THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

(Page 594.)

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—*Goethe.* "WHATSOEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!"—*Paul.*

No. 2397.—VOL. XLVI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1926. [a Newspaper.] PRICE SIXPENCE.

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No. 2397.—Vol. XLVI. [Registered as] Saturday, December 18, 1926. [a Newspaper.] Price Sixpence

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Christmas Roses.

To all our readers everywhere we give the old greeting: A Merry Christmas to You! If the phrase is hackneyed by use it is also hallowed by its associations. It rings with human kindness, it is the right coinage of what was once "Merrie England," although England to-day has lost something of its ancient robustiousness. But it has never forgotten the great feast of the year, nor all that it symbolises in the spiritual order—Peace and Goodwill. It was Barrie, we think, who said that God gave us memory that we might have roses in December. The present may not be entirely flowery, but we can gather Christmas Roses from our memories of brighter days in the past and from our hopes of brighter days to come. Those hopes to us are more than hopes—they are sure and certain things. We know that beyond these transitory days of trouble and turbulence we shall pass each and every one of us to a life more abundant, to a more spacious day divinelier lit. Of these hopes we may gather imperishable roses—roses in December.

* * * *

The Coming Science.

From a long statement by the great naturalist, Luther Burbank, concerning the lessons he has gathered from his study of Nature we take the following inspiring passage:—

> I believe that we have just about reached the end of this age of mechanical and chemical progress which has been so astounding as to change the whole face of things even in my own life-time. I think it not unlikely that there will come later an age when Science will concentrate on the wonders of the mind of man and on the subjects that we now call mystical and psychic. . . We may some day find Psychology only the first of a great body of sciences concerning themselves with what is now only hinted at in the present stage of this department of knowledge.

Remembering the close friendship between Luther Burbank and Edison, we may not be wrong in seeing a connection between the above statement and Edison's recent declaration on the subject of survival. Meantime we may justly hail Burbank not only as naturalist but as seer.

A Word in Season.

Concerning a certain newspaper's investigation of Spiritualism—an inquiry which we think there is a tendency to take much too seriously—E. T. B. (Manchester), writing in the "Two Worlds," remarks on the mistaken method whereby instead of investigating phenomena and their bearing on the question of survival the investigation is concentrated on "the claims of reputed mediums." That is perfectly true. It is a relic of the old superstition that the medium does something or produces something, whereas—we are speaking, of course, of physical mediumship—the medium should be a perfectly passive member of the circle. All competent investigators know this, and that for scientific test purposes, all participation by the medium—whether conscious or unconscious—in the results must be rigidly prevented. Such proofs have been gained over and over again, so that except for their own purposes investigations by newspapers are rather superfluous. But as E. T. B. points out in the instance under review, the inquiry certainly tends to check abuses, to restrain easy credulity, and to expose the dangers of permitting under-developed mediums to take up public work.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS FUND.

At Christmas, 1923, we originated this little fund to relieve various cases of distress among Spiritualists which come under our notice from time to time. This Fund has been kept in existence ever since, under the title of "Light Benevolent Fund," assisted by private donations, and several painful cases of need have been alleviated.

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TWO DREAMS.

By MARY E. MONTEITH.

It was only a short time before his death that I met him, a well-known man of letters, distinguished, not only in the literary world, but recognised as a leading rationalist, and—a dreamer. And when I say that he was a dreamer, I mean it literally. A certain dream had inspired him to action. Compelled to reality, he had no compunction in giving the dream full credit for a successful play of his which was then running. In the daily Press this fact was made public. One read that the diffidence which, hitherto, had kept him from a practical demonstration of his knowledge of the drama had been overcome by reason of a dream. He had dreamed a dream which contained the germ of the play. But for that dream, the play would certainly never have existed.

Although it was the first—and the only—opportunity I had of meeting him, we were not exactly strangers to one another. We had corresponded on the subject of this play. I was collecting dreams, every sort of true dream—that is to say, prophetic, telepathic, inspirational; and especially was I interested in that particular manifestation which, officially, is called dream-intelligence. And I had written, desiring the necessary confirmation from the dreamer himself, and asked for his permission to publish it at some future date as a modern incident in support of the theory that many dreams, which inspired the men of old and are looked upon to-day as legendary, were real experiences.

This letter brought a courteous reply confirming all and expressing an identical interest. He, too, had been collecting dreams for some years, and he intended, when time allowed, to gather them all together in a book, which, alas! was never to be written. In return, I sent him the details of a well-attested dream of my own for his collection, and there the correspondence ended. It was, however, the prelude to this meeting I speak of.

On my arrival in London some little time later, I received an invitation to meet him at dinner, our hostess being Mrs. Kelway-Bamber. She knew nothing of the correspondence which had passed between us, and I had never before heard her mention his name. Her object in inviting me was purely social, one of those coincidences which go to make the pattern of this patchwork existence. And so the meeting came about.

Naturally, the conversation turned upon dreaming. Here I must explain that the dream that I had sent him concerned a dead man, a man I had never seen, nor had I at that date met anyone who knew him. It had happened during the war. I had heard casually nearly two months earlier that he was reported as missing; he was spoken of as the husband of Mrs. ——, a lady with whom I was unacquainted. This man had appeared in a dream, telling me his name, asking me to deliver a message and volunteering the information that he was dead. The vision was so vivid, his features so clearly impressed on my memory, that I was able to write his description and subsequently to recognise his photograph. Personally, that was an overwhelming proof, and to judge by a letter written by his wife describing this incident, she was equally convinced that I had really seen him. There were several good proofs of personality, but these were given by means of automatic writing the day following the dream. After months of suspense the dream communication proved to be correct.

From the subject of dreams we went on to discuss the psychic side of things, and I discovered, much to my surprise, that a Rationalist need not necessarily be a sceptic. This one told me that after having given some considerable time and thought to the subject he was inclined to believe in the survival of man, and that in certain conditions communication between the two states of existence was possible.

He was obviously interested to hear that by reason of many experiences, I regarded the dream life as common ground where we, temporarily released, might go and commune with those who are set free. He agreed that my proofs were indisputably sound: but he thought that more evidence was required to establish such a claim for others whose experiences were not so frequent nor so clear.

Within a few months of this conversation, he died, and shortly after I dreamt of him. I was fully conscious that I was dreaming, and remembered quite well that he was dead, noticing how well he seemed, younger than when I had seen him alive. He laughed, saying that he had no limitations now, in answer to a question I had put regarding his present existence. "Mind you write and tell Mrs. Bamber that you have seen me and spoken to me," he said. I awoke with that sense of remembering an incident which actually happened yesterday rather than an event which had only been thought.

I did not write to Mrs. Bamber. As a matter of fact, although a vivid experience, this dream was not convincing. There was nothing verifiable. On two other occasions, when death had occurred suddenly, the two people had, respectively, come and told me what had happened. In those cases, I had something to go on. But, knowing that this man had died, and considering the subject of our conversation in life, imagination seemed most probably the cause. A week later, I dreamed of him again. This time he reminded me that I had not carried out his wishes, and asked me once more to write and tell Mrs. Bamber that I had seen him. There was no sort of proof, however, and so I decided not to trouble her, and I put the matter out of my mind. This decision was revoked a little later on by reason of a waking experience known as automatic writing.

First of all I received short written messages, telling me that the dream was true. Each time these came, I tried to convey the thought that proofs were lacking. At last, one morning, the following letter was written through my hand with an irresistible force. It came in the midst of some accounts I was doing—the piece of paper on which it is written, with its time and figures, confirms the suddenness of the communication. Dated, May 5th, 1925, it runs as follows:—

> My dear Miss Monteith,—
>
> I am . . [four illegible words] . . *that if I* pretend that I am writing a letter, you will act according to my imagination, and I now take the opportunity of communicating a message for my friend—our mutual friend—Mrs. Kelway-Bamber, to confirm a communication she has already received from me through another source. Will you kindly say that in every respect she was right, and that I advise her to work unceasingly in the interests of the subject she has at heart. It is the only thing that matters.
>
> Thanking you for allowing me to write,
>
> Yours sincerely,
>
> W—— A——.

This was signed by the name of my dream-communicator.

Strictly speaking, there was nothing in this message to prove that the dream experience was true, but considering that it followed the other messages, and that I had asked for some sort of proof, it may perhaps be sufficient for us to give the dream the benefit of the doubt. For the main point, that W. A. had communicated with Mrs. Bamber through another source, was quite correct. Moreover, I had then no idea of it. Several months had elapsed since our meeting, I being in the country, she in town. And I did not know that she was carrying on further investigations with Mrs. Leonard or any other medium. I will quote her words:—

> Referring to the communication written to Miss Mary Monteith by Mr. A——, dated May 5th, 1925, a few months after his death, in which he says, "I now take the opportunity of communicating a message for my friend—our mutual friend—Mrs. Kelway-Bamber, to confirm a communication she has already received from me through another source, will you kindly say that in every respect she was right. . . ." I beg to state that in April (1925), during a sitting with Mrs. Leonard, and on another occasion through a friend, a message purporting to be from Mr. A., came to me, saying he was well and happy to find that all he had been told was true regarding survival of personality. He had found his son.
>
> L. KELWAY-BAMBER.

Notes had been taken by Mrs. Bamber at these two sittings; details of the sittings are also fully recorded in her private diary.

THE RECTOR'S GHOST.

A CASE OF HAUNTING IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

The following story, included in an old book of essays by Rich. Cumberland (died 1811), is sent us by a contributor. The story has been slightly abridged owing to present demands upon our space:—

As I was turning over a bundle of old papers I discovered an original letter [dated December 15th, 1695] from Mr. Caswell, the mathematician, to the learned Dr. Bentley when he was living in Bishop Stillingfleet's family, enclosing an account of an apparition: "Sir . . I have sent you enclosed a relation of an apparition, the story I had from two persons, their accounts varied a little, so I got a friend to bring me to the author at a chamber, where I wrote it down. He is the curate of Warblington, B.A. of Trinity College, Oxford. Mr. Brereton, the Rector, would have him say nothing of the story, for that he can get no tenant though he has offered the house for ten pounds a year less. Mr. P., the former incumbent, whom the apparition represented, was a man of very ill report—is said to have had children by his maid, and then murdered them. . ."

Following is the narrative referred to:—

At Warblington, near Havant in Hampshire, in the parsonage house, dwelt Thomas Perce, the tenant, with his wife and a child, and a man servant Thomas, also a maid and the child, the maid being in the kitchen and about nine at night, all being gone to bed except the maid and the child, the man being in the kitchen and having raked up the fire, took a candle in one hand and the child in the other arm, and turning about saw one in a black gown walking through the room, and thence out of the door into the orchard: upon this the maid hasting upstairs, having recovered but two steps cried out; on which the master and mistress ran down . . she would that night not tarry in the house, but removed to another, belonging to Henry Salter, a farmer. The tenant went to the curate who smiled at the story, and then went to watch with him. Thursday night the tenant and I lay together in one room, and he saw something walk along in a black gown and place itself against a window. Sunday night I lay by myself in one room (not the one in which the man saw the apparition) *and the* tenant and his man in one bed in another room and betwixt 12 and 2 the man heard something walk in their room at the bed's foot, whistling, came to the bed's side, looked on them, then moved off. The old man called to me, I leaped out of bed, and went three or four steps into his room. I saw the apparition, and asked it in the name of God what it was. I received no answer, and *put my arm to feel it, and my hand seemingly went through the body of it, and felt no manner of substance till it came to the wall, then I drew back my hand, and still it was in the same place.* I adjured it to tell me what it was; when I had said these words, it, keeping its back against the wall, moved gently to the door. I followed it out into the gallery, then I found myself very cold, from my feet as high as my middle, though I was not in great fear . . the apparition seemed to have a morning gown of a darkish colour, no hat or cap, short black hair, a thin, meagre visage of a pale swarthy colour, seemed to be about 45-50 years old, the eyes half shut, the arms hanging down, the hands visible beneath the sleeve, of middle stature. I related this description to Mr. John Lardner, rector of Havant, and to Major Battin of Langstone in Havant parish; they both said the description agreed very well to a Mr. P., a former rector of the place, who has been dead 20 years, upon this the tenant and his wife left the house, which has remained void ever since. The Monday after last Michaelmas day, a man of Chodson, in Warwickshire, having been at Havant Fair, passed by the aforesaid parsonage about 9 at night, and saw a light in most rooms of the house; he, wondering at the light, looked into the kitchen window, and saw only a light, but turning to go away, he saw the appearance of a man in a long gown, he made haste away: the apparition followed him over a piece of glebe land of several acres to a lane, which he crossed, and over a little meadow, then over another lane to some pales, which belong to Henry Salter, my landlord, near a barn, in which were some of the farmer's men: he went in, told them how he was frightened and followed, and they went out, and saw it scratch against the pales, and make a hideous noise: it stood there some time and then disappeared; their description agreed with what I saw. This last account I had from the man himself, and from the farmer's men.—Tho. Wilkins, Curate of W. Dec. 11th, 1695. Oxon.

MRS. E. R. RICHARDS, of Silverton, Devon, who has now returned home, has earned by her valuable assistance as clairvoyant during her stay in London, the gratitude of the London Spiritualist Alliance, to whom her services were given freely.

SPIRITUALISM AND WHAT IT SHOULD MEAN.

BY BEATRICE ACTON.

How many religious sects are there in England alone practising each its own particular creed, the adherents of which firmly believe that theirs is the true and only belief that leads to the Kingdom of Heaven, and that by no other religious path is it possible to achieve everlasting life.

From these one may for comparison turn to the Agnostic and the Fatalist, of whom there are surprising numbers. A highly sensitive man, whose long life had been well spent according to worldly ethics, recently declared that having travelled and lived in various parts of the world, he had come to think of himself as an agnostic and fatalist. This man said he had an object to live for and that he prayed to God to prolong his life. He then told me of a curious experience that had happened to him. Before waking into living consciousness one morning, he had the impression of having been far away, and that he found his body being gradually drawn over him, "like a glove," till he was fully awake, the impression of such an unusual experience remaining.

Here was a man thinking himself agnostic and yet praying to God, an avowed fatalist and yet acknowledging the mysticism of psychic experience. He promised willingly and with evident interest to investigate Spiritualism.

It is impossible to probe the generating source underlying the great scheme of evolution, which is the will of that inscrutable power we call God. To all of us the present age is the most urgent, and if a sceptic may remark, "Why should not some evidence of automatic writing or psychic phenomena be sent from a pre-historic being as well as from Plotinus?" the answer may easily be: "Because the present age is one of great scientific discoveries, and all is in God's good time." Science and Religion are to-day working together. Truth and reverence guiding us in every path of research; each step will lead onward, from small beginnings to great endings.

Science and Spiritualism are now proving to mankind that the development of a soul does not end on earth: that there are other and unseen agencies which can be employed, and that the higher the plane of thought and action attained on earth, the nearer we come to the great secret of futurity.

Security is therefore our password, all fear being eradicated. Prophecies concerning cataclysmic trouble on earth create an unnecessary fear, and can avail no one on the day of revelation.

REMARKABLE BOOK TESTS.

BY R. H. SAUNDERS.

In a sitting with Mrs. Blanche Cooper, during which I had conversed as usual with my own people, the manifesting spirit said, towards the end of the sitting, "I would like to write." I have found that when the power for the "voices" weakens there is sometimes sufficient force present for the spirit to write. I usually go prepared with a quarto writing pad to be ready for a possible written communication. I place the pad upon my knees, and where I can see the materialised hand as the writing proceeds. I hold the pencil out in the deep darkness, and I feel the hand as it takes the pencil.

On this occasion, before the pencil was grasped, the voice said: "That is a new pencil!" As no mortal being could possibly have said this, it forms in itself a piece of striking evidence.

Three quarto sheets were then written by direct spirit agency, one by the Hindu Guide, Nada, and two by another spirit. Nothing had been said during the séance about tests of any sort, and what the purport of the messages was I could not tell until the light was switched on after the sitting. Then I read on Nada's sheet: "You will receive a Book Test." This spirit writes in letters more or less approximating to Roman capital letters, but the caligraphy, if it can be called so, is quite readable. The other sheets were written in a most unusual flowing hand, the letters being all joined together, but with space between the words.

Amongst other matters were these words:—

> Look on top shelf left third book page 36. Sermon and third book right page 63 Love.

Directly I reached home I did as directed, and got the two books down. The "third book left" I found was a copy of the New Testament in colloquial English, by Farren Fenton, in which the translator relates the Gospel narratives in current English. Page 36 contained "The Sermon on the Mount." The "third book right" was "Love and Death," by Donald Hole, and page 63 deals with "Spiritual progress," and contained the following:—

> Should I be wrong in saying that the spirit is the part of me which LOVES? Love acts through both mind and body, it does not depend upon reason. The Bible tells us that God is Spirit, and that God is Love.

SPIRITUALISM AND EVERYDAY LIFE.

ADDRESS BY THE DUCHESS OF HAMILTON.

On Thursday, the 8th inst., at 16, Queensberry Place, a crowded meeting of members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance listened to an address by the Duchess of Hamilton on "Spiritualism Applied to Daily Life."

MISS LIND-AF-HAGEBY, who presided, referred to the recent tour she and the Duchess had made in the United States, where they had been lecturing on a different subject. Incidentally she said that they derived on their American visit the impression of a people intensely practical. The American people were always eager to examine every idea placed before them and to know what it amounted to—that habit of mind did not always apply to the question of dollars, the Americans had been rather libelled in that respect. It was not always the monetary consideration that was at work in their minds, they wanted to get at the essential facts of everything, and they were never contented with what they had but always wanted something better. She instanced the case of a magnificent American railway station which she thought was better than anything of its kind in Europe, but the Americans were not satisfied with it, and told her that they were proposing to pull it down and build something still better.

THE DUCHESS OF HAMILTON then addressed the audience. She said that in considering the question of the application of Spiritualism to daily life, they might begin by looking into the bases of other religions, and seeing how far the principles of these religions were applied to the lives of their followers. Whether it was Christian or non-Christian, every religion was an example of man's hunger to reach out for and attain that which was far beyond himself—this might be called the "urge of evolution."

The opposition to this came through human selfishness and conceit, which dragged man down to his lower self. Prophets and seers all through the ages had brought truth to mankind, but mankind had tried to curtail the truth and cramp it within the limits of the intelligence of each particular era. They might find an example in the case of Buddha's teaching which was that his followers should train themselves in humility and kindness, and that they should be at peace with all mankind and with all living creatures. But many of his followers fell short of that ideal. The Founder of the Christian religion based His teaching on one law embracing all others—the law of Love. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Yet the followers of all the great religions seem to have fallen away greatly from the pure teaching of their founders. Amongst Christians they found love derided and hate and cruelty raging. There were not only the Crusades against so-called heathen, but those religious wars when men went forth enthusiastically to slay all who were not nominally Christians, killing or otherwise persecuting without mercy those who followed a different creed. The speaker instanced the massacre of the Huguenots, the dark deeds of the Inquisition, the cruel oppression of the Quakers and the cold rigidity of the Puritans who banned joy and were enemies of simple human pleasures.

In the interpretation of the faith and practice enjoyed by the religious founders, humanity had fallen into the error of bringing in narrowness and an intense conceit. There was a disposition to put strict limits on the hopes of heaven, especially for others. There was the story of the old Calvinistic Scotswoman to whom a friend one day remarked: "Well, Mrs. McGregor, you seem to think that only you and the minister will be saved!" To which the old lady replied: "Yes, and I am no' so sure about the meenister!"

Turning to the question of Spiritualism in its application to daily life, the speaker said, "What fresh light and help does Spiritualism bring us?" For Spiritualism was much more than a question of phenomena or even of communicating with our dear ones in the other world, important as these things might be. It meant for those who thoroughly understood it a new way of life, a dawning of new things that taught us that knowledge is never final, and that revelation is never local or limited, but continually in operation. It taught that truth could not be closed into a man's mind once and for all. There was a perpetual influx of life and truth from higher states to which we should all attune ourselves. Ordinarily we adjusted ourselves to life by paying special attention to the body and its needs, we sought anxiously to procure material food for it, but we sometimes forgot to take in mental food and still more often we forgot spiritual food. We could only take in and digest spiritual truth by trying to live a spiritual life, thus we enlarge our minds and souls and become ready for greater and higher truths.

Spiritualism taught us the comparative insignificance of creeds and set theories. Creeds were like the husk of the seed, they were meant to protect the truth for a time, but only until it was ready to expand and come forth in its full power and meaning. Spiritualism should do away with human conceit, for it taught that man was not yet finished, he was still in the making, still evolving towards what he should yet be. It showed that humility was the first step towards knowledge and progress. It served to destroy intellectual and moral materialism by proving the reality of another world and showing the relative importance of this world and the next. It showed that true riches did not consist in money and earthly possesions, but rather in the qualities of love, pity, tenderness and mercy, and the cultivation of the indwelling flame of righteousness which was ever striving towards right. Such riches were free to all, and Spiritualism showed that the only paupers were those who had not acquired these riches, but who had only love and pity for themselves, who strove in life only for their own personal comfort. Such people might be millionaires in the worldly meaning of the term, but in the Spiritualistic sense they were paupers.

Spiritualism, in short, brought in a complete change of values, and had broadened and liberalised those religious ideas which had, especially in the past, been reduced to petty and one-sided views in which certain things which were esteemed virtues were pushed to absurd extremes. Some of the things which were accounted sins by conventional forms of religion might be sins in a sense, but they were all very small compared with cruelty, which might almost be described as the unpardonable sin, for cruelty and hate were the very opposite of Love, which is God. As an example of forms of cruelty which were conspicuous in the life of the world to-day the speaker instanced the vivisection of dogs, the betrayal of those faithful creatures who had given their love to man. This practice of vivisection was based on gross materialism, for she (the speaker), held that the souls of animals were as immortal as those of men. A man who practised cruelty had a double burden of sin, for it was not alone the torture of helpless creatures, but the terrible example set to the younger generation. "Vivisectors need our prayers, for they know not that in tearing the bodies of the animals they tear their own souls."

Spiritualism taught that it was not length of life, but the quality of that life which mattered. The materialistic scientist scraped at the outer form, but Spiritualism showed how the inner might and should perfect the outer.

Turning to the question of healing, the Duchess pointed out that through spiritual means Christ gave His disciples power to "heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." But how terrified was the orthodox Church about spiritual healing! Some years ago the Bishops held a Council to consider the subject, and found that healing should only be allowed by consent of and with the help of doctors. Her Grace proceeded to give some personal experiences of the reality of spiritual healing. In this question of healing they had discovered the power of the mind over the body. They had found that our thoughts should be concentrated on health and not on disease, and that our inner selves should control our bodily organs and functions.

Referring to Christian Science and Theosophy, she had long felt that there should be co-operation by these movements with the Spiritualistic movement. That co-operation should be profitable to all of them. Passive Spiritualism was apt to become over-emotional and foolish, needing the training of self led to by Theosophy. Theosophy, on the other hand, was apt to become too hard and sterile, its fault was that it advocated the killing of all emotion. But nothing should be killed, all that was needed was its transmutation to higher forms. It was part of the work of Spiritualism to spread abroad the knowledge that we might commune with those glorious presences who directed the world, and come into touch with our loved ones, who would help us with rich gifts of thought and peace and inward illumination.

In conclusion, the speaker alluded to the teaching of Spiritualism regarding the essential unity of life. Spiritualists should work for that growth of co-operation and mutual understanding between peoples. She had observed while in America how many different nationalities lived together in friendship. They had a United States of America, why should they not eventually have a United States of Europe and a United States of Asia, and so work progressively towards "the brotherhood of man, the federation of the world?"

Concluding, Her Grace said: "I think the great truth given us by spiritual teaching is Growth in Unity through Diversity."

MISS LIND, in some comments on the address, referred to the necessity of expunging untruthfulness from life and gave some examples from her observation of political life. People should be sincere and honest, and should say always what they mean. She thought also that one test of the influence of Spiritualism should be the extent to which it was reflected in the personal life. It was something that should make its possessor brighter and happier. She remembered that once when addressing the members of a certain religious community she was struck by the faces of her hearers, whose expression was one of the most exquisite gloom. (Laughter.)

MR. H. E. HUNT, in cordially endorsing the remarks of the Duchess concerning the unity of life, remarked that it

was a suggestive fact that in the biblical account of creation there was a clear indication that the idea of living souls covered not only man, but all the lower animals. He moved a resolution of thanks on behalf of the audience. Dr. Hector Munro, who seconded the resolution, said that he, like some other medical men, was a student of the facts underlying the claim of Spiritualism.

Before the meeting closed, Miss Manby, founder of the Ladies' National Clubs, outlined a scheme for the founding of hospitals and nursing homes on original lines. She and her associates had already successfully carried out not only the founding of clubs, but also a scheme for the provision of flats for middle-class people of reduced means. This new proposal was a further effort to ameliorate the lot of the middle classes, who had suffered, and were suffering so heavily from the effects of the war, and who were the most heavily burdened section of the community.

* * * * *

The Duchess of Hamilton, who took the chair at a meeting held in Central Hall, Westminster, arranged by the Animal Defence and Anti-Vivisection Society, protested warmly against the use of stray and forlorn dogs for vivisection purposes. She pointed out that although vivisectionists justified themselves on the ground that their experiments tended to prolong human life, it was a fact that animals were being used for precisely the opposite purpose, namely, to develop the use of poison gases in warfare. Miss Lind-af-Hageby, the principal speaker, spoke of loathsome experiments upon dogs and other animals, some of which were performed without anæsthetics. It was claimed that experiments on dogs were necessary in order to find a remedy for rickets. This, said the speaker, was utterly indefensible, as the cure for rickets was good food and sunshine, the truth of which she herself could demonstrate in some of the devastated areas in France.

THE COMING SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION.

Edward Bellamy's Prediction.

A striking and beautiful passage occurs in Edward Bellamy's "Equality" (the sequel to that remarkable book, "Looking Backward"), wherein he makes one of his characters, alluding, in the latter part of the year 2,000 A.D., to the progress of the race in the preceding century, state that the direction in which it had most tended to increase human happiness had been in the science of the soul and its relation to the Eternal and Infinite:—

"This progress," said Mr. Barton, "has been the result not merely of a more rational conception of the subject, and complete intellectual freedom in its study, but largely also of social conditions which have set us almost wholly free from material engrossments. We have now for nearly a century enjoyed an economic welfare which has left nothing to be wished for in the way of physical satisfactions, especially as in proportion to the increase of this abundance there has been through culture a development of simplicity in taste which rejects excess and surfeit, and even makes less and less of the material side of life, and more of the mental and moral. Thanks to this co-operation of the material with the moral evolution, the more we have the less we need. Long ago it came to be recognised that on the material side the race had reached the goal of its evolution. We have practically lost ambition for further progress in that direction. The natural result has been that for a long period the main energies of the intellect have been concentrated upon the possibilities of the spiritual evolution of mankind, for which the completion of its material evolution has but prepared the beginning. What we have so far learned we are convinced is but the first faint inkling of the knowledge we shall attain to; and yet if the limitations of this earthly state were such that we might never hope here to know more than now we should not repine, for the knowledge we have has sufficed to turn the shadow of death into a bow of promise and distil the saltness out of human tears. You will observe, as you shall come to know more of our literature, that one respect in which it differs from yours is the total lack of the tragic note. This has very naturally followed from a conception of our real life as having an inaccessible security 'hid in God,' as Paul said, whereby the accidents and vicissitudes of the personality are reduced to relative triviality.

"Your seers and poets in exalted moments had seen that death was but a step in life, but this seemed to most of you to have been a hard saying. Nowadays, as life advances towards its close, instead of being shadowed by gloom, it is marked by an access of impassioned expectancy which would cause the young to envy the old, but for the knowledge that in a little while the same door will be opened to them. In your day the undertone of life seems to have been one of unutterable sadness, which, like the moaning of the sea to those who live near the ocean, made itself audible whenever for a moment the noise and bustle of petty engrossments ceased. Now this undertone is so exultant that we are still to hear it."

D. R.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(The Editor does not necessarily identify himself with the opinions expressed by Correspondents.)

A BOOK FOR INQUIRERS.

Sir,—Having lately re-read "The Verdict," by "Tertium Quid" (Kegan Paul), I was impressed by the value of the book for inquirers who are seeking for evidence of communication from those who have passed through death. The author has grouped his evidence skilfully and the final incidents are weighty, excluding, as they do, the possibility of explaining the facts by telepathy from those still incarnate.—Yours, etc.,

Crawley, Sussex. H. A. Dallas.

RECORDING THE DIRECT VOICE.

Sir,—Although not a Spiritualist myself, I am, in common with many others, keenly interested in, and sympathetically attracted towards, a movement commanding so much public and private attention at the present time. The claims of Spiritualists are such that, if conclusively proved, would inevitably bring about a radical change in the world's outlook, both as affecting man's journey on the "temporal tide" of life, and his future beyond the grave.

When discussing with a few Spiritualist friends the other night two remarkable books by Mr. Dennis Bradley, which I had just finished reading, I commented on the voices that manifested at the direct voice sittings and asked if any attempt had ever been made to obtain a gramophone record of any of the voices.

I do not know if any such experiment has ever been tried by Mr. Bradley or others. Can any of your readers state if an attempt of the kind has ever been made?—Yours, etc.,

"Spero Meliora."

[The National Laboratory of Psychical Research has already made dictaphone records of the vocal utterances of mediums under control; we believe, however, that attempts to record the direct voice have not been very successful. —Ed.]

PALMISTRY AND FATE.

Sir,—I was pleased to see an article in Light of December 4th, on "The Scientific Side of Palmistry," and that a Cheirological Society is in existence with Mrs. St. Hill at its head. It should help greatly in putting scientific palmistry in the niche where all students of the subject wish to see it placed. But as a science it can never be an exact one (if there is such a thing), for as character—and conditions which help to form character—change, so likewise does the hand and the lines upon it. So that seeing with the inner eye should not be discounted. To my thinking a good palmist should not only know through long and earnest study the scientific aspect, but should also have clairvoyant vision. The hand, however—from a scientific standpoint—is an almost infallible index to health and the direction that health is likely to take; thus, in this alone, palmistry is of incalculable value, if the person is willing to follow its guidance. The medical faculty—at least some wide-minded members of it—are beginning to realise the value of it. I have been interviewed often by such, seeking enlightenment on their own personal state of health.

The erroneous conception that Palmistry denotes a fixed unalterable *Fate*, is responsible for a great deal of aimless drifting on the part of people who dislike effort, and who wrongly imagine that their whole plan of life is indicated in the palms of their hands, and that this plan will inevitably unfold itself without individual effort.

John Oxenham, in one of his inimitable short poems, has put this very clearly (I quote from memory):—

To every man is given the choice of a high way or a low.
The high man chooses the high way and the low man chooses the low;
While in between on the misty flats, the rest drift to and fro.
But to every man is given the choice of the high way or the low;
And every man decideth the way that his soul shall go.

Neither Palmistry nor Astrology *makes* fate. It merely indicates the direction that is likely to be taken by the individual whose soul has reached a certain stage of development, and a good Palmist (like a wise judge) sums up the *evidence* that is laid down on the hand. But each individual is, potentially, master of his soul and captain of his fate.—Yours, etc.,

L. La Yenda.

LIGHT,

Editorial Offices, 16, QUEENSBERRY PLACE, SOUTH KENSINGTON, S.W.7.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS INTENDED FOR THE EDITOR should be addressed to the Editor of LIGHT, 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, S.W.7.

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS and "LIGHT" SUBSCRIPTIONS should in all cases be addressed to "LIGHT," 34, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4. Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to "LIGHT."

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—Twelve months, 22/-; six months, 11/-. Payments must be made in advance.

RATES.—£10 per page; 10s. per inch single column; societies, 8s. per inch; classified advertisements, 1s. per line.

We regret that it was stated in error in last week's "Light" there would be no increase in the price of the Christmas Number. The publishers feel sure, however, that readers will consider the present issue well worth the slight increase in price to sixpence.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

It is Christmas again, and although we do not hear the "bird of dawning" singing "all night long," as Shakespeare put it, we have the carollers to take its place. Also we are glad to accept the poet's assurance that at Yule-tide

The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike.
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time

It is certainly pleasing to know that the planets cannot "strike" even in an age of industrial unrest. As for the witch's loss of the "power to charm," much depends on the kind of witch. There are some feminine witcheries which seem to be especially potent at the Christmas season when the mistletoe is in tempting reach. Anyway we may for the moment accept the dictum that the wicked witches and the bad fairies are curbed and that the time is really "hallowed and gracious."

We can set aside even our psychic science which has shown that spirits have no particular relation to time and space, so that the "twelve o'clock rule," to use an old Parliamentary term, has no particular effect on the average ghost. If he has to go when the clock strikes at midnight it may be simply out of deference to a tradition such as we find in the story of Cinderella. As to the crowing of the cock, it does not appear that Chanticleer has any real power as an exorcist. Again, we have learned that ghosts have no relations with the churchyard. Indeed, any self-respecting ghost would shun that dismal retreat, even though his uninformed friends amongst mortals might regard it as his fitting abode.

Let not these considerations, then, have any damping effect upon our ghost stories. Let us listen patiently to the story of the ghostly Tommy Atkins being pursued around the churchyard by a ghostly sergeant, to the tale of the spectre who is discontented with his epitaph because it represented him as being too pure and good to have been a normal healthy human being. We can see the humour of such stories, knowing how little they usually accord with the facts of the case. If ghosts ever played some of the fantastic tricks described in folk lore and old wives' tales it was probably because the spirits concerned felt they had to play a part. They had to defer to the idea that they were goblins, spectres, bogies and what-not. The phantom prisoner probably had to rattle a chain to get any attention, and even that was a failure. It only frightened away those to whom he would have addressed his appeal. And it may well be that some of the more sportive spirits found a grim pleasure in playing on the fears and fancies of mankind. But always we are in favour of ghost stories at Yule-tide—no matter how grim and ghastly. They may represent the part played by bitters and ices at a banquet, stimulating or chilling the palate.

One feels more kindly to superstition than to prejudice. As Washington Irving put it, a superstitious person lives in "a kind of fairy land." Hard-minded prejudices shut out alike the fairies and the spirits. So we welcome the ghost story and would not rob the Christmas ghost of any of his privileges, whether it be to rattle chains, to utter sepulchral groans or even to carry his head in his hand! He may even change into a dog or a cat and we shall make no complaint.

But all the time we shall remember that the real ghosts are as human and natural as ourselves—perhaps a little more so! They are with us often on our earthly pilgrimage, and at Christmas especially are present at our family reunions even when uninvited and unwelcomed. They may even listen to our ghost stories, the better pleased when they observe that these do not represent our true ideas of them. We are merely doffing ceremony for a little in the true Christmas spirit and paying our tribute to the children's love of sprites, fairies and goblins. Despair and Melancholy are the two spectres to be avoided. They are the only "gobberlins who'll get you if you don't watch out!" Let us beware of these and cultivate the Christmas Spirit in every sense of the word.

A CAMBRIDGE HAUNTING CASE.

Under the title, "The Ghost of Corpus Christi," the "Sunday Express" recently gave a highly dramatic account of the exorcising of an alleged evil spirit at Cambridge University. The rooms in which the *manifestation* took place are believed to have been formerly in the occupancy of a certain learned doctor, a fellow of the college, who committed suicide in the eighteenth century. Three persons, it is stated, took part in the ghost-hunting episode, and comprised Mr. Shane Leslie, the well-known writer, Mr. Wade, and "a very distinguished King's Scholar," whose name is withheld. All three were college students, and members of a Cambridge Psychical Research Society, which was then—October, 1904—in existence.

These three had been discussing the haunted rooms, when an excited undergraduate burst in, imploring them to go to the assistance of a student then occupying the rooms in question, who had been reduced to a distressing state of "nerves": mysterious footsteps had been heard, and "a face had been seen at his window."

The King's Scholar, whose name is not divulged, said, "This is an Evil Spirit," and implored his two companions to assist him in tackling the unwelcome visitor, to which they eagerly assented. Armed with a phial of holy water, the four students set off for Corpus Christi, where they were met by the agitated occupier of the haunted chambers. Raising a large crucifix, the Kingsman recited the words of the Exorcism service, after which all four remained silent in the dimly-lighted room, illuminated only by the rays of the fire. There was a pause. Suddenly the Kingsman said: "The Thing is here!. . . Push me slowly forward, hold up my arms, but do not get in front of the Crucifix as you value your lives." His companions did as requested, but,

> Like some powerful magnet, the Evil Thing was actually drawing him out of the grasp of his companions. It was a veritable "pull devil, pull baker" situation. It was also a terrifying one. The atmosphere of the room had become charged with an intangible yet all-absorbing Evil, which sapped the strength and numbed the senses.
>
> The Thing subsequently showed itself in the doorway.
>
> It bore a human shape, and was menacing, but beyond that, no one could afterwards visualise its exact aspect. But upon one point they were all agreed. It was cut off at the knees.

The incidents which were recorded at the time in the "Occult Review," are related with a wealth of detail by Lieut.-Col. Cyril Foley, and the substance is confirmed by Mr. Shane Leslie. Both these gentlemen write with sincerity. At the same time, a thought will possibly intrude into the minds of the sceptical reader, viz., that Colonel Foley and Mr. Leslie have been the victims of an elaborately-arranged hoax. But one answer to that is that such hauntings have in many instances been verified beyond all dispute.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

In the "Westminster Gazette," writing on "The Churches and Human Survival," after replying to the allegation that Providence has barred the doors to knowledge of survival, "Optimus" remarks: "If Providence has barred certain doors of knowledge, it is absurd to suggest that they can be forced by the human mind." He adds:—

It may be that the doors are barred, but as there are those who say that they are open, their assertions ought to be tested by those most competent to judge. Credulity and absolute denial are equally potent enemies to the advance of knowledge, and the sane man will turn his back on both. It is time that the whole question of the evidence for survival was submitted to a larger tribunal, and there are sufficient instances of things once pronounced impossible which have now been realised to prevent anyone from pre-judging the issue.

* * * *

From "Thoughts on 'The Sunday Chronicle' Investigations," by "E. T. B.," in the "Two Worlds," we quote a paragraph:—

The curse of Modern Spiritualism is the horde of partially developed mediums who take up public work. This is the seed from which fraud springs, and it thrives best in the soil of hyper-credulity. Under-developed mediums are those who have not had the patience to cultivate their gifts to the full. They have not the perseverance to develop until phenomena can take place in the light and under test conditions. Darkness is no doubt helpful in the early stages of development, but it is by no means necessary. The remedy for under-development is in our own hands; no Spiritualist should countenance any medium who insists upon complete darkness. In this way one source of fraud would be eliminated.

* * * *

The "Sunday News" has begun a series of articles by a well-known physician, on the "Medical Value of Dreams." The "News" invites its readers to relate their dreams to it, and says this physician will interpret them medically. Here is an excerpt from his introductory article:—

Dreams have a definite significance of their own, and they are taken seriously by modern physicians as a clue to the state of the mind's health, just as tongue and pulse indicate the condition of the body.

Though people often boast that they enjoy untroubled sleep, modern science declares that every one of us dreams every night. But it is only occasionally that we are aware of our mental wanderings and adventures during sleep.

The ancients always tried not only to explain their dreams, but also to guide their conduct according to what they fancied was the right interpretation of them.

* * * *

A column of correspondence in the "Southend Standard" on Spiritualism, contains a letter by Mr. H. William Cooper that thus concludes:—

One may decry the scientist, but in my opinion the revelation is just as likely to come from the laboratory as from anywhere else. Busy as the seeker after the truth of the Universe may be, with time only to offer up the prayer of the Puritan:—

"Lord, I shall be verie busie this day;
I may forget Thee,
But do not Thou forget me."

Yet if he is sincere in his search he may one day find opened to him that which he little dreamt of.

"Out of the darkness of night
The world rolls into light,
It is daybreak everywhere."

* * * *

In some remarks upon Allen Upward's attitude to life and his critical analysis of Spiritualism, the "Midland Daily Telegraph" says:—

Mr. Upward argues that whatever powers of action the departed may have, must be more easily exerted on the thought world than on physical events. In effect, he asks: "Why should ghosts turn tables, when it is easier to turn thoughts?"

The newspaper writer and the novelist there alike seem ignorant of the fact that the electro-magnetic forces of the human organism are highest in the physical scale, and next to mind; also that the forces constituting the table are in the extreme degree negative to those of mind, being destitute of volition. For those reasons the table may be easily "turned" when the thought is immovable.

The following item of news in the "Morning Advert is taken by it from the "Central News":—

The French Academy has been discussing the wo "medium." It has decided that "medium"—plural "mediums"—shall be retained in the next edition of the dictionary, and has added the following definition: "A medium is a person who claims to have the power of bringing into communication the world of the living with what are called spirits."

* * * *

In its account of a lecture on Spiritualism before the members of the Silsden Primitive Methodist Debating Society, the "Keighley News" reports the lecturer, Mr. A. Haworth, as saying, "It was the unconscious practice of a psychological fact in Spiritualism" that would ultimately prove death to be only a change, and which would rend the veil surrounding it:—

While one might look upon an organised séance as a mild form of entertainment and laugh sardonically at some of the palpable frauds practised, he firmly believed that the principle behind it all was the same principle which guided our destiny from the cradle to the grave. It was that principle which, throughout all time and from every point of view, had shown ordered progression, and to his mind there was no question about that principle being the will of God.

* * * *

The "Lincolnshire Standard" reports an interesting and entertaining lecture on "Psychical Science—Practical Life," by Major C. C. Colley, son of the late Archdeacon Colley, under the auspices of the Skegness Lecture Society. The "Standard" characterises it as "one of the most remarkable lectures ever given in Skegness." Addressing his audience as a declared "perfectly normal person," Major Colley told how, as a boy, making mud pies with other boys, he got very dirty, and sometimes had an "S.O.S." notifying him of the approach of his father, who found them all neat and tidy when he arrived. Here is a different sort of story:—

In 1912, while fulfilling his Army duties at Aldershot, Major Colley got an S.O.S. message in his brain which read, "My boy, I have gone. Hurry up!" His father had told him that when he died he would give him a signal, and so convinced was the speaker that his father had been transferred to another world that he went to his Commanding Officer and asked for leave. . . He went to Farnborough Station, where he asked for a ticket to Stockton. The booking clerk gave him a ticket for Middlesbrough. . . As a matter of fact he had never been to Middlesbrough and hardly knew where it was. But he knew that for some reason or other he had to go there, even though he was compelled to borrow some money from a friend on the platform to pay the extra fare. On entering the railway carriage he opened his morning newspaper and there saw a big headline: "Death of Archdeacon Colley at Church Congress in Middlesbrough."

* * * *

Continuing his articles on Spiritualism in "Popular Science," Victor Warren relates some remarkable experiences of psychic photography. Visiting friends who lived in an old Elizabethan house, and particularly interested in photography as a hobby, he was asked to take photographs of the house, interior and exterior. After spending two or three days rambling round the house to decide on the positions most favourable for the work, accompanied by an Airedale dog that had attached itself to him, he took some photographs and developed them in the evening. In one plate he noticed that someone was leaning out of a window; and as he had not noticed this at the time, inquiries were made, but everybody said they had been at the other end of the house when the photograph was taken. Next day he resumed the work on the interior of the house, nothing unusual happening until he reached the room where the mysterious figure had been, when the dog began to bristle and growl, and eventually fled from the room. Upon development of the plates, Mr. Warren was "surprised to see the distinct figure of a woman on the photograph of the room where the dog had behaved so strangely." No explanation was forthcoming. The narrative concludes thus:—

Passing through this particular room on the following day and carrying all the plates with me I was startled by hearing a noise behind me. I turned round, and at the same time felt someone knock the plates out of my hands on to the floor. The room was apparently empty and I stooped to pick up what remained of the plates. Two only were broken, and these were smashed beyond all hope of repair. They were the two plates in which the mysterious figure appeared. I can offer no explanation for this strange happening and must leave my readers to form their own conclusions.

THE CHARM OF CHRISTMAS.

That is the only word for it—"charm"; and it is difficult to explain it, as difficult as it is to explain the charm of a child's eyes and of its mother's answering glance. Apart from its Founder, we believe a great deal of the glamour of Christmas depends upon the weather. We can never believe that our Christmas could have been invented, or can now be properly kept, on the other side of the world in the sunshine. In so far as it is kept there, it is a memory, and with a borrowed light, a sort of moon Christmas drowned in the sun.

No: Christmas depends on the shortest day, and the stars, and a jolly fire, and all the windows closed, and the curtains drawn, and the shutting out of the white snow or a howling wind. Most of the old, old carols dwell on the darkness, the snow, the desolateness and the stars.

But all would have been in vain without the story. That story is absolutely unique: and, for everyone at Christmas, it seems to breathe and sing and shine. Will the world ever consent to give up the story of the manger and the inn; of the shepherds on the hills at night; of the heavenly glow, and the angels' song, and the magic star? It has forgotten ten thousand things that seemed, judged by ordinary standards, better accredited and far more important, but it goes on cherishing these: and, beyond these, there is the mystical, pathetic, beautiful life and death: and it holds and fills the imagination of mankind.

The heart of it all is intensely human, arresting and winning—the birth of a child of wonder in a stable. It surprises, it makes one want to bend with the shepherds, and with "the wise men from the East," as we bring our small gifts of "gold and frankincense and myrrh." It is all so quaint, so mysterious, so artless, so heavenly and yet so homely, and the music and the poetry and the art of Christendom have naturally grown out of and fastened upon all this: and it is all-potent still. "Age cannot wither, nor custom stale" its perfect human beauty. Therefore it will live: and the music, the poetry and the art could never have grown out from anything but a stable and a manger and "no room in the inn." The birth of a prince in a palace could never have worked the wonder, and captured the imagination and heart of the world.

What followed is in tune with it all—a life of mystery unfathomable, of beauty unspeakable, of perfect simplicity and unworldliness, comparable only with the life of Buddha, and productive of similar results. It is the carpenter's son who prevails; it is the mystic, who quietly put aside all that the world had to give him and who chose to have no place wherein to lay his head, that conquers: it is the steadfast hero crowned with thorns and hanging on a cross that tempts men to say, "Was not this a god?"

How would it have fared with a Messiah such as the Jews predicted and desired—a fighter, a national deliverer, a bender and breaker of competing powers? He would have gone down with the vulgar herd of warlike kings. The world laughs at his great daring saying that it is the meek who inherit the earth: but it is true. It has been and is a hard struggle, but the man of Nazareth will win. It is his message of Love and Peace which gives to Christmas its real charm. It is one of the great harmonies of God, and as we listen—

ringing down through time,
Its echoes reach us, soothing man's despair
With hopes sublime.
Yet, its full meaning, fraught with unselfish love,
Ages have failed to teach—
Heaven's lowest music soars so far above
Earth's highest reach.
Slowly we learn its harmonies, and mortal ears
Are dull to catch the strain:
And feebly human voices, choked with tears,
Join the refrain.
What dissonances interrupt its sweetness!—
Harsh chords of conflict; the moanings of the dying
Nations, like Rachel, for their children crying.
Low falls the song in mournful incompleteness—
O'ercome by bitter wailing,
Yet we know
Hereafter, to a pæan, all-prevailing,
Its sound will grow.

A CHRISTMAS WISH.

A Happy Yule to one and all,
A Glad New Year with joy supreme.
May Heaven's blessings on you fall
In a pure perennial stream.
May flowers of happiness abound—
Those flow'rs which bloom in sacred ground.

They are the gifts of angel friends
Who in the darkness of our night
Bear the sweet message which portends
The dawning of a clearer light,
Proclaiming with unbated breath
There are no dead; there is no death!

W. APPLEYARD.

THE GHOST OF UNCLE PERCY.

A TRUE STORY OF SPIRIT RETURN.

BY ANNIE BRITTAIN.

There are indeed stranger things in heaven and earth than our philosophy dreams of.

All my life I have been clairvoyant, and have had many strange experiences, one or two of which stand out in my memory as not very pleasant ones.

The first of this type happened to me when I was a girl of sixteen.

At that time my family removed from the West Riding of Yorkshire, and went to live in Longton, one of the Five Towns. Six months later I was sent back to my old home for a few days to transact some family business, and whilst there visited my Uncle Percy, who was ill.

Uncle Percy, who was a very strict Wesleyan, told me he was greatly concerned about the new religion of Spiritualism which my parents had embraced; that he had great fears for their souls; that, in short, they were on the wrong track, and heading for a hot corner in the next world! However, to set all doubts at rest, he made this pact with me before we parted—that when he died he would return and show himself to me if he found it possible.

My uncle was not seriously ill, and I cannot recall giving the pact another thought. A girl of sixteen finds life exciting anywhere, even in the Five Towns, and my uncle's promise to haunt me was forgotten until six weeks later. It was brought home to me then in a singularly terrifying fashion.

I was devoted to my Uncle Percy; but to frighten a young girl almost out of her wits by projecting himself as a grey mist into the crack of a door, then to emerge from it a new man like a new hat out of a bandbox, and to have engineered all this just ten minutes after he had shuffled off this mortal coil, was, to say the least, a little inconsiderate of him, and dreadfully unnerving. But as this is a ghost story which is absolutely true, I will tell it just as it happened, neither suppressing nor exaggerating.

It was a Saturday evening, and I was feeling unwell. My parents had just gone out and left me alone in the house, and as they would not return for two or three hours, I fastened the yard gate, re-entered the house, and bolted the front and back doors. The house was very old, and a large stone-flagged passage led from the front door into the living room, which also had a paved floor. The least sound made by anyone in the passage resounded throughout the house. I went into the living room and, closing the door, lay on the couch to rest, but not to sleep. A minute later I got up again to turn the gas low and soften the glare, then settled myself on the couch once more, leaving sufficient light to enable me to see everything in the room clearly.

I had been resting for nearly half an hour, when quite distinctly I heard the front door open again, and was startled by a heavy tread in the passage. Just for a moment I thought my father had returned, but remembered, with a little shock, that both doors had been bolted on the inside, and that anyone who entered would have to be admitted by me. Burglars flashed into my mind. I propped myself on one elbow and tried to shout, but no sound would come from my throat.

Tramp, tramp, tramp came the approaching steps, and the echoes followed in their wake. The few seconds which elapsed before the footsteps reached the door seemed an eternity, and each trivial detail in the room seemed photographed on my brain. The hands of the little clock on the mantelpiece pointed to 9.35; even its ticking seemed to be suspended. Just before the steps reached the door, I remember noticing that the stool used by one of my young brothers was lying overturned on the hearth. The intruder halted at the door. Imagine my feelings when the knob began to turn and the door opened inch by inch. As the door swung noiselessly on its hinges I saw the crack fill with a dense grey mist, and when it was fully open, a thick cloud, oval in shape, reached from top to bottom of the doorway, almost touching the sides at its widest part. I think I had expected a man, but the horror of this nameless thing unnerved me. As the dreadful thing drew on towards me, perspiration broke out all over my body. I had no more control over my legs than if they were made of lead, or I think I should have run for the door the moment it was clear. I could neither speak nor scream, but I tried to wave the horrid thing away with my arms. As though it was aware of my anguish, it moved along by the table towards the centre of the room. And now the cloud began to shrink and disperse on the outside, as though being fanned away by something lurking at the core. Even as I watched, I saw it take on the faint outline of a man. Then the thing burst. It was as if a match had been put to a cloud of petrol vapour, only it burst, not into flame, but into my Uncle Percy! For an instant I saw him stand there as real as life, and I remember exclaiming, "Oh, Uncle Percy!" Then some-

thing gave way in my head, and the blessed mantle of unconsciousness fell over me.

Whether my Uncle Percy attempted to revive me with astral smelling salts I do not know, but when I came to myself I was lying on the hearthrug and my father was bending over me with restoratives in his hand. My first words were, "Oh, father, Uncle Percy is dead," and I related to him what had happened. Father had returned alone, knocked repeatedly, and receiving no answer had become alarmed. He then looked through the window, and seeing me lying on the hearthrug, had finally broken a pane in the back kitchen window, and entered that way.

The sequel is short but dramatic. Whilst we were at breakfast the next morning a telegram arrived which read: "Percy died 9.25 last night." Just ten minutes before he had kept his pledge!

Uncle Percy had never visited Staffordshire whilst in the physical body, and yet was able to reach me within ten minutes of his death, which seems to show that time and space are non-existent on the etheric side of life.

SOME CHRISTMAS-TIME PHENOMENA.

By Leigh Hunt.

I have met many mediums who, like myself, have had evidence that spirit people are often as much concerned with anniversaries as we are. And of all such anniversaries, the Festival of Yuletide seems to be the one to which most attention is given there as here.

Before advancing age had brought its inevitable inactivity, my father particularly enjoyed the many family gatherings we had at Christmas time, and at one of these, in humorously rebuking me for some mild escapade, he said that when he got to the "other side" he would come back and pen me up in a corner! This had passed from my mind at the time when, while we were holding a séance on Christmas Day, 1920, the large loo-table round which we were sitting, commenced to rock violently. This, naturally, rather incommoded the sitters, and before I could get out of the way, I found myself penned up in a corner of the room, with an old-time whatnot at my back, and the table pressing hard upon me. I could hardly move, and cried out, "Here, stop!" which the table did, and when quiet was restored, just the word "Father" was spelt out! A simple thing not at all "spiritual," the reader may say. But it was very significant and impressive to me. And it was also very human.

A year later two relatives had been to a theatre just before Christmas, and on Christmas Day I clairvoyantly saw my father-in-law, who said, "I was with them at the theatre and pressed A.'s shoulder." I was told later by A. that this was quite correct, and some family detail, which he added, unmistakably proved that he was not only present, but was fully aware of the season of the year.

Again it was at Christmas time that I saw several spirit people with us whilst we were enjoying some music at home, and I heard my father-in-law say, "Play 'The First Great Joy,'" mentioning a Christmas carol, which he used to entertain us by singing, with some additions of his own.

These are but a few simple instances of the nearness of spirit people at this period of the year, but to those present they were of great significance, and once again proved to us the reality of spirit-return. They were examples of many instances of a like nature which seem worth recording, particularly as with these phenomena there were associated teachings of an uplifting and instructive nature, showing the interest of our friends on the other side in the Christmas festival.

HIGHTREE HALL AND ITS GHOST.

There was a Manor house, ancient and gray,
That hidden by trees stood beside the highway.
There was a Painting that hung there to view
Of a Lady, life-size; but whom nobody knew.

There was a Legend exceedingly old,
Which grew in effect, being often retold,
Of a Crime and a Crash and terrible sight,
And ghostly and ghastly rehearsals at night.

There was a Party, at tea-table met:
"Let's have a séance and see what we get."
There was a Spirit that winked with one eye,
Brimful of mischief, to others close by.

"I am the Ghost of the much-maligned she—
Tell the true story, and let me go free."

There was a sitter who took it all in,
Toiled at the task until he grew thin,
Read, wrote, and delved until he was gray,
But never has got at the truth to this day!

F.

THOUGHT AS A HEALING AND PROTECTIVE FORCE.

Some Remarkable Experiments.

By Horace Leaf, F.R.G.S.

During the great German offensive in the spring of 1918 I made it a practice to gather together friends for the purpose of concentrating thoughts for the safety of their relatives at the front.

Our method was to draw up a list of the names of the subjects, each of which was read out in turn, the entire company simultaneously willing that these persons should be invulnerable. Some of the concentrators were in no way interested in psychical matters, and were mainly persuaded to participate in the unusual effort by their affections.

The experiments appear to have been successful as all the individuals thus thought of survived the war, one only meeting with a mishap. This man was slightly gassed, and on returning home, expressed the conviction that during the most critical period of the offensive, when the Allies were rapidly retreating and the danger greatest, he had been helped by a strange power which, on several occasions, saved his life.

This was the period during which our concentration had been practised. As none of the soldiers knew we were treating them this man could not have derived the idea from us.

This apparent success encouraged me to renew the practice during the last three years for the benefit of sick people, and the results have been extraordinarily interesting.

Most of the ailments have been severe, and in some instances the results have been remarkable in the way the improvement of the patient has synchronised with the moment of concentration, even when the patient has been unaware of our effort.

Our method is for the company to sit in circle formation; the appearance and age of the patient is then given and the nature of his disorder stated; if possible the name of the person is also mentioned. The company then visualise the individual as standing in the centre of the circle, and all concentrate healing thoughts upon him at the same time. Owing to most of the sick people living in distant parts, the sitters usually know nothing about them beyond the facts stated during the treatment. The following are examples of the kind of effect that appears to be obtained.

A life-long sufferer from chronic asthma, fell seriously ill, and had been unable to follow his employment for several weeks. Ordinary medical treatment failed to relieve him in any way. He gradually grew worse, and the prospects were very bad. His wife happened to mention the matter to one of the members of our class, who suggested that we should treat him that evening. The wife agreed, making it plain that her husband tabooed all such methods, and would have to remain unaware of the effort.

The class concentrated on this man for about two minutes. A few hours later the asthmatical attack abated, and the next morning the man left his bed and insisted on returning to work. I saw him several months later, and he had continued free from serious attacks of his malady and had remained at his employment.

A few weeks ago a lady telephoned to me requesting us to treat her son, aged fourteen, who was very ill and whose case was baffling to doctors. At the time of concentration the patient's temperature stood at 105, and a few minutes later dropped to 101. Although it rose again during the night the child seemed to improve, and the doctors discovered that they had diagnosed the case wrongly. We treated this case on several subsequent occasions, and although the child's life had been despaired of, he eventually made a complete recovery.

We have seldom treated any case more than three times, usually only once. The following effect occurred after three treatments in eight days.

The patient, a highly-educated young man, suffering from an acute neurosis, had derived no benefit from the attention of several medical specialists, who recommended his removal to an asylum. He experienced considerable egotistical exaltation with a rapid tendency to megalomania; could not be persuaded to go out, but shut himself in a room listening to a gramophone. The lack of exercise and absence of desire for change were regarded as bad.

A few days after the first treatment a beneficial effect took place, and he expressed a desire for change, twice visiting town and attending theatres. The general improvement was excellent, and the outlook for complete recovery is good.

It is, of course, impossible definitely to attribute these remarkable results to any one cause, least of all to that of thought projection or whatever concentration may give rise to. The effects, however, have been so consistently in harmony with the aim of the concentrators that coincidence becomes more and more difficult as an explanation.

Our object in thus treating the sick is not entirely therapeutic. All the classes are for the development of mediumship and psychic powers, and the primary object in this connection is to fatigue the mind of the students so as to enable them more effectively to enter into the quiescent period necessary for this kind of unfoldment.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

By F. L. Leaning.

Whatever surprises Christmas may bring, it never comes as a surprise itself. In these days we have turned time upside down to such an extent that we begin doing in the first weeks of December what by rights we should be doing at the end of January. But the pleasantest part of the whole thing and the most surprising is that just at the very time when Earth spins into her darkest, coldest, dreariest days, with rain, fog, sleet, naked trees, shivers and gloom, our irrepressible race elects to create for itself "the maddest, merriest time" to keep high festival, to sing and shout, and deck itself out with the brightest colours it can find. And so for weeks before Christmas the shops are gay and enchantingly attractive, the Christmas numbers are out, making every bookstall as stimulating as a bed of spring tulips, and indoors in thousands of homes we all walk about in an atmosphere of secrecy and mystery, keeping as close as Guy Fawkes, but with the most innocent intentions, and not much more success. The streets are very pleasant to walk in, because the very things we want are often displayed there. Here is a little house, for instance, a most taking little dwelling, with a garden and back premises, with a notice to keep toy burglars away: "Beware of the dog." He must be a half-crown dog, to judge by the size of the sign. If only we were small enough to live there! Fairies would be all right; and perhaps it is a fairy dog that guards the house. One imagines the fairy housewife saying, "John, dear, you might ask that lonely mouse from the landing-cupboard to come in this evening, and we'll cheer him up."

But we must not dream here any longer, for we are on the way to the greengrocer's. He has a small forest for sale, of trees unknown to the Professor of Botany, but known and loved by the nation. By their fruits they are known, and their fruits are little coloured candles, and balls of gleaming silver and gold, and fluffy animals, and little dancing Columbine dolls, and stockings of a peculiar sort never meant for legs. Tiny packets of scarlet and green, tied up with holly ribbon, and larger packets that smile with pretty greetings lie at the foot. The little Tree is on active service, while all the fun and the dancing go on, and it feels perhaps some kind of dim pleasure at coming into the human world and finding light and warmth there. It is very much akin to us, and if it has a real root and will go on living and carrying out the purpose of its being, that purpose will be good. But we, who dress it for an evening with the pretty symbols of light and beauty and the tokens of goodwill, have, we believe, also a root in the reality of an unseen world. We also bear our little candles, to shine far in the darkness of a naughty world; we display our little shining globes of kindness and tolerance, and try to make a summer-land of hope and consolation for the lonely, the comfortless, those who have lost courage.

Once, long ago, a good clergyman was speaking to a little group on a week-night, while the muffled traffic of the city roared outside. He was speaking of Christmas trees. They were dressed up, he said, with false gaieties for a short time, and then thrown into the fire, because they had no root; they were not real trees. But he exhorted his flock not to be like this, not to be Christmas trees, but Christ trees, which would be true evergreens and live for ever. Very simple, obvious, and homely, but very true and very wholesome; so that the lesson stuck and was worth remembering even "twenty and thirty and forty years on."

But there is no need to spoil our pretty tree with any thoughts of falsity. Half life, or even much more than half, is made up of the veriest trivialities and most transient needs, griefs, pleasures, and activities. In these things our lot is cast, and nevertheless all the time the life eternal is underlying and is nourished by them. Just as the greatest fact in our physical universe, the earth's spin and its journey through space, is one of which our senses give us not the slightest hint, so the enfolding spiritual realities equally escape us, and yet are perhaps even more fundamental. All we have to do is to accept what time and the hour bring, putting down our roots, rejoicing in sunlight, firelight, candlelight, the dance with the little ones who do not remember any past, and the laughter with the old who remember days very long ago. For all our little Christmas trees are true shoots of Ygdrasil, the mighty Tree of Life.

There was a man once (or it may have been a woman) who dreamed that he had died just before Christmas, and arrived in the Spheres in time to see all the preparations. He was astonished to find them so like earth, and to be invited to a display of Christmas trees, all ready dressed, to be given out at the right time. Some of them were extremely beautiful, a mass of loveliness, others scantier but still very nice, and some almost bare. "I suppose," said the dreamer, "that these are unfinished yet?" "Oh no, they are quite finished," said the official in charge, "but the owners haven't sent us anything more to put on them. It is a pity." As he woke up he caught the words, an answer apparently to a question, "not poor, only thoughtless and selfish—kind actions are the only decorations we have any use for at this season." The man thought the dream was childish, and did not tell anyone about it, but he remembered, and he could not help hoping that his symbolic tree might be thickly hung. He took to saying a kind word to animals, to helping blind folk, to giving the little appreciative word of remembrance that friends could not ask for but liked to have, to being silent about their shortcomings, and generally practising the unobtrusive virtues that do not come only to the rich. And no doubt when he really dies, if he does not find an actual Christmas tree as a visible record of his life, he will find its equivalent, and it will be a right Merry Christmas for him and his friends.

THE FABLES OF SARDONICUS.

(In the Style of O. Henry).

The Persuasive Lecturers and the Complacent Public.

A certain Orator who desired to disclose a Great Truth to the people, journeyed into a far City, hoping to unload his Truth into the minds of the Citizens. But when he reached the City his confidence forsook him. "For," said he to himself, "I begin to fear that these people will give me the Deaf Ear and the Frozen Mitt." So he questioned an Intelligent Stranger upon the point, saying, "Sir, I desire to utter words of truth to your Citizens; can you inform me whether they will listen to what I have to say?"

The Intelligent Stranger, who had been polishing his Finger-nails with a silk handkerchief, completed his task in a leisurely fashion, replaced the handkerchief in his pocket, and turning languidly to the Orator he said, "Sure! they'll listen. You just take a walk to the Market Place and you'll see them listening."

So the Orator went to the Market Place, where he found a large concourse of Citizens assembled listening to a Speaker who addressed them from a Rostrum. And the Speaker, who had a rich and mellow voice as well as an engaging air of Sweet Reasonableness (albeit a trifle Pompous), told the multitude in a vibrant Baritone that Black was (he submitted) a different colour from White, and that Two added to another Two made a total (unless he were greatly in error) of Four.

And the people applauded these statements *with* enthusiasm, saying, "Behold! How true!"

And a second Speaker then occupied the Rostrum. But this second Speaker was one of those who had acquired a Forceful Personality (by means of a Correspondence Course), and his words were loud and insistent, and delivered in a Dynamic and Stunning manner. And he pointed out with great Vociferation, that Two and Two were really Five, and that Black was actually the same as White. And again the people applauded, saying, "Behold! How true!"

"I perceive now," said the Orator, addressing the Intelligent Stranger later in the day, "that my fears were unfounded, for indeed your Citizens are by no means Deaf, as I had erroneously anticipated."

The Intelligent Stranger yawned in a fatigued manner before replying: "Oh! yes, they've got ears. But they've no darn discrimination." So saying, he took out his Silk Hankerchief and polished his Fingernails with an air of bored abstraction.

Moral.

The Listening Ear is of little use when the Brains are otherwise engaged.

D. N. G.

THE EVE OF NOEL.

To the moon above the pines
Hoots the owl—a sound of dule—
And the wakeful watch-dog whines
On the chilly eve of Yule.

But the orchard mistletoe,
Moonlit, gleams with berries white,
And the holly's branches show
Green and scarlet to the night.

In the thorpe the window panes
Greet with lamps the festal time,
Carols mingle in the lanes
With the sound of bells a-chime.

Some have said, from moor and mere
Fairies all have fled away,
To the tale we give no ear—
Still the sprites of Christmas stay.

And to hearts and homes made fit,
To their silent guests akin,
When the Christmas fires are lit
Spirits still may enter in.

G.

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SOME STRINGENT TESTS OF "MARGERY."

The "Margery" case continues to be the subject of acute controversy in America, and from time to time we receive various testimonies, mostly favourable but sometimes definitely hostile. It is difficult at a distance of some three thousand miles to pronounce a final verdict upon phenomena that one has not personally encountered. At the same time, looking at the "Margery" case judicially, it must be said that the evidence in favour of genuineness not only preponderates in quantity but also in quality. It would be extremely difficult for a fair-minded and impartial person to doubt the actuality of Mrs. Crandon's powers after reading the reports of such experienced and reputable investigators as Mr. Malcolm Bird, or after listening to the carefully weighed utterances of Dr. R. J. Tillyard, F.R.S., in reference to his own personal enquiry into the "Margery" phenomena.

One hostile report, which suggests—in fact more than suggests—trickery on the part of Mrs. Crandon which has recently come before our notice, states that the authors of the report were not official investigators but were merely present as friendly observers. On perusing the complete report one begins to wonder what interpretation can be placed on the word "friendly." Apparently in this case the "two friendly observers" were present in the house of Dr. and Mrs. Crandon by invitation. They were therefore presumably the guests of the Crandons. The mentality of a person who can accept hospitality and afterwards go away and attack his host and hostess is one which people of good breeding will find hard to comprehend.

The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research for November contains an interesting account of some further experiments with "Margery" from which the investigators obtained remarkable phenomena under test conditions of extreme severity. The medium was attired in a single under-garment of the bloomer variety; the lower and upper margins of this garment were sealed to the skin of the medium by means of adhesive tape; blue pencil markings were made from the tapes to the skin at various points so that had the tapes been removed or tampered with the fact would have been immediately apparent. "Margery's" wrists and ankles were fastened with picture wire, the knees and legs were tightly wrapped with layers of adhesive tape from a point four inches above the knee to one four inches below. The position of this tape was further controlled by means of the blue pencil markings. The mouth, ears and hair were searched; the neck was fastened; the chair occupied by the medium was fastened to the floor.

At various instants during the séance the medium was examined by flashlight and all the controls verified. In these conditions levitations and other forms of the phenomena associated with Mrs. Crandon's mediumship occurred, including the voice of "Walter." At the conclusion of the séance the committee were satisfied that the wire on ankles and wrists and also the adhesive tapes showed no evidence of having been tampered with.

This report, signed by eight persons, seems to indicate that the séance was carried out under the strictest and most rigorous conditions.

WE LEARN that Miss H. A. Dallas is shortly undergoing an operation, and will therefore be unable to attend to correspondence. Her numerous friends among the readers of LIGHT will unite in sympathising with her during this anxious period.

DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES, 18/26, Stepney Causeway, London, E.1, which have, during the past sixty years, admitted over 101,000 orphan and destitute children, appeal for donations to assist them in their work of sheltering and feeding their present large family of nearly 8,000 little ones.

AN Address, "Observations on the Divining-rod and Other Phenomena—Chiefly South African," will be given at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, at 16, Queensberry-place, South Kensington, S.W.7, by Professor E. Garnett, B.A. London, on Tuesday, December 21st, at 8 p.m. A number of Kaffir drawings, etc., will be exhibited during the evening.

THE special greeting card, suitable for Christmas, New Year, and other festivals, which is on sale at the Psychic Book Shop, is simple and tasteful in design, and carries the stamp of high quality. It bears a short poem, by Sir A. Conan Doyle, which we give below:—

WITH THE SEASON'S GREETING.

It should be merry for we hold
That by the magnet of our love,
We draw the dear ones from above
To share our pleasures as of old.

And could we see our festive board
With unsealed eyes, then we should view
The broken circle formed anew
With every scattered arc restored.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS.

A comical fellow once said that Christmas was invented by Charles Dickens. (I place him with the other droll person who remarked that Spiritualism was invented by Sir Oliver Lodge.) But while Dickens did not invent Christmas as a festival, he did more than any other writer to make it a centre of human affection—a feast of kindness and mirth, of charity and reconciliation.

* * * *

Ever as the Yule season returns I take down his Christmas tales and read of ghosts, gruesome or genial, and of ministering spirits, whether in the flesh or out of it. And always I halt at this description of the "Spirit of Christmas Present":—

> The spirit stood beside sick beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands and they were close at home; by struggling men and they were patient in their greater hopes; by poverty and it was rich. In almshouse, hospital and jail, in misery's every refuge, where vain man in his little brief authority had not made fast the door and barred the Spirit out, he left his blessing.

It is unhappily only too easy to close the door and shut the Spirit out, whether it be a human spirit or the spirit of an idea. A sneer can do it, a churlish thought, an unforgiving temper or an attitude of unbelief. Many years ago a sensitive poet-friend of mine, after visiting a house where the family had a boorish contempt for Art and Literature, told me he had been "snubbed by an atmosphere"—a delightful phrase. How many returning spirits, hoping to join in the Christmas reunions, have been "snubbed" in just this way! Mostly, of course, the "snub" was unconscious, but it need never be inflicted.

* * * *

To the scientific sceptic, the common sceptic, and unbelievers generally, let us say: It is Christmas, it is the time to be genial and kindly and human. Drop your intellectual dignity and give the "ghosts" the benefit of the doubt. Try and think and act as though spirits really existed, and, recognising you, would be glad of a little recognition in return. Try it—as a piece of Christmas make-believe, if you will—and you may experience some pleasant surprises. It may even be easier to think kindly of those whom you cannot see than of some whom you can!

* * * *

Don't tell me that Dickens wrote satires on the Spiritualism of his own day; because the things in it at which he laughed are just the things at which intelligent Spiritualists had always laughed, and still laugh. Dickens had a profound sense of the essential realities of life, both on the spiritual and the psychic side. That is clearly traceable in his novels.

* * * *

"The Londoner" in the "Evening News" some time ago interested me very much in some observations on the handwriting of Mr. Andrew Lang. He says he once had a letter from Andrew Lang "four pages of words and no word readable." It reminded me of the last letter which Mr. Lang wrote to LIGHT. It was given to me to decipher and deal with. By long and hard study I came at last at the meaning of it. Andrew Lang wanted some information about the fire ordeal amongst savages and civilised races. I hunted up some references, but he was not quite satisfied. Since his death there have been cases of psychic phenomena involving the handling of fire which should have satisfied him—they were so well-attested. I refer particularly to the case in which Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny took part.

* * * *

This month brings with it the anniversary of the death (which occurred in 1908), of Edgar Lee, editor and proprietor of the "Encore." He was the first editor of the "St. Stephen's Review," and well known as a humorous writer and a racing man. Also he was an ardent Spiritualist, and one of his stories, which related to a prophetic dream of his own death and that of one of his friends, was of so astonishing a nature, that it made a great impression in the newspaper world. We gave it in LIGHT some years ago.

* * * *

Amongst my Press-cuttings is one headed, "Ghost Seen by a Boy Marquis." If the spirit caught sight of the young nobleman, no doubt the fact, as reported in the spirit-world, would be given under the heading, "Boy Marquis Seen by Ghost."

* * * *

"Man—Why, What, Whence, Whither? . . why should it all be so mysterious?" (I quote from a recent pamphlet.) I will not reply with the coarse remark, "Ask me another!" but merely suggest in a delicate and diffident way, that if instead of shouting questions at the Universe, we could only keep quiet and listen, we should learn much more than we do at present.

D. G.



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SIDELIGHTS.

Messrs. Honey & Co., of St. James' Row, Sheffield, have brought out an illuminated card entitled "The Principles of Spiritualism" for use in Spiritualist churches, lyceums, etc. These cards can be had plain or coloured and in various sizes.

* * * *

Details of the "Margery" phenomena which were presented by Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, at Clark University, Massachussetts, attracted such a crowd that special police were detailed for duty to prevent overcrowding of the lecture hall.

* * * *

The opening ceremony of the Spiritualist Church at Cardiff was accorded a prominent notice in "The Western Mail" of the 6th inst. Mr. Ernest W. Oaten, who is one of the two British representatives in the International Spiritualists' Federation, in which 29 countries are represented, performed the inaugural ceremony.

* * * *

The Lyceum Club, which has many and varied branches of activity, including literary, artistic, dramatic and other sections, has recently opened a Psychic Science Circle, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Philip Ch. de Crespigny. The inauguration dinner of the Circle, held on Monday, 13th inst., was attended by numerous leading Spiritualists, including the Duchess of Hamilton and Brandon, and Viscountess Molesworth, and Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle. We hope to give a fuller account of the dinner in our next issue.

A PSYCHIC PLAY STIRS UP ANTHROPOSOPHY.

THE "DANGERS" OF SPIRITUALISM.

Mr. D. N. Dunlop, President of the Anthroposophical Society of Great Britain, announced from the platform of the Rudolf Steiner Hall, on Monday, December 6th, at a lecture on "The Dangers of Spiritualism," by Mr. G. Kaufmann, M.A., that the lectures were an answer to those people who thought that Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's play, "The Dean's Dilemma," recently produced at the Hall, had something to do with Anthroposophy.

"Touch not the accursed thing," seemed to be Mr. Dunlop's feeling about us—the many Spiritualists who occupied the seats to hear what wrong we had done. In the course of his remarks Mr. Dunlop remarked that many years ago he had *thoroughly investigated* the whole matter, and had then come to a conclusion as to what the forces behind these psychic manifestations were—and had had no reason since to change his views. (To my certain knowledge, Mr. Dunlop was challenged by Mr. Hewat McKenzie, on making a similar statement, ten years ago, and had to acknowledge publicly that he had had *one séance* with *one medium* and could not remember who it was!)

Many Spiritualists have received benefit from the works of Rudolf Steiner whom Mr. Dunlop would claim as his master, and it is a pity that he should widen instead of seeking to close a breach, if any exists.

Mr. Kaufmann gave a reasoned, if not convincing, exposition of how Spiritualism came into the world in the middle of last century, and while denying that he was out to criticise psychic investigation, clearly showed that he held Mr. Dunlop's views on the matter and promised in his second lecture to get a little nearer the dangers. He also seemed to have a complete lack of personal experience and his ideas of Spiritualism seemed to be entirely confined to dark séances, obsession, and the like, but no discussion was permitted.

B. MCKENZIE.

THE PASSING OF MR. LESLIE CURNOW.

It is with great regret that we learn of the passing from us on Saturday, the 11th instant, after a short illness, of Leslie Curnow, who was for many years an enthusiastic worker in the Spiritualist movement. The son of the editor of a leading Australian newspaper, the "Sydney Morning Herald," Mr. Curnow, who obtained the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Sydney University, took up the career of journalism, and coming to England in 1913, was engaged by the London "Times" and other important newspapers, including the "Sunday Times." He was for some time a member of the staff of LIGHT, and subsequently embarked upon authorship and lecturing, in connection with Spiritualism and Psychic Research, in which he met with marked success. He assisted Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in the production of "The History of Spiritualism," and also wrote a book, "The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism," which was well received.

He was a "plain blunt man," of great sincerity and honesty of purpose, and the affection in which he was held was testified to in no uncertain manner on Sunday last, when the congregations at the Æolian and Grotrian Halls rose in silent tribute to his memory.

We extend to Leslie Curnow, in his new stage of life, our sincere good wishes at this present season of Goodwill to all men.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

"We are God's messengers to put forces into operation to answer your prayers."

So said a very highly-valued control the other day. The words brought to my mind some striking examples of such spirit operations.

In early girlhood, when I was in business with my father, we were in great financial difficulty. A large stock of goods had been purchased, but trade had been bad and they had remained on the shelves. The account became due and overdue, but there was no money to meet it. Then came the notification of the approaching call of the firm's representative. We knew that failure to meet the account at this time would mean trouble, possibly bankruptcy.

The day of the call arrived. My father and the traveller commenced talking, when I was impressed to go to my room and pray. I did so, asking earnestly that some way out of this difficulty might be found. When I came down after a few minutes I found my father smiling; the traveller had arranged to take the goods back and re-sell them!

On another occasion, more recently, I was out of work. I prayed continually for help and guidance. I answered many advertisements, but without result. Then a friend gave me the names of two firms with whom he had done business, and on whom he suggested I should call with a view to obtaining employment. I put the paper in my pocket, feeling that I could never make use of it. I resolved at the same time that if I did anything at all in the matter, I would go to the first-named of the two firms, as they did more of the kind of work I was used to. The next morning, however, the message came, "Go to the second of the two and don't bother about the other." I obeyed. Within ten minutes of my entry into the premises I was engaged. The position has proved an excellent one in every way.

These and many other similar instances prove that the message quoted at the beginning is reasonable. It is certain that prayer does put into operation forces that we otherwise could not employ.

E. C.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.

ADDRESS BY THE DUCHESS OF HAMILTON AND BRANDON.

In the course of her address last Sunday at the Æolian Hall, Her Grace discussed the subject of Spiritualism as a practical guide to every-day life, apart from mere questions of séance-room phenomena. Spiritualism, rightly interpreted, led to a high and ennobling path of aspiration and duty. It showed the necessity for great effort in the direction of spiritual progress, without which the true development of the soul cannot take place. "There is no Bankruptcy Act in Heaven," said the lecturer, and for all wrongs done during the earthly existence, reparation and forgiveness must be striven for and obtained. At the close of the address Mr. A. Punter gave numerous clairvoyant descriptions and messages, which found ready recognition.

V. L. K.

SPIRITUALIST COMMUNITY SERVICES.

OTHER-WORLD CONDITIONS.

Speaking at the Grotrian Hall on Sunday morning, the Rev. Drayton Thomas said that until recently there was a marked reluctance on the part of the Churches to state what we might anticipate after death. Spiritualism is one of the great factors which is ending this un-natural silence. Already men are speaking more clearly about the After-life, and the inevitable outcome there of good and evil actions here. We believe that there is a state and place enjoyed by the good, also a state and place where the evil find reason to regret their ways. Mr. Thomas proceeded to outline his personal expectation of what he would experience after death; the wonderful awakening and welcome by friends who had preceded him, the alluring occupations, continuance of favourite studies, possibility of helping those in the darker spheres, the progressive revelations of God, and the meeting with the Master, adding that these anticipations were no illusion or conjecture, but were based upon the actual experiences of those who are already living in that life.

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Wednesday Services at 7.30 p.m

Worthing Spiritualist Mission Church, Grafton Road
Sunday, Dec. 19th, 11 and 6.30, Miss Penney; Dec. 23rd, Mrs. Hayward.

SUNDAY'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Lewisham.—Limes Hall, Limes Grove.—December 19th, 11.15, open circle; 2.45, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. H. J. Osborn. December 22nd, 7, Mrs. M. M. Maunder.

Camberwell.—The Central Hall, High-street.—December 19th, 11, service; 6.30, Mrs. M. Crowder. Wednesday, 7.30, at 55, Station-road, public circle.

Croydon.—Harewood Hall, High-street.—December 19th, 11, Mr. Percy Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. Julie E. Scholey.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—December 19th, 11, public circle; 6.30, Mrs. Haddelsey. December 23rd, no service.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—December 19th, 7, Mrs. B. Petz, D.N.U. Thursday, 8.15, public service.

Bowes Park.—Shaftesbury Hall, adjoining Bowes Park Station (down side).—December 19th, 11, Miss Cecil Preston and Mrs. Stacey; 7, Mrs. Maunder. December 22nd, 8, Rev. J. M. Mathias.

Richmond Free Church, Ormond-road.—December 19th, 7.30, Mme. de Beaurepaire, trance address. (Doors close 7.40.) December 22nd, 7.30, Mrs. Lucy Smith, of South Africa, address and clairvoyance.

L.D.C.—Debating Section.—144, *High Holborn, W.C.*1.—December 20th, 7.30, Alderman D. J. Davis, "Prayer."

Fulham.—12, *Lettice-street (near Parson's Green Station).*—December 19th, 7, Mrs. A. Boddington. December 23rd, 8, Mrs. Maunder.

Bournemouth Spiritualist Mission, Charminster-road (opposite Richmond Wood Road), Bournemouth.—Sundays, at 11 and 6.30, address and clairvoyance. Local clairvoyant, Mrs. W. G. Hayter.

Croydon Spiritualist Church, New Gallery, Katharine Street.—December 19th, 3, Lyceum; 6.30, Mr. P. J. Hitchcock. Tuesday, 21st, 7.45, Public Hall, Wellesley Road, Mrs. Clements.

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Tuesday, Dec. 21st, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MRS. FRANCES TYLER.
Thursday, Dec. 23rd, at 7.30, Clairvoyance ... MR. GLOVER BOTHAM.

Séances for Normal and Trance Clairvoyance.
Monday, December 20th, at 7.30 ... ... MRS. ANNIE PATTERSON.
Wednesday, December 22nd, at 3 ... ... MRS. CANNOCK.

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Wednesday, December 22nd, at 7.30 ... ... MRS. BAYLIS.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. The Special Lecture by Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., advertised in the Syllabus to take place on December 20th at the Caxton Hall, is postponed until March 2nd, 1927, when it will be held at the Grotrian Hall, Wigmore Street.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS. The Library, Offices and Rooms will be closed on Thursday evening, December 23rd, and will be re-opened on the morning of Wednesday, December 29th.

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Continental Agents: Messageries Hachette et Cie., Paris; Messrs. Dawson and Sons (Low's Export), London;
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