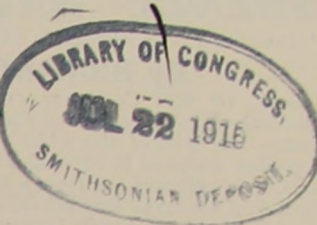


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" 3 p.m.—The "Curse" of the Trading in Gifts.

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" 3 p.m.—Spirit, Soul and Body.

" 6.30 p.m.—What is Hell or Heaven? And Who Makes Them, and How?

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

It is necessary at times to utter a word of caution to those who, being new to our subject, find cause for perplexity in the statements made in some of the books they consult. The literature of our movement, as of other progressive causes, is highly democratic. There is no board, council or synod to decide what is or is not canonical, what shall be read and what placed on an *index expurgatorius*. The readers are left to form their own judgments, and to accept or reject at discretion. It is excellent training in mental discrimination, but it may at times be a little severe. We think, for example, of some of the crude, undigested statements about life in the next sphere put forth dogmatically and without a hint that they have no more authority than that of the writer of them—which may be very doubtful authority indeed. Some of these statements may be true in essence, but they are put so baldly as sometimes to appear grotesque and forbidding. This lack of a due sense of proportion or the fitness of things is a very old complaint and far from being peculiar to the makers of books on psychic themes. Who of the older folk amongst us can forget the dreadful little books by devout writers which we read in our young days, and which described with pious enthusiasm a heaven so unnatural and repellent to any healthy mind that we read them with fear and dislike.

* * * *

There was no one in those days to tell us that while there actually was a heaven, it was not such an unwholesome place as it was depicted to be by writers who drew their inspiration from doctrines in which Reason had perished for want of fresh air. These things, however, work their own cure, and in the process of selection, the mind obtains training in thinking for itself and achieving its independence. The library of the London Spiritualist Alliance has been compiled on large impartial lines to serve the needs of a great variety of minds. Some seek it for help and comfort, and there are a great number of volumes of a helpful and consolatory kind. For the robust, intellectual and analytic type of reader there are works of critical and scientific interest. For the lover of literature, the library provides essays and studies on psychical subjects by writers sensible of the value of form and the graces of style. As to the descriptions of the life beyond to which we have referred, fortunately we have outgrown the tyranny of the printed page; we do not suppose that any statement must necessarily be authentic because it appears in the permanent form of a book. On the other hand, because some assertion appears to us to be nonsensical that

is no reason for discarding it. It may be simply a truth expressed in an absurd way by an untrained thinker, able to report but unable to interpret.

* * * *

"Diwan of Inayat Khan, rendered into verse by Jessie Duncan Westbrook" (Sufi Publishing Society, 100b, Addison-road, W.), is described as a little garland of Sufi Songs expressing some of the different aspects of Sufic thought and feeling. We are interested in the definition of Sufism contained in the foreword. Sufism, we are told, "is the Super-religion, that which contains the essence of all religions"; the Sufi is in revolt against the priesthood of an organised religion, and denies that salvation can be obtained through forms and ceremonies; he "regards asceticism as unnecessary, holding the loves of earth as symbols and even as parts of the Divine Love"; for the great Self of the universe is to be found within the human heart, and "when the illusion of separateness, which is the cause of all trouble and pain, disappears, the soul, awaking from the dream of life, will know itself one with God." All this appeals to us as defining much of what some of our friends mean by "Spiritualism" and "Spiritualist," and thereby reminds us how apt we are when we meet with ideas of which we approve to imagine they are singular to our own particular creed. But to return to the book itself. Inayat Khan's poems convey his teaching in a diversity of forms—story, parable, word-picture, philosophic reflection—and Miss Westbrook has turned them into very graceful English verse. We quote entire the little poem entitled "Death," with which the book closes:—

Within my slumber deep
Turning unquietly from side to side I stirred;
Death rocked me saying: Night is not yet o'er,
So slumber on!—I heard his gentle word.

Languidly I awake,
And watch Life in its sequence passing on,
But o'er me sleep hangs like a heavy cloud,
Death says: Sleep still—it is not yet the dawn.

* * * *

In "Hampshire Days," a delightful book on the natural history of the New Forest, the author, Mr. W. H. Hudson, relates an interesting incident in connection with adders. He was fond of observing them in their natural state, and he records that—

while it is probable that I was visible to them at a distance of three or four yards it is certain that they did not regard me as a living thing, or anything to be disturbed at, but saw me only as a motionless object which had grown imperceptibly on their vision and was no more than a bush, or stump, or tree. Nevertheless I became convinced that always after standing for a time near them my presence produced a disturbing effect. It is, perhaps, the case that we are not all contained within our visible bodies, but have our own atmosphere about us—something of us which is outside of us, and may affect other creatures. . . . This is one of the things about which we know nothing, or, at all events, learn nothing from our masters, and most scientists would say that it is a mere fancy; but in this instance it was plain to see that always after a time something began to produce a disturbing effect on the adders. This would first show itself in a slight restlessness, a movement of the body as if it had been

breathed upon, increasing until they would be ill at ease all the time, and at length they would slip quietly away to hide under the bank.

* * *

In the same work a curious fact in connection with snake skins is mentioned, recalling in a way the changing lustre of certain precious stones as described by Mr. Percy R. Street in his recent address. After referring to the disagreeable feeling aroused by the survival after death of some phenomenon supposed to be dependent upon vitality, as, for instance, the continued growth of the hair of a dead person, Mr. Hudson remarks of the skin of a serpent that:—

When properly and quickly dried after removal it will retain its bright colours for an indefinite time—in some cases many years. But at intervals the colours appear to fade, or become covered with a misty whiteness; and the cause, as one may see when the skin is rubbed or shaken, is that the outer scales are being shed. They come off separately, and are very much thinner than when the living serpent sheds his skin, and they grow thinner with each successive shedding until they are scarcely visible. But at each shedding the skin recovers its brightness. One in my possession continued shedding its scale films in this way for about ten years. I used it as a book-marker, and often had it in my hands, but not until it ceased shedding its scale coverings, and its original bright green colour turned to a dull blackish-green did I get rid of the feeling that it had some life in it.

SIR WILLIAM CROOKES, THE WAR, AND PSYCHIC SCIENCE.

The "Daily Chronicle" of the 2nd inst. contains a remarkable interview with Sir William Crookes by Mr. Harold Begbie. It commences with a reference to the fact that although he has reached the age of eighty-five the veteran scientist is as vigorously and intellectually alive as ever. "Indeed," says Mr. Begbie, "he told me that he is conscious in himself of no change of faculty during the last thirty or forty years," and he quotes Sir William as saying, "I feel very much as I felt at thirty-five years of age." A great part of the interview is taken up with discussion of the war, regarding which Sir William takes very optimistic views. (It is interesting to learn that the authorities have availed themselves of Sir William's services as a scientist.) But the portion of the interview which will doubtless be of most interest to our readers is contained in the concluding passages as follows:—

I said how encouraging it is that men should have faith in the power of Goodness, even when it is physically opposed by the tremendous materialism of Evil.

"Yes," he replied; "the soul of man knows that Goodness is right, and believes that it is unconquerable. There is reason for this. Evil trusts to physical force, and physical force can be worn out. Goodness, on the other hand, relies chiefly on that which transcends physical force, and which can be neither tired nor exhausted."

I should like to say, for the consolation of those to whom this war has brought bitter loss and exceeding anguish, that Sir William Crookes has reason to know that some at least among the bereaved have become convinced of a life beyond death by communication from the other side. There is a survival and a persistence of the soul. Death breaks up the machinery of the body, but that which is dearest and familiar and distinctive, the Personality, does not perish with flesh tissues. And those who hunger and thirst for consolation—who live not as this world lives, with distracted minds and animal preoccupations—some of these, simply by meditation, may be comforted. Blessed are they that mourn.

So this man, who has seen in his lifetime all the immense revolutions of physical science, who travelled by stage coach, discussed the telegraph with its inventor, foreshadowed wireless telegraphy, invented the radiometer, led the way in the field of radiant matter, discovered when he was over eighty years of age a method of saving glass workers from catarract, and now is eagerly assisting the British Government to catch up the Germans in their scientific equipment for war—so this veteran of science bids us in quiet and modest tones entertain no doubt of the conflict's issue, bids us work for victory, sure that victory is on the side of righteousness, and to look beyond the trenches and beyond the graves of gallant youth for the explanation of that which baffles human understanding and crushes the hearts. Right will conquer. Truth will make us free.

FROM WORLDS UNREALISED.

PASSAGES FROM A PSYCHIC SCRIPT.

We received some time ago from the Rev. G. Vale Owen several volumes in typescript of psychic messages received by him at various times. Many of them are of a deeply interesting character, even when one takes into account the psychological problems involved, as for instance how far such communications are coloured and modified by the mind of the recipient. We set aside in this case the theory that all such messages are the product of the subliminal mind, for Mr. Vale Owen's script was in some instances accompanied by collateral evidences, much as in the case of the automatic writing of "M.A. (Oxon.)." The Rev. G. Vale Owen is a discriminating investigator fully alive to all the problems of psychic subjects. He plied the communicators with questions and never hesitated to express doubt. The tone of the messages, it will be observed, is of the religious order, as befits the nature of the channel and the character of the communicators themselves. They are not less valuable on that account, although we have sometimes felt that in its reaction from a Theology which has to confess a humiliating ignorance of other-world conditions, the average student prefers the philosophical or the scientific communication. From a study of the three classes we have come to the conclusion that they are generally in agreement, only the terminology differing. We are giving some selected passages from Mr. Vale Owen's script, not because they are the finest we can find, but because they appeal to us as the most suitable at the moment and relate to matters often discussed amongst us. It will be seen that the communicator gives some suggestive explanations on points of common difficulty regarding descriptions of "other-world order."

In reply to a remark from Mr. Vale Owen expressive of his gratitude to the communicating intelligence for "coming down here into this dim realm," the following message was written (the date being October 24th, 1913).

You say "coming down here," and that fairly well expresses the condition of things from your point of view. Yet not altogether, nor perfectly. For if the planet on which you live your present life is dependent in space, then "up" and "down" are terms which must be very restricted in their meaning. You already have noted this in your writing or, rather, you were impressed to note it.

When we said "the powers which watch over the world" we did not, of course, mean to localise these powers on one side of this planet, but to imply the all-enveloping watch which the heavenly powers keep about the sphere which is called earth. These powers are resident in zones of which the earth itself is the centre, and they lie in concentric circles around it. The inferior zones are those near the planet's surface, and progress in power and glory as the distance is increased. But yet space must be enlarged in meaning when applied to these spheres, for distance has not the same obstructive sense to us as it has to you.

For instance, when I am in the Tenth of these zones, my cognisance is limited, more or less, by that Tenth zone as to its outer or superior boundary. I may, on occasion, and by permission, visit the Eleventh zone, or even go higher; but residence in those higher zones is not permitted me. On the other hand, the zones inferior to the Tenth are not impossible to me; for the zone in which I dwell, being a sphere, includes within itself, even geometrically considered, all the nine inferior spheres. So that we may, for the sake of clarity of understanding, put it thus: The earth is the centre about which many spheres exist; and is enclosed in all those spheres. And the residents in the earth life are potentially in touch with all those spheres, and actually so in ratio to their altitude spiritually considered,—spiritually because these spheres are spiritual and not material.

Even the material Sphere of Earth is only so phenomenally, for it is a manifestation in matter of all these zones of spiritual power which envelop it, and of others, too, of other degree which interpenetrate it. Leave these latter aside, for the present, at least, and consider the matter as we have limited it.

You will now have some idea of what aspiration and prayer and worship mean. They are the means of communion with the Creator and His High and Holy Ones Who (to put it in a way which you will understand) dwell in the highest, or outermost of these spheres, and include within Himself and Themselves all the zones within that highest zone or sphere. And so the earth is enveloped by, and included in, and affected by the spiritual powers, of varying degrees and kind, entrusted by the Creator

God to all these ministers of all these spheres which are around it. But as you progress outward you come into a more complicated state of affairs. For not the earth only but every planet in this Solar system has its like complement of spiritual zones or spheres. So, as you go farther and farther from the earth, you come to a realm where the spheres of earth and the nearest planet interweave with each other. As every planet is served by like attendance, so the complication is multiplied, and you will begin to see that the study of these spheres is not so simple as some good people among you evidently think it to be, who demand from us information as to the meaning of this thing.

Draw a diagram of the Solar system, with the Sun at its centre, and the planets roughly in their respective places around him. Then begin with Earth and encircle it with, say, a hundred circles. Do the same with Jupiter, Mars, Venus and the others, and treat the Sun in like manner; and you will have a faint idea of the work, its absorbing interest and profound depths of meaning, of those of us who include in our studies the spheres of God. Nor have we yet reached the limit of our problem. For what applies to the Solar system must be applied also to that of every other star and its planets. Then each system having been separately considered, each must be studied in its relation to the others. Think of it awhile and you will acknowledge that there will be no lack of employment for your mental energies when you come over here.

Now, we are sometimes asked how many spheres there be. Well, after the explanations given above, I do not apprehend that we shall be asked that question by you. Did you ask it, we, who are only of the Tenth of these zones, would perforce have to answer that we do not know, and that we much doubt whether our answer would differ were you to put that question a million million years hence, we having progressed all the while.

And now, friend and fellow-spirit, we wish to ask you to consider one other aspect of this matter. We have said that these spheres are spheres of spiritual power. Now, two worlds affect each other by means of that which your scientists name gravitation. Similarly, two spheres of spiritual power, coming into contact, cannot fail to act and counteract each on the other. Referring to your mental diagram of the Solar system, you will see that earth is, of necessity, acted on by a large number of spheres, and that the greater number of these are those which belong to the Sun and the other planets.

Yes, friend, there is, after all, something in the astrological idea, and perhaps your scientists do well to give it a wide berth, for it may not be much understood by, and would probably be fraught with danger to, those who do not understand the nature of spiritual power. That power is real and tremendous, and every sphere of all these is reinforced or modified by the others. The study of these things should be approached with the utmost reverence and prayer, for these are realms where angels of high estate go sofly, and we of lesser estate look on and wonder after the sublimity of that Being Who unifies all this in Himself, and Who has no Name that can be transmitted to us, who only can reach out after Him a little way and then our arm is shortened; who only can see a little way and then the light beyond is darkness by reason of its intensity.

But we testify to you, friend, and those who will think reverently of things they cannot understand, that if wonder gives us pause time and again as we proceed, yet never do we lose that sense of a Presence Whose breathing is of love, and Whose leading is gentle as a mother's leading of her little child. So we, as you do, take His hand and do not fear, and the music of the spheres is around us as we go on from glory to the glory beyond. Come this way ever, our brother in Him. Never faint weary of the road, for the mists are thinning as you proceed, and the light strengthens into the further light which shines on the path unknown but never to be feared; so we tread gently and humbly, as little children do, amid the glories of the planets and the heavens of suns and spheres, and of the Love of God.

On Saturday, October 25th, 1913, the day after the receipt of the message recorded above, the following was written:—

We will, if it is to your mind, continue our message of yesterday in regard to those spheres of power which affect the earth.

Still concerning the Solar system, we say that, on considering what we have already said, you will see that we have not yet mentioned all the complications which enter into the study of these spheres. For not alone do the concentric circles of zones about all the planets and the sun commingle with all the rest, but also the relative combination is continuously changing with the changing positions of these bodies and their consequent proximity to, or distance from, one another. So that it is quite literally correct to say that during no two seconds of time is the influence from them impinging on the surface of the earth the same. Nor is any combination of their influences

identical in its effect or intensity all over the earth at the same time, but differs in the different localities. There must further be taken into our calculations the streams of radiation coming to this Solar system from the systems of the other stars. All these things have to be reckoned in, for bear still in mind that we are speaking of zones and spheres of spiritual beings whose powers are energising continuously, and whose wakefulness never fails.

This, then, is a rough outline of the conditions which obtain among the planetary systems, whose outer manifestation is visible to the eye and telescope of the astronomer. But what is thus observed is but a very little mite when compared with the whole. It is but as a small shower of spray which besprinkles the voyager, as he stands in the prow of the vessel, and scatters itself in globules of mist around him. He sees the miniature globes of water where they float reflecting the light around them, and says they are innumerable. But if this be so then what of the ocean itself from whence they came, and of which they are, and to which they will return?

As that small cloud of spray-mist is to the ocean so is the star-bemisted heaven, as seen from the surface of the earth, to the whole. And as the depths of the ocean are to the eye of him who gazes over the vessel's side, so are the depths of space and all that it holds to the human intelligence.

Now, let us think a little further afield. Space itself is but a term used to describe the indescribable. It is, therefore, without definite meaning. For what is space, and where are the boundaries of it set? Is it illimitable? If so, it has no centre. Where, then, is God and His Dwelling-Place? He is said to be at the centre of all Creation. But what is Creation? A creation which has relation to space, or a creation which is invisible?

Now, it is useless, for all practical purposes, to speculate on things we do not understand. It is well to feel after these things sometimes in order that we may discover our own limitations. This done, let us now speak of such things as we, in a measure, are able to understand.

All these zones of which we have spoken are inhabited by beings according to their degree, who progress from one sphere to a higher, as they accumulate knowledge within themselves. You will see from what we have already written that, as we advance from the lowest to the higher spheres, there comes a region of spheres which are interplanetary, inasmuch as they embrace within their circumference more planets than one. Still advancing, we come to a state where the spheres are of such a diameter that they are interstellar; that is, they embrace within their circumference not only more planets than one, but more stars, or suns, than one. All these are filled with beings, according to their degree of sublimity, of holiness and of power, whose influence extends to all, both spiritual and material, within the sphere to which they have attained. We have but advanced, you see, from planet to star, and from star to stars in their grouping. Beyond are spheres more awful still and more tremendous. But of these we in this Tenth Sphere know but little indeed, and nothing certain.

(To be continued.)

THE INSTINCT OF IMMORTALITY.

You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets, and the roses, as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvellous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history.

For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode and song; I have tried all, but I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say like many others, "I have finished my day's work," but I cannot say, "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens on the dawn.—VICTOR HUGO.

Mr. A. V. PARRIS will hold meetings for clairvoyance at the rooms of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's Lane, at 3 p.m., on Tuesdays the 29th and 27th inst. and Fridays the 22nd and 30th, as announced in the advertisement on the front page of cover. These meetings are not connected with the programme of the Alliance.

THE VISIONS AT MONS.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE STORY OF THE BOWMEN.

It is to be hoped that first-hand evidence will still be forthcoming in support of the stories of miraculous intervention in the retreat from Mons; but some of that already published in *LIGHT* is very good evidence of the third-hand order; and even if the accounts are mixed up somewhat with memories of Mr. Machen's effort of "pure imagination," there may well be a substratum of fact which it would be interesting to know. In that case, however close the correspondence should prove to be between the real and the "invented," there are possible ways of accounting for it besides the obvious way of coincidence.

I have marked "pure imagination" and "invented" with inverted commas. In our sublime conceit we take a credit for our imaginations and inventions to which we are hardly entitled. We mistake the unconscious workings of our subliminal machinery for the creditable exertions of our will. I suppose it is possible deliberately to invent a story, seeking out and choosing from the stock of ideas in our mental wardrobe, but I defy any writer to say with certainty that none of these ideas came to him unsought. The probability is that Mr. Machen received some or even most of his tale as a free gift from his subliminal mind. This subliminal mind works up the material that comes to it from the normal consciousness, but it also obtains material in secret unknown ways—by telepathy and at least in one other way—by the travels of the etheric or astral or etheric-cum-astral double. I suggest, assuming the legends in question to be true, that Mr. Machen received the outline, if not the details, of his story either by telepathy from someone who knew or by a method which I must say I greatly prefer—the method, I mean, of being himself, albeit unknown to himself, actually on the scene. Who knows how often we take silent leave of the body and steal away on our travels propelled by the force and in the direction of our desires?

Mr. Machen writes his tales with the collaboration of his subliminal mind, but to speak of this as his "subconsciousness" is an error, for two reasons. In the first place, the word implies a region of consciousness which is below the threshold of normal appreciation, but this subliminal activity is not necessarily conscious. In the second place, practically the whole of our mental life is of this subliminal order, and therefore should be included in whatever term is used, the particular branch of this activity which seems to be of an occult nature being given a name of its own. We shall see, if we think, that our consciousness consists only of that continuous movement of the attention from point to point and from moment to moment. It is an affair of moments and minutes, and may be thought of as a line which is being continually traced and obliterated as fast as drawn. All else is below the threshold, and does not subsist as consciousness or subconsciousness, but as these things potentially. It is the machinery of consciousness rather—our mental mechanism and the stock of ideas and memories from which we can draw at need.

This machinery, which I consider has an actual physical or hyper-physical basis in the brain or elsewhere, can be set in motion by the will, but there is no doubt that much, and I should think most of its operation is purely automatic. Witness the phenomena of dreams and the sensations of drowning, when it is speeded up to an inconceivable rapidity. Witness more especially the phenomena of genius, as an example of which the musician's incomprehensible mental processes occur to one most naturally. If the musician had to invent his themes by a conscious and deliberate effort we should be poor indeed. They spring ready-made from the hidden deeps and his conscious task is to polish and elaborate them. We are told that Schubert had no sooner read a poem than its musical setting was present in his mind. And what is true of music is true, I believe, in some degree of every sort of genius, from that of the inspired orator to that of the great chess-master, and to a less extent of that slighter gift which we call talent.

And is it not true also of the everyday experiences of us more matter-of-fact people? Who has not tried, and found it impossible, to divest his mind of all ideas? It may have been

in an attempt to woo reluctant sleep; but very soon he found a train of thought in full career. The mind will not be still. The wheels of its machinery keep revolving whether you like or no. How else are problems worked out and decisions arrived at in the night hours? And your bright ideas, your happy thoughts, your witty rejoinders—do you take credit for these products of your mind-factory, or do you admire them, as you should, from an outside and impersonal standpoint? How often have you answered questions before you understood them, and how often, madam, have you "known you were right" though you could give no reasons? We are, far more than we think, the reviewers merely of our mental battalions; and it might be profitable to inquire how far this self-acting mechanism is responsible for our virtues and vices, our good and evil deeds, our sacrifices, our heroisms. But that would take me beyond my present intentions.

N. G. S.

A NATIONAL GATHERING AT HULL.

The thirteenth annual Conference of the Spiritualists' Union, Ltd., was held in the Windsor Room, Metropole Hall, Hull, on Saturday and Sunday, the 3rd and 4th inst., the President, Mr. Geo. Tayler Gwinn (London), in the chair, supported by the Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and the Council.

The Union met in Hull at the invitation of the local society meeting at Holborn Hall, Witham, and the secretary of that body, Mr. Chas. E. H. Wann, acted with conspicuous ability as secretary for the arrangements for carrying out the meetings.

The annual report stated that the membership showed a decrease upon last year. The various committees had each done much work. An emblem, to be issued to all affiliated societies, had been produced.

The Fund of Benevolence Committee reported two hundred and fifty grants during the year. To assist the annual collection for the fund, three hundred bills and posters had been issued to societies, and one hundred circulars to individual Spiritualists, at a cost of £2 17s., but only ninety-five societies and forty-four individuals had replied.

The balance-sheet showed a deficiency of £58 3s. 2d., against which assets, amounting to £612 12s. 9d., were stated.

The President delivered a brief address to the meeting, emphasising the central points of Spiritualism. His remarks were cordially received.

On the report of the Committee for the Revision of the Articles of Association, a lengthy discussion ensued. Four schemes were considered, the first on the committee's report, the second submitted by the Yorkshire District Union, the third by the Southern Counties Union, and the fourth that recorded in the minutes of the previous annual meeting. In the result, the whole matter was referred back to the Revision Committee.

The elections for office for the ensuing year resulted as follows: Auditors, Councillor Berry (Birmingham) and Mr. E. A. Keeling (Liverpool) for the Union, with Mr. F. J. Clarke, F.S.A.A. (Doncaster), as official auditor; President, Mr. Ernest W. Oaten (Sheffield); Vice-president, Mr. J. J. Morse (Manchester); Secretary, Mr. Hanson G. Hey (Halifax) (re-elected); Treasurer, Mr. T. H. Wright (Sowerby Bridge) (re-elected); Council, Mrs. Jessy Greenwood (Hebden Bridge), Mr. A. G. Newton (Southampton), Mrs. M. A. Stair (Keighley), Mr. C. E. H. Wann (Hull), Mr. Councillor J. T. Ward (Blackburn), Mr. Robert H. Yates (Huddersfield).

On Sunday the morning meeting was devoted to the reading of a paper by Mr. Ernest W. Oaten (the President-elect), who took for his subject, "Some Problems of the After-Life," with which he dealt on metaphysical and philosophical lines, his address standing out as a memorable feature of the meetings. It will be issued by the Union in pamphlet form.

The large hall was comfortably filled for the evening meeting. Mr. G. T. Gwinn presided; he was supported by Mr. Oaten, the president-elect, accompanied by many well-known workers and the Council. An excellent musical programme was supplied by Miss Reenie Mason (vocalist), Professor John Sigall, L.C.M. (the celebrated Russian violinist), Mr. R. John H. Sigall, celloist, with Mr. Edward H. Stubbs, accompanist. Addresses were delivered by Mr. R. H. Yates (Huddersfield), Mr. F. T. Blake (Bournemouth), and Mr. Alfred Kitson (Dewsbury), each of whom spoke with fervour and ability.

The meetings were fairly well attended considering the many adverse conditions. On the Sunday the weather was simply atrocious, rain and thunder prevailing during the whole day. The discontinuance of all cheap railway fares, the prevailing financial stress, and some amount of anxiety regarding the venue of the gatherings, no doubt exercised a retarding effect all round. The financial returns from the collections showed a decided diminution over previous years.

M.

SWEDENBORG AND MYSTICISM.

BY CHARLES E. BENHAM.

Garth Wilkinson, one of the most profound students of the literature of Emanuel Swedenborg, goes so far as to say that Swedenborg was the only theologian who was not a mystic. But for the respect due to Dr. Wilkinson's erudition, this might seem a perverse assertion, in face of the general idea that Swedenborg, if not the chief of the mystics, was at least a mighty leader among them. But in looking into this question it must first of all be remembered how loosely and diversely the term "mystic" is applied. The inexactness arises probably somewhat in this way: mysticism is a sealed book to many if not most people; consequently, every theological system that is a sealed book to them they instinctively refer to the category of mysticism. The tenets of the mystics are confusing and incomprehensible to the majority, and therefore everything that is confusing and incomprehensible is assumed to be mystical. Of course it is a most illogical inference. Chinese may be unintelligible, but every unintelligible language is not therefore Chinese. One is reminded of Samuel Weller's father, whose distaste for poetry led him to suppose that whatever appeared distasteful to him in his son's love-letter "wergered on the poetical." The illustration may seem flippant, but it is by no means inappropriate, for the indefinable and incommunicable faculty of appreciating poetry is a very apt symbol of the kindred gift of spiritual discernment which enables some people to appreciate mysticism, while those who have not that gift look in vain for a "meaning," and come to the conclusion that there is none.

The point is, however, that there has arisen in general parlance a very corrupt and yet widely prevailing notion that mysticism implies a sort of misty-cism. False as the concept may be, it has taken such root in human thought that mysticism has come to be inevitably associated with doctrines that are more or less fantastic, vague, indefinite, defiant of reason, and incomprehensible to common sense. Indeed, in view of the jargon of some who have sheltered themselves under the cult of mysticism, it is to be feared that the aspersion is not altogether unfounded. It is no doubt in this sense—the popular one, and yet one of the dictionary definitions—that Garth Wilkinson asserts that Swedenborg's ever clear and precise handling of Christian doctrine was alone free from any taint of mysticism.

Swedenborg himself speaks in the same strain in several places in his writings, notably in the "True Christian Religion," and condemns the prevailing faith of the Church of his day as "mystical and enigmatical on every point." It is evident that here he is only using the word "mystical" in its accepted though corrupted sense, for elsewhere he specifically declares over and over again that the mystical sense of the Divine Word is no other than the spiritual and celestial senses which have been lost for ages, and which he claims to have been the chosen instrument to reveal once more. So far from condemning mystics or mysticism in the true sense of those terms, he constantly uses the very word "mystical" as significant of occult truths, celestial arcana of the deepest importance to man.

For special reasons connected with his mission as revealer, he considered it well to abstain from particular study of the writings of the mystics, or indeed of any of the theologians, in order that he might be preserved from preconceived notions in his own work, and he expressly declared himself unacquainted with the works of Jacob Boehme, whose "Aurora" was, perhaps, the glimmering dawn that preceded the rising of the fuller day in the awakening of which Swedenborg was concerned.

Confining ourselves now to mysticism in its true sense, and quitting altogether the popular notion of it as a chaotic obscurity for obscurity's sake, let us consider what it is and in what relationship to it Swedenborg stands.

Mysticism, as Mr. A. E. Waite well expresses it, is "not a creedal religion." It has no dogmas, unless indeed it be a dogma that the Divine is to be sought and found within us rather than without, and that "the letter killeth: the spirit maketh alive." It is not, at any rate, essentially allied to any special theological teaching. It leaves all that to the Churches, and concerns itself rather with the attitude of the disciple than with his opinions. Madame Guyon, though so unreasonably persecuted by jealous and narrow-minded ecclesiastics, particularly emphasised the fact that she left all matters of dogmatic instruction to the properly ordained priests of her Church, and her "simple method" interfered in no way either with their teaching or their ministrations. Indeed, mysticism is consistent with many diversified intellectual

beliefs, and retains its unity amid all their variety. Protestant or Catholic can alike be introspective; each can view the phenomena of the universe as symbols, each can recognise the transcendent importance of the inner over the outer, of the thing signified over the symbol that signifies, of the thing expressed over the mere form of its expression, whether that form be the most gorgeous ritual of the Roman Catholics, the psalm-singing of the Puritans, or the extempore utterances of the Quakers. The proposition that what underlies all externals is what really counts and is the fundamental controlling factor that needs our chief regard in everything, is not a theory demanding proof. It is an axiom; or, if it does not so present itself, it is that the individual who cannot concede so much as self-evident is not, at his present stage, in a position to approach mysticism at all. He stands in the same relationship to it that the man does to music or poetry who wants it proved to him that the charm of these accomplishments is not fictitious, who asks to be shown exactly what constitutes that charm and exactly where it lies, just as one might demonstrate the truth of one of Euclid's theorems.

Swedenborg's divergence from the general body of the mystics was principally that he claimed a somewhat unique and abnormal faculty, enabling him, according to his own assertions, to see into the spiritual world as it were objectively, while to the normal mind, even of the devout mystic, spiritual vision is rather subjective in character. Of course his claim to objective spiritual sight may be disputed, and it may be urged that he was under hallucination. With that point we are not dealing here. The point we are concerned with is that the faculties he claims, whether rightly or not, were substantially different in kind from those of a Guyon or a Tauler. He, so he avers, was specially constituted to be a medium of revelation through the unfolding to him, in this life, of senses of spiritual sight and hearing, senses which to others are closed until the next stage of existence; and this abnormal faculty, he contends, was permitted not so much for his own sake, not out of special favouritism towards him, but for the benefit of others who could not receive instruction except in some such way. That he was the chosen instrument was because by training, ancestry, and general constitution of mind he was the most suitable vessel for the purpose. One such revelator was sufficient, and it remained for the world to test his objective testimony by its consistency or otherwise with the universal subjective insight which every rational mind enjoys.

Subjective introspection such as all properly developed souls have the faculty to enjoy can feel assured, can indeed perceive to its own contentment, that "God's in His Heaven"; but an exact description of that Heaven, of the world of spirits, and of the Hells, obviously demands a more objective faculty of insight, and this is what he solemnly declares to have been entrusted to him for the benefit of the human race. Similarly an inward sense of the sacred writings of the Christian Church was well recognised by the mystics in general. That knowledge he enlarges upon by revealing not alone that such a sense exists, but precisely what it is in the general terms of "good and truth" or "will and thought" that form the dual essentials of every human concept. Not that he claims to be the first and only man endowed with this high gift of spiritual vision, for he says that man had it in early times, and that from ancient revelators the knowledge of the existence of God, of the life after death, and of the spiritual sense of the Divine Word has been originally derived and preserved in lingering fragments of doctrine to be restored and more fully elaborated through the means of his mediumship in later times.

It may be well understood that such a high claim as all this implies must be a matter of doubtful acceptance with some, and of entire disbelief with many. That is another question. What we are here dealing with is simply Swedenborg's relative position to the mystics in general, with a view to show how entirely different was his standpoint, although his alleged objective perceptions undoubtedly tally in many respects with those of the more intuitive spiritual vision which is common to all rationally minded men.

One curious corollary may in conclusion be pointed out as arising from Swedenborg's position among the mystics. By reason of the objective character of so much of the vast arena of his writings, it is quite practicable for many of his disciples to be devout Swedenborgians, and yet hopelessly void of that inner light that is essential to their laying claim to the title of being mystics; just as a literary student may be learned on every poem by Browning and Tennyson, and even enthusiastic in praise of their poetry, while he is yet void of that mysterious indefinable poetic instinct without which he is in point of fact entirely blind to all that really constitutes the soul and essence of that poetry.

The same might, perhaps, be said of the disciples of any of the mystics, but hardly to the same degree as in the case of Swedenborg, where the abundance of objective testimony is sufficient in itself to occupy the mind, even in cases where the true mystic faculty is entirely non-existent.

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A SIDELIGHT OF CRITICISM.

From the title of a book recently published by Professor Gardner, of Oxford, viz., "The Ephesian Gospel," one would hardly gather that the book itself contains any important pronouncements on the conditions of life to-day. Nevertheless there are some statements in "The Ephesian Gospel" which will make a strong appeal to all those who are concerned with the spiritual aspects of modern times. Thus he says in one place:—

Has not the study of Nature and of man shown us in recent years more and more clearly the truth of the Johannine teaching that the material is unreal and evanescent, and the spiritual is the truly abiding, and the source of the life which is eternal? I will not speak of the growing spirituality of the study of matter. What more concerns us is the result of the study of the unconscious in man, and the spiritual world in which he dwells like a fish in the ocean.

This reflection leads the Professor to a consideration of the subject of Spiritualism, and here he shows a bias eloquent of his unfamiliarity with it. He has in some dim way begun to realise its importance as a buttress of faith, but he thinks it necessary as a matter of intellectual policy, perhaps, to refer to the "trickery and imposture which have accompanied the experiments of the professed Spiritualists." Had he taken the trouble to inquire carefully into the matter on which he presumes to express an opinion he would have learned that Spiritualists are the very people who have been foremost in the exposure of this same trickery and imposture, carrying their hatred of deception to such lengths that often they were mistakenly led to attribute to fraud that which on further investigation proved to be due to the operation of obscure psychological laws. But putting that consideration (important as it is) to one side, the Professor's attitude is about as logical as that of a man who should denounce medical analysts on the ground that their experiments are so often accompanied with evidences of adulteration! The experienced Spiritualist, let us tell Professor Gardner, is the detector of fraud rather than the promoter of it, and he is a far better authority on the nature of his experiments than a theologian who discusses his subject from hearsay evidence. We say "discusses," and not "condemns" because the Professor does not condemn it, for after putting himself right with conventional opinion, fortifying his position with a kindly allusion to the "low level of morality of the lives" of Spiritualists (of which we shall say something later), he proceeds:—

... Surely some of the well-established facts of Spiritualism, the transference of thought from person to person, or

the remarkable dominance of will and belief over what is merely material, are of the utmost importance to our views on the subject of religion. We are gaining a conception of a realm beyond and above the visible world, which seems to make impossible in the future any merely material or magical conception of religion.

After this comes a reference to the "great widening of our horizon" which has resulted from these discoveries, and to the fact that it has made "a revolution in our notion of death" bringing "life and immortality to light." If there are any materialists of the old school left this excursion into the psychical field will surely produce amongst them some derisive comments on the tendency of Theology to try and "run with the hare and hold with the hounds," and in its desperation to snatch support for its tenets from sources which it proclaims to be tainted. It would afford them one more racy example of what they regard as the intellectual decrepitude of Theology.

To attack a doctrine and assail the character of its followers as a preliminary to extracting from it some reinforcement of religious principles is unworthy of a writer as distinguished as Professor Gardner. We have shown how baseless is the suggestion conveyed in the words "trickery and imposture," and we add that the reference to a low level of morality in the lives of Spiritualists is equally unfounded. And even if it were not so, the old saying regarding stones and glass houses would have a very pertinent application. The Christian Church, moreover, contains thousands of Spiritualists, a fact which, while it explains the progressive changes which have been going on in that community of late years, is very unfortunate for the author of the criticism we have noted.

"Everyone must feel that there is a new stir in Christianity," writes the Professor. It has been compelled "to modify its formulæ and to take on new aspects." But, he adds, "the necessary intellectual basis has not been thought out." That is evident from Professor Gardner's book. Part of that necessary intellectual basis will be the conscientious and impartial examination *at first hand* of those sources of the "fresh life which has come into the Christian Churches," and, further, the disposition to be very discriminating in the matter of criticism. Spiritualists are not a small and obscure sect. They are a body of persons to be found in every rank of life and in almost every religious community, and the Church owes them a greater debt than it has yet begun to realise.

ANIMAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

Apropos of the psychic side of animal life, we note that the "Animals' Friend" for July contains an account, signed "A. C. W.," of a Dandy Dinmont dog called "Bonnie," concerning which two strange incidents are narrated. The first relates to the death of his master, to whom the dog was devoted:—

He was in his mistress's room about two hours after the end, and in the greatest grief, when he suddenly looked up with an intense, steady, absorbed gaze, his eyes brilliant and wide open. For a long time he kept looking up to the same spot. His mistress could not see anything. He ran downstairs and rushed about the lawn in such spirits that it seemed as if years had been taken off his life. He seemed to want to show the effect of what he saw in that long look. He never again was so sad as before, but he shared the grief of the household in a more resigned way.

Some neighbours of ours of whom "Bonnie" was very fond called to see us on the day before they embarked on the "Stella," on which they were lost. The next day, before I knew anything of their sad fate, "Bonnie" kept looking about the room, as if he saw people come in, and looking in the way he did when visitors whom he liked came in, or were in the room. I could not make it out, till I found that those visitors were amongst the drowned, and then I knew what "Bonnie" saw.

THE great things are long in coming, but they bear upon them the seals of permanence.—A. E. WAITE.

THE DIRECT VOICE.

A CORRELATION.

BY VICE-ADMIRAL USBORNE MOORE.

The best evidence that can be put forward of the existence and identity of a spirit is afforded by correlations, *i.e.*, when a spirit is able to manifest in one place and then tell someone in another place, through another medium, where he has been and what he has said or who was present. When this takes place in two different countries with different sitters it is more satisfactory than when it occurs only in two cities of the same country or to the same sitter. I have experienced these correlations very often in the United States and three or four times between the United States and England. I cannot, however, remember ever having such a clean-cut or convincing example as that which I am now going to relate.

In December, 1914, the Editor of *LIGHT* received a letter from Dr. John S. King, the well-known physician and psychic investigator in Toronto, Canada, telling him that "Dr. Sharp," the spirit guide, or "control," of Mrs. Wriedt, had spoken to him and others at certain meetings in Toronto in November. No one knows better than Dr. King the rules of the game. He does not give away details; he only mentions one item of "Sharp's" talk—that he had first visited him on a night when he (Dr. King) had delivered an address, when he "came over from Dover." Enclosed in the letter was some corroborative evidence of one of those present at the Toronto sésances and a narrative, also testified to, of a sitting with J. B. Jonson at Toledo, Ohio, on which occasion "Dr. Sharp" had materialised and spoken to him. The ladies of the society at Toronto (not named) were much interested and had asked Dr. King to write to England and ascertain if "Dr. Sharp" would corroborate the fact of his having visited their circle: it was known by some that Mrs. Wriedt was in England.

The Editor waited a few weeks for an opportunity of seeing Mrs. Wriedt. None having occurred he wrote to me on February 13th, asking if I would investigate the matter. I received this note, enclosing Dr. King's letter, at breakfast on Sunday, February 14th, at my club, skimmed over it, put it in my pocket, and immediately after breakfast went to Mrs. Wriedt, with whom I had an appointment at 10.15. I did not mention the letters to Mrs. Wriedt.

In a few minutes we went into the séance-room. "Dr. Sharp" soon made his presence known and the following colloquy took place:—

QUESTION: "Have you been over to Canada within the last three months?"

ANSWER: "Do you mean to 'Paul'?" ["Paul" is the pseudonym of a Canadian gentleman who has contributed under that name to *LIGHT* and who is known to me and "Dr. Sharp."]

Q.: "No, somebody else."

A.: "I went to Dr. John King at a séance where there was a man-medium for the voice. I wish you to write to Dr. King and tell him from me that medium is quite genuine. A number of people were there; among them Mrs. Calvert and Mrs. Sales—[spelling] C A L V E R T."

Q.: "How do you spell 'Sales'?"

A.: "I forget. We went over a bridge to get to the séance-room. It was Toronto, Canada. The people asked after Mrs. Wriedt and they asked after you. They were anxious to know if it was me speaking and wanted this to be confirmed in England. Tell Dr. King his wife spoke to him, and his little girl was sitting on his knee."

Q.: "Can you give the date?"

A.: "No; I can't remember dates."

Q.: "Have you manifested to Dr. King through J. B. Jonson at Toledo?"

A.: "I most certainly have, and through other mediums. I am very pleased to meet Dr. King, as he has done so much for the cause. I wish you to tell Dr. King that I was the first person to introduce phenomenal mediumship into Canada."

("Dr. Sharp" did not volunteer anything about a lecture or an address.)

On the following morning I had an opportunity to speak to "Dr. Sharp" again. I said, "The paper from Toronto said that you told the people you had come from Dover. What is the meaning of this? Is it a mistake?" "No mistake at all," he replied, emphatically. "I was at Dover, or near Dover, in a hospital ship, looking after the wounded. I was hovering about between Southampton, Folkestone, and Dover in the hospital ships, and I was nearest to Dover at the time when I left to visit Canada."

All this was sent to Dr. King at Toronto, and in course of time he sent me an account of his sésances. One of them was on November 18th when "Dr. Sharp" informed him that he had come over for the first time from Dover on the night of Dr. King's address, November 14th. Dr. King goes on to say:—

On November 19th, 1914, a séance was held at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Julian Sales in Rosedale, a residential part of the city, by the same medium, and twenty-six sitters were present, including Mrs. Calvert. In order to go to this séance we had to cross what is known as the Rosedale High Bridge, which spans a ravine, with a roadway below at a distance of 120ft. I inquired after Mrs. Wriedt, and you were inquired after by Mrs. Calvert and, I think, by one other. [The italics are mine.]

Want of space prevents me from quoting the whole of Dr. King's interesting letter to me, but he mentions that his deceased wife did speak to him at this and all his other sésances; that his daughter's presence was felt by him, and that the medium was a man-medium for the direct voice, a Mr. Burroughs, who was placed under the strictest test conditions.

I have never been to Toronto. Though I have heard of him from W. T. Stead and others, I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting Dr. King and I do not recollect ever hearing or seeing the name of Calvert, in connection with Canadian affairs, before this incident. Mrs. Wriedt is acquainted with Toronto and knows Dr. King and Mrs. Calvert, but she did not hear of the November sésances till my talk with "Dr. Sharp" on February 14th; and, even if she had, it would not account for "Dr. Sharp's" loud and clear utterances on that day in a London flat. Nothing is more certain than that "Dr. Sharp," though working with and assisting Mrs. Wriedt, is an independent personality.

A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF JULY 11TH, 1885.)

In a recent number of the "Spectator" is a very clever discussion of the theory of mind-reading or transfer of thought in its relations to some of the phenomena of Spiritualism. For example, the Rev. P. H. Newnham writes a series of questions in one room which are answered in another by the Planchette on which Mrs. Newnham is resting her fingers. She gave, in this way, many things utterly unknown to her, for example, some Masonic prayers. . . Mr. Newnham in one room wrote: "Write out the prayer used at the advancement of a Mark Master Mason." And the answer came: "Almighty Ruler of the Universe and Architect of all worlds, we beseech Thee to accept this, our brother, whom we have this day received into our most honourable Company of Mark Master Masons. Grant him to be a worthy member of our brotherhood; and may he be in his own person a perfect mirror of all Masonic virtues. Grant that all our doings may be to Thy honour and glory, and to the welfare of all mankind." Mr. Newnham adds: "This prayer was written off instantaneously and very rapidly. It is a very remarkable production indeed. For the benefit of those who are not members of the craft, I may say that no prayer in the slightest degree resembling it is made use of in the ritual of any Masonic degree; and yet it contains more than one strictly accurate technicality connected with the degree of Mark Mason. My wife has never seen any Masonic prayers, whether in 'Carlile,' or any other real or spurious ritual of the Masonic Order." Here, then, assuredly, was a formula composed by some intelligence totally distinct from the conscious intelligence of either of the persons engaged in the experiment.

—From Editorial Notes.

TRAVELS IN SLEEP.

OUT-OF-THE-BODY EXPERIENCES.

Prentice Mulford, the mystical writer, whose works have become almost classical amongst students of the supernatural, tells us that we "travel in sleep." There is a tremendous amount of testimony to the same effect from those who have these experiences, and although they are rarely susceptible of scientific proof their volume and consistency count for a great deal, and many of them are undeniably interesting. We have lately received two letters on the subject, which we present below.

Mr. J. F. Gems writes:—

With regard to the very interesting article of Mr. Arthur Mallord Turner, M.A., in your issue of April 10th, under the heading "Out-of-the-Body Experiences," I would like to submit for his opinion an experience I had on the night of the 17th ult., which was so realistic and vivid that I cannot bring myself to believe that it could have been only a dream, although in recounting it I may be suspected of drawing on my imagination. I give the experience exactly as it occurred to me.

I had retired to bed in circumstances just as usual, and feeling perfectly well, but had barely laid my head on the pillow—certainly I had not lost consciousness—when I had a curious sensation of floating. I seemed to rise rapidly and pass out into the air, although quite conscious of what I was doing. In a few moments I was passing swiftly along by a wood which is close to my house, my sensation at this time being one of intense astonishment at my method of transit.

I found I was following the path, but the trees were so close as to cause me considerable alarm. I was not sure that the power which enabled me to float would keep me from dangerous contact with the trees.

At first the wood seemed dark, but on looking up I found the night was clear and the stars shining. Suddenly I noticed a light (which seemed to be resting on my breast) like that of a glow-worm, only very much brighter, so that it lit up the surrounding trees, and thereby gave me a little more confidence. The trees and objects around were perfectly familiar to me.

Notwithstanding this, the feeling of alarm grew. The experience was so strange. I could not make out why I was there, what was causing me to go along, or where I was going. I seemed to have no more weight than a bubble, floating as lightly and buoyantly as a bubble would.

The alarm grew to a feeling of panic, which impelled me to make a violent effort to get back to my normal state. To my intense relief I found I was able to do this, passing back to my bedroom as rapidly as I had come. Finding myself again as usual, I looked out of the window; the sky was clear and the stars shining brightly, as I had seen them in my rapid passage to the wood.

My first impulse was to commit the details of this extraordinary experience to paper, but they had made so vivid an impression on my mind that I decided I should be able to record them quite as accurately in the morning.

Will Mr. Turner be good enough to say if this can be considered a case of "travelling"?

A lady correspondent at Falmouth, author of some thoughtful works reviewed in these columns, sends us the following strange experience confided to her by a young lady friend, of whose character for good sense and conscientiousness she has a high opinion:—

April 30th. Friday evening, 8 o'clock Falmouth time.—As I sat quite quietly in my room I found myself being taken over water, and then through a stretch of country. I was then taken down a narrow path—two or three could walk abreast; on my right was a river, and on my left wooded country. Suddenly I found myself standing in front of a sentry box, and seemed unable to go further. "Why," I asked, "am I brought here?" and almost before I had finished the sentence, I saw standing immediately in front of the sentry's box a young fellow apparently about eighteen. He was standing with his gun resting on the ground. His hands touched the barrel just below the bayonet. I also noticed he was wearing an oval-shaped hat without a peak. The hat seemed to be of a dark material piped with red.

As I looked I saw his eyes were closed, so I concluded he was either dozing or in a "brown study." Then, as I looked up the path down which I had come, I saw forms moving stealthily towards us. I touched the young fellow on his shoulder, and stepped into the sentry box, and then I noticed for the first time that I appeared to be dressed in white. The sentry turned round, looked straight at me, rubbed his eyes, and then looked again. I pointed with my left hand to the moving figures

now rapidly approaching. Six or eight of these were crawling on their hands and knees in the grass on the right of the path near the edge of the river, and others were walking behind. The nearest man was only a few yards from where the sentry and I stood, and I could see they had on their heads a kind of flat-shaped helmet with a spike (I mean flat compared with our policemen's helmets).

Just as I thought my warning was too late, I heard a rifle shot and a scuffle just beside me, and then further down the path I heard another report, then another, which sounded a little further away, and then a fourth which sounded yet further away still. The shots or reports sounded to me like fore-arranged signals that the enemy were near. I turned to look for the sentry, and found him lying beside his box evidently wounded; near him were lying three motionless bodies of men who seemed to be wearing dark suits and helmets with spikes, and one man just beyond the three was in a kneeling position.

Then I heard a rush behind me, and I turned and saw men moving, and I noticed these were wearing hats or caps of the same shape as our regulation khaki caps with peaks, and as far as I could see in the darkness, they looked to be men in khaki. They seemed to make a dash forward, up the path towards the darker figures, and I heard a clashing of steel.

Then I saw the wounded sentry move, and he put out his hand as though to touch me, and said, "Mother." I placed my hand on his head and tried to soothe him, and he seemed quite contented. After a while my guide stood beside me, and intimated that it was time to go. As I stood up I saw some of the men in khaki returning, walking with a firm tread, and talking and laughing amongst themselves.

As they came near the sentry box, I heard one of them say, "Hullo! Look here!" and saw him bend over the form of the sentry, kneel on one knee and raise the sentry's head.

Then I felt a sensation of being taken swiftly through the air, and I found myself back in my room again, and noticed it was then twenty minutes to nine—Falmouth time.

I have often been able to travel in this way, and have seen things taking place at a distance, and also made my presence felt. At times I have been seen, but never before have I had an experience like this. I wonder if others have had similar experiences, and if so have they never been able to corroborate them?

VISIONS AT THE BATTLE FRONT.

"Pax," a correspondent of LIGHT who has been active in pursuing inquiry into the stories of visions at the battle-front, sends us the following extract from a letter received from an artilleryman on the 26th ult.:—

With regard to the stories which you have heard about "angels and spirits" appearing to our chaps in the trenches, I can only say that I have not seen them myself, but then, of course, we do not stop in the trenches long and have not the experience of them as have the infantry. I have heard several fellows discussing this subject and they absolutely vouch for the truth of it. They may be right, but, of course, you must remember that trench work is mind-straining as well as nerve-racking, and that may account somewhat for a lot of these stories.

"Pax" adds that nevertheless she has heard thoroughly reliable accounts of visions which were not seen in the trenches.

The "Notes of the Month" in the current issue of the "Occult Review" deal at considerable length with the matter, citing several of the accounts which have appeared in LIGHT. The editor, Mr. Ralph Shirley, remarks on the considerable discussion which has taken place in the Press regarding the alleged psychical phenomena at the Battle of Mons, and referring to the attack made by the "Evening News" on the statements by Mr. Sinnett in the "Occult Review," and to the (unfounded) claim of the evening paper that the record given was derived from Mr. Machen's now well-known story, he says:—

Seeing this attack I at once wrote a rejoinder giving the true state of the case. I regret to have to state that, deviating from every tradition of self-respecting journalism, the "Evening News" failed to insert my reply.

Mr. Shirley relates that he has interviewed two English ladies who have been nursing at a hospital at St. Germain-en-Laye, in the neighbourhood of Paris. These ladies stated that the accounts in question were in France "not merely implicitly believed, but were absolutely known to be true," and they added "that no French paper would have made itself ridiculous by disputing the authenticity of what was vouched for by so many thousands of independent eye-witnesses."

Mr. Shirley points out that those who have witnessed and

related these supernormal appearances are not unnaturally shy of giving their names in view of the scepticism of the general public—a consideration which we have found by experience to apply to psychic phenomena generally. As we observed a short time ago in "Notes by the Way," some people can hardly be prevailed upon to relate their psychic experiences at all, much less to authenticate them with their names for public satisfaction. The testimony which comes to light (the pun is unintentional) is but a fraction of that which is withheld. When the reality of spirit existence comes to be a matter of general knowledge, a different atmosphere will be created, but by that time the need for witnesses will have greatly diminished. We want the witnesses now to help—and here we may quote the "Occult Review" again—"to break down the all-too-prevalent disbelief in the reality of the unseen world which, more than anything else at the present time, is hampering the onward march of human progress."

DREAM CHILDREN.

Those who have read "Our Mutual Friend," to which reference was made in "Notes by the Way" last week, will remember Fanny Cleaver, the heroic little hunchback girl described variously as "Jenny Wren," "the doll's dressmaker" and "the person of the house." We select the following passage from the book as having a peculiar psychic interest. It occurs in Chapter II., Book II., which describes a visit paid to "Jenny Wren" by Eugene Wrayburn and Lizzie Hexam. "Jenny Wren" observes:—

"I wonder how it happens that when I am work, work, working here, all alone in the summer-time, I smell flowers."

"As a common-place individual, I should say," Eugene suggested languidly—for he was growing weary of the person of the house—"that you smell flowers because you *do* smell flowers."

"No, I don't," said the little creature, resting one arm upon the elbow of her chair, resting her chin upon that hand, and looking vacantly before her; "this is not a flowery neighbourhood. It's anything but that. And yet, as I sit at work, I smell miles of flowers. I smell roses till I think I see the rose-leaves lying in heaps, bushels, on the floor. I smell fallen leaves till I put down my hand—so—and expect to make them rustle. I smell the white and the pink may in the hedges, and all sorts of flowers that I never was among. For I have seen very few flowers indeed in my life."

"Pleasant fancies to have, Jenny dear!" said her friend, with a glance towards Eugene as if she would have asked him whether they were given in the child in compensation for her losses.

"So I think, Lizzie, when they come to me. And the birds I hear! Oh!" cried the little creature, holding out her hand and looking upward, "how they sing!"

There was something in the face and action for the moment quite inspired and beautiful. Then the chin dropped musingly upon the hand again.

"I dare say my birds sing better than other birds, and my flowers smell better than other flowers. For when I was a little child" (in a tone as though it were ages ago), "the children that I used to see early in the morning were very different from any others that I ever saw. They were not like me; they were not chilled, anxious, ragged or beaten; they were never in pain. They were not like the children of the neighbours; they never made me tremble all over, by setting up shrill noises, and they never mocked me. Such numbers of them, too! All in white dresses, and with something shining on the borders, and on their heads, that I have never been able to imitate with my work, though I know it so well. They used to come down in long, bright, slanting rows, and say altogether, 'Who is this in pain? Who is this in pain?' When I told them who it was, they answered, 'Come and play with us.' When I said, 'I never play! I can't play!' they swept about me and took me up, and made me light. Then it was all delicious ease and rest till they laid me down and said, all together, 'Have patience, and we will come again.' Whenever they came back I used to know they were coming before I saw the long bright rows, by hearing them ask, all together a long way off, 'Who is this in pain? Who is this in pain?' And I used to cry out, 'O my blessed children, it's poor me. Have pity on me. Take me up and make me light!'"

PLUMMET MESSAGES.

A REMARKABLE STORY.

In *LIGHT* of April 25th, 1914 (p. 196), appeared a brief account of some plummet or "magic circle" experiments carried on by Mr. Francis Naish, M.A. A short time ago he paid us a visit, bringing with him some curious relics, the whereabouts of which, he explained, were revealed through communications given by the plummet. These relics consist of a disc of vellum with the Greek alphabet inscribed round the circumference, a prism of glass, and a large tooth. The messages (one hundred) were received by him in March, 1915, in conjunction with three colleagues designated as Oxon Alpha, Beta and Gamma.

The experiments were carried on at Burford, where on March 29th Oxon Beta received by the pendulum, swinging over a circle marked with the letters of the alphabet, the following message, which was transcribed by Mr. Naish:—

S. Wisdom [*i.e.*, Simon Wisdom, a local worthy of the past associated with Burford], if you wish to find a relic bright, go into the church and turn to the right. Round by the chapel of St. Thomas, you'll come to a tomb all stript of brass. Behind a saint on the farther side, you'll find my crystal and my gyde. Dixi.

It will be seen that the message is given in rhyme, and has a certain flavour of antiquity. Later Oxon Beta received a further message:—

Simon Wisdom. This is my command, because I wish you well I bequeath the crystal to Franciscus Naish. If he keeps it secret he must use it only himself. If he obeys this order he will in time see many wonderful things with it. If not, great troubles will fall on all of those who were present when he found it. I swear it by our lady. Dixi.

On March 31st Oxon Alpha took up the wondrous tale, with this result:—

Wisdom Simon. When I was a youth I cut a large tooth called the Wisdom tooth, and that is why they call me Wisdom. The tooth soon went and I used it as a plummet for my large guide which was destroyed. You will find the tooth in a hole in the window frame in the ground floor . . . [for prudential reasons we omit the name of the house mentioned in the message]. Dixi.

To cut a long story short, Mr. Naish states that he and his colleagues obeyed the directions in the messages and were rewarded by the discovery of the relics mentioned.

In the course of a letter written after his visit Mr. Naish says:—

The relics have been examined in London by noted experts who testify to their being ancient. The tooth has been shown to an experienced veterinary surgeon (for we cannot accept it as human) who did not identify it as that of any of the domestic animals; but further inquiry is contemplated. The "gyde" is a circle of very fine thin animal vellum, four inches in diameter, with the Greek alphabet beautifully inscribed round the circumference. An expert noted that the characters were not written in modern style. In the centre appear the initials "S. W." . . . The crystal is a prism of glass, triangular, right angled with three polished facets, viz., two sides, each one square inch, and the hypotenuse. The other two sides are unpolished, and show plainly that the workmanship is not modern. Other suspected defects induce the supposition that it was not made for optical purposes, and a question as to whether it is an application of the geometrical theorem of Pythagoras (Euclid I., 47) for the form of a scry glass. This prism has three corners chipped, as though its owner had let it fall at some time. This owner was living at the same period as the famous Dr. Dee, of the British Museum crystal, and his Latin spellings by the plummet in March point to his being a good Latin scholar. A little Greek also came, but not from "S. W.," though he must have known Greek very well to have this vellum "gyde" for use. Other spellings concerning this "gyde" and the hiding-place of the gold ring used for plummet have arrived from "S. W." since my return from Oxfordshire. Readers of *LIGHT* will find an account of this ancient method of receiving messages in Dean Milman's "History of Christianity," Vol. 4, page 120, and in Dr. N. Lardner's Works, Vol. 4, page 445, which contains also the account, in Latin, from "Ammianus Marcellinus," and in Bury's "Gibbon," Vol. 3, page 18, note 31. Zonaras gives a different account of the method (Ann. T. 3, page 28).

It is a curious story, and we give it as an example of a substantial result stated as being gained by the use of the magic pendulum. Mr. Naish has also shown us a number of curious messages, some of them a queer jumble of ancient and modern phrases in doggerel verse, not always of an edifying kind, purporting to come from Anthony Sedley, the leveller, who was confined in Burford Church, and afterwards shot by order of Cromwell.

Assuming the genuineness of the messages, there is a suggestion that the subconscious minds of the recipients of the messages were not altogether inactive. In Chapter II. of his little work on *Psychical Research* (Williams and Norgate) Sir William Barrett deals with the magic pendulum, or *pendule explorateur*, and to this book we commend the attention of readers interested in the question.

Mr. Naish states that the swing is not that of a pendulum, which is due to gravity, but rather the levitation of a plummet from the centre of the circle towards the circumference, and that the spelling was so fast that the letters had to be written in close juxtaposition and without either capitals or punctuation, that the plummet holder was constantly in doubt that spelling was proceeding and that it was impossible for Mr. Naish to decipher the words (*for the most part*) as the spelling proceeded, that his rule was that all should be silent till the plummet became inert, which it invariably did after the final "Dixi," or "Adieu," or "Ave et Vale."

In the meantime, we understand that Mr. Naish is calling the attention of persons eminent in psychical research to the results of his experiments.

SIDELIGHTS.

A new book by Sir Oliver Lodge, "The War and After," will be published this month by Messrs. Methuen.

A correspondent writes to suggest that the adoption of a badge—such as a small silver or gilt cross with the letter S intertwined—to be worn in the buttonhole, might be the means of bringing about introductions between people who have ideas in common, but fear to broach to one another the subject in which they are interested. "Many of us," he says, "are soul-starved in out-of-the-way localities, so that no method for mutual help and unity should be lost, as it now often is." This is not a new idea. A movement of the kind proposed was started many years ago, the members wearing a badge in gold or silver that they might be recognised by fellow-Spiritualists. We have heard very little of this practice lately, and it may have fallen into disuse. It is rather a difficult matter to design any badge that would meet with general acceptance, but the idea is worth considering. By the way, we have known of helpful friendships which began by one party or the other carrying a copy of *LIGHT*, "The Two Worlds," or some other publication of a progressive tendency.

Mr. James Lawrence, Hon. Secretary of the Spiritualists' National League of Defence, writes: "Several members of the Defence League have called my attention to a sermon preached by Rev. Dr. Orchard on May 2nd in the King's Weigh House Church, London, his subject being, 'The Gospel of the Flowers.' Weaving into his discourse certain incidents in the life of Jesus, amongst them the Transfiguration, he said: 'Men saw his face glow with spiritual glory, not at a séance in a darkened room, but on a mountain top in the sunlight.' So far as I am aware, Spiritualists are the only fraternity making serious attempts to obtain transfigurations at séances, either darkened or in light; hence I accepted the reference as being directed against them, and wrote to the gentleman in question, but have received no reply. Perhaps he had no sinister meaning behind the words, but the use of them was unfortunate, as there are always persons ready to pounce upon such utterances and invest them with a meaning and value not really attaching to them. For this reason I feel compelled, by virtue of my office, to give Dr. Orchard an opportunity to offer some explanation."

In reference to the series of lectures on psychology which she is giving on the Mondays in July in Essex Hall, Strand, W.C., Miss Janette Steer, the well-known actress, says: "This is a new platform that I am attempting, but in the midst of so much destructiveness a little constructiveness should come as a pleasant antidote."

A noteworthy feature in "Pearson's Magazine" for July is an article by Mr. William Archer on the question "Can we Foretell the Future?" By way of clearing the ground Mr. Archer lays down certain preliminary principles. He puts aside prophecies confessedly founded on inference from known premises and he is also careful to point out that the inquiry "has no essential connection with what is known as 'Spiritualism,'" observing very pertinently that if it could be proved that disembodied spirits possess the power of seeing into the future, the fact, while very interesting, would be just as incomprehensible as the fact (if fact it be) that we ourselves possess such a power. He proceeds to pass in review a great number of cases, most of which we have met with before. After grouping together many which, though sufficiently remarkable, leave loopholes for such explanations as mis-recollection, telepathy, *telesthesia*, or mere coincidence, he comes to some which it becomes increasingly difficult to account for on any such lines.

Of these Mr. Archer regards as most conclusive the automatic writing through the hand of Mrs. A. W. Verrall in November and December, 1901, which pictured in brief sentences and with details somebody lying on a sofa or in bed, reading by candlelight a French memoir, "Marmontel," which he had borrowed. When, on March 1st, 1902, a young friend of Professor and Mrs. Verrall, Mr. Edward Marsh, visited them in Cambridge, it transpired that in February he had been reading by candlelight that identical book (which he had borrowed from a library) under just such circumstances, the other details very closely resembling those described. This case, in Mr. Archer's opinion, "seems to place beyond all dispute the fact that the future is not wholly inaccessible to the human mind—that portions of it, at any rate, do somewhere and somehow actually exist before they materialise themselves in space and time." Mr. Archer promises to give a second instalment of his study of the subject next month. He states that he has notes of something like three hundred cases of alleged premonition, prevision or prophecy the great majority dating from the past half-century and that these represent only a selection from the available material.

"LIGHT" "TRIAL" SUBSCRIPTION.

As an inducement to new and casual readers to become subscribers, *LIGHT* will be sent for thirteen weeks, *post free*, for 2s., as a "trial" subscription. It is suggested that regular readers who have friends to whom they would like to introduce the paper should avail themselves of this offer, and forward to the Manager of *LIGHT* at this office the names and addresses of such friends, upon receipt of which, together with the requisite postal order, he will be pleased to send *LIGHT* to them by post as stated above.

DOUBT came a-begging: and I bade him wait;
Fed him, while sorry stories he'd repeat.
He went, and left a cross upon my gate—
The sign that brought his fellow tramp, Defeat.
—ELLA R. PEARCE in "The Nautilus."

THE BIBLE AS ORACLE.—Some people get astonishing results from opening the Bible at random when in need of guidance and then taking the first text that the eye lights upon. A correspondent of *LIGHT* tells how a friend of his met in the train a soldier, who before finally making up his mind to enlist adopted the experiment, after prayer, and this was the text which resulted, and which decided the question for him: "Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee; be of good courage and do it" (Ezra x., 4). Amongst all the appropriate answers obtained by this method of consulting the Bible, it is doubtful whether any could be more specific.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and frequently publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion. In every case the letter must be accompanied by the writer's name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

The Origin of the Soul.

SIR,—Mr. Venning, referring to my article on p. 153, denies the ultimate nature of the speck of protoplasm which I gave out to be our earliest grandfather. He says that on the theory of evolution that speck must have had fathers and grandfathers *ad infinitum*, and that the evolutionary hypothesis must be supplemented by the theory of Special Creation as a starting point.

It is true that the evolutionist, as he travels in imagination backwards, must finally reach what seems to be a full-stop at the point where the earth becomes too hot to support life. It was only after this that protoplasm, which is its basis, became possible. How, then, did the first organism make its appearance? Was it produced by a special act of creation or precipitated upon our planet out of space, as has been not very helpfully suggested? Or did it occur by spontaneous generation? The experiments of Pasteur and others proved conclusively, it was thought, that spontaneous generation was a myth and living matter could only proceed from previous living matter, on the principle *omne vivum e vivo*. For the evolutionist the only solution of the difficulty was to agree that spontaneous generation is impossible now, but to assume that in earlier days, when the world was young, more favourable conditions prevailed and life spontaneously arose from the happy and "fortuitous" association of the right kind of chemicals. The principle of evolution was thus carried back beyond the difficult point I have mentioned into the inorganic age, bringing the problem of living matter into line with the whole cosmic procession from nebula onwards. This theory may not seem very poetical or spiritual, but it was eminently logical and scientific. Only there was no evidence in its favour and experiment offered rather less than no support. The belief that life could be generated from infusions had gone the way of that other belief that eels were born of mud and geese from barnacles.

There was no evidence whatever until Dr. Bastian some years ago published the results of his experiments. Employing new methods, he claimed to have developed living organisms from various substances, both organic and inorganic, against which no accusation of life could be brought. Science is arbitrary in its judgment on the claims of new discoveries, and Dr. Bastian's results have not been accepted nor his experiments, so far as I know, repeated. But the precautions taken by him were very thorough, and his reasoning appeals convincingly to the unbiased reader: and similar experiments were said a year or two ago to be in progress. If these are or have been successful, it will prove that for life to appear it is only necessary that the proper physical conditions should be present. Spontaneous generation will have come into its own again, and the evolutionist will breathe more freely. But the problem will remain whether life is a rearrangement of old and familiar forces or whether it is something mysterious and new.

Mr. Venning says, surprisingly, that it is now denied that organisms have grown more complex since the beginning of things. This statement is too startling to stand unsupported by authority. The geological record shows the gradual disappearance of higher forms as the deeper strata are reached. He accuses me of "sneering" at man for proclaiming "what a superior people we are." I plead guilty, with the reservation that I do not feel sure he has been quite successful in his choice of a word to describe a subtle and delicate humour. He recommends two authors for objections to the evolutionary hypothesis. But does he not mean rather the theory of Natural Selection as the *method* of evolution?

At Mr. Venning's request I have re-read his article on "Our Many Ancestors" (August 8th). It is a puzzle of which he has sought in vain for the key. Starting with the assumption that each family has two parents, four grandparents, and remoter ancestors in proportion, and pursuing his quarry through earlier

generations, he finds that quite a short time ago there can barely have been standing-room for his progenitors alone. How, then, can the race be descended from a single pair, as foolish theologians pretend? The *reductio ad absurdum* proves there is a flaw in the argument, but Mr. Venning says he has not been able to find it, though I think he supplies it in his phrase, "ancestral duplicates."

To begin with, it is common knowledge that population increases as you go forwards. Our ancestors, therefore, were fewer, not more, than ourselves. Our remotest human forebears were probably a species or tribe; but let us assume that they were two only, and see what happened. They had six children (approximately), and these intermarried, contrary to our notions of what is correct, and produced in a few generations a prodigious number of descendants (greatly tempered, however, by the struggle for existence) who were all cousins of one sort or another. By Mr. Venning's reasoning their ancestors, with which we started, should have been a vastly more prodigious number. But we know by our assumption that they were two! Is Mr. Venning answered? It is not necessary that each family should have four grandparents all to itself. In spite of complications and interweavings of families, there is and must be a great sharing of grandparents among them.—Yours, &c.,

N. G. S.

The Direct Voice: Its Proofs and Problems.

SIR,—I have been greatly interested in reading "L. A. C.'s" letter in your issue of June 19th (page 290), because I know that he does not stand alone, the same perplexities having been experienced by more than one of my friends, who have referred them to me, and I have endeavoured, however imperfectly, to explain them. First let me express the opinion that "L. A. C." has given an unbiased description of his difficulties.

Of the great number of people who have investigated the Direct Voice some have undoubtedly done so in an exceptional frame of mind. Some have expected to hear Delphic Oracles and been ready to accept everything without proofs, whilst others have erred in the other direction, expecting their spirit friends to satisfy their cross-examinations according to the procedure of a law court, and being acutely disappointed when they have failed to do so. Let me, therefore, state some facts which may serve as a basis for explanation.

1. Our spirit friends do not develop into prodigies of wisdom immediately on transition, nor do they at once lose certain mental defects such as bad memory, lack of confidence, over-cautiousness, &c., which probably tend to counteract any extra powers that may accrue through the fact that they now look upon earthly life from a broader standpoint and a wider experience.

2. They are but learning to take their own spiritual responsibilities, and it is a larger field of work than material responsibilities.

3. How often we find that one person may be most careless in speech (and reckless in act), and yet never seem to suffer any disastrous consequences, whereas another, always cautious and discreet, may make one slip which brings in its wake a perfect cataclysm of catastrophes. We do not yet know sufficient of the conditions or limitations of the spirit life to be able rightly to appreciate the difficulties under which communications have to be made to earthly recipients, but we do know that spirits seldom manifest alone; there are always a number, which would seem to prove that some may experience one kind of difficulty which others may be qualified to surmount.

4. We know that spirits advance in spirit life, and this may involve the necessity of using other spirits as intermediaries, and these latter may be ignorant of the details, which some investigators quibble about. Let me give a personal experience. I was surprised to learn that an old friend wished to communicate by automatic writing through my hand, for she was unable to write when she passed over two or three years before, but the contents of the message satisfied me as to her identity. The rate and form of the writing were quite in accord with the statements that she was only just learning to write. May not similar difficulties in the way of locution explain some perplexing experiences in regard to the Direct Voice?

In conclusion, the writer emphatically states that he has on

numerous occasions heard the Direct Voice when he has been alone, but what proofs can he advance to combat the objections that he was the subject of hallucination?

Such an experience, which is the only really Direct Voice, will of necessity bring absolute conviction to the recipient.—Yours, &c.,

M. R. R.

The Ethics of War.

SIR,—As regards Mr. Wake Cook's excellent and sensible remarks on the Ethics of War, there was no need to give explanation or proof for his obvious statement that "the pacifists were largely responsible for this terrible war." Historical facts are sufficient evidence. The pacifist element amongst us, preaching peace where there was no peace (in the House of Commons and elsewhere) reduced our army and navy—the former by thirty thousand men—at the very moment when they were most vitally needed. The refusal to grant sufficient money for the necessary "defence of the Realm" prevented our being able to defend our Realm adequately—plunged us into colossal and, in great measure, unnecessary expense; and also, alas! into colossal and unnecessary loss of life. This in addition to bringing unspeakable agony—physical and mental—upon our country. No sane person assumes that in this special case preparation for war would have meant immunity from war. It was because Lord Roberts and other experts knew that nothing would deter Germany from making war upon us, sooner or later, that they urged us so solemnly to be prepared with men and munitions. In many cases such preparations have meant immunity, but this can only be when the enemy is governed by a responsible being; not a megalomaniac. In any case, those who refused to be warned acted insanely. Mrs. Duke, in common with all other pacifists, is living under the protection of the defenders of that Realm which she considers ought not to have been defended.

If she and others who think on similar lines were logical and loyal to their opinions, they would disdain to accept the immunity which they denounce.—Yours, &c.,

E. KATHARINE BATES.

Lyceum Club, Piccadilly.
July 3rd.

SIR,—In her letter on this subject, Mildred Duke ignores the one thing needful—the *motive* of the war. Christ forcibly removed money-changers from the Temple, not for His own sake, but because His Father's honour was at stake. The motive of our war is identical: England's honour. I fail to see anything "funny," but then a sense of humour may be lacking.

Personally I do not think we need trouble about "preparations" of any kind. "Not by material, but by moral force, are men and their actions governed," and the English-speaking people may yet form one great nation. "Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws makes that and the action fine" is applicable to the present war.—Yours, &c.,

E. P. PRENTICE.

A Vision of a Cross.

SIR,—This may interest your readers of LIGHT. A little time ago my daughter and myself were sitting at tea in front of the window. It was a beautiful day and the sky was very blue. All at once the sky seemed to open and a huge Cross was formed, such a one as was never seen on earth, all in pale colours of white, pink and blue. At the same time thousands of star lights came quite close to the window; they were seen by both my daughter and myself. We left the room and went to another window, the lights were still to be seen, but not so numerous.

Since then I have lost my husband and now this awful war has come.

I should like to know if anyone else has seen the same.—Yours, &c.,

SEMPER VIVA.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"G. W. M."—Many thanks for the anecdote which, although interesting, is hardly important enough for publication, as there are so many cases of a similar kind.

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

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

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—*Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.*—Mrs. Cannock gave most successful clairvoyant descriptions to a large audience.—77, *New Oxford Street, W.C.*—On Monday, the 28th ult., Mrs. Mary Gordon gave fully-recognised descriptions. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided at both meetings. Sunday next, see advt. on front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, *Pembridge Place, Baywater, W.*—Morning, address by Mr. Ernest Meads on "Initiation, Past and Present"; soloist, Mr. E. Godley; evening, address by Mrs. Mary Gordon on "Knowledge." For next week's services see front cover.—B.

CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM: 22, *Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.*—Mrs. Fairclough-Smith gave a powerful inspirational address in the morning on "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," and in the evening gave clairvoyant descriptions, all of which were duly recognised, affording great comfort to the recipients. For Sunday next see advertisement on front page.

ANERLEY, S.E.—4, *WHEATHILL-ROAD*.—Trance address on "What we do Beyond the Grave," by Mr. Love. Trance address every Sunday, 7 p.m.

FOREST GATE, E. (FORMERLY STRATFORD).—*EARLHAM HALL*.—Miss Violet Burton's address, "Behold I Live," was much appreciated. Mrs. E. Bryceson presided. Sunday next, Mr. McIntosh, address.—W. H. S.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—Memorial Service, Mrs. Maunder, address and clairvoyance. June 30th, Mrs. Webster, address and clairvoyance. Sunday next, 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Mrs. Orłowski, address and psychometry. Wednesday, Mrs. Neville.

HACKNEY.—240A, *AMHURST-ROAD, N.E.*—Mrs. Beaumont gave an address on "Peace," and convincing descriptions. Sunday morning meetings will be discontinued till the end of August. Sunday next, 7 p.m., Mr. A. H. Sarfas. Usual circles during the week.—N. R.

WIMBLEDON (THROUGH ARCHWAY, Nos. 4 and 5, BROADWAY).—Mr. H. Fielder gave spiritual address. Sunday next, 7 p.m., Mr. G. Prior, address; Miss Grace Prior, clairvoyance. Wednesday, public circle, Mrs. T. Brown. 21st, special visit of Mrs. Susanna Harris, short address and clairvoyance.

BRIGHTON.—*MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM)*.—Excellent addresses and clairvoyance by Mr. Horace Leaf. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; 7 p.m., Mr. F. G. Clarke, address; 3 p.m., Lyceum. Tuesday, 3 p.m., private interviews; public circle, 8 p.m.; also Wednesday, 3 p.m.

BRIGHTON.—78, *WEST STREET, FIRST FLOOR (LATE WINDSOR HALL)*.—Mrs. Curry gave addresses and excellent clairvoyant descriptions both morning and evening. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. A. Vout Peters. Tuesdays, at 3 and 8, Mrs. Curry, clairvoyance. Thursdays, 8.15, public meeting.

PECKHAM.—*LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD*.—Morning and evening, addresses and clairvoyance by Mr. A. V. Peters. 1st, Mrs. Podmore gave an address, followed by clairvoyance. Sunday next, 11.30 a.m., Mr. Williams, address; 7 p.m., Mrs. Neville, clairvoyance. 18th, anniversary services.—T. G. B.

CROYDON.—*GYMNASIUM HALL, HIGH-STREET*.—Mr. George Prior's excellent address on "Things that Matter" was much appreciated. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., the president; at 7 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf, address and clairvoyance. Thursdays, at 8, address and clairvoyance.

STRATFORD.—*IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE*.—Address and clairvoyance by Mr. and Mrs. Connor. 1st, address and clairvoyance by Mrs. Neville. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., Fellowship; 7 p.m., Mr. Trinder. 15th, Mrs. Peeling. 18th, Miss Woodhouse. 22nd, Mr. Dewar, lecture on "Spirit Photography."

BRIXTON.—143A, *STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD, S.W.*—Mr. Dale gave an interesting address on "The Way to Obtain Peace, Health, and Happiness." Sunday next, 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7, Mrs. Maunder, address and clairvoyance. Thursday, 15th, 8 p.m., Mrs. Maunder, "Psychic Experiences" and clairvoyance. 18th, Mrs. Boddington.—H. W. N.

CLAPHAM.—*HOWARD-STREET, WANDSWORTH-ROAD*.—Mrs. Brownjohn gave an address, followed by clairvoyance; Mrs. Simmons sang a solo. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 4.45 p.m., Anniversary Tea, tickets 6d. and 3d.; 7 p.m., Mr. Symons. Friday, at 8, public meeting. July 20th, Mrs. Maunder.—F. K.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—*SURREY MASONIC HALL*.—Morning, address by Miss Graeter on "Life After Death, and Eternal Life"; evening, interesting personal psychic experiences by Mrs. Aldridge. Sunday next, 11 a.m., Mr. A. A. Bailey on "Modern Spiritualism and Its Necessity"; 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Checketts on "The Silver Thread."

BATTERSEA.—HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET.—Morning, circle conducted by Mr. Ashley; evening, address by Mr. Lund on "The Purity of Spiritualism"; clairvoyance by Mrs. Lund. Corporal S. Williams attended the Lyceum session. 1st inst., our leader gave an address on "Clairvoyance and Psychometry." Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., circle service; 7 p.m., Mrs. Annie Boddington, address and clairvoyance. Tuesdays, at 8, circle. Thursday, 15th, at 8.30 p.m., Mrs. Bloodworth.—P. S.

HOLLOWAY.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Rev. David F. Stewart, M.A., an address on "Is Every Man my Brother?" which opened an interesting discussion; afternoon, bright and instructive session with Fulham Lyceum; evening, Mrs. S. Podmore, an address on "Spiritualism; and its Message," followed by descriptions. Anthem by choir. 30th ult., Mrs. C. Pulham gave descriptions. Sunday next, 11.15 and 7, Mrs. E. A. Cannock. Wednesday, Rev. Wm. J. Piggott on "Foes to the Kingdom of the Spirit." 18th, Mrs. Mary Davies. Every Sunday at 3, Lyceum.—J. F.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mr. Haviland gave an interesting address on "Spirit Identity."

PORTSMOUTH.—311, SOMERS-ROAD, SOUTHSEA.—Addresses and clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Farr.—P.

SOUTHAMPTON SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, CAVENTISH GROVE.—Address and clairvoyance by Mr. Mundy. 1st inst., Mrs. Harvey.

READING.—SPIRITUAL MISSION, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street gave addresses on "The Great Theme" and "More." 28th ult., clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Boddington.—C. S.

TORQUAY.—Inspirational address by Mrs. Thistleton, "In Search of God," followed by recognised clairvoyance and messages. 1st inst., address by Mr. Rugg-Williams, and clairvoyance.

PORTSMOUTH.—54, COMMERCIAL-ROAD.—Private Ben Edger gave an interesting address on "Guidance in the Voyage of Life."—J. W. M.

BOURNEMOUTH.—WILBERFORCE HALL, HOLDENHURST-ROAD.—Addresses and descriptions by Mrs. A. Boddington. 1st inst., address by Mrs. E. Mann; descriptions by Mrs. Martin.

BRISTOL.—THOMAS-STREET HALL, STOKES CROFT.—Evening service conducted by Mr. Eddy, assisted by Mr. Watkins, who gave clairvoyant descriptions. Other usual meetings.—W. G.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Meeting conducted by Mrs. Farley, address by Mr. Lethbridge, clairvoyance by Mr. Summers.—S. S.

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

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL.—Miss Florence Morse gave addresses and descriptions, morning and evening.—H. E.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Mrs. Neville's addressee, "Do the Dead Return?" and "Spirit Influence," were much appreciated. Her clairvoyance was good.—C. A. B.

TOTTENHAM.—684, HIGH ROAD.—Mr. Hayward gave an address on "What is Death?" and Mrs. Hayward clairvoyant descriptions.—N. D.

BIRMINGHAM.—PRINCE OF WALES ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BROAD-STREET.—Mrs. Taylor Woodall (Walsall) spoke at both services, and gave clairvoyant descriptions. 5th, two meetings were taken by Mrs. Taylor Woodall.—T. A.

EXETER.—DRUIDS' HALL, MARKET-STREET.—Morning, address by Mrs. Grainger on "The Perfect Way" followed by clairvoyance. Evening, address by Mr. C. Tarr on "The Criticism of Spiritualism." Clairvoyance by Mrs. Grainger.

MANOR PARK, E.—THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.—Morning, healing service; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, uplifting address and clairvoyance by Mrs. Miles Ord. 28th ult., ladies' meeting, address and clairvoyance by Mrs. Hayward. 30th, Mr. Sewell spoke on "The Use of Training."—E. M.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.—The local medium, Mrs. E. Scholes, spoke on "Personal Psychic Reminiscences" and "The Future Reformation." Descriptions by Mesdames Scholes, Charnley, Newton, and Miss Larney. The Lyceum showed an increased attendance.—E. B.

MANOR PARK, E.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STONE ROADS.—Morning, spiritual healing service conducted by Mr. B. W. Stevenson; afternoon, Lyceum; evening, discourse by Mr. J. H. Carpenter on "The Meaning of Life"; anthem by the choir.—S. T.

PORTSMOUTH TEMPLE.—VICTORIA-ROAD SOUTH.—Mrs. Agatha Spicer paid a first visit, giving addresses on "Past, Present, and Future," and "The New Theology," following each with clairvoyant descriptions. 30th ult., Miss Beaty Fletcher gave inspirational replies to written and verbal questions. Large audience; most interesting evening.—J. G. McF.

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