

Light:



A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,699—VOL. XXXIII. [Registered as]

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[a Newspaper.]

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have sometimes heard complaints that the advanced spiritual movements of the day concern themselves very little with art. That, of course, is a rather sweeping indictment, for all great art, in its expression of the beautiful in Nature and in the Soul, is the outcome of the spiritual forces in life. But we can quite easily see what the persons who make this objection have in mind. It is illustrated by some remarks of Dr. James Hyslop in the June issue of the 'Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research.' Dr. Hyslop is severe on the modern taste for fiction, and laments the tendency to look for happiness in imagination and illusion. 'It is not Truth but Art that is our God,' he says, and confesses that he likes facts better than fiction or Art. Well, there are two ways of looking at every question, and although we have placed a very exalted estimate on the position of Art as the beautifier of Life, it is plain that we have arrived nowadays at a stage in which the conceptions of a soul and a future life must be established on a solid basis of facts.

The facts have been accumulating for generations, and it has fallen to the part of Dr. Hyslop and a host of other distinguished minds to investigate and record them. These facts have for so long been disguised, obscured and even rendered unrecognisable by fiction-mongers and word-spinners that it is no wonder to find such men as Dr. Hyslop frankly intolerant of Art and Idealism. Patient investigators have found that the soul is something more than a cloud, the world to come a little more substantial than a mist-wreath. It is a vain task to try and kill the imagination in mankind, and when the priests and the theologians of the past had, between them, masked the realities of the life beyond in a ghastly mockery of words, the thinkers turned wearily away. They sought consolation in art, poetry and literature, and left the problem of death alone. Who could blame them?

Spirit beings and spirit life had been reduced to mere abstractions, having no kind of scientific sanction. Then came a flood of facts: mesmerism, psychometry, telepathy, spirit control, materialisation, apports and all the varied host of psychic phenomena which have furnished forth the records of the last half-century. It wrought a tremendous change in the religious outlook. Here at last were the realities. The idealist might weave out of them what he chose, but for the patient scientific investigator they stood as the raw material of a theology that should be able to

prove its case as well as spin words about it. The work is only beginning. Psychical research is only at the commencement of its labours. The cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces of the Spiritual philosophy will stand more enduringly when the foundations of fact have been well and truly laid. The time has not yet come for the superstructures of Art, but it will surely arrive.

Waste and failure—if there are waste and failure in the Universe in any but a superficial sense—belong to the lower forces. The higher the law the more exact, stable and definite are the results of its working. Whatever of chaos and catastrophe may belong to the outworking of life in physical realms, we have no qualms regarding the subtler worlds that lie under spiritual laws. We look there for permanence and relative perfection. There is an end there, we think, of the tentative and experimental. But even in the physical universe things are better ordered than some would have us believe. We used to hear a good deal about the possibility of accidents happening to the earth. It might collide with a comet, be drawn out of its orbit by some planetary catastrophe, or it might fall into the sun. A distinguished German scientist has now arisen to ridicule these ideas.

Flammarion described many causes which might bring about the 'end of the world' by natural means. But the German authority referred to above points out that the modern view is that the universe is stable. The balance of the cosmos is perfect. Newly-discovered forces of gravitation, he tells us, give the planetary system a physical stability to an unlimited degree. Even the sun, he holds, will not 'burn out' because the energy which it loses is constantly restored by the gravitational energy it absorbs from space. And as to the human race, he is equally optimistic. It will not degenerate and die out either because of its own mistakes or because of such natural catastrophes as the prophets of evil used to predict so abundantly. Rather its intellectual and physical evolution will go on indefinitely, carrying us to heights undreamed of hitherto. We are glad to have this scientific testimony, although we have never believed anything but good of Nature and humanity.

There is a story of an old Scotswoman who expressed her opinion that, of all the congregation at the church which she attended, only she herself and the minister were of the elect—and she was not very sure of the minister. The very fact that the tale has passed into a jest is evidence enough of the part which the sense of humour in human-kind has played in breaking down the old spirit of religious exclusiveness. But it is still a little difficult at times to convince some minds that other religious faiths and even social movements to which they are opposed may be, and doubtless are, the cherished objects of spiritual ministry. In a recent issue of 'Prabuddha Bharata' appears a poem

by Ella Wheeler Wilcox entitled 'Shrines,' in which the poetess declares:—

About a shrine or sacred place
Where many hearts are bowed in earnest prayer,
The loveliest spirits congregate from space,
And bring their sweet uplifting influence there.

This would apply, we think, quite as much to the shrines and temples of one religion as of another, given that the worshippers in each were equally devout. The home, too, may be a shrine:—

I know a humble, plainly-furnished home
So thronged with presences serene and bright,
The heaviest heart therein forgets its gloom
As in some gorgeous temple filled with light.

THE WRIEDT SEANCES AT ROTHESAY.

A RECORD AND SOME IMPRESSIONS.

From a regular contributor to this journal who spent a portion of his annual holiday in Rothesay during last month (July), we have received the following account of two sittings which he was fortunate enough to obtain through the courtesy of Mrs. Wriedt and of Mr. and Mrs. James Coates, at whose residence the seances are held.

To begin with (he writes), I had no fixed intention of applying to Mr. Coates for a place in the circles. I have had a long experience of most psychic phenomena, and the question of proof had long been settled in my mind. The evidence to me was absolute, and when interpreted in the light of the science and philosophy of the subject formed a coherent body of principles and facts. When, therefore, I paid a friendly call on Mr. and Mrs. Coates, I left it to the fortune of the hour whether it would be convenient to them to include me in the circles in the absence of any previous arrangement. My visit to Rothesay had been planned before I had learned of the presence of Mrs. Wriedt, and mainly with a view to renew some old associations with the place. I was quite prepared, therefore, to find that the arrangements (made in many cases weeks or months before) might preclude the admission of a casual visitor with only a day or two at his disposal. However, I had apprised Mr. Coates of my intention to call upon him, and on my arrival he kindly offered to include me even if it involved a little disturbance of plans, which indeed was the case. And that I might be entirely independent in the matter, I elected to join the Sunday circles (held in the afternoon and evening) on the same footing as other sitters and without reference to any Press privileges. Further, I decided to take up an entirely detached standpoint, and to divest my mind as far as possible of all preconceptions and past experiences of psychic phenomena. I would view everything as an outsider, 'a child in these things.' In short, the policy of the 'clean slate.'

I was impressed at the start by the scrupulous and scientific way in which Mr. Coates had carried out all the preliminaries. The seance room was a pleasant and refined apartment excellently ventilated, the atmosphere being delightful, both in the physical and psychic senses. (One may observe these things without being an expert in seance conditions). Then I noted the keen interest which the sittings had excited. People had come and were coming in shoals from near and far to be present. There were old stagers, new adherents, and those who were complete tyros in psychic matters. They included people in most ranks and conditions of life. The learned professions, commerce and finance, and the leisured classes were all represented in the many visitors who applied for admission. Mrs. Wriedt, whom I had not previously met, I found to be a bright, vivacious American woman, with no discernible sign about her of anything of the abnormal, the supernormal, or, for the matter of that, the subnormal. She had much of the *aplomb*, the air of alertness and quick apprehension, that I have noted in many American ladies. I found that a rigid scrutiny was applied to intending sitters. Scepticism was not barred, of course. It was rather invited, 'but detrimentals'—people who were likely to introduce any element of discord—were not wel-

comed. It was more than a matter of credentials, although these also were needed. The most ardent believer whose presence would act as a drag on the phenomena was as little desirable as the stranger who might harbour the design of wrecking the seance. That arrangement at one stroke abolished the miseries and disasters of which the promiscuous circle has so long been the 'direful spring.'

I do not propose to record consecutively the happenings at the two sittings which I attended. It is no easy matter to make notes in the dark, and I could not always follow the purport of some of the conversations held with spirit visitors, marvellously evidential as they appeared to be to the sitters addressed. Both the circles were much alike in their general features, and I shall, therefore, amalgamate the accounts of each.

The sitters consisted of some fifteen people or thereabouts. The trumpet used in the production of the voices was placed in the middle of the circle. I did not examine it—subsequent experiences proved that neither to the medium nor the trumpet could be assigned the results of the circle, unless either could be credited with supernatural powers, and I have no belief in the supernatural.

The proceedings were opened with the Lord's Prayer, and a hymn followed, after which the medium gave a few clairvoyant descriptions of no special significance. Recognitions were scanty and uncertain, but I found that these descriptions were designed mainly to fill up the interlude during which the power was being gathered for the substantive part of the demonstrations.

The first 'voice' was in a somewhat hoarse whisper, but the name was clearly heard and responded to. Then one by one followed other 'voices,' some clear and distinct, others faint and at times barely audible. I have said 'one by one,' but this was not always the case. Near by me sat a gentleman—a stranger to me—who in the course of some previous conversation I had learned resided in my own neighbourhood of north-west London. At the time when one 'voice' was carrying on a conversation with a member of the circle who sat opposite to us, another in a faint whisper was addressing him in my own corner of the room. It subsequently appeared that it was the voice of his departed wife. Occasionally the voice of Mrs. Wriedt and the other voice or voices were heard at the same time, for the medium was quick in giving advice and directions or repeating names indistinctly heard. Sometimes she was wrong in her interpretation. Sometimes we all were wrong, but the unseen visitors were not amenable to 'suggestion,' and resented misunderstandings. This to me was a significant feature of the seance.

'Ella Thomson,' for instance, would not rest quietly under the imputation that she was 'Nellie Johnson,' a friend of one sitter, or 'Ethel Tomkinson,' the friend of another. 'No, no, no,' the voice would say, 'I am Ella Thomson—Ella Thomson. I want to speak to my brother' (or other relative, as the case might be). And when the sitter referred to had risen to the occasion there was a brief and often affecting exchange of greetings. Now and again a loud, hearty voice, with something of a Hibernian twang, burst in to smooth out some difficulty. This, I learned, was 'Dr. Sharp,' who was in charge of the proceedings on the 'other side.' If ever a voice and the words it uttered gave token of a strong, shrewd, kindly and humorous personality, it was in this case. 'There are hundreds of them all around you,' he said on one occasion. 'They all want to come; but there is only one eye and one ear for them all'—a pithy way of expressing the narrow channel by which the two states of existence were temporarily linked. A sitter referred to a difficulty at a previous seance in which the name of the communicator was a matter of doubt. It could not (he maintained) have been that of the person it claimed to be. 'Dr. Sharp' replied that the sitter was under a misapprehension. The spirit had not said that he was (let us say) 'John Smith.' He had really wanted to give a message to 'John Smith.' It was clearly not safe to assume that any name uttered by a spirit was always his or her name. And Mr. Coates explained that in any difficulties of the kind it was always advisable to refer the matter to 'the Doctor,' who would never let a doubtful case go until he had cleared it up. A very touching episode was reached when the clear voice of a little girl was heard greeting its parents. At the father's request the child sang in a sweet, childish treble a

little song of its nursery days. It was an unforgettable incident. It would have been a delightful experience in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life. There is something very winsome in the songs of children—of some children, at least. And the little song and the talk that followed went to all hearts. To one of us, at least, it brought a sensation that bordered on the painful. Suppose—suppose we were all being deceived? It would be horrible. One thought of Barlow's lines—

But, ah! the bright glow of the early day,
When simple things
On snow-white wings
Gave joys that now for aye must pass away—
Leaving no trace, no trace
Where trod the little footsteps, laughed the little face.

But here, at least, was the little voice, known to the parents and recognised by them. And 'if a white fear flashed in the brain' of one particular sinner it was destined shortly to be dispelled.

(To be continued.)

LIFE WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE VEIL.

By L. V. H. WITLEY.

XIV.

'THE PRODIGAL'S MOTHER.'

The Baptists, unlike the Methodists, have no stated creed or doctrinal standard to which a minister or a member must give assent and consent; yet, while there are, of course, exceptions, I am doing Baptists no injustice—the rather would it be esteemed an honour—when I say that, as a body of people, they stand for 'the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.' I speak with no hesitation on this point, as I myself have been in intimate touch with Baptist thought and life for many years.

Nevertheless, even the Baptists have been influenced by the spirit of the age. Not C. H. Spurgeon, were he now in this life, would preach exactly in the way he did forty years or so ago. To the generality of Baptists, Spiritualism, as such, is unquestionably taboo; but this only makes the incident to which I am about to refer all the more striking and significant. In the 'Baptist Times,' the official organ of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, there appeared, a little time back, a sketch by 'John Meldrum,' headed 'The Prodigal's Mother,' in which spirit ministry is most clearly taught. It is true that the testimony is put into the mouth of the 'chapel-keeper,' but I happen to know that 'John Meldrum' is the pen-name of a gifted Baptist minister of the younger generation, and the significance of the episode appeals to me not only in that the recognised organ of the Denomination admits to its columns a sketch teaching spirit communion, but in its suggested addition to a parable of Jesus. Many thousands of sermons must have been preached on the Parable of the Prodigal Son, but not until quite recently have I noticed any hint that something had been omitted from the immortal story. I am not ashamed to say that the sketch, when I first read it, brought tears to my eyes, and for all its halting language the idyll appeals to me as one of the choicest I have ever seen. Without further preface, I pass on the sketch to my readers, only explaining that the speaker is supposed to be an aged chapel-keeper, and the listener a young minister:—

'It's just this,' he said, in response to my look; 'when that boy, thinkin' 'imself a man, went from 'ome, 'e broke 'is mother's 'art. Night after night she cried 'erself to sleep. It weren't as though 'e 'ad gone to better 'imself. She 'oped that till she could 'ope it no longer, an' when she 'eard ov 'is sin—'er 'eart just broke, an' she passed away. An' tell me this, where would 'er spirit go but into the far country, seekin' 'er own?'

'It's pitiful to think ov! There 'e was, shameless, and abandoned, an' 'is mother beside 'im all the time, tryin' 'er best to bring 'im to 'imself, an' not feeling sure ov 'im till 'e come to the swine-troughs. Then she got a grip on 'er lost boy, an', sleepin' an' wakin', she filled 'is mind with thoughts ov the old 'ome an' 'is old father. An' when 'e rose to 'is feet an' looked across the brown fields towards the old spot, she was beside 'im, whisperin', pleadin', till 'is pride was broke, an' 'e fell on 'is face

among the swine, an' cried between 'is sobs, "O mother, mother, I'll go, I'll go!"'

'An' 'e went, an' 'is mother was 'is good angel, 'is unseen companion. An' the old father was standin' by the gate at the bottom ov the field, peerin' with 'is failin' sight down the dusty road, an' wonderin' for the ten-thousandth time wot 'e was goin' to say to the boy's mother when 'e met 'er in glory, 'ow 'e 'adn't never come back. 'Is 'eart was 'eavy, for 'is arms was resting on the gatepost, against which 'is wife 'ad leaned when she 'eld 'er baby long ago.

'Somethin' touched 'im. 'E thought it were the wind. Again 'e felt it, an' it were like the touch ov an angel's wing. 'E lifted up 'is 'ead with a new light in 'is eyes. Round the bend in the road came a tramp, footsore an' lame, an' the old man 'ad to grip that post with both 'ands. Again that touch, that movin' wind, an' 'is time it carried the scent of the flower from the 'edgerow—the flower she loved. Then 'e knew. A beam from the settin' sun struck 'is eyes, an' out ov the golden mist the face of 'is dead wife smiled. "Wife," 'e whispered, "the boy—the boy!"'

David was silent for a moment.

'E ran an' put 'is arms around the tramp's neck, an' kiased 'im. 'E was lost an' 'is mother found 'im, an' our Lord knew it!'

'Ow do I know?' he asked, in reply to my unspoken question.

'Only by takin' notice,' was his answer. 'Did you ever notice this before? When the boy got 'ome there was a suit ov clo'es an' a pair ov slippers ready for 'im. That was 'is mother's doin's. She put them clo'es an' slippers in the store cupboard before she went out to seek 'er own. A man wouldn't 'ave thought about it, an' that's wot makes me sure our Lord knew the mother ov them boys.'

Since writing the above I have seen a statement to the effect that tradition does affirm that the prodigal's mother died of a broken heart. Whether my friend 'John Meldrum' was aware of this legend I cannot say. Anyway, death, so-called, is no final word, or episode, even to a broken-hearted mother. A true mother is not the less a mother when she passes into the unseen, and who can say how many prodigal sons and erring daughters have been reclaimed by the ministry of parents from within the veil?

'ENEMIES OF MAN.'

The following is an extract from the report in the Chatham 'Observer,' of July 12th, of Mr. E. W. Wallis's lecture in reply to Monsignor Benson. Dealing with that gentleman's assertion that the spirits who communicate are 'the enemies of man,' Mr. Wallis asked:—

How did he know that such beings existed? How did he know they were enemies? Had he been investigating? Had he been doing what he said people ought not to do? Where did the evil spirits come from? There were many questions that had to be settled when a man made an affirmation of that kind. The Spiritualists wanted proof because their inquiries had led them to certain conclusions. If the other world were given over to the enemies of men, so that they could deceive the very elect in this world, what kind of place was it beyond the grave? Were the good spirits prisoners in heaven while the evil spirits were free to mislead the people living in the present world? The Spiritualists were blamed because they claimed from the evidence they received that they were in communication with their spirit friends. They held that no bad spirit could compel a mortal to do wrong. There was a great deal too much of moral cowardice in the world, of people seeking to make a scapegoat of the devil. They wanted to lay the blame on an evil spirit or someone else, instead of frankly owning their own culpability. Spiritualists did not believe in that kind of thing. They believed in accepting their own responsibility. They believed in the Fatherhood of God, in the brotherhood of man, intercourse between the two worlds, personal responsibility for everything done in the body, and the pathway of progress open to all persons in this world and the next.

UNDER the heading 'Words of Wisdom,' 'The Hindu Spiritual Magazine' prints a valuable article by Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, from which we quote the concluding sentences: 'No attraction between the sexes can last or produce happiness which is not based on true friendship, high respect, mutual self-control, and unselfish love. These are the four corner-stones on which sex passion must build its mansion, if it is to last. Without these corner-stones no marriage can be successful, and with these corner-stones no irregular association can exist.'

TRIBUTES TO MR. ARTHUR HOLDEN.

The notice of the transition of our venerable friend, Mr. Arthur Holden, came to me as a veritable bolt from the blue. I met him first at the Summer School of the Alpha Union, held at Letchworth in August, 1910, and was struck immediately with his patriarchal appearance. Notwithstanding his great age, he attended nearly all the meetings. One day it was announced that he would read (to those who cared to listen) a selection from a number of messages received from his wife in the unseen world. I took advantage of the opportunity of listening to these messages. A personal talk with Mr. Holden followed, and he kindly volunteered to arrange for me to meet a psychic at his own house to see if I could get evidence of my own wife's survival. Accordingly I journeyed from London to Olton for a week-end, and on the Sunday the most wonderful thing in all my life (up to that time) happened. Not only did I converse with a control, but I had a message from my mother, and my wife herself spoke to me and, manifesting convincingly the continuity of her affection. Mr. Holden said that I had had more convincing proof than any he had known previously through this particular psychic. From Mr. Holden and his daughters I received nothing but the greatest consideration and kindness during my brief stay in their beautiful home.

The friendship thus begun continued and developed, until I came to regard Mr. Holden almost as a father. When he went to live at Letchworth he invited me to visit his new home. Our friend's reminiscences were of a most interesting character; one hopes that some record of them is preserved. I do not write these lines because I feel that his kindness to me was exceptional: so far from that being the case, I think it was but typical of his attitude to his fellows. He never begrudged any time or effort to bring to others the joy of spirit communion which he himself knew so well. He was remarkable, too, not only for his sense of the reality of spiritual things, but for the way in which, in spite of his advanced age (he was seventy-seven), he kept his grip on the things of the material world. The last time I saw him, only a few weeks ago, he told me he still paid a monthly business visit to Birmingham. It will be long ere we see his like again.

For many, as for myself, the 'other world' will seem more real and homelike when we think of our friend's presence in it, and while we cannot but be conscious of our own sense of keen loss in his removal, we can rejoice on his behalf in the welcome which so choice and gentle and kindly a spirit must have received on the other side. In that 'home' he will doubtless remember those of us who are yet 'out in the cold,' and be just as interested in keeping in spiritual touch with our plane of existence as he was, while here, in maintaining conscious communion with that plane in which it is now his happy privilege to be 'at home.'

L. V. H. WITLEY.

Our dear brother and fellow-worker, Arthur Holden, has been called to come up higher, and I ask you to allow me to say that I know no man in our movement whom I love and revere more than him. His works are known, and their good fruition follow him. And they who love him would only rejoice that he has gone to the higher life if they knew that for many years now—indeed, ever since the passing on of his dear wife, whose wondrously beautiful and inestimably rich communications he published lately—his heart has been in the better land, and he has verily been as a 'pilgrim' here. Addio, Addio, beloved brother! Addio, brave heart! Thou hast entered into thy joy, for thou art now with her whom thy soul loveth, and so in the fuller consciousness of love. Addio, Addio! well might we be pardoned for envying thee thy joy.

JAMES L. MACDETH BAIN.

72, Clifton Hill, N.W.

SPIRITUALISM, A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

By W. H. EVANS.

(Continued from page 352.)

We have seen in preceding pages what man is, and how he is produced. Heredity and environment are two factors which are continually operative. And as this has a decided bearing on the ethical aspect of the question, I must frankly face the issue. The determinist is perfectly logical in his position, and none can, I think, dislodge him. But he rarely goes far enough. I was to show, if possible, that man can be master, but that his mastership is supplementary to the determinist position. While it is perfectly true that man is the product of heredity and environment, the usual meaning attached to these two words is not quite far-reaching enough. Our heredity goes back behind the material, and if the facts of Spiritualism prove anything, it is that man is a *spiritual* as well as a material being. He has a spiritual heredity, and in the possession of spiritual qualities lie the hope and certainty of his mastership. We all respond, more or less, to our environment, but the stronger the 'me,' the less influence has the 'not me' upon it. That is the reason why many rise superior to what is called a bad environment. The fact is they are able to put themselves in an attitude to assimilate the best which their environment can give. And such assimilation is an evidence of their power over their environment. Many speak loosely about this matter, and speak as if there were only one factor. We must remember that there are two factors.

When the positive germ is deposited in the ovum, it is the response to its environment which brings about the development of the foetus. The golden germ of the spirit attracts to itself from its environment the necessary matter to build itself a body, and according to the quality and quantity of the matter, it is able to build a body that shall respond to high or low ideals in its future life. When the time comes for it to express itself in a wider environment, birth takes place. We may say that the foetus has by development grown superior to its environment. Many factors enter into the formation of the temperament and organic quality of the unborn—among them the influence of the mother, together with the environment in which she is placed. The ideas which dominate her mind have all an influence, and many a child is born with a tendency to express what are called evil qualities, who in after life is treated harshly by his fellows for doing that which, owing to that predisposition, he had been unable to avoid. When the child is launched upon its post-natal life it is for many years moulded largely by the environment in which it is placed. And this action and reaction between the individual and his environment continues throughout life.

We are largely governed by our ideas. If we believe that we have the power to mould our environment we act accordingly. If we belong to the jelly-fish tribe we just acquiesce in circumstances and admit their mastership. But if we rise superior to our environment, it is because we have a strong heredity and are aided by a better environment. Environment is a word of very wide meaning. The whole of the past is included in our heredity, and many of the influences of the past are in our environment also. Everything we come into contact with—every book we read, every conversation we have, every chance word that is spoken to us—is environment. Add to this our psychic environment, which, though unseen, is none the less potent, and we can see how wide, far-reaching and extended it is. We are not conscious of all the forces which go to mould our characters. If we were, we should be surprised to see how potent are the influences which come to us from the unseen world.

Can man be master? Can he have freedom of choice? These are questions we have now to face and answer. But before we answer the first we must be clear as to what we mean by mastership.

Mastership is largely a question of relativity. The savage translated from his native wilds to the midst of civilised existence would be utterly at sea; while the civilised man translated to the wilds of the savage would find himself much in the same position as the savage in civilised life. Both would be out of

* *Psychology*, like *Sociology*, is still largely in the scholastic stage; it is ignorant and intellectual, a happy refuge for the lazy industry of pedants; instead of experience and accurate description and analysis, it begins with the rash assumption of elements, and starts out on ridiculous syntheses. Who with a sick soul would dream of going to a psychologist?—H. G. WELLS.

touch with their environment. With no knowledge of wood-craft, or the methods whereby he could wrest a living from Nature, the civilised man would, perhaps, perish. Yet, in civilised life he may be an adept at acquiring what he desires; and in his native wilds the savage would be master of his position. In their respective environments they are masters. To be master means to be in sympathetic touch with one's environment, and able to use it for his own and his fellows' benefit.

In civilised life, the man who is hyper-spiritual may be considered inefficient. His moral nature may be so highly developed that he cannot stoop to perform the petty meannesses which are interwoven into our commercial life. He cannot say a pair of shoes are all solid leather if they have paper stiffenings and liftings. To be absolutely truthful would spoil him as a salesman. Yet he may be, in a truly spiritual sense, a master; only his moral nature will not let him respond in sympathy with his commercial environment. Hence the world calls him a failure. The whole question is bound up with life and its expression. Civilisation is the life expression of the people, and if such meannesses as we have intimated exist—and we know they do—their existence argues that the life of the people, as a whole, is not so high as it should be. This brings us back to the statement already made, that we are governed by our ideals. The higher the standard of thought, the higher will the life expression of the people be.

Potent as is the action of our environment, our inner life is also potent if we but recognise it. The facts of Spiritualism bring home to us, as nothing else does, the power that lies within each of us, and truly in a spiritual sense we can be masters. But it involves the decision to live the moral law, 'to do unto others as ye would they should do unto you.' We have been taught this, but have pessimistically said 'it is impossible.' By so saying we have imposed a false limitation upon ourselves. In the bountiful provision for all our needs which Nature has made, there is no reason why we should not live this law. But we excuse ourselves and listen to our lower desires, and while entangled in their wiles, shout that we are free, and condemn our fellows because they fall into the net which has been spread for them from their birth. We must throw aside this pessimism and proclaim with cheery optimism that man can transcend his environment; that as he has made, so he can unmake. If he has slums he can sweep them away and put clean, healthy, sanitary dwellings in their place. Slums are monuments to our selfishness and greed. Environment is powerful, but not all-powerful. When we awaken to a realisation of our own power, we find that fate is its hand-maiden. We can make our future. The power is within, and it is here we discover that we are masters. By mastership we mean that stage of development wherein we recognise our own ability to mould our environment.

Can man have freedom of choice? One of the distinguishing traits of the *genus homo* is his power of initiative. Everyone chooses every day of his life. But rarely do we find people asking what determines their choice. If we pause to consider we shall see that many influences enter into our decisions. Many people think they are not at all influenced by externals, but that it is merely a question of 'I will,' or 'I will not.' But what choice is there if we have nothing to decide? We are merely creatures of impulse. True it is that, in the undeveloped man, choice is largely determined by outside influences. He acts automatically according to the strongest impulse, without reasoning very much upon it. But as we rise in the scale of development, we find that the range of choice becomes wider, and the ego decides what it shall and what it shall not do. There is a difference in the ego deciding and the choice being decided by outside influences entirely. One is impulsive, the other is the result of intellectual and moral perception. This, again, is a development resulting from the combined influences of heredity and environment. In fact, these influences have been developing in us the power of initiative and choice.

There is one other thought I wish to dwell on before I close this all too brief discussion of an intricate theme. There are some who postulate that it is possible for man to live such a wicked life that he sinks lower and lower until at last all spirituality is exhausted, and he ceases to be. Now, if there is a being produced who can live such a life as that, persistently continuing in evil courses for ages until he ceases to be, it argues that originally such a being had more of evil than good in his nature. In fact, it is equivalent to saying that he is the offspring, not of God, who is love and goodness, but of a devil. God is infinite, and is also the very soul of goodness. And it is utterly

impossible to conceive how an incorrigibly evil person can spring from a source of infinite good. It also argues that in such a case God fails. It does not ease the matter by saying such persons have free will and can choose the good if they wish. It must be explained why they do not wish. Besides it is doubtful whether anyone is so bad that there is no spark of goodness in him. And this goodness must grow at some time. To say it will be extinguished is to say that evil is more powerful than good. But as all change their environment at death, many of the causes which operated to produce what we call evil will cease to act, and the good within will have a chance to come into activity. I cannot admit that God will fail, and to say that one soul will be extinguished is to say that the omnipotence of God has become impotent; this His omniscience has not been equal to providing for all needs; and that He is not present in the one so utterly evil, and therefore not omnipresent. Thus through all life's vicissitudes we shall at last come home, feeling that all is well and that the Father's love has been with us through all the fires of affliction and the anguish of sorrow.

(To be continued.)

A TIMID CHRISTIAN.

In our issue for June 21st (page 291) we noticed a valuable article which Miss H. A. Dallas had contributed to the June 'Commonwealth' on 'The Value of Studies in Psychical Research.' That article has caused searchings of heart in one at least of the more fearful readers of that excellent magazine. 'M. D. B.' in a letter in the July number, finds it 'hard to say that such studies are altogether reconcilable with Christianity.' 'The question will arise,' he says, 'whether, since our Blessed Lord has revealed nothing of the hereafter, his followers are justified in searching for knowledge on the subject by methods which have not his sanction.' To this we would reply that to say of any religion that it limits in any direction and in any sphere the reverent search for knowledge would argue something radically wrong with that religion; and to say of its author that he desired to confine the knowledge of his followers, in any direction, to what he himself revealed would equally be a reflection on both himself and his teaching. We do not believe anything of the kind either of true Christianity or of its founder. Because Jesus did not anticipate the era of psychical research or prescribe to his followers how it should be conducted, it does not follow that the methods it employs would not have his sanction. 'M. D. B.' says that 'unfortunately it would be possible to find psychical researchers whose faith has been shattered by the same studies.' That, again, says little for the firmness of the foundation on which their faith rested. Let us hope that such a shattering was the preliminary to the building up of something stronger and more enduring.

'Thus he came at length
To find a stronger faith his own.'

The question asked by 'M. D. B.' whether it is not a fact that in many cases psychical research has exercised a demoralising influence on those engaged in it, is one which we may safely leave psychical researchers themselves to answer. He goes on to contrast the aim of the phenomena experienced by those engaged in psychical research with that of the visions and spiritual communications recorded in the Bible. It appears to him that in the one case it is communion with the spirits of the departed, in the other it is communion with the Father of Spirits—the suggestion apparently being that while it is filial and therefore right to hold communion with our Father, it is not right, though perfectly natural, to desire to commune with our brothers and sisters—that is, if they happen to have removed to another sphere of existence. 'The question, to my mind,' says 'M. D. B.', 'is whether we have any right to take the initiative, as it might be put, and attempt to hold intercourse with those whose bodily presence He has removed.' Spiritualists do not credit themselves with having taken the initiative; they believe that that has come largely from their friends on the other side, but they do not question their friends' right to do so, any more than 'M. D. B.' would question the right of a relative or friend whose bodily presence God had, through the workings of His inscrutable providence ('M. D. B.' probably believes in Providence!) removed to America, to communicate with him, if possible, and let him know how he was getting on.

We would remind our friend that this idea that any endeavour to raise the veil that hides the hitherto unknown is a defiance of some divine decree has always stood in the path of discovery and advancement, both mental and spiritual. The fact is, 'M. D. B.'s' attitude is at once an indication of the need for Spiritualism and a justification—if justification be needed—for the existence and work of 'Light' and other educational agencies of a similar kind.

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SOME POINTS FOR CRITICS.

When we are told of the faults and follies of some of those whose interest relates mainly to the lower aspects of Spiritualism we think of the story of the witty master of a household who was asked what business had brought him to town. 'My family,' he replied, 'have sent me to try and obtain the services of an angel to do the cooking.' We are far from wishing to discourage the idea that character and reputation are of tremendous importance to workers in our own, as in all movements. But we never overlook the fact that some of the greatest achievements for human welfare have been the work of men whose characters would not stand the test of a close investigation.

Mr. Weller, senior, expressed to his son, the immortal Samuel, his belief that there was a close relation between physical bulk and a wide experience of life. 'Vidth and visdom,' said the old gentleman, were always found together. We could not make the same claim for gifts and goodness. The great artist, the eloquent preacher, the distinguished scientist—even they do not always shine in their private lives. How much less, then, should we expect the lowlier types of workers to be immaculate! We are, of course, entitled to lament the fact—with due regard, of course, to our own shortcomings—but it is sometimes necessary to discriminate between the man and the work. They cannot always be judged together. The bad man may construct for us a very serviceable house, and we should be foolish, indeed, if we refused to live in it because of our objection to the moral character of the builder.

We have been told of persons (miscalled Spiritualists) who devote their use of psychic gifts to dubious ends—to the discovery of winners on the turf, successful speculations on the Stock Exchange, and the like. We can only discourage it—we cannot prevent it. And we can always look for the soul of goodness in things evil. We can remember, for instance, that nothing can be perverted that has not a true use, just as the counterfeit always implies the existence of reality. And so the venal man who seeks communication with the invisible world for purposes of gain and the foolish one who pursues it for pleasure and excitement are, each in his own fashion, serving a useful end. 'I would rather,' said an old clergyman to us, 'see people attending church for selfish purposes than remaining outside as a result of indifference. I would even prefer active wickedness to apathy.'

That is very much our own view of the question. But there is another aspect of the matter. There is a curious vagueness in some minds as to what is vicious and what is merely earthly. The vast humanity of the next life does not consist entirely of 'prophets, priests and kings.' There is a fashion of despising the 'huckster,' but he has his part

in the business of life, and may even on close acquaintance show himself to be a very good fellow at heart. So long as he traffics in the market place there should be no great objection to him. It is only when he brings his wares into the sanctuary for sale that it is time to raise an outcry. In his legitimate sphere he is at least doing some work. He is not loafing about, sponging on the charitable. We would not have the 'spirit circle' turned into a puppet show or a mercantile bureau. Neither would we have it looked upon as a method of approach to mysteries remote and super-human. There are, indeed, things 'too pure and good for human nature's daily food,' but in the meantime life has to be sustained somehow. Neither religion nor philosophy can afford to disdain common sense and common needs.

In her delightful book, 'A Psychic Autobiography,' that gifted woman, Amanda Jones, the American poetess and inventor, tells how on one occasion a spirit-lawyer wrote through her hand a document in perfect legal form for use in some business in which she was engaged. It stood the test of expert scrutiny—there was no flaw in it. True, the legal mind which thus aided her from the world beyond was that of a wise and good man, and the business for which the document was designed was a mission work. But the core of the matter was that there was a *use* to be served. An inspired treatise would have been more in accordance with the notions of some persons regarding intercourse with the world beyond, but it would have been of no service. And the question of *use* had, in this case, very little reference either to the character of the lawyer or the philanthropic nature of the work. Always the first principle of Nature is *USE*. Let us consider that before venturing on judgments of people or things in our movement or outside of it. Use comes first, truth and beauty and wisdom are outworked later, and often after very unpromising and sometimes positively ugly processes. The phenomena-hunter who is constantly seeking mental stimulants in the beholding of wonders is not an edifying spectacle, but he is keeping in action forces that will later be of immense benefit to those of more unfolded character. So, too, is he who seeks only monetary gain through psychic avenues. And the work of the medium whose moral reputation is offensive to 'the unco' guid' may not be the less useful on that account. It never detracted from the greatness of the first Duke of Marlborough's victories that, to put it mildly, he was far from being a saint—it only reflected on the great General as a *man*. We should learn to discriminate in our censure. And as a closing reflection let us observe that some of the enemies of our movement show the tactics of the lawyer, who, finding himself confronted by an unanswerable case, is reduced to abusing the witnesses who represent it.

'THE DEVIL'S TOLL' is the title of an article by 'J. B.' in 'The Christian World' of July 24th, which contains many striking and suggestive thoughts. The idea seems to be that, whether a personal devil exists or not, humanity has to pay toll; 'that all our good doing and good being is subject to a horrible discount; that our best, even in the hour of its victory, pays tribute to our worst; that our forward movement includes these manifold slips backward; that our success carries in it so often the seeds of defeat.' This theme is illustrated in various ways, but the conclusion is not so disheartening as the proposition implies. Thus we are reminded that 'no good once won is ever finally lost. For the folly, the savagery of the hour, the full price will be paid. And the payment will be in itself an enduring lesson.' We were recently reminded that the word 'devil,' if spelled backwards, gives us 'lived.' And to have lived is a great thing. To *live* one must be, and do, and learn, and understand, and grow in knowledge, grace, and wisdom. To truly *live*, one must triumph over the evil, vile, or ill conditions which arise from ignorance, superstition, fear, and folly, and are the conditions which gave birth to the idea of the devil: Devil, evil, vile, ill. He who can triumph over these has truly lived.

HELL DISESTABLISHED.

There can be no doubt that the old hell of fire and brimstone, everlasting and horrible, useless and inhuman, is at last disestablished. Discredited, discarded, unwept, and unsung, it is consigned to limbo, not only without regret, but with many a sigh of relief, if not with active rejoicing. It is true that here and there the old literal lake, pit, furnace, or abiding-place of his Satanic majesty remains in the creeds, and is half-heartedly, almost shamefacedly, taught by preachers who have not kept up with the times; but even these men almost unconsciously apologise for and seek to justify their teaching.

The spirit people who have been communicating from the other side for sixty-five years have persistently and consistently proclaimed that life after death is the natural sequel to this earth life; that people are neither better nor worse when they first awake to realise that they are on the other side than they were here; that character and motive determine a man's status in that life, not his creed or church belief; that sin and suffering go hand in hand—the one being the inevitable consequence of the other—and thus each one makes his own hell or heaven; that reform, progress, and happiness are possible after death for the truly repentant wrong-doer as well as for the aspiring, loving, spiritually-minded worker for humanity and the truth; that there are many grades, planes or spheres in the beyond and that each one goes 'to his own place,' the place which he has made his own by his loves and labours on earth, from which state he advances whenever he is ready to continue the work of his education and desires to grow in grace and goodness that he may become in tune with the Infinite.

For proclaiming these truths spirit people have been regarded as false teachers. 'Evil spirits,' 'misleading demons,' and other choice epithets have been applied to them, and Spiritualists have been ostracised, charged with heresy, infidelity, and other misdemeanours. Yet, if we may judge by the opinions recently expressed by a number of leading preachers, that which the spirits have been proclaiming so patiently and insistently is now accepted as gospel truth.

Messrs. Cassell and Co. have just published in book form the answers which sixteen clergymen have given to the question, 'Is there a Hell?' and their replies are most significant. Thus, all agree that there is a hell (a condition, not a place). They are also agreed in repudiating hell fire and demons. The Rev. A. C. Dixon says that 'the fires which burn the soul are hotter than the fires which consume the body'; the Rev. F. B. Meyer holds that 'what fire does for the body will be supplied by remorse,' and the Rev. Richard Roberts holds that hell is 'a condition in which the man suffers the fires of lust and the torments of desire without possessing the means of gratifying or assuaging them.' Some of them, however, are still held in bondage to some extent by the old views expressed in the Scriptures, or believed to be Scriptural; but the Rev. A. J. Waldron (Church of England) says frankly, what hosts of other people are thinking, 'If the Bible teaches "everlasting punishment" so much the worse for the Bible, because we cannot believe it; you may quote texts, and have behind the texts the very finest scholarship, but it is no good!' and the Rev. Dr. M. Hyamson (Jewish) maintains that 'endless torments are in flagrant contradiction to the goodness of God as expressed in His Holy Word.'

There is a disposition among Roman Catholics to detect in the new teaching a tendency towards acceptance of the doctrine of purgatory; but here, again, the Rev. A. J. Waldron proclaims the more Spiritualistic idea of the future life. He says, as reported in 'The Daily News and Leader' on July 25th, 'To divide it into three stages—hell, purgatory, and heaven—is rather crude, but I do believe in a series of evolutionary stages after death.' Sir Nathaniel Barnaby holds that the word 'Hell' should be expunged from the Bible, and the original words, especially Gehenna, restored, because Gehenna was not mainly 'a place of punishment, but a place of purifying and destruction.' Slowly, but surely, we are coming to realise that 'purifying is the end of pain.'

It is not surprising to find a few who cling to the old orthodoxy, but we are more than a little surprised that the Rev. Dinah T. Young still believes in the resurrection of the body

and is, therefore, inclined to believe that hell is a locality. The official catechism of the Salvation Army denies specifically both that punishment after death can be a means of restoration and that after a period of punishment the soul is destroyed, basing the denial on the assertion that the same language is used in Scripture to describe the duration of the happiness and joy of the saved as is employed to describe the duration of the punishment of the lost. Mr. S. Sleight holds that 'in the moral government of God, hell is as great a necessity as heaven, but the arms of everlasting love are beneath the very hell He was obliged to create.' But that does not tell us what or where hell is, although it implies that the soul may pass through hell to heaven.

Clearly the old literal, burning hell has gone, and going with it is the doctrine of hopeless, useless, endless punishment inflicted by a personal devil (a successful rival to God in a competition for possession of the souls of men). But if hell does not exist, and never has existed; if there is no personal devil, and never has been; if there are no demons, or imps of hell who delight to torture the unbeliever for ever; if there is no physical resurrection and no general assize-court judgment day after death, what becomes of the 'plan of salvation'?

If God does not need to be placated and reconciled to man, but man has to return, repentant, like 'the prodigal son,' to his spiritual home, and is welcomed by the Loving Father, who sees him a great way off, and goes out to meet him, what becomes of the doctrines which still find place in the creeds, the hymns and the Prayer-book?

If these doctrines are not true now they never were true. Let us think of it, ponder over it, and see what it means. Millions of lives have been darkened, millions of hearts have been broken, millions have been done to death because of these false teachings, and millions more have gone to the other life trusting to the broken reed of a false theology, expecting a salvation that was not needed and could never happen, anticipating immunity from the consequences of misspent lives because of their faith, but compelled to reap as they sowed: to outgrow their enslaved conditions by expiatory services of love and fellowship.

Truly we have reached the parting of the ways. The old nightmare of dogmatic theology is slowly passing away and the sunlight of Divine order, beauty, love and joy is making earth-life radiant and showing the path of progress, open to every soul that wills to tread it, by which ultimately all men, from east, west, north and south, will enter into Eternal Life—and be at home in God's Glorious Kingdom of Love.

MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

In the following paper on 'Miracles,' which was read before the Literary Society of Windsor Place Congregational Church, Cardiff, the writer, Mr. T. James, ably presents the Spiritualist view of miracles and spiritual evolution. He says:—

If there is one thing more pronounced than another in this present age it is the marvellous extension of the spirit of inquiry, which bids fair to lift the tone of the general thought far higher than in any previous era. There are those who can only see danger in this fine critical attitude, this bold challenging, to which institutions deemed sacred are being subjected, but we may rest assured that nothing of value will suffer, because the evolution of this spirit is accompanied by a fine development of the intuitional, the inspirational, and the imaginative, or creative, faculties which give balance and weight to the decisions of the intellect. We are realising that spiritual evolution works from within outwards—that we trust the mental, moral, and spiritual nature with which we are endowed, and thus a real sacredness is coming into the hearts and lives of men. The religious world has nothing to fear from the advent of self-reliant and truth-seeking minds, for it will respond to their challenge, and true religion will become a more vital influence day by day. The one stern demand of the age is for truth; it demands evidence upon all points. It wants simple honesty and a less involved message. It is losing reverence for reputation, and is putting reliance on character and not upon tradition.

No fiercer battle has been fought in the realm of critical

thought than that over the 'miraculous' element in sacred history. Orthodoxy stands upon its defence in asserting that the miraculous is necessary and even vital to religious revelation, that the true test of a divinely appointed messenger, or prophet, lies in the manifestations of supernatural power accompanying his mission, and that therein is to be found the evidence of the governance of Nature by a Supreme Power, or, in other words, that the reality of the being of God is to be judged by deviations from natural phenomena, and not from their unvarying progression, and that the credentials of the chosen oracles of God are countersigned in the same way. Akin to this is the doctrine of the infallibility of the Biblical records. But since so many intelligent and thoughtful men can no longer accept these 'orthodox' ideas, is it any wonder that agnosticism is the only refuge for their unsatisfied minds? What we must do, then, is either to give them proof that the miraculous is non-existent and mythical—that it is quite an unnecessary element of religion—or that the incidents recorded in the Scriptures occurred in a natural way and were not peculiar to time and place—but can be paralleled at any time, given approximately similar conditions.

Upon analysis of the higher criticism, we find a peculiar position arrived at. The miraculous is in general denied, but with hesitation and reservations.

Professor Harnack says:—

Although the order of Nature be inviolable, we are not yet by any means acquainted with all the forces working in it and acting reciprocally with other forces, our acquaintance even with the forces inherent in matter and with the field of their action is incomplete, while of psychic forces we know less. We see that a strong will and a firm faith exert an influence upon the life of the body and produce phenomena which strike us as marvellous; has anyone ever yet drawn any sure line between the possible and the actual—who can say how far the influence of soul upon soul and of soul upon body reaches?

Now I shall endeavour to show that enough is known of these forces and powers to warrant us in forming a definite conclusion. But Harnack also says:—

Some of the stories had their origin in an exaggerated view of natural events of an impressive character, and in stories such as arose in the interest of seeing Old Testament prophecies fulfilled.

But these explanations are not more stable than the orthodox assertions, seeing that they are based on an assumption, and particularly as they do not apply to miraculous incidents in contemporary history. Apollonius of Tyana described in detail the murder of Domitian in Rome, although himself in Egypt at the moment of its happening—he also raised a noble lady from the dead. The Emperor Vespasian performed miraculous cures at Alexandria. These 'miracles' have more authentication than those of Jesus and they have no connection with prophecies or parables and sayings.

Harnack himself admits that 'some of them are stories of surprising cures effected by Jesus' spiritual force, and stories of which we cannot fathom the secret.' Here we have a definite admission, and if but one per cent. of the miracles (so-called) is left without solution, it is mere dogmatism to say that the miraculous is non-existent, or not possible.

Let it be admitted that cures were effected by the spiritual or psychic force of Jesus, and anything in the nature of physical disorder can be cured in the same way, by the same means, since the means employed come within the natural order. If John Smith gives evidence of being possessed of a psychic or mental power whereby he is able to alleviate pain, even only of the commonest and simplest ailments, then grave ailments may yield to the curative power of the same force intensified. It is only a question of degree as to the potency and efficacy of the power. The records of cures effected by men naturally gifted with healing powers, fill volumes. Their work has been tested and authenticated beyond question and the records are accessible.

It is wearisome to reiterate names, but when many medical men, eminent in their profession, testify to the existence of this power from observation, where is the layman who dare challenge their conclusions, be he ever so finely philosophically equipped? In the movements of mental healing and Christian Science we know there are many absurd exaggerations connected with their

claims; we know also (some of us, at any rate, do) that at their base the principles are true and sound, and to-day there comes apparent corroboration from the orthodox side of medicine. In the case of such individuals as Valentine Greatrakes, Herr Gassner, 'Jacob' of Paris, Dr. Newton, Mr. Mack, Mr. George Spriggs, and others, who all claimed to have been assisted by supernormal intelligences, there is sufficient evidence to establish a correspondence of method with New Testament healing. I think the great stumbling-block to a real comprehension of these things is the supposition of Divine intervention in special cases, but in modern thought there is no room for the ascription of act or fact to the direct and immediate activity of the Creator.

Hume objected that 'A miracle is a violation of the laws of Nature,' and 'A miracle is a transgression of a law of Nature by a particular volition of the Deity or by the interposition of some invisible agent'; but, as Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace points out, both these definitions are bad, or imperfect. The first assumes that we know all the laws of Nature—that the particular effect could not be produced by some unknown law of Nature overcoming the law we know. It also assumes that if an intelligent invisible being held an apple suspended in the air, that act would violate the law of gravity. The second is not precise; it should be some invisible intelligent agent, otherwise the action of galvanism and electricity when these agents were first discovered, and before they were ascertained to form part of the order of Nature, would answer accurately to this definition of a miracle. How does Hume, or any man, know that any particular miracle is a violation of a law of Nature? He assumes this without a shadow of proof, and on the words 'violation' and 'transgression' rests his whole argument. Dr. Wallace's definition of a miracle is: 'Any act or event necessarily implying the existence and agency of superhuman intelligences, considering the human soul or spirit, if manifested out of the body, as one of these superhuman intelligences.' This definition is now accepted by all researchers whose experiments deal specifically with the order of phenomena before termed supernatural. Lecky makes this objection to the miraculous, that 'in certain stages of society and under the action of certain influences an accretion of miracles is invariably formed around every prominent person or institution.' There is truth in this assertion, but does it cover the whole ground of the facts? What of the Church of Rome, that great theatre of the miraculous? Have the many Popes any miracle-workings to their credit? Except two or three of the very early ones, none. This is true also of the cardinals and other prominent personages. The saints, whose miraculous powers led to their canonisation, arose from the humble laity or the peasant priesthood.

Not among the great in temporal power or chief in intellect is the vision of spirit unfolded, but the spirit world declares itself through those who possess the fine sense of humility, and the wonders of a larger world are opened before the eyes of meekness—history contradicts Lecky.

Although Renan and Strauss do not say so in so many words, the inference to be drawn from their writings on Jesus is that he allowed his disciples to credit him with miraculous powers that he did not possess, in order that he might establish influence with the people. There is, admittedly, a good motive behind, reform was the grand idea, and the end justified the means, but after studying Jesus' character as shown in his three years' ministry, I cannot see how to fit imposture or falsity into his moral fabric.

Certain alleged miraculous events, such as the commanding of the sun and moon to stand still—the virgin birth and the story of Jonah and the whale—may be classed as legendary, and I do not propose to deal with them. They have certainly an esoteric meaning, but we must differentiate between them and the miraculous in which intelligent manipulation of psychic power is apparent.

The most prominent feature of miracle in sacred history is that of the appearance of angels or superhuman intelligences charged with a definite mission to mankind. These manifestations are universal in character, all ages and races bear witness. The cultured Greek, the pastoral Hebrew, the subtle ancient Egyptian, as well as the diminishing Red Indian and savage

Zulu, record it on monolith, in verse and legend, but it would be useless to attempt to settle the question upon literary or inferential considerations. If an angel appeared to Abraham on the plain of Mamre or to John on Patmos—if a demon inspired Socrates and attended Luther, then we have a right to expect to find parallel experiences in the lives of men and women of this century, and if it can be as definitely established, by such evidence as is accepted for the usual phenomena of life, then no abstract reasoning or philosophy can remain in the field and live when opposed to a question of fact and experience. Is such evidence forthcoming? Some of the finest and clearest minds of the age say 'Yes, and in abundance.'

(To be continued.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The following good example of 'the prophetic dream' was given recently in 'The Daily Chronicle.' 'The late Lord Dufferin, when in Paris, dreamed one night that he was in a hearse *en route* for the cemetery. A day or so later he was entering the lift at an hotel when he recognised the attendant as the driver of the hearse in his dream. He stepped back, and the lift ascended without him. As it neared the top something broke and it crashed to the bottom again, killing everyone in it.'

The valuable articles on the 'Voice' phenomena through the mediumship of Mrs. Wriedt which have appeared in our columns, first from the pen of Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore and then from that of Mr. James Coates, have aroused considerable interest not only in this country, but in many others. We are pleased, therefore, to be able to give in this issue of 'LIGHT' the testimony of an old friend to 'LIGHT.' He is an experienced Spiritualist, a careful observer, and a trustworthy recorder, hence his experiences, supplementing and corroborating as they do those of so many other capable witnesses, are of additional value.

Owing to the scepticism of so many people and the widespread indifference to the truly amazing supernormal phenomena which occur in the presence of mediums, it is necessary that we should continue to observe, study and record these happenings—especially such of them as give evidence of the presence and identity of incarnate human beings. Dr. A. R. Wallace has truly said that the facts in this realm 'are as well proved as the facts in any other branch of scientific research,' but the great 'British Public' does not think so—yet—and we must continue our work of education and demonstration until the facts are generally accepted. We include the fact that the phenomena demonstrate human survival and intercourse with 'the departed'—not personating demons.

More correspondence on Reincarnation appears in 'The Referee' of July 27th, nearly three columns being devoted to letters *pro* and *con*. Our friend, Mrs. W. P. Browne, of Gipsy Hill, asks 'Why need we postulate a separate entrance into a human organism of a something termed a soul? When does mind enter the organism? Does not life itself include everything?' and then says: 'We believe that man is a spirit incarnated upon earth for the purpose of growth or development. We believe that the Creator is the Father of all spirits—the source of all life, and that life is therefore indestructible. Life changes its mode of manifestation from time to time and varies according to environment, but we think it cannot be extinguished. The theory of Reincarnation does not commend itself to some of us because it cannot be proved to be true, and all that it seeks to explain can be accounted for otherwise. Psychical research has taught us a good deal, while through the phenomena of modern Spiritualism we claim to have demonstrated, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the continuity of life after physical death.'

A. E. Brookes Cross, on July 20th, dealing with alleged recollections of having been in certain places before, although those places have never been visited during the present life, pointed out that such recollections involved that the place or city had remained unchanged since the previous incarnation. Mary Croker, this week, cites Prentice Mulford's essay on 'We Travel while we Sleep,' and gives a reasonable explanation of such seeming recollections. She relates how, returning to England after a long absence, she desired to visit Erith, the home of her childhood's days, of which (although she had not seen it for twenty years), she retained a vivid recollection. One night she dreamed that she was there, and that she walked about noticing many alterations. In the morning she gave her mother full particulars of this dream vision. A few days later they went

together to Erith, and were both struck with amazement to find all just as it had been seen and described!

Several correspondents seem to think that great importance must be attached to the fact that the ancient Jews and other Eastern people believed in reincarnation, but surely that is no proof of the correctness of the theory. The ancients believed many things that are not accepted at the present time. We do not accept texts as proofs nowadays, we ask for evidence. John Badcock pertinently asks, 'Why theorise on the subject?' Where are the facts that will prove it? When, where, how, why—who knows? G. H. Lepper has a poor opinion of present-day Theosophy. He says: 'Freed of its later accretions, "Theosophy" might have had a radiant future as a philosophy for those who are untrammelled by orthodox dogma. But in its present form—which differs from the pure cold light of the original as much as Tibetan Lamaism does from the teachings of Buddha—it is worse than useless.' This is rather hard and unkind.

The other day we saw it seriously suggested that possibly the reason why some parents do not manifest from the other side to their children here is that they have already reincarnated! Constance de le Vingue asks, 'Is it conceivable that God can be called upon to create a fresh soul for every being born of the will of man?' Why not as conceivable as to believe that *any* souls are created? We hear of 'young souls,' as distinguished from old ones. If we must theorise, why not recognise that there is no creation—that spirit, as life-potency, is immanent, as universally present as ether, and that when the right conditions exist, individualisation follows as naturally as atoms are formed in the ether, with this difference: that when such individualisation is achieved, the spiritual being persists, awakens to awareness, and, through experience, to self-realisation?

'Dagonet' says: 'We have all known instances of the dog-like devotion of a good woman to a worthless man, but it has probably never occurred to us that the woman and the man were dog and master in a previous incarnation. . . . Of course, if a woman can be a reincarnated dog, she can be a reincarnated cat. It is possible that the militant mice—but I am getting on dangerous ground.' Apparently the man in his former incarnation lavished his affection on the dog, but in the present incarnation he brutally ill-treats his wife, who, however, still loves him with dog-like fidelity. His reincarnation seems to have led to his deterioration—or is it his karma for having lavished his affection on one of the 'lower' creations? But, in that case, why is the poor woman made to suffer? Is it because she failed to recognise the worse than brutish nature of the man who loved her as a dog but despises her as a woman? We give it up.

Many years ago Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis was shown by his spirit preceptors the wise methods of training young children, which he embodied in the 'Children's Progressive Lyceum' system, in which system physical training, by calisthenic and other exercises, is an important and integral feature. Since that time continuously increasing attention has been given to physical culture, and to-day there is observable in some directions a tendency to overdo it, and to neglect moral education, than which there is no more important or more needed branch of training for both young and old. Apparently, Miss Theodora Johnson, who recently lectured in the Æolian Hall on 'The Beauty of Health,' is endeavouring to combine the two by dealing with the higher aspects of physical education. She emphasised the interaction and reaction of spirit, mind, and body, and eulogised the work of her chief, Madame Bergman-Osterberg, declaring that its effect on the mental, moral, and physical condition of women would go down to untold generations. Beauty and health can, of course, be best secured by the intelligent co-operation of willing pupils with earnest and capable instructors. Self-knowledge, self-control, self-culture, and self-expression on the highest ethical and altruistic plane should be the aim of all education.

The Rev. Susannah Harris is not only pastor of a Spiritualist church, but (as we learn from 'The Daily News and Leader' of July 26th) she is also Chaplain of the Women's Republic, which consists of one hundred thousand women all over the United States. She refuses to perform the marriage ceremony unless both the man and the woman produce a certificate of health from a medical authority of high standing. She holds that the basis of happy married life is equality and comradeship, and eliminates the word 'obey' from her marriage service. 'She has done a great deal to stem the white slave traffic, and rescued many who seemed almost "past praying for."' She visited a murderer in prison, a man of quite charming manners and likeable personality. He seemed very much moved, thanked her fervently, said he did not know why he had done what he had done and expressed great

sorrow. Just as she was about to leave him his expression changed, and making a bound towards her he hissed, 'I would give a million dollars to strangle you.' Luckily she was near the door, and managed to escape. She found that this unfortunate man was 'a victim to heredity; he had inherited this meaningless and terrible obsession from his mother.'

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

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

Consciousness and Nirvana.

SIR,—It is pertinently asked in 'LIGHT,' how can there be 'awareness' of absorption in Nirvana if consciousness is absent?

I do not think the question asked is really difficult to reply to; the real difficulty lies in the confusion generally found between consciousness which is measurable and consciousness which is unmeasurable. We may deduce from what Professor Bergson has written that consciousness *itself* is unmeasurable. But when we consider consciousness we ordinarily relate it to our bodily state. We think of the consciousness of our friend Brown as that of a human being having a body distinct from our own body in space; we do not separate our idea of Brown's consciousness from our idea of a consciousness necessarily part of a body in space. So we make consciousness measurable, because we relate it to space.

Let me try to put into simple language what is above stated.

There is no doubt that in our ordinary life we treat our personal consciousness as an inherent part of our body; and, as all our ideas are related to the movement of our brain and all our movements and actions are related to space, it is natural we should do so. But there is a very strange power in all of us; we can 'get outside' what we term 'ourselves.' Each one of us can sit down quietly in a chair and reflect on what he terms himself. He can think about his past thoughts, past actions; his immediate present and hopes and fears for the future. All these past thoughts, past actions, the present, and hopes and fears for the future, are conditioned in time and space. But evidently these thoughts, actions, hopes, and fears are not *thinking about themselves*; it is *you* who are thinking about them. *You* are something outside these thoughts, actions, hopes, and fears. In fact, *you* are a conscious personality 'outside' your human bodily personality.

But, it seems to me, you cannot think this outside personality: thought would appear to be related to cerebral activity—to motion in time and space. But you are 'aware of' this outside real personality; you cannot think it, for it is not conditioned in time and space, and human thought is conditioned in time and space.

Now, has not everyone this consciousness of a real self? And, if so, can we not imagine that, when by dissolution our body disappears, and with it disappears all material distinction between personalities, this consciousness survives? I think that, though we cannot determine this survival, we can be 'aware of' it. In moments of ecstasy all that is material fades away, and so all material distinctions; our human personality is gone, or, rather, subsumed under our real personality, for there is strong evidence that the so-called dead can communicate with the living. And, under ecstasy, we are still conscious in 'awareness' of personality. When we return to earth we cannot think, cannot determine in any way what our experience in ecstasy was. But we are none the less firmly assured we, as personalities, have had the experience. The coming back may even seem to be the passing from reality to the taking up again of a part accomplished dream.

We may liken human consciousness to the dreaming, in time and space, of a fuller personal consciousness, and, in Nirvana, it may be we wake from our dream and there, in reality, live in the fuller consciousness. But, conditioned in the body, we cannot think this fuller consciousness; we can only be 'aware of it.'

I am not sure whether the distinction between 'awareness' and thinking has before now been used. I suggest that we think only our phenomenal universe conditioned in time and space. When we arrive, by process of reasoning, at the necessity of the noumenal, we still cannot think the noumenal, we merely arrive at 'vital knowledge of our own ignorance.' For this 'vital knowledge,' perhaps the term 'awareness' may be used.

Nothing herein written is to be taken either in support of or against the theory of Nirvana. All attempted is to show that in Nirvana there may still exist a form (I) of personal consciousness, though this involves the loss of what we ordinarily treat as personal consciousness.

F. C. CONSTABLE.

The Wriedt Seances: Some Questions.

SIR,—As one who has attended some of the circles held by Mrs. Wriedt it occurs to me to ask whether any efforts have been made to ascertain the *modus operandi* of communication. It seemed clear to me that in many cases the communicators were circumscribed by the conditions in which they found themselves, as well they might be. The sitters addressed were often in similar case. It was rather like meeting an old friend in a train just as one is leaving it—only a few moments to spare and a hundred things to say on each side. It would tax the coolness and power of concentration of a night editor or an advocate. It would be interesting to learn whether the communicating spirits always spoke directly or had occasionally to enlist the services of others to speak for them; also whether such evidences of identity as were disclosed in any individual case could not have been indefinitely expanded were the conditions furnished. In my own case I was corrected on some questions of fact, finding later that the communicating spirit was right and I was wrong.

This arose out of some questions I put, and therefore suggested that the evidence came spontaneously from one who even in such disconcerting circumstances retained clearness of mind and was in no condition of 'fog' such as is generally believed to exist in the case of spirits plunged temporarily into earth conditions. It would be interesting to learn something of the circumstances on the other side in these cases. I may add that I had more than one proof that whatever the mental state of the communicators might be, they were able to see clearly in the darkness.—Yours, &c.,

EUGENE P. GLEN.

SIR,—I have just concluded a series of thirty-one open sittings and ten or eleven private sittings with Mrs. Wriedt in Glenbeg House. To say that they were successful is an understatement of fact. The sitters were all delighted and many a sore heart found peace and consolation in hearing once more the voices of their returning friends across the border. The series of articles, 'The Voice Phenomena,' which appeared in 'LIGHT,' I propose to publish in book form, and also the symposium, 'Has W. T. Stead Returned?' which is now in the press. I have no doubt that the lovers of that indomitable journalist and Spiritualist, Mr. W. T. Stead, will be delighted with these evidences of spirit return. Miss Estelle Stead has written the Preface. The book will tell its own tale. When ready, your readers will be advised by advertisement.

Mrs. Wriedt will shortly return to America, and I think it but right to say that no medium has been worked harder, or has been more willing, and never in my experience have the results been more satisfactory. Concerning these sittings, no doubt we shall have accounts some day from those who took part in them and helped to make them so successful.—Yours, &c.,

JAMES COATES.

Glenbeg House, Rothesay.
July 24th, 1913.

An Interesting Experience.

SIR,—Possibly the following experience will be of interest to the readers of 'LIGHT.' During the past few months I have heard rappings in my bedroom as soon as I enter it, often during the night, and when I awake in the morning. The knocks, at first, are soft, but gradually they become louder and closer. I have often repeated the alphabet, but up to the present to no purpose. One evening I asked the rapper to try and show himself to me. I thought that I would look for the appearance at the foot of my bed, or in some distant part of the room, which is a large and lofty one, with twin beds in it, quite near each other.

On May 26th the knocking was persistent, and I was very restless. At last, I suppose I went off, but it must have been into a trance. When I felt I wanted to awake I could not. I tried hard, as I somehow knew that something was happening. At last I succeeded in opening my eyes and saw a dark mass swaying between the beds. It resembled the shoulders of a man bending with his head towards me. I watched for a few seconds, thinking 'Surely this is something uncanny,' when it disappeared. Immediately afterwards I switched on the electric light, jumped out of bed, ran to my son's room and told him all that had happened, begging him to exchange rooms for the rest of the night, as I did not care to go back to mine.

In the morning my son informed me that he had heard knocks on the walls and on the picture frames. When I recovered, about ten o'clock the next morning, I scolded the spirit for frightening me, and for a few days I heard no more rappings.—Yours, &c.,

M. A.

London, W.

Monsignor Benson Replies.

SIR,—I thank you for your kindness in sending me a copy of 'LIGHT,' and for the courtesy of the article dealing with myself. So far as I can see, you prove your case with regard to Dr. Winslow, and I will not again quote him in the same terms in which I have quoted him in the past.

You must allow me, however, to verify the quotations there made before committing myself further. Until I have done that, I see that I cannot in any case refer to Dr. Winslow as I have been accustomed to refer to him hitherto.—Yours, &c.,

R. HUGH BENSON.

Hare-street House, Buntingford.

July 21st.

Psychopasms and Skotographs, or Spirit Photography.

SIR,—In your last week's issue of 'LIGHT' (p. 357), Dr. Abraham Wallace is reported to have said that 'he had two photographs produced in the Crewe circle and they were very evidently faked.' The doctor has a perfect right to exercise his own judgment, but it does not follow that because in his opinion such photographs could be faked that those which he states had been obtained at the Crewe circle were the results of fraud. If he knew the members of the circle personally and had tested them as I have during the numerous sittings for psychic photographs which I have held with them, and had obtained such fine psychic results as I have obtained, I think he would not have used those words. The members of the Crewe circle are making in this matter a greater sacrifice for the cause of truth and science than any other persons I know.—Yours, &c.,

W. WALKER.

3, Palace-road, Buxton.

['Constant Reader' (who has not given us his name and address, as he should have done), desires to ask Dr. Wallace how he, or anyone else, can tell a faked photograph from one that is not faked, unless he is present and able to watch the proceedings; also, how a photograph obtained under Miss Scatterd's conditions could be faked.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Sex in the Life after Death.

SIR,—I note with pleasure the following in a letter signed 'A. K. Venning' (page 335): 'If sex and marriage are facts on this phenomenal plane, then it seems to me evident that there are noumenal realities underlying them on the higher planes, or they could not be.' Personally, I regard the question of sex as one of the most vital, from the philosophical standpoint, and of practical importance. Having such views, and having given the matter some consideration, I offer the results of my study to those who may be similarly interested, for their consideration.

The quotation above is quite in line with the teachings usually given out by students of occultism, which may be summed up in the Hermetic axiom 'As above, so below,' and *vice versa*, or in other words, that every objective fact or manifestation is the embodiment of a real but subjective idea. We cannot know the ultimate significance of the terms, positive and negative—male and female. We know that they exist as symbols of ideas which can be apprehended by consciousness, and with sufficient development it seems possible that we can trace positive manifestations from cosmic processes to the most minute manifestations of life on our physical plane.

It is certain that the Unity or Divine Spirit cannot become manifest without becoming, or giving rise to, duality. The two aspects of this duality, whatever they may be fundamentally, are symbolised by the terms positive and negative—male and female. This duality, then, is sex in the broadest sense of the term.

Reasoning by analogy, from the physical to the super-physical, we can establish definite principles with regard to sex and its manifestations. For example, it is a law of Nature, demonstrable in physics, that action and reaction are equal and opposite. This law refers to one of the manifestations of duality, but referring it to sex, on all planes, we discover by analogy that the aspects of God called positive and negative exist co-equally. So that if we may speak of a quantity of positive force, each quantity will have a corresponding quantity of negative force, which we may call its counterpart.

It seems reasonable to suppose that the doctrine of twin souls is based on this principle. Manifestation is only possible by the correlation or union of positive and negative. This we may call marriage in the broadest sense of the term.

Individual spirits or egos are, if the foregoing is correct, combinations of positive and negative. We do not manifest these in equal proportions, otherwise we should each be perfect and complete in ourselves, and absolutely independent of all other egos. Human society, nay, even humanity itself, could not exist if such were the case. It is our mutual interdependence, due to the inequality of positive and negative within us, that constitutes us a human family and explains sex and marriage as phenomena. We are all seeking completion by association.

Harmonious relationship means the co-operation of those who can most readily supply one another's deficiencies in positive and negative element; hence in this sense sex is the basis of social life, as it is our destiny both individually and collectively to become equal in positive and negative force by assimilation, co-operation and spiritual blending with others.—Yours, &c.,

Fratton, Portsmouth.

GEORGE VICTOR JEFF.

Omens.

SIR,—The hold that omens had upon classical antiquity, more especially upon the practical, materialistic, matter-of-fact Roman, has for centuries been a standing mystery which received little light, rather added darkness, from the common practice of putting it down to superstition—the last resource of the shallow.

Rudolph von Ihering in his recent work, 'The Evolution of the Aryan,' explains the ancient auspices, divinations, &c., in a very novel, but convincing, manner, tracing their origin back to the wanderings of the early tribes and the conditions by which they were environed.

The Pontifices were the 'bridge builders' and had originally nothing whatever to do with religion, but only with the customs of everyday life, which later, as the tribes settled down, crystallised into religious ceremonies. But let the author speak for himself regarding divinations, &c.:—

'Practical purposes are to be served by all these observations which afterwards bore the name of *auspices*, originally only intended for one of them.

'Endowed with the keen insight of a primitive race, the wanderers take note of all the phenomena which can help them to form their plans during the migration; the sky, whether it will rain during the course of the day; wild animals, that they may be on their guard against them; the intestines of animals, thereby to judge of the healthiness of a district; the feeding of fowls, to ascertain whether the food is fit for the people; the flight of birds, to find out thereby the best way to go. Sky, wolves, snakes, oxen, fowls and birds all help to instruct man how to act. These matters need no artificial, far-fetched interpretation; they all have a direct practical significance, intelligible to the ordinary man, and if I were to sum up the total meaning of the system of *auspices* during the migrations in one word, I should call it the prophylaxis of a primitive race' (page 376).

The author is a leading authority on Roman law, and by following up the trails offered by ancient laws, he has made many interesting discoveries, and is enabled to correct many long-established crusty errors. He has produced a capital book for progressive thinkers, and he certainly 'spreads a radiant light upon a portion of Roman antiquity hitherto wrapped in utter darkness' (p. 375).—Yours, &c.,

A. K. VENNING.

THE DR. J. M. PEEBLES 'LOVE-OFFERING.'

Amount already acknowledged, £30 8s.

Mr. B. D. Godfrey has received the following contributions:—

	£	s.	d.
'A Scots-Isleman'	5	5	0
Mrs. Coates	1	0	0
Mrs. Jones	0	10	0

Mr. H. Everett, of 84, King's-road, Brighton, acknowledges the receipt of 2s. from Peckham; Mrs. Stennett, 6d.; 'Anon,' 6d.; Society, 1s.—And 4s. 6d. from Brighton: Miss Briggs, 2s.; Mrs. Bessie Little, 2s. 6d.

TRANSITIONS.

MRS. ANNIE BRIGHT.—Just as we go to press, a telegram from Mr. James Coates comes to hand with the unexpected news that Mrs. Annie Bright, Editor of 'The Harbinger of Light,' Melbourne, Australia, passed to spirit life on June 19th last. Mr. Coates will contribute an appreciation of Mrs. Bright to our next number.

MR. B. B. HILL.—'The Progressive Thinker' of July 19th states that 'just as a weary toiler in the vineyard at set of sun, his task all done, turns his face homeward, so did B. B. Hill, pioneer and veteran Spiritualist, peacefully leave his mortal form after a short illness and commence his journey in the higher sphere of life's endless progression, July 7th. Transition services were held at 106, Loomis-street, Chicago, Ill., Dr. George B. Warne, President of the National Spiritualists' Association, and Mrs. M. E. Cadwallader officiating. The remains were taken to his home in Philadelphia, where services were held in the temple of the First Association of Spiritualists, and were interred at Northwood Cemetery. A tower of strength to the cause has gone in the passing out of this earnest worker.'

MRS. NORDICA'S FAREWELL MEETING.

A large gathering of Members, Associates, and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance assembled at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Monday last, to listen to clairvoyant descriptions from Mrs. Minnie Nordica, and to wish her a hearty Godspeed on her return to South Africa.

Mr. H. Withall, chairman, said that during her year's stay in London Mrs. Nordica had won golden opinions. Demonstrativeness helped a medium, but Londoners, although appreciative, were not usually very demonstrative. Mrs. Nordica's calmness and self-command had stood her in good stead. We were very glad that she had been so successful in her work here, and, in a kindly way, we were glad she was going back to South Africa that others might share in the benefit of her services.

Mrs. Nordica, in thanking Mr. Withall for his kind words, said that she had the misfortune to be a fighter, and the more opposition she encountered the happier she was. The Alliance had treated her with great kindness and given her every opportunity. She had had the easiest time of her life in London. But she had been cabled for and she was going back to Africa to harder work. The spirit friends had never deserted her, and her road had been one long success. Her home was in Sydney, New South Wales, and the sooner she turned her face towards home, the happier she should be.

Mrs. Nordica then gave some thirty or more messages from, and descriptions of, spirit people; the descriptions, with hardly an exception, meeting with some degree of recognition, and many of them being strikingly evidential—as, for instance, when she described to a lady the sudden death of an mounted officer from a gunshot wound, and the lady responded, 'Yes, he was my brother-in-law, and was killed at Mollah River while leading his company.'

At the close Mr. Withall proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mrs. Nordica, not merely for her good services that evening, but for all the work she had done since she had been in London. He had heard from many sources of the great comfort she had brought to bereaved and sorrowing hearts. The world needed such comfort, for too often we failed to realise the nearness of our spirit friends.

Mr. Gems seconded the vote with much pleasure. He regarded Mrs. Nordica as the most talented, sympathetic and kind medium whom he had met. Her heart and soul were in the endeavour to spread Spiritualism.

Mrs. Nordica, having expressed her warm thanks, the meeting closed.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control and magnetic healing. Application should be made to the Secretary.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' Annual Camp Meeting will be held on August Bank Holiday at Golder's Hill Park, Hampstead Heath (Tube or motor 'buses to Golder's Green). *Rendezvous* at 2 p.m. in Shakespeare's Garden. Rally for tea at 4 p.m. sharp near Chalet. Tickets must be obtained of officers in grounds. Adults, 9d.; children, 6d. (under 14). Don't miss this Alfresco Social. All Spiritualists heartily invited.

We note with pleasure in 'The Hendon and Finchley Times' a reference to the success of four pupils of Mrs. C. Amy Butterworth-Cooper, R.A.M., in passing the local examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy and Royal College of Music. Mrs. Butterworth-Cooper, as many of our readers will know, has been long associated with the musical portion of the service of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists as choir mistress and pianiste.

A 'PSYCHOLOGICAL' PLAY.—At the Lyric Opera House, Hammersmith, on Monday last, Mr. Charles H. Lester produced a melodramatic 'psychological' play, in which he takes the part of Varian Brande, a materialistic, atheistic villain, who, after a series of misdeeds, suddenly dies. A scene follows, entitled 'a vision of the hereafter,' in which Brande awakens 'on the other side,' in what is called 'the beautiful summerland.' He is met by one of his old associates, who tempts him to return to earth and gratify his hate; his spirit mother and the angel of purity plead with him to seek the light, but he refuses and returns to earth. There his better nature begins to assert itself; he repents and rises to the higher regions. The play might well be entitled 'As a Man Sows.' It is an earnest attempt to picture the reality of a future life and enforce the truth that 'memory is hell' and that only by sincere repentance and expiation can the spirit here, as well as hereafter, make atonement and attain to purer and happier states. The acting was above the usual level of melodrama. Mr. Lester worked hard to carry his audience with him, and he had our sincere sympathy in his difficult task, for it was abundantly clear that at least a very large proportion of his hearers were unable to appreciate the ethical and spiritual purport of the message.

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

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

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—*Shearn's Restaurant, 231, Tottenham Court-road, W.*—Mr. Horace Leaf deeply interested a large audience with an excellent address and clairvoyant descriptions.—15, Mortimer-street, W.—21st ult., Mrs. Mary Gordon gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. Sunday next, see advertisement on front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, Pembroke Place, Baywater, W.—Mr. P. E. Beard gave addresses on 'The Communion of Saints' and 'The King's Highway.' Mr. Godley sang solos at each service. For next week's services see front page.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, Becklow-road, W.—Mrs. Fielder gave a fine address on 'Christ the Rebel.' Sunday next, 11 a.m., circle; 7 p.m., Mrs. Richards. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Webster.—M. S.

HAMMERSMITH.—89, Cambridge-road.—Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; 7 p.m., Mr. P. Nevin, on 'Women's Suffrage and Spirituality.' Descriptions by Mrs. Kent. Thursday, at 8, circle.

SEVEN KINGS.—45, THE PROMENADE.—Mr. Alcock Rush spoke on 'The Utility of Spiritualism' and answered questions; solo by Mrs. Rush. July 22nd, Mr. Neville on 'Patriotism.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Miss A. Keightley. Tuesday, Mr. Thompson. 10th, Mr. H. Wake. 12th, Mrs. Neville.—H. W.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Mr. W. E. Long: morning, spirit teachings and personal messages, much appreciated; evening, grand address. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. W. E. Long, messages and answers to questions; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. G. T. Brown, on 'Spiritual Gifts and Their Uses.'

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mrs. Cannock, address and descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Miles, a member, will speak on 'Was the World Created in Six Days?' Also demonstrations of healing. Lyceum at 3 p.m.—J. W. H.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mr. Percy Scholey's inspiring address and well-recognised descriptions were much appreciated. Miss Johnson kindly rendered a solo. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., service; at 7 p.m., Mr. T. F. Matthews, address and clairvoyance.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STONE-ROAD.—Morning, healing; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, Mr. A. H. Sarfas spoke on 'The Land of Shadows' and gave descriptions. July 24th, Mrs. Podmore spoke on 'Disappointment,' and gave descriptions.—A. L. M.

BRISTOL.—144, GROSVENOR-ROAD.—Mrs. Baxter gave excellent discourses on 'Is it Right and Best that each one should follow his own Light?' Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., service. Monday, at 3 p.m. (by request), special service for visitors (free), collection for New Church Fund.—J. S. B.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. M. H. Wallis gave uplifting and inspiring addresses, answered questions, and gave descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 and 7, Mr. F. Grayson-Clarke (president), trance addresses. Tuesday, 3, private interviews; at 8, also Wednesday, 3 p.m., circles.—H. J. E.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST.—Mr. G. R. Symons gave spiritual addresses, and Mrs. Curry gave descriptions. Sunday next, Mr. Karl Reynolds. Tuesdays, at 3 and 8, also Wednesdays, at 3, Mrs. G. C. Curry, clairvoyante. Thursdays, 8.15, public circle.—A. C.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Morning, Mr. R. G. Jones gave an address and descriptions; evening, Mrs. Beaumont spoke on 'Our Responsibilities' and gave descriptions. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., Mr. Reynolds, on 'Why I am a Spiritualist'; at 7 p.m., Mr. W. F. Smith, address, and Mrs. Smith, descriptions. Thursday, 7.15, healing.—N. R.

HOLLOWAY.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning and evening, Mrs. L. Harvey, of Southampton, gave addresses on 'Spiritualism and its Many Phases' and 'Life Here and Hereafter' also descriptions and auric readings. 23rd ult., Mrs. Pulham gave psychometrical readings. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., service; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, Mrs. S. Podmore. Wednesday, 8.15, Mrs. E. Webster. 10th, Mr. Horace Leaf.—J. F.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, Mrs. Orlowski gave an interesting address; evening, inspiring address by Mrs. Roberts; good descriptions by Mr. Roberts. July 24th, Mrs. Orlowski gave good psychic delineations. Sunday next, morning, Mr. Clarkson; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, Mrs. Irwin. Thursday, 7th, Mrs. Podmore. 9th, Lyceum Outing to Orpington. 10th, morning, Mr. Moncur; evening, Mr. and Mrs. Roberts.—A. C. S.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—Thoughtful and inspiring address by Miss Violet Burton. Sunday next, Mrs. Boddington. Thursday, at 8.15, séance. Silver collection.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. A. Trinder gave an interesting address on 'The Nature of Spirit, and the Spirit World,' and some descriptions, which were much appreciated. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. G. R. Symons, address.—W. H. S.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—Morning, Mr. C. Lock, illustrations of psychometry; evening, Mrs. Mary Davies gave a good address on 'The Principles of Spiritualism,' and descriptions. July 24th, Mr. J. Wrench, address and descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.45, Mr. J. Cattanaeh, 'Spiritualism and Materialism'; at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Hayward, address and descriptions. August 7th, at 8 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf.

CLAPHAM.—HOWARD-STREET, NEW-ROAD.—A good number of members and friends sat down to an enjoyable tea. Mr. and Mrs. Kent gave an address and descriptions, and Miss Heythorn sang several solos. Everything points to success and advancement. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Alice Jamrach. Monday, at 3, ladies' circle; silver collection. Thursday, at 8, address and clairvoyance.—F. C.

WHITLEY BAY.—137, WHITLEY-ROAD.—Mr. J. H. Bain delivered an address on 'Footsteps of the Past.'—C. C.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Addresses by Mr. Elvin Frankish and descriptions by Mrs. Letheren.—E. F.

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL.—Mrs. M. Mayo gave addresses, morning and evening.—H. E.

TOTTENHAM.—684, HIGH ROAD.—Mr. D. J. Davis spoke on 'The Fear of Death.'—N. D.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Mr. Clavis gave an address and Mrs. Summers descriptions. July 23rd, Mesdames Trueman and Summers gave descriptions.

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street gave addresses on 'The Curtain of the Mists' and 'The Mirage.' 21st, Mr. Hanson Hey gave an address.—M. L.

STONEHOUSE, PLYMOUTH.—UNITY HALL, EDGUMBE-STREET.—Address by Mr. Johns on 'Seek and ye shall Find.' Soloist, Mrs. Hoskyn. Clairvoyante, Mrs. Short. Chairman, Mr. Adams.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—Mr. L. J. Gilbertson gave addresses on 'The Breath of Light' and 'The Living Water.'—J. W. M.

PORTSMOUTH TEMPLE.—VICTORIA-ROAD SOUTH.—Mr. Arthur Lamsley ably dealt with 'Meditation' and 'Individual Freedom.' July 21st, Mr. Horace Leaf gave descriptions, &c.—J. G. McF.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES'-CRESCENT, N.W.—Mr. Hayward spoke on 'Development' and Mrs. Hayward gave descriptions. July 25th, circle conducted by Mrs. E. Cornish.

CHATHAM.—553, CANTERBURY-STREET, GILLINGHAM.—Mr. G. F. Tibby gave an address on 'Spiritualism: Its Use and Abuse.'—E. C. S.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.—Mr. Robert Davies spoke on 'We have all our Angel Side' and 'The Philosophy of Life,' and gave descriptions; also on Monday.—H. I.

SOUTHEND.—CROWSTONE GYMNASIUM, NORTHVIEW DRIVE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.—Evening, Mr. Gerald Scholey spoke on 'The Transfiguration of Jesus' and the president gave descriptions and messages. Mrs. Matthews also gave descriptions.—S.W.

MANOR PARK.—THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.—Mr. R. Boddington spoke on 'What I Believe, based on What I Know.' July 21st and 23rd, addresses and descriptions by Mrs. Webster and Mrs. Jamrach.—E. M.

BOURNEMOUTH.—WILBERFORCE HALL.—Morning, address and descriptions by Mr. H. Mundy; evening, address by Mr. D. Hartley, descriptions by Mrs. Hunter. 24th, address and descriptions by Mr. F. T. Blake.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Morning, Mr. Rundle spoke on 'The Woman of Endor and the Treatment of Mediums.' Evening, on 'The Relationship of the Objective and Subjective Minds.' Good psychic readings followed. Solo ably rendered by Miss Habgood.—B.

BRISTOL.—THOMAS-STREET HALL, STOKES CROFT.—Mr. Gambier Bolton gave good addresses on 'The Church of the Living God,' 'Do the Dead Return?' and, on Monday evening, 'Ghosts in Solid Form.' July 24th, address and descriptions by Mr. and Mrs. Goddard, of Gloucester.—W. G.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD.—Morning, an uplifting address by Mrs. Rainbow; evening, Mrs. M. Gordon spoke instructively on 'Whose Fault is It?' and gave descriptions. July 23rd, Mrs. Irwin gave psychic readings.

EXETER.—DRUIDS' HALL, MARKET-STREET.—Mr. H. G. Hey gave an interesting account of his recent visit to Geneva. He was convinced that as far as England was concerned the next move in our educational system must be to make the acquirement of at least one foreign language in our elementary schools compulsory. Mr. Hey's addresses were much enjoyed and he was heartily thanked for his visit.—H. L.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

'Origin and History of Reincarnation.' Symposium arranged by S. GEORGE. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net. Power-Book Company, 58-59, Bank-chambers, 329, High Holborn, W.C.

'The Master: Life and Teachings.' By J. TODD FERRIER. Cloth, 7s. 6d. net. Lund, Humphries & Co., Ltd., The County Press, Bradford, and 3, Amen-corner, E.C.

'Some Aspects of Chinese Music and Other Papers.' By C. P. GREEN. Cloth, 2s., paper cover, 1s. 6d., net. William Reeves, 83, Charing Cross-road, W.C.

'A Plea for a Thorough and Unbiased Investigation of Christian Science.' By an Enquirer. Stiff cover, 1s. net. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., Bedford-street, Strand, W.C.

'The Under Dog.' Papers by Various Authors on the Wrongs Suffered by Animals. Edited by Sidney Trist. Cloth, 3s. 6d.; paper cover, 2s. 'Animals' Guardian' Office, 22A, Regent-street, S.W.

MAGAZINES: 'The Vineyard' for August, 6d. net, A. C. Fifield, 13, Clifford's Inn, E.C.; 'Hibbert Journal' for July, 2s. 6d. net, Williams & Norgate, 14, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C.; 'Nautilus' for August, 15c., Elizabeth Towne, Holyoke, Mass., U.S.A.; 'Occult Review' for August, 7d. net, Rider & Son, 8, Paternoster-row, E.C.; 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques' for June, 1fr., 39, Rue Guersant, Paris; 'The Co-Mason' for July, 1s. 2d. post free, 26, Rashleigh House, Thanet-street, Russell-square, W.C.

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French Fiction of To-Day. By M. S. Van de Velde. Vol. I., with six portraits of Maupassant, Daudet, Feuille, Chéribuliez Ohnet, Lavedan. Cloth, 240 pages, 1s. 3d.

Woman in Transition. By Annette B. Meakin, Fellow of the Anthropological Institute. Published 6s. New copy. Cloth, 313 pages, 1s. 10d.

The Procedure, Extent, and Limits of Human Understanding. By Dr. Peter Browne, Protestant Bishop of Cork. 1729. Old binding, worn and broken, 9d.

There is no Death. By Florence Marryat. Cloth, new copy, 26s. 6d., 2s. 3d.

Proceedings of the Psychological Society of Great Britain, 1875-1879. With a Preface. Contains several Essays by Serjeant Cox. Bound in leather. 2s.

'Light.' Bound volume for 1904, in half-roan, quite new copy, 6s.

Witchcraft of New England Explained by Modern Spiritualism. By Allen Putnam. Cloth, 482 pages, 2s. 4d.

The Revival of Religion. By the Rev. James Robe, A.M. Cloth, 295 pages, 10d.

An Attempt to Show how Far the Philosophic Notion of a Plurality of Worlds is Consistent or Not so with the Holy Scriptures. 1801. Old binding, worn and broken, 9d.

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- 'Spiritualism in the Bible.' By E. W. and M. H. Wallis. Boards, 1s. 1½d. post free, or bound in cloth 1s. 8d. post free.
- 'Interesting Incidents During Forty Years of Mediumship.' By E. W. Wallis. 35 pages, 3½d. post free.
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- 'Is Spiritualism Dangerous?' By E. W. and M. H. Wallis. Price 1½d. post free.
- 'Thoughts on Mediumship, and Useful Hints to Beginners on the Conduct of Spirit Circles.' By E. W. Wallis. Price 1½d. post free.
- 'The Holy Truth.' Selections from the Spiritualistic Writings of Hugh Junor Browne. 65 pages, boards, 10½d. post free.
- 'Objections to Spiritualism Answered.' By H. A. Dallas. Price 1s. 1½d. post free.
- 'A Spirit's Creed and other Teachings.' Through the mediumship of William Stainton Moses ('M.A. Oxon.'). 18 pages. Price 1½d. post free.
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