

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Two rather important works, published by 'The Theosophical Publishing Society,' have reached us:—one by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, on 'Nature's mysteries'; and one by Mrs. Besant, on 'Esoteric Christianity or The Lesser Mysteries.'

Mrs. Besant's book is helpful in many ways, especially in illustrating what we have long held,—that Theosophy may be or may become anything, with wise handling. Thus, in her 'Foreword,' Mrs. Besant says of the 'inner light,' or 'mind of Christ,' 'This is the way of the Divine Wisdom, the true THEOSOPHY. It is not, as some think, a diluted version of Hinduism, or Buddhism, or Taoism, or of any special religion. It is Esoteric Christianity as truly as it is Esoteric Buddhism, and belongs equally to all religions, exclusively to none.' From this point of view, the book has a special claim upon distinctively Christian thinkers, as it grapples with all their deep problems;—The historical Jesus, and the mythic Christ, The Atonement, Resurrection and Ascension, The Trinity, The Forgiveness of Sins, Sacraments, &c. On all these subjects, Mrs. Besant has much to say that merits studious thought, and we hope to return to the book for a fuller consideration of a specimen chapter.

Mr. Sinnett's bright and instructive little volume is a gathering up of a well-known series of articles in 'The Sun,' all of them as alive with ideas and criticisms as any one could wish. We do not always agree with him, but we like to see 'the strong man armed,' when he is a seeker after truth: and we specially like to see and hear him when he knows a good many things, as Mr. Sinnett does, and can tell with vigour, lucidity and humour what he knows, as Mr. Sinnett can. His book is as amusing as it is informing, and as racy as it is scientific.

'The Metaphysical Magazine' gives us a singularly concise paragraph which puts the case for Spiritualism into the proverbial nutshell. It is well worth preserving. If we wanted one, it might almost do for a creed:—

The universe is larger than our horizon, and, indeed, our scope of vision comprises but a very small part of it. Whoever limits his conceptions of possibilities to the scope of his own understanding, lives in a very small ant-hill. The world of mind is no more circumscribed by the individuals living on the earth than the universe is limited by the series of the solar system. As there are myriads of beings of innumerable races in the region between the poles and the single-celled amoeba, so there must be categories of intelligence between man and the Infinite Essence. It is not only reasonable to suppose that the individuals that

possess the intellect to conceive all this have direct affiliation with the Intelligence which is beyond it, and are therefore sharers of the same eternity. Thus, dying, so far as the world of physical sense is concerned, they live on as thinking, intelligent beings. They, then, and other intelligences beyond the veil, may inspire their thoughts and wishes into others, who by some peculiar susceptibility are capable of receiving them.

We like exceedingly Mr. B. F. Austin's book on 'What converted me to Spiritualism. One Hundred testimonies.' (Toronto: The Austin Publishing Co.) The 'testimonies' are brief, but generally go straight to the mark right away: and the personal element all through makes an animated book of it. As a rule, each testimony has the writer's portrait; and a good-looking company of testifiers they are. We are inclined to think that it is one of the very best books for inquirers.

Mrs. Wilmans, combating what, on the face of it, seems sheer tyranny on the part of certain United States Post Office officials, says:—

The sensational papers that have printed so many articles about me have steadily refused to accept the many that have been written by my friends in my defence. They did not wish to publish the truth; they cared nothing for the truth; all they wanted was to furnish a scandal that would please the vast populace who glory in the ruin of others. Not only have the writings of my friends been refused by them, but when I attempted to stem the tide of their abuse by sending them true statements they have either destroyed or returned the articles. They did not want the effect of their sensational and untruthful disclosures destroyed. Surely it will not always be that the public will drink down such stuff with such hungry avidity, preferring it to the truth. That this is the case now is proved by the fact itself, since the lives of these big scandal-mongering papers depend on their giving the people what the people demand.

We know something of this in London, more's the pity! A pure and honest newspaper press is one of the most urgent wants of the day.

'The Birmingham Spiritualist Union' has published a little book of 85 hymns for public services. It is creditably produced, in limp cloth binding, and is sold (under cost price, we believe) for one penny. A spirited Preface says justly:—

People with advanced ideas of the future life are often found singing hymns which express thoughts quite inconsistent with their beliefs. This may be because the tunes associated with the hymns often endear them to one's mind more than do the words of the hymns themselves. There is, however, no more reason for singing ideas which are out of harmony with advanced thought than there is for talking them.

The compilers, in some cases, have departed a good deal from the form and style of the conventional hymn, and, with regard to these, we imagine tunes will be a difficulty; though many are old friends with the old face. On the whole, the book deserves attention from those who are looking out for a small book of the kind, and from collectors who contemplate compilations of their own. The book is published by Mr. T. Hands, 49, Guildford-street, Birmingham.

An old and much respected friend, in a letter lately received from him, says;—

Last time Madame Montague was here, she said, when describing 'forms,' that one of them had apparently been a Scotch clergyman, and wished me to recognise him. I went over a number of names of ministers whom I had known and who were acquainted with Spiritualism. First I named Rev. William Miall; it was then she said 'a Scotch clergyman.' Then I named the Revs. Professors James Morrison, John Guthrie, John Kirk, Fergus Ferguson, Rev. William Bennett, and others. Still it was 'No, no!' Madame then said I had a controversy with this clergyman when I was young. 'Oh,' said I, 'then it *must* be Dr. Guthrie. I had a newspaper controversy with him regarding anti-slavery leaders in America.' Still she said, 'It is not he.' 'Well,' I said, 'I give it up.' My wife then said to me, 'Will it be your old friend, your father's minister?' I replied, 'I do not think it can be he, the Rev. Dr. Willis; he would not come back.' Madame said, 'It *is* the clergyman you have named. He is pleased to be recognised, and he has come to tell you that you were right.'

I left my father's church when I was about sixteen, nearly sixty years since, after a friendly controversy with the Rev. Dr. Willis. Two of my points of protest he was willing to yield, viz., baptism of believers only, by immersion, and non-intoxicating wine in the Sacrament. The third point—election—he was sorry he could not move me on, but he told my mother he expected I would return to Renfield-street Church. I went to Nelson-street Chapel (off Tron-gate), then called the 'teetotal kirk,' and although I favoured the views of the Quakers very much, I was baptised in Nelson-street Chapel.

I thought that Dr. Willis's very friendly visits would cease after my mother's death in Port Glasgow, but every time he came from Canada (where he was a professor in the Free Church College), he found me out somehow. He came to see me in Liverpool; then in London, at Anerley, Leadenhall-street, and Chancery-lane; and I visited him at Maida-vale.

The little story interests us because of its completeness all round, though it is not a perfect 'test.' The tardily recognised visitor continuing his old calls upon his once youthful wrestler is really very pretty.

The following thoughtful lines, suggested by our late Article on 'Reasonable Prayer,' have been sent to us by a valued correspondent:—

Prayer is a means whereby we make the soul
Receptive, and responsive to all good.
The wordless prayer of perfect trust, perchance
Were best and wisest, since our wisdom's small.
It is not needed to evoke from God
Some favour He would otherwise withhold;
Yet, it may serve to open wide a door—
Which, but for it, might stay for ever shut—
Through which can enter, all unsought, unguessed,
Some blessing He was waiting to bestow.

He will not force the sanctuary of soul;
Proud, self-sustained. Whilst we ourselves suffice,
We have no welcome for the Heavenly Guest;
But when Life's floods all barriers burst away,
And stressful storms our weakness to us prove,
And Self submits—lies low—He can come in.

FELIX RUDOLPH.

Significant of the way in which Science is 'tending back to God' is a story recently told of Helmholtz in his later days—the Helmholtz who was so sarcastic on one occasion concerning the imperfections of the human eye.

He was fond of explaining certain natural phenomena by the aid of the vortex theory.

'But where did the vortex come from?' asked an inquisitive student one day.

The great scientist eyed the questioner with a grave expression. 'God made it,' he replied simply.

ILLNESS OF MRS. ANNIE BESANT.—Mrs. Besant was expected to visit London in April or May next, but we regret to learn that she is now lying ill with Indian fever at Benares. We are sure she will have the cordial sympathy and good wishes of hosts of Spiritualists and other friends.

SEEN IN A MIRROR.

Monsieur X., justice of the peace in the town of Wieklo Luki, in Northern Russia, related to Monsieur Wiskol Chopicki, of Warsaw (Rue Wilcza, number 30) the following occurrence:—

'A few years ago I was living in Ukraine, in the town of Romny. Having resigned the post I had been filling, I was enjoying a time of rest in my house, which stood in a large garden, and at the same time awaiting from the Government a fresh appointment. My family consisted of four persons—my wife, two sons, and a daughter. My eldest son was studying at the Ecclesiastical Academy at Kieff; the younger was at home preparing to enter college (Gymnase). My daughter, aged ten, was going to school. On returning home one day, she ran in bringing the news that a fortune-teller had settled in the neighbourhood and that she was surprising all who consulted her. The little girl, with the curiosity natural to her age, begged me earnestly to take her some day when she had not many lessons to do, to see this divineress. The day arrived, and we drove, in fine weather, to the dwelling of the modern pythoness. Her modest home was in a kind of villa. We stopped on seeing a little old lady approaching us. She was followed by an enormous dog. "Does the fortune-teller live here, madame?" I asked. "Yes, sir!" We were taken into a small vestibule and thence into a large room. Our guide opened a door and called someone—"Madame Marie, we have visitors"; and there entered a woman of thirty-five or forty, wearing the dress of the women of the towns in Ukraine. "What do you wish me to foretell?" asked she, lighting two little bits of candle, and covering the window with a thick curtain so that the room was quite dark. The candles were reflected in a little mirror on the wall. She placed another mirror in such a manner that the candles were between them. "This is how it is done. I look in this third mirror which I hold near to me, and I communicate to those present what I see in it." I glanced at the small mirror, my daughter doing the same, but we saw nothing but the light of the candles.

"First of all, madame," I said, "be so good as to give me a few particulars as to your past life, at least those relating to the period when you were first conscious of the power of divining. How did it come about?" "Once when I was a little girl," she replied, "the idea came into my head that I might be able to foretell things. I had heard that for this purpose a mirror was used. So I seated myself before the lighted candles, as now. I took the mirror and began to look. I saw in it my future husband and the whole of my destiny. Well, since then, whenever I have nothing to do, I light the candles, take the mirror in my hand, and wait for what it has to show me. I see every event. For instance, suppose someone I know is going to be ill. If he is to recover we find that we continue to see him, in the sequel, at work, at rest, going about. If he is to die, then the mirror shows us the funeral—the priests, the torches, the coffin, the cemetery. If I ask mentally whether these events will take place in a few days, a week, or a month, I am at once shown a date marked in dots (points). Sometimes an annoying incident happens in the neighbourhood, such as a robbery. I am aware of it immediately, and I give information as to where the lost goods are to be sought. They are recovered, and the owner is very grateful to me. Occasionally the fear that I am committing a sin comes over me. I one day confided this fear to a priest, my confessor. 'Pray to God,' said he, 'He will forgive you, though I can see nothing wrong in coming to the help of one's fellow-creatures.' Thus I gradually grew accustomed to foretelling. At first I was only successful in the evening or at night, but now I am equally so at high noon. I no sooner look in the mirror than I see the whole life of man pass before me." "I see," she resumed, after a few moments' silence, "that you are a rich man, and an official. You . . . but no, you have no appointment now. That is the past. I see you in uniform; how richly braided it is! You have a gold chain round your neck from which hangs a medallion inscribed 'Justice of the Peace.' But all that is over. You have had no appointments for three years."

RALPH WALDO TRINE.

The February number of 'Mind' contains an appreciative biographical sketch of Ralph Waldo Trine, the author of that delightful book, 'In Tune with the Infinite.' The notice is written by Charles Brodie Patterson, joint editor of 'Mind' with John Emery McLean, and gives a number of interesting details respecting Mr. Trine's experiences, which go to show that, like many others who have attained strength and poise, he has been developed through hardship. Mr. Patterson says:—

"The 'Word of Life' given forth by Mr. Trine, both through pen and personality, carries double weight when we realise that it is not the creed of one who has lived in the calm atmosphere of a secluded and sheltered life, but is the fruit of a most varied and oftentimes trying experience. He has engaged in various kinds of manual, industrial, and newspaper work, besides teaching and lecturing; and more than once he has known what it was to walk the streets of a large city, hungry and without work. . . Mr. Trine is one of Nature's noblemen—kind-hearted and generous in nature, a man singularly free from selfishness, and one you always feel better for having known."

A thorough-going vegetarian, a director of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and of the American Humane Education Society, Mr. Trine is still a young man, and has devoted much time to the study of social and economic problems, and a book from his pen may be expected in the near future, dealing with these subjects from the point of view of a Socialist who is such because of his New Thought philosophy. He was married in 1898; and Mrs. Trine, who is in hearty sympathy with her husband's thought and work, is a gifted and charming woman. Under the title 'A Sort of Creed,' the following 'Life Thoughts' by Mr. Trine are given in 'Mind,' together with a portrait of the author:—

A SORT OF CREED.

- To live to our highest in all things that pertain to us ;
- To lend a hand as best we can to all others for this same end ;
- To aid in righting the wrongs that cross our path by pointing the wrong-doer to a better way, and thus aid him in becoming a power for good ;
- To remain in nature always sweet and simple and humble, and therefore strong ;
- To open ourselves fully and to keep ourselves pure and clean as fit channels for the Divine Power to work through us ;
- To turn toward and keep our faces always to the light ;
- To do our own thinking, listening quietly to the opinions of others, and to be sufficiently men and women to act always upon our own convictions ;
- To do our duty as we see it, regardless of the opinions of others, of seeming gain or loss, temporary blame or praise ;
- To play the part of neither knave nor fool by attempting to judge another, but to give that same time to living more worthily ourselves ;
- To get up immediately when we stumble, face again to the light, and travel on without wasting even a moment in regret ;
- To love all things and to stand in awe or fear of nothing save our own wrong-doing ;
- To recognise the good which lies at the heart of all people, of all things, waiting for expression, all in its own good way and time ;
- To love the fields and the wild flowers, the stars, the far-open sea, the soft warm earth, and to live much with them alone, but to love struggling and weary men and women and every pulsing living creature better ;
- To strive always to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. In brief—
- To be honest, to be fearless, to be just, to be kind. This will make our part in life's great and as yet not fully understood play truly glorious, and we need then stand in fear of nothing—life nor death; for death is life.
- Or, rather, it is the quick transition to life in another form; the putting off of the old coat and the putting on of a new; a passing not from light to darkness but from light to light, according as we have lived here; a taking up of life in another form just where we leave it off here; a part in life not to be shunned or dreaded or feared, but to be welcomed with a glad and ready smile when it comes in its own good way and time.

TRANSITION OF MR. A. MORTON. We learn with regret that Mr. A. Morton, author of 'Psychic Studies,' passed to spirit life on January 30th, in Summerland, Cal., U.S.A.

"And for how many years did I fill the office of Justice of the Peace?" asked I. The medium seemed to be thinking. "I see now—I see, you filled that office for twelve years!" And she proceeded to relate the history of my past life, omitting not a single important fact. It was all surprisingly exact. She went on, "You have three children—this little girl and two sons. The eldest is far from here—a long, long way off, in a town situated near a large river. I know the town, it is Kieff! Here is your son!" she exclaimed, still looking in the mirror; "what a nice-looking young man! about twenty-three. His hair is short, and he is dressed in black. He is standing at a table, before some old men, who look very grave and serious. They are covered with medals. There is a Bishop among them—a Metropolitan (archbishop). But where can it be? Ah, now he is going away. How pleased he is! It has all disappeared! Now I see your younger son! How like he is to you! He is on a blouse with a belt. He is also standing at a table. It is an examination. Yes, I see the professors sitting in a circle. How pale he is, and his lips are trembling as if he were in a fever. Now I see your house—your wife and your little girl. Why, you will soon have a new home! I see you once more in uniform and wearing a medallion. You will sell the house you are now occupying, and you will go to live in a cold country."

'If I add to this account that, on that very day and at that very hour, my eldest son, now a theological student, was undergoing an examination in the second course before the Metropolitan and the Rector, for admission into the Academy of the Orthodox Greek Church in St. Petersburg; that at that very time my younger son was being examined; and that I was unexpectedly appointed, on June 9th, 1892, the date foretold, to be Justice of the Peace of the town of Wolkie-Luki, in the extreme north of Russia, where I am still living, ever sighing after my dear country, Ukraine; all this is evidence enough, it seems to me, of the authenticity of this gift—as yet inexplicable to us—this divine gift lodged in the puny personality of a humble woman of the people.'

JOSEPH DE KRONHELM.

Gajsin, Podolia,
Russia.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall (entrance from Regent-street), on the evening of Thursday next, March 6th, when an Address will be given by

MR. W. J. COLVILLE

ON

'Twenty-five Years of Psychic Experience in Many Lands.'

FOLLOWED BY ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each.

THE EVENING OF THURSDAY, MARCH 20TH, AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MR. JOHN C. KENWORTHY

ON

THE LAW OF SPIRIT-COMMUNION.'

One or more members of the Council of the Alliance will be in attendance at the rooms, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., every Wednesday, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., and will be pleased to meet any friends who may wish for an interview.

A MATERIALISATION SÉANCE.

So much scepticism has been shown towards what is known as spirit materialisation that any reliable testimony to the genuineness of this phase of psychic phenomena should always be welcome to students of occult sciences and others who are searching for the truth, and so, perhaps, the following account of a materialisation séance, which I attended some little while ago, may be of some value as testimony and evidence in relation to this branch of research.

People are so prone to accuse mediums of fraud and trickery where, in nine cases out of ten, there is no possibility of fraud being practised, that I may state at once that in this case the possibility of trickery was quite out of the question; nor were the witnesses of these phenomena deluded by hypnotism, excited imagination, or any other plausible theory generally advanced to deny the possibility of spiritual agency.

By the invitation of an uncle and aunt (Mr. and Mrs. C.), I joined a private party of friends—none of whom (except Mr. and Mrs. C.) had witnessed psychic phenomena of any kind before, and they were quite sceptical about Spiritualism, though open to conviction—and we journeyed by rail to the home of a well-known medium, who lives on the outskirts of London. On arrival, we were shown into an ordinary sitting-room, devoid of all furniture, curtains, &c., except one large round table and the requisite number of chairs. We examined the room thoroughly to satisfy ourselves that there were no trap-doors, wires, or mechanical appliances which might be used to deceive us, and having conclusively proved there were not, we, on the entrance of the medium, took our seats around the table. Some musical instruments, such as zithers, a violin, and tambourines, were brought in and put upon the table, and a large and heavy musical box was placed in a corner of the room; and the medium having taken his place in the circle, and hands joined, the lights were turned down, and the séance commenced.

We talked for a few minutes, and, at the medium's request, sang 'Lead, kindly Light,' and as the medium went into a deep trance, we became aware of cold draughts blowing around us, and lights appeared above our heads, and little balls of light flitted about the room; rappings were heard on the walls and table, and one or two sitters complained of being touched by unseen hands. I distinctly felt a hand laid on my head, and hands touched my shoulders and face. The ladies on each side of me (who had been most sceptical) were trembling violently, and begged that they might not be touched.

Then a deep bass voice said: 'Good evening, friends,' and we saw the face and bust of a man, with a black beard and fine features, emerging gradually out of the dark, until he appeared like any ordinary human being. This we learned was 'John King,' the medium's control and guide, who thenceforth took the place of the medium and directed the séance. He moved round about the room and chatted with us, exhorted the ladies not to be nervous—as they were not there to frighten them—and answered the various questions (which I for one) asked him. Then other faces began to appear, and voices were heard from the gloom above us; and suddenly a fiery cross appeared, with a shadowy hand holding it, which went gradually round the circle, stopping in front of, and slightly above, the heads of each of us, whilst a benediction in Latin was mumbled by the being who was holding the cross, and who, 'John King' informed us, was a certain eminent priest who had died some years ago. Then suddenly a face appeared directly in front of me, and came within a few inches of mine, and smiled and nodded to me, as if in recognition. It was the face of a man with fair, pointed beard and fair moustache (*à la Cavalier*), clear-cut classical features, broad forehead, and a profusion of fair hair coming down on to his shoulders. He wore a large plumed Cavalier hat, and the velvet and lace coat and trimmings of the Cavaliers of Charles the First's time. My aunt (Mrs. C.), who was sitting at the other side, exclaimed, 'Why, it's a Cavalier!' and I asked 'John King' who it was, as the spirit seemed to know me, and I certainly did not recognise the face, and I was informed that it was a

friend who had lived on this earth nearly 250 years ago, in the reign of Charles I., and was now a guiding spirit of mine. This spirit, after nodding his head and waving his hand, suddenly disappeared through the middle of the table. At the same moment another form appeared, of a dark complexioned man of military appearance, who moved across the room to where a Mrs. F. was sitting, and bending forward to embrace her, said (so that we all heard him distinctly), 'God bless you, my darling! At last we meet again.' This was Colonel F. (husband of Mrs. F.), who had died in India several years before. Mrs. F. recognised him at once, and was greatly affected. Other spirits then materialised and talked and moved about the room, some of whom were recognised as friends or relations who had passed to the spirit world years before. A Hindu spirit came and had a long chat with Mr. C. in Hindustani, a language Mr. C. was well acquainted with, having spent many years in India amongst the natives. After a pleasant conversation of ten or fifteen minutes, the Hindu played some tunes on the zither, one of which, Mr. C. told us, was a very old Indian tune, known to very few Europeans in India, and which he had been privileged to listen to when sojourning amongst the natives. A cousin of mine then appeared who had died some seven years ago, and whom, in his lifetime, I had never seen; but I recognised him by his likeness to pictures I had seen of him, and Mrs. C., who knew him well, recognised him at once. Then an old friend of mine, who had been drowned off the coast of New Zealand, ten years ago, suddenly came up directly in front of me, and with his appearance came a cold, damp air, which was felt by everyone in the room, and made me shiver. His face was but dimly discernible, and looked rather ghastly, though tranquil and impassive. He put up his hand as a sort of greeting, and disappeared. I had not thought of him for years, and certainly did not expect to see him at this séance, but I knew him at once. Some of those who appeared clasped our hands and in other ways proved that they had assumed material form again and were tangible. I asked one spirit to pat me on the head with his hand and then rap against the ceiling, which was at once done. I next requested that the heavy musical box, which was lying in a corner at the other end of the room, should be placed on the table in front of me, and play a tune. In an instant this was done—the box was whisked off the floor, over the heads of the sitters, and banged down in front of me, and at once began to play. Other musical instruments, such as tambourines, zithers, violins, seemed to possess wings, as they rose from the table apparently of their own accord, and flew round about the room over our heads, being played on by unseen hands all the time.

The séance lasted nearly three hours, and at least thirty spirits either materialised or appeared, and others spoke who could not make themselves visible; for instance, a spirit who was invisible stood close beside me, and spoke to me in Spanish; but I know very little of that language and could not understand him, while it seemed that he did not know any other language but Spanish. When the lights were turned up, we found the medium, who had just come out of the trance, in a very dazed condition, and his eyes had a strange, unnatural look.

I relate this just as it occurred. I am certain there was no trickery or delusion, and consider it a good exhibition of spirit power, and an absolutely convincing proof of the genuineness of the materialisation of spiritual beings, the close proximity of the spiritual spheres, and the mastery of spirit over matter, and consider that in an age like this such evidence of psychic powers and a spiritual world is invaluable.

REGINALD B. SPAX.

Undercliffe House,
Ventnor, Isle of Wight.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE IN LONDON.—Mr. Colville arrived at Plymouth from New York on Monday last, and on reaching London gave us a pleasant call at this office on Tuesday morning. He is looking well, is in excellent spirits after his journey around the world, and speaks warmly of the kindly reception which he received in Australia and New Zealand. For his programme of lectures in London we refer our readers to his announcement in our advertising columns.

HOW SHALL WE THINK OF THE DEAD ?

(FROM 'THE LITERARY DIGEST.')

In reply to a correspondent who writes to him asking for words of assurance regarding a future life, and for a more definite knowledge of how we should think of the dead, Dr. Lyman Abbott essays to throw some new light on the problem of immortality. He prefaces his statement by saying that he finds it impossible to think of the dead without thinking of the living, for his thought of the dead is based upon his thought of the living. He continues (in 'The Outlook,' January 4th) :—

' It is the postulate of all my thinking that there are two worlds—an outer and an inner, a material and a spiritual, a world governed by inflexible law and a world of self-governed liberty, a world discerned by eye and ear and touch, and a world discerned by consciousness. If the philosopher assures me that these two are one, I do not dispute him ; perhaps they are ; nay, probably they are ; but in all my thinking I think of them as two worlds, co-operative but contrasted. I think of the spiritual world as ever manifesting itself through the material world—a perpetual but invisible Presence, veiled yet revealed in all phenomena ; a love of beauty in all forms of beauty, an intellectual skill in all mechanical contrivances, a true spiritual consciousness in all seemingly unconscious operations of Nature ; an ever-present and eternal Energy from whom all things proceed—an Energy whose thought is in all Nature's ingenuities, whose purpose is in all life-processes. I conceive of Him, the ever-conscious Artist in every flower, the ever-conscious Artisan in all correlated forces, the All-Father is all history and in all lives. I conceive Him setting me off from Himself, as a spark is struck by the hammer from the red-hot iron, to be, like Him, a lover of beauty and a creator of beauty, a lover of truth and an utterer of truth, a lover of righteousness and a doer of righteousness ; and yet, like Him, free to choose the ugly, the false, the unrighteous ; and because thus free, fitted to be His companion ; able to be at one with Him or to separate myself from Him, able to think His thoughts, share His purpose, be partaker of His life, or to be indifferent or averse to Him ; capable of being His companion and His friend, and therefore capable of being His enemy.'

The part that the material world and the physical organs play in the development of the individual life, says Dr. Abbott, may be divided into three stages. In the first stage the material organs minister to the life of the spirit. In the second stage, such growth of the spirit as can be attained on the material plane is substantially achieved. In the third stage, the physical organs begin to appear as a clog upon the spirit, and man becomes keenly aware of limitation. Dr. Abbott declares :—

'The artist is conscious of a beauty which he cannot interpret through the brush ; the poet, of truths which he cannot frame into verse ; the orator, of a life which transcends all his powers of expression. While all others are praising his creations he is growing increasingly dissatisfied with them. His life has grown at once too large and too delicate to be expressed by the tools with which he is furnished. He looks at times for a subtler brush with which to depict beauty, a finer language than words afford to express his inexpressible life. Moreover, as he begins to feel the need of finer tools, they begin to grow poorer. His eye begins to lose the keenness of its vision ; his hand the deftness of its touch ; his sluggish brain refuses to obey his call, and the words which used to come in flocks at his bidding come slowly and singly or not at all. Sometimes the spirit remains in its prison long after it has ceased to be a palace beautiful, as if to show us how dreadful this world would be were we all to live our life here after the material organs had ceased to be a help and had become a hindrance. But generally before this time comes the prison walls fall away, and the emancipated spirit enters upon a new though unseen habitations fitted for its larger development ; the dulled tools that losing their value are taken away, and the worker is given a new equipment in the new world for the richer, fuller life to which, after this brief earthly schooling, he is called.'

Thus, the body, its purposes all served, returns to the earth from which it came, 'dust to dust, ashes to ashes' ; and the spirit, set free, enters upon the career for which it has been unconsciously preparing. Dr. Abbott concludes :—

'I think that there are no dead ; I think that there is no death ; I think that there is no long and dreary sleep, no waiting for a future resurrection of a body which has served its purpose and has no future purpose which it can serve ; that life goes on unbroken by what we call death ;

that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not an extraordinary event, but only an extraordinary evidence of an ordinary event ; that He was the first fruits of them that sleep ; that all rise from the dead as He rose from the dead and live as He lives ; that to die is "to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better" ; that every death is a resurrection, and that to every spirit God giveth a body as it pleaseth Him. I think of death as a glad awakening from this troubled sleep which we call life ; as an emancipation from a world which, beautiful though it be, is still a land of captivity : as a graduation from this primary department into some higher rank in the hierarchy of learning. I think of the dead as possessing a more splendid equipment for a larger life of diviner service than was possible to them on earth—a life in which I shall in due time join them if I am counted worthy of their fellowship in the life eternal.'

THE 'FORM' OF 'KATIE KING.'

Judging from the extracts given in 'LIGHT,' of February 15th, it is greatly to be hoped that Dr. Oliver Lodge will see his way to publish his admirable address in pamphlet form. For one thing, this would facilitate co-operation on the part of those who desire to promote an earnest attempt to solve the mysteries which surround striking phenomena about which much has already been published—as in the case of Mr. D. D. Home. A good deal, however, has still to be made known respecting his phenomena and experiments connected therewith, and important errors have yet to be pointed out in some published statements, so that time must necessarily elapse before there can be a sufficiently solid basis for consideration.

But surely all is ripe for judgment with regard to the 'Katie King' form, which was photographed by the late Mr. W. H. Harrison in 1873, and by Sir W. Crookes so often in 1874? During the last twelve months I have received many letters of inquiry about 'Katie' from thoughtful individuals, all of whom seemed to be very imperfectly acquainted with the facts of the case. This led me in September to minutely re-examine all the photographs I have, connected with her, viz., one taken by Mr. Harrison in 1873, and twenty-two given to me by Sir W. Crookes. Kindly permit me briefly to assure your readers that those taken by the latter (who occasionally used several instruments simultaneously) prove two things beyond doubt. First, that there was no double exposure of plates, accidental of course ; second, that 'Katie' could not have been the medium in masquerade.

By skilful arrangements it is made quite clear that 'Katie' was several inches taller than the medium, and her arms and fingers were longer than those of the medium ; and at first I wondered if this might be due to expansion of the medium's figure, such as I had seen and most carefully tested in Mr. Home's case, in 1867-8, in excellent light, when he was elongated and contracted several times, and subsequently levitated after I had made experiments visibly affecting his brain as manifested in a crystal. But he could not maintain that height beyond a few seconds, whilst 'Katie' walked about the room for many minutes at a time.

J. HAWKINS SIMPSON.

DECEASE OF MR. P. W. CLAYDEN.

Mr. P. W. Clayden, formerly president of the Institute of Journalists, and for more than thirty years connected with the leader writing and editorial departments of the 'Daily News,' died rather suddenly on Wednesday, February 19th, at his residence, 1, Upper Woburn-place, W.C. The deceased gentleman, who was seventy-four years of age, had been in failing health for some time, but shortly after Christmas he caught a chill, which recently developed into acute bronchitis. Mr. Clayden was a keen politician. He was a member of the Executive Committee of the National Liberal Federation, and was hon. secretary of the Liberal Forwards. Mr. Clayden also took an active share in the work of journalistic organisation. In addition to his active association with the Institute of Journalists, of which he was president in the year 1893-4, besides being treasurer of its orphan fund, he was also a moving spirit in the international organisation, and was president of the Congresses of the Press held at Antwerp in 1894. He was the author of various works on religious, historical, and political subjects. The 'Daily News' published a long article in which the writer spoke of our departed friend in terms of the highest eulogy, but omitted all mention of the fact—is it possible that he was unaware of it? That Mr. Clayden had been a Spiritualist for many years, and at the time of his decease was a member of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

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OCCULTISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

We have arrived at an interesting bend in the road. The old highway, with its hedges and walls, or its possible byeways with their man traps and spring guns, is changing its character. The hedges and walls are getting lower, the byeways are broadening, the adventurous spirits therein are laughing at the old sign boards and warnings, and there are innumerable glimpses of distant valleys and hills beyond the woods on either hand, with freshets of air suggesting open country all round. The pilgrims, waking up as they trudge along, step out with hopeful animation, though many are only perturbed. Daring questions are whispered, comparisons are indulged in, a few of the more enterprising run on ahead or scale the walls—and some pause, shudder, or turn back.

Take the civilised world on the whole, this is its condition to-day, and no one can tell what may happen to-morrow. The once servile begin to be restive: the docile are asking for credentials; common clay criticises costly china; fustian holds its own, or tries to do so, against ermine and purple; the world half smiles and half uncovers at mention of the 'right divine of kings,' and the priest is let alone. Even Christ is turned over like a second-hand garment on a stall, and a great poet says to God,

'Who shall judge Thee, on Thy judgment-day?'

For good or evil, everything is being tested, or some new thing is being set alongside the old thing, to its disparagement. Everybody with a notion, a prejudice, a restless desire to stretch, feels free to set up a new religion, or to take to pieces and repair an old one, or to produce a theological or theosophical conglomerate that is warranted to supersede everything. It is a little pathetic, a great deal amusing, and enormously hopeful: for the one thing needful is the sense of freedom that makes slaves think.

A small illustration of this large fact lies before us in the shape of a four-page paper by Dr. R. S. Clymer, in 'The Metaphysical Magazine,' on 'Occultism and Christianity.' The writer starts with what is now the well-known vice of exaggerated contrast. He does not assail, or offer to repair, our poor old Christianity: he simply produces his brand new simplicity and smiles, as he says, 'See how superior we are to all that!' As we have said, it is at once pathetic, amusing and hopeful.

His very first sentence is this: 'When we compare the teachings and practice of Occultists and of Christians, we are impelled to the conclusion that the latter are making a

sad mistake.' Are they really? How then does he attempt to show that? He does it by taking some professed Christians at their worst, and some branch of the Christian Church by no means at its best; and then he finds it easy to attribute what he pleases to Occultism, and set up a contrast, and draw his conclusion.

For instance, he says, 'I have never met an individual who professed to be a follower of Christ who did not scruple to tell me plainly that if I did not stop the study of the Occult and embrace religion according to his notion, I was on the direct road to Hell.' Now, 'honour bright,' what are we to make of this? Has Dr. Clymer really and truly been so wretchedly restricted or so strangely unfortunate in his intercourse with Christians? We have known thousands of Christians, and have talked freely with them, and are not quite sure whether one of them ever actually damned us as flatly as *all* Dr. Clymer's Christians damned him.

That suggests the primary fact here,—that there are Christians and Christians, and Occultists and Occultists, just as there are socialists and socialists or critics and critics. There are Christians who are, we admit, over ready to send fellow-pilgrims to hell: but, on the other hand, there are Occultists who are quite as over eager to make sweeping statements that lack both measure and charity. There are, moreover, Christians who are sheer bigots, and Christians who have almost a perfect blend of Spiritualism and Rationality; and, on the other side, there are Occultists who are but little distinguishable from these last, and Occultists who are practically adorers of demons.

Dr. Clymer himself, while flouting Christians, sets forth a faith which all rational and spiritual Christians will recognise as very much their own. He says; 'The Occultist can see good in all God's children. He cares not how a man worships, so long as he lives his religion by loving his brother as himself.' 'The true Occultist is not ashamed or reluctant to take an erring one by the hand, no matter how low that soul has fallen; and to tell such an one that God has not forsaken him but will aid him to live the true life.' And this is put as contrasting the Occultist with the Christian! Was there ever such nonsense? Why, even the sisters of mercy of the Church of Rome refute it, with their unbounded pity. And, at the other end, what of the Salvation Army, with its array of lost sheep found, and its seeking which never ends? And what of the millions of loving and unselfish workers in missions, districts and slums?

Again he says, contrasting Occultists and Christians, that the former have 'passed to a higher grade of thought and life,' that *they*, as distinguished from Christians, have their 'thoughts devoted to the object of helping one another' (which Christians do not!), and that they, again unlike Christians, believe that God is 'near,' and that 'we are all children of one Father' who 'never brings forth a soul to send it into endless misery':—all of which, millions of Christians would say, we do most steadfastly believe.

As we have said, this shaking up of Christianity by Dr. Clymer is a small illustration of a large fact, and we must not much wonder at it in the present chaotically critical state of the general mind. But, though we must expect this kind of thing, it is our duty to help to moderate it, especially by encouraging fuller thought and broader sympathy: and, certainly, if Christianity has to go into the melting pot it will not be put there by the hands which handle old gold as though it were cheap tin. Anyway, the truth will be told about it when it goes into the purifying fire: and we are of opinion that when it comes forth it will be more precious and not less. Base metal has gathered about it; but the core is gold.

'THE DANGERS OF SPIRITUALISM.'

ADDRESS BY THE REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

On Thursday evening, the 20th inst., at a meeting of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, held in the Regent Saloon, St. James's Hall, the Rev. John Page Hopps delivered an address dealing with the recently published work on 'The Dangers of Spiritualism.'

MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, the President of the Alliance, occupied the chair, and in the course of some introductory remarks said that he knew some of those present were aware of the identity of the author of the book in question. But he had one request to make to them, with which he hoped they would comply. As the author had chosen to be anonymous, he thought it would ill become anyone to mention his name. The author was entitled to keep his name a secret if he chose, and to refer to cases which had come under his notice without mentioning names, but in so doing he took the consequences, in the estimate which his readers would place upon his testimony.

MR. HOPPS, in commencing his address, said he felt moved to depart from the usual course on such occasions, and to offer up a prayer or an invocation before entering upon his subject. Instead of doing that, however, he would ask them to allow him to read six verses of a very remarkable poem, written by that great modern prophet-poet, Mr. Gill.

The following are the first and last verses of the poem, which is in the form of an invocation to the angels :—

Angels bright, in strength excelling,
On your Lord who dimly gaze,
Of His glory still be telling,
Sweetly sing your sweet amaze.
Mighty angels !
Spend your strength upon His praise.

If perchance we faint and tremble
When our time draws near to die,
Angels, for our help assemble,
Whisper sweetly of your sky.
Waiting angels !
Help our trembling souls on high.

I have read these verses, said Mr. Hopps, because I wanted to put in the forefront of what I had to say, not so much the thought of the dangers of Spiritualism, as of the blessings of Spiritualism—(hear, hear)—and although I propose to speak about the subject only from the point of view of the dangers, yet incidentally all the way through, though I may say little about the blessings, these are foremost in my mind. I would like also to say that I do not propose merely to review the book ; I simply take it as a peg on which we may hang a useful discourse on the subject.

Continuing, Mr. Hopps referred to the remark of Professor Oliver Lodge, who described the work as 'a weak book.' He agreed with the President that it was undesirable to mention the writer's name, although some of them knew it quite well. It was a name that gave them assurance that at all events the book was written and published in good faith. The subject of Spiritualism was a paying subject—they had all sorts of books, articles and stories published about it ; and as the subject became more popular he believed that a great many books would be published that would be simply bogus—having no relation to any real experience or knowledge, but simply spiritualistic romances.

Nevertheless they must admit that this book was written in good faith, and he hoped the writer of it would give them credit for a little honesty in dealing with it—he did not seem to credit them with much. They were thankful to anybody who would point out the dangers of Spiritualism. Spiritualists did not want to take themselves in, any more than they wanted to take other people in. It was absurd, therefore, to suggest that they were not thankful for any honest warnings. But in this connection it was necessary to point out in three cases the very serious misstatements of the writer under consideration. In the introduction to his volume the author writes :

They [i.e., his spiritualist experiences] present an aspect of this much-debated subject which is not very readily and willingly exposed to view by Spiritualists.

That was to say, in short, that Spiritualists knew it was

an ugly subject, a dangerous one, and tried to hush it up. Now he had known Spiritualists and their operations for thirty years, and, speaking for himself and them, he said deliberately that this statement was incorrect. Spiritualists were willing to expose to view anything they believed to be true, and in his own case he might say that nine times out of ten, when he had been consulted on the desirability of studying the question, he had rather warned the inquirer than the reverse.

Turning to page 108 of the book, they found this :—

There is, as a matter of fact, no known method or condition by which the fatal influences, moral and physical, of the séance room can be counteracted, or by which the so-called 'higher' phenomena can be secured. All honest Spiritualists admit this—and many more would do were it not that they are fully aware that an admission of this fact would entirely undermine their system.

So Spiritualists told lies, or refrained from telling the truth, because they might otherwise damage their case ! Certainly he (Mr. Hopps) knew no Spiritualists in that condition of mind, who wished to hush up matters that were disagreeable. He did not wish to say anything in the slightest degree offensive, but certainly that was an extremely unfortunate misrepresentation—to put it mildly—of the condition of the Spiritualist's mind.

Quoting next the following passage :—

It is a fact universally acknowledged and admitted even by experienced Spiritualists, that the influence of the séance-room is on the whole debasing, and that it tends to banish all devotional feeling and true religion.

Mr. Hopps pointed out that this was not put forward as the writer's opinion. His statement was not only that it is so, but that it is 'universally acknowledged and admitted even by Spiritualists.' But I venture to say (the speaker proceeded) that if we took a vote of this large audience to-night, there would not be six Spiritualists who would acknowledge this. They would not acknowledge it because they know it is not true. They know that when there is pure purpose, honesty, and a desire for the truth, the influence of the séance-room is the very reverse of debasing. As for the religious side of it, having seen for myself all kinds of presentations of it, I can say that I have felt in the séance-room some of the purest religious emotions and heard presentations of the most beautiful truths. I believe I am speaking for this audience, but if not, at the close of this address it will be for you to state the contrary opinion.

There were four important things to be noted in connection with the volume. First : The writer did not deny the reality of spiritual manifestations, and that was true of five-sixths of the other critics of Spiritualism. The fashion now was not to deny but to affirm. In the second place, the writer went further and said we ought to know. A third point was that he even went further than this and said that prolonged investigation is desirable, that the whole thing is important and valuable, that the spiritualist hypothesis is important and valuable. Now this was very interesting, because here was a man who was writing about the dangers of Spiritualism, dissuading people from investigating, and yet making these important admissions.

Mr. Hopps then quoted the following passage from the volume :—

I am inclined to think that, for good or evil, Spiritualism in its modern form has come to stay.

A great many Spiritualists shared that opinion ! (Cheers.) :—

It is certain that an explanation of the mysterious phenomena under consideration will again and again be demanded, and that questions will be asked which must be answered.

A few pages further on they found an account of some extraordinary experiences at a séance where manifestations occurred without any attempt to provoke them, and very much against the will of the writer and his friend. In connection with this case, which involved some startling physical phenomena, which occurred in the room of a young man at night, Mr. Hopps read the following passage :—

As morning dawned the noises gradually ceased, the sounds becoming fainter ; and with the advent of daylight my friend obtained some refreshing sleep. On the following

night there was no further objective disturbance. P. F. soon regained his good health, and now the memory only of these most extraordinary occurrences has remained with us. P. F. has since gone abroad, and has not, I am confident, felt tempted to renew his acquaintance with the 'kind friends' of the spirit world.

That was a pity, because such an experience might have been followed up with very great profit. The passage showed that, so far from denying spirit action, the author very strongly affirmed it. Again, in reference to scientific men and their attitude, there was this passage:—

Some scientific men seem to be under the impression that any cumbrous hypothesis, however involved and incredible it may be, is infinitely better and more scientific than the simple explanation which the facts themselves appear to suggest and which does not really involve half these difficulties.

Here again the author was with them. The Spiritualists' explanation was a very simple one. These unseen people seemed to be very strongly individualistic. They knew their names. They told us things we did not know. They made infernal noises (according to the author of the book). Again the author continued:—

I simply propose to offer the evidence which, as a member of the Society (for Psychical Research), I have gathered in the course of my inquiries extending over a number of years, and which seems to my mind to tell strongly in favour of the objective character of the phenomena in question.

It seemed plain from this that the author admitted all the Spiritualists' contention in regard to the reality of the phenomena. And, further, he admitted that they ought to know, and that prolonged investigation is desirable. It was a curious admission, for he coupled it with the suggestion that it was bad for anyone to attempt it or that it should be done only by experts or scientific men. It was very amusing that scientific men, after deriding the subject, should affirm, or have it affirmed for them, that they alone should have the right to deal with the matter!

The last of the four important points cited by Mr. Hopps was the fact that the author actually affirmed the importance and value of the Spiritualists' hypothesis:—

So far as the general public are concerned, it is to my mind of the utmost importance that the objectivity and actual occurrence of the phenomena, or, to speak quite plainly, the action upon us of an unseen spiritual universe (which some of these phenomena certainly go to demonstrate), should be fully known and realised: for it seems to me that it is in this direction, in the denial of it, that the chief danger attending the inquiry will be found to lie.

So the danger after all was not in the direction of the Spiritualist with his investigation and experiment. The danger lay in the denial—an extraordinary admission, considering what followed:—

A person who believes, or at least thinks it probable, that intelligent agencies, external to the inquirer, may be at work in producing the phenomena in question, is far more likely to proceed with caution and circumspection, even under favourable circumstances, than he who imagines that they may be attributed to some unknown and occult force, or to action of his own submerged and hitherto but very little understood personality.

The danger, then, according to this writer, was to the man who was not armed beforehand with the knowledge that they were very subtle and powerful beings with whom he had to deal. So he gave away his whole case with regard to the cause of these things, for he went on to say:

In the course of my own inquiries I have again and again found that it was this latter sceptical attitude of the mind which was most apt to prove perilous and disastrous to the inquirer, and which was most frequently the real cause of his trouble.

No Spiritualist could have put the case better! The danger was not for the Spiritualist with his foreknowledge and insight so much as for the ignorant and sceptical inquirer. And even when doubting the desirability of general experimenting, the author is inclined to admit that the subject is a legitimately scientific one, and states as much in the introduction to his book.

Now all this enormously helped them in arriving at a decision concerning the dangers, for in the face of these

four or five admissions they had to ask themselves the question which they had to ask about almost everything, viz.: Does the object of the pursuit justify the peril? Men found in practical life there were dangers attending every enterprise. There were dangers in navigation—one might encounter a storm (just as in navigating the dim seas of Spiritualism one might possibly encounter a fool or a demon), but we did not on this account give up shipbuilding. Then there were dangers in ventilation, because if the ventilation was bad, one might catch cold. There was even a danger in respiration; we might take in microbes, but we did not give up breathing on that account. It might even be argued that there is danger in reading the Bible. Over and over again people had read of certain things in the Bible and were tempted (by some evil spirit, perhaps) to 'go and do likewise.' There was the case of Abraham, for example. Suppose any father or mother received a command from some bright and beautiful being, to offer their children as a sacrifice. Would they do it? Yet there had been cases of people who had done so under the delusion that they had received a Divine command. There was danger in reading the book of Ezekiel. He (Mr. Hopps) could not read anywhere in public the awfully filthy things Ezekiel was commanded to do by 'the Spirit.' Any man who acted as Ezekiel did would suggest a lunatic asylum, and if he had money and relatives with expectations, the lunatic asylum would be sure. (Laughter.)

There was danger in religion. It had led to the bloodiest wars and persecutions. There was even danger in being of an inquiring turn of mind and writing a book on the dangers of things. (Laughter.) 'Unless you shut yourself up in a monastery or a nunnery you would not shut yourself off from dangers, and even then you would not shut yourself off from this question.'

Was there not something cowardly in this constant anxiety about danger? What would Nelson have said of it! or Wellington? or the last boy at Eton who stood up to a bully? He appealed to Spiritualists whether the object was not worth the danger. Let them think of the explorer's struggle in Darkest Africa: and they all admired Stanley. They all admired Nansen, too, in his search amongst the hummocks and ice and snow of the Arctic regions for the North Pole. And should not Spiritualists know something of the explorer's struggle and danger, aye, and the explorer's glory?

But 'what is the use of it?' they were being continually asked. Well, he had always maintained that it did not matter what these unseen beings said, any more than it mattered what was being telegraphed under the Atlantic. What the keen experimenter wanted to know was, is the machine working? I hold in my hands (Mr. Hopps proceeded) a letter from a bright, intelligent, clever man, who wants to believe in the spirit world and in the persistence of his wife there. He does not ask for a beautiful spirit message or a glorious vision. What he wants is proof that any sort of a being persists beyond the black veil on the other side. 'To change my world,' he says, 'the demonstration of the most inconsiderable hobgoblin that ever rumbled in a chimney would be sufficient. I could assume my wife on the strength of any spirit. I know hers will stick together if any will.'

Now, if there were nothing else in Spiritualism, this letter suggested a very great and important purpose for it. Here was a man who said it would change the world for him if, even to the smallest extent, he could have demonstrated to him the fact of persistence beyond what we call death.

If the case were even worse than the wildest alarmist made out, was there nothing in vicarious suffering? Was there to be no vicarious sacrifice in the researches of the Spiritualist? Are there no men and women who, if they could demonstrate this great fact to their fellows, would incur danger? Are there to be no heroisms on this borderland? Is it for nothing that God has given us this pathetic, this profound, longing to know? Has God ever given the world the explorer's instinct without having somewhere a land waiting to be explored?

But all this did not lessen the need of warnings and the value of knowledge of the dangers, and, therefore, said the speaker, we are grateful for warnings. But I am bound to

say that this book does not tell us anything we don't know. The writer is manifestly one-sided; or he has only told us half his story; or he has been amazingly unfortunate, for it is all ugly, it is all ominous, it is all sinister, black and dangerous, and his conclusions are very much like his facts. It is very unfortunate, but I myself have never met with such a case. But I sometimes imagine in reading this book that the writer has only given us half of his experience. Mr. Hopps then read the following passage from the work:—

The danger becomes then both great and formidable, and arises from the fact that such persons are, like the inexperienced chemist, operating with forces the character of which they do not understand and the correlation of which to other forces they cannot possibly know. And while they may thus, of course, come upon a discovery which may prove a gold-mine of scientific wealth, they may also blow themselves to pieces; and the latter is, as we all know, far more likely to be the case than the former.

What nonsense this was! It was not true of experiences either in chemistry or Spiritualism. It was absurd to say that experimenters were more likely to blow themselves to pieces than to come upon a discovery.

This writer was very hard up for drawbacks, for he found it necessary to point out that 'the exercise of mediumship is almost always attended by physical exhaustion'—so was preaching! 'very frequently by complete mental prostration'—so was acting! 'producing a kind of moral paralysis and inertia of the will'—he hoped that was not true; 'sometimes there are cataleptic seizures'—so there were in great revival meetings; 'contortion of the muscles of the face'—he had seen that in many clergymen; . . . 'all of them conditions awakening disgust in all healthy and normally constituted minds—a state of feeling far removed, and rely, from anything approaching moral aspiration or elevation.'

So it seemed you could not have moral aspiration or elevation if you were exhausted, if you were prostrated, or if you did not keep a smiling and pleasant face all the time. Which was, of course, all absolute nonsense.

Continuing, Mr. Hopps said: Now, I could give him better instances, and many of you here, I daresay, could give him better instances, of low-class manifestations than he has given us; and to show that we are not afraid of the subject and do not wish to hold back anything, I may give you three or four cases from my own experiences.

Mr. Hopps then gave the following examples. The first case related to some experiments with the Planchette. All present except myself (Mr. Hopps said) were the very persons of saintly goodness and purity, and in the course of the experiments a lady (one of the most blessed angels of God I ever knew) was holding the Planchette. The pencil made all kinds of absurd marks, and I said, 'I think we shall have to stop unless you can do something to help us.' And then the wretched thing spelt out, 'I can help you to sin.' Now if I had been only with others like-minded, that is precisely the thing I would have followed up, because there was evidently something not from our own minds. There was substance in that remark. I should have liked to grip that being, whoever it was, and said, 'Why do you wish us to sin? What particular sin could you help us to commit?' And I would have had it out with him.

Another case was that related at an experience meeting at which one of the members of the Alliance said that he was present at a séance and getting very nice communications, when they were interrupted by the entrance of the servant, whereupon the pencil wrote, 'Damn Jane!' That was a most interesting incident. It was one in which they might find a great deal of solid reality. At all events, one would admit there was character in the remark. He would much like to have got hold of that control and said, 'Come, now, did you lose your temper? What made you write out that oath?' It would have been very interesting. How often they had been deluged with communications of a treacherous and water kind! When they got something that meant character it was worth following up.

In another case a clerical friend of Mr. Hopps who had become a Spiritualist was one Sunday going from the vestry to the pulpit when he heard raps on the vestry table.

The raps spelt out a message which purported to come from 'Jesus,' and requested the minister not to preach on the subject he had decided upon, but to go into the pulpit and think of nothing, and his sermon would be given him there. Mr. Hopps' friend had the sense to reply, 'Thank you, I have no experience in that direction. I think I had better follow my usual course.'

Mr. Hopps himself had been advised by someone who professed to be his father to give up studying for his work and to trust to controls. But he had regarded the advice as a temptation to be lazy, or as dangerous, in consigning himself to the keeping of someone he did not know. He gave these instances to show that Spiritualists did not hush these things up.

About six months ago he had received some most filthy and atrocious post cards from a stranger who had once or twice attended his church. Subsequently he received a letter from the anonymous writer of the post-cards, in which the writer asked forgiveness and explained that for years he had been obsessed by some influence or spirit which impelled him to write post-cards of this kind to people. After doing so, having an indistinct recollection of what he had done, the knowledge made him extremely miserable. Hence he had written to ask Mr. Hopps' pardon, and to explain that it was not his real self which was at fault.

They did not wish to hush these things up—these were the things they had to encounter. But he for one did not feel in the slightest degree moved to give up his work on the London Spiritualist Alliance, but rather encouraged to stick to it, because he could see there was a great deal to do to put things in the right light.

Referring again to the volume under consideration, Mr. Hopps cited the author's story of a young man who was controlled by a spirit of subtle and extraordinary malice and cunning. All through the story these characteristics of the spirit were insisted upon, and yet when the persons concerned cross-examined this malicious and cunning spirit they received some very striking replies. The control was asked:—

What is your object in thus attaching yourself to P. F. [the young man in question]?

ANSWER: He obstructed my plans when on earth and caused my ruin. I have tried all I could to gain control of him, and very nearly had possession. Do pray that I may become happier and also that I may leave him.

Let them imagine that, from a demon of extraordinary malice! 'Do pray that I may become happier and also that I may leave him.' The latter part of the petition rather suggested that there was some law which made this wretched creature stick to the young fellow.

Then came another remark addressed to the obsessing spirit in reply to his appeal:—

We will do what we can; indeed, all in our power. But you must now part with P. F., who, as you see, is greatly alarmed.

ANSWER: I shall be losing my power when his own will becomes stronger.

Now this surely should have taught this writer a great deal more than he apparently knows about the 'dangers of Spiritualism.' And (Mr. Hopps continued) this suggests to me very strongly the case of some poor wretch who could not help himself. He wants the young man to get better that he himself may get better. Then he says:—

Keep a careful watch over him for a time, and do pray for me—a wretched sinner!

This looks far more as if this man were suffering some natural, moral punishment for his iniquity than as the case of a malicious, cunning devil.

Then the question is asked:—

What can we do to facilitate the separation?

ANSWER: I am unable at present to leave him entirely. He must exercise his power of will and resist me. Pray for me!

Well, whether it was inevitable for this poor wretch or whether it was necessary for this young fellow, we cannot tell; but it looks as though between them it was inevitable, and certainly it looks as though the spirit was doing what he would fain have avoided doing.

But there is animus in the book. I do not want to say anything which may indicate the writer, but it is necessary for my presentation of this point in its full significance to say as much as this—that I believe the writer is a gentleman who belongs now to the Church of Rome. I think we may say as much as that. It appears that what offends or vexes him is that Spiritualists are too apt to become critical and rational, and we all know how dangerous that is! Everyone knows how shocking it is to think for yourself, and that seems to me to be the key to the curious complicated lock of this book. In illustration of his contention Mr. Hopps then read the following passages from the book:—

The learned spirits, writing through Mr. Stainton Moses, teach a kind of Broad Church doctrine, out of which all definite and distinctive Christianity is refined away.

The doctrine which is most generally taught by the spirits, probably because it is the most popular one with Spiritualists, is that of continual progress of an existence in the other state which is practically a continuation of the present one, with its wants and enjoyments, its follies and perversities.

And the author goes on to ask:—

What is this but a sinking back into the old philosophy of Paganism?

According to this view the present life does not appear as a stadium in which a race has to be run in order to obtain a prize, a certain end, but as one of many halting stations in the course of a long journey.

So we had to believe, if we wished to be saved, that in this life we were running a final race for a prize. The costermongers and dockers of the East End were much to be pitied, then. They had not much chance in such a race in this world, for it took them all they knew to pay their rent. Then the writer said:—

There is in the Gospels not a shadow of support for this doctrine of progression.

If that were true then as a heretic, said Mr. Hopps, he could only say, 'So much the worse for the Gospels!' But it was not true.

Reverting, in closing, to the question of the dangers, Mr. Hopps referred to one of his experiences thirty years ago, when he began his inquiries into Spiritualism. He was warned by one professing to be the very dearest being he ever knew and loved on this earth, at a time when he was a sceptic and almost a scoffer. He was asking some question but instead of answering it she interpolated this warning, 'Don't believe all the spirits tell you, but always use your own judgment.' That was just what that being would have said had she been in the body. *She* did not want to hush it up; and he had related the incident to hundreds of people. On the following morning, when he attempted to renew communication with the unseen world, sure enough he had an hour of lies enough to damn an army. But he had not on that account abandoned the subject, remembering the advice of his spirit friend. There were danger signals, and if we watched for them we should be able to keep ourselves fairly free from serious harm.

Mr. Hopps then offered the following suggestions to those who wished to shun the dangers:—

1. Be on your guard. It sounded commonplace enough but it was true. A man in business, buying and selling, knew he was in danger of loss and stood on his guard. So it must be here.

2. Be under restraint. Some Spiritualists needed that suggestion, for the subject was one that lent itself to hysteria and excitement. And no wonder. The discovery that there are indeed an unseen world and unseen people, and that those you thought had gone to some unknown heaven millions of miles away were close to you, was liable to upset you a little and give you touches of hysteria.

3. Grasp well the fact that the subject is vastly more complicated, perhaps, than anybody imagines.

4. Be sure that a pure intent and a brave spirit safeguard the seeker.

The Bible said, 'Resist the devil and he will flee from you.' Luther was right when he said, 'There is nothing the devil dislikes like contempt; he can stand anything but that,' and Luther advised contempt for all evil influences. And then there was a very precious suggestion which he (Mr.

Hopps) had found of great value in talking and writing to people about Spiritualism. He believed it was the foundation of all their teaching:—

(5) Believe in the dominance of good.

Why should they assume, as this author seemed to assume, that silly, evil, demoniacal spirits persist, and that they alone can influence us?

Last of all, as an old Scottish preacher once said to him: (6) Give God the benefit of the doubt.

The writer made a stand for certain dogmas; let Spiritualists make a stand for a sane, a just and a merciful God. What puzzled him was that people who laid so much stress on the Bible did not believe in their own Book.

Mr. Hopps then read the following amongst other passages from the Scriptures:—

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that revere Him and delivereth them.

The poor, rationalistic, critical Spiritualists believed that, but not merely because it was in the Bible.

He giveth His angels charge concerning them.

We are surrounded with a great cloud of witnesses.

Not a great cloud of devils. They were not going to be such infidels as to believe these witnesses were all malignant.

Let us then go on without fear. Greater and stronger are they who are with us than they who are against us.

Yes, let them go on, upheld by goodness and wisdom, remembering:—

How pure in heart, how sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou or any call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except like them thou too canst say,
'My spirit is at peace with all.'

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imaginations calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience like a sea at rest.

But when the heart is full of din,
And doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And hear the household jar within.

In conclusion, Mr. Hopps said: Wisdom and goodness will not ensure communion by way of experiment, nor will they ward off the spirits of the outer darkness; but they will enable you to stand your ground, or even to go on your way rejoicing. (Applause).

At the conclusion of the address there was an animated discussion, a summary of which we hope to present in our next issue.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications from 'Somon,' 'Experto Crede,' Princess Karadja, Dr. Peebles, J. Stannard, 'Echuca,' 'A. V. P.,' 'R.' and others are unavoidably held over for another issue.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution.' Washington, U.S.A.: Government Printing Office.
- 'A Dream of Realms Beyond Us.' By ADAIR WELCKER. 331, Pine-street, San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A.
- 'The Radiant Centre.' A Journal of Success. K. Atkinson Boehme, 2016, O-street, N.W., Washington, D.C., U.S.A. Price 10 cents.
- 'The Astrological Magazine.' Edited and published by B. Suryanarain Row, B.A., 102, Linga Chetty-street, Madras, India. Price 7s. per year.
- 'Dominion and Power.' Studies in Spiritual Science. By CHARLES BRODIE PATTERSON. London: George Bell & Sons. Price 3s. 6d. net.
- 'The Gospels and the Gospel.' A Study in the most recent results of the Lower and Higher Criticism. By G. R. S. MEAD, B.A., M.R.A.S. London and Benares: The Theosophical Publishing Society. Price 4s. 6d. net.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

'Heresles.'

SIR,—As my work, for noticing which I thank you, is not specially designed to interest Spiritualists, but is concerned with issues to which Spiritualism is merely incidental, I can appreciate your hesitation in regard to tackling it as a whole. That business will have to be undertaken by philosophers, metaphysicians, and empirical scientists. You ask me to 'translate' my work into fifty pages. I regret that, at present, I cannot prepare such a digestible fragment for popular consumption. However, for Spiritualists, there is a compact dose in Volume V. If they read that volume, or that part of it dealing specially with their pet concern, I will promise that they will find such a complete elucidation of every important spiritualistic phenomenon recorded in your columns, as has never before been submitted to the world.

H. CROFT HILLER.

Religious Philosophy.

SIR,—In the interesting psychometric experiences narrated by Dr. A. Wallace, of Harley-street, in 'LIGHT' of January 15th, he remarks that the author of 'The Dangers of Spiritualism' is about to write a book on 'Religious Philosophy.' Perhaps, on this theme of themes, I may usefully see the life-guiding principles on which such philosophy is based, as lucidly shown in the essay known as 'The Alpha': a philosophical inquiry into the nature of truth, by a simple analysis of human nature. If it be not the only published work which presents a logically clear system of social and religious truth—excepting Dove's 'Theory of Human Progression,' treated by another and less spiritual method—I should be glad to know of it.

'The Alpha' has received the highest commendations of leading educational thinkers—more especially those of the late Lord Brougham. In the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance there is a copy of its fourth edition, in which may be seen the advent of its author and his first experiences in the spirit realm, as given in my house in 1870 through the mediumship of Mr. J. J. Morse. when he was an illiterate lad, to whom 'The Alpha,' its author, and myself were previously unknown.

At that time, and for a long period, I was happily and successfully giving my chief care to ascertain one's power to commune with the 'departed' of the inner world, under the most careful conditions I could devise, with a room and the same selected persons only, strictly devoted to the inquiry. Having then heard of young Morse as being frequently entranced at his work and led to find a better occupation, we had him come to us, through the aid of Mr. W. Pearce, and employment was soon found for him with Mr. James Burns, the publisher, with whom he long remained.

A. C. SWINTON.

Hindhead.

Medium for Materialisations.

SIR,—I am organising a scheme for training a certain psychic to become a medium for materialisations. We have a great dearth of such nowadays, and a greater dearth of systematic attempts to develop them. I propose to enrol four circles of seven members each, each circle to experiment independently of the others, and to meet once a fortnight for twelve sittings. I do not guarantee successful results, but I have every reason, from private experiments in this direction with this psychic, to anticipate them—in some of these circles at any rate. The meetings will be held in Bayswater. The subscription for the series of twelve experiments will be one guinea in advance, to go towards stocking a small shop, which will make this psychic independent of other public work. Anyone wishing to join may write to me for further particulars at my private address below.

FREDERIC THURSTAN, M.A.

31, Bedford-gardens, W.

Robin Stories.

SIR,—If 'LIGHT' be not tired of robin stories I can contribute one. It is several years old. A grand-aunt of mine saw one day a robin pecking at her window, and asked, 'Little bird, what have you to tell me?' The answer came later; her two sons had been drowned in the wreck of the 'Portfarshire,' the ship that made brave Grace Darling's name famed and loved.

Copenhagen.

S. C. DE KROGH.

The True Teaching of E. Maitland and A. Kingsford.

SIR,—It is surprising to me that the numerous defenders of Ed. Maitland and A. Kingsford and their teaching, never once allude to, or make use of, what is as plainly as possible their very last teaching, given by the spirit from the unseen, viz., the 'Gospel of the Holy Twelve.' This has been noticed in your pages, but no one seems to see the plain teaching therein as dead against the false message. This plain teaching was published just a few weeks before the falsehood appeared, as if in anticipation thereof—a message to the coming age' truly. And what age needs it more than the present, for which this publication was reserved? Is the true voice of the spirit to be forever suppressed, while false messages are being given?

I beg you will do me the justice to insert this letter as that of a clergyman of forty years' standing, a believer in the true Spiritualism, and a well-known friend of Ed. Maitland and Anna Kingsford, and in many ways collaborating with them, while in the flesh and now out of it, for the last thirty years and more, as my friend S. H. Hart well knows.

THE EDITOR OF THE 'GOSPEL OF THE HOLY TWELVE.'

3, Evelyn-terrace, Brighton.

The Boy Preacher.

SIR,—In reply to Mr. W. T. Horton, there are one or two things I should like to say :—

1. The existence of 'Hell,' or a hellish condition in the after life, is affirmed by most spirit people. 'Make no mistake—there is indeed a veritable hell,' said the control of Mr. E. W. Wallis at the Cavendish Rooms last Sunday evening. He was, of course, speaking of the persistent worker of iniquity. I need hardly point out that the hell of the Spiritualist is not quite orthodox in its conception.

2. In answer to the inquiry, 'What is the difference between Spiritualism and Christianity?' Jack Cooke says: 'I remember my reply was, "The one fills the lunatic asylums, and the other fills Heaven."' Now undoubtedly many a discarnate Christian, if able and willing to impress a human brain on the earth, might say the same, had they thought the same, before passing over. Errors of belief are not immediately rectified, and, moreover, the operator at the other end of the line might not connect the operation with 'Spiritualism.' 'Control' is rejected as a delusion, and 'inspiration' is accepted as a blessing, daily. But the question arises, did this reply really emanate from a stranger, or was it Jack Cooke's own immature conception? He is reported to have said 'I remember,' and this suggests a normal state of mind, or one not usually associated with entire control, while, in any case, a medium is like a filter, giving off something of its own to all that passes through.

3. As to Jack Cooke's condition being an exemplification of 'the Spirit of God in action,' I should be inclined so to describe every impulse that makes for righteousness. I do not, therefore, perceive any incompatibility between the various observations from various quarters.

February 22nd.

'BIDSTON.'

Battersea Spiritualist Church Band of Hope.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me through your columns to ask the friends who are interested in the promotion of temperance amongst the young, to volunteer their services as speakers? I believe I am right in saying that this is the only Band of Hope connected with the Spiritualist movement in London, and it is a cause of regret, therefore, that we should suffer from a lack of capable helpers, the object in view being one which must commend itself to all Spiritualists, and I believe it is only necessary to make our requirement known to obtain the assistance which we so urgently need. The neighbourhood in which our labour lies is one in which the evil effects of intemperance are only too apparent, and the vice with which the children are surrounded renders them the more susceptible to temptation, and we believe that our efforts to promote the adoption of not only total abstinence, but of the fourfold pledge also, will have a rich reward. The society has recently been reorganised and is now under the experienced conductorship of Mr. E. Hodder, a Spiritualist of about a quarter of a century standing.

We should be glad if several friends would each offer to give us even a few minutes on any Tuesday evening, between 7 and 8.15, to say a few interesting and encouraging words to the children, and on hearing from anyone willing to do this I shall be happy to arrange convenient dates. An object lesson with an easily discoverable moral is highly appreciated by the children.

WILLIAM J. PITT,
Band of Hope Secretary.

Henley Hall,
Henley-street,
Battersea Park-road, S.W.

Vivisection.

SIR,—A correspondent asks me, 'in fairness to us' (anti-vivisectionists), to say that I am unable to find any record of an operation on a donkey by Sir Spencer Wells. The information was given me by a thoroughly reliable person, and he did not record all his experiments or publish all his records. With equal impartiality, however, I will substitute for donkey in the singular, 'rabbits, guinea-pigs, and dogs' in the plural, and refer those who wish for information concerning decreased mortality after operation to the published works of Sir S. Wells on tumours. I do not write more, as your paper, I believe, is not meant for lengthy discussion of this subject between 'pro's' and 'anti's,' of which I am neither.

H. W. THATCHER.

A Death-Bed Scene.

SIR,—Having heard that the father of a dear friend was very ill, and knowing from experience how trying night nursing is, I called and offered to sit up, while my friend and her husband rested.

As I walked into the sick room, I saw a light fleecy mist over the bed, and after a little time I was able to describe the spirit form of a lady, who was at once recognised as the old gentleman's wife.

She appeared to me to be making 'passes' down the sufferer on the bed, who soon dozed off into a quiet sleep. He had previously been in great pain.

From time to time we saw spirit forms flitting over the bed, and often the old gentleman would begin to talk to someone by name, who, his daughter told me, had passed on years before. He would ask and answer questions, and wish the 'friends' good-bye, looking towards the door, and waving his hand in adieu to them. We, his daughter, son-in-law, and myself, saw that the end was approaching. All night we watched him in his quiet, unconscious sleep. At times beautiful lights flitted over his bed and the calm feeling that came over us was beyond words to describe. All at once we heard, faintly, the sound of angelic lullaby strains for a few moments.

Morning came, and at 9.30 a.m. we saw that the end was at hand; over the head of the bed a glorious light broke forth, while the spirit friends seemed to gather together, and we distinctly saw his wife stoop down over him, put out her hands as though lifting him up, and, with a quiet, *but distinctly audible* 'Come,' we saw the light and spirits ascend and a beautiful golden light burst forth and enveloped them. Nothing remained but the peaceful, cast-off, worn out body.

May God and His Holy Angels grant us, one and all, such a glorious entrance into heaven.

E. (Wolverhampton.)

P.S.—I may say that the old gentleman was not a Spiritualist until his last illness, when he and I had many a quiet talk together, and he frequently saw his wife.

[We have received the above interesting letter from a well-known Spiritualist in Wolverhampton, and an attestation from the gentleman referred to as the 'son-in-law,' who declares that the statements are 'perfectly true and accurately described' as witnessed by him.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Immortality in the Flesh.

SIR,—In your issue of the 8th inst., you quote from 'Eleanor Kirk's Idea,' and allude to her views on 'Immortality in the Flesh.' For the last five or six years many American writers of advanced thought have held these views, men whose papers have many more followers than Mrs. Kirk's. T. J. Shelton, of the 'Christian'; R. C. Douglas, whose Bible Lessons in 'Unity' are well-known in America; Dr. Dewey, Dr. C. A. Dickerson, as well as Mrs. Wilmans, all claim that by following the Christ way, spiritual regeneration will develop immortality in the flesh. R. C. Douglas says:—

'A few theologians of advanced type spiritually are grasping the fact. . . that death is not a necessity but rather that immortality belongs to man by divine right and is attainable by natural law without the necessity of death if he will conform his life and conduct to the Christ pattern and reach a higher consciousness.'

Dr. Shelton claims that:—

'The kingdom of God is the sovereignty of spirit over mind and matter. . . Instead of flying away to the skies for our permanent abode, those who are in the skies are to return to earth.'

I was surprised while in England to find how little attention was given to these thoughts. When in America (Pacific Coast) everyone seemed to be vitally interested, and I know of at least fifty monthly and weekly papers devoted to such subjects.

I write this because it did not seem fair that you should

notice Mrs. Kirk when men of much deeper and long-trialled intellects were ignored. It is a pity that one cannot get all these papers cheaply in England! Of course they go all over America free of postage.

Mrs. Wilmans declares in print that she is younger and brighter in spite of her 'three-score years and ten' than she was years ago, and she is convinced that she will gradually return to all her youthful vigour.

R. H. INVERARITY.

Busirah, El Biar, Algiers.

Passage of Matter through Matter.

SIR,—When first I read of the passage of matter through matter it was entirely incomprehensible to me. Afterwards I read 'The Light of Egypt,' the author of which has an extensive knowledge of psychic phenomena. He says:—

'No matter how solid any external object may appear it is not so, for every molecule of which it consists forms an extremely small atomic system of satellite atoms, revolving around their primary atom, which forms the impenetrable point of every crystal. There is space between every one of them. To dematerialise matter and resolve it into its original elements require the application of an external force powerful enough to polarise the material cohesive affinity of the atoms. If the dematerialising force is electric the form is destroyed as far as the external plane is concerned, but if it is magnetic the object is only etherialised, and in this state matter can be made to pass through matter, and immediately the magnetic dissolvent is withdrawn the object will reassume its original shape. We need scarcely add that in this natural fact lies the secret of the spiritual materialising phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, and it forms the true foundation of all magical manifestations of a physical nature.'

If credible human testimony has any value whatever, matter has passed through matter. I have never had an opportunity of witnessing this peculiar manifestation but my investigation has clearly proved to my mind that spirit can not only materialise but be photographed. It is difficult to determine what is impossible; and what appears to be impossible now may become an actuality in the future.

ARIEL.

SOCIETY WORK.

SOUTHALL.—1, MILTON-VILLAS, FEATHERSTONE-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last the usual meeting was held, when an inspiring trance address was given by Mr. W. Millard upon 'The Spirits are near: Beware.' A séance followed.—M.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Holgate gave an address on 'It is the Lord.' A pleasant after-circle. Meeting on Sunday next, at 7 p.m.; and on Thursday at 8 p.m.—S. OSBURN.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 111, ST. THOMAS'S-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK, N.—On Sunday last, Mr. Brenchley delivered a fine address on 'Joan of Arc.' On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Brenchley will give clairvoyance.—E. COATES.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD (NEAR SEVEN SISTERS CORNER).—On Sunday last Mr. E. Whyte delivered a splendid address on 'Life and Occupations on the Spirit Plane.' The audience were so interested that Mr. Whyte consented to continue the subject next week.—W. F. L.

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS.—The monthly conference of this Union will be held at the Co-operative Hall, Breamer-road, Canning Town, on Sunday next, March 2nd; at 3 p.m., Mr. Dennis on 'The Future of our Movement'; at 7 p.m., Mrs. O'Donovan. Tea at 5 p.m., 6d. each.—D. J. D.

LONDON PSYCHIC SOCIETY.—This society met last Sunday evening, at headquarters, 3D, Hyde Park-mansions, when Mr. Montague delivered a very able address on 'The Evil Eye and Talismans,' followed by an interesting discussion. For next Sunday evening, see front page.—E. J., Hon. Sec.

NEW SOUTHGATE—HIGH-ROAD SPIRITUAL CHURCH, THE INSTITUTE.—On Sunday evening last splendid addresses were delivered by Mr. Davis and Mr. Rowe. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., a special address will be given by Mr. J. W. Boulding. —Sec., 3, Ranelagh-road, Wood Green, N.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last, Mr. G. Cole delivered a splendid address on 'Socialism and Mental Science.' Mrs. Hodder kindly sang 'The Message of the Bells.' On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Boddington; on Tuesday, at 7 p.m., Band of Hope; on Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., public séance; on Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.—YULE.