

Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

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"Light's" review of the work when first published occupied more than the whole of the first page of that issue (24th July, 1909.)

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

<i>A Recent Message through Mrs. Piper.</i> By Lilian Whiting	2
<i>Sir Oliver Lodge's Autobiography.</i> By Rosa M. Barrett	3
<i>Conan Doyle Memorial Fund.</i> By W. R. Bradbrook...	4
<i>Our New Year Message</i>	6
<i>Further Investigation of Duncan Mediumship.</i> By Margaret Vivian	8
<i>Christmas Tree for Spirit Children</i>	10

NEW YEAR

Again the flying hours complete
Another of the circling years;
Whose coming we are wont to greet
With mingled hopes and fears.

But hopes must wax as fears decline—
The Spirit bears us on its way.
Our watchword is that ancient line:
"Let nothing you dismay."

The old lights fade, but newer lights
Are shining through the cloudy bars—
We leave the Valley for the Heights,
And march towards the Stars.—D.G.

NOTES BY THE WAY

PREMONITIONS, FORTUNATE AND UNFORTUNATE

A CONTEMPORARY, quoting from Maeterlinck's book, *The Life of Space*, makes the statement that premonitions never announce a fortunate event. With profound respect for the great Belgian poet and mystic, one would suggest this is rather an over-statement, for there are many instances to the contrary. It reminds us of the common idea regarding the Highland second-sight as being exclusively confined to visions of tragedy or disaster. In that case also, seers occasionally foretell fortunate events. That such instances are rare is easily explained. Seers are very sensitive and their minds react most to the unhappy things of life, probably because there are so many of them. Doubtless a good deal turns on the cast of mind of the seer or prophet as to which particular line he takes. Usually there is a definite bias, and we may recall the case of Socrates who said that his *Daimon* (or guide) never told him what to do but only what *not* to do. There is a good deal of significance in that.

* * *

SENTIMENTALITY AND "SUMMERLAND"

OF late years there has sprung up in certain quarters a disposition to scoff at what is called the "Summerland." Those who ridicule are quite often Spiritualists, in the sense that they accept survival and communication. But the "Summerland" is to them a sentimental and enervating idea. They demand something more robust, and occasionally vent their feelings in such phrases as "sickly," "morbid," and the like. We see exactly what has happened—it is a part of the reaction which is going on everywhere around us against the emotional and sentimental notions of the past. Like all reactions it is liable to be carried to extremes—a tremendous revolt against the old theological conceptions, as unnatural as they were fanciful, resulting in many cases in the blindest kind of atheism. As regards the movement away from the conception of a "Summerland" of ease and beauty and in favour of an after-life of labour and effort, we regard it as a very healthy recoil even if it is occasionally carried to excess. Our own conviction, founded on experience, is that the world beyond contains many havens of peace and beauty for the weary ones of this world—they need them badly enough! But there is no eternal summer

holiday. When the soul is recuperated and made strong it finds its principal joy in labour and service.

* * *

ANIMAL TRAITS AND HUMAN NATURE

IT has been said in every one of us are traits of temper and character clearly traceable to our ascent from the lower animals, and that clairvoyance of a particular kind will reveal the particular kind of animal—tiger, wolf, fox, sheep or what not—most conspicuously represented in our composition. However this may be, most of us have noticed that many people shew in their physiognomy a resemblance to some particular beast or bird. Gladstone's face was strikingly leonine in type; there are the eagle types, and the fox, the ass, the horse, the deer and the hog are well represented in the multitude of human faces. This is, of course, to look purely at the physical aspects of the matter. If we look a little deeper we can find an even more suggestive study in examining the various mentalities and notice how curiously they correspond to animal traits. So that we do not find it at all incredible when we read of those visions of the greater seers who sometimes describe undeveloped spirits as appearing in the guise of various animals. This is usually regarded as purely symbolical, but there may well be some element of literal truth in it.

* * *

AVIATION AND ART

A RECENT article in the *Times* dealt in a picturesque way with the theory of Signor Marinetti, who holds that aeroplane flight is productive of inspiration in poetry; indeed, he has opened an exhibition to show what can be done both for painting and for poetry if these arts are carried on in aeroplanes. Mr. A. W. Trethewy in a letter to us writes: "It seems to me that the true explanation of the phenomenon is that the poetry so produced is automatic or inspirational writing of one kind or another, coming from the subliminal mind, sometimes with and sometimes without spirit guidance. The conditions in the aeroplane are favourable to its production, otherwise there is no difference between it and automatic or inspirational writing produced under other conditions, though perhaps there are writers who could produce it under no other conditions." Just now, when, according to the mystics, we have entered on the Aquarian Age (the "Age of the Air") Signor Marinetti's theory seems decidedly plausible. And then, of course, there is the "inspiration of the heights" for which we have hitherto had to ascend mountains.

A RECENT MESSAGE THROUGH MRS. PIPER

BY LILIAN WHITING

SOMETIME, during the war years, I received a very beautiful letter from a stranger (living in the Philadelphia suburb of Rosemont) signed Marion Bunner. My inquiry brought out from her that she was a cousin of the poet, Henry Cuyler Bunner (author of a most exquisite and unforgettable poem entitled "Arcady," which I had especially treasured) and from Miss Bunner's first letter a correspondence between us grew into an almost daily exchange of letters. We soon became "Marion" and "Lilian" to each other, and if our letters did not range over all the topics of the heavens above and the earth beneath it was only because we had not fully grasped such universal familiarity.

Marion had lived much in Italy: so had I. She was a devotee of poetry, in which I shared. She was, indeed, a devotee of all literature, so to speak, and a most finely critical and exquisitely appreciative one. Her letters were indeed literature—not the mere usual order of "unrelated fragments," as a New York critic designated the Cesnola statues. But her touch was as spontaneous as genius always is; and her divination of beauty in all forms and aspects of expression, was intuitive, whether in letters, art or thought. Her subtle and marvellous insight into both life and literature, provided me, for some years, with a spiritual companionship that was wholly unique.

Telepathy between us played so large a part that this aspect alone would lend itself to a chapter of reminiscences. Although Philadelphia and Boston are not remote from each other, it seemed never to occur to either of us that a personal meeting was possible. Our companionship was so entirely a matter of spirit to spirit that perhaps we should each have deprecated any touch of the objective life thrown into it.

After some eight years, I awakened, one March morning, from an experience ordinarily called a dream, but which was not one of those common vagaries. I know, because I have both: the ordinary "dream" and the actual experience in the partial release to the ethereal realm. In this I had been standing face to face with a woman whom I did not know, but I found myself repeating—

*He said: "She has a lovely face,
God in His mercy lend her grace."*

As I came to consciousness it was these lines, rather than the person whom I had seen, that held me: "Who wrote this?" I was mentally saying. I am sure I had known Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott" from my cradle up; but I was still so partially submerged in another state that it required a minute or two to "get back," and then the name of the poet, of course, came to me.

While I was dressing, I heard a rap on my sitting-room door; I stepped from my bedroom—opened the door—a telegram—Marion had passed into the ethereal world at six o'clock the night before! Then I knew why I had arisen that morning with a peculiar sense of unexplained rapture. There was no reason to give for being happier than on any other morning, but I was conscious of being so. Now I knew! I was sharing something of Marion's new experiences.

Curiously, I had never had a photograph of her; it had been touched upon, but at all events had not materialised. So, the "dream" experience had been that Marion and I stood face to face in the ethereal, and I, never having seen her, did not know: but lines of poetry in some vague way, had stirred between us, and not wholly irrelevant.

Marion's hand-writing had a singular resemblance to that of Longfellow; and she invariably wrote on paper of a faintly-golden gleam in its creamy white: her letters being treasures for the eye as well as for the mind.

Then and there was initiated the new order of companionship that may always (under certain conditions)

be established with friends in the Unseen. I can hardly say I have even missed her, because I have had her more closely than the postal system of the United States could provide.

As it has happened, I have never, in all these succeeding years, had any objective sign from her. The telepathic intercourse had been so unbroken that I had scarcely thought of any other manifestation. But a week or so before September came in I said to her: "Marion, can you not send me some outer sign?" with a feeling, too, that it amused her, as we so little needed any sign or signals. On September 3rd I received from Minerva Piper (Mrs. Piper's younger daughter) the following letter:

I have just a tiny message for you: it is literally out of the blue! And may, or may not, have any meaning for you. However I am told to send all such words to whomever they concern. The message is: "Marion Bun sends love to Lilian, and Kate, also; and they say all is well."

"Kate" was Kate Field who had passed many years ago, and whom Marion, while here, had strongly individualised. That they should meet in the ethereal realm is natural. In fact, I had long known that they were in close contact.

Mrs. Piper had never heard of even the existence of Marion Bunner. Our correspondence had been so compact of the inner life that (while it was no secret) I yet had seldom alluded to it except to my treasured friend, Miss Elise Emmons, of Leamington (England). While I am privileged to hold Mrs. Piper as an old (and very prized) friend, yet as half my year is passed in Italy, and she is absent from Boston in the summer, I have not seen her for a very long time.

The one point that is not "evidential" in this incident is that of my mental request to Marion to send me some objective sign, which request I had not (naturally) mentioned to any one, so I can offer no corroborative testimony on that. But I, myself, know that I did make this request.

May I add that our relations with friends who have passed on, are, undoubtedly, far more simple and natural than we realise.

The Brunswick, Boston, U.S.A.

PURPOSE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In "Clairaudient Transmission," reviewed in LIGHT some weeks ago, Dr. Henry Hollen, of Hollywood, California, described how the power of clear and instructive writing—in prose and poetry, had been bestowed on his wife, Mrs. Aura May Hollen. In "Consciousness and Its Purpose" (Keats Publications, 2 dols.), just published, the reader is presented with an example of Mrs. Hollen's prose work. The book is in three parts—Consciousness and its Purpose; Hypothesis of the Universal Mind; and Illumination. Communion between those on the physical plane and those who have passed to a higher plane is accepted and asserted as an accomplished fact, and reincarnation is regarded as a factor in development. "In each existence," it is stated, "lies the possibility of progress, and within each reincarnation the soul attains a greater capacity for knowledge. Whether this be an accumulation which enriches mind, or whether the reverse takes place, depends upon the power of Reason to dominate Desire, which in Man gives acquiescence to purpose." In form, the contents of the book are somewhat fragmentary, but to the ordinary reader this may be an advantage, since it makes possible the treatment of scores of subjects coming within the range of consciousness, from "The Fear Complex" to "Astronomical Deduction."

SIR O. LODGE'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY ROSA M. BARRETT

THE Editor of LIGHT asks me to add further details to those given in LIGHT for Dec. 18th and I gladly add some of my impressions about this most inspiring book.

It enhances one's admiration and, if one may say so, one's affection for this vivid personality—apparently as alert intellectually now, at eighty years of age, as in his early manhood. One item struck me as specially revealing the true greatness of character; the writer owns to and regrets what many would think a very trivial fault of many years ago—that of being when weary, sometimes irritable with his own children. "God forgive me," he writes, adding, "surely I have conquered this, but that is little virtue now, as I am surrounded with thoughtfulness and affection."

Sir Oliver speaks of his pleasure at finding his sons at once spending any money given them. "An expenditure of money is one of the things a child has to learn," and he laments his own too great thrift. "We were encouraged to save—my father having an extravagant vein he wished to curb in us."

He speaks of his indebtedness to Ruskin's teaching as giving him high ideals and saving him from the material view of life which he had learned from the teaching of Mill, Tyndall and others. Instead of production being the end and aim of life, Ruskin taught that healthy, happy human life was to be aimed at, at whatever price.

It is striking to remember how many of the most original thinkers have never been through the ordinary educational grind. Sir Oliver's schools taught him little in spite of his ardent desire for knowledge, and he seemed destined to a business life, acting as book-keeper and assistant to his father from the time he left school at fourteen till he was twenty-two. As a matter of fact no one observed any special ability in the boy. His mother—a remarkable woman—had previously done this work, in addition to managing a large household and bringing up a family. Sir Oliver acknowledges how much he owes to his mother, to an aunt who first helped him to a wider life and enabled him to attend lectures and classes in London, and to his own wife.

One of the earliest instances of psychical experience of which Sir Oliver heard was in connection with the death of the father of the lady whom he subsequently married. The wife had foreseen in a vivid dream the death of her husband. He appeared to her a second time after she had married again, saying, "He's a good man; he loves our child." It was not, however, till many years later that Sir Oliver's interest in psychical matters was aroused. When my brother, Professor (afterwards Sir William) Barrett, read a paper on "Thought Transference," in 1876 to the British Association—the historic paper that ultimately led to the formation of the Society for Psychical Research—Sir Oliver, though attending the meeting, was not interested enough to be present when it was read.

I was amused to read that at a lecture given by my brother at Hanley, where Sir Oliver's family were then living, on enlarging on some of the lecturer's experiments to a girl who was also present, she said to her mother on leaving, "How Oliver has improved, I am quite in love with him." This attraction grew and was mutual, and they eventually married.

One would like to quote many noteworthy sentences, such as: "Though our knowledge seems great, our ignorance is astonishingly greater."

"Whatever the meaning may turn out to be, any odd occurrence may be worth investigating, provided we can be sure it happened." So if psychical phenomena are facts, they must be "of ultimate importance to scientific men."

"Never close your minds and reject facts in deference to present-day authority. . . . Times change . . . see

(Continued at foot of next column.)

BISHOP AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

THOSE who desire to see the proofs of human Survival accepted by the Christian Churches will be greatly encouraged by the fact that serious attention is being given to the subject in the *Liverpool Review*, a Church of England Diocesan Magazine of which the Bishop of Liverpool is Editor.

In the November and December issues, there appear articles on "Psychical Research" by the Rev. A. F. Webbing, Rector of Risby, Bury St. Edmunds, whose name is familiar to readers of LIGHT as the author of that very notable book, *Something Beyond*. In his first article, Mr. Webbing briefly explains the history and results of Psychical Research in this country and adds:

"In our own time, however, active opposition to the facts dealt with by Psychical Research is confined mainly to the ignorant and unthinking. The phenomena are generally admitted by those who have investigated them. It is in interpreting the facts that the doctors disagree. Roughly, there are two schools of thought: those who attribute all the occurrences to powers inherent in living human beings and those who assert that, whilst much may be accounted for in this way, there is a very great number of facts which it is impossible to explain except upon what is called 'the spirit hypothesis,' that is, that the phenomena are due to the existence and activities of discarnate minds, *i.e.*, 'the dead,' as they are generally called. Both of these theories seem to indicate the spiritual nature of Man. Which of these interpretations is the true one? I do not presume to dogmatize for others, but, speaking for myself, I am quite convinced that the latter are demonstrably in the right."

In his second article, Mr. Webbing mentions a number of books which give an introduction to the subject. These articles, it is interesting to observe, were featured in the posters announcing the contents of the Review.

Even more important than the articles themselves, is the comment of the Editor of the Review (the Bishop of Liverpool). It is as follows:

"On another page we print the first part of an article on this subject (Psychical Research) which will interest those who are prepared to approach it with an open mind. There are many who have hitherto ignored it, partly because they are satisfied with their own conviction that personal survival is a truth which does not need the demonstration of evidence, and partly because they are repelled by the silly extravagances of some of those who advertise such evidence. But this should not prevent an unprejudiced consideration of well-attested experience presented by competent authorities. It is true that our Lord, while proclaiming the fact of a future life, was reticent about its mode and its surroundings. But it can hardly be claimed that He excluded the prospect of new light upon the fact. It seems a duty at least to 'prove' what seems to some honest and skilled observers to be a part of His continuous revelation of the truth. There is need, however, of a warning that the actual investigation of the communication between this world and the other should be left to those who are skilled in the work of research, as well as honest in drawing their conclusions from it. Much harm to themselves and others has been done by those who dabble in it from motives of mere curiosity."

(Continued from previous column.)

to it that the change is for the better." If psychical phenomena are true they may contain the germ of a vast development, opening a new department of knowledge.

"My testimony . . . to the reality of a spiritual world is based upon direct experience of facts."

"A spiritual world is the greatest of realities. . . . We can have an eye to the future, but we can only act in the present. . . . No knowledge is really unprofitable."

CONAN DOYLE MEMORIAL FUND

By W. R. BRADBROOK, Hon. Sec.

THE net. value of the Conan Doyle Memorial Fund to date is round about £2,000—a substantial sum but still inadequate for any endowment scheme of importance.

This includes an amount of £750 from an anonymous donor, whose generosity must have inspired many with the wish that they too were able to follow such an example and perhaps has awakened emulation in the hearts of a few who can and possibly—nay, *probably will*—enable the fund to be sufficiently strong to prove a beneficial influence in the Spiritualistic Movement.

The sentiment has been expressed on many a platform and in numberless press articles that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle must still be taking an active interest and exercising a strong influence in Spiritualism's progress. Often this has been rather a pious hope, like the orthodox view of Survival, than a clear and earnest conviction. Of this, however, we may be certain: that, as Sir Arthur ever sacrificed his own personal interests to the work of spreading the *truth*, so will he now, from his loftier viewpoint, soon make his influence, his spiritual and intellectual individuality, to be *felt* and recognised.

There are clear indications of this already—a photographic script here, a perfect spirit photograph there, and characteristic or intimate messages from various quarters bearing unmistakable evidences of identity, apart altogether from the heterogeneous mass of messages which do not ring quite true.

One may reasonably expect that if and when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle attains the power of manifesting his characteristic force through clear channels, he will lose no time in advancing the work of his latter years in the body. His pioneer spirit, strengthened by richer experiences and clearer vision, may conceivably traverse opinions he once held—indeed, it would be strange if any of us found no cause in the fuller light to revise our mundane views of spiritual verities, although whether we should be equal to the sacrifice of returning to earth-conditions is another matter and probably one in the hands of the Higher Command.

Meanwhile the Conan Doyle Psychic Bookshop, Library and Museum still meet, so far as possible, the enquiries and fill the needs of correspondents in all parts of the world. In its more commodious, even if temporary, quarters at The Friendship Centre, 85 Lancaster Gate, London, W.2, through the interest and kindly co-operation of Mr. Stephen Foster, there are to be seen a most wonderful collection of photographs and other artistic exhibits tastefully arranged around a library of some two thousand volumes, from which readers or investigators may select volumes in leisurely comfort not only on every day of the week but also on Sundays.

There is one thing lacking. The need has been proved already for general accommodation for Spiritualists visiting this country. It should be possible to add a club, holding a welcome to all who agree upon this one central principle. Once established on sound lines, such a venture should be largely self-supporting. The Memorial Fund ought, however, to be considerably increased in order to justify the establishment of the larger scheme indicated.

CESARE LOMBROSO'S "AFTER DEATH—WHAT?"

Mrs. S. A. Marson has issued a second edition of her pamphlet giving extracts from Cesare Lombroso's remarkable book, by permission of the publisher, Mr. T. Fisher Unwin. The pamphlet gives some of the notable cases of psychic evidences recorded by Lombroso, and should be of value in directing attention to the reality of phenomena, as well as, incidentally, to the book itself. Priced at sixpence, it can be obtained of Mrs. Marson, 405, Archway Road, London, N.6., post free 7d.

THE THREE WISE MEN

MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART ON THE MINISTRY OF REVELATION

AT the Grotian Hall, on Sunday evening, Mrs. St. Clair Stobart took as the theme of her address the story of the visit of the three Magi to the Babe of Bethlehem. King Herod, troubled at the suggestion of a rival king, had called together the priests and scribes, who were the interpreters of Prophecy, to enquire of them where Christ would be born. And it was they who, with faith in an old prophecy, were able to give Herod the information he required.

But who were these Magi (from whom our word magician is derived)? They were Zoroastrian Priests, of Chaldea and Assyria. And Zoroaster, who had lived 2,500 years B.C., was the embodiment of a Spirit so Christ-like, that we may justifiably regard him as an Incarnation of the Cosmic Christ. One thousand years before the birth of Jesus he had taught the Immortality of the Soul, and he anticipated by 3,500 years modern teachers of the movement known as "New Thought." His Bible—the Zend Avesta—consists of conversations between Zoroaster and the great God-Spirit, whom he named Ormuzd. These revelations were taken down by Zoroaster, on sheepskins, with a wooden pen, charred black in the fire. It is believed that he learned much wisdom also from Melchisedec, and that the Zoroastrian Melchisedecian teachings were further-carried on by Daniel. And since the Parsees were Zoroastrian pilgrims who landed in India 1,200 years ago we can trace an interesting link between the religion of the Jewish Abraham—who also learned from Melchisedec—the religion of the Persians, Assyrians and Chaldeans, the Indian Parsees, and our own Christian religion. For the background of all religions is the same, being derived by revelation from the great God-Spirit, through some human Incarnation fitted to receive the revelations.

Mrs. Stobart exemplified this principle of the Incarnation at intervals throughout the Ages of the Cosmic Christ, by describing events in the lives and religions of Krishna (said to have lived 4,000 B.C.) and of Osiris (of 20,000 years ago) and she shewed striking resemblances and parallelisms with the life and religion of Jesus of Nazareth.

"We are thus," she said, "made aware of the unity of all revelation and are led to the belief that these greatest revelations have all come by means of the Great Spirit known as the Christ, whose latest Incarnation was our own dearly-beloved and honoured Jesus of Nazareth. Our conception of religion is thus expanded to a magnificent universal cosmic scheme of Revelation."

Mrs. Stobart concluded by pointing out that, thus seen by the light of universal Spirit-history, the picturesque episode of the visit of the three Wise Men from the East, opens up windows in the heavens and on the earth, which are generally kept sealed by the Churches. We can see that it was no King of the Jews whom these interpreters of prophecy, these wise diviners, these great Chaldean occultists, these priests of Zoroaster, came to worship, but that

The Shepherds and the Wise Men all,
The Vision had to see
The Christ within the Infant
To *this* they bowed the knee.

INDEX FOR "LIGHT" FOR 1931

With our next issue, there will be included, as a supplement, a detailed Index for LIGHT for the year 1931. For the preparation of this Index we are indebted to Capt. A. A. Carnell, Honorary Treasurer of the L.S.A., who has given much time and care to the work.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(The views and statements of correspondents are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, who occasionally prints, in the interests of free discussion, letters with which he does not agree.)

MR. BRADLEY AND CHURCH DIGNITY

Sir,—Referring to the "dignity" of the Catholic Church (mentioned by Mr. Dennis Bradley in his book "... And After") I should like to know what Mr. Bradley thinks of the scenes enacted in the Cathedral at Naples on September 20th last, at the ceremony of the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, when the crowds who could not crush into the cathedral filled the square outside and mistook the cheering in the church which greeted the appearance of the phials for signs of joy that the liquefaction had taken place—a quick liquefaction is believed to be an omen of prosperity, of immunity from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

The wildest joy seized the crowds in the square. The signal was given for the batteries in the old fortress to fire their salute. State lottery ticket sellers did a roaring trade and fireworks went off. Priests came out and vainly tried to explain that there was no miracle yet. They could not get a hearing; not until the Cardinal himself appeared did they realise their mistake. It took over two hours for the blood to liquefy, and by that time the people, both within and without the cathedral, were in a state of hysteria. The long process of liquefaction was interpreted as an omen of bad trade and an eruption of Vesuvius before long.

We must, of course, make every allowance for the Latin temperament, but what would happen if such scenes occurred at a Spiritualist Church?

As a Catholic (3rd order of St. Francis), I have known lots of stables and outhouses used as churches. There was a stable used as one in 1918 at a place only 19 miles from London. But what of it? Personally, I can feel nearer to God in the open air than in Westminster Cathedral.

Mr. Bradley remarks in one of his charming books that "Children conscripted in birth, must be free in life." Does he believe that any Catholic is ever free to follow his own conscience? He knows better. One cannot help thinking that it is a cause for regret with Mr. Bradley that Christ should have been born in a stable rather than in a West End Nursing Home!

BIANCA UNORNA.

* * *

"SPIRIT RADIO"

Sir,—Psychic Science has so advanced that the time is not far off when we will have the "spirit radio" or the "spirit telegraph." Every wireless and radio man interested in psychics should start to work on such an electrical machine.

My idea of the machine is something like the radio, that could register the fine forces of one person sitting near the machine. If a spirit makes the force a little stronger, a click or rap could be heard or a needle in a gauge move to one side. Everybody has some little force, so why not try to capture it so that a spirit could work on it. The whole secret is in the radio conditions.

I hope you will do all you can to get the wireless and radio men to work on this.

OSCAR HERRMANN.

Rue Scribe, Paris.

* * *

HELPED BY MOZART

Sir,—Since June last, Mozart has also been helping me. He gave his name as "Wolfgang" at first, but in October admitted that he was Mozart.

His handwriting is very similar to that of Stainton Moses (M.A. Oxon), though I am now able to distinguish between them by the measure of force with which they write. There is no mistaking Stainton Moses, but Mozart is a little more hesitating as though unfamiliar with writing in English characters.

So far, I have no proof that this friendly spirit is Mozart the musician. If I could obtain a specimen of his own

handwriting in life and compare it with what I now obtain—it would not be "proof" but it might be an interesting confirmation of identity, or perhaps your correspondent T.J.L., who is in closer association than I am with Mozart, could get some corroborative evidence from him for me.

W.A.R.

(NOTE.—In our issue of Dec. 11th there was a letter from "T.J.L." saying that a guide claiming to be Mozart has written through his hand.—ED.)

* * *

IS THE UNIVERSE MOTIONLESS

Sir,—In his address to the Mathematical and Physics Section of the British Association on 29 September last Sir Arthur Eddington, dealing with "*the rate of recession of the spiral nebulae*," stated, according to *The Times* report, his belief that "*the observed motions of the nebulae were genuine, so that we must accept this alarmingly rapid dispersal of the nebulae with its important consequences in limiting the time available for evolution.*" (The italics are mine).

Clearly, Sir Arthur argued from movements as movements. He would have been disrespectful to his audience and his speech would have been pointless if on such an occasion he had used language which concealed his thought.

No astronomer could accept Mr. Armstrong's contention that the physical universe is motionless. The science of astronomy is based on two of the oldest inferences of the human mind—that light reaches us from the sun, moon and stars, and heat from the sun. If the universe is devoid of movement, neither light nor heat can travel in any way from one part of the universe to another.

The manner in which we are provided with these remains a mystery, and, as light does not "make its report"—to repeat Sir Arthur Eddington's phrase—the sun, moon and stars are unexplained images of unknown things. The foundation of astronomy is wholly subverted.

Brookside, Wraybury.

GODFREY BURCHETT.

* * *

SPIRITUALISTS AND DISARMAMENT

Sir,—In view of the supreme importance of the meeting of the World's Disarmament Conference in February, the Officers of the Spiritualists' Union suggest to all Churches and Members of the Union and all other Spiritualist Organisations, that Sunday, January 24th, be Disarmament Sunday, and that a combined effort be made to concentrate those Thought Forces (so much talked about) and to direct them outwards for the success of the Conference.

Recognising the generally grave state of the world, and that nearly all Governments are pursuing the paths which inevitably lead to war, we realise that any control over the actions of these Governments can only be exercised by the Will of the People being exercised positively in the direction of Peace. We therefore suggest that during the month of January every Spiritualist Church shall arrange for a *Two Minutes' Silence* during every Service, during which all present shall unite in silent prayer, concentrating their thoughts on this message: *May all forces and persons working for peace through disarmament be strengthened by the divine power within us.*

It is further suggested that this procedure shall culminate on Sunday, January 24th, when a united effort shall be made for the *Two Minutes' Silence* to be observed as near as possible to 11-15 a.m. and 7 p.m. The practice to be continued for the duration of the Disarmament Conference. If all will join in this effort some measure of success must result. How much will depend upon the amount of Divine Power we have generated of Peace within our own hearts and between each other.

J. B. M'INDOE, President.

A. G. NEWTON, Vice-President.

J. M. STEWARD, Treasurer.

G. F. BERRY, General Secretary.

Light

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OUR NEW YEAR MESSAGE

IT has long been the custom to treat each departing year as something we are glad to "see the back of," and to welcome the one newly-arrived as full of promise and happy augury. The old year, in short, is dismissed with something like a parting kick, and the new greeted with extended hand.

We of LIGHT, who have seen many an old year go out and a new year come in, do not look on the event quite in this fashion. We have found that every year has been fruitful of good when its tale was told. The tribulations and disasters we took as a necessary part of the story, but not the most important one. We could always find it in our hearts to give the old year our blessing as it passed into the dark backward and abysm of time. And as to the new one, we had learned by experience not to expect too much from it, although our confidence that it would mark new notches in our record of achievements was never betrayed.

We look back on 1931 as fulfilling and more than fulfilling our always modest expectations. Our subject has gone forward in every direction, whether we look at it from the standpoint of scientific discovery or popular propaganda. The very troubles of the world at large have contributed to that result. Affliction, it has been said, is good for the soul, and as it is the soul and not the body with which we are mainly concerned, that is in the right direction.

We have advanced measurably, even if the evidences of the fact are not all on the surface where everyone may see them. Many things happen behind the scenes—things of moment and of pleasant significance. We are made aware of them, but find no temptation to proclaim

them from the house-tops. The time is not yet ripe for that. Publicity in some directions is often of doubtful utility—premature publicity is always pernicious. We have seen enough to justify our conviction that as the old order of life recedes, the new one—a veritable new Dispensation—comes in to an exactly proportionate degree. Of course it means a great clash of forces. We are in the midst of it now, but we view the material disruptions and disasters without dismay. Looked at aright they are the pledge and justification of our faith that the framework of a new and better world is being built up under the ruins of the old.

And so, looking back on the year whose last sands are trembling in the glass, and forward to the one before us, we are conscious of nothing but gratitude for the one and good hope for the other. Basing our vision of the future on the sound foundation of experience of the past, we should say that 1932 promises new and startling developments in psychic evidences. We are conscious of a certain churning of the darkness which hints at fresh revelations of the nearness of that other world from which light and power are now pouring into this one to an ever-increasing degree. The afflictions of the time are bringing with them a kind of attrition and attenuation of the mundane side of life. The curtain between the two worlds may not be rent, but it is growing perceptibly thinner.

It has been frequently prophesied that communication will eventually become as regular and trustworthy as inter-mundane communication by wireless or telegraph wire. Of that we are assured, and if the New Year passes without some development in this direction we shall feel something like disappointment.

But in any case our mood is optimistic. We shall not shrink from "earthquake and eclipse" knowing the purpose they serve, and that the end is sure—the redemption of life. So "here's to the year that's awa'"; and to all our friends and readers, old and new, we give the old wish; "A Good New Year to one and all!"

A NEW YEAR'S WISH

Now empty is the glass, its sands have run.
Unstayed by grief, unchecked by joy's bright hour,
Their measured swiftness with relentless power
Swept past the failures, and the triumphs won.
Gone for all time is 1931;
Yet still its threat'ning clouds above us lower,
Only by faith we see the shining tower
That hope, the undefeated, has begun.
Shall we not help the building to acquire
Its perfect form by patient cheerfulness,
'Til through the gloom its gleaming tower and spire
Shall shine in radiance on a world's distress?—
May joy and laughter light the year for you
And earth be glad in 1932.

E. HALL HAINS.

SIDELIGHTS

DO ANIMAL PETS SURVIVE?

Those who believe that their animal pets survive death and who look forward to meeting them on the "other side" will have their belief and their hope strengthened by the stories told by Mr. J. Morewood Dowsett in his book *How Animals Live* (Hutchinson 12/6), reviewed recently in *LIGHT*. These stories reveal animals as exhibiting in varying degrees some at least of the virtues supposed to be exclusively human—such as love, patience, fidelity and self-sacrifice. "I have found most of the domestic kind capable of generosity and forbearance," says the author. "They are forgiving under circumstances that would provoke an outburst of wrath from a human being and they show a remarkable sense of discrimination. This may be observed in any household where a dog or cat has to associate with young children. The animal generally has to put up with much annoyance and often physical suffering when the youngsters (without any intention of cruelty) force it into unnatural attitudes, toss it in the air or swing it by its tail in the course of their games. It is seldom that we hear of any retaliation by the animal, generally it suffers in a silence which is only broken by a warning growl when the limit of endurance is passed."

* * *

A DOG'S MEMORY.

That animals have memories of which they make intelligent use, Mr. Dowsett is able to prove by many interesting examples. There was, for instance, a dog which accompanied its master on a trading ship and which, having been ordered not to go ashore at an English port because of the quarantine regulations, was ever afterwards able to distinguish English ports from other ports. "He never goes ashore at an English port," said his sailor-master, "but in other countries, where they are not so strict, he likes to see the different places and make friends with the dogs there. When we come to England, he knows that dogs that don't stay on board get into trouble. Mr. Dowsett conjectures that this dog "did its thinking through its nose" and recognised the forbidden shores by some "collective racial odour." Be that as it may, there *was* thinking based on memory, and there *was* intelligence comparable in kind if not in degree with that of man, and therefore some ground for assuming an individuality which may survive. It will be interesting to most readers of his book—and a little astonishing—to find that Mr. Dowsett is endeavouring to introduce the grass snake into the list of domestic animals. "The British grass snake," he says, "is a perfectly harmless reptile and often renders good service to man by preying on the mice that infest our houses. When tamed and kept as a pet, he is capable of great affection." A grass snake as a substitute for a cat is an idea which ought to appeal to those who are fond of novelties.

* * *

GOOD ADVICE.

Giving advice to those who think that Spiritualism "is of the Devil," a writer in the *Cambridge Daily News*, who signs himself "Dum Spiro Spero," says: "Get to know a few deep-thinking honest padres of the Protestant churches, and also get to know an equally honest and devout number of Roman Catholic priests, and let him in strictest confidence discuss the whole matter with them, and I am on to bet a good deal that after having had such talks he will think many times before saying that Spiritualism is an eruption from hell."

* * *

GENTLE BUT EFFECTIVE.

A gently-phrased but very effective reply is given by "A.G.A." in the Ipswich *Evening Star* to "Old Fashioned Gospel" who had asserted that Spiritualism is con-

demned by the Bible. "The Bible, from cover to cover, is full of psychic incidents, some good, some bad, and it is uncharitable on the part of your correspondent to associate the faith of Spiritualists with 'doctrines of devils.' Does he not appreciate that those who contend that only evil spirits are permitted to visit the earth must admit the possibility of Moses and Elias, who appeared and spoke on the mountain, being in reality impersonating demons? Why cannot he see that we have the best of precedents for speaking with the dead if the privileged opportunity comes our way? Can he not understand that the difference between the seer and the sorcerer is the difference between the use and the abuse of the same power?"

* * *

"INNS" ON THE "OTHER SIDE."

It is rather startling to read that a Primitive Methodist Minister, the Rev. W. Hughes, thinks that the "many mansions" of the After-life may mean "resting places or even inns." As reported by the *Rugby Observer*, Mr. Hughes in explanation of this suggestion, said: "Public-houses and clubs were the perverted expression of a great social instinct. Heaven would meet that instinct and satisfy it in a nobler way. God had never warped our best instincts." This is something very different from the orthodox Methodist ideas of palms and harps and golden streets—and probably much nearer the reality.

* * *

"CONTROLS" AND "GUIDES."

Mr. Arthur Ford, whose lectures and clairaudient descriptions are still fresh in the memories of many people in this country—has been very active since his return to the United States of America. Speaking in Boston recently (says T.A.S. in *The Banner of Life*) concerning controls and guides he explained that the control occupied a very different position from the guide—the control being a very intimate part of the Medium, almost his other self. He likened the control to the wire that connects the two parties to a telephone conversation, with no more real responsibility for the message than has the wire. He illustrated this in the case of his own control, "Fletcher." People would say, Fletcher said this, or Fletcher told me so and so, which was only partly true. Most of the information that a Medium gives comes from the spirit friends of the sitter. When the information is of a technical nature such as law, medicine, etc., it comes from a spirit expert in those departments and while 'Sunshine,' 'Rosebud' or 'Bright Eyes' deliver the message they are really only the wire through which the message passes."

WE WOULD NOT HAVE YOU MOURN

We would not have you mourn for then we grieve
Your loss with you. But we would have you share
The riches of our state. We would not leave
You to your tears, the weighted cross you bear.

There is no barrier—none. We have not died,
But you are dead. O, send your spirit free,
Break down the walls you build that ever hide
The Risen Sun, the Earth you will not see.

We would not have you mourn, nor count the years
Lengthening to their close, nor hope to be
Resigned. Know there is joy too deep for tears,
And vision earth-bound eyes can never see;

Here dread can find no place, nor is there chime
Of dying hours. O, hear! The symphony
Transcending speech compels you *now*, for time
Is but the threshold of eternity.

Peter Williams.

(Author of "A-Hunting....." and other poems published 1930 by Anglo-American Publications Ltd.)

FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF DUNCAN MEDIUMSHIP

BY MARGARET VIVIAN

I HAVE recently had a series of twelve sittings with Mrs. Victoria Duncan, of Edinburgh, and the results have been remarkable. The circle consisted of six sitters, four of whom were present at all the seances, which were held in a good red light. Last March, I attended a Duncan sitting arranged by the London Spiritualist Alliance, and I was unable to reconcile what I then saw with the adverse reports subsequently published both by the L.S.A. Committee and Mr. Harry Price. It is, of course, obvious that these reports were the result of careful and conscientious investigation, and the contradictory findings of the L.S.A. Committee and Mr. Price on the one hand, and of Dr. Rust and Mr. M'Indoe on the other, puzzled me considerably. I therefore invited Mrs. Duncan to come to Bournemouth, and I now venture to put forward a possible solution of the problem. Mrs. Duncan is, in my opinion, even more sensitive to her surroundings than the majority of physical mediums, and the good or bad results may be due to one or all of four possible causes.

(1). *The mental attitude of the sitters.* With a circle of strangers, the phenomena are poor, but as the sitters gain the confidence of the Medium and of the control, Albert, so the results rapidly improve. If the sitters are strongly prejudiced in favour of the fraud theory, they will get manifestations that have every appearance of trickery.

POWER FROM THE SITTERS

(2). *The psychic powers of the sitters.* Albert asserts that he derives much of the 'power' from the sitters, and it seems probable that if the circle is composed of persons who have little or no psychic force, the phenomena will be weak or even entirely absent. In our group we had two fairly strong Mediums, and Albert thanked them for the help they gave him. In this connection it is noteworthy that when we had a poor sitting these sitters felt no ill effects, but after a brilliantly successful seance, both of them complained of severe headache and exhaustion.

(3). *The inhibitory power of some sitters.* This is merely a hypothesis, but it seems likely that just as one sitter may help by contributing psychic force, so another may inhibit the phenomena by a kind of negative power. Probably the sitter is unaware of it and he may be an enthusiastic and keenly interested member of the circle. This possible cause is hard to prove, as other factors might account for a poor sitting and it would be necessary to hold several seances with and without the suspected person before attributing to him the poor results. We were fortunate in having a circle composed of apparently suitable sitters. We came with open minds, keenly observing the manifestations, but with no bias in favour of fraud. Whether even better results would be obtained by a group composed entirely of mediumistic sitters, I do not know.

(4). *A fourth possible explanation of the appearance of what look like fraudulent phenomena* is based on a remark of Albert's that, when the conditions are unsatisfactory, it is sometimes possible for an evil intelligence to get through. As a rule, the door-keeper is able to keep such beings out, but when such an intelligence forces his way into the circle he may succeed in producing phenomena that have every appearance of fraud. He may even 'apport' gauze or a rubber glove with a view to discrediting the Medium. This theory will no doubt be ridiculed by those who do not understand the subtlety and complexity of mediumship. But is it more incredible than the proved fact that a Medium can enable us to see materialised forms?

I will now give a brief account of some of the phenomena observed during our sittings. The first sitting was poor. We saw a muslin-like substance issuing from the Medium's mouth and the voices were in no way evidential. At the second sitting we saw several forms of various sizes, one of them standing beside the Medium with a bright "spirit light" shining on him.

We then decided to test the regurgitation theory by administering pastilles that contained enough methylene blue to dye the contents of the stomach. The Medium swallowed them in my presence on two occasions and she was kept under observation from the time she took them until she entered the cabinet. Before each sitting, one of the sitters watched her completely undress and put on the black garment that remained in the seance room between the sittings. The ectoplasm was invariably snow-white. From the fourth sitting onwards we saw immense quantities of ectoplasm, equivalent to at least a dozen yards of cheese-cloth. We were allowed to touch it and it felt like cold, wet putty with a faint disagreeable smell.

As a rule, the forms were closely veiled, but on two occasions we saw the actual features, one of which was definitely recognised by a sitter as his niece, a slender girl of fifteen, who gave her name. The forms spoke independently and we saw their lips moving.

Mrs. Duncan, when she arrived, knew none of the sitters but myself. The others, therefore, adopted pseudonyms: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Mary, so that when any of the forms gave names, it was good evidence of their identity. Names were frequently given, both of the figures and sitters. The above-mentioned niece said: "Why do you call him Matthew? His name is Frank." (correct). Another materialised form said: "His name is not Mark. It is Will, my husband. My name is Grace." (both names correct).

Once we had an apport of half a large cucumber that fell suddenly into a sitter's lap. Another time, Albert said he would cut off a lock of a spirit lady's hair and hand it to her brother. He did so and the hair, which was dry and normal-looking, was quite unlike that of the Medium or of any of the sitters. Once we saw the forms adorned with glittering jewels that looked like stones of many colours, which Albert informed us were spirit lights. At the seventh sitting, Albert promised that at the next seance he would bring a blue spirit light in the form of a large shell. He did so, and the forms carried it in their hands so that their fingers were clearly seen, outlined against the blue light. Other forms showed their bare feet and several times slapped a sitter's hand with a resounding smack. A young girl brought a ball, the size of a tennis ball, which she asked a sitter to catch, but it fell into the cabinet and she explained that it was attached to her person by a cord too short to allow of its being thrown into the circle. Meanwhile, a spirit light revealed the Medium sitting in her chair.

SENSITIVENESS OF THE MEDIUM

The extreme sensitiveness of the Medium is illustrated by an incident that occurred at the fourth sitting. An aluminium trumpet stood on the floor, and a sitter's chair accidentally knocked it over. Albert announced that he must close the sitting because the Medium's face had been burned by the sudden re-absorption of the ectoplasm, owing to the noise, and she was so agitated that he could do no more. When she emerged from the cabinet, there was a red mark on her face together with a little blood-stained saliva.

The best phenomena were obtained when the sitters

(Continued at foot of next column.)

"POWER" ON THE WORLD CRISIS

At the Fortune Theatre, London, on Sunday evening last, Mrs. Dorothea Frood Hyams, who presided, referred to the present world-tribulation as being largely due to fear-thought—fear of poverty and fear of disasters of all kinds. These fears were the outcome of selfishness and lack of faith. In place of this negative thought she advocated strong positive and constructive thinking. The world to-day was offered the choice between Christ and Chaos, and that had been the keynote of the addresses from "Power" through Mrs. Morris, to which they had listened Sunday after Sunday.

Mr. Laurence Cowen offered some remarks appropriate to the season, and referred to the Old Testament prophecies of the coming of a Messiah which saw fulfilment in the birth of Jesus.

"Power's" address (through Mrs. Meurig Morris) was more than ordinarily impressive as in graphic language he described the Cosmic Christ, alluding to the symbology presented by the solar system with the sun and its satellites, those outward and visible signs of interior spiritual principles. Alluding to the exalted spirits who, under the Supreme Ruler, ordered the affairs of the Universe, he made special reference to St. Michael and his work in the great world-crisis of to-day. There were the lower spiritual forces to be overcome—those undeveloped souls who had carried to the next world their gross appetites and passions, the emanations from which met and mingled with the thoughts of those in this world who were of the same low grade of development. Hence there was need of a great purging for until the interior conditions were cleansed the world would not be ready for the revelation of Spirit.

(Continued from previous column.)

sat quietly and passively while a portable wireless set supplied soft music.

To sum up, I may say that all the sitters are convinced that they witnessed genuine materialisations. Mrs. Duncan could not have brought anything into the room, and the regurgitation theory is ruled out by the methylene blue test and by the X-ray photographs taken in Scotland, which show a normal oesophagus and stomach. The voices were evidential in that names were given that were unknown to anyone in the room, except the sitter who was being addressed. The apports, spirit lights and jewels cannot be ascribed to fraud, and that Mrs. Duncan is a genuine and very remarkable Medium we have no shadow of doubt.

Some physical Mediums may be suitable for scientific investigation with an elaborate system of control, but not Mrs. Duncan in her present stage of development, and I am of opinion that, whenever she sits with a group of persons who have a strong bias in favour of fraud, the manifestations will be unconvincing and may take on the appearance of cheese-cloth and rubber gloves. This is perhaps unfortunate, but it is an undoubted fact.

What settled the matter once and for all, as far as I am concerned, was the appearance of the unveiled faces. Voices might be explained away by telepathy; muslin might conceivably be introduced into the cabinet by amazingly clever conjuring, but I defy any member of the Magic Circle to produce recognizable faces of deceased persons whose lips move when they address their friends.

At a final sitting, we succeeded in obtaining a flash-light photograph of Albert's tall form, standing at the opening of the curtains.

REPORT CONFIRMED BY SITTERS

Having read the above report, prepared by Dr. Margaret Vivian, other sitters signed the following certificate.

We, the undersigned sitters, testify to the accuracy of the above report. (Signed) CHRISTINA M. WORLEY

THOMAS ASHBY

N. MAC. G.

FRANCIS P. REID

RAY'S AND REFLECTIONS

The strong soul never puts forth all his strength against a weak antagonist, just as the Roman general said he never sent out a legion where a cohort was sufficient. It is a question of economising means to ends, and the lesson is one to be learned by some of the protagonists of Spiritualism who are inclined to waste a great deal of energy on opponents who are not worth powder and shot.

* * *

Mrs. Emilie Hinchliffe, who is now so well-known as a result of her book and her lectures describing the return of her husband, Captain Hinchliffe, the airman who lost his life in an attempt to fly the Atlantic, is refreshingly outspoken in her comments on a certain class of Spiritualists who consult their spirit friends about every circumstance of daily life—even, as she says, whether they should take an umbrella when they go out! The rebuke is not unmerited, although we must be patient with those who in psychic matters are still in the infant class.

* * *

It is possible to prove some things by photography, but not everything. I can recall how Mr. Gladstone, in Parliament many years ago, produced photographs in connection with some alleged outrages in Mitchelstown in Ireland. He said that photography could not lie. On the following day a waggish M.P. passed round a photograph shewing the Grand Old Man in a dishevelled condition leaning in an evident state of insobriety against the door of a low public house! Under the picture were the words: "Photography cannot lie!"

* * *

Mediums, as we know, are rarely capable of sustaining a test under distracting conditions; they are usually too sensitive for such a purpose. Still, I have known some instances to the contrary. The two which come most readily to mind were those remarkable clairvoyants, John Slater and Bert Reese, who paid visits to this country from America many years ago. Bert Reese was hauled up for fortune telling in New York, but gave the Court such astonishing proofs of the reality of his clairvoyance that he was acquitted. The same thing happened to John Slater in one of the Western States. But I never heard of any English Mediums or psychics demonstrating their powers in open Court in this fashion. Doubtless the American climate is more favourable to psychic manifestations than the British one.

* * *

There was a Scottish writer, a friend of R. L. Stevenson, if I remember aright, who wrote a delightful essay entitled "On Doing Without." And now the time has come to put that excellent phrase into practice, but not in an abject fashion. One can be too submissive. If our spiritual science teaches us anything, it is the power of the will over circumstances, to give us not so much what we want as what we need. It is a silent power and least in evidence where there is much self-assertion and pushfulness. In the contest between celestial "powers" and material "forces," the "powers" always have the upper hand at last. That is illustrated constantly in the psychic region, and it is no less true in the affairs of the world at large.

D.G.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE NEW YEAR

The New Year provides an excellent opportunity for readers of LIGHT to help us by ordering their copies direct from this office.

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CHRISTMAS TREE FOR "SPIRIT CHILDREN"

BY R. H. SAUNDERS

IT is some ten years since the Editor of *LIGHT* entitled my account of a service held round a Christmas tree as "A Christmas Tree for the Children of Two Worlds." The idea was new then, but in many parts of the world it has been adopted since, thus making for the happiness of unnumbered spirit-children, and the little ones in the hospitals to which the tree and its toys are sent.

We held our office of devotion this year, with Mrs. Roberts Johnson as Medium, and we were told that many thousands of spirit-children were present, and the names of over fifty were obtained, some giving names, street and even town. Materialised hands of the little ones shook the tree and the excitement of the children was as great as would be such a function on earth. Occasionally the voice of an adult spirit was heard enjoining quiet! Every toy, gift or card upon the tree had its proper claimant; and at times a dear little voice in pathetic tones would say, "There's no toy for me—I'm looking for one."

An old spirit thanked us for what we had done, and I observed, "It's little enough." "Little!" exclaimed the spirit, "never regard service or help of any kind as of little moment. Did not your Teacher hold in high estimation the tiny tribute of the widow—to Him it was a Royal Gift, and of greater value than those who give of their super-abundant wealth. Ah! He knew the Kingdom of Heaven was in the child, and it is the privilege of parents to foster it. I was a follower of Mahomet but I revere your Great Teacher. I have searched your Sacred Books as I do my own Al Koran, and I quote you 'Suffer little children to come unto Me.' He loved little children. The good God never intended children to be unhappy—their tears are pearls gathered by the High Spirits and taken to Heaven, and brought back as blessings to others. Joyous hearts are round this tree anxious to see its treasures."

I thank, through the columns of *LIGHT*, "One who loved little children," and other anonymous donors of toys, etc. There was added weight given to the Christmas Tree, and they have the assurance of imparting much happiness to the little ones.

ROOM FOR COMPASSION

To the Editor of *LIGHT*,

Sir,—In Spiritualist writings one continually comes across the doctrine that we reap as we sow and it seems fair and just—by analogy with the plant world inescapable.

Sometimes, however, I have thought that this insistence on reaping as we sow (a doctrine very suitable, naturally, for the uncoguid and all who feel a complacent assurance) is carried too far and may even induce spiritual pride. The experience of mankind shows that there has always been a place somewhere for overlooking faults or amendment. History is full of such cases. Both the Testaments abound in adjurations to turn over a fresh leaf and all will be forgotten. It may be said that that was suitable for the early days of man—the "babes and sucklings" stage—but that now we should be of a more robust fibre.

It may be so, and if it be true that Spiritualism is not a religion but just a scientific statement of fact about our future with some implications as to our conduct on another shore, there is nothing more to be said. For myself, I don't take that view of it at all—I believe there must be room somewhere for the virtue of compassion and that there will be as many of those referred to once as "publicans and sinners" have a good show as those who are near perfection.

As a side issue, we shall not do much against the established religions of the world—the whole thing is too icy—they will keep most of their main beliefs and take as many of ours as they do not find incompatible.

E. HARVEY.

DR. FRANK BALLARD

With much regret we record the death—which took place at Newlands, Ranmoor, Sheffield, on December 21st—of the Rev. Frank Ballard, D.D., president of the Sheffield Society for Psychical Research, and one of the best-known and most highly gifted of the older generation of Wesleyan Ministers. He was 80 years of age. In addition to being a Doctor of Divinity, he had the degrees of M.A. and B.Sc. (London).

Dr. Ballard was especially noted as a writer and lecturer on Christian evidences and for many years was set apart for this work by the Wesleyan Conference. Since his retirement some years ago, he has devoted his energies largely to demonstrating the truth of Survival as proved by psychical research, although he never described himself as a Spiritualist.

He had arranged to lecture for the Sheffield Society and, only a few days before his death, selected the title as "Brain, Mind, Personality, Character—a Study for the Times." Mr. O. J. Wendlandt (Secy. of the Sheffield S.P.R.), who was very closely in touch with him, says he died literally in harness and after an illness of only a few days.

Writing of his death, the *Yorkshire Telegraph and Star* (Sheffield) says: "The versatility of Dr. Ballard will be realised when it is mentioned that in addition to his other activities he was a scientist with the gift of popular exposition, and had composed several hymns. He enjoyed the friendship of many eminent men in various spheres of life, including Sir Oliver Lodge."

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