

Light:



A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1913.

[a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY

'The Rational Education of the Will' by Dr. Paul Emile Lévy, of Paris (William Rider and Son, Ltd., 3s. 6d. net), is a book of immense practical value, and a distinct acquisition to the New Thought Library, to which it is the latest addition. That it has won the appreciation it deserves is shown by the fact that in its English form it is a translation from the ninth edition in France. Dr. Bernheim, Professor at the Faculty of Medicine of Nancy, contributes a preface, in the course of which he draws an instructive distinction between the act of will intelligently exercised and directed only to what is possible and that effort of will-power which involves nervous tension, and is therefore liable to exhaust its energy and invite defeat. That strikes us as an important lesson at the outset. And Dr. Lévy commences his book with a proposition which he fully justifies before the last chapter of the work is reached:—

I propose to show in this work that it is quite possible to protect ourselves, morally and physically, from many ills, and should any disease assail our minds or bodies, to find within ourselves the means of mitigating or healing that disease.

'The Power Within' is a well-known phrase nowadays and Dr. Lévy puts the idea into a scientific form. He deals adequately with the subject of suggestion in its two aspects: hetero-suggestion (suggestion from without) and auto-suggestion. The latter he naturally finds the more important in relation to the cultivation of the will, for here we have the principle of self-help at work. It is a question of 'disciplining our mind and body' by reference to 'the laws of intelligence and reason.' The author takes his stand on a central truth when he finds the source of all action and sensation in the ideal world: 'Every idea is action in a nascent state.' We are told how to apply the method of auto-suggestion in the cure of disease or the rooting out of pernicious habits, and the instruction is fortified by a large number of cases in which patients have testified to cure by means of concentration of thought and mental direction. Psycho-therapists will welcome this dictum from such an authority:—

Psycho-therapy certainly does not claim to be the whole of therapeutics, but there are cases where nothing can replace it, and others in which it acts better than any alternative treatment. There is no case in which it cannot be employed usefully.

In the last issue of 'Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research' Professor Hyslop deals in keenly-analytical fashion with 'The Subconscious and Its Functions.' Our old friend the 'subliminal consciousness,'

as an explanation of psychic phenomena of the subjective kind, comes in for searching criticism, and we cordially agree with Dr. Hyslop's pronouncement that

instead of seeking to find that evidence [i.e. of the existence of the soul] in the non-conscious, unconscious, subconscious or subliminal phenomena, it should be sought in the conscious, and this is precisely what the evidence for personal identity means in communications with the dead.

That is clearly the right way. When we want to gather information concerning a thing it is best to study the thing itself, and not the abnormal sides of it. A true conception of health is not gained by studying disease. Says Dr. Hyslop:—

I do not believe that uprushes of the subliminal explain anything except the abnormal phenomena of mind.

Dr. Hyslop's own experiences enable him to combat effectively the position of the sceptic that 'the subconscious is the fabricator of all the personalities that manifest themselves in mediumistic phenomena.'

There ought to be a mnemonic connection between them if they are not independent personalities. Shakespeare remembers the personalities he created, and is the unity of all of them. . . They are not independent personalities in so far as his own mind is concerned. Now, in all my mediumistic experiments the personalities claiming to be spirits show no such memory connected with each other as would be expected in case the facts were subconscious. The same incidents are never repeated, or if occasionally a similar incident is connected with different personalities it is with variations to suit the realities of actual life. . . What I always find is that any given personality purporting to communicate will disavow, emphatically disavow, the knowledge of incidents that did not belong to him in life.

We are quite familiar in our own experiences with this theory of the personalities expressing themselves through a medium being simply phases of the medium's own personality. It was, we found, a favourite idea of some of the medical fraternity who observed the phenomena until (in the case of those who persevered) experience rendered it untenable. We observed, however, that the spirit purporting to communicate did in some cases show in a suspicious degree the prejudices and other characteristics of the medium. But this, as we found, was due not to unconscious cerebration, but to *imperfect control*. When perfect control was attained the individuality manifested was frequently in marked contrast to the personality of the medium. And the evidences of a separate identity were conclusive. It was not merely that in many cases the earthly characteristics of the 'control' were closely reproduced and recognised, but that the ideas and general attitude of mind were strongly at variance with those of the medium. Dr. Hyslop puts the question into a nutshell when he says:—

When the mind's own activity is at its maximum it may destroy the contents of outside stimuli. When this activity is at its minimum, the outside influence will be more evident in the contents of the result.

For 'signs of the times' we may appropriately look on occasion to the 'Times' itself. We cull with pleasure the following extracts from a leading article in the great daily.

The thoughts expressed are curiously in line with the ideas expressed in 'LIGHT':—

People have been driven a little too hard and hustled a little too remorselessly. They are asking themselves and others whether this is really all of life, or whether perhaps it would not be well to pay a little more heed to the ends of existence and a little less to the means. They are aware that they must have railways, and even faster railways, than before, but they are no longer proud and exultant in contemplating the superior machinery. They are rather disposed to feel resentful because so much of it is necessary. The triumphs of science are not denied, but they are found rather oppressive, and their limitations are more acutely felt than before. There is a disposition to turn for happiness to the things that science cannot tell them anything about, and to seek room for the expansion of feelings and emotions not yet neatly reduced to formulas. In literature, in art, in music, there are abundant evidences of a recoil from the rigidity, the mechanic regularity, the arid precision, that cramp imagination and efface individuality.

The 'Times' leader-writer is dealing with the indignant opposition which has been aroused by the proposal to build a railway which will disfigure many parts of London where efforts have been made to keep the surroundings healthy and beautiful—the Hampstead garden suburb, for example. And reflecting on the modern disposition to resent further attempts to make life hideous in the name of 'progress,' he continues:—

Social unrest is the same tendency showing itself in another sphere. It calls for better wages because that is the only familiar form of demand, but better wages do not cure it, because they do not meet the real inner need. Many other expressions of that need are hardly less crude, and it is easy to play at being superior and to dwell only upon the crudity. It is wiser, however, to recognise the underlying aspirations for a life more satisfying to the soul of man than that which has been fashioned for us by a long period of pursuit of material gains.

'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?

THE Rev. Thomas Grimshaw, a good trance speaker, a member of the Board of Management of the National Spiritualist Association of U.S.A., will be in this country during June next, after attending the Geneva Congress, and he will be pleased to arrange to speak for societies here during his stay. Letters may be addressed to him *c/o* 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C.

THE twenty-fourth annual conference of the British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union will be held at Hull on Saturday and Sunday, the 10th and 11th inst. The Saturday conference will take place in the Holborn Hall, Holborn-street, Holderness-road, at 6 p.m., and the Sunday in the Lecture Hall, Jarrett-street, at 10 a.m. In the latter hall, also on Sunday, at 6.30 p.m., a grand public meeting will be held, when addresses will be delivered by the president, Mr. R. A. Owen, the president elect, Mr. Reuben Lathan, and members of the Executive Council.

THE PSYCHO-THERAPEUTIC SOCIETY is entering upon a new era in its history. To the great satisfaction of the committee the Princess Karadja has done the society the honour of accepting the presidentship, and Lady Lumb has allowed her name to be added to the list of vice-presidents, and intends to take an active part in the work. The society has just removed to 26, Red Lion-square, Holborn, W.C., and now occupies rooms which are well suited to its requirements, especially with regard to lectures, there being accommodation for at least a hundred persons.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The last meeting of the season will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, MAY 8TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MISS FELICIA SCATCHERD

ON

'Psychophasms and Skotographs': Psychic Pictures Produced in Darkness.

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

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, May 6th, Mrs. Percy R. Street 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. May 20th, Mrs. W. F. Smith.

PSYCHIC CLASS.—On Thursday next, May 8th, at 5 p.m. *prompt*, address by Miss Clarissa Miles on 'Thought Transference,' being an account of a series of telepathic experiments between Miss Ramsden and Miss Miles, with illustrations.

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, May 9th 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.—Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 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.

MRS. MARY SEATON'S LECTURES.

A series of Special Afternoon Lectures will be delivered by Mrs. Mary Seaton, at 110, St. Martin's-lane, at 3 o'clock. The following is the syllabus:—

Wednesday next, May 7th, on 'The Right and Wrong Uses of Psychic Powers.'

Wednesday, May 21st, on 'The Control of the Body; or, Mental and Spiritual Healing.'

Wednesday, May 28th, on 'The Real and the Unreal; or, The Unfolding Consciousness.'

ADMISSION 1s.

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Mrs. Mary Seaton jointly invite Members of the Alliance to attend these meetings free of charge.

'CHEIRO' ON PALMISTRY.

On Thursday evening, April 24th, a packed audience greeted 'Cheiro,' the well-known writer on palmistry, at the meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall. His lecture, which was an illustrated one, on 'Hands of Famous People,' was listened to with the closest attention and greatly appreciated. 'Cheiro' gave an extremely interesting explanation of palmistry, and his instructive comments on the markings shown on the hands that were exhibited were very helpful both to students of the subject and to those who knew but little regarding it. We shall give a report of this address in next week's 'LIGHT.'

A MOUNTAIN TRAGEDY SENSED BY A CLAIRVOYANTE.

BY ABRAHAM WALLACE, M.D.

My friend, George Templeton, F.R.C.S., a distinguished London surgeon, spent some time with me in Switzerland last winter, where he learned to ski. He was a man of strong physique, with great determination of purpose, and was fond of all outdoor exercises, being an excellent walker, having not long ago walked round the island of Arran in one day, a distance of sixty miles.

At Easter he found that he could be absent from professional work, and being eager to improve his powers as a skier he set off for Norway and arrived at Finse on the railway between Bergen and Christiania—one of the best centres for this most seductive alpine sport. He had made several excursions, and intended returning home on Friday, March 28th. On Thursday morning, the 27th, in company with his brother and four other men, he started about eleven o'clock to climb to a hut nine miles from the Finse Hotel. In ordinary circumstances the party ought to have arrived at the hut in three hours, but owing to the state of the weather, they did not reach it till 4.15. After refreshments they started on their return journey about five o'clock, but ere long they found their progress greatly impeded by a blizzard. Mr. Templeton had taken the lead, closely followed by a Mr. Warren, when 'all of a sudden,' writes Mr. Green, one of the party, 'it came on very thick, and the two were blotted out.' 'The force of the wind was terrific,' states Mr. Benjamin Templeton. As Mr. Templeton and Mr. Warren had gone ahead, the others expected that they would reach the hotel before them. The remaining four kept together, but were becoming very exhausted, when about eleven o'clock they saw through the darkness a light, towards which they struggled, and found it to be a roadman's hut on the railway. There Mr. Ben. Templeton and a Norwegian, who had fallen and was suffering from concussion, spent the night, the other two walking along the railway to Finse, where they learned that Mr. Templeton and Mr. Warren had not arrived.

A search party went out in the early morning, then others followed, till nearly thirty people were scouring the hills during Friday, but they returned without having found any trace of the missing men. 'The following night was bitterly cold and misty; but the next morning more guides were put out, and every available man was on search duty.' On Sunday, the 30th, Mr. Ben. Templeton communicated that 'unfortunately three guides have gone a-missing, and grave fears are felt for them.' These three guides were absent for two nights, but fortunately they returned safe and well, having got to a hut, where they were obliged to remain owing to the storm. It was hoped that Mr. Templeton and Mr. Warren had also succeeded in getting to a hut, and were waiting there till the blizzard ceased.

Such was the condition of suspense when, on Monday, the 31st, I got from Mr. Templeton's sister, in London, a pair of his gloves, and went the next morning, April 1st, to have a séance with Mrs. G., a clairvoyante. I may say that I had never sat with this sensitive before, but I had received a message through another medium that if I went to Mrs. G., a friend from the other side would try to control her, as he wished so much to speak directly to me. I do not wish to give the medium's name at present, owing to the activity of the police in attacking sensitives whom they, in their ignorance, suspect to be fraudulent persons, and, moreover, I have previously, by unkindly-disposed persons, been charged with publicly advertising certain mediums. Here are some notes I took of the séance.

Tuesday, April 1st, 12.10 p.m.—The room was darkened by lowering the blind and drawing the curtains, so that I had a little difficulty in taking shorthand notes. On Mrs. G. and I sitting down at a table, she indicated that there was someone present who wished to communicate with me regarding a previously-arranged experiment, and had been expecting me for some time. I said that I regretted that I could not go into the matter now, but would arrange another sitting for that purpose.

I then gave the medium the gloves belonging to Mr. Templeton without giving any hint about the owner of them. I simply

said, 'Do you get any influence with these?' Being apparently in a more or less normal condition, she answered, 'I get this gentleman in a state of great hurry; he is impulsive and is worried. I am taken across water.' I then said, after a pause, 'I do not wish any special tests, as I come this morning for a specific purpose. Can you tell me if the owner of these gloves is in the body?' 'I don't get any sensation of weakness—I don't get him out of the body.' I then asked her to put on the gloves. She said, 'I feel as if I get a blow on the head—I don't know where I am.' Then, after a pause, 'I see strange people about—they are not like English—with the blow I am stunned, and I don't feel myself. Now I feel as if someone wishes to take possession of me.' Her general appearance suddenly changed and she passed into a trance condition. Then a deep, manly voice shouted, 'He is your friend—he has passed out of his body. He looks as if he were climbing. It is very cold. He is clutching something with his hands, and they are so cold. He does not realise that he has passed out of his body. The blow was quite unexpected, he is struck on the head near a rock. His body will be found, it is away towards the left. He was unconscious when he passed out.'

The medium came partially out of the trance and began to shiver violently. Her teeth chattered as if suffering from intense cold, and she said: 'Oh, I am frozen, my limbs feel dead.' She then came distinctly out of control and in her natural voice related her impressions: 'I now feel as if I had had a fall or blow. I don't know where I am; my limbs, especially my legs, are frozen. I am climbing, and something seems to overwhelm me and I go right backwards. I feel it in my head. You will get a definite message about him before long.' After a short pause she added: 'I get the impression that he will some time be able to work through you and influence you. There is another spirit near him who says that he is on the other side, too.' The medium said: 'There is a cold current of air as if someone is trying to control me, but does not know how. He wants to shake hands with you. I get his conditions. He is a very powerful man. There is a condition of a fall. I never felt so intensely cold. I am climbing. I am trying to find out where I am and then I am lost again.' After a pause: 'His friends in the spirit world would like to send you messages, but they don't know how to communicate. The gentleman himself tries to indicate that he learned a little from you about the subject of spirit return, but he could not take it in, it was so strange.' (That is quite true, I had spoken to him.) She continued: 'He, or someone, is calling Waller or Walter—oh, no! it is your name, Wallace.'

The medium explained to me that the manly control was her first husband, and they always found that the information he gave was to be relied on; and that he wished to say that the gentleman's body would be found soon.

She asked: 'Has he a near relative in the spirit-world—someone like a brother, I think?' I said: 'His father and mother are alive, and I understand that all the members of his family are alive and very healthy.'

She then gave some information regarding my own psychic work, and our séance terminated.

I visited Miss Templeton shortly afterwards, and expressed my belief that her brother had passed away, although we were all cherishing the hope that he was still alive. She then informed me that Mr. Warren's body had been found.

The subsequent history confirmed the statements of the sensitive. Mr. Templeton's body was found on Thursday, April 3rd, about half-a-mile from where Mr. Warren's lay. It was covered up in the snow and was discovered by dogs. There was no visible indication of any injury to the head, but a person may fall and suffer from concussion of the brain without any external wound. What is especially interesting was that he had gone away towards the left, as stated by the control, as his body was found at a greater distance from the point of divergence from the others than if he had gone to the hotel, and had he kept towards the right he would have come to the railway track which led to the hotel. I am convinced that Mr. Templeton had a fall and was stunned, for if not, he was so strong in body and resourceful, that he would have dug a hut in the snow and waited till daybreak, but his body was found on its side as if he

were asleep. His sister informs me that a younger brother passed to the other side of life three or four years ago.

I think this case may be taken as an example of the acquisition of knowledge by supernormal means. It will, of course, not satisfy sceptics, but I desire to place it on record, for I believe that in cases where individuals disappear, if two or three sat in a harmonious circle with some article belonging to the individual, much valuable information might often be obtained.

Carping critics who, in their ignorance, mock at things too wonderful for them to understand, ask, 'If you can do what you claim, why not assist in discovering undetected crimes?' So long as the only motive or object for the detection of crime is the exercise of the spirit of revenge or judicial punishment, which in the extreme degree, is death by hanging, so long will students of the occult refrain from assisting mere Scotland Yard methods.

LIFE WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE VEIL.

BY L. V. H. WITLEY.

XI.

LIFE: BONDAGE OR ECSTASY?—(Concluded.)

'There is nothing new under the sun,' wrote the pessimistic author of Ecclesiastes. The picture of life as ecstasy is not Emerson's property alone; I find that the late Lady Charles Dilke also caught a glimpse of the same conception and perception, for she writes:—

In the clamorous crowd of everyday interests and occupations some moment must be held secure in which thought may take its lonely flight towards the unseen. He to whom the valley of vision has become as a familiar place knows the ecstasy of those moments in which our sense of the reality of things that are eternal is quickened and the facts of earthly existence and environment fade away and perish.

Lady Dilke's words are wise and weighty, but I prefer the idea we may gather from Emerson, that not merely a few moments out of the day are to be ecstatical, but that the brief time spent in conscious and deliberate touch with the Eternal should colour, and indeed govern, the whole of our experience. A few words by Rev. T. Rhondda Williams will exemplify to some degree what I mean:—

There are blessings to be got in passive moments; asides for contemplation and quiet reception are necessary; and much 'comes of itself' to a soul that is rightly pitched. . . . But to give up the life of active goodness in order to secure spiritual experience is the way to the wilderness, not to the mount of God.

Perhaps the first thing to be emphasised is that it is a huge mistake to put off the idea of entering into the life of ecstasy until we 'shuffle off this mortal coil.' 'Call no man happy until he is dead' is based, surely, upon a false conception. If it infers that when a man is 'dead' he is annihilated, there is no happiness or ecstasy about that; if it means that in the after-life a man is beyond 'the whips and scorns of fate,' this also is misleading, for experience hereafter, as here, depends, firstly and ultimately, not upon *where* a man is, but upon *what* a man is. To my mind, a morbid other-worldliness has been one of the greatest hindrances to the spiritual development of the human family. 'Heaven' and 'hell,' or the states of consciousness which those words denote, are matters of *this* life, and if there be any 'life eternal,' we are in that life now and always. God is God here as well as hereafter; joy is here as well as there; so with love, with fear, with sowing and reaping, with aspiration, with endeavour, with beauty. True, these things of the spirit may be more or less in an embryo, or fettered, stage here, but in essence they are the same. As a matter of fact, we cannot help ourselves, any more than the boy can help being the father of the man or the girl the mother of the woman. The fundamental and final thing in human nature, as we know it to-day, is not the physical frame which we inherit from our animal progenitors, but the spirit which inhabits that body, and which will one day slough off its temporary tabernacle just as it assumed it. George MacDonald puts it in his exquisite way:—

Where did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into here.

I do not go now (*pace* my Theosophist friends) into the question of pre-existence, albeit I feel inclined on occasion to agree with Wordsworth as to this, however difficult it may be sometimes to discern the 'trailing clouds of glory.' The point I am emphasising is that the things which we shall find to be germane to the spirit when we get into the 'everywhere,' are just as germane to the soul here and now.

Another matter to be considered is that in so far as we give place to fear we shut out ecstasy. Fear lusteth against ecstasy, and ecstasy against fear. They are greater antagonists than the phagocytes and the leucocytes in our blood, for these manage to exist side by side, whereas fear and ecstasy are mutually exclusive. Fear means slavery; ecstasy means freedom. All fear is bondage, and the poignant fact is that it is self-imposed. Worse still, what we attract to ourselves we radiate to others. How often we hear the expressions, 'I fear the worst,' and 'That is almost too good to be true.' Our attitude to life and its providences should be just the opposite. We should always hope for the best, and constantly and consistently assume that nothing is too good to be true, or that such and such a thing is so good it must be true!

Ecstasy being a purely spiritual experience, its exercise and enjoyment is not in any way bound up with the possession, or non-possession, of the things which tend to the material or sensuous enjoyment of life. A host of examples of this might be quoted, but I must limit myself to one only. John Bunyan and his wife set up housekeeping, so the immortal dreamer says (maybe with a slight touch of exaggeration), being 'as poor as poor might be, not having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt us both.' They were wedded before the bridegroom was out of his teens, and for their means of livelihood they were dependent upon the precarious earnings of a peripatetic tinker. Later on in his life he spent no less than twelve years in prison in the very prime of his days, and declared that rather than give a pledge against his conscience he would stay in gaol until the moss grew on his eyebrows. Yet in that gaol, with all its deprivations and hardships, he enjoyed times of ecstasy such as have been given to but few. He tells us that once, in his earlier days, when he was passing through a lone countryside, he was so overwhelmed by a sense of the love of God that he felt he must speak about it to the very crows in the fields around. I am not suggesting that Bunyan knew nothing but ecstasy, far from it. Many a time did he himself fight with grim Apollyon and climb Hill Difficulty, to say nothing of getting shut up in Doubting Castle in the merciless hands of Giant Despair; but he knew also the joys of Beulah Land and of the Delectable Mountains.

I refer to one other thought only, and that is, that ecstasy is not only independent of material things, but it is not the preserve of any particular theological school or organisation. There are some who appear to be anxious to claim particular virtues or experiences as specifically 'Christian,' but, personally, I abhor such an attitude. Christianity, to me, stands for inclusiveness, not exclusiveness. It is to me a wonderful and blessed thing that men holding widely differing views as to the interpretation of Christianity, and in relation to the person of Jesus Christ, have yet been at one in their experience of and testimony to the ecstasy of the spiritual life. But I rejoice still more—to use words attributed to St. Peter—that (I am quoting from the 'Twentieth Century New Testament') 'God does not show partiality, but in every nation he who reverences Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him.' Ecstasy is no special prerogative of any precise form of religious belief, but may be shared, and has been shared, by men and women who have never heard the name of the historic Jesus, and whose religions are denominated by names which convey a greater or less degree of inferiority if not of opprobrium. In saying this, I am not losing sight of, nor slurring over, the fact that, as a matter of personal experience, it is mainly through Jesus Christ and his life and teaching and the impact of his spirit upon my own, that I have been enabled to see and to enter into some of the deeper things of life.

Maybe my readers will be asking—Where and how are we to become possessed of this spirit of ecstasy? For myself, I can but fall back upon *en theos*, 'in God.' If I may alter one word in a sentence of Mazzini's in 'The Duties of Man,' it will express

my feeling: 'If you would emancipate yourselves from the arbitrary rule and tyranny of man [fear], you must begin by rightly adoring God.' Should you rejoin that God is conceived of in such a way by some that you could not *adore* such a Being, then, I ask, why be bound by anyone's conceptions of God, apart from your own, especially if those ideas should be below that which the name of God stands for to you? What we are responsible for is our own conception, and for this we are thrown back upon ourselves. Fear is bondage from without, largely self-inflicted; ecstasy is a welling-up from within of the Divine element in each of us. 'What we most need,' it has been said recently by a prominent Methodist minister, 'is not so much proofs of the existence of God, or definitions of His attributes, but rather the quickening into a larger life of the slumbering God-consciousness that is in us all.' Is not this one of the modern ways of expressing the old-time cry of the evangelists, 'Get right with God'? Browning says:—

There is an inmost centre in us all
Where truth abides in fulness.

The very attitude of listening for and to the Divine voice puts us on the way to the realisation of the spirit of ecstasy. He who can say, in all sincerity, 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God: My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God,' will, with the Psalmist, go on to find that God has become 'my exceeding joy,' for the heartfelt craving and yearning brings its own satisfaction. This is true to spiritual psychology, and quite in accordance with the teaching of Jesus: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.' Over and over again in the Psalms and the prophetic writings of the Old Testament we find this chord of ecstasy struck—a chord in which the Divine and the human unite to form one harmony. 'Thou [i.e., God] wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.' 'He satisfieth the longing soul, and the hungry soul He filleth with good.'

To live in ecstasy is, in truth, to live in tune with the Infinite, and the fact of all facts is that, however keen *we* may be in so living, the Infinite is much more keen on getting us into tune with Himself; and some happy day all disharmony, all lack of accord and concord, will cease, not only for individuals, but for the race and for the cosmos.

There was once an ardent Methodist preacher named Billy Bray who averred that as he walked along the road one foot said 'Hallelujah' and the other answered 'Amen.' That man's ideas of God and of the Gospel might possibly not pass muster nowadays with very many of his successors in the ministry, but, nevertheless, he knew what it was to be in tune with the Infinite. 'First and last and all the time,' says the Rev. R. J. Campbell,

the soul's one and only intimate companion is God. The question of all questions is that of our relationship to God and of the quality of our spiritual life. . . . Believe that it is God's will that you should be set free from all fears, from all power of evil, and become spiritually rich and strong. . . . It may be long before the Christ is fully formed in you; it may be a slow growth and a hard struggle in daily dependence upon the spontaneous grace of God. But spiritual plenitude will come, as sure as God is God, if you will but be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

And the reason why this will come about is that, to adopt R. W. Trine's meaningful words:—

In essence the life of God and the life of man are identically the same, and so are one. They differ not in essence, in quality; they differ in degree.

In his own rugged fashion, Carlyle says:—

The first duty of a man is that of subduing fear. We *must* get rid of fear; we cannot act at all till then. A man shall and must be valiant. Now and always the completeness of his victory over fear will determine how much of a man he is.

Intellectually, Carlyle was doubtless right in putting 'valiant' as the contrast to 'fearful,' but, spiritually, the antidote of fear is undoubtedly love. Love includes being valiant, as well as a host of other things—although one may be valiant without being loving. There is no place for fear when we recognise and realise that the affairs of this and every other existence are in

the hands of a Father whose name and whose nature is Love. Only when we lose sight of this can fear dwarf our spirits and darken our lives. Would that I were able to depict the contrast between the life of love (which is ecstasy) and the life of fear (which is bondage). Fear hath torment and terror; love hath joy and peace. Fear attracts evil and deprives us of good; love brings good and wards off evil. Fear is selfish; love is unselfish. Fear is earthly, an inheritance from the brute; love is heavenly, the earnest of the angelic future. Fear shrivels the soul; love expands it. Fear is a barrier between man and man, between man and his Maker; love breaks barriers down. Fear is negative; love is positive. Fear is destructive; love is constructive.

Had space permitted, I would have referred to G. F. Watts' 'Love Triumphant,' and expanded other notes which lie to my hand: my pen is very reluctant, even now, to be laid aside. But for to-day, I must conclude with a few significant words from Maeterlinck, which not only form a fitting finale to my article, but furnish an answer to any reader who may feel that I have in any way wandered from my subject in changing ecstasy into love:—

If you have loved profoundly, you have needed no one to tell you that your soul was as great in itself as the world; that the stars, the flowers, the waves of night and sea were not solitary; that it was on the threshold of appearances that everything began, and nothing ended. . . . You have beheld that which in life cannot be seen without ecstasy. But cannot we live as though we always loved? It was this that the saints and heroes did; this, and nothing more.

SPIRIT TEACHING REGARDING JESUS.

The following extract from 'Spirit Teachings,' given to the Rev. Stainton Moses (M.A. Oxon.), will be of interest to many readers who are not familiar with it, especially to our Continental friends:—

You inquire from us what position we assign to Jesus the Christ. We are not careful to enter into curious comparisons between different teachers, who, in different ages, have been sent from God. The time is not yet come for that; but this we know, that no spirit more pure, more God-like, more noble, more blessing and more blessed ever descended to find a home on your earth. None more worthily earned, by a life of self-sacrificing love, the adoring reverence and devotion of mankind. None bestowed more blessings on humanity; none wrought a greater work for God. It is not necessary that we should enter into curious comparisons between God's great teachers. Rather would we give to all the meed of praise that is their due, and hold up the example of self-denial, self-sacrifice and love to the imitation of a generation which sadly needs such a pattern. Had men devoted their energies to the imitation of the simplicity and sincerity, the loving toil and earnest purpose, the self-sacrifice and purity of thought and life which elevated and distinguished the Christ, they had wrangled less of his nature, and had wasted fewer words upon useless metaphysical sophistries. Those of your theologians who dwell in the days of darkness, and who have left to you an accursed heritage in their idle and foolish speculations, would have turned their minds into a more useful channel, and have been a blessing instead of a curse to mankind. Men would not have derogated from the honour due to the great God alone, but would have accepted, as Jesus intended, the simple gospel that he preached. But instead of this, they have elaborated an anthropomorphic theology which has led them to wander further and further from the simplicity of his teaching, which has turned his name and creed into a battle-ground of sects, and has resulted in a parody on his teachings—a sight on which his pure spirit looks with sorrow and pity. . . . We do not labour to upset belief when it is a harmless error, but we can lend no countenance to views that dishonour God and retard a soul's progress.

THE editor of 'The International Gazette' in the May issue gives a kindly and appreciative notice of the Address by Mr. E. W. Wallis on 'Spiritual Emancipation by the Elimination of Fear,' which was recently reported in our columns. He says that it 'was full of good things and will be found well worthy of the attention of readers and thinkers.' Mr. Wallis has now issued a pamphlet, price twopence, containing the Address in full. It should be widely circulated. A number of correspondents have already testified to the help and encouragement they have derived from the perusal of this lecture in 'LIGHT.'

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DR. RUSSEL WALLACE AND HUMAN PROGRESS.

All who know anything of the life and work of our 'Grand Old Man' of Science, the co-discoverer with Darwin of the principle of 'Natural Selection,' are aware of his absorbing interest in human progress. His scientific pursuits have never blunted his human sympathies, but have rather quickened and enlarged them. His latest book* stands as a further evidence of the fact—if any were needed—and in its strength and purity of diction is a marvellous example of youthful vigour in the brain of one who has long passed the threescore and ten years proverbially allotted to human life. Even remembering that we live in an age when men and women preserve their working powers longer than ever before, it remains astonishing that the author of this book is over ninety years of age. There is no sign of the fact in the work. It is all clearly and closely reasoned, with a consistent appeal to science and history, and the problem being stated we are shown what we are fain to accept as a true solution.

In his opening chapter Dr. Russel Wallace claims that what we term morality is not entirely due to inherent perception of what is right or wrong conduct. It is largely a matter of convention, a product of the environment. Most people repress their passions and regulate their behaviour under the influence of example and experience.

These restraints, becoming habitual, may often give the appearance of an actual change of character till some great temptation or violent passion overcomes the usual restraint and exhibits the real nature which is usually dormant.

Then it is that the real, inherent character is shown—the character that persists and is transmitted to offspring. This being the case, any progressive improvement is dependent on some selective agency. What this selective agency is, and how its influence will be exerted, is shown in one of the later chapters to which we shall refer hereafter.

But for this later chapter one might derive an almost pessimistic conclusion from the book. For the author claims that general ethical conceptions, the accepted ideas of morality, and the conduct resulting from these are not superior to-day to those which prevailed in the remote past, and in this connection he alludes to the splendid literature and exalted moral teaching of Ancient India. Nor does he find any increase in intellectual power apparent to-day:—

We are the inheritor of the accumulated knowledge of all the ages, and it is quite possible and even probable that the earliest steps taken in the accumulation of this vast mental treasury required even more thought and a higher intellectual power than any of those taken in our own era.

His review of the changes of environment during the nineteenth century when material progress, until then almost stationary, began to respond to the advance of the physical sciences, is not flattering to our civilisation. He traces the evils that resulted from a rapid growth of wealth, and an increased power over Nature—child labour, insanitary dwellings, adulteration, fraud, and other forms of social injustice.

But although one has to admit apparent failure here, it is but temporary. In the chapter on 'Selection in the Animal World,' Dr. Wallace deals with the purpose of Nature—'a life-world culminating in man,' and man he finds 'as much above and as different from the beasts that perish as they are above the inanimate masses of meteoritic matter which, as we now know, occupy the apparently vacant spaces of our solar system.' Finding man to be a 'living soul' gifted with 'an insistent perception of justice and injustice, of right and wrong, of order and beauty and truth,' the author passes by a natural transition to a consideration of the extent to which man has influenced the forces of life. When he arrived on the planet a great revolution was effected in Nature. She had produced a being who was her superior, who knew how to control and regulate her action, and so we had 'Selection modified by Mind.' And it is in 'Selection,' in a newer phase, that Dr. Russel Wallace sees the avenue through which humanity will pass to its golden age. That 'new form of selection' will be preceded by changes in the social order and the economic system. Those changes will mean the sweeping away of vicious and hurtful luxury on the one hand and oppressive labour and fear of starvation on the other. This will set humanity free for the operation of a truly 'natural selection' which will gradually eliminate the lower types of mankind and steadily raise our physical, moral and intellectual standards. With the possibility for women of freedom of choice where marriage is concerned, large numbers of the worst men who now easily obtain wives will be rejected, and by this weeding-out process a general improvement in the race will be secured, and the true end of evolution attained.

That is Dr. Russel Wallace's solution of the problem in its larger aspect, and the argument is developed with rare ability in its various phases.

With eugenics on its mechanical and legislative side he has little sympathy, for he holds that

Nature, or the Universal Mind, has not failed or bungled our world so completely as to require the weak and ignorant efforts of eugenists to set it right, while leaving the great fundamental causes of all existing social evils absolutely untouched.

For us the argument is tremendously re-inforced by reflecting on the nature and destiny of man as a spirit, and by remembering the great host of men and women who in the world beyond represent the advance guard of human progress. Evolution in human life may be said to mean the Urge from Below. But in arisen humanity we have the Call from Above. The efforts of the workers on earth are aided by the labours of those who have gone on. On this point doubtless Dr. Russel Wallace could have spoken with the assurance of knowledge, but he has chosen to confine his argument to those practical issues best suited to the general education of the time. Those who have the knowledge can read 'between the lines' and round out his reasoning for themselves. To these the terms 'the race' and 'humanity' will have a larger meaning than that temporarily assigned to them in the pages of this book. Later philosophers, addressing a public with a larger outlook, will be able without fear of hostility and misconception to 'rise to the height of this great argument.' That time is not yet. But we are persuaded that it is not far off.

* 'Social Environment and Moral Progress,' by ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, O.M., D.C.L., F.R.S. Cassell & Co., Ltd., 3s. 6d. net.

THE PSYCHIC ELEMENT IN FOLK-LORE.

BY ANGUS McARTHUR.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday evening, April 10th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, in the chair.

(Continued from page 201.)

Dealing next with the question of signs and omens, the speaker said: 'In that part of the country from which I come, which happens to be Shropshire, there are very few families who have not stories of omens and signs which are held to preage the death of a member of the family. In my own family the sign of the impending death of any male in the direct line of the family is the fall of a picture, and I can testify from my own experience, in the case of my father and grandfather, that the death of each was preceded by an event of this kind.' The fact that on one occasion (but in this instance it was not in my own family) an endeavour was made to guard against this by renewing the cords of every picture in the house during an illness proved quite futile. The picture fell just the same, and within two days the patient was dead.

Now, there might be nothing in it, Mr. McArthur continued, but having been present all the time, heard the picture fall, and witnessed the circumstances, the affair made a great impression on his mind; and if this was the case with a person of philosophic and scientific tendencies—a man of the world—how much more would such events impress people who lived quiet, uneventful lives in a part of the country where they rarely saw a strange face?

Again, there were the omens connected with bells and clocks, concerning which Mr. McArthur read the following passages:—

If two bells ring, or a bell ring and a clock strike at the same time, it is a sign of parting. If a bell rings (as sometimes happens) of its own accord, it forebodes a death. Not long since, the servants in a clergyman's family in Shrewsbury were made most uncomfortable by a bell ringing in this way, for one of them had known a case in which such a mysterious summons was followed by the death of one of the maids on the succeeding day.

If a clock falls, it is also a sign of death; if it stops unaccountably, some misfortune will happen at the same hour another day. An old man from Welshampton died in the Shrewsbury Infirmary. His daughter says that during his illness the clock stopped every night at a certain hour, which in the end proved to be that of her father's death.

This last superstition was embodied in the old song at one time very popular, 'My Grandfather's Clock.'

The church bell tolling with a heavy sound, the church clock striking while the text of the Sunday morning's sermon is given out, mysterious knocks heard at night, crockery falling without apparent cause, fruit trees blossoming out of season.

All these omens were still accepted all over the country and all over Europe as signifying some event about to happen, and although our knowledge of that subject was very imperfect at present, and although it must be years before we could speak with any certainty, it was nevertheless worth our while to consider and collect these instances, because they threw a valuable light on the psychic development of mankind.

Another species of phenomena which had a very important bearing on psychic investigation was the horror of naming the dead which was met with in many parts of the world. Mr. Edward Clodd in his volume, 'Myths and Dreams,' thus referred to the subject:—

All over the barbaric world we find a great horror of naming the dead, lest the ghost appear. An aged Indian of Lake Michigan explained why tales of spirits were told only in winter, by saying that when the deep snow is on the ground the voices of those repeating their names are muffled; but in summer the slightest mention of them must be avoided, lest the spirits be offended. Among the Californian tribes the name of the departed, spoken inadvertently, caused a shudder to pass over those present. . . . Dr. Lang tried to get the name of a relative who had been killed from an Australian. 'He told me who the lad's father was, who was his brother, what he was like, how he walked, how he held his tomahawk in his left hand instead of his right, and who were his companions; but the

dreaded name never escaped his lips, and I believe no promises or threats could have induced him to utter it.'

That reticence might remind some of those present of the extremely curious fact known to theologians that the real pronunciation of the name Jehovah had not come down to us. The Hebrew language in its early form was written only with consonants—there were no vowels. But recognising that the language might be lost if vowel signs were not introduced, the learned Jews about the seventh century, A.D., decided to introduce them, and invented a series of vowel marks. Reverent of the original forms of the words, they did not alter these, but placed the vowel signs above or below the consonants. It was as though we wrote the word 'Spirit,' S P R T, placing two little i's underneath. The Hebrew word for Jehovah then simply consisted of the consonants Y H V H; we did not know what the vowels really were. Modern theologians thought it was originally pronounced Yahveh, if it could be said to be pronounced in days when it was a name too holy for everyday utterance. That was an instance from the past of a forbidden name. It was not easy to assign an origin to the idea, but it connected with general instances in later times of reluctance to mention the names of the departed. We noted, too, in our psychic investigations to-day, the occasional reluctance on the part of returning spirits to disclose their identity or give their names. But whether the reluctance arose from past tradition or not was a difficult problem. Possibly it was due to some uncertainty of identity. He (the speaker) candidly admitted that the question was too difficult for him to solve.

Passing next to the practice of 'breathing out the spirit,' Mr. McArthur read the following passage from Mr. Clodd's book:—

In Harland and Wilkinson's 'Lancashire Folk-lore' it is related that while a well-known witch lay dying 'she must needs before she could "shuffle off this mortal coil" transfer her familiar spirit to some trusty successor. An intimate acquaintance from a neighbouring township was consequently sent for in all haste, and on her arrival was immediately closeted with her dying friend. What passed between them has never fully transpired, but it is asserted that at the close of the interview this associate received the witch's last breath into her mouth and with it her familiar spirit. The powers for good or evil of the dreaded woman were thus transferred to her companion.' . . . When a Roman lay at the point of death, his nearest relative inhaled the last breath; in New Testament story, the risen Jesus breathes on his disciples that they may receive the Holy Spirit, and the form thus adopted in conferring supernatural grace is still used in the rites and ceremonies of the Catholic Church.

Obviously there was a psychic explanation of these things, especially as they were so extremely ancient and enshrined in religious records for which we have the greatest respect whatever view we may take of their authenticity. One would have thought that any intelligent idea of the nature of the spirit would render impossible the belief that it could be transferred from the body of a dying individual into another person. Therefore there must be some other reason to account for the practice. What it was remained for us to discover.

Dealing next with those stories which related to the alleged visits of saints to this world, Mr. McArthur referred to the well-known legends of St. Peter coming over from Lambeth in the fisherman's boat and choosing a site for Westminster Abbey, and of Edward the Confessor bestowing a ring on a beggar who turned out to be St. John the Apostle. He then cited the following more modern example from 'Shropshire Folk-Lore':—

Once upon a time there came to a blacksmith's shop late one night a traveller whose horse had cast a shoe, and he wanted the blacksmith to put it on for him. So Will (that was the man's name) was very ready, and he soon had it on again all right. Now, the traveller was no other than the Apostle St. Peter himself, going about to preach the Gospel; and before he went away he told the blacksmith to wish a wish, whatever he chose, and it should be granted him. 'I wish,' said Will, 'that I might live my life over again.' So it was granted him, and he lived his life over again, and spent it in drinking and gambling and all manner of wild pranks. At last his time came, and he was forced to set out for the other world, thinking, of course, to find a place in Hell made ready for him; but when he came to the gates the Devil would not let him in. No, he said, by this time Will had learnt so much wickedness that he would be more than a match

for him, and he dared not let him come in. So away went the smith to Heaven to see if St. Peter, who had been a good friend to him before, would find him a place there; but St. Peter would not, it wasn't very likely he would! and Will was forced to go back to the Old Lad again, and beg and pray for a place in Hell. But the Devil would not be persuaded even then. Will had spent two lifetimes in learning wickedness, and now he knew too much to be welcome anywhere. All that the Devil would do for him was to give him a lighted coal from Hell-fire to keep himself warm, and that is how he comes to be called *Will-o'-the-Wisp*. So he goes wandering up and down the moors and mosses with his light, wherever he can find a bit of boggy ground that he can 'tice folk to lose their way in and bring them to a bad end, for he is not a bit less wicked and deceitful now than when he was a blacksmith.

That was a curious instance of a story of an obviously psychic nature brought into being to account for a natural phenomenon. Now, the inventor of the story might have explained the 'Will-o'-the-Wisp' in fifty different ways without drawing on an occult explanation. The presumption, therefore, arose that for some reason the occult explanation suggested itself the most readily to his mind. Nobody would regard the story as true, so that it was a fair inference that it was deliberately invented, and it was remarkable that the inventor should clothe his story in the occult form of which he must have had some knowledge.

As to the lessons of folk-lore, if we could find the stories of occult phenomena in the past paralleled in our own psychic experiences then we should have taken another step towards the establishment of that thesis which was now becoming so firmly fixed in the minds of those who studied the occult side of things although that study was a comparatively new one. We were only at the beginning of that science which was to demonstrate the spiritual nature of life. As Maeterlinck observed in his latest work, 'La Mort':—

It is not yet time to draw conclusions. Let us not lose sight of the fact that we are dealing with a science born yesterday, and searching blindly its instruments, its paths, its methods and its object in a night darker than that of earth. It is not yet thirty years since was built the boldest bridge yet thrown across the river of death. Most of the sciences have behind them centuries of ungrateful effort and barren uncertainty, and amongst the youngest there are few, I think, which can show like this one from its very first hours the promise of a harvest which is perhaps by no means that which it thought to have sown, but in which many unknown and curious fruits are showing themselves already. (Loud applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN said he thought we ought to be grateful to those persons who, like the lecturer, took the trouble to investigate subjects which did not appeal to the generality of people and gave us the benefit of their knowledge. The conclusion Mr. McArthur had come to, that there was a psychic origin to folk-lore stories, was borne out by the fact that in ancient times amongst the Greeks and Romans there was a knowledge of occult phenomena, and that it was only in comparatively recent years that such knowledge had been lost. If these things existed some two thousand years ago, it was reasonable to suppose they had been handed down from father to son, and that in the course of time their original meaning had been lost.

The lecturer's allusion to picture-falling recalled to Mrs. NORDICA the fact that she had read in regard to the death of the well-known actor, Wilson Barrett, that a picture on the walls of the hospital fell as he was taken in.

Mrs. SYMONDS, in moving a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer, said she had had distinct proof that animals were acted upon by unseen entities, and mentioned an instance which occurred last year in the house of a friend of hers, the exact moment of the death of her friend's father being accompanied by a cry of 'He's gone!' from the parrot.

THE CHAIRMAN seconded the resolution, which was carried by acclamation.

We are glad to know that the women of Walsall have subscribed for and obtained a suitable chain of office for the Mayoress. It was presented on Friday, April 25th, to the Mayor, our good friend, Mr. John Venables, and afterwards placed round the neck of the Mayoress, by Lady Holden. Mrs. Venables, who thus has the honour of being the first to wear the handsome badge of office, was also presented with an exact replica in miniature which bore the inscription, 'Presented to the Mayoress of Walsall, Mrs. Esther Venables, from the Women of Walsall, as a memento of their high esteem.'

THE RECEPTION TO DR. PEEBLES.

An atmosphere of warmth and cordiality pervaded the well-attended social gathering in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Wednesday afternoon the 23rd ult., to welcome Dr. J. M. Peebles and his companion, Mr. R. P. Sudall, on their visit to London.

Mr. Withall (Vice-president) took the chair and made a happy speech, in which he referred to the good work for Spiritualism which was done forty or fifty years ago, first at Camberwell and then in Southampton-row, by that energetic man Mr. James Burns. He often thought that in the present day that work was not sufficiently appreciated. At that time everybody was against Spiritualism, and the man who espoused it was regarded as either a rogue and a vagabond or demented. Among other things, Mr. Burns started a library and got books from America, and one of the first books he procured was Dr. Peebles' 'The Seers of the Ages.' That book, Mr. Withall believed, was to many people their first introduction to Spiritualism. Mr. Burns organised a great number of meetings, and early in the seventies he invited Dr. Peebles to this country. The doctor had since been a great source of strength to Spiritualism, not only in England but in Europe, in fact all over the globe, for he had been round the world five times, and had now come to attend the Universal Congress at Geneva. The doctor was connected with all the progressive movements of the day, feeling that Spiritualists should do their best to aid in the world's progress. He was an advocate of peace, of disarmament, of food reform, and practised what he preached. In his younger days he was a member of the Universalist Church, but left it and took to lecturing for the Spiritualists. He had had a hard struggle, for a Spiritualist lecturer was not one who got many of the 'loaves and fishes,' but he had the recompense of having gained many friends. 'To-day I want to tell him how welcome he is, and to say that when he comes over again—should we be alive at the time—(laughter)—I hope we may meet in this room and congratulate him on the strength, energy, and kindly nature and all the good that is in him.' Mr. Withall closed with a warm word of welcome to Mr. Sudall.

Dr. Peebles said that it gave him almost unbounded pleasure to look again into the faces of his friends in this country and clasp their hands. He was glad to land again in England. Americans honoured the mother country, though a few foolish young people liked to brag about the fourth of July. He was here to talk and lecture and do what he could, for he was born to work. Referring to some of his early difficulties, he recalled the time when he was pastor of a church in the City of Baltimore, then a slave-holding city, and how, owing to his anti-slavery attitude, it was not safe, when he went to baptise children, for him to go alone. It was a trying time for him when he left the Church. Speaking to a brother preacher, he said, 'I have glorious news. I have conversed with the spirits.' 'Brother Peebles,' was the answer, 'you are crazy.' Here was the crucial point. A member of his church had become a medium, and was writing marvellous things and giving test after test. He was in a popular church, and receiving a fine salary. Should he stand up and defend this truth or conceal it? He resolved to be a man and defend the whole truth. Since then he had travelled round the world and had seen a great many mediums. When he was asked what he had seen to convince him of the fact of spirit return, he replied, 'What have I not seen? I have seen so much and know so much of these marvels that I am astonished that anyone should remain in doubt. As my hairs whiten I love the truth of Spiritualism more and more—that truth which wipes away the mourner's tears. Clothe me in rags, but never take away from my soul the glorious fact that we can talk with God's angels!' In our blessed cause we needed to feel that we were spirits in a spirit world; we needed more enthusiasm and more religion. 'I cannot help saying that my mind reverts to good Dawson Rogers and others whom I knew so well in the old days. They were workers with us and for us. God bless them! They have passed up higher, and by and by, if we are worthy, we shall meet them and walk with them in those heavenly fields.' (Applause.)

Dr. Abraham Wallace offered his most sincere and joyous con-

THE VOICE PHENOMENA.

CONVINCING EVIDENCE OF SPIRIT RETURN.

BY JAMES COATES.

(Continued from page 196.)

TESTIMONY OF MR. JAMES COATES—(resumed).

The sances held on July 17th, 1912, were noteworthy, because they appealed especially to ourselves, as the 'voices' and other manifestations made special claim upon our attention.

My stepson, David A. Simpson, makes himself known to us and members of the Rothesay circle by various psychic modes, and he was among the first to present his etherialised form to us at the first sitting we had with Mrs. Wriedt, but he had not addressed us in the direct voice.

On the morning of the 17th he informed his mother, in the presence of Mr. Peter Reid—who happened to call—that his sister Agnes and he would speak to us in the private circle. David said: "Dr. Sharp" has promised to help me and Agnes. We have stood aside till the other friends got evidence, but will now come and speak in the private meeting.' This was quite in keeping with his disposition, for in life he was very retiring in the presence of visitors, although always 'at home' to us.

At the private circle, at 2 p.m., our old friends, Councillor John Duncan and his wife, Mrs. McCallum, Miss Brodie, Mrs. Coates, Mrs. Wriedt and myself were present. I wish to emphasise the fact that Mrs. Wriedt did not hear or know of the promise made by David. Not that the arrangement had been made for testing purposes, it simply happened to be so, as Mrs. Wriedt only arrived just in time for the sance. She appeared in excellent spirits, and remarked that it was curious, mentioning some instances, that at her most successful sances the sitters were only seven in number. She felt that we were about to have a good time. The medium sat in front of the cabinet, and at her request I closed the door and put out the light. This had barely been done before 'Dr. Sharp' gave us a hearty welcome. There were none of the usual preliminaries that had been observed in the prior sittings.

'Dr. Sharp' said he trusted that all present would realise the spirit world and the material world as one. He hoped that that meeting would be long remembered by us, as one in which spirit communion was proved to each of us. There were times when spirit communion was difficult, but that day each one would get striking evidence. 'We will bring heaven to you today. Now let us pray.' The doctor then in a clear voice uttered the Lord's Prayer—with slight interpolations, such as 'Deliver us from temptation.' The utterance was emphatic and reverent. All present joined in the devotional exercise.

Mrs. Wriedt said to Miss Brodie, 'I feel I have to tell you that there is a young man here who was burned to death in a train.' This was followed by a description. Miss Brodie knew the person referred to. She was requested to call upon his friends and tell them he had been. Miss Brodie fully understood, and so did Mrs. Coates and I, as we remembered when the tragic occurrence took place, and the effect the man's death and the disaster had on our friend.

There was someone at the cabinet. The cloudy form advanced to the centre of the room and went back into the cabinet. None of us could make out the form, it was undefinable. We thought it was that of the young man who had been burnt.

The medium described an old lady to whom Mrs. Coates had been very kind, and who wanted to thank her. Mrs. Coates thought of a few old ladies, but could not decide. The old lady had to stand on one side as unrecognised. We afterwards learned that she was an old nurse who had done service in our household, but whom in the conflicting thoughts of the moment we had forgotten, though we had both known her well.

A figure at the cabinet was described by Mrs. Wriedt. None of us could see more than cloudy forms or cloudy patches moving about. It was someone for Mrs. Duncan, and for a little time was unrecognised. It was 'Lizzie,' Mr. and Mrs. Duncan's daughter. She expressed the desire that her parents should thank Mr. Coates for his 'wire,' and for bringing them here. There was a sound of kisses. The allusion to the 'wire' was appropriate. Nothing further transpired at this point. Evidently the spirit friends were gathering power. All of the foregoing had taken place in less time than it takes to write about it.

At about 3 p.m. we were startled by a loud voice saying: 'My

gratulations to Dr. Peebles. The doctor was always rejuvenating—not reincarnating—(laughter)—and was as enthusiastic in the cause as ever. It reminded him of an incident told him by a fellow-countrywoman of his a few days before. She had been a member of St. Vincent's Church, Glasgow, when our old friend, John Page Hopps, was pastor. On meeting her after an interval of many years, Mr. Hopps exclaimed, as he shook her by the hand, 'Why, I never expected to speak to you again till I got up yonder!'

Mr. Withall here stated that as there had been an idea that the Alliance did not attract the young people, the Council had that afternoon elected Dr. Peebles an hon. member, as he was but ninety-one years young. (Laughter.)

Mr. Thurstan held that one of the best ways of calling attention to Spiritualism was by improving ourselves psychically. Dr. Peebles set an excellent example, and there was no reason why many Spiritualists should not follow that example.

Miss Rogers said it gave her immense pleasure to meet and greet the doctor. She should always cherish with delight the memory of his visit to Norwich forty or more years ago.

Mr. E. W. Wallis recalled attending a meeting addressed by Dr. Peebles and Dr. Dunn early in the seventies at which he was deeply impressed, for never before or since had he seen an audience so affected. In one of his addresses Dr. Peebles had said that in 1900 Spiritualism would be the religion of the world. That was, perhaps, a little sanguine, but there had been an immense change in the public attitude on the question, especially within the last twenty years. He (Mr. Wallis) believed that, though there was not so much church-going or profession of religion, men's convictions were deeper and more assured than ever in the past. Like the doctor, he was an optimist. The spiritual nature of man craved for expression, and whatever modes of faith might die out, the faith would live. They wished Dr. Peebles God-speed.

Dr. Peebles, in returning thanks, said that in the States Spiritualism as an organisation was not making the progress it should, but its influence was permeating society. He wished also to thank the Council for so graciously making him a Member of the Alliance. He esteemed it an honour.

Mr. Sudall added a few words and said that he knew of no man worthier of his devoted service than Dr. Peebles, and no better cause than Spiritualism in which to labour.

MIGRATORY SPIRITS.

Writing in 'The Truth,' Stewart J. Spence refers to the theory that 'migratory spirits pass from one body to another and become the spirit of more than one body,' and says:—

If a migratory spirit comes to earth from some other sphere and enters consecutively into the bodies of, say, Pharaoh, Menepthah, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, Tamerlane and Napoleon Bonaparte, and then wings its way from St. Helena's lonely isle to some far-off world, it follows that only this migratory spirit will survive, and that Pharaoh and the rest of these fine gentlemen will utterly drop out of existence; except, perhaps, as they may continue to exist in dim memories in the mind of the emigrant spirit. And, of course, what would be true of them would be true of all men—no personal immortality for any—blank extinction of actual existence for all!

Mr. Spence holds that if one body could be born without a spirit native to or originating with it, then all other bodies could be born without spirits of their own, since the emigrant spirit, according to Plato, comes from the depths of a past eternity. This he does not believe, because spirit is the body-builder—the body being the result of the living cause—and consequently no foreign or migratory spirit can enter into and take forcible possession of a body which is already tenanted by the true human Ego.

It is all very perplexing, especially as there seems to be no means whereby the truth of the theories of reincarnation or re-embodiment can be demonstrated. Consequently it is a matter regarding which each one must be 'fully persuaded in his own mind.' Discussion seems futile, as the correspondence in our columns, which closes this week, has once more shown.

dear Mr. Coates, you know who I am.' I did, as soon as I heard that never-to-be-forgotten voice. It was Mr. Stead.

The voice: 'I am Stead. God bless you for the work you are doing. God bless you, Mrs. Coates, for enabling me to send that message to the world. God bless all the dear friends here. May you be true; may you never be ashamed or afraid of Spiritualism; may you never forget the privileges you have received in knowing this great truth of spirit-return. Be faithful to this great revelation. God grant that you may never have to suffer on its account as I have done. Dear Mr. and Mrs. Coates, I will help you. If any of you are at any time in trouble, call upon me, and I will try to be with you and help you. God bless all the dear friends here, and give them strength and power to make this great truth known. I am Stead, and have returned to you. God bless you, Mrs. Coates, for helping me to get into your aura. Mr. Coates, tell Robertson I have been.'

That was the gist of his message. The full and hearty tone of his greeting startled all of us. Mrs. Wriedt nearly broke down when she heard the voice, and exclaimed, 'Oh, dear Mr. Stead, how good it was of you to come!' We did not know then, as we afterwards learned, that Mr. Stead, at 'Julia's Bureau,' directed Mrs. Wriedt to go to Rothessay, as he had a message to deliver, which is imperfectly rendered above. The ringing tone and conviction in his voice will not be readily forgotten.

In contrast to the voice of Mr. Stead came that of Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis, which was tender, sympathetic and persuasive. It appears he has not closed his connection with the earth plane. Of those present, only Mrs. Wriedt recognised the voice. The friends were addressed and encouraged. I felt that he overrated my ability. What little I have been able to do would not have been done without assistance from the unseen, but possibly what I have written with that help will find its place in the records of the movement. As Mrs. Coates has referred to Dr. A. J. Davis' statements, I need not say more here.

At this séance, according to promise, my stepdaughter, Agnes Simpson, and stepson, David Anderson Simpson, manifested; but as Mrs. Coates has already referred to this, I need only say that, as a demonstration of spirit-power emphasising the interest and knowledge of the departed, it was unequalled in the remarkable manifestations which took place during the course of these séances.

A cousin of mine, James Tobin (eldest son of Mrs. Ellen Tobin, who had already etherealised and spoken to us), manifested by voice at this séance. He sang a stanza of the American soldiers' patriotic song, of which the refrain is, 'Tenting, tenting.' I was too much interested and was unable to take verbatim notes. 'Well, Jim, how are you keeping?' was his simple and effective salutation. We then talked of his father, of 'Con,' Isabella, and his mother. He reminded me of some incidents, contrasting my present position with the old days. I asked about Harrie, his surviving sister, and whether I should tell her that he had spoken to me. His reply was: 'Harrie pretends she is interested, not to hurt your feelings, but do not believe a word of it. Leave her alone. She will learn the truth some day.'

It was not until he was gone that I remembered about the mysterious disappearance of a nephew. Mrs. Tobin had already assured me that Fred—the missing boy—was with her. As it was, my cousin Jim remained long enough to establish his identity. He had, like myself, been a soldier in the Grand Army and saw service during the Civil War in the United States.

A low, sweet voice was heard addressing Mrs. Coates, saying: 'Minnie, I am Minnie.' A moment or two elapsed before this spirit friend was recognised, as the name was not caught at once. It was with great patience this friend made herself known. She had manifested in our circle, as many others had, before we knew of Mrs. Wriedt, and this voice manifestation was most convincing.

'I am Minnie B. My mother lives at —,' giving the address, and speaking of her brother, Dr. George.

We had seen her in her earth life, but had never spoken to her. For several years before her death she had been mentally afflicted. Now she was free, and her voice was calm, lovable and gentle. She said she did not wish her mother, an old lady of eighty-six, to be spoken to. 'You know mother. I would not have her disturbed. Yes, my nurse was very good to me. It was not easy for her. I wish mother to do right by her. I have been able to influence mother. Neither mother nor George believe in this. You can tell George, but not mother.' Mrs. Coates: 'You know, Miss B., that I have kept away from your mother, because you used to control me, and almost forced me to go and see her. I was afraid you would control me in her presence, you were so forcible.'

Miss B.: 'You need have no fear now. I did that when I knew no better. I am free now and content to wait for mother.'

I am so happy now, and, oh, dear Mrs. Coates, I want to thank you ever so much and your dear husband for my being able to come in the past—and to-day. I am so glad. Good-bye.'

That this gentle soul should wait for the private sitting to make her appearance, wholly unexpected, has been evidential in two ways. In the first place, it comported with her character; in the next, neither Mrs. Wriedt nor any of the other sitters knew her in earth life. And although Mrs. Coates and I fully sympathised with her mother and herself, we had never spoken to her. It is a pity that the mother cannot be informed that her daughter is free, happy, and suffers no longer. This incident, coming so soon after David and Agnes spoke, had a chastening effect on the entire circle.

(To be continued.)

PSYCHIC PERCEPTION OR SPIRIT INFLUENCE?

Mrs. Campbell Praed, in her foreword to a cheap reissue of her remarkable novel 'Nyria' (cloth, 2s. net, William Rider and Son, 8-11, Paternoster-row, E.C.), repeats, with an important addition, the statement she made in her original preface as to the origin of the work. She says:—

Briefly, the source of the story of 'Nyria' lay, as I then pointed out, in the subconscious memories of a very elementary and unlearned young woman, who, on my first accidental discovery of her abnormal gift, as she handled a fragment of marble I had once taken from the Vestals' House, seemed to be carried back by force of association to an earlier life in Rome during the reign of the Emperor Domitian. My own studies along that line enabled me at once to verify the period by her description of the Forum and its surroundings; and later, to check the information she gave me concerning historic personages and events, in practically all of which she proved herself correct. Indeed, on several points, believing her to be in error, I found by subsequent reference to authorities that it had been I who was at fault. This was the most surprising because I had satisfied myself that in ordinary conditions the young woman had only the most elementary knowledge of Roman history, had never been in Rome, and was without means of access to books on the subject. Thus, after some preliminary difficulty in establishing sympathetic relations in what I might term the realm of pre-existence, and many talks during which my young friend would seem to step back into and to re-live that life of the past, a human history, told in detail, but in a childlike, chattering manner, was gradually unfolded to me. The novel was compiled from a mass of reports of those talks which I took down at the time. . . . There remains an elucidatory point which was inadvertently omitted from the original preface. It is this, that several of the scenes 'Nyria' described were given me from other points of view by different and separate clairvoyantes before I knew of the existence of 'Nyria'—of whom likewise they had never heard. Here, it seems to me, is opened the question of those imperishable records available to all who have the psychic faculty sufficiently developed to reach them.

While it is possible that these same 'imperishable records,' and not memories of a pre-existence of her own, may account for the history told by the 'elementary and unlearned young woman,' it is more probable that this was a case of spirit return, or the overshadowing of the 'unlearned young woman' by a spirit. Further, such a brave and loyal little soul as Mrs. Praed's slave girl, who goes to her martyrdom with the light of faith and rapture on her upturned face, would seem to have learnt already the chief lessons of earth life, and have no need to return. If she has been re-embodied, it says little for the rate of spiritual and mental unfoldment in that Paradise to which angels seemed about to welcome her (and the vision of which enabled her to fare forth 'as seeing Him who is invisible'), that, after all these centuries, Mrs. Praed should see nothing more in her than an 'elementary young woman.'

THE 'Occult Review' for May is an interesting number. The editor, in his 'Notes,' upholds reincarnation at great length, devoting the whole of his space to it. Miss Harper has an article on 'W. T. Stead as a Seer.' James Matthews tells a queer story of a prophecy by an old fakir fulfilled. Mabel Collins writes on 'Some Views of Dr. Rudolf Steiner on Human Evolution,' and Elizabeth Severn on 'Synthetic Psycho-therapy, an Exposition of Modern Healing.'

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

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

Reincarnation and its Opponents.

SIR,—Permit me a final word on this subject in reply to Mr. Merlini, who handles the question with ability, and of whose courtesy I am very sensible. He refers to a great number of actualities which are, in his view, explicable only on his particular hypothesis. May I say that I have not met with a single fact that could not be more readily explained by causes nearer at hand—the psychic possibilities of the individual himself. To import the reincarnation theory into these matters seemed to me akin to using a Nasmyth hammer to crack filberts.

Mr. Merlini says, 'Everything in the Cosmos moves circularly.' May I ask where he obtained this singularly limited impression of Cosmic movement? Has he never heard of the *Spiral* movement beyond the Circular one, and of the *Vortical* movement beyond that? Beyond the Vortical there are other grades of movement, but they are not yet known to mathematical science. However, I leave him with the Vortical movement, and when he has applied that to his thinking, the results may be surprising. Behind all great traditions there is an element of profound truth. There is a great truth behind the theory of reincarnation, but it is not the petty idea of individual spirits coming back again and again into physical embodiment.—Yours, &c.,

EUGENE PHILIP GLEN.

SIR,—I am sorry that the first two paragraphs of my letter in 'LIGHT' of April 12th should suggest to Mr. Glen that I consider the opponents of reincarnation the only prejudiced persons. As a matter of fact, I was thinking at the moment of two letters recently published in 'LIGHT' which I thought showed the presence of strong prejudice and some lack of the qualities so necessary for any profitable discussion. These special letters were written by opponents of reincarnation as it happened. Had similar ones emanated from reincarnationists, I should have written those paragraphs in my letter exactly as they stand. I think I make this quite evident later, by endorsing Mr. Guy Heaton's remark that reincarnation has become a veritable nightmare 'owing to the usual loss of all sense of proportion in those who discuss it' and also by saying myself that 'champions on either side rush in to wave their respective flags, &c.' There is no suggestion here of one-sided prejudice. My fifth paragraph would have no meaning had I wished to suggest that the opponents of reincarnation were alone in fault. Unfortunately I could not see my letter in proof before publication, or should doubtless have anticipated possible misconception and guarded against it still more plainly.

In thanking Mr. Glen for his kindly references to my work, I should like to remind him that 'illumination' comes always from within, through the still small voice of the spirit; and each one must receive it for himself. Knowledge can be handed round, but not wisdom.

Any intimations as to reincarnation that I have personally received would be, of necessity, valueless to others—as a matter of fact, they do not absolutely convince even myself.

As Mr. George Sanders most pertinently remarks, if we are filled with the consciousness of Divine Love and Divine Wisdom 'what does it matter whether we reincarnate or not?'—Yours, &c.,

E. KATHARINE BATES.

Alassio.

SIR,—I have read with considerable interest the recent correspondence in 'LIGHT' concerning reincarnation. To many like myself the subject is somewhat fascinating, notwithstanding one's inability to approach it from a purely scientific standpoint; and when well-known novelists, such as Marie Corelli and Sarah Grand, emphatically assert that by successive human incarnations humanity makes its ascent, the ordinary person may well hesitate to affirm that the doctrine is without a reliable foundation.

To those readers who are desirous of knowing the truth I would recommend 'The Life Elysian,' a beautifully written book, by Mr. R. J. Lees. One chapter briefly but convincingly shows that the theory of reincarnation is against all natural law and is an absolute myth.

The source and reliability of this information, I have good reason for believing, are beyond question, and it occurred to me that possibly many would be glad to know that definite knowledge on this otherwise abstruse problem is not impossible to obtain.—Yours, &c.,

W. CHAMBERLAIN.

[This discussion must now cease.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Progress at Weston Church.

SIR,—I beg to report that my church has been crowded to the doors these last two Sundays, people driving in from adjacent towns in waggonettes, traps, and motors. We hope to keep a substantial part of this congregation. No such four consecutive services have ever been seen at this church within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. I wish to make the church as comfortable as possible, so as to retain as many as possible, and as the pews are straightbacked, and bare-seated for the most part, I wish to cover the seats with felt. It will take about £3. Will any reader of 'LIGHT' help to do this? Any donation will be promptly acknowledged by myself or wardens. I am passing through a fiery time of trial in one way and another, but by God's providence I am confident that I shall be delivered from it all, while the cause of spiritual truth will go forward. Kind regards.—Yours, &c.,

C. L. TWEEDALE.

Weston Vicarage, Otley, Yorks.
April 23rd.

Is it True?

SIR,—A friend who takes an interest in things occult and mystical tells me that every year on the anniversary of the murder of St. Thomas à Beckett, a local thunderstorm occurs at Canterbury. My informant further assures me that the earth-bound spirit of one of the four knights who took part in the transaction still haunts, or did until recently, some part of Canterbury. Whether it is the cathedral or not I am not quite clear. Personally, I should very much doubt whether the knight in question could have been earth-bound for so many years. If it is still haunted by the presence, would it not more likely be his geist or double? Perhaps some reader can throw light on the subject, or, at any rate, verify or contradict the statement regarding the annual thunderstorm?—Yours, &c.,

OMNIA VINCIT AMOR.

'A Question Regarding Consciousness.'

SIR,—In answer to 'An Earnest Inquirer' (p. 191), I would say that it is all a question of self-consciousness, and that if one were able to enter into the conscious experience of another, there would no longer be any difficulty.

Though appearances may indicate the contrary, the spirit can never be entirely separated from the organism. Were it so, death would take place. When the consciousness is undergoing psychical experience, the pulse-boat is reduced to the lowest minimum consistent with the preservation of human life. Now a medium is one who comes under spiritual influx, and such an one claims that the responsibility of the utterances through him is vested in his guides, but the palpable dissimilarities in these communications clearly demonstrate that absolute truth is not to be found in them, the information given often being adapted to, or limited by, the mental states of the sensitive and the hearers.

The inner consciousness of the instrument can be utilised, for the time being, by the controlling spirit, the normal consciousness being suspended. The external personality knows nothing of that true spiritual insight which alone can cognise the things that pertain to the spirit, and yet without this inner spiritual power of perception the external man cannot scientifically demonstrate what composes even the appearance of spiritual truth.

In reference to the assumption of the indestructibility of spirit, allow me to point out that each one of us is an individualised atom of life with a specific life-quality and self-consciousness of our own, indestructible and eternal; and yet even as we all form part of the 'Grand Man' of our earth, so are we each component parts of the Great Angel, the great Angelic Centre to which we belong by virtue of our descent from that particular sphere.—Yours, &c.,

MABON.

SIR,—Perhaps the following experience may be of use to your correspondent, 'An Earnest Inquirer.' Whilst I was helping a sick person by mesmerism, she passed under spirit control. This has occurred almost daily for the past eight months; consequently there has been ample opportunity for conversation. Noticing that, whilst under control, the physical eyes remained closed, I requested the control to open them. He replied that he could not; he made several attempts, but failed to lift the eyelids. This seemed strange to me—he could move the limbs, why not use the eyes? The control said that when any person (in the body) went to sleep, the eyes remained closed till normal consciousness returned, although the spirit might be what is called dreaming, and although the limbs were often moved. In

the present instance, the medium had gone away with spirit friends, but under the impression or consciousness of sleep, what she saw or heard under these conditions would appear to her as a dream. In answer to a question, the control further stated that if a suggestion were given to the medium when in the mesmeric state that, should she go away and he come, he would be able to open the physical eyes, he would then be able to do so (this was proved to be true), and she would maintain wakeful consciousness. What she saw and heard would be remembered and described, if a suggestion to that effect were given her by the mesmerist, before the control was effected. Otherwise, she would return to normal consciousness as though waking from ordinary sleep. The control said, moreover, that he knew of no such condition as absolute unconsciousness. Everyone was at all times conscious of something. I then asked if it would be possible (by suggestion) for the medium to remain in the room whilst her body was controlled and be conscious of the fact. He replied, yes; also to hear all that was said. But without the suggestion, the medium might be in the room without being conscious of the control, &c., though she would be conscious of something all the time. Upon another occasion, I had put a man to sleep for sickness, when he became restless. I advised quietness; he said, 'Wait a minute.' As he still continued restless, I inquired the cause; a strange voice replied, 'Wait until I get this man out of the room,' and immediately the voice said, 'You are now speaking to the man who used to employ the sick one, in Ireland, thirty years ago, when he was a boy'—adding that he (the control) had come only to thank me for my help to the sick one. After giving his benediction, he retired, and the owner of the body returned. In his mesmeric state he did not know of the incident. Of course, in his normal condition, I did not mention it. I have had other similar experiences.—Yours, &c.,

G. W. MAKIN.

The Mediumship of John Taylor.

SIR,—I recently arranged for a series of sittings with Mr. John Taylor, the physical medium of Manchester, three being held at the International Club of Psychical Research, 22A, Regent-street, London, one at a gentleman's house in Regent's Park, and two under the auspices of the Brighton Society. I have no hesitation in saying that on each occasion the phenomena were wonderful. Mr. Taylor also endeared himself to all by his quiet, genuine, unassuming manner. As I have had much experience in other lands, and consider his phenomena of a most striking character, I think it would be a move in the right direction if the Spiritualist societies would from time to time bring Mr. Taylor before those persons in London who are asking for a physical sign. Mr. Everett, of the Brighton Society, was also highly pleased with the demonstration, and looks forward to an early return.—Yours, &c.,

H. NORDICA.

59, Edgware-road, W.

THE LEAGUE OF DEFENCE.

Being unable to go to Manchester to participate in the celebration of Good Friday, I was extremely disappointed that I could not attend the first public meeting of the League of Defence. However, our stalwart friends, Mr. J. J. Morse and Mr. R. H. Yates, looked after our combined interests, the latter sending me a full and pleasant account of the proceedings.

Mr. J. J. Morse (Editor of 'The Two Worlds') was appointed hon. treasurer, and I shall endeavour to merit the confidences reposed in my humbleself as hon. secretary. It was also resolved that a list of League members, with their full addresses, should be compiled and published, together with a request, to society secretaries, and secretaries of County and District Unions, to file it ready for reference; that all reports and records of attacks by Press or pulpit should be sent out immediately to members of the League, and to the secretary of the League, so that they might have immediate opportunity of repelling attacks, and the public be enabled to read in the same paper in which the attacks are made or reported, statements of what Spiritualism really is, written by those who understand it, and further, that every secretary be asked to become a member of the League.

I shall be glad if secretaries will kindly send me their names, and if those who are already members will let me know if they are willing to allow publication of their addresses. Mr. Yates has a scheme in process of development, but desires to have some idea of who will co-operate. Will readers please remember that Mr. Morse is waiting to acknowledge the receipt of donations towards the expenses which must necessarily be incurred.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES LAWRENCE,
Hon. Secretary.

387, Shields-road, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, APRIL 27th, &c.

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

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION—*Shearn's Restaurant, 231, Tottenham Court-road, W.*—Mr. H. Biden Steele's interesting and helpful address on 'Strange Happenings (some Practical Aids to Investigation)' was much appreciated.—15, *Mortimer-street, W.*—April 21st, Mrs. Neville gave fully-recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided at both meetings.—Sunday next, see advertisement on front page.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, Pembroke Place, Baywater, W.—Morning, address by Miss M. Ridge on 'The Necessity of Death'; evening, Mr. H. G. Beard spoke on 'Life's Shadows,' and Miss Jeannie Bateman, L.R.A.M., sang a solo. For next week's services see front page.

FULHAM—**COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD.**—Mr. Fielder gave an address followed by questions and discussion. Sunday next, Dr. Peebles. Tea at 5.—H. C.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH—73, **BECKLOW-ROAD, W.**—Morning, Miss Rotherham conducted a circle; evening, Mr. Wallace. Sunday next, 11 a.m., circle; 7 p.m., Mr. Fielder. Thursday, at 8, Mrs. Webster.—M. S.

CLAPHAM—**HOWARD-STREET, NEW-ROAD.**—Mr. Sarfas gave an address and descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15, open circle; 7 p.m., Mr. Symons. Monday, at 3 p.m., ladies' circle. Thursday, at 8, public meeting.—F. C.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES—**ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.**—Mr. Robert King spoke on 'The Phenomena of Materialisation.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Davies on 'The Occult Side of Prayer,' and clairvoyant descriptions.—J. W. H.

STRATFORD—**WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.**—Mr. J. C. Thompson's interesting address on 'Do Discarnate Spirits Influence Incarnate Spirits?' was much appreciated. Miss Florrie Shead sweetly sang a solo. Mr. Geo. F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address, Miss A. V. Earle.

BRISTOL—144, **GROSVENOR-ROAD.**—Mrs. Baxter spoke on 'What are we to Understand is the Kingdom of Heaven?' and Mr. Brunt on 'Identity in Spirit Land,' subjects chosen by the audience. Sunday next, 6.30, public service. Usual week-night meetings.—J. S. B.

BRIGHTON—**MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).**—Mr. Frank Pearce gave interesting addresses. Sunday next, at 11.15 and 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Jamrach, address and clairvoyance; also Monday, at 8, Tuesday, at 3, private interviews; at 8, also Wednesday, at 3, circles.—H. J. E.

BRIGHTON—**HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET, WEST.**—Mr. T. O. Todd gave an excellent address and Mrs. G. C. Curry descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15, public circle; 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton. Tuesdays, at 3 and 8, also Wednesdays, at 3, Mrs. Curry, clairvoyante. Thursdays, 8.15, public circle.—A. C.

CROYDON—**ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.**—Mr. Percy Scholey spoke on 'The Spiritual Ideal.' Evening, Mrs. Mary Davies gave an interesting address on 'The Occult Side of Prayer' and well-recognised descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., service; at 7 p.m., Mr. T. Olman Todd.—G. S.

BRISTON—8, **MAYALL-ROAD.**—Mr. Horace Leaf gave a trance address and descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., healing; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7, Mr. Percy Smythe, address. Circles: Monday, 7.30, ladies'; Tuesday, 8.15, members'; Thursday, 8, public.—E. K.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD—**HENLEY-STREET.**—Mrs. Maunders delivered an address on 'Life's Harmonies.' Sunday next, in Battersea Park, at 3, Messrs. G. T. Gwinn, Scholey and Rush and Mr. and Mrs. H. Boddington; also in hall, at 7. Thursday, 8.15, clairvoyance.

STRATFORD—**IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.**—Morning, Mrs. Hayward, 'Phenomena'; evening, Mr. A. J. Neville spoke on 'The Marvels of the Universe' and Mr. J. Wrench gave descriptions. April 24th, Mrs. E. Neville gave descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.45 a.m., Mrs. Cattanaich on 'Is Spiritualism a Religion in Itself?'; 7 p.m., Mr. J. G. Nicholson. 8th, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Richards.

CAMBERWELL NEW ROAD—**SURREY MASONIC HALL.**—Mr. W. E. Long gave personal messages in the morning, and in the evening a fine address on 'Dreams and Visions.' Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. Long, questions invited; at 6.30 p.m., address by Mr. G. T. Brown. 25th, at 6.30, visit of Dr. Peebles. Note date.

HACKNEY—240A, **AMHURST-ROAD, N.**—Morning, Mr. Douglall conducted the meeting; evening, Mrs. Alice Jamrach gave an address on 'What is Man?' and descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. R. G. Jones; at 7 p.m., Mr. A. J. McLellan, address and descriptions. Monday, 8 p.m., circle (inquirers welcomed). Thursday, 7.15, Mr. H. Bell, healing; 8.15, circle, members only.—N. R.

SEVEN KINGS.—45, THE PROMENADE.—Morning, Mr. R. Hutchfield opened discussion on 'The Sermon on the Mount'; evening, Mr. Smith spoke on 'Man—his Responsibilities,' and Mrs. Smith gave descriptions. April 22nd, Mr. T. Brooks on 'Meditation,' and Mrs. Briggs, descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. Turner; at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Roberts. Tuesday, 8 p.m., Mrs. Pitter. 11th, Miss F. M. M. Russell.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, circle; evening, at the Arlington, Mr. H. J. Stockwell addressed a large audience, and Mrs. Keighley gave descriptions. We are indebted to Mr. Hurndall for placing the hall at our service. Sunday next—morning, circle; afternoon, Lyceum, naming of son of Mr. Underwood. Tea at 5, 6d. Evening, Mrs. Podmore. 8th, Mrs. Keighley. 11th, Mr. J. Macbeth Bain. Tuesdays, at 8.15, healing.—A. C. S.

HOLLOWAY.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. J. Abrahall spoke on 'The Aim and Purpose of Life,' and gave psychometrical readings; evening, Mrs. Minnie Nordica gave an address on 'There is no Death,' also auric readings and messages. April 23rd, Mrs. Mary Clempson gave psychometrical readings; Mr. E. Alcock Rush sang a solo. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. J. Abrahall; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, Mrs. Annie Keightley. Wednesday, Dr. J. M. Peebles on 'Oriental and Occidental Spiritism.'—J. F.

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—Annual visit to Battersea Society, Sunday, May 4th. At 3 p.m., Rally in Battersea Park. South London Spiritualists are urged to attend. At 7 p.m., public meeting at the hall in Henley-street; speakers: Messrs. G. Tayler Gwinn and Gerald Scholey. Soloists, Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush.

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL.—Mrs. Ellen Green gave addresses and descriptions morning and evening.

CHATHAM.—553, CANTERBURY-STREET, GILLINGHAM.—Miss Violet Burton gave an instructive address on 'Results.'

BRISTOL.—THOMAS-STREET HALL, STOKES CROFT.—Address and descriptions by Mrs. Powell Williams. April 25th, Mr. Edwards' healing circle.—W. G.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.—Mrs. E. A. Cannock spoke on 'A Spiritualist's Responsibilities' and 'The Mysteries of Life' and gave descriptions.—P.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.—Mr. Wilfrid Rooke answered written questions and discoursed on 'The Evolution of the Race.' Clairvoyantes, Mrs. Scholes and Mrs. Rooke.

BIRMINGHAM.—CAMDEN-STREET SCHOOLS.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave inspirational addresses and descriptions, and on the 26th answered questions.—J. R. C.

TOTTENHAM.—684, HIGH ROAD.—Mrs. Mary Gordon spoke on 'The Power of Thought,' answered questions, and gave descriptions.—N. D.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Mr. Symons gave an inspired address, and Mrs. Neville spoke on 'Psychic Gifts' and gave psychic readings. Mr. Rundle took the after-circle.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.—Good address by Mr. Kent on 'Jesus the Man, Christ the Spirit'; descriptions by Mrs. Kent. April 24th, Mrs. E. Cornish.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD.—Morning, circle; evening, address by Mrs. Roberts on 'Lead, Spirits Bright'; descriptions by Mr. Roberts; solo by Miss L. Drieselmann. April 23rd, Mrs. Podmore.

SOUTHEND.—CROWSTONE GYMNASIUM, NORTHVIEW DRIVE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.—Mr. G. R. Symons gave an address on 'The Five Points of Fellowship,' and the president followed with fully-recognised descriptions and messages.—S. E. W.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Address by Mr. Lethbridge and descriptions by Mrs. Summers. April 23rd, Mr. Clavis and Mesdames Trueman and Summers officiated.—E. F.

STONEHOUSE, PLYMOUTH.—UNITY HALL, EDGCUMBE-STREET.—Address by Mr. Blamey on 'Angel Witnesses.' Clairvoyante, Mrs. Joachim Dennis, who also sang a solo. Address by Mr. Adams on 'Healing.' Descriptions by Messrs. J. Dennis and Hoskyns.—E. D.

PORTSMOUTH TEMPLE.—VICTORIA-ROAD SOUTH.—Mrs. Annie Boddington gave addresses and recognised clairvoyant descriptions, and on the 28th, successful demonstrations of psychic power. April 23rd, address by Mr. A. Lamsley, descriptions by Miss Hilda Jerome.—J. McF.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—Morning, address by Mrs. Mann, descriptions by Mrs. Hunter. Evening, address by Mr. W. J. Street, clairvoyante Mrs. Taylor. 24th, address by Mr. J. W. Cox, descriptions by Mr. F. T. Blake.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street gave addresses on 'Thoughts Concerning the Guests of God' and 'The Road-Menders.' 20th ult., Mrs. M. H. Wallis answered questions, and gave an address and descriptions. 21st ult., Dr. Rankin spoke on 'The Psychic Aspect in Modern Medicines.'—M. L.

MANOR PARK.—THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.—Morning, Lyceum's sixth anniversary, special addresses; afternoon, healing service; evening, Mr. S. S. Noyce, address; descriptions by Mr. W. Noyce. Usual week-night services: Mesdames Bryceson and Jamrach officiated.—T. S.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STRONE-ROAD.—Morning, healing service; evening, address by Mrs. Beaumont on 'Mediumship in the Bible,' and descriptions. April 23rd, lantern concert by Mr. Self, on behalf of the Lyceum funds. 24th, Mrs. Annie Keightley spoke on 'The Way of Transgression,' and gave descriptions.—A. L. M.

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