

# Light:



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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY

'Cheiro's' withdrawal from his professional pursuit of chiromancy, in order (we believe) to devote himself to general literature, will occasion regret in many quarters, but we are glad that what is stated to be his last public deliverance on the philosophy of the hand was made from the platform of the Alliance. Opinion amongst us regarding what may be called the side-issues of our subject—chiromancy, astrology, numerology and so forth—differs widely, even hotly sometimes, but we aim at being as inclusive as possible, consistent with the best interests of our movement. All the 'occult arts' abound in useful hints and suggestions when sympathetically examined, even when we cannot altogether reconcile their special doctrines with our own system of thinking. On the question of predicting the future, the chairman's remarks on the occasion of 'Cheiro's' address, of which we gave a full report last week, are very much to the point. And although we cannot cover all the ground on the lines of pure reason, we do well to hold firmly by reason all the time. By the method of 'proving all things' we may occasionally have to reject ideas which further experience proves to be true, but equally we avoid accepting ideas which we may have later to discard—after they have done mischief.

The 'Occult Review' for May is an excellent number. The article on 'Mr. W. T. Stead as a Seer,' by Miss Edith K. Harper, is full of interest, throwing new lights on the character of the famous journalist, and giving examples of the psychic influences which manifested themselves throughout his life. The three instances of prevision in connection with his journalistic career are indeed remarkable. The 'Notes of the Month' are devoted to an exposition of the case for the doctrine of Reincarnation, and the arguments are set out with conspicuous ability. In a question of this kind, of course, a great deal turns upon the nature of the soul, or, more correctly, the individual spirit. The writer of the 'Notes' alludes to the absurdity of supposing that the 'soul' is generated spontaneously at or (just) before birth. And he suggests that the parents of a child are in 'much the same position, with regard to the life which they bring into the world, as the packing-case maker is in relation to the goods for which he supplies the case.' To us the question presents itself somewhat in this form: There is a sense in which a match is 'created,' the thin splinter of wood, with its tip of phosphorus. It is struck, and a flame bursts out. The maker of the match did not create the flame. He merely provided the conditions through which the element of fire

could be brought into outward expression. The illustration is a homely one in each case, but having a certain application to the subject.

We have closed the lively discussion on the question of Reincarnation—always a fascinating subject—and do not propose to reopen it, for the present at least. We were not sanguine enough to expect that any conclusive result would be attained; but it has not been profitless. The contest of wits even on matters of pure speculation is useful in a variety of ways. There is some intellectual stock-taking, a re-statement of differences, and some burnishing of minds. The origin of the soul (or spirit) is a much deeper question. If it had a beginning, said the old logicians, then it must have an end. We hold (provisionally at least) by the idea of the essential unity of the individual spirit with that Universal Spirit which is without beginning or end, but has an infinite variety of modes and grades of expression. We have never been able to think of the human spirit as something entirely separate, discrete, independent. This, of course, brings in other problems turning on the nature of individuality and selfhood—the problem of the 'I' which is never merged into any other 'I.' Hegel's doctrine of contradictions bears fruitfully on the question. We can only reason up to a certain point—beyond that remains an infinity of matters baffling to our reason—at present—but towards the completer apprehension of which we grow all the time. Our main concern is the demonstration of the existence of the spirit and all that it implies. The rationale will follow.

On the whole we find our study of current journalism fruitful and encouraging. True, the disposition to emphasise any case of wrongdoing on the part of persons who belong, or are alleged to belong, to our movement is disconcerting, but we can allow it the proper discount. It does not appear in the sober editorial pronouncements, but only in the news columns which are arranged to 'tickle the ears of the groundlings.' The attitude of mind of the average news editor appears to be: 'We are not surprised when a law-breaker is a member of the Church of England, a Roman Catholic, a Baptist, or a Wesleyan, but this particular malefactor is said to be a Spiritualist, and it should be brought out in the report.' Well, if the news-gatherer finds any satisfaction in it, we can console ourselves with the reflection that it is only rarely accorded to him. And the moral to our adherents is pretty obvious. A fierce light beats upon them, and they should order themselves accordingly. But there is nothing very new about the attitude of the outside world in this respect. With what gusto in the earlier centuries of the Christian era must the Roman populace have received the news of some offence against morality on the part of a Christian! A follower of the Nazarene and detected in misconduct—here was something to chuckle over, and to make the most of in the market-place. But after all, there was a kind of compliment in it.



But to return to our opening reflection. It has become a quite frequent experience of late to light on some passage in a newspaper article indicative of the set of current opinion towards the principles we avow. A short time ago we quoted from a leader in the 'Times' some remarks expressive of discontent with modern materialism. And in a recent 'Handbook' article in the 'Referee,' 'Vanoc,' the writer, takes a quite inspiring view of human progress. He believes in the 'upward march,' in 'the expansion of humanity on an ever-widening field of achievement and delight.' He notes the growing disposition towards sympathy and understanding between the followers of the different creeds of the West, and their discovery that they have something to learn of Asia in matters of religion. And in the course of his remarks he makes the following significant statement:—

A good many years have passed since Lord Lytton inscribed to Max Müller his prophetic book, 'The Coming Race.' We entered the period of Vril about ten years ago, and the control of force is now due to dexterity rather than to strength.

This is quite in the line of psychic thought. So also is his observation that

The teachings of Emerson and of Swedenborg seem destined to reach a wide public in the near future.

As for mysticism, references to it crop out in the most unlikely places. And it is always spoken of with admiration, even sometimes enthusiasm.

From time to time there rises from the literary world a complaint concerning the prevailing dearth of great poetry. There is certainly reason enough for the famine—the times are not favourable to those 'deep quietness of soul' in which the finest inspirations are conceived. But we think of the present era as merely a stormy interval, and we look for the coming of great Bards whose vision will pierce beyond the confines of mortal life, and whose songs will be of a new life and a better way. William Morris, in his foreword to 'The Earthly Paradise,' wrote:—

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,  
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,  
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,  
Or bring again the pleasure of past years.

The poet of the future will be no 'idle singer of an empty day.' He will be a man of strong vision, radiant of soul, speaking with the assurance of knowledge. He will deal mainly with the great impersonal things that include the individual life and inspire it. But all his songs will have the inspiration that will come of a solution of 'that great mystery of Death.'

Quoting the command, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image' (Deut. v. 8), the Rev. A. T. Bannister, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Hereford, writes in the 'Modern Churchman' for April:—

There are other idols than those of wood and stone, which darken the knowledge of God more grossly than any graven image. To worship an idol is simply to love supremely what comes from self, some prejudice, habit or opinion—some wooden or stony form of theology, it may be, instead of the spirit of Christ. . . . The undying Catholic Church is co-extensive with the race of man; and neither creeds nor ritual have anything to do with its membership, but only righteousness. . . . And he who would narrow this Church of Christ, who would emphasise the importance of any other thing than loving God and working righteousness—who would exclude this one, or excommunicate that one, on any other grounds than that he is unrighteous—is guilty of the sin of schism, that is, a breach of the law of love by reason of ecclesiasticality. And ecclesiasticality in its turn may be roughly defined as the claim by any local Church or sect to the exclusive possession of the spirit of God. One would think that it was almost a degradation even to conceive the bare possibility that the God and Father of all mankind would consent to farm out, as it were, the monopoly of His Spirit to a mere handful of His children. And yet, not only does one

Church explicitly make this claim, but many sects and parties, Protestant as well as Catholic, by implication do the same. And wherever we find it, it is an evil element in the religious life, a form of idolatry.

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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 23rd, 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.

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

## DR. MAXWELL AND PROFESSOR REESE.

In an open letter to M. G. de Vesme, editor of 'Les Annales des Sciences Psychiques,' Dr. J. Maxwell gives an account of his interview with Professor Reese, the American medium, to whom he had been introduced by Dr. von Schrenk-Notzing. The interview took place at the house of Mme. B. early in March.

Dr. Maxwell, by request of the medium, wrote down seven questions on seven square pieces of paper which the Professor had torn from a sheet of black-edged note-paper, previously taken by Dr. Maxwell from Mme. B.'s writing-table. The medium retired into an adjoining room, and as the door was left standing open, the two gentlemen could see each other but it was not possible for Professor Reese to observe what questions were being asked by Dr. Maxwell. Meanwhile the Professor entered into conversation with several persons present.

Before leaving the room the medium had requested the doctor to mention on one of the papers the Christian and family name of his mother, the name of one of his former professors, and five questions according to choice. Dr. Maxwell wrote: (1) Marie Agélie Mougenot. (2) Evelin. (3) Shall I find a publisher for my novel? (4) Shall I be successful with my books on criminology? (5) Which is my greatest fault? (6) Will a certain event which I desire realise itself? (7) Shall I re-occupy my house before I retire? All these questions were put in English, as Professor Reese does not speak French. Dr. Maxwell confesses that he might have put more interesting questions but, taken by surprise, he asked those that first came to his mind. Questions four and five were not answered.

Before re-calling the medium, Dr. Maxwell had doubly folded the seven square pieces of paper and kept them himself. Professor Reese, when coming back to the room, had therefore



no opportunity whatever of touching them, but requested Dr. Maxwell to put in each of the two side-pockets of his (Dr. Maxwell's) trousers one of the questions, and two others in the two inner pockets of his waistcoat. The remaining three questions Dr. Maxwell kept in his hand, but at the wish of the medium he touched the latter's forehead with one of these papers, then put it on a chair and sat upon it. He had, in consequence, only one question in each hand. The one in his right hand he was asked to place on the medium's forehead; this done, he again clasped the paper tightly in his hand.

Now followed the same cabalistic proceedings as in the case of Dr. von Schrenk-Notzing's interview previously described (p. 219). Subsequently, Professor Reese wrote on a writing-tablet belonging to Mme. B. the following: 'You will find a publisher within eighty-eight days. This affair has been a great anxiety to you, but all will now go well with it.'

When Dr. Maxwell opened the paper which he had been holding in his right hand, he found that he had received a clear and precise answer to question three, but he remarks that the matter had not pre-occupied him very much.

Professor Reese now began to speak very rapidly, both in English and German. As Dr. Maxwell could not follow on account of the rapidity of his utterance, the medium requested him to write down: 'Under no circumstances.—A. Will Robinson.'

Dr. Maxwell could not fathom the meaning of this message, both names being unknown to him. The medium himself then wrote on the writing tablet: 'The event you desire will surely accomplish itself; you will inhabit your house sooner than you anticipate. You will retire.'

These are clear answers to questions six and seven, yet it has to be noted that question seven being a complex one the medium referred separately to the two sentences it contained, but ignored the word 'before' which had joined the two sentences.

Then he wrote:—

Your mother, Evelin, has had four children, of which you are the eldest. Towards the age of twenty-three (or twenty-five) you began to gain your livelihood in an independent way. You have succeeded fairly well, but your enemies increase and are trying to put you down—write down—but you will have success and obtain a place of honour.

Professor Reese inquired if he were correct in his statement about the mother, the number of children she had had, and Dr. Maxwell having been the eldest; on receiving an affirmative reply he showed the latter what he had written on the tablet, but at the same time he requested Dr. Maxwell to substitute for 'Evelin' the two words 'Marie Angéline.' Again the medium took up the pencil and wrote at the foot of the page, 'Marie Engéline,' thus coming pretty near to the correct name, 'Marie-Agélie.'

When Dr. Maxwell rose to take leave, the medium once more wrote rapidly: 'Mougonot.' This word, with the exception of a slight error in spelling, is evidently a reproduction of the proper name, 'Mougenot.'

Dr. Maxwell considers the above related experiences of great interest. His faculties of observation were throughout the proceedings on the *qui vive*, and as he is not a good subject for hypnotism there can arise no question of his having been hypnotised. The suggestion of thought-transmission must equally be put aside. In fact, Dr. Maxwell looks upon the mistake which occurred about his mother's name as a conclusive proof in this respect. He could never have thought of, or transmitted, the name 'Evelin' as belonging to his mother. This very error proves to him a direct perception of the written questions and the interpretation given to them by the medium. Evelin was the name of a former teacher of the doctor, but when spelled with an E at the end it would suggest a feminine Christian name.

Another slight error, probably due to a conscious or subconscious interpretation, occurs in the word Angéline or Engéline instead of Agélie. This latter mythological name is rarely used, but is characteristic of the period and place of birth of Dr. Maxwell's mother (1824, Saint-Pierre, Martiniques, Antilles).

When questioned by Dr. Maxwell, the medium explained that he could not account for his actions, that he wrote and spoke as he felt compelled, which proves automatic action in the

shape of varying impressions, but which does not exclude the activity of his personal consciousness.

Another signal point has to be considered. In the last reply of the medium appear the words: 'Put you down—write down.' Dr. Maxwell finds therein the confirmation of repeatedly-made observations about automatic writing. The personality—whichever it may be—treats the organism of the medium as a third person. The word 'down' is very badly written the first time, and the words 'write down' have been added as a correction of the illegible word. This correction takes the form of an injunction imposed on the medium by the controlling power from which emanated the various thoughts that found expression through automatic writing.

F. D.

## A MOHAMMEDAN VIEW OF HELL.

We have received a copy of 'Muslim India,' a monthly magazine 'devoted to the interests of the Muslims,' and edited by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, B.A., LL.B. (6d. net, J. S. Phillips, 99, Shoe-lane, E.C.). Naturally from some Western standpoints it contains much disputable matter. We should, of course, expect to find a Muslim journal earnest in its defence of 'the faithful' against Christian aspersions, and convinced that in the Balkan struggle the sympathies of Europe have been all on the wrong side. We do not propose to discuss this question or comment on the editor's eloquent speech at Cambridge in opening a debate on the proposition that 'polygamy is, and has been, a useful institution to human society.' With regard to the ethics of war, we certainly do not agree with the statement that 'a warrior prophet is needed.' We have had too many warrior prophets already! What really interests us in the magazine is the enlightened teaching with regard to the future life which is set forth in an article entitled 'The Doctrine of Hell in Islam.' The writer says:—

If a life after death has been ordained for the human soul, it could not have been meant but for its progress, its advancement to higher and higher stages. Without this the doctrine of a life after death becomes horrible. Even in this short space of life we find the soul progressing and advancing step by step from lower to higher stages. Could an everlasting life have then been designed for the unending torments of hell? The very idea makes one shrink and turn back in horror. Such a doctrine deals a death-blow to the justice and mercy of God. No intelligent being could have made man and preserved his soul for such an end. . . . It is true that the Holy Quran mentions hell as the abode of the evil-doers, and even depicts its horrors, but it must be borne in mind that, according to the Holy Quran, both heaven and hell are places for the perpetual advancement of man to higher and higher stages. . . . In ci. 6, the hell is called a 'mother' of those who shall go into it. The use of this word is, I think, the clearest evidence as to the true nature of hell as described in the Holy Quran. What is meant is that as a child is brought up by the mother, so those in hell will be brought up in that place for a new life, the life of perpetual advancement in paradise. It is true that the Holy Quran also speaks of hell as a place of torment or tortures, but these torments, according to the Holy Book, are remedial. Just as a patient has to devour bitter medicines and to undergo operations and amputations which are most painful, but which are undoubtedly the only steps which can restore him to health, so also it is with the torments of hell, which are not only the natural consequences of the poison of sins, but are at the same time the most necessary steps to undo the effect of the poison, and to breathe into a person a new life in which he must go on making unending progress.

We may cap this quotation with the following little story taken from some selections, on another page of the magazine, from 'The Sayings of the Prophet Mohammed':—

Mohammed asked, 'Believe ye that a mother will throw her child into the fire?' The answer came 'No.' Then said Mohammed, 'But God is yet more merciful to His creatures than a mother to her child.'

If the Rev. Francis Wamou, who was a great friend of the late Archbishop Colley, will communicate with Mr. L. H. Senior, of the Confederation Life Assurance, Temple Bar House, 23-28, Fleet-street, E.C., he will, we believe, hear of something to his advantage.



## THE VOICE PHENOMENA.

CONVINCING EVIDENCE OF SPIRIT RETURN.

BY JAMES COATES.

(Continued from page 220.)

Shortly before the evening séance on July 17th Mr. Charles Walker proceeded to close and darken the windows. He had barely finished when Mrs. Wriedt entered the room to see if everything was in order and to get the trumpet. At once 'Dr. Sharp's' voice rang out: 'How do you do, Mr. Walker?' Before he could recover from his astonishment and reply, Mrs. Wriedt, taken aback, exclaimed 'Oh, what a fright you have given me, "Dr. Sharp"! We are not ready yet.'

Being in the adjoining room, and the séance-room door being open, I heard the exclamations, without, however, distinguishing the words. Mr. Walker came in and explained what had taken place. It was agreed that this was an indication that this, the concluding séance, would be a most successful one. And it was.

As much of what took place has already been dealt with by others, I propose to add only the following:—

'Dr. Sharp' called out to Mr. Duncan that, as he did not see very well, he was to rise from his seat and come round to where I was, so as to be nearer the cabinet. This was arranged. Then he said to me, 'I want you to rise and take a step forward. That's it.' Mrs. Walker, who was on the other side of me, was invited to stand up and take my hand. This was to make 'a battery,' a phrase used by this intelligence. A slim, graceful form grew up, as I thought, between us and the cabinet, which was close at hand. For a moment or so I lost recollection of the fact of standing, but was informed afterwards that the figure seen was an etherealisation of Mrs. Walker's sister. I suppose my momentary loss of consciousness was due to some transient effect necessary to the manifestation. I was aroused by the voice of 'Dr. Sharp' saying: 'Now, Mr. Duncan, step forward and take Mr. Coates' hand. We want to draw from you both.' What was going to happen I did not know, but certainly a cool air circulated about us, not unpleasant, but distinctly felt. I suppose we had been standing there one or two minutes, when we were told to be seated.

Mrs. Coates whispered to me that she saw the form of Mr. Stead. I looked towards the cabinet and could not see anything, but in less time than it takes to write about it, I heard those about me exclaim: 'There is a light at the cabinet; there's Mr. Stead!' Looking up in that direction, I, or, rather, we, saw the hazy light cloud and the oval, but indistinct, face of Mr. Stead for two, perhaps three, seconds. It vanished as mysteriously as it came. A second or two afterwards it came again, with features sufficiently distinct for us to observe that it was none other than Mr. Stead. When Mr. Duncan, Mr. Auld, Mrs. Coates, and I declared we recognised the face, it bowed. It appears to have gone round the circle and bowed, too. To us there was a mobile expression, amounting to a smile, and the face disappeared. The shoulders and bust were visible to those near the cabinet, but Mrs. Coates said she saw the whole form, of which the luminous head, face, and beard were distinctly apparent to ordinary vision.

Shortly after the withdrawal of this etherealisation, we again heard Mr. Stead's voice, so individualised, distinct, resonant with joy and victory:—

'My dear Coates, my dear friends, God bless you all. I am Stead. You know me. You are greatly privileged in being witnesses for the great truth that there is no death. I am not dead. You know me. Your own friends have been able to greet you here. May you have the boldness to go fearlessly forward and proclaim the glad tidings of great joy: There is no Death. May you never falter or hesitate to make known the fact of spirit return. God bless you, Mrs. Coates, for giving these dear friends the opportunity they have this day of meeting with their dear ones and me. May everyone here be strengthened in all good resolves, and give to the world what they have received. God bless you, Mrs. Coates, for giving your services, without fee or reward, to the spirit-world, and Mr. Coates for his faithfulness in giving these facts to the world. God bless you all for your noble work.'

These appearances and this address produced a veritable 'uplift' in the atmosphere of the room graced with the presence of this—on earth—forcible, magnetic and strenuous personality.

Mr. Stead etherealised twice within a short time, the last appearance being clearly defined, and none will readily forget

the clear, ringing tones of his voice. Thus, in our own home, and in the presence of fourteen sane and thoughtful people, Mr. Stead has manifested and proved in his own person that the dead do return.

We now understood more fully why 'Dr. Sharp' had moved Mr. Duncan near to the cabinet; there was a directing mind here. It was that of Mr. Stead himself, who wished to give the man who first gave his message of April 26th to the world an opportunity to see his (Mr. Stead's) face. Had Mr. Duncan sat where he had been, there would probably have been no etherealisation, or if there were it is improbable that Mr. Stead's features would have been so clearly distinguished by Mr. Duncan. With the exception of two friends, who wish, for family reasons, that their names should be withheld, all present have freely testified to the correctness of the account given. I would conclude by saying that it is impossible to accept or believe for one moment in spirit return if the evidences for Mr. Stead's return are not accepted. I know of no single concrete case in the history of modern Spiritualism so adequately attested. It will be difficult, even for those who discard the trance, automatic, clairvoyant, clairaudient and clairsentient phenomena, as belonging to the subjective and the region of self-deception, to reject the evidences presented by psycho-physical phenomena. These are objective and are discerned through the play of sense-faculty. Mr. Stead, before and subsequent to these séances, has in my home and elsewhere characteristically manifested and appealed for recognition by all modes.

At the close of this last sitting 'Dr. Sharp' said: 'I have to thank you all, and Mr. and Mrs. Coates, for the splendid conditions which you have given us, and you must admit I have worked hard to make these séances a success.'

Mrs. Wriedt added a few words of personal experience, and said that she would always look back on these sittings and the kindly way in which she had been treated with great pleasure.

Special testimonies by Mr. and Mrs. Duncan, and Mr. and Mrs. Walker, relating to these manifestations of Mr. W. T. Stead, were received and recorded, and, in addition, the following witnesses are prepared to certify, as some have already borne testimony, to having both seen and heard Mr. Stead, in addition to their own friends: Messrs. John Auld, 'Hazelcliffe,' Ardbeg, Rothesay; Peter Reid, The Terrace, Ardbeg, Rothesay; Peter Galloway, 'Ferndean,' Kirkintilloch; Mrs. McCallum, Miss Arrol, and Mr. Alexander, Rothesay; Mrs. Coates, Mrs. Wriedt, and the writer.

## THE COURT'S DECISION REGARDING 'ALCYONE.'

We regret exceedingly the troubles which have befallen our Theosophic friends, but deem it necessary to place on record the judgment of Mr. Justice Bakewell, delivered in the Madras High Court on April 15th last. 'The Daily News and Leader' states that by this judgment (against which an appeal is being lodged)

Mrs. Besant has to deliver up to their father the two boys, Krishnamurti and Nityananda, for whom she claimed extraordinary powers. She brought them to England two years ago. Mr. Justice Bakewell has made them wards of Court until they reach the age of twenty-one, and he expressed the view that the English would assist the Madras Court in securing the return of the boys, who are in England.

The Theosophical Society in England and Wales regards the result as a complete vindication of the good name of the Society, although the plaintiff secures a technical victory. The Judge, it is true, held that the right of the father, Mr. Naraniah, to the custody of his children was inalienable, but he was declared to be unreliable as a witness, his charges against Mr. Leadbeater were dismissed, and he was condemned to pay all his own and defendants' costs in the suit. The Society is thus completely cleared of the charges brought against prominent members.

ADDRESS BY MISS SCATCHERD.—On Thursday evening, the 8th inst., Miss Felicia Scatcherd delivered a very interesting address on 'Psychophantasms and Skotographs,' to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance. The large audience frequently applauded the speaker and accorded her a hearty vote of thanks at the close. We shall give a full report of this address in an early issue of 'LIGHT.'



## OPENING OF THE OLD RECTORY HOME OF REST AT READING,

LADY MOSLEY'S MUNIFICENCE.

The oft-repeated objection that Spiritualism does little or nothing in the way of philanthropic effort to alleviate human suffering does not apply to Reading, for not only has it a well-equipped Spiritualist church with a resident speaker and a public healing guild giving one thousand free treatments a year, but now, through the practical and sensible philanthropy of Lady Mosley, a member of that church and also of the London Spiritualist Alliance, there has been established a Home of Rest where broken-down women workers may obtain shelter and skilled treatment free of any cost to themselves. The home is situated on the banks of the Thames at Caversham, and consists of three cottages in the grounds of Lady Mosley's residence, Caversham Old Rectory. Rich in historical associations—for it is said to have been granted by Henry VIII. to Cardinal Wolsey—the house is surrounded by well-kept grounds, terraced lawns going down to the river bank. At the end of the terrace is a summer-house which bears the date of 1663, and is said to be haunted. A boat is heard approaching with stealthy oars, and on its reaching the summer-house there is the sound of a heavy plunge, as of a body, in the stream. Many people now living have frequently heard these sounds, but history is silent concerning the exact nature of the tragedy. Another ghostly visitant is the Monk Bernard, who, as legend has it, met his death within its walls. The portion of the grounds in which the Home is located is about two and a half acres. The Frances Cottage, dated 1551, has been furnished by Miss Frances White, Lady Mosley's sister, and named after her. It consists of two bedrooms containing four beds and the superintendent's room. The Elizabeth Cottage, named after the foundress, is a more modern structure. Here are the dining, recreation and matron's rooms and accommodation for two patients. The third, called, *pro tem*, the Stable Cottage, has room for six patients. The Home is under the direct medical supervision of Dr. G. L. Ranking, who is also a member of the Reading Spiritualist Church. To superintend the work, Lady Mosley has chosen Mr. Percy R. Street, who is the resident speaker at Reading, and whose healing work at the London Spiritualist Alliance is well known. The matron of the Home is Mrs. Egginton, who belongs to the Healing Guild of the Reading Church, and is a well-known food reformer. On Monday, May 5th, in the presence of a number of invited guests, Lady Mosley opened the Home.

Mr. Percy R. Street, in calling upon Lady Mosley to dedicate the Home to the service of humanity, said that amidst all the sickness and suffering to-day, especially among women toilers, they felt the provision for their recuperation was hopelessly inadequate. The Old Rectory Home of Rest was designed to help such, to take them in, give them shelter, dietary, and all that medical skill could do to restore them to health. They were fortunate in securing the co-operation of Dr. Ranking, whose enthusiasm with regard to progressive therapeutics was well known, and whose skill in diagnosis was likely to be of the utmost value. Few homes had been instituted along such lines. There was no charge whatever; the entire cost of the upkeep was borne by Lady Mosley. No public money was asked for or needed. Mr. Street asked Lady Mosley, who had proved herself a benefactress in very deed, to open the Home, which in her sympathy and kindness of heart she had founded.

Lady Mosley, in declaring the Home open, modestly described it as a humble effort to aid the suffering. She did not want too much said about it. To her it was a great joy to be able to start such a Home, which she trusted would bring happiness as well as health to all who entered its doors.

Dr. G. L. Ranking mentioned that, though the patients would not be charged a penny, the treatment and care would be the best possible. The names of Mr. Percy R. Street and Mrs. Egginton were in themselves a sufficient guarantee of that.

Mrs. Willison Edwards, the president of the Reading Spiritualist Church, proposed a vote of thanks to Lady Mosley, which was heartily given.

The visitors were then conducted through the Home and the grounds. All sects and creeds are admitted. The superintendent

will gladly send forms of application if those women toilers who are broken down in health and cannot otherwise afford a rest, will write to him at the Frances Cottage, Old Rectory Home of Rest, Caversham, Reading.

## THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

Our representative at Geneva writes:—

Sunday: The Universal Spiritualist Congress at Geneva has had a successful opening. The reception to delegates on Friday evening was a brilliant function and the meetings on Saturday were largely attended and full of interest. On Saturday evening Commandant Darget delivered an interesting and instructive lecture on 'The V Rays,' illustrated with lantern slides. About a score of British and American delegates and visitors are here, and this morning, among the papers read was a fine one on the 'Ideals of Spiritualism,' by Mr. Hanson Hey, and one by Dr. J. M. Peebles, which was read by Mr. E. W. Wallis. M. Léon Denis made a speech on the 'Religious Value of Spiritualism,' which aroused much enthusiasm.

## THE PLACE OF PHENOMENA IN SPIRITUALISM.

BY ERNEST HUNT.

Spiritualism, in the general eye, is confounded with its phenomena, and the part is taken as representing the whole—the more's the pity. For Spiritualism is not this or that series of phenomena, it is a science, and a philosophy, to the upbuilding of which phenomena innumerable have lent their aid in the past and will doubtless do so in the future; but the laws and causes which underlie them are enabling us to formulate therefrom a philosophy of living, which far transcends in importance the individual scope of any particular experiment or phenomenon. In the continued search for phenomena and more phenomena, the *raison d'être* of the whole thing, the philosophy, is too frequently overlooked. Those who defer to advice communicated from beyond and deny their own judgment and critical faculties use and exercise, gradually lose their normal grip over their own concerns; while those who allow the pursuit of phenomena to absorb their thought, time and energies to such an undue degree that the even balance of their way is disturbed, must necessarily suffer in consequence.

I am far from saying that the search for phenomena is unnecessary. In chemistry, for instance, continued experiment is a condition of the growth of that science, yet the budding chemist learns his elements from his text-book, verifies his teaching by organised experiment, and leaves the research work in the hands of those specially qualified by Nature and knowledge to follow it up; so in some similar way it would be well if the psychical researcher could learn his elements from the large literature on Spiritualism, confirm his teaching by experiment, and then, leaving the special research work to the specially qualified, proceed to let his light shine forth in his character and his deeds.

To be always flying after the latest medium, to be ever seeking for clairvoyant descriptions, or communications 'from the other side,' is not characteristic of the normal mind, but, on the contrary, indicates a lack of balance and a distorted sense of proportion; and in so far as an individual fails to appeal to others as a sane, well-controlled, and equably disposed individual, his chances of influencing them by his character and personality decrease.

If Spiritualism teaches anything at all it should teach us to see something of the underlying purpose of life, and should therefore give us a cheery optimism, a sane and sober sympathy with our fellow men, and a faith that enables us to stand out against the rampant luxury, materialism, and selfishness of to-day, and to hold fast to the things that are not seen, the great spiritual factors of the universe. If our Spiritualism does this, then even though we never again experience one jot or tittle of 'supernormal' phenomena, yet our light will shed its radiance on the path we tread, and our actions will proclaim louder than our words the truth of the philosophy our lives essay to interpret.



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### BEHIND THE TIMES.

A correspondent has been good enough to send us a pamphlet entitled 'The Spirit World' written by the Bishop of Salford (a Roman Catholic bishop) and published by the Catholic Truth Society. Inasmuch as it is an attack upon Spiritualism, our correspondent suggests that we should make some comments upon it, and we cheerfully accede to the suggestion.

Let us commence by a citation from its introductory remarks:—

Now we are fully aware that so far from reprobating or discouraging modern progress of any kind, whether intellectual, political or social, the Church in all ages has blessed and fostered all true progress and development.

It leaves us breathless. How can we characterise such a statement?

Let us ask the Right Reverend writer of the pamphlet a few questions.

Did 'the Church' support Copernicus in his teaching that the earth revolved round the sun? Did it support Galileo and Bruno and Laplace and Kant, all of whom made true discoveries regarding the nature of man and of the solar system—all their teachings being at variance with the ideas held and taught by the Church? Did it 'bless and foster' their doctrines? Did it welcome the discoveries of Darwin and Wallace? Only extreme hardihood could answer these questions in the affirmative.

Reading the pamphlet attentively, we find several statements quite as startling as that we have quoted. But 'the Church' as a supporter of progress—it is too funny. We cannot easily conceive of a bishop of any Church writing 'with his tongue in his cheek.' Had it been a mere man of the world—but then no man of the world, governed by the ordinary standards of common-sense and good taste, would have ventured on such statements. The ordinary man usually has a sense of the ridiculous.

Having had a casual fling at Socialism, with which we are not particularly concerned, the bishop turns his attention to our own pernicious doctrines. And here let us pause to record our thankfulness for the introductory remarks by which he has unconsciously demonstrated his utter unfitness to pose as a judge or critic of any modern system of thought whatever. It was a strange perversity that prompted him at the outset to utter that which to every unbiassed mind renders his subsequent judgments quite nugatory.

He refers to the 'hasty generalisations and arrogant assertions' of students of physical science in the early part of the nineteenth century. Were these the only 'hasty generalisations and arrogant assertions'? Those students of physical science, at least, never contended that the sun

and the stars revolved round a stationary earth. And if they denied the immortality of the soul—well, what scientific evidence had the Church ever furnished them of the fact? 'The growth and wide diffusion of what is known as "Materialism"' was certainly a fact—the author of the pamphlet occasionally deviates into accuracy of statement—but what did it mean? Here was the Church with all its alleged information concerning the spiritual side of man and his destiny, the Church which (to quote the bishop) is 'beyond all other religious systems . . . a "Spiritualist" organisation,' and the thinking and progressive portion of mankind would have none of it. Yet when there arose out of the very needs of the world a system of thought and investigation which placed the doctrine on a rational and scientific basis, it spread so rapidly that the writer of the pamphlet expresses alarm. It seems from his statement that it is 'even making headway among Catholics.' Tut, tut! It is almost as dreadful as some of those other scientific truths which the Church 'encouraged' and 'blessed' in its own peculiar fashion.

We get, of course, some of those weary old stories of spirits who deny Christianity, who admit that they are evil and seducing spirits—and so forth.

It is very tiring to have to deal with critics who have not the most elementary knowledge of psychology, and who in their anxiety to discredit psychic phenomena will greedily gulp down anything and everything that supports their case. Are we to understand that records of spirit communication in which the communicators hold by the doctrines of 'the Church'—and there are many such—are fraudulent, and that the only genuine examples are those in which the communicators admit that they are hostile to Christianity? Where are we to draw the line? We do not propose to labour the point that in some cases investigators dominate the conditions with their own minds to such an extent that they can induce the 'spirits' to say anything they desire. This involves a little knowledge of the phenomena of mesmerism and 'suggestion' which lie on the fringes of our subject, and of which the bishop, as a supporter and patron of progressive thought, naturally knows nothing at all.

It is a puerile argument—pitifully puerile—that attacks any discovery, invention or doctrine because in the course of evolution, people have suffered by it. Think of the thousands who have been killed, maimed and maddened by steam locomotion, by electric traction, by aviation, aye, and by religion itself. We seem to have heard of burnings, and torturings, and of various forms of religious mania. Has 'the Church' forgotten them?

Let us see what the writer of the pamphlet has to say about his subject, 'The World of Spirits.'

The Church teaches us that God allows the blessed souls in heaven to know what passes on earth and to be interested in the fate of those living. And this is not merely a benevolent interest, but one of immense utility and practical value, inasmuch as charity leads them to be our earnest and unwearied advocates with the Divine Majesty, so that their prayers are continually pleading for both our temporal and spiritual welfare, particularly of those amongst us who are bound to them by the ties of kinship or devotion.

The manifold good offices which living men are constantly receiving from the world of holy spirits, whether the angelic hosts or the disembodied spirits of the just, require from us in return corresponding offices.

And thus it is that by these mutual offices the whole of God's Kingdom is for ever vivified by a golden stream of divine charity which permeates every part:

'For so the whole round world is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.'



Now, what are we to make of it all? That the doctrine of spirit communion is at once a great truth and 'a gigantic evil'? That the 'whole round world' is 'bound by gold chains about the feet of God,' and at the same time linked even more conspicuously about the hoofs of Satan? That the 'golden stream of divine charity which permeates every part' is liable to violent interruptions which permit of their permeation by streams of diabolism and maleficence? There seems to be a great gap between the theological and the logical. What kind of a world does the bishop really suppose he is living in? Has he any clear ideas on the subject at all, or has lucidity of thought gone out of 'the Church' altogether? We think and hope not. But it is a sad thing to find that many of those outside 'the Church' have a nobler, a more reasonable and dignified conception of the power, the purpose and the immanence of the Divine Ruler than 'the Church' can present; that they scout the idea of a world so given up to evil forces that its divine governance is almost set at naught. The materialistic scientist may be a very terrible fellow, but he is a clear thinker and says forthright what he thinks. The spiritual scientist has also some very definite ideas about things, although he has considerably extended the circle which bounds the thinking of his materialistic colleague. He can make a plain statement without incoherence or confusion of ideas. But 'the Church' is rather in the position of the 'neutral' which, as the proverb tells us, is singed from below and soused from above. It can only mander and trim and equivocate. It has always frowned upon (and encouraged) science. The world is at once divine (and devilish). There are spirits (but, generally speaking, there are no spirits). It knows all about the spiritual world (and has only the vaguest ideas concerning it). There is an omnipotent Ruler of humanity (only the Devil is a little stronger). It is a 'Spiritualist organisation' (and, oh, the evils and dangers of Spiritualism!). There is a fable by wise old Æsop which deals with the contempt excited even in a demon by a man who could blow hot and cold with the same mouth.

Meantime the Rationalist and the Materialist laugh consumedly. Their old enemy is surely in its dotage if this is a fair specimen of its intellectual acumen. But the Rationalist and the Materialist will not have the best of it after all. It is no merit of 'the Church' that has preserved it from the extinction into which it would assuredly have fallen had the world been ordered on the lines of materialistic thought. What has saved 'the Church' and enabled it to retain its hold on humanity is the ineradicable religious instinct in man, the very presence of which testifies to the spiritual reality for which 'the Church' (in a way) stands. But that religious instinct is growing and allying itself with the reasoning faculties. The two cannot be divorced. If reason grows religious, religion must grow reasonable. Science progresses more and more towards the invisible worlds—many are the signs of its advance. It has already certified many of our facts. What will 'the Church' do? Oppose it tooth and nail, and then, when the truth is established, announce with its native ingenuousness that it was always the friend of Progress? We wonder.

The *odium theologium* is a deplorable thing, and it is also, we are glad to think, very much out of date. In our journey through the world we meet men of many creeds, and we meet them on a fraternal footing—they are our very good friends. There are freethinkers, churchmen, nonconformists, materialists, agnostics and Spiritualists amongst them. Even when they meet in a group, there is never any acrimonious feeling. None denounces another's faith or claims a monopoly of truth for himself. There are deeper bonds than creeds. Anyone who showed the spirit

manifested in the pamphlet before us would find himself by the same fact shut out of the fellowship, besides receiving some sharp reminders of his real place. That temper of mind is growing all the while. It comes of a deepening sense of human dignity and self-respect. So that even on the purely social side of things the bishop shows himself sadly behind the times. There are evils and abuses in all departments of life—our own movement is not impeccable—but the way to their removal is by co-operation on the large principles of life and conduct and not by the attitude of creedal hostility and jealous exclusiveness. The world has found this out already. Why should the Church lag behind?

### IDEALISTS.

With the awakening of a higher moral element in the human consciousness, there is at once perceived the tendency to idealise. A range of thought will generally be culminated by the widest and purest conception known to the idealist, and beyond the accomplished good a 'divine discontent' continues to urge man to read a meaning in the higher impulses insistent on his nature, and to discover that Best which is yet to be.

The ability to form a vision of the future and endeavour to realise it is a distinctive feature of mankind, and idealists can be regarded as a type of human nature at its best. The force behind moral progression has been the power of the dreamer, the seer. These have shaped the implements with which humanity has conquered the baser and become possessors of the nobler heritage.

The unknown God will no longer suffice. He must be known and interpreted afresh by each age, and to this end humanity has spent its thought and energy. No religion or philosophy has been felt to express adequately His being or the relationship between Creator and created, but each has shared in the unfolding of the soul force wrapped in the human organism.

There have been marked periods in history when in all phases of life and thought the material has dominated to a deplorable degree; the spiritual has been present, as it ever must be, but so confined and overgrown with the weeds of selfishness of a visionless people as to appear completely absent. Yet how many mighty forces have sprung from these periods of seeming spiritual decay.

In all branches of art, science and literature, aye, and religion, a redeemer has come, and from the ruins a new order has issued. Mark the effect of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood Movement in the realm of art, with its purifying aspirations in symbolical expression. The discoveries of science, that new path for the faith of the race which henceforth must build its conception of God and its religion from its knowledge of the laws of His universe. Observe, too, the trend of literature at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century, and, later, the development of the classic temper and expansion of thought resultant therefrom—its influence growing and ever widening by severe criticisms of evil and contrasts with good. The gospel of brotherhood and unifying doctrine of one soul animating all mankind; the supreme power of love as the expression of Deity; the recognition of an individual moral responsibility in life. Are not these emanations of the dreamers, the idealists?

Youth is pre-eminently idealistic. Life stretches before it with magnificent possibilities, and to accomplish something beyond the ordinary is the desire of every young reformer whose knowledge and experience have yet to be acquired and powers of endurance tested. With characteristic impulsiveness a hook is thrown out, the mentally captured ideal set up to reign and receive the obeisance of the ardent worshipper. But such ideals are short-lived; the absence of character is revealed in the sense of failure experienced by the young heart to realise at will ideals of perfection, and its allegiance is quickly transferred to something of more facile achievement.

The mature invariably builds its theories unconsciously—the sum total of knowledge gained from this or that experience, or the carefully reasoned conclusions drawn from criticism of pre-



conceived ideas or mode of conduct. These form the basis for life-long strivings to attain a state which corresponds with the highest sense of perfection; unattainable, perhaps, because of an imperfect world, but leading nearer, always toward it. And equally impelling is the momentary vision, that ecstatic experience of soul comprehending Soul. A beacon light shines on the far horizon, and the path of life, though trod with leaden feet, assumes a new importance, labour a new dignity; sorrow and suffering become as the key to knowledge, defeat the impetus to victory, and death the gate to life. To such there can be no passive acquiescence to a sense of overwhelming odds, no deliverance which has not been a self-deliverance, no sacrifice which has not been an intelligent sacrifice, and no reward of ultimate lofty spiritual destiny which has not been earned by contact and fierce wrestlings with evil. In the sublime struggles of the human mind, submission to higher impulses is but the outcome of this strange discipline, and not the chance choice of a moment. Higher standards of duty and nobler aims—the production of creative faith confident in that final triumph of humanity; the perfect blending of the physical with the spiritual.

It is man's prerogative to idealise and to dream, and there be always those who offer death for such, but the true idealist is, in the words of Coventry Patmore:—

‘The man who  
Though his fights be all defeats  
Still fights.’

The complex conditions of modern life and the perhaps over-emphasis of acquired intellectual culture serve, unfortunately, to eliminate these innate qualities of the higher self. The tendency to regard a deepening moral order as a natural production unattended by conscious effort, retards that epoch of the future when faith shall find its witness and justification in the realisation of its ideals.

The problem of how to awaken the creative faith in mankind and link with it the freedom to worship its Maker untrammelled by creeds and meaningless religious observances, solves itself with a knowledge of the tenets of Spiritualism. Every faculty possessed by humanity finds here its widest scope for wise cultivation and activity, and its equivalent force for existence. Herein at last is found the great highway of progression into the future: knowledge scientifically proven, combined with fidelity to the Creator of all life interpreted through all life.

## TOLSTOY'S REMARKABLE PROPHETIC VISION.

The American ‘Semi-Monthly Magazine’ recently published an account, written by the Countess Nastasia Tolstoy, of her interview with her grand-uncle, Count Leo Tolstoy, some months before his death. She says that in 1910 she was invited by the Czarina to visit her informally at the Summer Palace at Peterhoff, and that during the interview, at which the Czar was also present, the latter asked her to convey to the Count on his behalf a request that he would, through her, send him a message which he (the Czar) might send in turn to the King of England and the Kaiser of Germany, both of whom were desirous of having a communication from the old man—something that he had not published and never would publish himself. She states that Tolstoy, in response to her inquiry whether he had ever had any visions of a political character, or made any prophecies on a large international scale, informed her that there was something that had haunted him for two years. He said:—

‘I cannot call it a dream, because I have seen it often while I have been sitting at my writing table. On other occasions it has appeared to me at twilight, before my dinner hour. I am not a believer in ghosts, nor in the Spiritualistic explanations of phenomena; but I admit that I cannot account for this mysterious affair.’

‘Is it a vision?’ I interrupted.

‘Something of that order, but very clear. So clear that I could draw a distinct picture of all that transpires. Furthermore, I can call up the vision at will. I am almost sure I could do it while you are here. The only difficulty is, that I am not able to write anything during the time of the manifestation. My hands are absolutely paralysed.’

The Countess promised to write down whatever he might dictate, and Tolstoy agreed. Continuing her report she says:—

My aged host leaned back in his chair, covered his eyes with his hand and relapsed into an apparently comatose condition. For ten minutes he remained absolutely motionless. Then, straightening up like one in a trance, he began in a low and hollow voice:—

‘This is a revelation of events of a universal character, which must shortly come to pass. Their spiritual outlines are now before my eyes. I see floating upon the surface of the sea of human fate the huge silhouette of a nude woman. She is—with her beauty, her poise, her smile, her jewels—a super-Venus. Nations rush madly after her, each of them eager to attract her especially. But she, like an eternal courtesan, flirts with all. In her hair-ornament of diamonds and rubies is engraved her name: “Commercialism.” As alluring and bewitching as she seems, much destruction and agony follows in her wake. Her breath, reeking of sordid transactions, her voice of metallic character like gold, and her look of greed are so much poison to the nations who fall victims to her charms.

‘And behold, she has three gigantic arms with three torches of universal corruption in her hand. The first torch represents the flame of War, that the beautiful courtesan carries from city to city and country to country. Patriotism answers with flashes of honest flame, but the end is the roar of guns and musketry.

‘The second torch bears the flame of bigotry and hypocrisy. It lights the lamps only in temples and on the altars of sacred institutions. It carries the seed of falsity and fanaticism. It kindles the minds that are still in cradles and follows them to their graves.

‘The third torch is that of the law, that dangerous foundation of all unauthentic traditions, which first does its fatal work in the family, then sweeps through the larger world of literature, art and statesmanship.

‘The great conflagration will start about 1912, set by the torch of the first arm in the countries of South-eastern Europe. It will develop into a destructive calamity in 1913. In that year I see all Europe in flames and bleeding. I hear the lamentations of huge battlefields. But about the year 1915 a strange figure from the North—a new Napoleon—enters the stage of the bloody drama. He is a man of little militaristic training, a writer or a journalist, but in his grip most of Europe will remain till 1925. The end of the great calamity will mark a new political era for the Old World. There will be left no empires and kingdoms, but the world will form a federation of the United States of Nations. There will remain only four great giants—the Anglo-Saxons, the Latins, the Slavs and the Mongolians.

‘After the year 1925 I see a change in religious sentiments. The second torch of the courtesan has brought about the fall of the Church. The ethical idea has almost vanished. Humanity is without the moral feeling. But then a great reformer arises. He will clear the world of the relics of monotheism and lay the corner-stone of the temple of pantheism. God, soul, spirit, and immortality will be molten in a new furnace, and I see the peaceful beginning of an ethical era. The man determined to this mission is a Mongolian-Slav. He is already walking the earth—a man of active affairs. He himself does not now realise the mission assigned to him by a superior power.

‘And behold the flame of the third torch, which has already begun to destroy our family relations, our standards of art and morals. The relation between woman and man is accepted as a prosaic partnership of the sexes. Art has become realistic degeneracy. Political and religious disturbances have shaken the spiritual foundations of all nations. Only small spots here and there have remained untouched by those three destructive flames. The anti-national wars in Europe, the class war of America, and the race wars in Asia have strangled progress for half a century. But then, in the middle of this century, I see a hero of literature and art rising from the ranks of the Latins and purging the world of the tedious stuff of the obvious. It is the light of symbolism that shall outshine the light of the torch of Commercialism. In place of the polygamy and monogamy of to-day, there will come a poetogamy—a relation of the sexes based fundamentally upon poetic conceptions of life.

‘And I see the nations growing wiser, and realising that the alluring woman of their destinies is after all nothing but an illusion. There will be a time when the world will have no use for armies, hypocritical religions and degenerate art. Life is evolution, and evolution is development from the simple to the more complicated forms of the mind and the body. I see the passing show of the world-drama in its present form, how it fades like the glow of evening upon the mountains. One motion of the hand of Commercialism and a new history begins.’

The late author-reformer finished, opened his eyes and looked at me slightly confused.

‘Had I gone to sleep?’ he asked me. ‘I beg your pardon!’



When I read his vision-talk to him he listened gravely and nodded, saying that it was correct. Upon my request, he signed the document and handed it to me with a blessing.

The Countess says that the Czar read her report with pronounced agitation, and promised to forward a translation to the Kaiser, and through him to the King of England. 'The Czar,' she says, in conclusion, 'has told me repeatedly that the Kaiser of Germany thinks it is one of the most impressive literary prophecies of this age.'

We give the above interesting testimony for what it is worth, but, as far as they have gone, events are disproving the accuracy of the visionary forecast. We are reminded of the saying, 'Never prophesy until you know, and then don't.'

### ITEMS OF INTEREST.

In our next issue we shall commence a series of valuable papers on 'Spiritualism a Philosophy of Life,' written by Mr. W. H. Evans. These papers should be especially useful to those who are in doubt as to the philosophical and religious value of Spiritualism, and we bespeak for them the thoughtful attention of all our readers. Mr. Evans deals with 'The Ever Present God,' 'Good and Evil,' 'The "Me" and the "Not Me,"' 'Mediumship,' 'The Spirit World,' 'What is Man?' 'Soul Measuring,' 'The Gateway to Life Eternal,' 'The Spiritual Aspect of Determinism,' 'Some Objections Answered,' 'The Religion of Spiritualism.'

Our esteemed contributor, 'F. D.,' informs us that a curious story has been going the round of the Continental psychic papers to the effect that, a few days after Sir Hubert von Herkomer's picture, 'The Last Muster,' was exhibited at the Royal Academy, Sir Hubert received a letter from a lady who expressed her great astonishment that her late mother should have sat to him as a model for an old woman whose face, so the story went, appeared in the picture; the writer adding that she immediately recognised the likeness. The lady, it was said, afterwards showed Sir Hubert an oil painting of her mother which proved to be a counterpart of the old woman's head. 'F. D.' wrote to Sir Hubert informing him of this alleged occurrence, and at his invitation had a pleasant interview with him. The story proved to be based on an entire misconception of a genuine incident.

Referring to the Irvingite 'gift of tongues' and other similar manifestations which occurred before the advent of modern Spiritualism, Mr. James Robertson says: 'Whatever was spiritual in the "voices" of those days was not of a high order, and no great loss came to the world when they became silent. Observers needed some key by which to read and interpret such things, and the world had to wait till the teachings of psychology had been read with more care in the light of modern Spiritualism. As Theodore Parker has said, "Every piece of coal, every bit of iron was a prophecy of steam engines and steamships if men had only the wit to read the oracle." So the experiences of Joan of Arc, Swedenborg, Blake, and Joanna Southcott, and the Gift of Tongues, were but as signposts pointing to a coming revelation of spiritual forces, ever at work, though only fitfully recognised till the times were ripe.'

How difficult it is to get freedom of thought and, above all, freedom to express honest convictions, especially for the religious teacher, is well brought out in an interview with the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams which appears in the 'Christian Commonwealth' of the 7th inst. He says: 'It really seems to me that we should now have an understanding among the authorities of Congregationalism that liberty of theological opinion should not be interfered with. There is no consistency in appointing to Old and New Testament chairs in colleges men who use the critical method and have themselves reached conclusions along the lines of those methods to teach young men; and then to refuse to those young men the opportunity to work according to the knowledge they have acquired. There are men who pull a good many strings in Congregationalism who would certainly object very seriously to a young man who spoke about the theology of the gospels as being of a more or less transitory character because it was related to contemporary ideas. He would probably be on the black list if he said we were not to be bound even by the theology or the ideas of Jesus. Yet one of the last appointed New Testament professors, Dr. Moffat, of Mansfield, says these very things in his last book.'

The fact that each one must apprehend truth for himself was well illustrated last week when, as reported in 'The Daily News and Leader,' at the close of an address by Professor Sims Woodhead on 'The Origin of Life,' given to the members of the Victoria Institute, Lord Halsbury, who presided, made the remark at the conclusion that he was not certain that he understood the subject before the address, and he was not certain that he was in a better position at the close.

In the course of his lecture, Professor Woodhead said: 'Even the most agnostic must admit the wonderful law and order that rules throughout the great scheme of Nature. So marvellous and complete is it that when I am informed that there is no personal God, I answer to myself that of this great scheme I have but one experience, and that is that all the will, ruling power, intellect, soul, and spirit of which I have cognisance are personal.' He also stated that 'evidence was being obtained that there were forms of living matter so minute that they did not come within the direct range of their most powerful microscopes. These forms had the power of multiplying and of inducing diseases, during which the most profound changes took place in the human body.'

We have of late been enjoying a series of visits from friends from across the Atlantic. First of all we had the pleasure of welcoming Dr. J. M. Peebles and Mr. Sudall; our next visitor was the Rev. Thomas Grimshaw, formerly of Burnley and Blackburn, who has won for himself a prominent position in our movement in America; lastly, Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader, the able editor of 'The Progressive Thinker,' of Chicago, Ill., looked in upon us, after having paid a round of calls at Liverpool, Manchester, Walsall and other places. The Universal Congress at Geneva is responsible for this influx of distinguished visitors. One of the most valuable features of these international gatherings is the fact that they afford opportunities for the meeting together of so many workers on behalf of Spiritualism who, otherwise, might never have that pleasure, on this side at any rate.

'The Place of Waiting' (John Long, Ltd., Norris-street, Haymarket, W.C., price 6d.), is the title of a beautifully written, but somewhat rhapsodical, description of the experience on awakening 'on the other side' of one who loved and lost while here, but awaits the coming of his beloved. The difficulty with all records of this character is to obtain any real standard of appraisal by which to ascertain their value. The writer of this brochure says: 'If the language of the world I have left failed us sometimes even there, when we sought to express ideas that had come to us, how utterly inadequate is it here, where everything that surrounds me is such as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," nor the heart of man conceived even in the highest flights of its imagination. How can I speak of things for which the language of earth has no symbols?' When due allowance has been made, and the *spirit* of the thoughts expressed has been caught, then certain spiritual principles, *viz.*, the beneficial influence of suffering, the joy of service and the ministry of love, are finely portrayed.

We have received from Mr. J. Crank the manuscript of a series of addresses, entitled 'Genesis Revealed,' given by him in the Ethical Spiritual Church, Preston. The description, in his opening 'apology,' of the circumstances which led to their delivery is rather amusing: 'A colporteur was distributing leaflets, entitled "Are you saved?" On receiving one, I put the question in return, and he replied, "Yes, saved from sin." "Then," said I, "you do not commit any sin?" Correcting himself, he said that he was saved from "original sin." The question, "What is original sin?" elicited the information that it was "the sin of our first parents when they fell." I asked, "How did they sin and how did they fall?" to which he responded by advising me to "go home and read Genesis." I replied that I had done so many times, but could not find those statements in the text. Consequently I must press my question, "How did they fall?" "By eating the apple," was his answer. Asked why they ate the apple, he said that it was "because the devil tempted Eve." Thereupon I undertook to prove that the statements he had made were no part of the text of the early chapters of Genesis, and that his interpretation of the same was faulty in the extreme. At the close of my harangue several of my hearers asked me if I would explain my conception of what those chapters actually taught.' This Mr. Crank did some weeks later in the addresses above referred to. Dealing with the subject in an original manner, they excited considerable interest, and we understand that to meet the wishes of his audience, he proposes to publish them in pamphlet form.



## FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

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

## Telepathy?

SIR,—I have been conducting an experiment in telepathy, an account of which may be of interest to your younger readers. Meeting a young lady who was a total stranger to me, I found that I could at once receive her unspoken thoughts, and I told her so. Soon afterwards she went away, and over a distance of some hundred and forty miles I received her thoughts as clearly as when she had stood before me. To us both it has brought great happiness, for we are assured that to those whose souls are attuned the old saying, 'Out of sight means out of mind,' is false. But one thing is certain, I owe it all to Spiritualism.

An experience came to me some little time ago. I was awakened out of a deep sleep by someone, in the spirit, calling my name. I at once recognised a friend of mine. The next time we met I mentioned the experience and she told me that, at the time, she was talking about me to some of her friends.

I do not know if you would call this telepathy. Anyhow, it is food for thought.—Yours, &c.,

W. HARRADENCE.

## 'A Question Regarding Consciousness.'

SIR,—I am sure, with your usual fairness, that you will grant me a brief hearing on this subject. While agreeing with your correspondent 'Mahon' (p. 215), on the whole, I doubt if the self-consciousness of the 'individualised atom' is eternal. I am of opinion that self-consciousness and free will are illusions. Consciousness of self as a free agent, and of the world as inert, are corresponding illusions—constituting one, and can only be accounted for by the life of Nature. We constantly attribute true existence to that which is in time. For example, the earth moving results in our perceiving the heavens moving, and being conscious of ourselves at rest. Why are the perception and consciousness different from the fact? The nearer one approaches the great Source of Life—that Divine Centre to which all creation tends, the keener will be the desire to eliminate the self, realising, with Shelley, that 'all things seem one in the universal sun' and that God is 'All in all'!—Yours, &c.,

E. P. PRENTICE.

SIR,—A medium whom I once visited told me that when controlled she was not unconscious, but could hear and realise, in a dazed sort of way, what was being said through her organism.

Another medium told me that she was perfectly unconscious of anything that was being said through her.

I have always understood that the *spirit body* of the medium is close at hand, but on the outside of his (or her) physical body while it is being used, and that in some cases it is just put to sleep for the time being, I assume by the strange hypnotic power of the controller.

This would be preferable, one would think, to being in a dazed state, feeling unable to function on the spiritual plane, not being absolutely free, nor in the physical either, seeing that one was outside the natural vehicle for doing so.

When having been put to sleep by the chief control, it would be quite possible for other spirits unknown to the medium to use the body.

But this would only be by permission of the chief control during the 'sitting' or 'séance.'

Why, too, should it be impossible for a higher and more powerful spirit to super-impose a kind of stupor upon one who in the nature of things was less developed, therefore less strong in individuality, than the spirit who was wholly incarnate—Yours, &c.,

F. H.

## Spiritualism Spreading in America.

SIR,—Being much interested in Spiritualism, and a constant reader of 'LIGHT,' I take pleasure in sending you the enclosed newspaper clippings. I find that the knowledge of the science and religion of Spiritualism is on the increase in America, and in my little way I am enlightening all those whom I meet who appear to be in a state of uncertainty.—Yours, &c.,

H. SHAW.

[We are always pleased to receive newspaper cuttings, even if we are unable to make use of them, and thank our correspondent and other friends for kind assistance in this direction.—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

## 'The Riddle of the Universe.'

SIR,—Can any reader of 'LIGHT' give me through you the name or names of one or more writers who have dealt with the theories and arguments of Ernst Haeckel, as set forth in his book, 'The Riddle of the Universe'? I refer particularly to his denial of the immortality of the soul.

Being thoroughly familiar with Spiritualistic literature, I am well aware that the fallacy of the materialistic point of view has been proved. What I want, however, is a book that deals with Haeckel's theories and arguments *seriatim* and shatters them.

If there is such a book in existence, and I believe there is more than one, I shall be glad to know the title, the name of the author, and where it can be obtained.—Yours, &c.,

ARTHUR L. HOWARD.

New York, U.S.A.

## The World's Indifference.

SIR,—Are not the indifference and neglect with which our facts are treated by the ordinary product of the nineteenth century amazing? One would think that people, especially those who have lost young and lovely children, would, on receiving the slightest hint that they could enter into communication with them under certain conditions, leave no stone unturned until they had tested the matter thoroughly and proved either its truth or its falsehood. But what do we find! Either an indifferent incredulity or a stolid, stupid silence.

What surprises await all of us on gaining full consciousness in the higher life, especially these blind dullards, and how they will regret the valuable time wasted through this perverse foolishness! Surely it must be one of the greatest pleasures and amusements of those in the other life to watch the amazed surprise and half doubting rejoicing of newly arrived people meeting and recognising their dear ones whom they had thought dead or buried in the grave! What thrilling and touching scenes must take place 'over there'!—Yours, &c.,

A. K. VENNING.

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

## A Vivid Dream Experience.

SIR,—Some twenty years ago I had the following dream, but I still remember it quite clearly, as it impressed me very much at the time.

I was nurse-attendant to a young lady of twenty-four who was subject to epilepsy, but was otherwise in good health. I had, of course, to sleep in her room (she was, I may add, living in the house of a doctor, under his charge). One night I dreamed that I was waiting in utter darkness outside some place. There seemed to be someone with me who answered every thought that passed through my mind without my having to utter it aloud. Then suddenly it became so light that I was almost blinded, but after a while I looked round and seemed to be in a most lovely country. The views were so splendid that I delightedly admired everything. There were people following their occupations, and amongst other things I noticed that some were building, only everything seemed on a much better scale than here. At last I thought 'I wonder what place this is,' and the voice at my side (I could not see who was speaking) said 'This is heaven.' I was surprised, and said, 'Well, it is not a bit like I expected.' I could see many people passing in and out of some gates, some of whom I knew. At last I saw the young lady I was nursing. I went up to her and spoke to her, but she did not seem to know me. So I said, 'Oh, come now! you know me.' Then she said, 'But it is not the Lord's wish that I should know you.' With that I woke.

Some days afterwards my patient did not seem so well. The doctor thought it was only some slight ailment, but kept her in bed. She lay all one day very quiet and dull and heavy looking till about 10 o'clock at night. I was waiting for the doctor's final visit. Suddenly the light in the room seemed to shoot up. I looked up, but the gas was just the same, but my patient was leaning on her elbow with a glorious light on her face. She seemed transfigured, and was looking past me at something beyond. She kept repeating, 'It's lovely, it's beautiful! Is this heaven? It's not a bit like I expected.' Then I remembered my dream and felt rather creepy. After a while the light seemed to fade from her face, and the dull and heavy look returned. I told the doctor, but he said he had seen her worse; she was merely temporarily wandering. I felt certain she was going to die, but kept my own counsel. She died three days later from congestion of the brain. A week or ten days after my dream I related it to her parents. It seemed to comfort them, and they afterwards thanked me for telling them. But I did not mention it to the doctor, as I thought he would only laugh.—Yours, &c.,

F. E. W. B.



## The Murder of Thomas a Becket.

[In connection with the tradition referred to by 'Omnia Vincit Amor,' on page 215, which associates Becket's murder with a thunderstorm, the following letter which Major H. W. Thatcher has received from the British Rainfall Organisation, 62, Camden-square, N.W., tells its own story.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

SIR,—Dr. Mill asks me to reply to your letter of the 2nd. As I have no doubt you will have concluded, the tradition of which you speak appears to be a gross superstition, and whilst there are so many promising lines of research for meteorologists to follow up, it would be a pity to waste time upon investigating a question so manifestly fantastic. We have a large number of correspondents in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, and should so very remarkable a phenomenon have any foundation in fact, it could hardly fail to become notorious, and in that case we should certainly have heard of it. In addition to this, the fact would be the more remarkable, since December is, as a rule, free from thunderstorms in the East of England.

The most interesting aspect of the tradition to me lies in the extraordinary pertinacity with which such ideas remain in existence.—Yours, &c.,

CARLE SALTER  
(Chief Assistant).

## A Fourth Century Writer on Spirits.

SIR,—I have just finished reading a remarkable, and I think little known treatise on, or apology for, non-Christian belief in the second half of the fourth century; it was written by one Sallustius, a Neo-Platonist. The nineteenth chapter ends as follows: 'Souls are punished when they have gone forth from the body, some wandering among us, some going to hot or cold places of the earth, some harassed by spirits. Under all circumstances they suffer with the irrational part of their nature, with which they also sinned. For its sake (i.e., that it may continue to exist and satisfy justice) there subsists that shadowy body which is seen about graves, especially the graves of evil-livers.' This treatise, or *confessio fidei*, has been translated by Mr. Gilbert Murray, Professor of Greek at Oxford. Your readers will find it at the end of the Professor's 'Four Stages of Greek Religion' (Oxford University Press, London).

I strongly recommend those of your readers who are interested in the inner history of religions to read the above-mentioned book.—Yours, &c.,

JOSEPH CLARK.

## Rev. C. Tweedale's and the Mentone Manifestations.

SIR,—I was much interested in the account of the manifestations in the house of the Rev. C. L. Tweedale, as recorded in a recent issue of 'LIGHT,' especially as they were similar to those that occurred here some years ago. In both cases the ringing of bells, where no bells existed, was a unique and remarkable feature. In the Rev. C. Tweedale's house they were church bells which sounded (though the nearest church bells were a mile and a-half away). In the Mentone house they were electric and other bells which sounded in the middle of the walls and tables (where there were no bells). The other phenomena which were similar in both cases were: the movements of furniture without any physical contact, the apports of coins and other articles, heavy articles thrown about, the vanishing of articles which re-appeared later in other places, banging noises, rappings, heavy footsteps, appearances of spirit forms and faces, &c. These phenomena ended as suddenly as they began at Mentone after going on for over two months.

Since I left the house several years ago nothing at all has occurred. The manifestations were evoked in the first place by a *séance* which I instituted—the other people in the house knowing nothing at all about Spiritualism and only trying the *séance* out of curiosity.

A few days ago I was having tea in the house where these phenomena occurred, and the proprietor confessed that he had circulated reports to the effect that all the manifestations were due to trickery in which he was the chief operator. He had done this because it was absolutely necessary at the time as people (servants and guests) were so badly frightened. A number of people who did not want to believe in any psychical agency were quite satisfied with this explanation, and to this day probably believe it was all trickery. The proprietor added that he was quite convinced that there was no trickery, as he certainly did not play any tricks, and he was satisfied no one else did, as he made the closest and most searching investigations and inquiries at the time—even having an expert electrician and mechanic in to examine everything.

I quite agree with all that Mr. Tweedale has written about the value and utility of these phenomena, though to the majority they may appear trivial and purposeless.

Psychical phenomena invariably are treated with ridicule by those who know nothing about Spiritualism, and I am not surprised to hear that there were some who ridiculed the manifestations in the Rev. C. Tweedale's house, and explained them away by trickery, delusions, fraud, &c. It also invariably happens that when it is conclusively proved that such manifestations are due to supernormal agency, then the sceptics turn round and say it is due to the 'devil,' and that you are in league with evil spirits. It is *always* either trickery and the hallucinations of weak intellects, or the 'devil.' However, as discoverers of great truths, we can afford to be indulgent and quite indifferent to hostile criticism, which, after all, is only ignorance and lack of light.—Yours, &c.,

REGINALD B. SPAN.

Mentone, S. France.

May 1st, 1913.

## 'Personality'—'Individuality.'

SIR,—Probably there are few words in our language, which, like all language, is such a miserably inadequate medium of thought, that are apt to set us all—advanced and learned thinkers included—more at cross-purposes than the two words 'personality' and 'individuality.' *Persona* has as its primary Latin-Dictionary meaning, 'a mask,' from which one naturally gets at the idea of 'aspect.'

I do not want to discourse on theology, which is a subject I generally consider that I particularly dislike, but perhaps we have here the key to the difficulty or aversion of Unitarians to think of Deity under several 'persons,' which thus would seem to imply certain 'aspects' or 'functions.'

Then, again, we have the objection to the idea in the title of Myers' unique and monumental work, 'Human Personality and its Survival after Bodily Death.' Myers, as I always think, understood perfectly well what he meant, but probably he used the word 'personality' here in the sense that includes that of 'individuality.'

Tennyson, in describing his experiences in 'Ecstasy,' which, as he asserted, had frequently occurred all through his life, said: 'All at once, as it were, out of the intensity of the consciousness of *individuality*, the individuality itself seemed to resolve and fade away into boundless being, and this not in a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, utterly beyond words; where death was almost a laughable impossibility, the loss of *personality*, if so it were, seeming no extinction, but the only true life.'

The italics are my own, to show that Tennyson, like your own writer, probably uses these words in their sounder and more proper sense. Tennyson, of course, as is only too well known, had no belief in any sort of 'absorption,' as a mere pretty word so often used for annihilation—I spare quotations for the sake of brevity—and Tennyson's experience appears to be a much more common one than many would suppose.

Having given some study to Bergson, it seems to me that the first of your two paragraphs in 'Notes by the Way,' p. 121, on H. Emilie Cady's 'Lessons in Truth' is quite apiece with the idea that permeates Bergson's philosophy—that of the transcendence of intuition over intellect. The second paragraph, whilst perfectly consistent with the first, appears to me to accord with the philosophy of Mr. F. C. Constable as expressed in his 'Personality and Telepathy,' and elsewhere. Yet a few years ago Mr. Constable advised me *not* to study Bergson, and I told him that I nevertheless meant to disregard his advice! I cannot aspire to the profundity of either of these two thinkers, and yet I venture to suggest that there are many ways in which they may be in very essential agreement—both possibly going right down as far into the heart of reality as it is possible for the human mind to go.

I have one more remark to make which touches my own feelings rather deeply, and which applies to the question of the utility for mankind of such writers and thinkers as these; it is this, namely, that however the 'intuition' may transcend the 'intellect,' and however the simple may often confound the wise and learned—as I feel sure they often may and do—yet one may say that 'God' requires of each of us the very best we may have to give Him, and there may be some of us with whom that very 'intuition' can only be reached and unfolded through the medium of the 'intellect'—at least, in the first instance. Nevertheless, as 'spiritual things have to be spiritually discerned,' so the Christ-spirit—in whatever way we may express to ourselves this reality—is necessary to enable us to arrive at truth.

Otherwise, I feel assured, the intellect of itself only tends to go round in a closed circle—the 'vicious circle'—which, being closed, does not become the 'spiral.'

In spiral progress one may find oneself facing each in turn, and over and over again, every point of the compass; and if



one finds one is at each return only a little higher up, then, I venture to say, we can learn to regard these various 'facings' with complete equanimity.—Yours, &c.,

GUY HEATON.

### Cancer and Inoculation.

SIR.—The letters you have published with regard to the terrible disease of cancer have recalled to my mind some remarkable statements made to me some five years ago by a very intelligent lady on this disease. She said, 'There is a remedy for all natural diseases, but there is no remedy for cancer, because cancer is an unnatural disease. Nature throws off all the vile humours of the body through the skin, working from within outward, as in measles, chicken-pox, boils, small-pox, &c. By inoculation we have undoubtedly arrested the development of small-pox, but in so doing we have driven Nature back upon herself, with the result that to-day we have seventy different forms of cancer, but no cure.' She further stated that the cells of a cancer were a reversal of all the other cells of the human body, and this was proved by the fact that whilst all other diseases worked from within outward, cancer always grew inward. Her concluding statement is one to which I particularly wish to call attention, for, if true, it is an important fact that ought to receive the attention of the medical profession. It is this: 'There has never been a known case of anyone suffering from cancer who has had small-pox.'—Yours, &c.,

GEORGE BENNER.

### NO SPECIAL LEGISLATION FOR SPIRITUALISTS.

A copy of 'The New Zealand Times' of March 26th last reaches us containing a report of an interview which some leading Spiritualists had with the Minister of Justice (the Hon. A. L. Herdman), at which they 'put forward a request for statutory recognition of their practices, with greater protection against frauds and quacks professing to be psychic seers.' After a lengthy interview the Minister said that—

while it was his duty to submit their views to the Cabinet, he did not think he should hold out any hope of the Government taking up the Bill. It was an unusual application. The legislation asked for was of a special kind, to meet a special organisation. He was quite convinced from his knowledge of members of their institution that they need have no fear, if their practices and customs were founded upon sound principle. But he did not think he could recommend the Cabinet seriously to consider the question of taking up this Bill.

### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MAY 11th, &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. Horace Leaf gave an eloquent address on 'Religion,' and convincing descriptions. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided.—15, *Mortimer-street, W.*—On the 5th inst. Mr. Leigh Hunt gave interesting descriptions. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

**KINGSTON-ON-THAMES ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.**—Miss Florence Morse answered questions, gave descriptions and sang a fine solo. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. H. Neville.—J. W. H.

**SHEPHERD'S BUSH.**—73, *BECKLOW-ROAD, W.*—Address and descriptions by Mrs. Ord and Mrs. Keightley. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Hope. Thursday at 8, Mrs. Stenson.—M. S.

**PECKHAM.**—**LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.**—Morning and evening, Mr. Barton gave addresses and answered questions; Sunday next, morning, Mr. Stott; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, Mrs. Clara Irwin. 22nd, at 8.15, Mrs. Webster, psychometry. 23rd, Dr. Peebles. 25th, 7 p.m., Mrs. Effie de Bathe.—A. C. S.

**BRISTOL.**—144, *GROSVENOR-ROAD.*—Mrs. Baxter gave addresses on 'The Wages of Sin is Death' and 'The Spirit View of Our Planet.' Solo by Mr. W. Price was much appreciated. Sunday next, at 6.30, public service. Usual week-night meetings.—J. S. B.

**MANOR PARK.**—**CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STRONE-ROAD.**—Morning, healing service; evening, an address on 'The Trinity,' by Mr. G. R. Symons. 8th, Mrs. Alice Jamrach spoke on 'Spiritual Development,' and gave descriptions. On the 21st, at 8 p.m. sharp, Dr. J. M. Peebles will pay us a visit.

**BRIXTON.**—8, *MAYALL-ROAD.*—Mrs. A. Boddington gave address and descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., healing, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7, Mrs. Mary Gordon, address and descriptions. Circles: Monday, 7.30, ladies'; Tuesday, 8.15, members'; Thursday, 8, public.—E. K.

**STRATFORD.**—**WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.**—Mr. A. H. Sarfas' interesting address on 'Life,' and his able answers to questions were much appreciated. Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn presided. Sunday next, Mrs. Harvey, address and clairvoyance.—W. H. S.

**BRIGHTON.**—**MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).**—Mr. F. T. Blake gave soul-stirring addresses and descriptions and Miss Zoe Bridgen sang a solo in the evening. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. F. Grayson Clarke (president), addresses. Tuesday, at 3, private interviews; at 8, also Wednesday, at 3, circles.—H. J. E.

**BRIGHTON.**—**HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET, WEST.**—Mrs. Mary Gordon gave excellent addresses and descriptions. Sunday next, 11.15, public circle; 7, Mr. T. O. Todd; also Monday, 8, on 'The Temple.' Clairvoyance: Tuesdays, 3 and 8; Wednesdays, 3; Thursdays, 8.15.—A. C.

**HACKNEY.**—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD, N.*—Evening, Mr. D. J. Davis gave an earnest address on 'The Value of Life.' Sunday next, 11.15, open meeting; 7 p.m., Mrs. S. Fielder, address and descriptions. Monday, 8 p.m., Mrs. Sutton (inquirers welcomed). Thursday, 7.30 p.m., Mr. H. Bell and Mrs. Brichard, healing; 8.15, circle (members only).—N. R.

**EXETER.**—**MARLBOROUGH HALL.**—Addresses and descriptions by Mrs. Harvey.—E. F.

**WHITLEY BAY.**—137, *WHITLEY-ROAD.*—Mrs. E. H. Cansick's address on 'Pentecost, Past and Present,' was much appreciated.

**NOTTINGHAM.**—**MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL.**—Mr. Aaron Wilkinson gave addresses and descriptions morning and evening.

**KENTISH TOWN.**—17, *PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.*—Mr. Lund spoke on 'Brotherhood' and Mrs. Lund gave descriptions. 9th, Mrs. Cornish.—J. A. P.

**SOUTHEND.**—**CROWSTONE GYMNASIUM, NORTHVIEW DRIVE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.**—Mrs. E. A. Cannock gave an address on 'The Mysteries of Life,' and excellent descriptions.—S. E. W.

**PLYMOUTH.**—**ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.**—Mr. Prince gave an address and Mrs. Summers and Mrs. Trueman descriptions.—E. F.

**SEVEN KINGS.**—45, *THE PROMENADE.*—Miss F. M. M. Russell spoke on 'Visualisation and Post-Impressionists' and answered questions. 6th, Mrs. Pitter ably dealt with 'Bible Criticism.'—C. E. S.

**PORTSMOUTH.**—**MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.**—'Mothers' Day' commemoration services, conducted by Mrs. L. Spiller. 7th, address by Mrs. S. Pulman; descriptions by Miss E. Little.—P.

**SOUTHPORT.**—**HAWKSHEAD HALL.**—Mr. John Pawson spoke on 'The Spiritual and Mental Unrest of the Present Age' and 'Looking Backwards.' He also gave descriptions and answered questions.—H. I.

**SOUTHEND.**—**SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.**—Morning, Mr. Rundle gave an address on 'The Soul's Awakening' and descriptions. Evening, he spoke on 'Healing by Faith' and Miss M. Habgood sang a solo.—C. A. B.

### NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

'Heaven Opened.' A Poem by A. W. WATSON. Of the author, 43, Ellers-road, Harehills, Leeds.

'The Son of a Servant.' Cloth, 3s. 6d. net. Wm. Rider & Son, Ltd., 8-11, Paternoster-row, E.C.

'Wind Along the Waste.' By MAUDE ANNESLEY. Cloth, 1s. net. Wm. Rider & Son, Ltd., 8-11, Paternoster-row, E.C.

'The Other Great Illusion: The Folly of Class War.' By J. W. PETAVEL, R.E. (Ret.). Paper cover, 6d. net. Geo. Allen & Co., Ruskin House, 44 & 45, Rathbone-place.

'Religious Beliefs of Scientists' (new and enlarged edition). By ARTHUR H. TABRUM. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net. Hunter and Longhurst, 9, Paternoster-row, E.C.

From L. N. Fowler & Co., 7, Imperial-arcade, Ludgate-circus, E.C.: 'Success: How Won through Affirmation,' by HENRY HARRISON BROWN; 'Modern Miracles,' by J. WALLACE-CLARKE; paper covers, 1s. net each.

MAGAZINES: 'Review of Reviews' for April, 6d., Bank Buildings, Kingsway; 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques' for March, 1fr., 39, Rue Guersant, Paris; 'Revue de Spiritisme,' 40, Boulevard Exelmans, Paris; 'La Revue Spirite' for April, 1fr., 42, Rue St. Jacques, Paris.



## THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (OXON.)'

## ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held *over*, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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**Section IV.**—Time: April and May, 1873—Facts of a minute nature given through writing, all unknown to me—Spirit reading a book and reproducing a sentence, through the writing, from Virgil and from an old book, Rogers' Antipopopriarian—Experiment reversed.

**Section V.**—Mediumship and its varieties—The physical medium—Clairvoyants—Recipients of teaching, whether by objective message or by impression—The mind must be receptive, free from dogmatism, inquiring, and progressive—Not positive or antagonistic, but truthful and fearless—Selfishness and vain-gloriousness must be eradicated—The Self-abnegation of Jesus Christ—A perfect character, fostered by a secluded life, the life of contemplation.

**Section VI.**—The Derby Day and its effects spiritually—National Holidays, their riot and debauchery—Spirit photographs and deceiving spirits—Explanation of the event: a warning for the future—Passivity needed: the circle to be kept unchanged: not to meet too soon after eating—Phosphorescent lights varying according to conditions—The marriage bond in the future state—The law of Progress and the law of Association—Discrepancies in communications.

**Section VII.**—The Neo-platonic philosophy—Souffism—Extracts from old poets, Lydgate, and others written—Answers to theological questions—The most difficult to approach are those who attribute everything to the devil—The pseudo-scientific man of small moment—The ignorant and uncultured must bide their time—The proud and arrogant children of routine and respectability are passed by, &c., &c.

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**Section XI.**—The powerful nature of the spiritual influence exerted on the writer—His argument resumed—The rejoinder—No objection to honest doubt—The decision must be made on the merits of what is said, its coherence and moral elevation—The almost utter worthlessness of what is called opinion—Religion not so abstruse a problem as man imagines—Truth the appanage of no sect—To be found in the philosophy of Athenodorus, of Plotinus, of Algazzali, of Achillini, &c., &c.

**Section XII.**—The writer's difficulties—Spirit identity—Divergence among spirits in what they taught—The reply—The root-error is a false conception of God and His dealings with man—Elucidation at length of this idea—The devil—Risk of incursion of evil and obsession applies only to those who, by their own debased nature, attract undeveloped spirits.

**Section XIII.**—Further objections of the writer, and statement of his difficulties—The reply—Patience and prayerfulness needed—Prayer—Its benefits and blessings—The spirit-view of it—A vehemently-written communication—The dead past and the living future—The attitude of the world to the New Truth.

**Section XIV.**—The conflict between the writer's strong opinions and those of the Unseen Teacher—Difficulties of belief in an Unseen Intelligence—The battle with intellectual doubt—Patience needed to see that the world is craving for something real in place of the creed outworn, &c., &c.

**Section XV.**—The religious teaching of Spiritualism—Deism, Theism, Atheism—No absolute Truth—A motiveless religion not that of spirit-teaching—Man, the arbiter of his own destiny—Judged by his works, not in a far hereafter, but at once—A definite, intelligible system—The greatest incentive to holiness and deterrent from crime, &c., &c.

**Section XVI.**—The summing up—Religion has little hold of men, and they can find nothing better—Investigation paralysed by the demand of blind faith—A matter of geography what form of religious faith a man professes—No monopoly of truth in any—This geographical sectarianism will yield to the New Revelation—Theology a bye-word even amongst men—Life and Immortality.

**Section XVII.**—The request of the writer for independent corroboration, and further criticism—The reply—Refusal—General retrospect of the argument—Temporary withdrawal of spirit-influence to give time for thought—Attempts at establishing facts through another medium futile, &c., &c.

**Section XVIII.**—Difficulty of getting communications when it was not desired to give them—The mean in all things desirable—The religion of body and soul—Spiritualising of already existing knowledge—Cramping theology worse than useless—Such are not able to tread the mountain-tops but must keep within their walls, not daring to look over—Their father's creed is sufficient for them, and they must gain their knowledge in another state of being, &c., &c.

**Section XIX.**—Outline of the religious faith here taught—God and man—The duty of man to God, his fellow, and himself—Progress, Culture, Purity, Reverence, Adoration, Love—Man's destiny—Heaven: how gained—Helps: communion with Spirits—Individual belief of little moment—Religion of acts and habits which produce character, and for which in result each is responsible—Religion of body and soul.

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