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FEBRUARY 1, 1911.

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

By a recent English mail came an article from "The Inquirer" of December 3, 1910, which, if space permitted, I would fain put before my readers in full. It is entitled "Practical Mysticism," and is from the pen of Stanley A. Mellor, who is probably a son of Mr. Justice Mellor, who was an Unitarian of a distinguished spiritual type. "The Inquirer" was an old-established paper half a century ago, and it is good to see that in this as in many other articles it has caught the spirit of the time, which, whether in science, art, or literature, is going the way of the New Psychology. It gives a view of true mysticism which at present is but little understood, and shows it to be the most practical thing in life, and "the very essence of religion." Stanley A. Mellor says: "The popular view of mysticism seems to me fundamentally mistaken. So far from being impractical, real mysticism is pre-eminently practical, so much so that no kind of so-called practical life or practical activity is worth having without some sort of mysticism." As has been stated so often in these columns, the end and aim of all spiritual investigations should be getting into conscious personal touch with the Invisible World. No one else's visions or messages can take the place of our own development. Many are the spiritual wrecks who have been thus led away from the Source of all Light and Strength by will-o'-the-wisps of this kind. No organisation or society will for long prosper which rests on anything less than the sure foundation of direct spiritual guidance, which comes to all those who seek it. "The real secret and power and the characteristic feature of mysticism," says Mr. Mellor, "consists in dependence on *inward experience*. Other men are dependent upon traditions upon the accepted opinions of others, upon abstract formulas and accredited beliefs." All these "must fail in the presence of the highest truth, whose own innermost nature it is to be absolutely simple and yet beyond words."

This is what the apostles meant in their insistence on the necessity of prayer of the vital kind, and of the absence of any "mystery" concerning the true religious life. "The essential thing," says this writer, "is the immediate certainty of God and His kingdom. And this attainment, so far from being unpractical, is the most intensely practical thing any man here can be concerned with. It is the very essence of religion, and true religion is the most practical of all human concerns, the end, which, as Hegel said, contains all other ends. . . In other words the basis of sound practical life is mysticism, and nothing else." This is the heart of the New Psychology, and being based on the natural instincts of the human heart, is the religion within Nature the world is waiting for. It cannot be gainsaid that a study of psychic phenomena is the gateway through which a knowledge of invisible things is gained. Dr. Lyman Abbott says, "To practise the habit of immortality is to live in the invisible world. It is to realise that the things that are not seen are the real things, the immortal things, the important things." "Every prayer," says Lilian Whiting, "for spiritual enlightenment is answered from the spiritual realm."

In a remarkable book that has just arrived from America—"A Psychic Autobiography," by Amanda T. Jones, of which fuller mention will be made in the March issue, her long life of practical work as a successful inventor, and of spiritual experiences, written at the request of the late Professor W. James, and with an introduction by Dr. J. H. Hyslop, is redolent of this practical mysticism. As in my own case, there is no lack of spiritual guidance, but the soul must be absolutely free to gain its own development. "Spirits may clear away the mists before us—it is our eyes that see?" says Amanda Jones. "Spirits may point the way; it is our feet that *walk!* Spirits may scatter thoughts like meadow flowers; our hands must gather them. . . Whatever spirits know, they have no right to tell us—they have no *power* to tell us—unless we have the necessary mind and brain development enabling us to fully apprehend. Then we can meet as equals—not before." "Why not consult the spirits?" she was asked, at a crisis, as others are often asked. "Well," she replied, "Mr. Kendall, a visible earthly friend, was a spirit. So was I, and so are you. Please bear in mind that we are spirits all—able to give and take. Moreover, if we wish to know the time of day, why ask a ouija board? You turn—and there's the clock! You walk abroad and ask your way of men, but should you find yourself alone and in danger you call for higher help. Be sure that when the danger came I called and I was heard!" This is practical mysticism that may be safely followed.

But there was never a time in the world's history when it was more necessary to point out that psychic powers and spiritual development are totally distinct things. In the last chapter of "Within the Holy of Holies" the writer has some wise words to say on this subject: "In these days of inquiry, while we are delving into the ancient philosophies of India; making scientific researches into psychic phenomena; and beginning to realise that the so-called miracles of Bible times were performed by intelligent manipulation of natural forces or laws that are just as operative today as then, the devout student naturally wants to know how to develop his own psychic or occult powers. "These," says the writer, "are the common property of all normal human beings, but their development and use open up a *world of illusion* that is dangerous in the extreme to anyone whose spiritual faculties are undeveloped. . . . Many deluded men and women fondly imagine they have developed psychic powers, but who, on the contrary, have simply killed off their individuality, dwarfed their spiritual forces and degenerated into mere hypnotic subjects. . . . Whenever your spiritual development has progressed until your character is fixed on the Solid Rock . . . new powers will be given you just as rapidly as you show yourself worthy and capable of using them for good." There is no more important work to do in the world than to raise man's eyes from illusions which are so rife on every side, to a practical mysticism which shall recognise in every incentive to further activity a message from the unseen, and we shall doubtless receive a strength from that unfailing omnipotent source to answer—

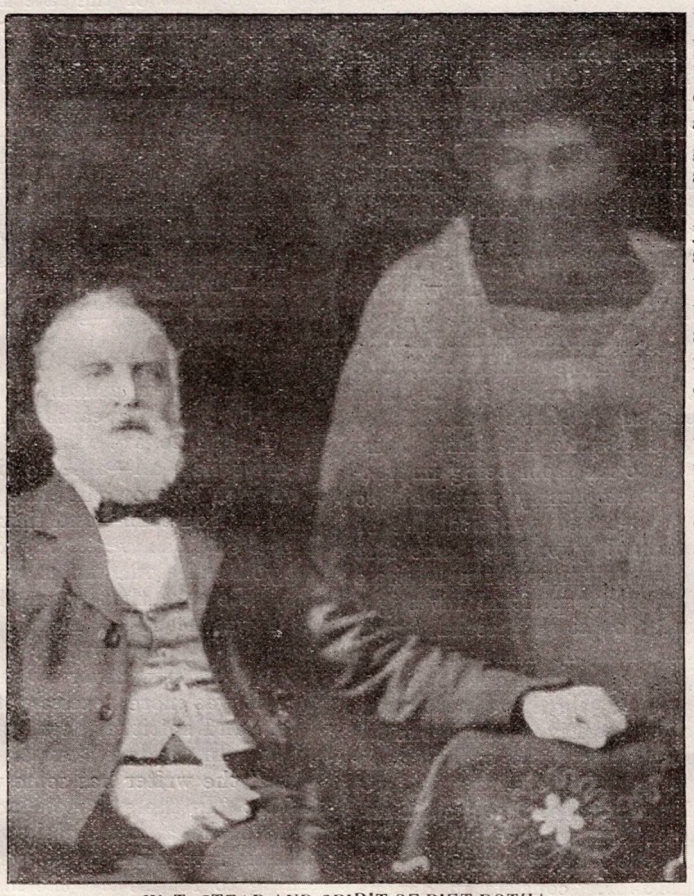
"Here am I, Lord. Send me."

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

W. T. Stead and Spirit of Piet Botha.

By Annie Bright.

Early in January there arrived by the European mail one of the most remarkable books on Spirit Photography that has yet been published. It is a French production, issued by the Libraire Nationale, Paris, and printed on satin paper, doubtless for the better production of the striking series of spirit photographs which appear on at least half of its 150 pages. It forms a compendium of spirit photography up to date, and includes the work of the late Mr. Boursnell, of London, Dr. Hansmann, of Washington, United States, Dr. Keeler, and others. To Emmanuel Vauchez, the great French reformer, whose work on behalf of secular education and the emancipation of the State from ecclesiastical control has endeared him to all lovers of freedom, is this volume with singular appropriateness dedicated. Some time ago a portrait of Emmanuel Vauchez, with a notice of his important work, appeared in this journal, the foundation of which was the establishment, as far back as 1866, of the "French League of Secular Education," which, after forty years activity in establishing libraries throughout France and other enlightening agencies, saw its culmination in statutes passed by the French Legislature, giving State control over educational establishments and other departments hitherto ruled by the church. All through, however, Emmanuel Vauchez, who is a devout spiritualist, was animated by the desire to give a religion of a true and vital kind to his countrymen. It did not satisfy him to give an education "secular, compulsory and free"; he wished to complete his work by assisting in the development of a spiritualistic and scientific religious ideal. He saw with alarm the tendency everywhere towards materialism, and enlisted the help of the great body of scientists and thinkers about him to give the people a knowledge of the spiritual universe and of their immortal destiny. Like all other leaders among spiritualists with open vision, he recognised that to arrest public attention "facts" must be produced. Vauchez himself, convinced of the truth of spirit photography, established over two years ago a "Committee for the Study of Psychic Photography," and opened a subscription for offering a valuable prize to the first one who should invent an instrument to place the realisation of invisible beings, radiations and aura generally within the reach of all.



W. T. STEAD AND SPIRIT OF PIET BOTHA.

What the New School of Spirit Photography Aims at.

Hitherto it has always been a necessity to have a medium present, and in no branch of spiritual phenomena has an opening for fraud been easier. There are, however, sufficient incontrovertibly attested specimens, such as W. T. Stead's photo. with Piet Botha's spirit, reproduced on this page, and hundreds of others to prove that discarnate beings can show themselves on the sensitive plate of the camera. In the introduction to this new volume, "La Photographie Transcendentale," the author says: "Unfortunately up to the present time certain conditions have been indispensable for obtaining photos of the occult. The operator must be an individual provided with special psychic qualities, a medium, so that the beings of the invisible world could materialise sufficiently to impress the sensitive plate. . . . This kind of photography is not within the reach of everybody, but should it not be possible to be able to take at will, and without special conditions, negatives of the invisible?" This was what was in the mind of Emmanuel Vauchez when he established the Committee, and at the same time opened a subscription, not yet closed, which now amounts to close on 50,000 francs (£2,000), to be awarded to the fortunate inventor of an apparatus which should enable all who desire to take photographs of the beings in the ethereal realms to do so at will and without a medium. "The thing is possible," says the author, "because these beings and these radiations exist." It may be remarked that in a measure this was attained by Dr. Baraduc, who without claiming any peculiar psychic powers, was able, by the aid of coloured glasses and special apparatus, to take photographs of psychical auras as reproduced in the *Harbinger* about three years ago. In the closing sentence of his introduction the author says that his volume is an independent study unconnected with individuals or societies, its only aim being to give an up-to-date account of the position of spirit photography. In the opening chapter photographs of the officials of the Committee are given—Dr. Foveau de Courmelle, President; Emmanuel Vauchez, General Secretary; and Mlle. Eugénie Dupin, Professor of Science and niece of M. Vauchez, Secretary. In Article 3 of the provisions of the Committee it is stated that "No one will be entitled to the prize but he who can produce an instrument that can be used by everyone." It is significant that all the exponents of the Higher Spiritualism insist that the aim of all teaching, all experiment should be to put the individual in personal touch with spiritual realities. This is true mysticism, and leads away from every phase of mystery with which so many leaders would place a yoke on their followers as deadly as any of the other priestcrafts that have kept the world in bondage. It is as important as ever to emphasise the Apostle Paul's words, "There is no mystery but the mystery of godliness."

Testimony to the Truth of Spirit Photography.

Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, in a valuable letter regretting his inabillty to take an active part in the work of Emmanuel Vauchez, says, "I have myself a very interesting collection of similar photographs, and I have affirmed during the last 30 years that the evidence they bring is at once scientific and conclusive." Sir William Crookes' experience in photographing on one plate the form of Katie King and of the medium, Florence Cook, forms the subject of the second chapter. Sir W. Crookes says, "I am absolutely certain that Miss Cook and Katie King are two distinct individualities." Over 25 pages and 17 spirit photographs are given in the description of the remarkable work of Dr. Hansmann, of

Washington, United States. One curious photograph, "The Transparent Man," was sent to Emmanuel Vauchez by a Melbourne citizen, Mr. Robert Stewart, formerly a prominent photographer here. It is a picture of a man seated on a chair in a garden, through whose body and hat even are seen the enclosing rails of the garden and plants. Other valuable evidence from all parts of the world is given, but the one that will appeal more generally to readers is that supplied by Mr. Stead in his account of a sitting of which the outcome was the photo. given here.

What Mr. Stead Says.

In the pamphlet "How I know the Dead Return," of which many thousands have been distributed in Australia, Mr. Stead relates how the picture of himself and Piet Botha was obtained. This is repeated in the French volume, and is so convincing as well as above all suspicion that it is again given here as of special bearing on the subject. Mr. Stead says :

"I have referred to spirit photography. Let me disarm any sceptical reader by admitting that nothing is more easy than to fake bogus spirit photographs, and further that an expert conjurer can almost always cheat the most vigilant observer. The use of marked plates, which I handle, expose, and develop myself, no doubt afford some protection against fraud. But my belief in the authenticity of spirit photographs rests upon a far firmer foundation than that of the fallible vigilance of the experimenter. The supreme test of an authentic spirit photograph is that a plainly recognisable portrait of a dead person shall be obtained by a photographer who knows nothing whatever of the existence of such a person, and that no visible form shall be seen by the sitter in front of the camera.

I have had such photographs not once but many times. I will here only mention one. The photographer whose mediumship enables him to photograph the Invisibles is a very old and rather illiterate man, to whom this faculty was at one time a serious hindrance to his photographic business. He is clairvoyant and clairaudient. During the late Boer war I went with a friend to have a sitting with him, wondering who would come.

I had hardly taken my seat before the old man said : 'I had a great fright the other day. An old Boer came into the studio carrying a gun. He fairly frightened me, he looked so fierce, so I said to him, 'Go away, I don't like guns.' And he went away. Now he's back again. He came in with you. He has not got his gun now, and he does not look so fierce. Shall we let him stay ?'

'By all means,' I replied. 'Do you think you could get his photograph ?'

'I don't know,' said the old man, 'I can try.'

So I sat down in front of the camera, and an exposure was duly made. Neither my friend nor I could see any other person in the room but the photographer and ourselves. Before the plate was removed I asked the photographer :

'You spoke to the old Boer the other day. Could you speak to him again ?'

'Yes,' he said, 'he's still there behind you.'

'Would he answer any question if you asked him ?'

'I don't know,' said the old man, 'I can try.'

'Ask him what his name is !'

The photographer appeared to put a mental question, and to listen for a reply. Then he said :

'He says his name is Piet Botha.'

'Piet Botha,' I objected. 'I know Philip, Louis, Chris, and I do not know how many other Bothas. But Piet I never heard of.'

'That's what he says his name is,' doggedly replied the old man.

When he developed the plate there was seen standing behind me a hirsute, tall, stalwart man, who might have been a Boer or a Moujik. I said nothing, but waited till the war came to an end, and General Botha came to London. I sent the photograph to him by Mr. Fischer, who was Prime Minister of the old Orange Free State. Next day Mr. Wessels, another Free State delegate, came to see me.

'Where did you get that photograph,' he asked, 'the photograph you gave to Mr. Fischer ?'

I told him exactly how it had come.

He shook his head. 'I don't hold with superstition. Tell me, how did you get that portrait ? That man did not know William Stead—that man was never in England.'

'Well,' I replied, 'I have told you how I got it, and you need not believe me if you don't like. But why are you so excited about it ?'

'Why,' said he, 'because that man was a near relative of mine. I have got his portrait hanging up in my house at home.'

'Really,' I said, 'Is he dead ?'

'He was the first Boer Commandant killed in the siege of Kimberley.'

'And what was his name ?'

'Pietrus Johannes Botha,' he replied, 'but we always called him Piet Botha for short.'

I still have the portrait in my possession. It has been subsequently identified by two other Free Staters who knew Piet Botha well.

This, at least, is not a case which telepathy can explain, Nor will the hypothesis of fraud hold water. It was the merest accident that I asked the photographer to see if the spirit would give his name. No one in England, so far as I have been able to ascertain, knew that any Piet Botha ever existed."



This was developed by the Rev. Professor —— of Cambridge, with Archdeacon Colley, from an unopened packet of quarter photo-plates, which for fourteen days had been in the keeping of Sir Oliver Lodge. Among the nine names of discarnate friends the last name is UMBOLO, who thirty years ago was a Zulu umfaan-boy servant in Natal to the Archdeacon's son—Captain Colley, Royal Horse and Royal Field Artillery. Umbolo, before he departed this life being a "Ring-man"—Head-man—Chief of his Tribe, now at various times, and in various ways (as also in psychographic writing shown at Cambridge during the week of the Church Congress), comes to tell of matters that the future will make clear ; even as in psychograph of September 16th, 1910, the Iron Duke of Wellington (himself a Colley), forecasts.

Ven. Archdeacon Colley's Latest Experiences.

By a still later mail came a letter and large packet from Archdeacon Colley, relating his recent experiences at Church Congress, Cambridge, and giving photographs of letters received psycho-graphically, one of which is reproduced above. Archdeacon Colley says in letter dated December 15, 1910.

Dear Mrs. Bright,

I write from Leamington printing office. The enclosed has been delayed on account of the photo-engraving inset not being ready for the other matter that I had so widely circulated at Cambridge while I was at the Church Congress the last week in September. The interest of what I had on view of my many spirit photographs and psychographs was immense. And toiling since to send to the clergy what I am now sending to you and to all the Bishops, keeps me hard at it to catch up very much more that remains to be done, and I want a staff of typewriters to compass answers to enquirers and tell them how, under the permission of the All-Compassionate Ineffable, Incomprehensible Creator, Lord God Almighty, the Angel World is ready to help in this phase of irrefutable spiritualism which, from my own fifty years practice of photography, I know cannot be gainsaid. While as to psychography, writing in all languages and with faces of friends departed on hermetically sealed up photo plate held between our hands uplifted in prayer, staggers the best scientific thought of to-day. I get indeed quite angry with our unseen helpers, and the chemists on life's other side, invisible, that they will not tell me how it is done. Perhaps they cannot as with the case of Paul, the apostle, when he saw and heard things impossible to be described.

I have later marvels to report but am pressed for time and overwhelmed with work as usual. Thank Mr. Stanford please for *Harbingers* and block.

Believe me,
Faithfully yours,
T. Colley.

In the packet accompanying the above letter are copies of photographs of the Archdeacon's Father and Mother, reproduced in *Harbinger* supplement some time ago, the Easter Sermon also given as supplement to this paper

during last year, letter from the spirit world, reproduced here, and a plate of small photographs. There is also an "Open Letter" from Archdeacon Colley to the Bishop of Worcester, headed "Church Congress Impressions," and reprinted from the daily papers of Oct. 9th.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

All these later demonstrations, of which spirit photography is a striking feature, show that a remarkable spiritual awakening, of which the Rochester Knockings in 1848 were the starting point, is at hand. This century is likely to prove a spiritual era in the history of mankind. Unlike any former developments, science is now the handmaid of the new dispensation. Wireless Telegraphy, Aviation are simply the forerunners of a development of the spiritual powers of the race that are thus dimly outlined. Those who have read Bulwer Lytton's "The Coming Race," will remember how the spiritual force "Vril" was used by the inhabitants of his fabled land for motive power, even of their own bodies. In the remarkable address reproduced in this issue in the pages devoted to Mr. T. W. Stanford's circles with the medium, Charles Bailey, Dr. W. K. Clifford states how this motive power comes from the central force which guides the Universe, and how Aviation will not be a success until inventors turn to nature and study how a bird flies and accommodates itself to every turn of wind and strong current. The future is so full of promise, the work of enlightenment so apparently endless that nothing but grateful thanks are tendered to men like Emmanuel Vauchez, Archdeacon Colley, W. T. Stead, and every other courageous and able worker, for their untiring and unselfish labours. Therefore—

"Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

ERRATA.

By an unfortunate printer's error a portion of the January issue, on page 3, second column, three lines were wrongly transposed. In the local copies the page was reprinted, and apologies are tendered to all readers who received the earlier edition.

MR. T. W. STANFORD'S SEANCES WITH THE MEDIUM CHARLES BAILEY.

By ANNIE BRIGHT.

There has always been more controversy concerning the passage of matter through matter than any other phase of phenomena. Many leading scientists have witnessed it, and more than thirty years ago Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace was present at a seance held in Florence where the table was covered with large quantities of fresh flowers, the medium being Mrs. Guppy. A discussion on the subject will be found in one of the issues of "Borderland," that valuable paper published quarterly by W. T. Stead, where every kind of phenomena found place. Strange is it, however, when reading the pages full of testimony of all kinds to the truth of spiritual phenomena, that it was not until Mr. Stead's son had passed beyond the Borderland that Mr. Stead gave his unqualified adherence to the truth of spirit survival and return. Like everything else, there is evolution in spiritual development.

One of the chief reasons for the holding of Mr. Stanford's circles is the pressing need of waking up the world to a belief in the spiritual basis of matter, and thus lift people from the present state of indifference about everything they cannot discern with their five senses. Edward Maitland, author of "Pilgrim and the Shrine," and later collaborator with Dr. Anna Kingsford in a notable demonstration to the world of spiritual truth in many valuable publications, wrote as follows in "Borderland," in conjunction with others in answer to a gentleman's assertion that such demonstrations as take place at Mr. Stanford's circles were not only impossible but useless. Edward Maitland shows how it is through the clergy in the past neglecting to give spiritual food to their hearers that such manifestations are necessary. He says:—

"That, therefore, which I commend to Mr. Barkworth, and those (if any) who think with him, is the consideration that it is precisely to such blessed restoration of the intuition of spirit and of spiritual truth that the manifestations to which he takes exception (the passage of matter through matter) are intended to minister, and actually do minister. And if, viewed from his standpoint, they appear frivolous, mean, and low, the blame rests, not on those whose intelligence is so limited as to be accessible only by such manifestations, but on those faithless or incompetent husbandmen, the official exponents of religion, who, being entrusted with the world's spiritual culture, have suffered its spiritual consciousness to decline and dwindle well nigh or quite to extinction, until only by such means can it be re-kindled. For the first step to spiritual revivication is the recognition of the reality of man's spiritual nature; and where the mind and the conscience are dead, the appeal must be to the bodily senses, though the order of spirits which appeal only to these can hardly be accounted a high one."

As one important step to the soul's awakening to a study of the marvellous forces of Nature, so little known or recognised, an address by Dr. Clifford on "Life Throbs in the Great Heart of Nature" has been selected as peculiarly appropriate to this issue.

The following is a record of the addresses and phenomena, continued from January issue.

157TH SEANCE. November 23rd.—Address by Dr. Witherow, "Will all men be saved?" Phenomena. A young ebony tree from India. Quantity of meteoric dust. Dr. Whitcomb said "such an apport has not been brought here or anywhere else before. It is from a bursting meteor, and has not fallen upon the earth." Astec spearhead with place for poison. Manuscript.

158TH SEANCE. November 30th.—Address by Dr. Witherow, sequel to previous one, "The Kingdom of God. One Fold, one Shepherd." Phenomena. Tablet. Bird sitting on nest with two eggs. Headdress worn by snake charmer, made of Nile grass from equatorial Africa.

159TH SEANCE. December 7th.—Address by Signor Valetti, "The Heart of the Universe." Phenomena. Two Tablets from Babylon, said to be the most important yet brought and translated by Dr. Robinson. Bird and nest. As the bird lived on insects it was taken away by request. Nest and egg. It was stated that the number of birds brought by occult power at this and other circles through Charles Bailey, now totalled 265.

160TH SEANCE. December 14th.—Address by Dr. Witherow, "The New Birth." Phenomena. Quantity of gravel, unexpected, and no dish provided; Medium covered with it as he sat in the cage with door locked and sealed. Native dress from Samarai, New Guinea, photographed in January issue.

ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR W. K CLIFFORD,

"LIFE THROBS IN THE GREAT HEART OF NATURE."

Delivered on Wednesday evening, Jan. 11th, 1911.

Specially reported by Miss M. Wilson, Shorthand Writer and Typist, Premier Buildings, Collins Street, Melbourne.

The mysteries of Nature are so wonderful and so little understood, that sometimes a quiet talk about these matters is beneficial to all. It is very necessary for everybody to know something about himself and the universe in which he lives, and he should strive to attain as much knowledge as he possibly can while in the flesh on such matters. He who lives in accord with his surroundings, in rapport with Nature and understanding Nature's laws, will live a much better and safer life than he who is entirely ignorant of such laws or does not care to trouble himself about such weighty matters. I divide my subject under three headings: first the sun, secondly the growth of trees, and thirdly the flight of birds.

WHAT THE SUN DOES.

The sun, the centre of your solar system, has been made the subject of much speculation, and many volumes have been written about the wondrous orb of day. Astronomers have vied with each other to find out all about the sun, and the power and wondrous effects which they sometimes witness thereon through their mighty telescopes. As I do not intend to give you an astronomical lecture, I will simply say I speak of the sun because he is not only a great luminary but a marvellous luminous body that scatters radiant energy and electrical power. In the great storms and tempests of fire, which are continually taking place in the substance of the sun, large stores of electrical energy are liberated, which have a certain influence on all the planets and satellites influenced by

the sun. As you doubtless desire to know something about the planet on which you dwell I will confine myself to its influence on the earth plane. You all know that the sun is not only the source of life but that without its benign influence there would be no life upon the earth plane. Withdraw a plant, an animal or a man, from the beneficent rays of this luminary, and you find at once that they begin to sicken, wither and die, and I will explain the reason of it to you. Out from the sun proceed the beams of life—those wondrous shafts of life which speed on their way to this earth through the auras and ethers and atmospheres and then strike the bosom of mother earth. The vast stores of electricity which are liberated are diffused all round the solar system, and the earth gets its due share. Not only does it receive the shafts of light but an enormous amount of electricity. And remember that the electricity of the sun is different to the electricity of other planets because there are various kinds of electricity, as every electrician knows. The electricity of the sun is a penetrating, permeating power, and you are permitting great stores of energy to be wasted because you do not yet know how to collect from the sun's rays the electrical power that is being thrown upon the surface of the earth. So powerful are the electrical rays that they not only penetrate the crust of the earth but they permeate it to a vast depth. The increased pressure in the centre of the earth often causes large masses of rock to move, chasms are formed and these rocks shift and fall into these chasms. The results in the form of earthquakes are noted upon the crust of the earth by the destruction of villages and even the death of human beings. If you have ever witnessed a volcanic eruption, you will remember the awe-inspiring sight of shafts of electricity coming up out of the crater from the cone. This has frequently been witnessed in eruptions taking place at Vesuvius, Etna and other volcanoes. Fissures in the crater, which correspond to the lateral shafts in the earth, permit pent-up electricity to gain access to the atmosphere, and so great is its mighty power when pent up that it causes the awful destruction of which, fortunately, you have not been an eye witness but have read about.

The Sun's Power on Vegetation.

And now we come to its power upon vegetation, and I take a tree for an example of all the rest. Take the seed of any of your trees, small or large, and examine it. Contained in that little, round brown substance is the germ of the fibre, the wood, the bark, the leaves, the sinews and the blossoms, and if it be a fruit tree, the fruit also. Grind it to powder, examine it under your most powerful magnifying glass, and you will fail to see anything but a little mass of brown matter, and yet in that small round seed there is in truth an universe. The orchardist or gardener proceeds to his field and makes a hole where he plants his seed and covers it with the soil. Then he moistens the soil, which is afterwards tended by Nature, who with copious rains continues to moisten it. Now let us gather round in imagination and see what takes place when the seed germinates. It remains quiescent for a time. The sun sheds abroad upon the earth its wondrous beams of light; the electrical power strikes the crust and as it permeates the crust it at last finds its way to the little brown seed. In one part of that seed, though you could not see it with the most powerful microscope, there is a sensitive spot, and remember that there is a sensitive spot, not only in the seeds of the plants, but in the human brain, in the human heart, and in all the organs of the body. There is in every organism one spot more sensitive than another. In this seed there is a sensitive spot and the electrical power strikes it. If we could closely watch the process, we should find that when the electrical energy had entered into the bosom of the seed it began to accumulate in that sensitive spot very small particles of moisture. All the processes of the human body as well as the processes of Nature are carried on through the agency of moisture. Then from the earth itself there is gathered something to which I cannot give a name because you people have as yet no name for it. It is an essence which is collected from the earth itself. Some earth abounds with it more plentifully than others, hence you say it is good soil; other earth is barren, has none of it, and you say it is bad soil. This wondrous power and energy is concentrated upon this sensitive spot, and day after day being constantly struck with the electrical power from the sun and warmed into life with the aid of moisture and the wondrous essence from the earth, there is thrown up a little projection—very, very small indeed. It looks in the inside of the seed for all the world like a wart. A few more days with the mighty power from the sun still penetrating, and this little wart-like protuberance bursts at the top and little filmy fibres begin to come from the sides of the protuberance, hair-like and so fine that you could not at first see them with the most powerful magnifying glass that you have. But after a few days they begin to strengthen and thicken and form as vertebræ form in the vertebrates, and then through a little opening that has been made they find their way. Water continues to help its growth, the electricity that is absorbed and thrown upon it from the soil causes the fibres to thicken. In these we have in embryo the trunk, the bark, the limbs, leaves and flowers of the giant tree, which will stand the tempest and storm for hundreds of years, and after a time, as these little fibres grow up, others go down, all starting from the sensitive spot in the seed. Think, my friends, of the wonderful strength and power of these little hair-like appendages, so fine that you cannot see them, but they have the power to turn aside a piece of stone and to penetrate hard clay in taking hold of the soil. All round these are the roots of the trees, and as time passes the roots thicken and lengthen and twist round the particles of earth, while the fibres which ascend grow into one. Then the gardener comes some day and finds a little earth pushed on one side and there comes a little green stem, and at last branches, leaves and flowers.

Electricity the Motive Power.

And so we watch the process as the tree grows higher and higher, but still dependent upon that great orb of day for its life. The electrical power is still penetrating the roots and also the fast growing stem. The moisture which collects round the root is being drawn upon, and these little fibres gather it up and send it up the trunk. What becomes of the seed? In a great many cases, part of it is absorbed into the tree. In certain plants this is so, but not in all. After it has given birth to the tree it is sometimes cast on one side as being of no further use. Then the tree grows and extends, its branches reach out to the heavens, and the fowls of the air settle thereon. After a time it puts forth many leaves and then come the flowers. The gardener admires the tree, but he perhaps never gives a thought to the wondrous processes of Nature that have produced such a giant, or the source of the glorious colour of the flowers or foliage. And I wish to tell you another secret—why the foliage and the tree are variegated and the flowers of such a brilliant hue. From the rays of light there are various shades of colour—I know that the scientists have not discovered them all. These penetrate the earth, colour the sap, and just as the sap is coloured, so there is a natural selection even with plants. Some select red, others violet, some blue, others green, and sometimes several shades at once. Then the flowers are mottled or variegated, and as the sap is coloured or tinged, so it causes the flowers to be of brilliant hues. I once heard it said that no one could explain it, but we, from the spirit side of life, can explain it to you, and at last science will realise that we speak the truth. It is great Nature that tinges with gorgeous hues the flowers of the field.

How Birds Fly.

I have no doubt that you have often watched the flight of birds. Men have tried and are trying to

fly, but have not succeeded. The airship is but a balloon, the aeroplane that you have invented is a clumsy contrivance, very uncertain, and at any moment disaster is likely to come to the aviator, but no such danger exists for the bird. Look from the deck of the ship, how the stormy petrel or the albatross skims through the air, just lightly skimming the surface of the waves and then rising and sweeping through the air. Think of the flight of the eagle, how he soars with apparently no movement of his wings. Man will never learn to fly until he takes into consideration certain things, and it is only by noting the flight of birds that he will be successful at last. When the bird flies he expands his wings. There is something that travels along the wings through the nerves and penetrates the quills of his feathers, and this passes from one feather to the other. What is it? It is electrical energy that comes from the body of the bird. He gets his store of electricity from the sun, for he is a child of Nature living in the sunlight, and he absorbs, as you do also, stores of electricity in your body when you expose yourself to the sun's rays. As the bird flies he gets, so to speak, en rapport with the forces of Nature. The electricity from his body is darting through his feathers and coming in contact with the more subtle electricity in the atmosphere. The electricity which he receives from the sun's rays has been changed in its passage through his body, for the electricity in the atmosphere is a negative compared to the positive which comes through his body. The two meet and produce a mild electric battery, which enables him to overcome certain difficulties which the aviator cannot because he has not the necessary electricity. When he flies, taught as he is by the Father of Nature, he turns the wing feathers in different directions so that the currents of air pass through. He does not think every now and then that he must turn the feather this way or that way, but what you call instinct teaches him at every fresh current of air to turn certain of the large feathers—now they are horizontal, now deflected, now turned up. The currents of air passing through the feathers causes him to become so buoyant that it is utterly impossible for him to fall as a man falls with the aeroplane. These are difficulties which man must surmount and will at last do so, but it will only be by watching the flight of birds, taking into consideration all their movements and thus learning from Nature. It is only in that way that they will be able to overcome their difficulties. Let me say, my friends, in conclusion, that if you wish to gain knowledge, there is only one way in which you can gain it. God is the author of all there is, He has set immutable laws in His universe, there is nothing happenng by chance. True there has been an evolution of species in plant and animal life, but the omnipotent, immutable law is over all, and if a man desires to get knowledge he must carefully ponder and consider the ways of God's creatures—he must take note of Nature and her handmaidens. The man who closely takes note of the processes and the forces of Nature will be repaid a thousandfold; the man who is a student of Nature lives close to his God; lying close to Nature's heart he hears the heart throbs, and he sees the Guiding Hand that rules the universe.

J. Godfrey Ranpert, who has been to Australia and America lecturing, with consent of the Holy See, on psychic phenomena, gave a lecture at Cambridge, England, lately on "Some facts respecting Psychical Research." He accepts all the phenomena, and says "It is impossible for Catholics to ignore the subject," but warned them against investigations, but to get "in constant and vital touch with the true supernatural by means of the sacraments of the Church." This is the only way of safety for the church, as investigators surely find that the individual soul can get in touch with spiritual things with no need for priestly intervention. Priestcraft is therefore in danger.

THAUMAT-OAHSPE.

The Ether of Space.

By J. Nelson Jones.

It is not alone with the great question of the four false Religions of the world that Oahspe is concerned. It enters the field of cosmogony and deals with the structure of the Universe. This is especially interesting at this juncture, when the latest determinations of Science claim a density for the ether of space which is truly astounding. These determinations are of recent date, while Oahspe was written thirty years ago when the most vague ideas were prevalent in regard to this most subtle yet most real substance.

It will be the endeavour of this paper to put some utterances from Oahspe on this subject into juxtaposition with some statements recently made by Sir Oliver Lodge. The one a *revelation* from the *spiritual*, one might say, the etheric, world; the other from this world of *matter*.

In the Book of Cosmogony (Oahspe) and the 2nd chap. will be found the following remarkable statement:—"There are two known things in the universe: ethe and corpor (matter). The former is the solvent of the latter. For comparison, take a lump of table salt, which, though white, is impervious to the sight of man. Cast it into water, and it is lost to sight; though it still existeth, the sight of man can see through it. Earth substance, as such, is equally soluble in ethe. And the great etherean firmament is thus constituted, being a dense solution of corpor. In the main, etherea is transparent, but in some places translucent, and in others, opaque. Here are iron, and copper, and granite, and water, and lead, and clay, and nitrogen, and oxygen, and hydrogen, and various other kinds of corporeal substances, as known on the earth, and besides these, millions of things not known on the earth. And ethe holdeth them in solution; even after the manner that the air holdeth the substance of clouds, which is water in solution." Again, in the Book of Jehovih, Chap. I., v. 5, we read:—"For the substance of my etherean worlds I created ethe, the most RARIFIED. Out of ethe made I them. And I made ethe the most subtle of all created things, and gave to it power and place, not only by itself, but also power to penetrate and exist within all things, even in the midst of the corporeal worlds. And to ethe gave I dominion over both atmospherea and corpor."

It has long been the fashion to regard these ethereal realms as a mere void; where nothing is, and nothing could be; but, this is because we are deficient in a sixth sense, or perhaps, it would be better to say this sixth sense is dormant while we are in the mortal husk. Now let us see what Sir Oliver Lodge has to tell us. In his Book, "The ether of Space," published in 1909, after commenting upon some of the theories held by scientists of earlier date, he proceeds thus:—"So that, now I am able to advocate a view of the ether which makes it not only uniformly present and all-pervading, but also massive and substantial beyond conception. It is turning out to be by far the most substantial thing—perhaps the only substantial thing—in the material universe. Compared to ether, the densest matter, such as lead or gold, is a filmy gossamer structure; like a comet's tail or a milky way, or like a salt in very dilute solution." Again: "Whatever difficulties we may have in forming a consistent idea of the constitution of the ether, there can be no doubt that the interplanetary and interstellar spaces are not empty, but are occupied by a material substance or body, which is certainly the largest and probably the most uniform body of which we have any knowledge."

It is this wonderful ether that transmits to us the heat, light and gravitative pull of the sun; "a force," Sir Oliver Lodge proceeds, "or tension more than what a million million steel rods, each seventeen feet in diameter, could stand." What mechanism transmits this gigantic force? Take a steel bar itself: when violently stretched, with how great tenacity its

parts cling together! Yet its particles are not in absolute contact, they are only virtually attached to each other by means of the universal connecting medium—the ether—a medium that must be competent to transmit the greatest stresses which our knowledge of gravitation and cohesion shows us to exist."

If these two statements coming from opposite sources are true, the logical conclusion is that all about us, and in and through us is an infinite world of etheric substance that is more real and solid than we have any conception of, and that out of this etheric menstruum is precipitated all that our five senses can discover, of what we call matter; in fact, in this apparently empty space is situate the veritable etheric or spiritual world, with its myriads of divisions and its infinitude of inhabitants. This certainly throws a light upon the "after state," which opens up vistas hardly conceived of before.

That Sir Oliver Lodge does not ignore this spiritual outcome from what, in a sense, he might consider to be a purely material investigation, is evident from the following. He says:—"And when the present century, or the century after, lets us into their secrets (of electricity, magnetism and ether), and into the secrets of some other phenomena now in course of being rationally investigated (the psychic), I feel as if it would be no merely material prospect that will be opening on our view, but some glimpse into a region of the universe which Science has never entered yet, but which has been sought from afar, and perhaps blindly apprehended, by painter and poet, by philosopher and saint."

The only point wherein one can differ with Sir Oliver Lodge in the foregoing paragraph is about the "centuries" required to develop the advanced ideas that can link on the *two* parts of *one* whole, the spiritual and the material. We are in the dawn of it now, as is evidenced by all such thinkers and writers as Lilian Whiting, who has evidently adopted the same ideas essentially as are propounded in this paper; if we may judge by the notices that have appeared in the "Harbinger of Light" of her recent work, "Life Transfigured," which the writer of this article has not seen.

Lest this paper should grow too bulky, though much more could be said, we will close now with a pregnant summing up by Sir Oliver Lodge:—The universe we are living in is an extraordinary one; and our investigation of it has only just begun. We know that matter has a psychical significance, since it can constitute BRAIN, which links together the physical and the psychical worlds. If anyone thinks that the ether, with all its massiveness and energy, has probably no psychical significance, *I find myself unable* to agree with him."

To those who find it difficult to understand how solid matter can be precipitated from a menstruum which holds it in solution, let them perform the following interesting chemical experiment:—Get a couple of ½ ounce test-tubes, half fill each with pure rain water; into one put a small crystal (say a grain) of Iodide of Potash, and into the other about the same quantity of acetate of lead. These will speedily dissolve and there will be two tubes of clear and transparent liquid in which there is not a trace of solidity. Now pour one into the other and instantly the eye is astonished by the appearance of a dense solid substance of a brilliant yellow colour, which speedily settles to the bottom and can be filtered out and dried. It is iodide of lead; a new product, and with different appearance and qualification. It may be said:—This is chemical attraction. True; but what is chemical attraction? Is there no directive MIND behind it? Anyhow, it may illustrate how *visible* matter could be precipitated from an etheric menstruum which holds all forms of material substance in solution.

To all who would shrug the shoulder in doubtful expression, I would ask them to ponder the weighty aphorism of Arago:—"He is a bold man who, outside of pure mathematics, pronounces the word IMPOSSIBLE."

Ararat, January 1911.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Ararat, 16th Jan., 1911.

To the Editor of the "Harbinger of Light."

Dear Madam,—Will you kindly insert this note in your next issue, in order to inform all friends who wish to obtain copies of "Oahspe" and the book so highly recommended by Prof. Larkin, to be read in conjunction with it, called "A Dweller on Two Planets," that I have obtained a few copies of both these books from America, and that they are available to all who may desire to have them at the net cost to me with any postage or carriage added. I have paid 23s. 6d. for the Oahspe books and 9s. for the "Two Planets," and these are what I am offering them at as I want nothing. I am not a bookseller; my only object in getting this small supply is for the accommodation of friends who wish to get the books, but do not know how to do it; and in the interests of the great Truths they teach.

Yours very truly,
J. NELSON JONES.

Extract from letter by last American mail.

1118 Rio Grande St.,
El Paso, Texas, U.S.A.
November 29th, 1910.

To the Editor of the "Harbinger of Light."

Dear Madam,

I greatly wish that you would publish the following in regard to the price of Oahspe in your much esteemed paper, the "Harbinger of Light." When the third edition is put on sale, the price will be 4 dols. in the United States, and 4 dols. 25 cents in foreign countries. That is to say, the price will be 3 dols. 50 cents, and the balance is postage. In objecting to the price, people are apt to overlook the fact that postage plays a large part in the price of Oahspe.

I never miss reading the "Harbinger of Light," and I consider that it is most truly named. If every person in America could realise the Truths told by the lofty minded writers of this paper, what a race we would be! I am deeply grateful to you for the space you give Oahspe; and I believe you are accomplishing a wonderful work in spreading this book. My heart also goes out to such students of and writers concerning Oahspe as Prof. Larkin and Mr. Nelson Jones, who with their talent for writing and explaining are showing the people that while it is a big book, it is so easily understood, and the most interesting book in the world. I have read Oahspe ever since I was nine years old, and it grows more interesting all the time. To my way of thinking, the education, training, life and travel of spirits in the other world is utterly absorbing; and when it comes to the history of false gods with their schemes for foisting themselves on innocent humanity, their plotting and plunging mortals into war, the inside history of the old fabled wars of the Trojans and Greeks; the cause, and the why and wherefore of history, all of which is not to be understood without a knowledge of Oahspe. In other words, Oahspe is a key which unlocks the riddles of our past, our present, and ourselves.

Allow me to wish that the new year now approaching will bring you much happiness and success.

I am very sincerely yours,
JUSTINE BALLOU NEWBROUGH.

Oahspe can be ordered direct from—

Mr. A. M. Howland,
1118 Rio Grande St.,
El Paso, Texas, U.S.A.

THE SPIRITUAL PILGRIM.

In another column of the present issue there is reference to a recently published volume from the pen and brain of a pioneer in the field of Spiritualism and human progress, Dr. J. M. Peebles, who, half a century ago, earned for himself the cognomen of "The Spiritual Pilgrim." He has ploughed the ground and sowed the seed in many countries, and amongst them Australia is indebted to him for a liberal share of his good work. Five times during the last forty years has he been with us, and on each occasion has he left a good impression, clearing the atmosphere in the spiritual field, removing the excrescences that have gathered on the spiritual tree, and watering its roots so that its soundness, symmetry and beauty might be made more manifest.

Dr. Peebles' first visit was in November, 1872, when, under the auspices of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists, he commenced his missionary work at the Temperance Hall, and gave great satisfaction to his audiences, but though not militant or aggressive in his discourse, the secular press with one accord joined in a chorus of abuse and misrepresentation in an endeavour to write him down. His audiences, however, were steadfast, and the services were transferred to the Opera House, several leading citizens, including Councillor J. McIlwraith, Drs. Motherwell, Bird and Addison, Messrs. T. W. Stanford, John Ross, John Carson, etc., accompanying the chairman (Mr. Charles Bright) on the platform. The theatre, which was said to be seated for over two thousand, was full in every part, and next day the press altered their tone, the "Argus" of January 13th devoting two columns to a fair and appreciative report, which included a highly eulogistic address signed by the committee of the society, which, with a purse of sovereigns, was presented by the chairman to Dr. Peebles. The following is his characteristic reply:—

"There are occasions in life when silence is eloquence—times when the surcharged heart, partially paralysing the lips, makes utterance nearly impossible. When reaching Melbourne a few months since on a voyage round the world, I was most cordially received by a committee of your citizens, who believed in God and angels, in heaven and the ministry of spirits, and by others also, who sympathise with the dissemination of liberal religious principles relating to human duty and destiny, and though a stranger, coming as a plain unassuming man, speaking the 'words of truth and soberness,' with firmness yet becoming meekness, I was assailed and persecuted, not for wrong acts or misdeeds, but for alleged wrong religious convictions. Such an offence as 'heresy,' under the name of spiritualism, was not to be tolerated, 'Crucify him' was the cry. Accordingly some of the 'baser sort' placed me much in the position of the Apostle when he wrote, 'Troubled yet not distressed, perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed.' The full cup was to be drained, the trial to be borne in a calm forbidding spirit. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and what social or religious reformer has not worn the crown of thorns? and yet as a committee of gentlemen, as an 'association,' as liberalists belonging to that highly intelligent body of the 'great unchurched,' you have bravely upheld my hands, fortified my resolutions, and manfully seconded my earnest efforts in promoting the 'faith once delivered to the saints'—faith in God and man, coupled with that divine knowledge of a present angel ministry to earth. Since my feet pressed your hospitable shores, you have been unswerving in your attentions and kindnesses, and be my future pilgrimages, in whatever clime they may, I cannot expect to find more genuine and unselfish friends; and it is to me a blessed thought that these and all other sunny friendships of earth are but buds that, unfolding bloom for ever in the heavens. I can never forget you.

With sincere thanks then, I accept these beautiful and substantial tokens of your kind regards, feeling, however, that the flattering terms in which they have been presented apply more fully to other faithful workers upon the temple of progress. The purse is a tangible proof of your forethought, liberality, and generous impulses. The illuminated scroll is a beautiful memento of your sympathy. Permit me in conclusion, therefore, to assure you that wherever I may travel, I shall bear it with me as a token of sympathy and confidence from the spiritualists and liberalists of Melbourne."

Apart from the Sunday services, Dr. Peebles was ever active in the fulfilment of his mission, actively co-operating in the development of the Children's Progressive Lyceum, which had been recently formed, and which, by his aid, filled its twelve groups or classes, and became an active auxiliary to the parent institution. He also gave some week-night lectures at Ballarat, Bendigo and other important centres where societies were formed. The effect of this gave an impetus to Spiritualism in its higher aspects, leading numbers of thoughtful people to investigate and become active instruments in its promotion.

At his second advent five years later he was cordially received, respected by the press, and his Opera House services attended by thousands of interested listeners to his impressive discourses. With his later visits and teachings most of our Australian readers will be familiar, and those who have had the pleasure of his personal acquaintance invariably speak of him with respect, admiration, or affection. His literary works are numerous and impressive, from "The Seers of the Ages," published nearly half a century since, to the "Five Journeys Around the World." His latest work, which is to some extent biographical, is full of enlightenment on every aspect of Spiritualism and kindred subjects derived from his vast experiences during his long and active career. One of his works is entitled, "How to Live a Century and Grow Old Gracefully." As he is now in his eighty-ninth year he is illustrating the second part of the title, and bids fair to complete the first.

W.H.T.

REV. FREDERIC C. SPURR
ON
MR. STANFORD'S SEANCES.

From the *Christian World* of Nov. 17th, 1910.

It is so customary for not only ordinary citizens but clergymen to roughly put aside as "impossible" the phenomena of the "passage of matter through matter," that it will be interesting to readers everywhere to see the following letter sent by Rev. Frederic C. Spurr, of this city, to the "Christian World," London, a weekly paper of high reputation and enormous circulation. As will be remembered in the "interview" with Mr. Spurr in the October issue, that gentleman is profoundly impressed with the necessity of a spiritual revival and the breaking down of the materialistic thought of the age, which is as rife in the churches as elsewhere. A wide experience has shown that no better starting point can be found than a study of the constitution of what we call "matter." Science is also leading the way to a demonstration of a spiritual basis of the universe. Everything that to our five senses is apparently so firm in structure from the granite rocks to this "too solid flesh" is shown by science to be in constant motion and to consist of atoms, molecules, electrons, while permeating all is the great Directive Force—which eludes the scrutiny of scientists, though they are beginning to dimly apprehend it—whose vehicle is the "Ether of Space," and whose attributes are Love and Law. If the world were to be destroyed to-morrow, the ethereal realms to which every individual soul belongs and which constitute our real though invisible dwelling place, would be there to receive us, just as when the world is now ended for each one at the change called death. This is apprehended by all spiritually developed people. Emerson, when asked once if he had heard that the world was to be destroyed at a certain date, replied that he had not, but in any case it did not concern him. It is to rouse people from the spiritual torpor that is so prevalent and the entire

absence of any living faith or knowledge of a future life that these circles are held by Mr. Stanford, and with such marvellous results. It is the constant theme of letters received from all parts of the world that for the first time a rational basis for religion and immortality has been obtained from the records of these circles, and the spiritual teaching contained in the wonderful addresses. There is a constant accession of inquirers from the ranks of clergymen, and Mr. Spurr's letter shows that he is one of those who desire to vitalise the religious ideas of his contemporaries.

A MEDIUM AND HIS MARVELS.

Miracle, Mystery or Conjuring.

By Rev. Frederic C. Spurr.

There is a chamber in Melbourne, situated in the heart of the city, which, during the last eight years or so, has been weekly the scene of some remarkable happenings. Very few people are, at one time, admitted to this sanctum, but in the aggregate many hundreds of the chief men and women of the city have shared in the excitement that is associated with it. Opinions are sharply divided as to what occurs there. Many will have it that the happenings are closely related to what is called miracle. Others have no opinion to offer save to admit that they are in the presence of an insoluble mystery; while others declare the phenomena to belong to the order of extraordinary conjuring. I have been once or twice to the sittings, and I would like to tell, first of all, what I have seen and heard, and then afterwards remark upon the matter.

There lives in Melbourne a wealthy merchant, named T. W. Stanford, who for thirty years has been a student of the occult. A few years ago it came to his knowledge that a boot operative in one of the suburbs—a Mr. Charles Bailey—was experiencing some remarkable psychical phenomena. He professed to be "controlled" by certain Hindoo spirits who brought through closed doors, from all parts of the world, some astonishing "apports." It was said that these articles were conveyed through space with the rapidity of thought, and that the *modus operandi* of their coming was purely natural, wrought by means of natural laws, of which, however, earth dwellers were entirely ignorant. The explanation offered by the "controls" was that all matter, being nothing but an aggregation of atoms or electric corpuscles, could be disintegrated at the will of those who knew the secret, "precipitated" with the rapidity of lightning, and recombined in any place desired. The explanation seemed all right, but the great question was as to the *facts* of these "apports" being brought. Did these articles—many of them large and solid—really come out of space in the way described, or was there a more mundane way of accounting for their appearance—a way which might be easily explained by Messrs. Maskelyne and Devant? I confess, when I first heard of the matter, my thoughts travelled to St. George's Hall, London, and I recalled the magic of Mr. Devant—the disappearance of a woman in full light, the production of a man from nowhere, and other trifles of that order. I also recalled Mrs. Besant, Madame Blavatsky, the Mahatmas of the Gobi Desert and . . . smiled. It seemed an old trick in a new guise. Not long before leaving London three of us—all known to readers of "The Christian World"—were treated to a special spiritualistic performance in a private house, and we came away exploding with laughter at the most obvious farce which had been enacted under our eyes.

Then there were rumours that this same Charles Bailey had been detected in a fraud at Grenoble. Certain birds which had come as "apports" were said to have been purchased on the previous day from a Grenoble dealer. True, the story was variously told and there were some obvious contradictions between the various accounts of the incident. Yet the flavour left by the story in the public mouth was not good. It was a case for investigation, and I determined to put the thing to a test for myself. Mr. Stanford was very kind and freely opened everything to me. Certainly *he* has no axe to grind. He is a very wealthy man. He never receives a penny from any person who attends his sittings. On the contrary, his sittings cost him a good deal of money, and he is very generous in his gifts. So far as he is concerned, therefore, there can be no suspicion of financial scheming, while his face and general manner are leagues removed from those of the humbug or impostor. Rightly or wrongly, he is perfectly sincere in his belief that these "apports" come, and have come during the last eight years. I was hardly prepared, however, to see such an amazing and extensive collection of "apports" such as he possesses. He owns quite a museum of the most remarkable articles ever brought together under one roof. A number of large drawers are packed with priceless curios, all of which, he swears, were brought into that same room through the medium, Charles Bailey, under test conditions which absolutely precluded the remotest possibility of fraud. To give a complete catalogue of these "apports," I should require an entire page of "The Christian World." Let me enumerate some of the most striking items. First of all, and perhaps most astonishing of all, Mr. Stanford has an aviary of living birds, brought, he declares, at these sittings, from different parts of the world. There they are alive and happy. They came into the room alive, he says, in the presence of acute observers. Some of them came in the darkness, others appeared in full light. They came through a man who, previous to the sitting, had been carefully searched and beaten all over, and who, moreover, was then locked up securely in a cage covered with fine net, through which everybody could see. He extended empty hands, and lo! like lightning there fell into them from space the living birds. Some of these birds have been in the aviary for several years. Besides these living things, the following articles repose in the museum: a leopard skin, a tomahawk with human scalp and hair, tortoise, bird's nest: with eggs therescalps and hair, tortoises, bird's nests with eggs therein, fetishes from Africa, dreadful-looking dolls from Tibet, a variety of Tibetan prayer-books, a human skull, a curtain 11ft. by 5ft. from an Indian temple, costly Indian dresses and garments, Chinese flags, strings of rare coins, which fell like a shower into the gauze cabinet, a rain of buckwheat, a huge fish-net from the islands, Egyptian and Roman manuscripts and papyri, an animal's skin measuring over six feet in length, a number of exotic shrubs, some of which are now growing in a garden in East Melbourne, precious stones, stone spear-heads, sets of carved ivory beads beautifully finished, palm leaves covered with religious writing, fur hat and anklets from Tibet, millet seed in large quantities, and a Chinese mandarin's complete costume. This is merely a selection from the list. More extraordinary than these dead things are the birds to which I have referred, and such items as living fish enveloped in seaweed and a living snake, which disappeared in full light, as too dangerous to be at large in a room.

But the list is by no means complete. To some the following will appear to be the most extraordinary "apports" of all. Mr. Stanford has drawers full of cylinders and tablets covered with cuneiform inscriptions, in appearance exactly like those which fill the cases in the Assyrian section of the British Museum, and which he alleges were dropped into the room, some of them, in full light. A most remarkable "apport" was a mass of seaweed, which, in common with the rest of the articles, I carefully handled. It is absolutely impossible for any man to conceal such a quantity of stuff upon his person and not be discovered by the searchers. But what are we to think of this account of it? A prominent lawyer of Melbourne, who often attends my church, assured me that he was present when this seaweed was brought. The room was suddenly filled with the pungent odour of strong sea water, and there dropped upon the table this mass of seaweed, dripping with water, which immediately ran off the table,

yet the medium was quite dry, and there was no trace of water on ceiling, floor or elsewhere in the room.

Now let me tell of what I have seen with my own eyes. The medium, Charles Bailey, is undoubtedly a quite ordinary man. He may be a good boot-maker, but he has no gifts of speech, and he has not those natural gifts of "smartness" which make a first-class conjuror. He is a small man, lightly dressed, and I took the precaution to search him thoroughly. Every pocket was examined, as well as every other spot where a man could possibly conceal anything. Then he was subjected to a thumping which, while it did not wound him, would be quite certain to smash any such articles as birds' eggs, or any such creatures as birds that he might have about him. And thus thumped and searched, he was led immediately into a wooden cage covered with fine net, where he was imprisoned, the door being locked, and the cage being sealed in several places, so that any attempt to open it would be immediately detected. The cage itself was thoroughly examined, and it is absolutely certain there was nothing whatever in it beyond the mere framework, of the simplest construction possible, and a cane bottom chair. There he sat, in semi-light, visible to everybody. At either side of the cage was posted a gentleman well known in the city, one being a doctor and the other a lawyer. In a few minutes this unlettered man, professedly in a trance, delivered a remarkably clever and beautifully-worded scientific lecture, the "control" being, it was said, the late Signor Valetti. Of this address I do not speak save to say that it was spoken in broken English, it contained a number of Italian words and illustrations, and that for fifty-five minutes its flow was unchecked, and that as a scientific production it was worthy of the eminent professor who was supposed to have uttered it. Then came the 'apports," some of which were brought in the darkness and others in the light.

These included an Indian blanket, containing a human scalp and tomahawk; a block of lead, said to be found in Roman strata in Rome, and bearing the name of Augustus; a quantity of gravel, alleged to come from Central America, and quite unlike anything seen in Australia; a large string of shell-beads, said to come from the Indians; two perfect clay tablets, covered with cuneiform inscriptions, both being several thousands of years old, and said to have been brought directly from the mounds in Babylon; and finally, a bird's nest, containing several eggs and the mother bird, undoubtedly alive. The remarkable thing about the bird was this: Mr. Stanford said it could not live in this climate at present—the weather was not sufficiently hot—and he begged the "controls" to be good enough to take it away and bring it back a month or two later. In full light the bird's nest, the eggs and the living bird vanished as mysteriously as they appeared. On one of the nights when I visited the apartment, an ordinary blackboard was placed upon the table. It was subjected to a close scrutiny by every person present. The lights were extinguished for a few seconds, and when they were turned up the board was covered with a number of Greek and Latin inscriptions, said by the "control" to be copies of inscriptions in Rome and elsewhere. The marvel was that the writing was simply perfect, while the letters were drawn with absolute precision as only a practised writer in full light could draw them. Charles Bailey himself could not read a line of what was written. He does not even know the formation of the letters of the Greek alphabet.

These, then, are some of the facts in connection with Mr. Stanford's sittings. That collection of remarkable "apports"—the most remarkable, surely, ever brought together in one single museum—needs to be explained. They all came through Charles Bailey, who was thoroughly searched at every sitting. They all came within the net-covered cabinet, which was also searched at every sitting. They all came into the cabinet while it was locked and sealed, and many of them came in full light. The question is, how did they come? If it is a question of conjuring, then it must be admitted that Charles Bailey is a magician absolutely unique in the world. Clothed in a suit so slender that any extra article would be immediately apparent, how did he manage to produce a huge leopard skin, six feet long, scores of living birds, huge quantities of dripping seaweed, living fish, a piece of tapestry measuring 11ft. by 5ft., a complete mandarin's costume, a human skull, and the like? And, further, how could this poor boot operative manage to possess himself of hundreds of cuneiform tablets, of Greek and Egyptian papyri, MSS., of Tibetan prayer books, of African fetishes, of sacred articles from Indian temples, and the like? To obtain such articles would require the purse of a millionaire and the influence of a world-wide traveller. If not conjuring, then is this mysterious work what it claims to be, "the passage of matter through matter," the demonstration of a force of which the existence is only just beginning to be suspected? If it is, it demands investigation. In any case, it ought to be investigated, for the whole thing is either a colossal and baffling piece of humbug, the most pretentious and mysterious ever attempted, or it is the opening up of a new vista, the consequences of which are immense. The British Association will hold its meetings in Melbourne in 1914. Here, then, is the opportunity for an inquiry. The foremost scientists and investigators of the world will be present in this far away corner of the globe. Surely it would be worth their while to inquire most carefully, in the interests of truth, into the reality or otherwise of this phenomenon. If it is false, the sooner it is slain the better; if it is true, the gain cannot be other than great.

Melbourne, October 4.

As the religious aspect of this question is the all-important one, an article on the procedure of Mr. Stanford's, including one of the invocations with which they are always prefaced, which appeared in the Sydney "Sunday Times" of January 1st from the pen of its Melbourne representative, is given jointly with Mr. Spurr's letter. This gentleman has been a sitter for some years at Mr. Stanford's circle, and has been led out of the bondage of materialism by what he has witnessed.

THE BAILEY SEANCES.

Religious Aspect of Spiritualism.

There is a religious side to spiritualism as well as the incomprehensible, as demonstrated by the production of phenomena, and in view of the misapprehension which prevails to a large extent on this point (writes the Melbourne representative of the "Sunday Times"), it strikes me as being but ordinarily fair to a much misunderstood religion to state a few facts under this heading.

The Rev. Mr. Spurr, the devout and popular preacher of the Baptist Church, Melbourne, who is broad-minded, sound of judgment, and popular, has attended a few of the investigatory seances conducted by Mr. T. W. Stanford, Melbourne, with the medium, Mr. Charles Bailey. He intimated that his desire was to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the allegations in regard to the phenomena and other demonstrations that were said to prove spirit return. His views have been set out in a lengthy article appearing in one of the leading church papers of Britain, and he suggests therein that the phenomena are sufficiently striking to justify investigation by the congress of scientists that will sit in Australia in 1914. He says nothing in his article indicating that the teachings are opposed to Christianity.

The article was reproduced almost in extenso in the Melbourne "Herald," and certain remarks by correspondents, whose letters were published subsequently —these remarks being to the effect that spiritualistic teaching is opposed to Christian doctrine—have suggested the writing of this brief explanatory note.

The seance at Mr. Stanford's opens with a hymn

and a prayer by a "control," speaking through the medium, Mr. Bailey. Among the hymns favoured are, "Abide With Me," "Oh, God, our help in ages past," "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "Sun of my Soul," "There's a land that is fairer than day," and others of the same class. After the invocation there are demonstrations of psychic phenomena, which are followed by an address, or sermon, uplifting in character, devout in tone, and spiritual and Christian in its teachings. The following is a complete prayer offered on a recent occasion:—

"Eternal Father God, we approach Thee in all solemnity, and we know and feel that it is a privilege to communicate with Thee. To-night we desire to wait upon Thee, for they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as on eagles' wings, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. So to-night, our Father, we desire to run without weariness, to walk without fainting, and in Thee alone can we do this. Grant, we beseech Thee, that Thy spirit be with these people, let there be showers of blessing, let there be signs of wonders, as Thou didst perform them through Thy Holy Child, Jesus. Grant, we beseech Thee, that all those who assemble here from time to time shall be true and consistent workers for the salvation of humanity. In the midst of turmoil and strife may they receive that peace which Thou hast promised those who put their trust in Thee. Let Thy ministering spirits whom Thou hast sent forth inspire them to great and noble works, help them in the development of their gifts. May each one's spiritual life be brightened, may they be shining lights in the spiritual firmament. Support, we beseech Thee, all Thy sensitiveness, Thy seers, and Thy prophets, for we know they are persecuted as of old by the thoughtless multitude. Send Thy spirit to comfort and to sustain them, and all those who labour in Thy vineyard. Help, we beseech Thee, spirits in prison, and those who are bound with chains of darkness. Thou didst send Thy Messenger to liberate those that were bound, the bruised reed should he not break, nor the smoking flax should he not quench, until he should bring forth judgment unto truth. So to-night let them be judged according to men in the flesh, but may they live eternally to Thee in the spirit. Help the sick and the suffering, and those appointed unto death; deliver them, we beseech of Thee, this night. Bless Thy servant who works and labours here from time to time, the band of helpers, those who are seeking with a single eye to serve Thee, and to uplift Thy name and to build up Thy kingdom upon the earth; let it come, we beseech Thee, in great power, this night. Answer these our petitions, and teach us how to pray. Amen."

The following extracts from one of the addresses, which had for its text John iii., 3:—"Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," will show the soundly religious tone of the addresses, for the words quoted are typical of all the utterances—"Those of you who are Christians and read the Bible will know that the spirit of God is spoken of right through the book as a wondrous power. It was the Spirit of God that brooded upon the face of the waters in producing creative acts of which we read in the book of Genesis. It was the Spirit of God that came down upon the people on the day of Pentecost. It was the Spirit of God that helped the Christ in all His wondrous works, and amidst the various surroundings, when He sought to help the people. It was the Spirit of God that guided and directed the Apostles who came after Him. It is the Spirit of God that dwells in the Church to-day—I mean those people whose hearts are centred in God, whose lives are in tune with the Infinite. . . . That Spirit which manifested itself right throughout the ages, is manifesting to-day, producing signs and wonders if you like, but the greatest sign and wonder is the regeneration of mankind. I would like to say to you as a word of warning, get right away from those spiritualists who tell you that it is not true, who try to persuade you that Christ never lived, you may call him your highest Orpheus; you may say he was a good man, you may say very nice things about him, but in your lives you may deny him. I say, the man or woman who does that is not fit for the kingdom of heaven, they have not experienced that change which we are speaking of, they have not been born again. . . As soon as ye desire to live a better life, to be spiritually perfect, and prayer ascends unto God, the Spirit of God will take possession of you, will indwell, and will cast out that which offends."

The utterances at the seances are reported by a thoroughly competent and conscientious lady stenographer, and typed from her notes. The records are kept by Mr. Stanford, and constitute a compendious set of volumes on spiritualism in its religious aspect.

DO THE DEPARTED COMMUNICATE WITH US?

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. W. T. STEAD.

By the latest English mail came a letter from Mr. W. T. Stead, with copies of an interview with him from the "United Free Church Magazine," by Walter Wynn. It gives so interesting a picture of the man as he looks to his contemporaries on the press that a report somewhat condensed to suit the exigencies of space is given below.

* * * * * *

"It was on Tuesday morning, November 1st, 1910, at 11.45, that I realised a desire of many years. I saw Mr. Stead. I wrote telling him of my wish, and he at once replied by saying he would be delighted to see me.

The ordinary journalist is a very decent sort of fellow, so is the ordinary preacher, but I like to see and hear the man who is hated, misunderstood, slandered, ignored, called "erratic," "a crank," "mad," "wicked," "a liar," and described generally with similar sweet verbal reasonableness. I would go over hedges to see him, and ask to be carried on an ambulance to hear him. He never disappoints me. A special recommendation is when the leaders of churches cast him out of the temple, and when religious organisations damn him with faint praise. If he has been to prison for conscience sake, it is an additional attraction. Go and hear such a man. Buy anything he prints. Listen to all he says, and never waste a minute of your life listening to the diplomatic, tight-rope dancing, smiling, drawing-room Miss Nancys of the Pulpit and Press, who slip through the world saving their skin and reputation by smiling nicely at officialdom and currying favour with "men of position." It is because W. T. Stead is a *man*, and not a public Miss Nancy, that I admire and love him. His courage, fidelity, monumental labours, and sufferings, compel reverence. At 61 years of age he stands before the world with his chariot still hitched to the stars; a brother man, an enthusiast in every good cause. He has a large, beaming face, which is full of kindly expression when he smiles, and becomes radiant with goodwill when he laughs.

"Good morning, Mr. Stead," I said, "you are looking well."

"Thanks; yes; I am very well. Sit down. I am pleased to see you. I have been thinking over the suggestion you made that we should talk about the other world." I pause here to say that from this moment onwards I heard for an hour the most remarkable stream of talk I ever listened to from a human being. Walking up and down the room, leaning on the couch and against the mantelpiece, this remarkable man continued:—

"You ask me 'What actual proof is there of another world?' I reply by asking what proof would there be of the starry heaven, of light, or of the existence of colour to a world of blind men? If one or two of the blind men obtained their sight, how would they prove to those who remained in darkness

that they could see what they saw? It is just the same way with us when we approach the question of the other world, our senses are blinded, but here and there are some who can see. That is to say, there are persons who have so far evolved in the direction of the higher humanity that they have what is commonly called the sixth sense. They see what you and I cannot see, they hear what you and I cannot hear, they receive impressions of forces which pass us by. They are the exact equivalent to the seeing men in a blind world. As to the value of their testimony you have to check it just in the same way as the blind men would check that of the first seeing persons who discerned the stars, light and colour. We satisfy ourselves first as to the general credibility and trustworthiness of the witness. If he is a man whose word can be taken upon all ordinary matters, there is at least a *prima facie* case for believing that he is speaking the truth even when you have no means of checking the accuracy of his testimony. Secondly, you need to compare the testimony of many such witnesses, and if you find that when they are examined and cross-examined apart from each other they all agree in the main as to the facts to which they testify it is reasonable to conclude that, in the absence of any possibility of collusion, they are really describing that which has a real existence.

Now, these two decisive factors, first the trustworthiness of the witnesses, and secondly the agreement among themselves as to the fundamental facts, are both established beyond all gainsaying, therefore I say we may fairly accept their testimony. Now what is it that these people tell us without any variation? They have always told us in all ages that there is another world, that we here are but in a state of brief probation, and pass at death into another state of being from which it is possible to communicate with mortals. The details vary indefinitely as to the nature of that other world and as to its relation to this, but there is no difference of opinion on the fundamental questions, that the other world exists, that it is closely related to this, and that the life lived in the body affects directly and decisively our condition in the next world. In this all religions are at one that have been, that are, or that ever will be. What spiritualism does is to verify the main bases upon which all religions have rested. If you say, 'I am not satisfied, I want more proof,' then I would say, 'What would you consider to be an adequate demonstration of the reality of the other world?' Often you find people who say they would believe if they had this, that, or the other evidence. It is promptly afforded them and even then they are not satisfied. They want something else. Such people would never have believed that Columbus had discovered America. They would say they had never been there themselves, they had never seen it, and they would refuse to accept anything on first hand testimony, which means the evidence of their own eyes. Yet if you told them they could get that evidence if they chose to go to America they would refuse to take the passage on the ground that it is dangerous, that many people who start never get to their destination, they don't like being sea-sick, and so forth."

"Yes; but do you have no doubts at times, Mr. Stead, as to the interpretation you give of the spiritualistic phenomena you experience"

"Not the slightest. I have seen and therefore I believe. I have seen my son materialise before my eyes; but why should I wish particularly to *see* him? That I hear from him is certain. We used to talk to each other by means of the telephone. I knew his voice, believed what he said. It was enough. I did not see him. *I heard* him. So now."

"Have you had any proofs lately of your son's existence?"

"Certainly. I have both seen and heard him."

"You are quite sure?"

"As sure as I live."

"What, then, is the kind of life, Mr. Stead, that the departed live in the other world? Why is it we get such slight reports of the life they live?"

Mr. Stead was roused.

"No evidence?" he cried, "there is any amount of definite evidence? There are absolute proofs to be found in any of the standard works by the English and the Continental Spiritualists. I admit that they contain many statements that differ, but not more than the different accounts of the Western Hemisphere written by travellers, say in Greenland, New York, Mexico and Brazil. My own opinion is that the departed exist round about us in this world. For instance, my son tells me he lives as he used to do, but with far more power. I have not the slightest doubt, I repeat, that he lives."

'Do the departed exert an influence over our lives?'

"Yes; certainly they work on us by our thought Of course, everything is under law, but their power over us is also under law, and who shall limit such an influence?"

"But, Mr. Stead, how is it that Sir Robertson Nicoll affirms that no word has ever yet been proved to have come from the other world?"

"My dear fellow; the question rather should be this: is there any conceivable evidence that would satisfy Robertson Nicoll?" (At this I laughed with hilarity). "Yes; but that is the question. The extreme readiness with which Robertson Nicoll swallows all the phenomenal records in the New Testament and Christianity, and the way he banishes evidence of the truth of what I say, which he can test any day in the week, causes me to change the question into this: *What would be regarded as conclusive evidence by the mind of Robertson Nicoll?*"

This was said with such inimitable and kindly humour that my comical faculty was disturbed. There was a look on Mr. Stead's face which seemed to indicate that Sir Robertson Nicoll was the most hopeless being intellectually that the Creator ever suffered to exist!

"Well now," I said, "what does this spiritualistic movement mean practically in the religious life of the world?"

"Why—immense results. The rehabilitation of Christianity will result from a clear perception of the occult forces now ignored. Take the ordinary Church member: he not only talks as if he did not believe in another world but resents any proof of it."

. . . . . .

"Do you ever regret having written 'Modern Babylon'?"

"Great heavens, no. I praise God every day I live for that. There can be no doubt the authorities determined to destroy me, but their efforts were the best thing that ever happened to me. They lifted me on to a pedestal on which I have talked to humanity. That is where particular providence comes in. What you are apt to regard in life as an irretrievable disaster is just the opposite. If God answered many of our prayers He would ruin us. Whatever happens is best. If a man will leave himself with God, He will make the best use of him. Of course, it is hard to reconcile many things in the world with justice and love, but Jesus had seen them all and He told us it was all right. And He knew. He knew. Yes; I believe in God because I believe in Christ."

After a few amenities, one of the most remarkable hours I ever spent came to a close with an expressed hope that Mr. Stead would live another 30 years, whereupon he assured me he would probably be going to gaol twice before he died, and be *stoned* to death at the finish. This—with a merry twinkle in his eyes!

WALTER WYNN.

United Free Church Magazine.

Mrs. Knight McLellan is returning to Melbourne about February 24th, and a "Welcome" is being arranged for her by the Spiritualistic Church of Victoria. Those willing to assist are cordially invited to send their names to Mr. G. Mitchell, 44 Barton-street, Hawthorn, so that a fitting reception may be given to this veteran worker in the cause.

MRS. EDWARDS,
Inspirational Speaker.



Mr. W. D. Campbell, President of Spiritualist Church of W.A., Perth, sends the accompanying picture of Mrs. Edwards, who has been for four years minister of the above Church, having recently resigned the position through a breakdown in health. Her work in Perth has been of so generally useful a character, giving public lectures on total abstinence and local option and other social matters, that on the occasion of her leaving for Australia, the *Western Mail* gave a short notice of her work and the picture which is now reproduced. By latest accounts Mrs. Edwards is regaining her health, and is at present residing in Victoria, where her two sons are filling important positions in the Educational Department, and it is hoped that she will soon resume her work on the platform.

REVIEW.

*Five Journeys Around the World.

Shortly after his third visit to Australia, Dr. J. M. Peebles published a volume, entitled "Three Journeys Around the World." The editions then printed were exhausted, and the book has been out of print and called for several years. This has induced the author to embody a large portion of it revised and brought up-to-date with his experiences, observations and reflections connected with his two later tours, the whole forming a large volume of upwards of five hundred pages of deeply interesting and instructive matter. Brief historical sketches, critical and comprehensive descriptions of the numerous countries he has visited, the peoples, their religions and modes of life and philosophical reflections thereon. These are interspersed with numerous incidents of travel in places not often visited by tourists. In two of his sea voyages he was accompanied by an excellent medium through whom he held converse with a highly intelligent spirit named Aaron Knight, the records of the communications bearing often upon the peoples with whom they were for the time in contact, giving information with regard to their origin and development anterior to the recorded history, others on unsolved problems connected with physical and spiritual life; these from their lucidity are in many instances particularly interesting. The author's descriptions of places and events abound in word pictures, and are wonderfully varied, covering so wide a field, and the book is embellished with numerous illustrations. It is to be noted that in nearly all these so-called Heathen countries he discovered traces of Spiritualism in some form, and in some instances there were practical evidences of it.

W.H.T.

*Five Journeys Around the World,—Travels in China, India, Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, and other Heathen and Oriental Countries; by J. M. Peebles, M.D. Peebles' Publishing Co., Los Angeles, U.S.A. Price 9/-, posted direct from Author.

CULT OF ANTOINE THE HEALER.
The Fluid Influence of Spirits.

The London *Daily Express* gives the following:—

A petition has been forwarded to the Chamber of Deputies, bearing 160,000 signatures, asking Parliament to recognise "Antoine worship" as legal. Whatever answer is given to this singular request, the personality of Antoine, called "The Healer," is very interesting, and his hold over thousands of Belgians is a singular instance of the faith of mankind in one of their number.

Antoine was formerly a miner. Having inherited a little money, he abandoned his work and devoted himself to Spiritualism. He proved to be an excellent medium, and he often received—according to his followers—visits from spirits.

These spirits dictated long messages purporting to come from Heaven. One day they told him that he was ordered to exercise the gift of healing. Antoine thereupon visited the poor of his parish, spoke to them of Spiritualism, and is said to have effected several cures.

Antoine was soon besieged by sufferers who begged him to relieve their ills. He is now greatly popular in the valley of the Meuse, and especially in the neighbourhood of Jeuneppe, his native village.

Two years ago Antoine said that he was ordered to preach, and he has thus become the centre of a new religion. A church was built at Jeuneppe, for which £4000 was raised in a week. Antoine lives near the church, which is overcrowded every day with followers.

"The Healer" refuses to accept money for his services, and he is as poor to-day as when he began his strange missionary work.

The doctrine of Antoine's religion is rather obscure. He teaches that goodness must govern the world. He believes that the human body is controlled by fluid magnetism, and that the magnetism of one person can overcome the evil magnetism of another.

The services in Antoine's church are very simple in character. "The Healer" and his congregation concentrate their thoughts and Antoine gets into "fluidic" communication with the minds of the worshippers. When he feels that good influences predominate, he speaks under the power of the spirits.

Antoine's followers obey him unhesitatingly in everything. In appearance he is a tall, rather round-shouldered man, with grey hair; he wears a black frock coat, but is always without a hat.

CHILDREN AND THE UNSEEN.

By a strange coincidence two letters have been forwarded to me containing spiritual demonstrations through quite young children, both residents in New South Wales. At the same time arrives the "Occult Review" for January with an interesting article entitled "Children and the Unseen," by Reginald B. Spann. "It is a curious fact," says the writer, "that some of the most extraordinary cases of psychic phenomena have occurred spontaneously through the unconscious mediumship of children. Beginning with Joan of Arc, who saw visions when she was between twelve and thirteen years of age, he gives many instances principally of girls about the same age.

In Australia.

Both cases sent to the editor of this paper relate to younger children. One a boy of five years of age

saw and described to his father who was sleeping with him "most beautiful flowers and numberless curious faces" on the wall of the bedroom. When the light was lit, they disappeared, only to be there again when the room was in darkness. It was a most beautiful vision, and real not only to the child but to the father, who listened to the description.

In a second case the father writes of his little boy, only 3 years old, that they noticed him playing with someone they could not see, but who said at last to his mother, "Girlie is here," and she always seemed to be with him wherever he went. Sometimes he said there were three girls, one a big one, and said later, "One of the girlies has flew away out of the door." A clairvoyant saw them round him one night as he lay in his cot. Space forbids any longer mention of these interesting cases. Reginald Spann closes his article on the subject with excellent advice, which is quoted for the benefit of all. "I think it is a mistake," he says, "to use children in psychical experiments or to develop their powers in any abnormal way. They are naturally close to the Unseen, but it is to the Spheres of Light they belong—in all that is bright, fair, innocent, and gay, so let them remain there under the protection and guidance of the Angels of Light." This is similar advice to that rendered by the editor of this paper.

PERSONALS.

Dr. J. M. Peebles' new book, "Five Journeys Round the World," noticed in another column, is one of the most interesting of his many volumes. It can be ordered direct from Dr. Peebles, 9s., post free to any address in Australia or New Zealand. Dr. Peebles' changed address is 519 Fayette-street, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. He desires all mail matter to be sent there.

W. J. Colville has some excellent things in his latest book, "Ancient Mystery and Modern Revelation." Many people fear to inquire into the origins of the Bible as if the fundamental truths of religion based on the spiritual experiences of the world can be affected by such inquiry. "If bibles," he says, "will not bear examination, then the sooner they are consigned to the limits of desuetude the better, but if we can find much that is excellent in all of them, but the whole of truth in none, we do well to broaden our human sympathy and compare book with book, and system with system to the end, that we may at length find a common religious and philosophical denominator."

Ralph Shirley, in the January number of his excellent "Occult Review," takes Cagliostro as the subject of his notes of the month. This celebrated master of magic is the subject of an important volume by W. R. H. Trowbridge, just published by Chapman and Hall, London. Price, 16s. net. T.P.'s Magazine has a review of this book and portrait by Francis Gribble. Each notice has, of course, "The Diamond Necklace" episode about which Carlyle wrote so picturesquely. Cagliostro was acquitted by the French tribunal of any blame attaching to the matter.

W. L. Wilmshurst, whose articles always command attention as not only a scientific writer, but one who sees the spiritual side of things, has an article also in the January "Occult Review" on "S. Winefride's Well and Legend." It is most beautifully illustrated with views of the church at Holywell, Flintshire, which is the source and headquarters of the legend. There is no magazine published that contains such valuable articles on occult subjects as "The Occult Review." For 8s. a year it is sent direct to Australia from publishers, William Rider and Son, 164 Aldersgate-street, London, E.C.

Professor W. F. Barrett, F.R.S., has in the January "Occult Review" a most interesting and instructive illustrated article on "The Divining or Dowsing Rod." Professor Barrett is an authority on this subject, and contributed most important reports to S.P.R. of his experiments.

Elliott O'Donnell's "Ghostly Phenomena," published by Werner, Laurie, London, price 3s. 6d., is reviewed at length in the London "Daily Chronicle" with illustrations of one of the more startling stories. These are all vouched for, and their popularity shows that psychic phenomena are now gladly accepted as copy by the daily papers and publishers.

Mr. George Spriggs has been elected councillor of Richmond for the recently formed North Sheen Ward, in which his house at 1 West Park-road, Kew, is situated. A portrait of Mr. Spriggs, and a notice of his life appeared in the local paper received by last mail, and congratulations are sent to our great friend and helper by Australian readers.

Mr. W. D. Robinson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, is contributing to "Newcastle Chronicle" a series of papers entitled "Reminiscences of a Spiritualist." They are written in much the same style as James Robertson's, in his famous volume "Spiritualism," and full of interest. There is scarcely a paper published that does not now find it to its interest to gratify the public demand in this matter of Spiritualism.

Mrs. Ellen Green writes from 4 Derby-street, Moss Side, Manchester, of her successful work on the platform in England, and sends New Year greetings through the "Harbinger" to her many friends in Australia and New Zealand. Friends at home are greatly impressed, she says, with the addresses given in the "Harbinger" through Charles Bailey at Mr. Stanford's seances, the one by J. B. Gough, whose lectures are remembered in Great Britain, being specially noticed.

Mr. J. Isherwood writes from Sydney of a successful series of lectures there, and says that after four years' continuous work at the Antipodes he has decided to pay a visit to his home in England. He sails from Sydney with his friend, Mr. S. A. Brown, by the S.S. "Wilcannia," leaving that port on March 7th.

Mrs. Bright will be "At Home" to friends and subscribers from 3 to 5 on Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 8th, at "Harbinger of Light" Office, Austral Buildings, 117 Collins Street. Mr. Stanton will speak on "Healing by Spirit Power." Cordial invitation to all.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

Although the classes connected with above, conducted by Mr. Waschatz and Mrs. Engman, respectively, and the Lyceum, have gone into recess for the holiday season, there have been excellent attendances at the Sunday afternoon and evening meetings at the Austral Building, taxing the seating accommodation to the utmost. Mr. Engman, Mr. Bloomfield, Mr. Feinaigle, Mrs. Pymm, Mrs. Trew have been the principal speakers, and at the afternoon mediums' meetings many have been present, and great interest displayed.

At time of going to press, no details of future work had reached this office, but it is hoped that the year 1911 may be very fruitful in good works and on progressive harmonious lines.

MELBOURNE P.S. LYCEUM.

During the month, large audiences assembled at the two lectures given by Charles Bailey, at Oddfellows' Hall, and the first one, attended by 500 persons, was reported in the "Age" at some length. It was entitled "The Truth of the Grenoble Experiences," and gave a clear and comprehensive account of sittings that were wonderfully successful, in spite of most adverse conditions throughout the city. The medium's meeting was held on the 15th of January, and the platform was to be filled at the end of the month by J. M. Moorey, who has returned to Mel-

bourne after a highly successful tour in New Zealand.

A combined Lyceum picnic at Sandringham on the 30th of January was a great feature in the month's proceedings. Several suburban Lyceums joined with the Melbourne one, and a party of about 100 children and a great many friends and well-wishers were expected to take part in what promised to be a most successful gathering. In the report received, the officers of the Lyceum beg to thank the many friends who assisted to make the picnic a success, and those helpers in Lyceum session, and on the afternoon and evening platforms who have made the month's work a record one.

SPIRITUALISTIC CHURCH OF VICTORIA.

The annual meeting of the Spiritualistic Church of Victoria was held on December 8th, 1910, the principal business being election of officers. A very satisfactory financial statement was made by the secretary, and a hearty vote of thanks was carried, with acclamation, to retiring officers. The following officers were elected:—Leader, Mr. M. J. Barnett; vice-leaders, Mrs. Ord, Mr. Prince, sen., Mr. W. C. Riley; treasurer, Mr. G. W. Prince, jun.; secretary, Mr. J. Mitchell; organist, Miss R. Garvin; librarian, Mrs. Garvin; press correspondent, Miss J. Brayfield; committee, Mrs. G. Prince, sen., Mrs. Riley, Mr. J. Arthur, with power to add to their number. A special vote of thanks was accorded to Miss N. Knight for services rendered. Mr. Delderfield has occupied the evening platform during the month most acceptably.

THE OCCULT STUDENTS' SOCIAL.

On Monday evening, January 16th, a highly successful social was held at the Australian Church Lecture Hall by the above society. Mrs. Carrie Crozier spoke on clairvoyance, and a highly enjoyable programme of music was rendered, details of which had not reached the office at time of going to press.

SPIRITUALISM IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

THE CHURCH OF SEERS.

Dear Mrs. Bright,—Mrs. Morrell has just concluded her engagement with us, and now goes to Burwood for a month, after which we hope to have her again on the platform. Her visit has been a great success, and she has made many converts. She is a teacher of spiritualism of the highest and best aspects, and has made many friends, who unite with me in urging her to settle down in Sydney. Other speakers were Mr. T. H. Betteridge, "Psychometry," and Mr. W. Adam, with Mr. H. Sullivan and Mme. Levorna as demonstrators. Our Lyceum, which meets at Leigh House on Sunday mornings, is progressing favourably. We are glad to welcome Mrs. Cormack, our conductor, back from a visit to Brisbane. Cordial greetings to all co-workers in Victoria, and best wishes for yourself and paper.—

Yours fraternally,
A. J. BUSH.

RATIONALIST AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Mrs. Bright,—

Dear Madam,—I am pleased to report that steady progress has attended the services conducted by Mrs. Banks and myself under above heading. The committee of the Spiritualists' Church of New South Wales decided to close Sunday meetings, and in their stead, Mrs. Banks and self opened at 3.15 p.m. Sundays, a Phenomena and Psychological Class, which consists of short addresses, demonstrations, and mutual debate. Mr. J. Isherwood occupied the evening platform, commencing 1st January, and will speak till the end of February. So far good attendances have been the rule. With good wishes for all workers for Truth and Light, and kind thoughts for yourself and paper,—Yours in Truth,

R. TOWNS, "Psychologist."

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL CHURCH OF PROGRESS.

Mr. H. W. Moore, hon. sec., writes:—

We have been having special services nearly every Sunday afternoon this month, with excellent attendances. Rev. Dr. Zillmann gave an address, "From Ocean to Ocean," which was appreciated by all present, followed by Mr. R. Turner, with highly successful spiritual messages from flowers.

On the following Sunday two children were dedicated to Spiritualism by Mrs. R. Turner in most impressive manner, followed by an appropriate address for the occasion by Mr. Ferguson.

The speakers for the evening services were Mesdames Kruger and Love, Messrs. Touzalin, Gibson, Greer, Walker, Buckland; Spiritual descriptions, by Mr. Fred. Neal. Greetings to self, co-workers, and paper.

BURWOOD PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALISTIC LYCEUM.

Mr. Leslie Jones, hon. sec. of above, sends an interesting account, which space will only permit us to briefly notice, of the good work done at the above. On December 22nd, a most successful meeting was held, with Mr. G. W. Carter, conductor, in the chair, when prizes were given to the children, Madame Malu being called upon to do this pleasing ceremony. Presents were also given to Mr. F. C. Tanner, organist and physical conductor, of Lyceum exercises since its opening, and to Miss E. Basford, leader and ex-conductor.

On New Year's Day, Mr. and Mrs. Morrell, of Derby, England, visited the Lyceum, and Mrs. Morrell spoke of Lyceums in the old country, and of Mr. Alfred Kitson, general secretary of the British Lyceum Union. In the evening, Mrs. Morrell lectured on "The Uses of Spiritualism" for the Burwood Psychic Society. As will be seen in another notice, Mrs. Morrell is to pay a month's visit to Burwood, speaking for these excellent societies, and earnest workers in the cause. Leslie Jones wishes to appeal to Spiritualists everywhere through the columns of this paper to enter themselves as Spiritualists at forthcoming census.

AUBURN PSYCHIC SOCIETY.

Mr. and Mrs. Weekes, who have recently returned from a long tour of New Zealand, have occupied the platform of the above society during the last month, and, with Mr. J. Cook and Madame Malu, attracted good audiences. Mr. M. Jenkins, hon. sec., writes, and desires New Year greetings to all workers, and success to this paper and its editor, all of which we cordially reciprocate.

UNITED SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY.

Dear Mrs. Bright,—I am pleased to report that the above-named society has changed its place of meeting to larger and more convenient premises, situate 81 George-street west, and held its first meeting there Sunday 8th, at 3 p.m., which was a great success. Several short and stirring addresses were given by exponents of the higher Spiritualism, and harmonious conditions prevailed throughout. A few changes have taken place in the executive of the society, and the following officers were elected:—President, Mr. T. W. Muggleston; vice-president, Mr. G. Wright; secretary, T. Downs; treasurer, Mr. Mauser. A warm welcome will be given by this society to all Spiritualists, and others interested in

the welfare of humanity. Greetings to you, dear Editor, and all kindred societies.—Yours fraternally,

T. DOWNS.

SPIRITUALISM IN NEW ZEALAND.

UNITED CHURCH OF SPIRITUALISTS, AUCKLAND.

Mrs. Bright.

Dear Friend and Sister,—I have to report that Mr. J. M. Moorey finished a highly successful work with us on the 18th of December. His lectures have been delivered in a most capable manner, and have attracted very large audiences, and we were sorry that for health and business reasons Mr. Moorey was compelled to leave for Australia. A large number of friends and members assembled at the farewell social tendered to Mr. Moorey, and he was the recipient of many gifts, presented to him in grateful appreciation of the manner in which he carried out his work during his short stay amongst us. Mr. and Mrs. J. Wilson, of England, are now here, and we are looking forward to another very successful time. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson come highly recommended by all the chief societies of the North of England. Trusting the New Year will bring you and your paper every success,—I have the honour to remain, yours fraternally,

W. A. JACQUES, Hon. Sec.

CHRISTCHURCH SPIRITUAL SOCIETY.

To Annie Bright, Editor "Harbinger of Light."

Dear Sister,—Mrs. Harris Roberts is still holding crowded audiences, who fill the church, and has delivered some fine addresses, on the Higher Spiritual philosophy. The Wednesday night meetings for Psychometry are excellent. We held our annual picnic on New Year's Day, in the Wainoui Park, which was well attended, and successful in every way. Two ardent workers from the Home Land, Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson, who come to us with the best of credentials, are in Christchurch, and will take the platform. The president, on behalf of the Association, has welcomed them to Christchurch. Accept our greetings from Christchurch to yourself and brothers and sisters in all parts of the Commonwealth.—Yours in the work,

(Mrs.) H. H. L. WHITEHER, Hon. Secty.

Mrs. Steinman writes from Spiritualist Church, Christchurch, of the remarkably successful tour she has made in New Zealand, commencing January 1, 1910, when she opened in Auckland, followed by Wellington, Invercargill and Christchurch. Mrs. Steinman begins another tour of N.Z., at Dunedin, in February. Mrs. Steinman is a gifted exponent of the Higher Spiritualism, and feels that it is the Coming Religion. She sends kindest wishes for the "Harbinger," eagerly looked for each month."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our many friends and well-wishers are reminded that it has been decided that all contributions to this paper must be signed by the writer. These subjects are too important to be hidden behind a pseudonym, and no exception will be made.

"Historicus" received, but too late for consideration this month. Letter will be sent.

W. H. Evans.—"Cosmic Consciousness" received. Will consider.

Many letters are unavoidably left without reply; many excellent articles crowded out. Pressure of work and limited space the reason for both omissions.

"Edison and Immortality," and "South African Spiritualists' Union," unavoidably held over."

THE NEW YEAR'S NUMBER OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

As many letters have come to hand in which appreciative mention is made of the New Year issue of the *Harbinger*, the following contribution, sent for insertion in this number, is given to our readers as expressing the sentiments of so many correspondents:—

The first issue of the *Harbinger of Light* for the year 1911 has just come to hand. It is full of interesting information, which includes a character sketch of Charles William Eliot, President Emeritus of Harvard College, U.S.A, a leader of thought, and an eminent teacher, whose memorable address on "The New Religion" may be known to some. An address by Signor Valetti, "The Mystery of Existence," through the mediumship of Charles Bailey, and an article from the pen of Mr. T. W. Stanford are noticeable features. This gentleman, taking for his text "In my Father's House are many Mansions," leads the reader through real spiritualism to the most valuable knowledge of all that within ourselves and by our own lives, we are fitted for and determine our position hereafter. A careful perusal of this article by the student of progressive thought is recommended, as it is a critical review on the spiritual nature of man, and his ultimate attainment of what souls long for in the "Beyond."

C. H. CAMPBELL.

Mr Stanton, psycho-therapeutist, is seeing patients daily at 32 Collins Street, Melbourne, where he practised in conjunction with the late Dr. Abramowski. Mr. Stanton will speak at Mrs. Bright's "At Home" on February 8th, and Mrs. Bright will give instances of similar recorded cases.

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The greatly increased circulation of the paper makes it impossible to communicate directly with each subscriber, and it will strengthen the hands of the Editor to be thus relieved of much financial anxiety.

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Photo. reproduction of "Apport" brought to Mr. T. W. Stanford's circle, through the mediumship of Charles Bailey.



Of all the strange objects that have been brought to this circle, surely the most grotesque and also one that could not possibly be obtained outside the locality stated is the fetich from Samarai, New Guinea, photographed for this issue. It is connected with the native dress reproduced in January, as it was said to be the fetich carried to the fight by one of the tribes engaged in the conflict. Dr. Whitcomb said early in the evening, "A fetich left behind by natives who owned the dresses that have been brought will be produced to-night, and it will make a very fine photograph." It is 18 inches long, made entirely of stalks and leaves of grass with the face of cocoa-nut shell—a most ludicrous object which scarcely seemed suitable for photographing. Dr. Whitcomb said "This is a fetich from Samarai, New Guinea. These poor benighted people used to take this to help them win a battle as it was believed to give strength. The necklace is made of seeds that grow in tropical countries to which the natives in nearly every savage land attribute special benefit, whether physical or spiritual I am not quite sure."

As showing the necessity for the persistent demonstration of this remarkable phase of mediumship a quotation from a letter written by a Mr. Backworth, member of the Council of Society for Psychical Research as far back as 1894, entitled "Spiritistic Horseplay," is evidence. It is quoted in "Borderland" of Jan., 1894, in a chapter "Can Matter Pass Through Matter?" "The claim," says this gentleman, "to have seen matter pass through matter throws doubt upon all evidence coming from the same source" is a specimen of the crass ignorance displayed by educated people ignorant ot the possibilities of this Universe or of laws governing matter. Letters from Sir Oliver Lodge, Rev. J. Page Hopps and Edward Maitland, a few lines of the latter being quoted in the Séance article in this issue, all point to the same conclusion that anyone who professes to speak dogmaticaliy of what is possible or impossible in Nature is an obscurantist, and unqualified to give an opinion.