could not understand why I had not received a review that he had written, but I had a definite recollection of having been talking with him, and of his being uneasy, or dissatisfied, about something in connection with a review. I mentioned my experience to Mrs. Wallis and, on reaching the office, to Mr. South. He, however, was not aware that Mr. Hopps had had any book which he had not reviewed. A few days later Mrs. Hopps called at 'LIGHT' office and said that Mr. Hopps had left some manuscripts which he intended us to have. These she herself brought one evening later, and when I examined them the next morning I found, in an envelope, as if ready to be posted to me, a review of Havelock Ellis's 'World of Dreams.' It must have been almost, if not quite, the last piece of work that he had done. It is a curious coincidence that I should dream (if it was a dream) about this review of a book about dreams. (Applause.)

I am not much given to keeping statistical records, but in view of the frequently expressed opinion that the exercise of mediumship is injurious to mediums, the following facts may be of interest to you. In answer to my question, at one of my early sittings at Kingston-on-Thames, 'Am I a medium?' Mrs. Bullock's control said, 'Yes; you have a great public work to perform, your voice will be heard from platforms throughout the length and breadth of the land.' At the time I did not credit the statement, but its accuracy may be judged by the fact that during the past forty years I must have been under spirit control, as nearly as I can estimate without the actual figures, about ten thousand times; have given about five thousand trance addresses; have travelled at least a quarter of a million miles, and have been listened to by not less than half a million hearers. Yet I live to tell the tale! (Laughter.) So far from being injured, I can truthfully and fairly claim that I was never in my life more fit and capable than I am to-day, and during all these years I have not missed half a dozen engagements through ill-health. Is it any wonder that, when I read that mediumship leads to nervous instability, hysteria, and morbid developments of all sorts, I indignantly say, 'No, not mediumship (any more than preaching, painting, acting, or singing), but the misuse and abuse of it'? Nervous instability, hysteria, and morbid developments abound on all sides of us, and many, very many sufferers have been helped by Spiritualism to understand themselves and gain a healthy, normal, and happy state of body and mind. Mediumship, rightly understood and exercised, has saved a great many more from the madhouse than it has sent there. (Hear, hear.)

While I admit that there are difficulties, temptations, and dangers associated with mediumship, I deplore the tendency to exaggerate them, and by enlarging on them, to help to increase rather than diminish them.

Will anyone tell me of a walk in life—business, profession, occupation, or employment, not excluding those of the priest and the journalist—in which there are no temptations, difficulties, and dangers, and in which there are no neurotics, hysterics, or immoral and unreliable persons? I decline, absolutely, to admit that the high-principled, intelligent, and self-governing medium, or psychic, is injured by mediumship. Why should he be? Associating with like-minded spirit people, he *ought* to be helped and inspired—and he is. (Applause.)

I cannot conclude without bearing whole-hearted and loving testimony to the wisdom and helpful influence of those spirit-teachers and friends who have so faithfully associated themselves with and worked through me from before my seventeenth birthday till now. What my life would have been without their aid and guidance I, of course, am quite unable to imagine—but their mental and spiritual influences have played so large a part in my life-work that without them my career *must* have been entirely different. When first the honoured teacher, who is known to us as 'The Standard-bearer,' made his presence known through me and declared that he desired to develop me as a speaker, so that he might thus assist in spreading the knowledge of the spiritual life and its realities, he asked that I

would co-operate with him and that I would try to give him the best conditions possible for his work and make all the arrangements to afford him opportunities to address audiences. He promised, on his part, that he would be ready, when such occasions arose, to proclaim his message through me. Never, during all these years, has he failed me : never has he sought to infringe my personal rights and liberties : never in the slightest degree has he, or any other spirit, endeavoured to dictate, coerce or unduly influence me. My thoughts and feelings have been my own, my decisions have been my own. When I desire his advice or counsel he calmly and judiciously presents the alternatives, suggests various considerations, weighs up the case, and leaves me to decide (or I should say leaves us to decide, because in all these matters Mrs. Wallis and I, and her spirit friends as well as my own, work together). I have read and heard so much about the so-called 'psychological crime' of submitting to spirit-control—of 'losing one's individuality by becoming a trance-medium' and 'a variety of other alleged dangers and disasters—that I sometimes wonder if those who talk that way are dreaming, or unduly biased—or if they are misled by their preconceptions, or by the fears of theologians. Speaking from my own experiences, with knowledge of the results of my voluntary co-operation with my spirit-friends, and from my observations of the effects of mediumship on others, I thank God with all my heart that I have been privileged to be associated with His ministering spirits in their work for humanity.

So far from my mediumship having been an injury it has been an aid to health, strength and power—both of body and of mind. The re-active consequences to me of the thought-influences that have been brought to bear upon my mind and brain, and the teaching that I have been inspired to express, have been educational, stimulating and uplifting. Although, during the delivery of discourses, the ordinary processes of volition and consciousness are suspended, or inhibited, so that on regaining normal conditions I have no clear or definite recollection of what has been said through me while I have been in the 'magnetic sleep' state, yet the aggregate result to me has been helpful, stimulating, and beneficial. Just as continued association with thoughtful, earnest, true-hearted men and women in the body is bound to benefit anyone who co-operates with such persons, so my association with 'The Standard-bearer,' 'Lighthouse,' and others has been of great value to me. More I can hardly say ; the very nature of the case enjoins careful and temperate statement. Less I feel I ought not to say in justice to my trusted and beloved and faithful friends. It is one of my happiest anticipations, when I think of my passing over to the other side, that I shall meet those friends face to face, and enjoy such intercourse as is not now possible or expedient. Many a time, doubtless, I have fallen short of their expectations, and have failed to fulfil to the utmost my part in the mutual service in which we have been engaged, but, at the least, I can honestly say that I have *tried* to live up to the high ideal that they have ever set before me, and I feel deeply grateful for their unflinching patience and stimulating care. 'The Standard-bearer' tells us that the motto of the Brotherhood to which he belongs is : 'Truth is our creed, Love is our force, and Purity is our safeguard.' I have ever found him faithful to those three affirmations and to the spirit of his own words :—

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

—(Loud applause.)

The proceedings closed with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Wallis for his valuable and instructive address.

MR. GEORGE SPRIGGS wishes to thank the many kind friends who have written to him during his illness, and asks them to excuse his writing individual letters. He is making slow progress towards recovery, but is still confined to his room.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Edwin Jepson, in a short story in 'The London Magazine' for February, gives rein to his imagination in a circumstantial description of 'Mrs. Morrell's Last Séance.' He relates how a young girl materialises and how her father and mother, who are strangers at the séance, use their will-power to the utmost to compel her to stay with them. As a result the medium rises from her chair, sways and pitches forward on her face, half in and half out of the cabinet. The child exclaims, 'I can't get back,' her father catches her up, wraps her in a cloak, and he and his wife hurry from the room and are whirled away in a motor. The medium is found to be dead—shrunk, as light as a child, her black hair turned to a lustreless grey, her eyes pale and expressionless. The death of the medium is attributed to heart failure ; the father, mother, and child are never seen again. As a story of the 'shocker' type it is sensational enough, but it is calculated to do more harm than good because of its improbability—to put it mildly.

In 'The Occult Review' for February the Editor devotes his opening notes to a review of Mr. Alfred J. Pearce's 'Text Book of Astrology,' with a portrait of the author. This is followed by a notice of the artistic work of Mr. William S. Horton, illustrated with a portrait and four reduced illustrations from Mr. Horton's allegorical fantasy, 'The Way of the Soul.' In conclusion, we are given two portraits, side by side, of Mr. Vincent Turvey—one at the age of twenty-six, when, to quote Mr. Turvey's words, he was 'a healthy man of the world, with his psychic part dormant since the age of ten,' the other representing him as he is now, at the age of thirty-eight. These are of great psychic interest, the remarkable thing about them being, as Mr. Turvey himself points out, that while the second does not make him look two years older than the first, the two are so totally unlike that they would hardly be taken to represent the same person. The other contents of the number are 'Alchemy and Modern Science,' by Wm. R. Moore ; 'A Batch of Strange Stories,' by A. De Burgh ; 'The Holy Catholic Church a Mystical Society,' by the Rev. Holden E. Sampson ; and 'Divining for Water,' by J. D. L., besides some interesting correspondence and well-written reviews of periodical literature.

'The Vahan' for February devotes considerable space to letters dealing with methods of propaganda work in the interest of Theosophy. Some form of propaganda work seems to be thought advisable, but there is marked difference of opinion as to which method is most suitable. One writer suggests that occult teaching might be propagated a little more amongst the members ! Another is of the opinion that 'no one should be allowed to speak on the Theosophical platform who is not authorised, because all sorts of wild ideas may be, and are, preached in the name of Theosophy.' Another holds that 'those who have a message to give cannot be prevented from uttering it.' Qualified speakers are few in number, he admits, but speakers 'generally take care to state that their remarks have no sort of authority,' and, he reminds his readers, 'Theosophy has no tenets.' Another, who advocates propaganda, not to 'enrol huge numbers of "converts" but to spread the light' among those who are ready for it, holds that 'if we do not do our best to spread the light, it will burn lower and lower in ourselves,' and concludes with the exclamation, 'Woe unto us if we proclaim not the good tidings !' One opinion is much to the point. It is this : 'Infinitely more good is done by individual members always holding themselves ready to give out knowledge when it is asked for (or when they feel intuitively that it is needed) than by so many public meetings.' On page 129 the Editor, dealing with another matter, rightly says : "Deeds are what we want and demand" and the Fellows are asked to become Theosophists in their lives.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

'A Question of Evidence.'

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of the 27th ult. (page 41) Mr. Andrew Lang writes 'Now, almost all, if not all, professional . . . mediums have been caught in the act of cheating.' Is this a statistical fact ? If not, must it go unchallenged ? If true, is there not a convincing explanation of its inevitableness under average conditions of séances—apart, I mean, from direct wilfulness ? Though I fear few will be convinced of the inevitableness of fraud.—Yours, &c.,

RICHARD BUSH.

[It is true that a large number of public mediums, at some time in their career, have been charged with fraud, and that with

many of them so-called exposures have taken place. But it is not so true that these charges have been substantiated. In many instances they were doubtless unfounded and unjust, and were due to the ignorance and prejudice, respecting psychical phenomena, of those who made them. The mental attitude of the average sitter and the conditions of the average séance are such as almost inevitably to lead to such results as these. There is also to be considered the fact that many phenomena which are undoubtedly independent of the volition and conscious action of the medium bear to the inexperienced observer the aspect of fraud or are calculated to arouse his suspicions. —ED. 'LIGHT.']

Another Question of Evidence.

SIR,—A copy of 'LIGHT' (January 27th) has been sent to me, and I find, on the first page, that 'LIGHT' is 'a Journal of Research.' Nothing like a little judicious research, if you want to find anything. But from page 37 I cut the following passage:—

'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.'

When any person who makes researches as to the 'fire-walk' (and I do make such researches) reads this text he wrings his hands and weeps aloud, or swears profanely. What is your source for this yarn? 'An evening paper.' Evening papers, especially at a halfpenny, are known in the kingdom of Scotland as the 'evening lears.' Then the researcher (as is a researcher) asks, 'What evening paper, and of what date?' He wants the addresses of the percipients, Messrs. Nelson and Sawday, that he may obtain from them first-hand evidence; no other is genuine. To take a case: A most respectable elderly Earl once told me that he saw the notorious rope trick performed in India. I asked if there were any other English spectators. He named a most respectable Tory Member of Parliament (an acquaintance of mine). I then put the question to this gentleman, who told me that he had never seen any such performance anywhere.

There you are! He may have forgotten the incident. Neither Sir Henry Yule nor I could ever find first-hand evidence of the rope trick, after Ibu Batuta, writing six hundred years ago.

I have done the research for the fire-walk in a book which nobody ever read, 'Magic and Religion,' pp. 276-295. I give plenty of first-hand European evidence from Rarotonga, Fiji, Japan, Bulgaria, India, Trinidad, and Tonga. But I cannot add your Indian case on the evidence of 'an evening paper.' My Spanish and ancient Italian cases are at second-hand, and are merely illustrative, not evidential. For D. D. Home I had first-hand evidence; as also for Bernadette at Lourdes. If your honourable paper would give cases of all sorts of marvels at first-hand, and fresh recent evidence, it would be of more service to persons engaged in research than a wilderness of stories from unnamed and undated evening papers.—Yours, &c.,

A. LANG.

St. Andrews.

Spiritualists' National Fund of Benevolence.

SIR,—Kindly allow me through 'LIGHT' to thank the following friends who have sent donations to the above fund during January: Mr. J. Fraser Hewes, Nottingham, £1 1s.; 'B. C.', Bournemouth, £1; 'Four Friends,' Edinburgh, 15s.; Mr. T. W. Mair, Madras, 10s.; Lancaster Society, £1; Mechanics' Hall Society, Nottingham, 17s.; Darlington Society, 10s.; total, £5 13s. I would also thank Mrs. J. E. Portch (London), whose subscription of £1 was omitted from last month's acknowledgment. I would appeal to all warm-hearted Spiritualists on behalf of those who need immediate help during this severe weather. The above income does not meet demands. Truly it is blessed to give.—Yours, &c.,

M. A. STAIR.

14, North-street, Keighley.

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS A SPIRITUALIST.

The Mayor of Walsall (Councillor J. Venables), speaking at the annual prize distribution of the Walsall Spiritualists' Children's Lyceum on January 28th, referred to the fact that he had been connected with the Spiritualist movement in Walsall for upwards of thirty-five years. He mentioned that in the early days it was not easy to expound publicly the teachings of Spiritualism, but to-day men of all ranks were boldly upholding its claims. Referring to Spiritualism as an educational movement, he said that in the old times he and others used to meet, not only to gain wider knowledge of spirit communion, but to teach their fellow men, who had not been taught in their youth, how to read and write, that they might realise the benefits of education. He pointed out that Spiritualism had always been a potent factor in the direction of soul-culture and that it so influenced the minds of its adherents that they were energetic workers in all progressive movements which had for their ideal the upliftment of humanity. As Mayor of the ancient borough of Walsall, he felt proud to acknowledge the benefits he had received through Spiritualism, and said he had been amply rewarded for any discomforts he had experienced by the cheering messages he had received from those in the higher life, whom he and others had helped in the journey of life. He wished to impress on all the Lyceum scholars that it was their duty to help forward the cause of progress and spiritual science in every possible way. The Mayoress (Mrs. J. Venables), in responding to a vote of thanks for distributing the prizes, spoke of the sincere pleasure it gave her to present the books. She hoped the prize-winners would read and understand them, because good reading helped to develop good character, and a good character should be everyone's aim. Dealing with the value of Sunday-school training, she referred to the many well-known public men who mainly attributed their success in life to the lessons they had thus learned. The Lyceum aimed to assist children to cultivate their own minds and develop their best powers so that they might grow up to be of service to humanity, and she hoped that they would all do their utmost to make the Lyceum a success.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, FEB. 4th, &c.

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

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit influence, answered a number of questions in an able and helpful manner, deeply interesting all present. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided.—15, Mortimer-street, W.—On the 29th ult. Mr. Horace Leaf gave successful 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. L. Harvey conducted services. On the 3rd inst. successful meeting. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., 3 and 7 p.m., Mrs. Neville, clairvoyance.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD.—Madame Stenson gave an address. Sunday next, at 10.45 a.m., public circle; 6.45, Mr. Burton. Thursday, at 8, public circle.—J. J. L.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. E. W. Wallis's two addresses were much appreciated. Sunday next, Nurse Graham, at 7 p.m., address and clairvoyant descriptions.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mrs. A. Hitchcock gave an interesting address on 'This is my Body which is Broken for You.' Mr. E. P. Noall presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf, address.—W. H. S.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Morning, spirit teachings were given through Mr. Long; evening, Miss Ridge. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. Long. Subject, 'The Medium and the Mystic.'—M. R.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mrs. Cannock gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15, service; at 7 p.m., Miss Florence Morse, address and clairvoyance.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. Clarke gave excellent addresses. Mr. P. R. Street will speak next Sunday at 11.15 and 7 p.m., and give auric readings on Monday at 8, Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, circle.—A. M. S.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, address by Mr. Richards. Evening, address and clairvoyant descriptions by Mr. Horace Leaf. Sunday next, morning, circle; evening, address. 18th, Mr. G. F. Tilby. Mondays, at 3, circle in aid of the building fund. Circles: Tuesdays, at 8.15, healing; Thursdays, at 8.15, public.—A. C. S.