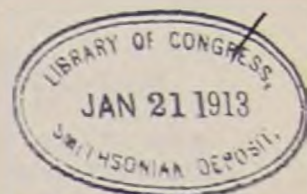


Light:



A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,670—VOL. XXXIII. [Registered as] SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1913. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.
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London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.
110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

Programme of Meetings for the Coming Week.

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Members Free; Associates, 1s.; Friends, 2s.

Seance for Clairvoyant Descriptions ... MRS. JAMBACH.
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For further particulars see p. 14.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

'LIGHT' AND THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

We beg to remind the Subscribers to 'Light,' and the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1913, which are payable in advance, that they should forward remittances at once to Mr. F. W. South, 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Their kind attention to this matter will save much trouble in sending out accounts, booking, postage, &c.

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Earnest Inquirer (lady) would like to join
good circle with private family, W.C. district, for research and messages; particulars at interview.—Address, 'M.D.,' care of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

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Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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No. 1,670.—Vol. XXXIII. [Registered as] SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1913. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	13	Mesmerism, Suggestion, and	
L.S.A. Notices	14	Thought-transference	18
A Departed Bishop Proves his		The Strange Case of Miss Orme ..	19
Identity	15	Psychic Investigation, with Illus-	
Symbolism and Science. By Miss		trations. An Address by Mr. H.	
H. A. Dallas	15	Biden Steele	19
The Study of Alchemy	16	'Cleon': A Poem by E. M. Holden ..	21
A Press 'Commissioner' and a		Items of Interest	21
Clairvoyante	17	Music: An Out of the Body Ex-	
Notes from Abroad	17	perience	23

NOTES BY THE WAY.

'The Stellar Ray' for November contains a noteworthy article on the curability of disease, in which the writer has some plain and pertinent things to say on the surgical craze for 'operating.'

An operation does not cure anything, and it is positively and absolutely unnecessary in any case of disease. In cases of accident, in traumatism [the treatment of wounds] a surgeon is needed, but in disease conditions he is a danger and a menace to life and health. The best a surgeon can do is to remove organs and tissues and the products of disease—not the disease itself. The latter is aggravated and often becomes incurable because of the injury.

We have sometimes thought that a fruitful cause of error in the treatment of disease is the disposition to study the phenomena of disease rather than those of health. We know what a bias the too concentrated study of any particular set of conditions is apt to give the mind. To hear some social reformers talk, for example, one would suppose the world reeked with infamy and social injustice. They have unconsciously trained themselves to see nothing else. There is spiritual, mental and physical health enough in life to remedy all diseases when it is properly directed.

The flow of 'New Thought' manuals, 'Health, Happiness, and Success' books, shows no signs of abating. To read some of them is like living in a world of rainbows and flying spray. Their transports move us at times to smiles rather of sympathy than contempt. There is something generous in the spirit of a writer who, having grasped even a fragment of a happy truth, is moved to sing and shout it ecstatically for the benefit of others. For the most part, then, we welcome books of this order, and our welcome is the more hearty when the book shows signs of maturity of thought and dignity of execution. Amongst volumes of this latter type we class 'Road to Freedom' by Floyd B. Wilson (Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Co., New York, 1d.). It is consecutive in its ideas, and sober in its reasoning—qualities worth notice in books of this kind—and the psychic element is introduced in an appropriate and suggestive way.

We noted with satisfaction in our reading of Mr. Wilson's little work that he has a very just estimate of the place of the intellect in the individual life. It is the custom to glorify intellect as something noble and radiant, but it is a relatively small faculty of the mind. A great scamp may be well endowed with it to the exclusion of that larger intelligence which is illuminated with sympathy and intuition. A great Seer may have only a

moderate quantum of intellect, but behind it may lie powers of spiritual vision that bring him into close relation with the highest truth. Mr. Wilson remarks, for instance:—

When I have failed in the accomplishment of purpose, I have found myself depending solely upon intellect.

The thinker who relies solely upon the intellect finds his thought sterile and his progress circular—if it can be called progress where one invariably returns to the point from which he started.

We were interested in Mr. David Devant's 'Reminiscences' in the Christmas number of 'The Strand Magazine.' It seems that the famous conjurer once visited a palmist at a bazaar, and he writes:—

She prophesied that I should become the proprietor of a theatre in the West-End—a place with a lot of lights in front of it. The theatre which she saw in the lines of my hand was not an ordinary theatre where plays were performed; in short, she gave a rough description of St. George's Hall as it now is. At that time I had not had one thought of ever earning my livelihood as I do now.

Mr. Devant remarks, however, that the palmist did not quite hit the mark, for he is not the sole proprietor of St. George's Hall, but the managing director. By the way, we do not think the palmist saw the theatre in the lines of Mr. Devant's hand as he suggests. The episode—which we accept as true on Mr. Devant's authority—is more suggestive of the prophetic clairvoyance with which we are familiar.

We observe with satisfaction that Mr. Devant is not so ungracious as to find fault with the prophecy because of the little discrepancy to which he alludes. We know of some persons who would consider a fulfilled prediction utterly discredited if it were not verified to the smallest detail. These remind us of the negro to whom in his sleep a spirit appeared and revealed to him the spot where a sum of fifty dollars would be found buried in the ground. On awaking Sambo hastened to the place indicated, and found a bag of dollars, but there were only *forty-nine*. He was extremely indignant, and afterwards nourished a bitter enmity against the ghost which, he declared, had stolen the missing dollar! That, of course, is only a 'funny story,' but we believe that some of our clairvoyants could relate experiences, almost equally farcical, concerning persons discontented with predictions of the future which although substantially verified did not correspond in every particular with the prophecy.

In an article on 'Dream Consciousness' in the 'Hindu Spiritual Magazine' for November, Dr Lal Sarkar, discussing the source of 'dream materials,' claims that:—

... the fragments of impressions, ideas stored up in the memory, and the associations arising out of them, which figure so largely in dream consciousness, come from the psychical entity and not from the physical body.

That argument is tremendously reinforced by a con-

sideration of clairvoyant and telepathic dreams. He would, indeed, be a bold dogmatist who claimed that such 'dream materials' were stored up in the cells of the brain. In fact, the physiological theory of dreams can only be logically presented by denying or ignoring all dreams which transcend physical possibilities. It may well be doubted whether psychic investigators have attained to more than a dim conception of the significance and resources of dreams and the dream consciousness in relation to the inquiry into the real nature of man.

As Dr. Sarkar well remarks, this class of phenomena has a biological significance which has not hitherto received due attention. He notes that the power of clairvoyance becomes evident in certain forms of dream consciousness, also in hypnotic states and certain abnormal conditions of the nerves. The faculty of clairvoyance is therefore, he claims, an evidence of some hidden faculty in man. Proceeding from the biological analogy that certain faculties (such as vision) which are absent in the lower forms of life are developed as those forms become more highly evolved, he concludes that the telepathic faculty of man is likely to be developed with his higher evolution. That is our own view. But we also claim (and Dr. Sarkar does not overlook the idea) that psychical faculties—clairvoyance and telepathy, for examples—supply hints or foreglimpses of powers which are to be exercised more freely and fully in the life beyond. Regarded from that point of view, they afford valuable illustrations concerning the methods of communication between one human being and another in the higher world.

Writing in 'Nash's' Holiday Special, on 'The World's Greatest Wish,' Elbert Hubbard declares that the one consuming wish of the world is for 'permanent peace among the nations, and peace with honour.' He insists that the cost of war outlives its oldest pensioner:—

The man too weak for war remains at home and perpetuates his kind. The warrior, unfitted by wounds and disease to fight longer, returns home to assist the man who escaped active service through weakness, and these two march their disabilities down the winding ways of time. And thus does the nation that conquers lose no less than does the one that is overcome. Only one party is victorious in war, and that is Lucifer and his allies, Woe, Want, Hate, Fear, Disease and Death. To-day the strength of a nation does not turn on its ability to fight but on its power to render service to other nations. It is productive skill that counts, not destructive ability. The permanent International Parliament, which is to hold its first meeting in San Francisco in 1915, will stand for international justice and universal common-sense. Big bodies of armed men are the greatest violation of common-sense that can be imagined. They are recruited and maintained by the forces of production, in order to destroy that which labour creates and human hearts hold dear. Only selfish interests maintain armies. To-day we have generated a world-spirit, and it remains only to give this world-spirit a voice through an International Parliament to make it effective. . . . All nations want the goodwill of all other nations, simply because the prosperity of the people demands amicable trade relations. The interests of the two countries are now so involved that if Germany could land an army in Great Britain and loot the Bank of England, it would ruin every bank in Berlin.

'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?

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

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

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, JANUARY 16TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MR. PERCY R. STREET

ON

'Psychic Development: Its Relation to Body and Mind.'

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 Thursday evenings:—

- Jan. 30—Rev. Lucking Tavener on 'The Spiritual Life as Expressed in Greek Art.' With sixty lantern illustrations.
- Feb. 13—Mr. J. I. Wedgwood on 'A Theosophic Conception of the Invisible Worlds.'
- " 27—Mrs. Despard on 'The Spiritual Aspect of the Woman's Movement.'
- Mar. 13—Miss Estelle W. Stead on 'What Spiritualism Means to Me, and Some Messages Received.'
- " 27—Mr. E. W. Wallis on 'Spiritual Emancipation by the Elimination of Fear.'
- Apr. 10—Mr. Angus McArthur. (Subject to be announced.)
- " 24—'Cheiro' on 'Hands of Famous People.' With lantern illustrations.
- May 8—Miss Felicia Scatcherd on 'Psychophasms and Skoto-graphs': psychic pictures produced in darkness.

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

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, January 14th, Mrs. Jamrach will give clairvoyant descriptions of spirit people 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. 21st, Mr. A. Punter.

PSYCHIC CLASS.—On Thursday next, January 16th, at 5 p.m. *prompt*, address by Mrs. Bell on 'Dreams and their Significance,' to be followed by discussion.

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

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, January 17th, 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 Wednesdays and Saturdays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—On January 15th (Wednesday next), 22nd and 29th, Evening Meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., at 8 o'clock, at which Mrs. Minnie Nordica will give clairvoyant descriptions. Admission 1s. each.

A DEPARTED BISHOP PROVES HIS IDENTITY.

The following article, forwarded to us by Mr. Henry Glasse, of Port Elizabeth, Cape, South Africa, was contributed to the 'Eastern Province Herald' by a member of the circle referred to:—

It has fallen to the lot of a small circle meeting for spiritual instruction in this town to receive a most conclusive test of spirit identity. . . . The giver of the test claims to be the Right Rev. William Collins, D.D., late Bishop of Gibraltar, and came in company with the late Bishop Strobino, formerly of this town, and with whom the writer was well acquainted. This much is mentioned for the proper understanding of the nature of the proof given.

At a circle held on June 12th last, and after discourses had been given both by Bishop Collins and Bishop Strobino, a control and guide, who habitually communicates under the name of 'Pasha,' remarked, in reference to the former: 'Read his "Hours of Insight"; he wants to make comments on it.' Inquiry was made for the book, but no information whatever could be obtained regarding it.

On June 19th Bishop Collins gave the following message: 'I want you especially to get the book of mine, "Hours of Insight," publisher Murray; it will please me very much, please Mrs. — (the medium), and give the proof; and at the same time I shall be able to make alterations for you. It is a book of sermons. You will see the meaning at once. I want to go deeply into this, and that is why I want to give you the one unheard of by you to test it, and it will deal with one of your questions.' No pains having been spared to obtain information regarding the book, both in Port Elizabeth and in Capetown, and as it was not to be found on the list of Murray's publications, the writer ordered it through a local newsagent.

At the circle held on June 26th the Bishop again manifested his presence, and was told that the book had been ordered; to which he replied, 'I am pleased you are getting the book. You will get it; then I will make the comments. I shall be glad to think that I had done a service to you and the spiritual cause. I feel that I thank God those sermons have been published.'

In due course the book arrived; it was sealed at the book-seller's, sealed by a gentleman before passing into the writer's hands and again with an official seal. On August 21st the package containing the book, still sealed, was placed on the table in the midst of the circle, and the Bishop's advice was asked. The following was his reply: 'I humbly thank the Father that He has allowed me to prove to you that I, a human being who trod the earth before you, have come from that Glory Land I passed into to visit you. I have come to teach and give you scientific proof. I think you will agree with me that the book is in itself a strong test, still I must let you know of one circumstance. In the book, "Hours of Insight and Other Sermons," you will find my ideas on Episcopacy, the government of the Church by Bishops and Prelates; also the Colonial view. You can do whatever you think best. I want you to notice that I preached the view I then held, that the Church should be ruled by its bishops. I now do not hold that view. I think I cannot do better than let you first see if that is what I stated. I want you to do whatever you think best. You will find that it will surprise you. Do not be too curious; if you can do some good, leave it unopened, and see then in the presence of stranger, if I am right.'

On the following morning the packet was taken to the office of the gentleman who had sealed it, and after reading the communication of the previous evening, the seals were removed, the book opened and found to contain the chapter on Episcopacy and the words 'and other sermons' added to the title 'Hours of Insight.' Inspection of the title-page also disclosed the fact that the work was a posthumous one, published in the present year, and perhaps still in the press at the time it was ordered; this the writer will verify by communicating with Murray, and publish later.

The points that give value to this test are the following: Firstly, only two persons in the circle had any knowledge of the existence of the late Bishop of Gibraltar, and that only through having seen him in this town some years ago. Secondly, no member of the circle knew of the publication of the book until informed of it by an invisible presence. Thirdly, it was practically impossible that they could have acquired any such previous knowledge, when we consider that booksellers here and in Capetown were ignorant of it, neither was the work mentioned in the latest catalogue issued by the publisher.

On Friday, January 17th, at 8 p.m., Mr. J. Foot-Young will give an address on 'An Hour with the Divine Rod' at 'Durie Dene,' Bibbworth-road, Cyprus-road, Church End, Finchley, N. Visitors invited.

SYMBOLISM AND SCIENCE.

By H. A. DALLAS.

In the September issue of the S.P.R. 'Proceedings,' Dr. Maxwell publishes an able criticism of cross-correspondences and recent methods of experimentation.

Although many will be unable to agree with the valuation he sets upon some of these experiments, we cannot but recognise the wholesome character of his criticism, and of the warning that the search for cross-correspondences and subtle meanings is liable to become dangerous, since investigators may easily mistake their own ingenuity for genuine discoveries. I refer to Dr. Maxwell's article, however, chiefly to comment on his view that the 'gravest peril of the new methods' of experiment consists in the fact that they are 'ultimately founded upon analogy and symbolism'; analogy and symbolism being, he thinks, 'outside the realm of scientific inquiry.' ('Proceedings,' Part LXV.)

Everyone will agree that symbolism is apt to be misunderstood, and, therefore, that caution is needed in its study or use; but this admission on the side of Dr. Maxwell's contention does not involve the acceptance of his statement that 'symbolism is outside the realm of scientific inquiry,' for no aspect of human development can be outside this inquiry, least of all that aspect which concerns the mode of communication of mind with mind. By the use of symbolism man has learned to communicate his ideas, and the roots of language bear traces of the rudimentary symbolism by which our savage forefathers named the objects around them, as well as the conceptions of their primitive religion. The hieroglyphics of Egypt show us pictorial symbolism in process of becoming sign language. How, then, is it possible to contend that science has no concern with the interpretation of symbolism, since it is manifestly spontaneously used by man in his early stages, and not only developed by the culture of later civilisation? In 'Human Personality,' Frederic Myers says: 'Science has deliberately created for herself an arbitrary system of signs.' (Vol. I, p. 99.)

When we study automatism, whether of utterance or writing, we should naturally expect to find ideas expressed through symbolism, and that on any hypothesis. For if what Dr. Maxwell calls a 'crepuscular state of consciousness' accompanies these automatic phenomena, it is highly probable that the intelligence working through this dim state will take the course of least resistance, and revert to the primitive human method of expression—namely, through signs or symbols. Frederic Myers seems to recognise this probability when he writes:—

Our subliminal mentation is less closely bound to the faculty of speech than our supraliminal. ('Human Personality,' Vol. I, p. 98.)

And again:—

I think that an intelligent study of visual and motor automatism will afford us sufficient proof that symbolism—at any rate, pictorial symbolism—becomes increasingly important as we get at the contents of those hidden strata. Telepathic messages especially, which form, as we shall see, the special prerogative or characteristic of subliminal communication, seem to be conveyed by vague impression or by inward or externalised picture oftener than by articulate speech. ('Human Personality,' Vol. I, p. 100.)

It is apparent from this that Frederic Myers regarded the symbolic mode of expression as an inherent quality of the automatic phenomena to which he devoted so much scientific attention. But I venture to question this statement of Dr. Maxwell's not only on the authority of this expert researcher, to whom he pays a tribute of respectful praise by saying that his work is of the best quality (*de premier ordre*), but because a study of my own automatic speaking and writing emboldens me to believe that science must include symbolism in its field of inquiry if it is to arrive at any just interpretation of these automatic phenomena. And this whether the hypothesis adopted be a Spiritistic one or otherwise; in either case the *idea* is present to the intelligence *first*, and its expression comes as a secondary consideration. The *idea* may be expressed in many ways, or before it finds expression at all it may start an analogous idea in the mind at work, or

an associated idea, and any one of these may find expression in some symbol through the tongue or hand of the automatist.

For instance, Mrs. Thompson's control 'Nelly,' on one occasion, gave a description of children playing in a field, where the name of the person connected with this 'message' was 'Merryfield.' Would Dr. Maxwell regard it as unscientific to assume that the intelligence at work, whatever it was, was struggling to express the *idea* conveyed by the name and did so in the way that most readily suggested itself, and was most easily adopted by the medium? The fact is that we should make fewer errors in our interpretation of automatic messages if we always bore in mind the simple fact that the idea exists in the mind of the communicating intelligence first, and that words and symbols are secondary—are the tools, in fact, with which the intelligence works—and that these are often picked up, so to speak, in the mind of the medium, and therefore are not always characteristic of the source of the idea. A 'control' has to make the best of the language it finds in the mind of the medium. We know that it has been possible sometimes to speak even in a tongue foreign to the medium; but these cases are rather rare. More frequently the phraseology is that of the medium, who is guided to use familiar language with a significance often not understood by the automatist.

Frederic Myers seems thus to have used the material in the minds of his mediums, and also to have been able to supplement it by symbols deeply embedded in his own mind. To those familiar with his writings it seems quite natural and appropriate that he should have found the path of least resistance for the expression of the ideas he wished to convey in the symbolism of classical legend or in the poetry of Browning and Tennyson.

Dr. Maxwell illustrates his objection to symbolism by citing Mr. Piddington's interpretation of the introduction of the words 'a knot of blue ribbon' into a script of Mrs. Verrall's. This phrase was, Mr. Piddington thinks, an attempt to lead up to the name of 'John,' which the control wished to give, and which seems to have formed part of a cross-correspondence. This appears to Dr. Maxwell to be a piece of far-fetched symbolism. When read with the context it bears another character, but even then it will be difficult for *anyone* not brought up in our country to recognise the legitimacy of the suggestion that it is an attempt to lead up to the word 'John.'

When we study the context it seems clear, however, that the phrase, 'a knot of blue ribbon,' should not be understood as a symbol, and is not so used either by the controls or Mr. Piddington. It is simply an *associated idea* connected with the name 'John.' The facts are these:—

On March 18th and 19th, 1907, Dr. Richard Hodgson claimed to communicate through Mrs. Piper, the sitter being the wife of an intimate friend of his at St. John's College, Cambridge; the friend's name was John Russell. On the 18th Dr. Hodgson said, 'Cup used. C. C.' This appeared to indicate a cross-correspondence to be sought for. On the same day he gave the name 'Jack.' On the 19th he said, 'When I said Jack or John, you did not understand.' Thus he insisted on the name being taken notice of. Mrs. Verrall did not know Mr. John Russell, neither did she know that Dr. Hodgson had a friend of that name, nor that he and his wife were to have a sitting with Mrs. Piper on that date; hence there is no normal way in which to account for the coincidence that her script of the 19th contained *both the names John and Russell, and also the drawing of a cup.* ('Proceedings,' Vol. XXII, p. 181.) Also, on the 20th, the words occurred: 'The Evangelist is our patron, and we keep his feast,' which looks like an allusion to the College of St. John the Evangelist, at Cambridge.

With these correspondences in view, it is not surprising that Mr. Piddington should have suggested that the phrase with which Mrs. Verrall's script of March 19th began, namely, 'a knot of blue ribbon,' may have been introduced by the control in order to lead her to write the name 'John.' But, as I have said, the appropriateness of this will be more readily recognised by an English reader than by one less familiar with the old and

well-known song, which is to many of us a part of the memories carried with us from our childhood:—

'Oh, dear! what can the matter be?

Johnnie's so long at the fair;

He promised to buy me a bunch of blue ribbon

To tie up my bonnie brown hair.'

It should be borne in mind, however, that this particular allusion is of quite minor importance, and that if it were omitted the incident would still remain as a striking coincidence, or, as some readers will agree with me in thinking, as an instance of what looks like a deliberate and purposed cross-correspondence.

In conclusion I should like to reiterate my sense of the value of Dr. Maxwell's warning, and my recognition that there is serious risk that, in the search for hidden meanings and subtle suggestions, we may overlook evidence of supernormal phenomena bearing on the most important question of identity, which evidence lies at our doors and claims our attention none the less because it is obvious.

THE STUDY OF ALCHEMY.

By H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc., F.C.S.

Common opinion regards the mediæval alchemist as a pseudo-scientist—half charlatan, half fool—whose quest was merely that of material wealth, to be gained by means of the Philosopher's Stone—a wholly fabulous agent that would rapidly convert lead and other base metals into pure gold. No doubt both charlatans and fools did pretend to the title of alchemist; but frequently the genuine alchemist was inspired by the lofty aim of the discovery of truth*—and frequently he was by no means lacking in wisdom, even if his methods were alien to those of modern science. Indeed, in contradistinction from common opinion, one school of thought maintains that the alchemists were concerned purely with spiritual processes concerning the regeneration of man's soul, and that their usage of chemical terms was purely symbolic. I do not believe in this theory, for the lives of the alchemists (as Mr. Waite has pointed out) indicate that the majority of them were concerned about purely chemical and physical processes—indeed, many discoveries in chemistry were due to their labours. But no more do I believe that a purely physical explanation of its aims will solve the riddle of the origin and nature of alchemy. It is, indeed, incredible that the alchemistic theory of the Philosopher's Stone—a theory at once so marvellous and so fantastic—should have originated through any misinterpretation of chemical experiments. Everything indicates that the alchemists reached it by *a priori* reasoning, and that the premises from which they started were (1) the truth of mystical theology, especially the doctrine of regeneration or new birth; and (2) that nature is the symbol of supernature, that 'what is above is as that which is below, what is below is as that which is above.' Starting with these assumptions, which are certainly not destitute of truth (to say the least), they attempted to work out a system of natural philosophy which was to be proved experimentally. 'In the metals they saw symbols of man in various stages of spiritual development; and since mystical theology asserts that man is triune in nature, consisting of body, soul, and spirit, so the alchemists argued there must be three principles in the metals. These they called *salt* (the principle of solidity, corresponding to body), *sulphur* (the principle of combustion, corresponding to soul), and *mercury* (the metallic principle *par excellence*, corresponding to spirit). Lead, they said, was a very base metal, containing much impure sulphur, because it is readily acted on by fire; whilst gold they regarded as the most noble metal, being pure mercury matured by pure sulphur. These mystical views led them to assert that the metals were gradually evolved one from the other in nature's womb. The transmutation of base metals into silver or gold was, to the alchemist, the physical analogue of the regeneration of the soul by the Spirit of Christ. To have achieved

* As one alchemist remarks: 'Would to God that all men might become adepts in our art, for then gold, the great idol of mankind, would lose its value, and we should prize it only for its scientific teaching.'

this, the alchemists fondly believed, was to have gained the One Thing which is at the root of all things physical; and it was as the final proof of their theories rather than as a means of gaining wealth that they so ardently toiled to effect this transmutation.*

In this effort the alchemists appeared to have failed; and with the progress of scientific knowledge and research the alchemistic explanations of chemical and physical phenomena were felt to be unsatisfactory. Indeed, many of the theories of the alchemists are fantastic in the extreme. But we should err, I think, if we declared them to be entirely false. Recent researches in physical science show that the so-called elements are one in essence, and are produced by an evolutionary process, though gold, no doubt, is not the end product. And I venture to assert further that there is, indeed, a correspondence, an exact analogy, between natural process and spiritual fact†; though the details of this correspondence may be quite otherwise than as conceived by the alchemists.

The alchemists did not proceed by the slow and safe method of modern science, that is, by the patient investigation of phenomena, questioning nature at every step in the formulation of a theory. Their method was otherwise. With bold speculation they allowed their imaginations to spring ahead, constructing a complete philosophy of the natural and the spiritual on the strength of but few facts. This method landed them in many errors. But they seem not to have been destitute of an intuition which enabled them to grasp certain fundamental facts of the Cosmos; and their works, amongst much that is dreary reading, contain flashes of insight, and hints and suggestions of very great value for those who are able to avail themselves of such.‡

In fine, the works of the alchemists are worth studying, and present many problems of interest. At the least, one can say of alchemy that it was an important phase in the development of human thought that has been too much neglected. At the best it contains some truths that have been forgotten.

Readers will, no doubt, be interested to learn that a society has recently been formed for the study and investigation on a purely neutral basis of the works and theories of the alchemists and the problems thence arising. These objects it will endeavour to attain by means of lectures, discussions, and the publication of a journal. Further particulars may be obtained from the hon. secretary of the Alchemical Society, addressed c/o Messrs. Rider & Sons, 8, Paternoster-row, E.C.

A PRESS 'COMMISSIONER' AND A CLAIRVOYANTE.

'The Liverpool Weekly Mercury' of the 4th inst. contained a description by its Special Commissioner of his visit to the Birkenhead Spiritualist Society. After a short address the medium told the Commissioner that she saw a spirit behind him—a tall, straight man—who was dressed like a Church of England clergyman. After giving details of his appearance, she asked, 'Can you place him, sir?' The reply being in the negative, she continued: 'The impression is quite clear, sir. I hear the gentleman calling out a Christian name; I think it is yours. I hear him quite distinctly calling "Charles! Charles!"' The revelation came to the Commissioner as a shock, and he answered that it was his Christian name. 'Yes,' she said, 'and I fancy the gentleman whom I see, and who died about twelve years ago, was also named Charles. Had you a relative who died about that time who bore such a name?' Again he confessed it was so. Turning to a lady who was sitting near the Commissioner, the medium described a beautiful girl, and said: 'She, too, is calling a Christian name, which I think is yours. It is either Rosalind or Rosemary. Do you know the lady?' Although the lady did not recognise the form of the spirit, the Commissioner knew that her own Christian name was Rosemary, and she confirmed this by telling the clairvoyante that the name was correct. To another lady the medium said: 'I see a man wearing a coat with large pockets. He is surrounded by a pack of dogs, and carries a gun. Well built, healthy appearance, a hardy man, I should say he was a gamekeeper, and had been dead a number of years. He was a near relative. Can you place him, lady?' 'Yes; he was my grandfather,' she replied. 'He was a keeper.' The 'Mercury's' Commissioner will not, we imagine, easily forget his first Spiritualistic experience.

* Quoted, with slight alterations, from a report of a lecture by the present writer in the 'Brighton Standard' for August 6th, 1912.

† Swedenborg has much of value to say on this point.

‡ Readers interested may follow the subject further in my 'Alchemy, Ancient and Modern' (1911).

NOTES FROM ABROAD.

In a recent number of 'Psychische Studien' an account is given of a mysterious episode in the life of Chopin, which originally appeared in the 'Neue Wiener Journal.' Some time before his death Chopin found himself at the end of his resources. Several of his intimate friends who were aware of this, addressed themselves on his behalf to two Scottish ladies, Mrs. Erskine and her sister, Miss Stirling, who had before befriended the unfortunate musician. Mrs. Erskine, in her reply, expressed her astonishment that Chopin should have spent in the course of the preceding three months the considerable sum of twenty-five thousand francs which she had sent to him through a trusty messenger. This man emphatically declared that he had handed the money in a sealed envelope to Chopin's former landlady, Mme. Etienne, whose honesty was above suspicion; she, however, denied any knowledge of the letter. In this dilemma the messenger consulted Alexis, a well-known clairvoyant, who told him: 'I see that you have delivered a sealed letter at a certain house, but this letter did not reach its proper destination. The woman to whom you handed it promised to take it immediately to the person to whom it was addressed, but instead of doing so she busied herself otherwise, and forgot all about it.' When Chopin was informed of the vision, he obtained by a clever ruse some hair of his former landlady's and sent it to Alexis, with the request that he would try and see what she had done with the missing letter. Alexis assured Chopin that it was lying intact in the drawer of a small table standing by the side of a bed. He added at the same time that if the landlady were cautiously reminded of the whole transaction, she would eventually produce the letter. The messenger went to Mme. Etienne and did as Alexis had advised. Mme. Etienne became terribly frightened, and at last confessed that she had put the letter away in a hurry and forgotten all about it. On searching her room she found it in the drawer indicated by Alexis. This recovered money relieved Chopin from much anxiety, and soothed the latter part of his life to a considerable extent.

In 'Le Fraterniste' we come across a discussion on the question whether we should initiate our children into the doctrines of Spiritualism. The arguments advanced by the various correspondents form attractive reading. They are all more or less in favour of making children acquainted with Spiritualism, but at the same time advise caution so as not to frighten the little ones when telling them of the return of spirits and their intercourse with us. A lady correspondent says: 'By all means let our children be taught the doctrines of Spiritualism; they will learn by it love and charity towards one and all. Let them realise that we are surrounded by good influences, and that by obeying them they will create for themselves their future happiness.'

'L'Academie des Sciences' has forwarded us its report about the Fanny Emden prize. As our readers are probably aware, Madame Julia de Reinach gave to the above society in 1910 a donation of fifty thousand francs. Every two years the interest on this sum, amounting to three thousand francs, was to be awarded as a prize, to be called the Fanny Emden Prize, for the best work on hypnotism, suggestion, and, in general, on any psychological actions which may be exercised from a distance on any animal organism. The donor gave an additional sum of three thousand francs which enabled the society to announce a competition for the year 1911. The result of it was made known some time ago. M. Emile de Boirac received two thousand francs for his writing on 'Unknown Psychology,' and the remaining thousand francs were awarded to M. J. Ochorowicz for his work entitled: 'Hypnotism, Mesmerism and Mental Suggestion.' This year the competition will again be opened, subject to certain conditions, the principal being that all manuscripts must be in French, and sent in not later than December 31st.

'The Survival of Man,' by Sir Oliver Lodge, forms the subject of a lengthy discussion in 'La Revue Spirite.' The same paper presents to its readers in every monthly issue some elevating or consoling thoughts, of which we quote the following: 'Prayer and will-power are the two greatest forces which man has at his command. Prayer dissipates the heavy clouds which surround us; it brings joy to our heart, and seems to detach from the barren soil our weary and, at times, wounded feet.' 'When man lifts his thoughts to God the exterior world, with its manifold distractions, disappears before his eyes; he enters into the mysterious sanctuary of his soul, where he holds communion with the Infinite. At such a time the tumultuous waves which previously agitated his heart and soul sink to rest, and during this perfect calm he listens undisturbed to the Divine Voice that speaks to him.'

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 11TH, 1913.

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. F. W. South, Office of 'LIGHT,' to whom Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable.

Subscription Rates.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c. To France, Italy, &c., 13 francs 86 centimes. To Germany, 11 marks 25 pf.

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MESMERISM, SUGGESTION, AND THOUGHT-TRANFERENCE.

Some time ago an inquirer wrote to us on the subject of Mesmerism, asking such questions as these: 'Is there danger in Mesmerism?' 'Can a person be mesmerised unconsciously?' 'Is it right to use Mesmerism medically?' 'Is it a good or evil influence?' In our reply we set forth a few practical thoughts which are by no means in harmony with most experts' conclusions. For instance; broadly speaking, we hold that Hypnotism is only Mesmerism in a new coat, and that Thought-transference and Suggestion are only aliases of Hypnotism in varying intensities. This is rather borne out by the fact that many methods which were once deemed essential are now proved to be unnecessary. It does not seem to matter what the subject gazes at, for instance—a penny in the hand, a suspended shining ball, or the tip of the nose, or nothing at all—though, of course, concentration and passivity help. The only thing really essential seems to be an operator's will, though that also is doubtful, for do not the experts tell us that Telepathy can work like a microbe or a draught and that one susceptible subject can catch a picture or a thought as another can catch the cholera or a cold?

Our own impression is that, call it what we will, this thing is simply universal, as the emission of influential thought. Millions upon millions of persons mesmerise or hypnotise who do not intend to do anything of the kind, and who would not know the meaning of the words. Thought-transference and Suggestion are as old as the hills.

How apt we are to delude ourselves that we have started something when we have got a theory about it and given it a name! From unsuspected influence tremulously begun, right up to what looks like absolute conscious control, the thing has never ceased. The poets, the dramatists and the law courts, nine-tenths of their time, deal with the world's queer cases of infatuations.

Is there one of us who has not wondered at the world's astonishing experiments in the matter of 'falling in love'? Who can explain it? We have shuffled out of the puzzle by a pious jest, and say that 'marriages are made in Heaven'; as though one said, in blunter language, 'Why he married her (or why she married him) God only knows!'

The young gentlemen who come round every morning with the milk, the potatoes, the grocery and the bread, know absolutely nothing about Mesmerism and Hypnotism, and

would be horrified if one accused them of it: but all the same they are all at it, with the well-favoured housemaid, who lately has omitted several of her nice attentions to our water-bottles, our cruets, our newspapers and our shoes. We have gone through it all before. It does not at all matter what the experts call it, or how they differentiate it from that and this—it is the old, old story—Thought-transference, Suggestion, Telepathy, Hypnotism, Mesmerism, Fascination, Delusion; and it all came in with Adam and Eve.

We are now fully prepared to answer the gravest questions that anybody can put to us, 'Is this thing, whatever it is, good or evil?' But our diagnosis has already answered that. One might as well ask: 'Is a pocket-knife good or evil?' or 'Is violin-playing good or evil?' It may be either. If you use a pocket-knife for nice and useful purposes, it is good; but if you use it to cut off the baby's toes, it would generally be thought to be evil. So with violin-playing. Of it we should say, as the poet said of a little girl,

When she was good, she was very, very good;
But when she was bad she was horrid.

Perfectly true; and that is our answer about Mesmerism or Hypnotism. It all depends upon the people who deal with it; or, in other words, it all depends upon what people think and wish and do: but that applies to everything.

But we hold fast to the doctrine that every law of Nature is right: every possibility of every law is right: every natural force or faculty is right. If not, Nature is a compound of God and demon. The wrong comes in with our ignorance, our misuse, our selfishness, our cunning which is the ugly perversion of wisdom. What are wanted are knowledge, patience, self-control, goodness, mercy, love. Then all will be well.

Here is our reason for giving a fair field and an open road for experiment. Would we stop Hypnotism by law? Why? Because, as a new thing, it is ill-used? But that surely is an argument, not for suppression, but for enlarged publicity. If there are dangers, out with them! Let us ventilate the subject: let everybody hear: let all men be on their guard: but let us not try to dam the flow of a mighty force, or leave it to work only in secret and the dark.

But, if Mesmerism and Hypnotism are what we say they are, no law could suppress them, simply because no law can suppress the play of strong emotion or energetic thought, any more than it can suppress the subtle compulsions of the will or—making love.

But there is a path of safety which needs pointing out everywhere—a veritable gospel of to-day. Would that ministers and doctors, parents and nurses, teachers and philanthropists, would everywhere proclaim it. Our correspondent asked: 'Can a person be mesmerised unconsciously?' The answer entirely depends upon the person. But, with regard to that question, and every other question which seems to indicate fear, we would say: No one need fear any evil who will be habitually self-possessed: and self-possession is an art which can be learnt. The Gospel we preach is the Gospel of Will, Patience and Work: Will, to give a hold upon the inner self; Patience, to give the blessing that can only come with time; and Work, to fill the life, and always with a saving power in proportion as we can put elements of unselfish helpfulness into it. On these lines, one may say: 'I will not fear what man can do unto me'; yes! and on these lines, one can say: 'I will fear no evil,' for against such an one the very 'gates of Hell' cannot prevail.

THE STRANGE CASE OF MISS ORME.

In 'LIGHT' of November 9th last we reproduced from the 'Berliner Lokal Anzeiger' the account of 'The Strange Case of Miss Orme,' supplied to that journal by a correspondent who was regarded as trustworthy. A Miss Garnett Orme had died in India under very curious circumstances. It was said that a native fortune-teller had predicted that her death would take place on or about the actual time of its occurrence. In the same issue of 'LIGHT' we gave the particulars of the result of the trial in India at which Miss Mount-Stephens, Miss Orme's late companion, who had been accused of having murdered her mistress, applied for probate of Miss Orme's will, which will that lady had made in her favour. We expressed the hope that some reader in India would kindly furnish us with the facts of the case. In response a gentleman has written from Central India to inform us that the story supplied to our German contemporary contained practically not one word of truth. He says:—

At the trial for murder the accused got off because there was not sufficient evidence against her or any proof as to who were her accomplices, for the corpse of the lady, Miss Garnett Orme, was discovered the next morning laid out with folded hands, no teeth, and with the room in perfect order, Miss Mount-Stephens being many miles away at the time. As regards the Spiritualistic part of it, I regret to say it is cases like these that bring Spiritualists and occult matters into disrepute. I did not personally know either, but the accused was known to friends of mine, so far that she called on them.

Our correspondent also sends us a pamphlet containing a full report of the learned judge's summing up in the will case. The judge went into the whole circumstances of the case in the most thorough, exhaustive and illuminating fashion, detailing all the known facts respecting the relations between the two women and the circumstances of Miss Orme's death. He admitted everything that he possibly could in favour of the plaintiff, but decided against her claim on the ground that the testatrix at the time of the execution of the will was not of sound disposing mind, due to delusion arising from fraud practised on her by the plaintiff.

I find that the feeling which inspired the testatrix to make her will had its inception in a mistaken belief in Miss Mount-Stephens' powers of foretelling the future by crystal-gazing . . . that feeling, such as it was, was enormously intensified by the further deceit practised by Miss Mount-Stephens in the matter of Spiritualism, whereby, as the sole medium of communication between the testatrix and her guardian angel, she became by far the most important person in the world to her. . . . While I do not pretend to pass any opinion as to the genuineness or otherwise of crystal-gazing, I must point out that it is through causing their dupes to believe that they are telling them things as to which their only means of knowledge is supernatural, that impostors make their living. . . . She (the plaintiff) admits that she used to practise, though only for fun and as a pastime, crystal-gazing for the deceased. . . . As to Spiritualism, her case is that she never indulged in it with the deceased, but in fact discountenanced it so far as she could.

The evidence showed that Miss Orme believed that she had received, through Miss Mount-Stephens' agency, communications from a 'Mrs. Winter,' whom she regarded as her guardian angel. One witness testified that Miss Orme appeared to regard Miss Mount-Stephens, 'as a sort of spiritual priestess, that she appeared to take all her ideas of Spiritualism from Miss Mount-Stephens, and that she would quote her opinion in much the same way as a Catholic would regard an authoritative decision of the Church.' Another witness quoted from a letter written by Miss Orme, in which she said, 'Miss Mount-Stephens quite frightens me at times, as she possesses the power to make people do as she wishes. I would not like to offend her, or, rather, a person who possesses her powers.'

The judge said:—

The circumstances of the case abundantly show that the plaintiff was assured by Miss Orme that she would leave her the bulk of her fortune, and there can be no doubt that the plaintiff had every justification for believing that she would be able to make Miss Orme keep her promise. . . . The plaintiff having provided 'Mrs. Winter' to satisfy Miss Orme's Spiritualistic cravings, constituted her that lady's guide, philosopher, and friend, and herself as the sole medium of communication between them. The result was that the plaintiff obtained a complete hold over Miss Orme.

Referring to an instance of an alleged prophecy, the judge very shrewdly remarked:—

The word *prophecy* brings us to the real crux of the matter. Miss Mount-Stephens stated in her evidence that she does not pretend to foretell events. Her counsel, Mr. Ross Alston, explicitly disclaimed for her all powers of prophecy, but it is only a power of this kind which would have been of any serious interest to Miss Orme. She obviously wanted to look into the future and know what was going to happen to her, and it is evident that Miss Mount-Stephens gratified her desire.

After pointing out that Mr. Grant, one of the witnesses, had been careful to make a distinction between crystal-gazing and Spiritualism, the judge drew marked attention to Miss Mount-Stephens' statement that she did not believe in Spiritualism, adding:—

I consider that the other evidence, combined with the plaintiff's own statement, proves irresistibly that she, having no belief whatsoever in Spiritualism, created 'Mrs. Winter' and induced Miss Orme to believe in her implicitly. It is also evident that, by so doing, she gratified her chief desire and obtained unbounded influence over her.

Here, then, we have the essential features of this remarkable case so far as it concerns Spiritualism, and we would emphasise the point that by her own admissions Miss Mount-Stephens was not a Spiritualist or a medium. The following words from our article on 'Fortune-Telling in the West-End,' in 'LIGHT' of August 17th last year, aptly apply to this case:—

As for the charlatans who attempt to steal the livery of the angels to cloak their deception and further their nefarious trade on the credulity of the public, no words of reprobation are strong enough for their condemnation. We do not believe that Spiritualists, as a body, are so foolish or so culpable as to employ, or fall victims to, those who practise this especially contemptible business, but it is high time that we emphasised the fact that Spiritualism has higher and more spiritual aims than fortune-telling.

PSYCHIC INVESTIGATION WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

By H. BIDEN STEELE.

An Address delivered on Thursday evening, the 12th ult., 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 8.)

Unfortunately, 'table-moving' is a class of phenomena which has not been taken sufficiently seriously. It has been neglected and abused. One even hears young hopefuls, home from school for the Christmas holidays, boasting of the 'awfully jolly fun we had turning tables and things.' And they usually end up by remarking, 'But it got awfully creepy when auntie turned down the lights and we all sat round the fire and told ghost stories.'

In very truth, one is reminded of the house where a haunted room was described under such circumstances at a Christmas gathering round the fire, while stories of the weird and the uncanny were the order of the evening. The hauntings and the hauntings were pictured in lurid detail, and one and all of the guests readily and loudly expressed their total disbelief in such things and pooh-poohed the whole idea. This in public! But, in private, each one stole up to the host, and in beseeching tones sought to be convinced that the particular bedroom he or she was to use was not the one in question! (Laughter.)

'Madam, do you believe in ghosts?' said the pseudo-medium to his awestruck consultant. 'Oh, no,' she replied, 'but I'm terribly afraid of them!' And this, one fears, is rather too often the spirit of the age. Mockery in public and fear in private.

But with members of our society this should not be so; for all are advanced beyond the majority of people in the knowledge of the Occult and the Spiritual and have realised that the next world exists now and that those who have died live, and can and do communicate with us—here and now.

This is a great truth; nay, rather, let us say this is the great

truth. The world has sought it ever since sentient beings existed and will seek it so long as this earth of ours lasts.

But knowledge is not always synonymous with realisation, and if only investigators, really and truly and in their innermost heart and being, realised this great truth, one can hardly think that they would embark upon their investigations in the free, easy, and incautious way that they do, or treat their spirit visitants with such scant courtesy.

People will sit at haphazard round the first table they come across without making any arrangements or considering any conditions, merely with a view to seeing 'what will happen,' and the result very naturally is disgust with the actual phenomena which occur and disaster so far as the sitting is concerned. But, as a matter of fact, this thing is a very real one indeed, and if approached in the right spirit and in the right way extraordinary results can be obtained; with the additional advantage that everyone in the circle takes part and is responsible in some measure for the success or failure of the experiment.

It also has this advantage above the ordinary mediumistic phenomena, that the elements of chance and fraud are practically reduced to a minimum. Those who have merely sat round a table in the manner I have suggested and obtained an occasional movement, or a series of violent oscillations, or the rapping out of an alphabet (which is an intensely tedious proceeding), cannot possibly realise what a really harmonious and well-conducted circle under the very best conditions can obtain—with exactly the same ingredients—when the conditions of success are understood and are brought into existence.

How often the idea enters the mind of the earnest investigator (and a little thought is often a dangerous thing) that clairvoyant and psychometric phenomena are all thought-reading, are the medium's own imaginings—lucky, it may be, in their accuracy, but none the less imaginings—the outcome of guesswork, and so on! How often does he feel that there is nothing tangible, and that he is making a fool of himself to believe in such rubbish! These happenings are the common occurrences of everyday phenomena-seeking, and are known to every one of you here, especially to those of you who are, or have been, particularly anxious to be convinced and to believe, but only after every other possible explanation has been tested and discarded.

Now, table phenomena are remarkably free from these objections, as I will endeavour to show you after giving a few recommendations, if you will allow me to descend to detail—almost, it may seem, to trivial detail—for the successful conduct of a circle for this class of phenomena in particular.

I want to set out and lay down what I believe to be the most ideal conditions possible for the holding of an ideal circle by the normal and average persons whom one usually meets in everyday life. By setting up a maximum of conditions, we may get a number (if not all) of them followed. To get the best possible results, the average person should spare no trouble in securing the best possible conditions. Such a person—the proverbial man in the street, for instance—cannot afford to sit anywhere, in any sort of psychic atmosphere, with any haphazard sitter, at irregular hours. On the other hand, a fully-developed medium of strong power can so create his own surroundings as, perhaps, to be able to obtain satisfactory phenomena with the first chance passer-by in Billingsgate Market at the busiest time of the day. Many of our great mediums do get marvellous phenomena under the most adverse conditions. But this is all out of the normal. We of less developed power should not neglect precautions; it is better to have too many than too few. We are dealing with unknown forces, and safeguards are necessary. The most trivial point is worthy of the closest attention. Success is only assured to the patient and careful sitter.

At the same time, do not let me discourage anyone by conveying the idea that the matter is too hard and too complicated for him. Let me rather exhort each of you to form a circle under such conditions as you can command, taking my suggestions as recommendations only, not as finalities.

First of all, I would lay it down as a condition for the holding of this ideal circle that a definite series of sittings should be decided upon. When this has once been done, no interference with them should, under any circumstances, be permitted.

Indeed, it is inconceivable how people who have any true realisation of the actual nature of the business upon which they are entering can go into it in such a light-hearted way as readily to allow a social engagement, or the first little physical ailment, to change their plans and upset the whole arrangement. We must, therefore, as an essential, have our dates fixed with a definite idea that we are going to hold a certain series of sittings, and we must make it a condition that the sitters, once chosen, shall be always the same, and that on no account shall anything short of serious illness entitle any one of them to withdraw. If, however, such a necessity should arise, it is very much better that a sitter should drop out of the circle than that any fresh individual should be introduced. The reason for this is at once apparent when we consider that we are really dealing with a kind of circuit of power batteries, each one of which must be working with the others, and the whole of which must in turn be so tuned up as really to form one large battery. After the conditions have been established the introduction of a fresh element would consequently necessitate an entire alteration of the circle and its conditions; whereas the dropping out of one individual would merely mean that the remainder of the set would have to unite the more firmly together so that the vacancy might not be felt.

It should be a definite rule, therefore, that nobody should be absent on any occasion except in the case of serious illness. Should any sitter be absent without such good cause, it is not fair to the other sitters that he or she should expect or be allowed to come back.

In arranging our circle on a very strict basis, we ought to be able to guarantee that the room we use is always going to be the same room, so that, in starting arrangements, it is wise to look ahead and see that this room shall always be available. It is almost impossible to guarantee that it shall be used for no other purpose, but where this can be done, the results justify any slight inconvenience that may be felt. The room should not be too large, or the feeling of ease and rest will be lacking, and the great essential is that all members of the circle should feel entirely at home and at their ease. On the other hand, of course, the room should not be so small as to be cramped, and should be moderately cheerful.

Having chosen our room, we must now be very careful as regards our sitters. Those of an entirely frivolous nature are not only undesirable, but are fatal if any adequate result is to be expected. As the same time, it is well to avoid those who are too intensely anxious or are fearful of having anything to do with the spiritual world. The elements of anxiety, frivolity, and fear are very detrimental. But neither is it wise to have all one's sitters of a too earnest disposition, for, as lightness will upset, so will heaviness prevent the obtaining of the phenomena. 'Tis but the old maxim cropping up again: 'Be temperate in all things.' Quite as many circles have been broken up by dull seriousness, unrelieved and unalloyed, as by frivolity. In any gathering for phenomena, especially for clairvoyance or psychometry, a good joke and hearty laughter will do much to bring the medium and the sitters into harmony, and the gathering to success.

How often have we noticed that the control will exhort the sitters to relax a little! Here we know few (and want to know fewer) who never smile. They don't help the world to roll along smoothly or easily. And as individuality is unaffected by the grave, we must expect, in our communion with our spirit friends, to receive and to give the same kind of feelings as we do with those in the flesh.

It is well to limit the number of sitters to something between seven and ten. It is true that with more sitters there may be more power, but this may not be advisable, because it is not by any means certain that the mere presence of additional sitters is going to create force that we want or can use. On the other hand, though a smaller number than seven may be adequate, the strain in such a case is, as a rule, too great. From a circle of between seven and ten a reasonable amount of power may be expected, and we are given a reasonable number of diverse individualities to blend satisfactorily. For this, of course, is another difficulty, that the larger the circle the larger is the number of different temperaments to be harmonised.

The next thing to be arranged is that the sittings shall always

commence at the same hour and with absolute punctuality. I have known unpunctuality on the part of the sitters break up circles and produce very undesirable phenomena. Most of us are somewhat particular in keeping our appointments, and if another person, after waiting for us a certain amount of time, leaves the rendezvous or becomes irritable through having to wait, we do not feel that we have much cause for resentment. When, therefore, we consider that we are dealing with individuals like unto ourselves, we shall, perhaps, be able to realise the fact that if we sit a quarter of an hour late or with 'regular irregularity,' our spirit friends may leave before we are ready to begin the sitting, may refuse to be attendant on such a circle, or may in their turn become irritable, and give us evidence of their displeasure.

On one occasion a circle of which I was a member began its sitting late, with the result that whereas phenomena usually commenced within a few minutes, we had to wait in stolid patience for over half an hour. At the end of this time there were tardy and seemingly ungracious movements of the table. At last an intelligence made his presence known and said he was the leader of his circle. We asked who was present, and he named several of our usual visitors and friends. We asked if they would come to us. We got two words—rapped out uncompromisingly and sternly (old sitters know the remarkable personality a table can assume)—'All gone,' and sit and wait as we might, that was all we got that night. It is only fair to add that the reason for our lateness in sitting was somewhat frivolous and could quite easily have been avoided.

We were punctual after that! (Hear, hear
(To be continued.)

'CLEON.'

A POEM BY E. M. HOLDEN.

Here is another volume of poems from the author of the 'Songs of Christine,' 'Songs at Dawn,' and others, some of which have been noticed in the columns of 'LIGHT.' There is a vein of philosophical mysticism, sometimes venturing into the regions of the occult, pervading these poems. The authoress, indeed, as we well know from personal intimacies, is not without such experiences in her own person. Indeed, many of the poems are couched in a vein of supernormal vision which suggests occult experiences. The book is inscribed to the memory of Richard Heath, who is really father-in-law to the authoress. Carl Heath, her husband, is well known as organiser of Peace Conferences to promote universal settlement of national disputes by arbitration, and reasoned mutual conference. It is not easy to select among these few poems any suitable for transference to our columns; but the following may suffice to show the musical language and the spiritual vigour of the poems:—

But oh, ye children of the love and life
That gathered round me in my mortal strife,
Be not deceived, so minded. I am still
Beside you, an indomitable will,
A driving power, along the lines outlaid
By every law of being re-obeyed,
To reinforce the individual fire
On each fair altar of your own desire;
And if cut off from every outward sense,
The closer knit, of purpose more intense;
Free of a wider realm, a loftier height,
Returning oft from out the Fields of Light,
Re-pledged to you on every plain of Sleep
With treasure-trove from out the ambient deep;
Until such hour, as o'er the silent sea,
That severs you from all that yet shall be,
You too set sail for God indeed, and hear
The glad 'All Hail' of those you counted dear,
That lead you on to other realms than these,
In solemn troops and sweet societies.

R. M. THEOBALD.

A CORRESPONDENT who resides in Louisiana, U.S.A., writes: "'LIGHT' is my weekly delight. I consider it the very best of all papers devoted to its line of thought. It is progressive, liberal, and instructive, and a boon to those who have 'loved and lost a while.'"

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

We extend to our venerable and esteemed friend, Dr. A. R. Wallace, O.M., our heartiest congratulations on having reached, on the 8th inst., his ninetieth birthday, and sincerely wish him 'many happy returns of the day.' An interesting interview with him was given in 'The Daily News and Leader' on Monday last, in which the writer says that the Doctor received him 'with a hearty handshake and a bright gleam of spiritual and intellectual youth flashing behind his blue spectacles. Dr. Wallace is still vigorous and hale, bubbling over with bright thoughts and happy phrases, and a fine figure of a man withal.' To his visitor Dr. Wallace expounded some of his ideas respecting the present state of things in this country and the outlook for the future. He is not at all perturbed by the turmoil and unrest of the day, but welcomes it as a good thing. And although he sees very much in our social environment that is bad and to be deplored he has faith in the future. Indeed, he is going to help things along by writing a little book on 'Social Evolution and Moral Progress.' 'I assure you,' he said with a chuckle, 'its appearance will make the bishops and the archdeacons and the parsons and the curates sit up straight—very straight!'

Those who are interested in 'birthday stones' may like to know that, according to one 'authority,' persons born in January should wear a garnet, in February an amethyst, in March a bloodstone, in April a diamond, in May an emerald, in June an agate, in July a ruby, in August a sardonyx, in September a sapphire, in October an opal, in November a topaz, and in December a turquoise.

So much is being said about Bahaism just now that the following paragraph from the 'Daily Citizen' is worth reading: 'Bahaism does not possess anything like as much right to the title of religion as Confucianism, with which, in many respects, it may be compared. Like Confucianism, it is simple, it abounds in truisms and platitudes, it avoids dealing with anything supernatural and miraculous; it does not touch upon such all-important subjects as the origin of man, of good and evil, the intercourse between God and man, or the immortality of the soul. There are unbridgeable gaps in the Bahaistic system from that standpoint. . . . Bahaism does not require any change of faith on the part of its followers, so that on its own showing it stands confessed not as a new religion, but as a purely ethical system.'

We are grateful for, and heartily reciprocate, all the encouraging good wishes and kind thoughts which have been showered upon us these last few days. One good friend writes expressing the hope that 'the newly born year will be full of work for you, and full of pleasure through that work.' We hope so too, and shall be delighted to be kept busy, for the more we can spread the light and help those who are in doubt to find the truth, the happier we are. Carlyle said: 'Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life purpose, he has found it and will follow it.' We feel that this is perfectly true, except that in some cases, ours included, the work finds the man, and he delights to follow it.

According to the 'Weekly Dispatch' of the 5th inst., 'Doowada,' whose real name is Ada Wood, has been fined at the East Ham police-court £5 and £3 3s. costs for fortune-telling. She seems to have been hardly treated, as no evidence appears to have been presented that she attempted to deceive anybody. She admitted, however, that she made predictions, and this seems to have been enough. The local 'Express' says that the magistrate stated that he was 'bound to come to a decision as to whether or not defendant, in making statements about future events, did so absolutely honestly or to "deceive and impose upon" people. She described herself as a "prophetic clairvoyante," and it seemed that under these conditions, fraud must enter into it sooner or later, however much people felt they had the power. They could not always answer questions, and make anything like a true answer. He was bound to come to the conclusion that that had happened in this case, and that defendant, by the answers she gave, was not entirely honest, and therefore her statements were made with intent to deceive. She was, therefore, guilty of the offence, but it was not a bad case.' The fine, however, was a heavy one for a poor woman to meet, especially as she must now find some other means of livelihood for herself and daughter. The witness, a police agent, admitted that she did not intend to believe anything she was told, and assented to the magistrate's comment that she deceived 'Doowada' more than she was deceived by her. These 'got up' prosecutions are a scandal; there is no justice in them.

In 'LIGHT' of December 14th last we printed an account of a prediction, said to have been made nine years ago by Prophet Ahmad, of Qadian, to the effect that Turkey would be defeated, but that 'a few years' later the conquerors would in turn suffer defeat. A correspondent, 'Vickers,' hopes that our contributor will give more definite particulars about the other prophecies to which reference was made. Another correspondent, 'Occidental,' asks if Mr. Kamaluddin will kindly inform him where the text of the prophecies may be found, where and when they were first published, and if an English translation exists. He says further that it would add to the interest of the prediction if a more definite time could be given than 'a few years.' Perhaps Mr. Kamaluddin will be able to supply the desired information. Another reader, Mr. W. H. King, would like to know why the prediction is spoken of as a 'revelation,' and asks, 'might it not be merely an instance of foresight?'

The latest fashion, as regards ghost stories, seems to be that the writer shall first declare his disbelief in ghosts and then proceed to give an account of his having seen one. This was what Mr. James Barr did in the Christmas number of 'The Red Magazine,' and now, in the January issue of 'Nash's' Magazine, under the title of 'The Wraith in the Tower,' we get, as the sub-heading has it, 'an extraordinary experience in the occult as narrated by one who does not believe in ghosts, and yet saw one.' It is descriptively written by Mr. Frederick Townsend Martin, and is illustrated by Mr. Seymour Lucas, R.A., who gives us a picture of a man in bed raising himself on one elbow and gazing, with mouth agape, at a figure which, instead of a face, presents a skull, on each side of which long, white hair hangs down to its waist. In his description of the ghost's appearance, Mr. Martin says: 'This awful figure raised one hand to push back its robe; I saw the hand extended, in its skeleton fingers it held aloft to me a smoking goblet'—and this the artist has limned for the gratification of the reader who is supposed to delight in horrors. We do not know which to doubt—the veritable appearance of the apparition, or the genuineness of the author's disbelief in ghosts; for if he really saw the ghost that he describes, how can he still disbelieve?

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

Under this heading we propose to devote space to brief letters of inquiry and replies thereto from our readers.

The Fifty Best Books on Spiritualism.

SIR,—For the benefit of those who desire to know what philosophy, as well as facts, Spiritualism has to present to the world, permit me to ask that some reader will give in your columns a list of fifty of the best books on Spiritualism.—Yours, &c.,

READER.

Astrologers Differ.

SIR,—From some small experiences of my own I have been inclined to put faith in astrologic predictions, but it puzzles me to see that 'Old Moore's Almanac' for January says: 'These conditions point to a more settled condition of the country,' while Zadkiel, under 'The Stars for January,' says: 'This does not augur well for peace at home and abroad.' I should be greatly obliged if some student of astrology would explain these seeming contradictions.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT SHEWAN.

SIR,—Having for several years been deeply interested in Spiritualism, I should be much obliged if any of your correspondents can give me an explanation of the following experience of mine:—

About a fortnight ago I was sitting alone at my breakfast in a well-lighted room, and thinking rather deeply of worldly cares, when just over my head came the sound of a very deep sigh. I looked up, and to my surprise saw on the ceiling a bright spot of light, about the size of a crown piece. It was in three stripes—red, white, and blue, like the ribbon one wears at Coronation or such times. A little farther on was a patch of the same colours, not so even; it reminded me of the auric readings I have seen Mr. Street do. The patch, as I have called it, was about seven inches by four. To prove that it was not a reflection from outside, I at once drew down all the venetians and shut out all light, but the colours still remained, lasting some little time, and then slowly fading away. I have never before, or since, seen anything of the kind, and I now ask—Could it be a spirit phenomenon?—Yours, &c.,

NIESA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Illustrations Wanted.

SIR,—I purpose giving a public lecture on 'The Evidence of Life after Death' in March next, and, wishing to make it an important occasion, I should be glad to have through you the address of any reader of 'LIGHT' from whom I might be able to get illustrative material, such as drawings, slides, &c.—Yours, &c.,
J. H. C.

The Vicar of Thaxted and Spiritualism.

SIR,—Perhaps not many of our Defence Leaguers read the 'Christian Commonwealth.' Will you therefore permit me to direct their attention to its 'Sermon Supplement' of the 1st inst., containing a sermon preached in his own church by the Rev. Conrad Noel on November 3rd, 1912. Referring to Spiritualism he described it as 'distorted and dangerous.' These three words contain practically all the elements of criticism and abuse levelled against as by irresponsible antagonists, but when a nationally respected clergyman so forgets his Christian charity, practical protest becomes imperative. The sermon deserves careful attention from Spiritualists, as much in it is peculiar to their teachings and experiences.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES LAWRENCE.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Are Spiritualism and Genius Allies?

SIR,—Yesterday, when passing a bookstall, my attention was arrested by the title of a book called 'The Sensitive.' Opening it, the first paragraph that confronted me was this, 'To the thick-skinned people the mind of the sensitive, to adopt the jargon of so-called Spiritualism, is absolutely impenetrable.' I was interested, and finding myself in the enemy's camp, straightway resolved to create a reversal, and let him 'feed' me (I was hungry), assimilation being a different matter. Like the old woman's leech, when I make an original discovery I am a 'sticker.' The author declares that he has 'very little sympathy with the Psychological Research Society, or any other learned body which endeavours to classify and tabulate the class of phenomena which we call, for want of a better title, supernatural.' All this I found distinctly refreshing. Men of genius are spoken of as having surrendered themselves to the working of a mighty spirit; then comes the following: 'The private lives of such men exhibit, as a rule, some ghastly flaw.' If so, who is responsible? Genius is not temperamental singularity only, but 'God's opportunity.'—Yours, &c.,

E. P. PRENTICE.

Sutton.

'The Elements of Child Protection.'

SIR,—In reference to your 'Note by the Way' on p. 614 (1912), might it not be a somewhat selfish attitude on the part of the community to wish to detain the souls of children in their hopelessly crippled bodies simply for the good which they are supposed to be able to render to that said community in calling forth its dormant love?

Is not the community indirectly responsible for their deformity, seeing that it is the selfishness and heartlessness of the ruling part of the community which impose the ill-conditioned circumstances upon so many, thereby often affecting the child pre-natally?

I am quite sure, too, that a deformed child must have many hours of unspeakable misery when it compares itself with its well-formed brothers and sisters.

Is the good which these crippled ones are supposed to effect a motive and a purpose sufficiently strong and true to warrant their detention in their ill-formed physical prisons, when in the 'world beyond' they might be advancing on truer lines freed from their physical deformities?

Is it not a waste of time for them to remain on this plane of things when they might be transported into the 'higher spheres,' where every provision is made for the upbringing of all sorts and conditions of children from quite the infant stage?

Are they not being kept out of their inheritance by mere sentimentality?

There are plenty besides little cripples for the community to love—old cripples and helpless ones, whom accidents are constantly overtaking, many of which accidents are caused by the covetous and loveless hearts of the few, who have it in their power to alter many of the 'mud-cabin' conditions of life.—Yours, &c.,

F. H.

'Ought We to Pray for Rain?

SIR,—If we knew as little as our fathers did, or as much as our children will, the question of the rightness or wrongness of asking God to alter the weather would be easier to settle.

There is a wise old saw to the effect that a man cannot be both buyer and seller, and it seems to me that a good many of us in our prayers are trying to fill the places of petitioner and petitioner. Our attitude is not simple enough. It is a natural impulse to cry for help in trouble and equally natural to indicate the nature of the help required. This may, perhaps, be more conveniently shown in the form of question and answer. 'What do you want?' 'Rain.' 'Then ask for it.' 'But I am not sure that it is right. I might be asking God to break His laws.' 'Do not be afraid. God will not break His laws to please you.' 'But my neighbour might not want rain.' 'God knows what is best for all His children.' 'But if I am not sure of getting rain what is the use of asking for it?'

Let us take the case of a father and child. Suppose a child should say to himself, 'I know my parents will give me everything I ought to have. What I wish for might be wrong. Therefore I will ask for nothing.' Now this attitude is strained and unnatural; it does not help to develop sympathy between parent and child. Any ordinary parent loves to have his children come to him with their multitudinous requests and if he possibly can he grants them. Dependence on a being wiser and stronger than ourselves calls forth a spirit of love and gratitude. It is right to pray for material good. Our earthly body is the appointed vehicle whereby we arrive at the knowledge of spiritual things. It is as much our duty to pray for daily bread as for spiritual blessings. In fact, to pray for anything in the right spirit is a spiritual blessing.—Yours, &c.,

MARGARET MOORES.

Mr. A. V. Peters in Ireland.

SIR,—I have, for the third time, had the privilege of carrying through a visit to Ireland by Mr. A. V. Peters. Five meetings were held in Dublin, and a similar number in Belfast. The latter city has the advantage over the metropolis of possessing a live Spiritualist society with a good hall in which large public meetings are held. There Mr. Peters gave evidence of his growing power as a speaker, as well as a psychometrist and clairvoyant. I wish, through your favour, to express my own sense of honour at being the 'happy medium' (in a figurative sense) of bringing to many of my kindred, not merely the comfortable faith, but the certain knowledge, that their beloved ones who have departed this life are in the happy possession of life more abundant. I know a lady who was left desolate through the death of her husband. I was moved to bring her in touch with Mr. Peters. What she heard and saw in a private sitting has entirely transformed her life. She and many others join me in thanks to the Spiritualist movement and to Mr. Peters for bringing us face to face with the most important fact in human life; that we are deathless spirits. There are many to whom such demonstration is not necessary. Within themselves they have the assurance. But the vast majority of the people of Great Britain and Ireland are living in the midnight of ignorance and denial, or the twilight of simple faith. Hence it seems to me a matter of regret that a man of such power as Mr. Peters should be allowed to live the greater part of his life outside these islands, spending time in travelling over Europe, working through the unsatisfactory medium of translation, when he might be working with economy of time and energy, and therefore with increase and intensification of results, if only he were retained in his native country. I believe Mr. Peters would prefer to spread the light at home; and I would venture to throw out the suggestion that just now, while he is in England, English Spiritualists should utilise him in a systematic campaign as lecturer and demonstrator.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES H. COUSINS.

35, Strand-road, Sandymount, Dublin.

'I Shall Pass Through this World but Once.'

SIR,—Referring to your paragraph in 'LIGHT' (December 28th, 1912), page 619, I may inform your correspondent, 'C. E. B.,' that the 'lines' he or she is in search of are by 'Stephen Grellet,' who, I believe, was a mediæval mystic. I could find that out, if necessary or desired by your correspondent. The lines in prose run as follows:—

I shall pass through this world but once. If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do, let me do it now; let me not defer it nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.—STEPHEN GRELLET.

A few weeks ago I happened to see a reader's inquiry as to the author of these very 'lines' in 'T. P.'s Weekly.' This

is the third time in three months I have come across such an inquiry. Is it not curious? I cannot remember in what 'work' I have come across the name of Stephen Grellet. I think it must have been in Evelyn Underhill's 'Mysticism.' Should your correspondent wish for a card to hang up on a wall with these (printed) words, headed 'Present Duties,' I will post one to her, or him, if such an one will communicate with me.

Wishing you and yours and your most interesting paper a prosperous and pleasant New Year,—Yours, &c.,

BEATRICE O'CONNOR.

'Beni Mora,' 21, Albert-road, Bexhill-on-Sea.

[Miss Cameron sends us the same wording as that given above and states that Stephen Grellet was a Quaker.—ED. 'LIGHT']

Music: An Out-of-the-body Experience.

SIR,—One night during a recent illness I became aware of the presence of several spirit friends by my bedside. They were conversing among themselves. One said, 'This is friend Roberts; it is rather dull for him lying here, so we propose taking him out for a few hours and giving him a little run.' 'Do you think he can stand it?' asked another, and a third said, 'What do you think he would like?' My guide replied, 'You have a phrenologist and a doctor amongst you. Go over him and see.' So I was pulled and pushed, and it was reported that I possessed insatiable curiosity, so great that it conquered all sense of fear; also that I had no nerves, and any horrors I might see would not unman me.

Next it was reported that I loved beautiful scenery and good music. Here an old German Professor exclaimed, 'Give him to me! I show him music.' My guide intervened: 'Music is wrong; the man cannot even bear to hear pianos playing.' The Professor answered, 'Still, he might like music.'

So I was handed over to the kindly old Professor, and together we left the room and soared away until we arrived where there was no sun, but the air was a rosy pink colour and seemed to be its own light. To breathe seemed to give health and strength and food, and a feeling of indescribable happiness. We stopped at a building on the side of a hill, a lovely landscape of woods, fields, flowers and streams stretched before us. The building resembled a small temple built of alabaster in the Grecian style of architecture. On one side of it was a flat or terrace. From this terrace rose slowly four large transparent tubes partly filled with different coloured liquids. Said the Professor: 'This is my organ. Listen! I give you some music.' The tubes rose and fell and played one of our grand Church hymns in such exquisite tones that I have no power to describe the effect. I had never before listened to anything so beautiful.

'How you like it?' inquired my companion, but I was too overpowered with enjoyment to reply. This did not annoy the Professor; he took it as a compliment, and said in tones of complete satisfaction: 'Ach, I knew you loved music! Now we go back.' I felt sure we were in heaven itself. The Professor, however, seemed to read my thought, and said, 'You think this heaven—eh? Ah, no, it only one little cottage of mine where I practise my music.' Then we returned whence we had come.

Another spirit now desired to show me Nature at its best, but as I am dealing with music, I will not mention what I saw with him. Again we returned, and once more the old Professor wanted to take me with him. Another also claimed me, but the Professor begged so hard they gave me to him. He alleged that he would show me music that never yet was played. With this curious statement the rest had to be content and let me go.

This time we never quite left the earth; but, rising to about a thousand feet above its surface, travelled at an incredible speed in an easterly direction. We stopped in the air just level with the roof of a small but very old cathedral.

Said the Professor: 'Listen to the organ!' It was playing a grand funeral anthem, now wailing as in grief, now in measured tones of resignation, now swelling into a song of triumph.

'Who is dead?' I inquired. Pointing downwards to where men in black stood lining the entrance to the building, he responded: 'Go down and ask. Speak French.' Well, I felt all right when close to him, but to leave him and go down at least seventy feet was a problem.

However, I wished I could do so, and immediately I stood on my feet close to one of the mourners. On my touching his arm he turned round and looked very frightened on seeing me. I asked in French, 'Tell me the name of the dead.' He replied, 'Le Roi du Servia.'

In an instant I knew why the music was called 'that which never yet was played.' We had looked into the future. We came back safe to my bedroom.

What does this mean? Your readers may put this down to

either incipient madness, a dream, or disordered imagination; or they may regard it as an illustration of what spirits can do. I may say that this is not by any means the first time my spirit friends have taken me out. This has occurred many times, and when I have been in perfect health.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN ROBERTS.

'AT THE YEAR'S END' IN THE NORTH.

The title of your leading article of December 28th, 1912, may be aptly applied to the following notes relative to the position of the movement 'twixt Tees and Wansbeck.

I have never been able to define the why of it, but somehow these Northern regions seem to be cut off from the body generally. From York to Darlington, from Newcastle to Edinburgh in the North and Carlisle in the West, to which must be added the great acreage of Cumberland and Westmorland, there is a large region wherein must be many thousands of human souls hungering for that word of reason, that voice of comfort, that spiritual illumination which we have received.

Then, further North, but outside the scope of the present survey, are the numerous towns and villages within easy reach of Glasgow, the united population of which cannot be under a million, and which offer a splendid field for propaganda work.

The Northern Counties' Union, now seven years of age, has no need to be ashamed of its record. It closes the year with sixteen societies on its roll, not so many as in the past, but the lapses have been through causes beyond control, and cast no reflection on either Union or society.

The Yorkshire Union claims two societies on Tees-side, and I think seven are affiliated with the National Union, facts which make us optimistic as to the early complete solidarity of our ranks. But there remains much to be done, seeing that fourteen fairly good societies are in *no* Union, and about thirty 'independents' are drawing quite large audiences. Still, on looking back to January last I feel fully justified in recording a perceptible increase all round, although some localities appear to have fallen off slightly.

Our platforms have been better served, simply because individual exponents have striven towards fuller expression, and our circles have been blessed with mediums desirous of giving the very best evidences obtainable, consonant with conditions and their own development. The 'Study Groups,' formed in October, are steadily growing in favour, scope and results, being open to any society and to any person seeking light on our teachings, one student at least having already qualified for public service. The introduction of debatable papers, and the discussion of general practical topics at quarterly conferences, have tended to quicken and fortify thinkers and investigators. Without any ulterior meaning attaching to the remark, I would say that a more intelligent atmosphere pervades the ordinary services—chairmen, choirs, and audiences contributing to that pleasing end.

We are poorer by nearly a dozen active workers, half of whom were of more than local repute, but their sphere of activities has only been changed. They serve us still.

The relation of society and Lyceum continues to be a vexed question, but I believe that it is becoming more clearly realised that they should work harmoniously together. This applies to a wider field than the Northland.

Formed a little over a year ago, the Tyneside District Council has made history. Twelve Lyceums and a goodly number of associate members compose its ranks. The Tees-side Council has, I think, seven Lyceums connected with it, only three, as far as I can learn, now remaining outside. I shall look for their inclusion before 1913 closes, also the formation of Lyceums at those few societies not now in line.

Professing Spiritualists and Lyceumists enjoy a greater freedom from interference to-day than at any other date, the would-be critic having discovered that unjustifiable attacks cannot now be made with impunity, and it is not uncommon for one of our brethren to expound our philosophy at church and chapel guilds.

These brief notes will convey to readers an idea of how we are situated in these parts, and, it may be, will stimulate them to endeavour to be of still greater service to the cause of truth and humanity.

JAMES LAWRENCE.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

To assist the 'Health Record' Propaganda Fund the editor, Mr. Arthur Hallam, will lecture on 'The Wonders of Mind and Nerves' at the Restaurant Frascati, Oxford-street, W., on Sunday evening, the 19th inst., and will demonstrate some extraordinary phenomena of human magnetism and hypnotism which he has been able to produce with two subjects who have kindly volunteered their services. For further particulars see advt.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, JAN. 5th, &c.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION—*Shearn's Restaurant, 231, Tottenham Court-road, W.*—In the regrettable absence of Mr. W. E. Long through illness, Mrs. Nordica kindly gave an excellent address, followed by auric readings and 'descriptions,' all being highly appreciated. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided.—*15, Mortimer-street, W.*—December 30th, Mrs. Cannock gave well-recognised 'descriptions.' Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advertisement on front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, *Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W.*—Morning and evening, Mr. E. W. Beard delivered able addresses on 'Ye Shall Know the Truth and the Truth Shall Make You Free,' and 'A New Year's Message.' At the evening service an interesting ceremony, that of dedicating and naming an infant, was performed by the well-known medium, Mrs. Cannock. See advertisement on front page for next Sunday's arrangements.—W. B.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD—SURREY MASONIC HALL—Mrs. Beaurepaire addressed good audiences. January 26th, the anniversary services will be held at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long.

BRIXTON—8, MAYALL-ROAD—Mrs. Maunder (vice-president) gave an address. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Miles Ord. Circles: Monday, at 7.30, ladies' public; Tuesday, at 8.15, members'; Wednesday, 8, astrology; Thursday, 8.15, public.

CROYDON—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN—Mr. Percy Scholey's uplifting New Year address was heartily appreciated. Sunday next, service at 11 a.m.; at 7 p.m., Mr. T. F. Matthews.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK. Messrs. Stockwell, Humphreys, and T. Brown gave short addresses. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton, address and answers to questions.

BRIGHTON—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM)—Mr. Gambier Bolton gave fine addresses on 'The Real Spiritual Life' and 'Do our Dead Return?' Sunday next, at 11.15 and 7, Mr. Frank Clarke, addresses. Tuesday, at 3 and 8, also Wednesday, at 3, clairvoyance; Wednesday, at 8, members.

BRISTOL—144, GROSVENOR-ROAD—Mrs. J. S. Baxter spoke on Ephesians iv., verse 3, and answered questions. The service was one of the best. Supplementary developing class began this week. Sunday next, public service at 6.30 and usual week-night meetings.—J. S. B.

HACKNEY—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—The speakers were Mr. Dawson, Mr. A. Rush, and Mr. G. T. Gwinn. Mr. and Mrs. Rush kindly sang duets. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Podmore, address and clairvoyant descriptions. Monday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. J. Neal. Thursday, at 8.15, circle (members only).

STRATFORD—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. Harold Carpenter's address on 'What is the Difference between Spirit and Soul?' in answer to a question from the audience, was much appreciated. Mrs. Bryceson presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. Richardson, address.—W. H. S.

BRIGHTON—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST—Mrs. G. C. Curry gave good addresses and 'descriptions.' Sunday next, at 11.15, circle; at 7, Mr. W. J. Tull on 'Spiritual Economy.' Tuesdays, at 3 and 8, and Wednesdays at 3, Mrs. Curry, clairvoyance. Thursdays, at 8.15, circle.

STRATFORD—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE—Morning, general discussion; evening, Mrs. M. Davies gave a good address on 'Self-Consciousness,' followed by 'descriptions.' 2nd, Mr. J. Wrench, address and 'descriptions.' Sunday next, at 11.45 a.m., Mr. J. Wrench on 'Our Present Need'; 7 p.m., Mr. A. J. McLellan. 16th, at 8 p.m., several speakers.—F. H.

HOLLOWAY—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD—Morning, Mr. J. Abrahall spoke on 'Spirit.' Evening, Mrs. S. Podmore gave a New Year's Message. Successful 'descriptions' at both meetings. 1st, Mrs. Clara Irwin gave psychometrical readings. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., open; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, Mr. Horace Leaf. Wednesday, Annual General Meeting, members only. 19th, Lyceum Council Delegates.—J. F.

PECKHAM—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD—Morning, Mr. Richards spoke on 'Astrology.' Evening, Mr. Blackman gave an address and good 'descriptions.' Sunday next, morning, Mr. Notcutt; evening, Mr. H. Fielder. 18th, Fancy Dress Social Evening; tickets 6d.; prizes. We would tender our best thanks to all those who assisted in any way the effort to help the widow of the late Mr. W. R. Stebbens. The fund is now closed. The result of the Soirées in Peckham and Bermondsey was £22 9s. 6d. Mrs. Stebbens has written thanking all friends for their kindness and goodwill, as well as for the material help she has received. She would have liked to do it individually, but asks that the will may be accepted for the deed.

NOTTINGHAM—MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL—Mr. G. F. Berry gave addresses and Mrs. McCaig 'descriptions.'—H. E.

CHATHAM.—553, CANTERBURY-STREET, GILLINGHAM.—Mr. C. J. Stockwell replied to questions.—E. S.

SOUTHAMPTON.—CAVENDISH-GROVE.—Mr. F. T. Blake, president, gave an excellent address and good 'descriptions.'—G. L. B.

BIRMINGHAM.—CAMDEN-STREET SCHOOLS.—Mrs. Groom spoke on 'The New Jerusalem,' and gave 'descriptions.' Monday, ladies held tea meeting and circle.—W. E. R.

BIRMINGHAM.—30, JOHN-STREET, VILLA CROSS, HANDSWORTH.—Mr. Hilditch gave addresses and 'descriptions' on Sunday and Monday; good audiences.—J. R.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.—Mr. McLellan addressed a large audience. 3rd, Mrs. Cornish gave 'descriptions.'—L. W.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.—Address and 'descriptions' by Mrs. L. Harvey. 2nd, healing guild, Mr. Croxford, followed by address and 'descriptions' by Mr. Gapper.

TOTTENHAM.—684, HIGH ROAD.—Our old friend Mr. J. G. Huxley was welcomed. He spoke, under control, on '1913,' and answered questions.—N. D.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Mr. Lethbridge gave the address and Mrs. Summers 'descriptions.' 3rd, circle, Mesdames Trueman and Summers gave 'descriptions.'

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHED HALL.—Mrs. Scholes spoke on 'New Years: Ancient and Modern,' and 'Where have the World's Great Heroes Gone?' and gave 'descriptions.'—H. I.

STONEHOUSE.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL.—Address by Mr. Blamey on 'If a Man Die Shall he Live Again?' Solo and 'descriptions' by Mrs. Joachim Dennis.—E. D.

WHITLEY BAY.—137, WHITLEY-ROAD.—Mr. Bancroft's address on 'Choose ye this Day Whom ye Will Serve,' was followed by 'descriptions.'—C. C.

BRISTOL.—16, KING'S SQUARE, STOKES CROFT.—Mr. Rudman spoke on 'Faith, Hope and Charity.' 'Descriptions' were given by a visiting medium and Mr. Rudman.—A. L.

BRISTOL.—THOMAS-STREET HALL (OFF STOKES CROFT).—Mrs. Powell Williams gave an address and 'descriptions.' 2nd, public meeting for 'descriptions.'—W. G.

SOUTHEND.—CROWSTONE GYMNASIUM, NORTHVIEW DRIVE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.—Mr. Horace Leaf spoke on 'The Message of the New Year' and gave fully-recognised 'descriptions.'

EXETER.—MARKET HALL.—Morning, address and clairvoyance by Miss Tarr. Evening, address and 'descriptions' by Mrs. M. A. Grainger.—H. L.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—The Rev. J. Todd Ferrier gave interesting addresses on 'Rest in the Lord' and 'The Three Graces.'—J. W. M.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Addresses by Miss Amy Letheren and Mrs. Letheren; 'descriptions' by Mrs. and Miss Letheren and Mr. Weslake.—F.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Morning and evening, Mr. Rundle spoke on 'The Need for Helping Imperfectly Developed Spirits,' and 'The Method of Communication in the Spirit Spheres,' and gave good 'descriptions.'—C. A. B.

PORTSMOUTH TEMPLE.—VICTORIA-ROAD SOUTH.—Mr. A. Punter spoke on 'If a Man Die, shall he Live Again?' and Mr. E. B. Gawn on 'Spiritualism and Spiritism.' Mr. A. Punter gave good 'descriptions' at both services.—J. McF.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—Mr. Percy R. Street spoke on 'The Years of our Life' and 'The Fetter Breakers.' 2nd, address and 'descriptions' by Mr. F. T. Blake.

CLAPHAM.—HOWARD-STREET, NEW-ROAD.—Mr. Symons gave an address and Miss E. Heathorne sang an anthem. December 31st, Mrs. Neville gave an address and psychometric delineations, followed by a large Watch-Night circle.

ILFORD.—45, THE PROMENADE.—Evening, Messrs. Sewell and Wake made earnest appeals for spiritual regeneration in the New Year. Tuesday, Mr. Sewell gave an address and answered questions.—H. W.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAUGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. Tilby spoke on 'Thought and its Use,' and 'A Retrospect of the Past and a Forecast of the Future,' and Mrs. C. Street gave 'descriptions.'—M. L.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STONE-ROAD.—Morning, healing service; evening, Mr. R. Boddington spoke on 'Spiritualism, a Science, Philosophy, and Religion.' 3rd, Mrs. Jamrach, address and 'descriptions.' 4th, Members' Tea and Concert.—F. S. T.

MANOR PARK.—THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.—Afternoon, healing service. Evening, address by Mr. Trinder. December 30th, ladies' meeting, Mrs. Lund. January 1st, address by the president, Mrs. Jamrach, on 'The Birth of the Christ,' and 'descriptions.'

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD.—Morning, circle; evening, Mrs. Neville gave a stirring New Year's address and psychometric delineations. Our New Year's Address and Dance was a success. We have started a library, and should be grateful for gifts of books.—C. D.

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Syllabus of Contents.

INTRODUCTION.

Difficulties in the way of the investigation.
Divergent results of investigators.
Attitude of public opinion represses publication.
This results also from the nature of the facts themselves.
The Intelligent Operator has to be reckoned with.
The investigator has little choice in the matter.
The higher phenomena are not susceptible of demonstration by the scientific method.
The gates being ajar, a motley crowd enters in.
We supply the material out of which this is composed.
No necessity to have recourse to the diabolic element.
Neglect of conditions proper for the investigation.
Agencies other than those of the departed.
Sub-human spirits—the liberated spirit of the psychic.
These have had far more attributed to them than they can rightly claim.
Specialism in Spiritualism.
Religious aspects of the question.
Needs of the age.
The place of Spiritualism in modern thought.

THE INTELLIGENT OPERATOR AT THE OTHER END OF THE LINE.

Scope of the inquiry.
The nature of the Intelligence.
What is the Intelligence?
Difficulties in the way of accepting the story told by the Intelligence.
Assumption of great names.
Absence of precise statement.
Contradictory and absurd messages.
Conditions under which good evidence is obtained.
Value of corroborative testimony.
Personal experiences—
Eleven cases occurring consecutively, January 1 to 11, 1874.
A spirit refusing to be misled by a suggestion.
A spirit earth-bound by love of money.
Influence of association, especially of locality.
Spirits who have communicated for a long period.
Child-spirits communicating: corroborative testimony from a second source.
Extremely minute evidence given by two methods.
A possible misconception guarded against.
General conclusions.
Personal immortality.
Personal recognition of and by friends.
Religious aspects.

APPENDIX I.—On the power of spirits to gain access to sources of information.

APPENDIX II.—On some phases of Mediumship bearing on Spirit-Identity.

APPENDIX III.—Cases of Spirit-Identity.

- (a) Man crushed by steam-roller.
- (b) Abraham Florentine.
- (c) Charlotte Buckworth.

APPENDIX IV.—Evidence from spirit-photography.

APPENDIX V.—On some difficulties of inquirers into Spiritualism.

APPENDIX VI.—Spirit-Identity—Evidence of Dr. Stanhope Speer.

HIGHER ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM:

A Statement of the Moral and Religious Teachings of Spiritualism; and a Comparison of the present Epoch with its Spiritual Interventions with the Age immediately preceding the Birth of Christ.

Some of the Contents.

PRESENT POSITION AND FUTURE NEEDS OF SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND

What is a Spiritualist?
Philosophical Spiritualism.
Religious Spiritualism.
Spiritualism is a Revolution.
The Directing Agency.
Conditions of Public Association.
Spiritualism deals with Vexed Questions.
Unity in Multiforimity.
Lessons of the Past.
Objectional Modes of Demonstration.
Exposures of Fraud and their Effect.
Lessons of the Future.

SPIRITUALISM IN SOME OF ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECTS.

Judaism and Jesus Christ.
The World at the Birth of Christ.
John the Baptist and his Message.
The Mission of the Christ.
Modern Christianity and Modern Spiritualism.
Objections Then and Now.
Bible Miracles and the Phenomena of Spiritualism.
Spiritualism is not Necromancy.
Spirits not all Trickery or Evil.
The Devil, his Genesis and Growth.
On Spirit Communion, and the Biblical Warrant for it.
Appeal to Bible Students.
Spirit Teaching.
The God Idea.
Man's Duties to Himself, his Race and to God.
Man's Future Destiny: Punishment—Hell, Reward—Heaven.
The Old Creed and the New.
Religion and Science.
A Practical Religion.
Loss and Gain by the New Creed.
Scepticism.
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