

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The following, by W. C. Gannett, is idealistic, and almost too much so, but there is a deep truth in it:—

Long, long ago, in manger low,
Was cradled from above
A little child, in whom God smiled
His Christmas gift of Love.
When hearts were bitter and unjust,
And cruel hands were strong,
The noise he hushed with hope and trust,
And Peace began her song.

Whene'er the Father's Christmas gifts
Seem only frost and snow,
And anxious stress and loneliness,
And poverty and woe,—
Behold the manger, rude and strange,
In which a Christ-child lies!
O welcome guest, thy cradle-nest
Is always God's surprise!

For trouble, cold, and dreary care,
Are angels in disguise;
And, greeted fair with trust and prayer,
As Peace and Love they rise:
Straightway provide a welcome wide,
Nor wonder why they came;
They stand outside our hearts and bide,
Knocking in Jesus' name.

It may seem to some like false sentiment, and just a little cruel to-day, to say that 'trouble, cold, and dreary care, are angels in disguise,' but, if we could rise up to the spiritual plane of the Christ, and live as he lived, this would be literally true. From the manger to the cross, it was true for him.

Our American brethren have just been keeping 'Thanksgiving Day,' which, we believe, has been kept for nearly three centuries, ever since the first settlers wrestled with the hardships of 'pilgrims and strangers.' President Roosevelt issued the call for the keeping of the day, and his call had in it far more than a mere official formality. The opening paragraph has a certain noble grandeur about it, and is a call not to America only:—

When, nearly three centuries ago, the first settlers came to the country which has now become this great republic, they fronted not only hardship and privation, but terrible risk to their lives. In those grim years the custom grew of setting apart one day in each year for a special service of thanksgiving to the Almighty for preserving the people through the changing seasons. The custom has now become national and hallowed by immemorial usage. We live in easier and more plentiful times than our forefathers, the men who, with rugged strength, faced the rugged days, and yet the dangers to national life are quite as great now as at any previous time in our history. It is eminently fitting that once a year our people should set apart

a day for praise and thanksgiving to the Giver of good, and, at the same time that they express their thankfulness for the abundant mercies received, should manfully acknowledge their shortcomings, and pledge themselves solemnly and in good faith to strive to overcome them. During the past year we have been blessed with bountiful crops. Our business prosperity has been great. No other people has ever stood on as high a level of material well-being as ours now stands. We are not threatened by foes from without. The foes from whom we should pray to be delivered are our own passions, appetites and follies, and against these there is always need that we should war.

'Wherefore,' says the President, 'I ask that throughout the land the people gather in their homes and places of worship, and, in rendering thanks unto the Most High for the manifold blessings of the past year, consecrate themselves to a life of cleanliness, honour and wisdom, so that this nation may do its allotted work on the earth in a manner worthy of those who founded it and of those who preserved it.'

An American poet, James H. West, splendidly interprets the inmost meaning of this 'Thanksgiving Day':—

Men in all ages have sowed seed for me,
And I have plucked the ripened fruit and grain.
Through toil of hand and weariness of brain
They brought a wealth of luxury to be,
And I inherit it. The good I see,
And thoughtless thrive in, comes by their long pain.
Vassals of Nature, they threw off the chain
And handed me their hard-won liberty.

What then! shall I but take? Nay, also give,
As eager to enhance the age-long charm,
And Man still higher reach, still wider hope,
With simpler, purer pleasures learn to live,
'Gainst wrongs still rampant lift redemptive arm,
To Love's blest energies give loftier scope.

And again this strikes a note that is for the world and not for the land of its birth only.

We are making far too much of our material progress, and of our progress in intellectual power and scientific knowledge. Material progress has its uses, and intellectual power and scientific knowledge are, of course, highly desirable; but all these might be with us in *excelsis* and yet we might be advancing only to a race of devils. There is distinct danger in the popular standard which is supposed to register 'Progress.' Frances Power Cobbe never wrote more wisely than when she put on record the following thought:—

The great hope of the human race does not lie in the 'Progress of the Intellect' or in the conquest of fresh powers over the realms of Nature, not in the improvement of laws or the more harmonious adjustment of classes and states, not in the glories of art or the triumphs of science. That which will truly constitute the blessedness of man will be the gradual dying out of his tiger passions, his cruelty and his selfishness, and the growth within him of the God-like faculty of love and self-sacrifice; the development of that holiest sympathy wherein all souls shall blend at last, like the tints of the rainbow which the seer beheld around the Great White Throne on high.

In the Villa Medici, over the room in which Galileo was imprisoned by the Inquisition, the municipality has placed the following inscription:—

Questo fu il luogo di prigionie
a Galileo Galilei
reo di aver veduto la terra
volgersi intorno al sole.

(Here was the prison of Galileo Galilei, guilty of having seen the earth turn round to the sun.)

Professor Tyndall wisely and nobly said, 'Above all things avoid that question which ignorance so often addresses to genius, "What is the use of your work?" Make truth your object, however unpractical for the time being that truth may appear.'

With full force we can apply that to Spiritualism. 'What is the use of it?' is too often the question addressed to the Spiritualist by the ignorant. Granted that no use for it is yet visible (though that is far too much to grant), it ought to suffice that we are on the track of a great truth.

We welcome sympathy, we invite help, we ask for courage, we demand freedom: but, above all, we insist upon progress. We echo the fine saying of Burke: 'Applaud us when we run, console us when we fall, cheer us when we recover, but let us pass on;—for God's sake, let us pass on!'

'The Conquest of Appetite: a Handbook of Temperance Law,' by Rev. S. R. Henry, M.A. (Belfast: A. Mayne and Boyd), is a moderate and sensible plea for temperance in all things, and on ethical grounds. He says:—

Let it be understood once for all that the *raison d'être* for the grace of temperance is not to be found in the perfection of the physical man. 'He that striveth for the mastery' is, of course, temperate in all things, because it serves him to be so, but the athlete would be just as much bound to be temperate if the inevitable consequence of his temperance were that he should come in last in every race. In other words, the fact that temperance is conducive to physical endurance is not the ethical reason for being temperate.

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS.

(From many shrines.)

Father of our spirits, whose life is our life, and whose love is the secret of all the love that has ever blest Thy world, at this time, sacred to the memory of Thy well-beloved son, we desire to feel our deep oneness with Thee. May that consciousness of oneness with Thee help us to understand Thy well-beloved, and may it bring us near to one another, for mutual sympathy and service. May we be mindful of the life of Thy well-beloved,—how, from the manger to the cross, he followed the light and listened to the call of the Spirit. May we remember his pitifulness, his heroic courage, his heavenly simplicity, his love for little children, his tenderness towards the sinner, his constant reliance upon Thee: and, as we remember these things, may we long to be like him, and so live that we may cherish the hope of seeing him hereafter, with joy and not with grief. O that his loving spirit may take possession of the Church called by his name, and of the world which he longed to save! May his latest benediction of peace be at last fulfilled; and may Thy Kingdom come and Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven. Amen.

'OCULT CHEMISTRY.'—The Theosophical Publishing Society has re-issued, in separate form, Mrs. Besant's article on 'Occult Chemistry,' which appeared in 'Lucifer' for November, 1895. Ten years have wrought great changes in our manner of regarding atoms, and it is only fair to say that atomic structures, as seen by clairvoyant vision and described, with illustrative diagrams, by Mrs. Besant, bear a considerable resemblance to the theoretical conceptions of the same bodies propounded by modern scientific men, and recently described in 'LIGHT.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

AFTERNOON SOCIAL GATHERING.

In the interest of Members and Associates who find it impracticable or inconvenient to attend evening meetings, a SOCIAL GATHERING will be held in the

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX-STREET, STRAND
(opposite the Law Courts),

on Thursday, January 25th, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., for conversation and the interchange of thoughts upon subjects of mutual interest. Afternoon tea at 4 p.m. Admission will be by ticket only. Tickets will be sent to all Members and Associates.

Meetings will also be held in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (near the National Gallery), on Thursday evenings in 1906 as follows:—

- Jan. 11.—MR. E. WAKE COOK, on 'Christian Science in the Light of Modern Spiritualism.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Feb. 8.—MR. FREDERIC W. THURSTAN, M.A., on 'Some Things we Want for Ideal Investigation.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Feb. 22.—MRS. W. P. BROWNE, MRS. M. H. WALLIS, MR. GEO. SPRIGGS, AND REAR-ADMIRAL W. USBORNE MOORE, on 'Some Notable Personal Experiences.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Mar. 8.—THE REV. LUCKING TAVENER, on 'Modern Art—the Spiritual Element in the Works of Blake, Rossetti, Burne Jones, and Watts'; with *Lantern Illustrations*. At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
Mar. 29.—MR. J. W. BOULDING, on 'Shakespeare and Spiritualism'; with Illustrations from Personal Experiences.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
April 12.—THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS, on 'The Holy Ghost the Comforter.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
April 26.—THE REV. J. HUNTER, D.D., on 'The Modern Revival of Interest and Faith in the so-called Supernatural.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.
May 10.—MR. L. STANLEY JAST, on 'The Spiritual Significance of Symbols.' At 7 p.m. for 7.30.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE ON ENVIRONMENT.

The 'Mail and Empire' of Toronto, Canada, of December 1st, gave a report of a lecture delivered by Mr. W. J. Colville in that city on November 30th, in the St. George's Hall, Inspector J. L. Hughes in the chair.

Mr. Colville opened his address by quoting from Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poem, 'Heredity': 'There is nothing we cannot overcome,' and said:—

'Beyond father and grandfather, behind parents and ancestors, was the one great truth that we were all the offspring of eternal love and wisdom. Environment might be likened to tools. We were all environed by circumstances over which we had no control, such as the weather, and by circumstances over which we were gradually learning to have control. The first step to the mastery of circumstances was to consider what to do "in" certain circumstances, instead of "under" them. The New Thought advocate believed in triumph over circumstances, instead of subordination to them. There was never a human being who did not desire good, and give evidences of nobility. Upon this thought all the greatest philosophies were based. Man had every element and ingredient of the animals in him, but he had also something more, which enabled him to master his appetite. Man was great enough to conceive of a life everlasting and thereby he demonstrated human goodness and majesty. He was as great as his idea of God, and therefore his ideas of life immortal were constantly rising. We were constantly growing clearer in our conscious apprehension of Divine goodness.

'What is all the world seeking, happiness? Then the world will never find it. What is all the world seeking, blessedness? Then the world will find it. Let the world seek happiness and it will not get it, but let the world seek blessedness and it will obtain both blessedness and happiness. The truly successful man is the one who knows his environment and uses it to help him do his work in the world.'

THE LAW DIVINE.

Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle.

—SHELLEY.

He who is in the Fire, and He who is in the Heart, and He who is in the Sun, are all One and the Same, and he who knows this becomes one with the One.—From the 'Maitrāyana Upanishad.'

A friend had just gone from me—a friend who could not find God in any of His wondrous manifestations upon earth; nor in the boundless heavens; nor in the ocean depths; nor in the face of his friend. Least of all could he find God in himself, for he was cold, and sad, and hopeless, and there was no light in him that another could see. He was so miserably final, so lacking in magnetism, that when he left me I felt sore, and as if strength had been taken out of me; so that, when the house-door was closed between him and me, I quickly changed the conditions and went out into my little garden, and there I found God. And we two, being one, walked 'in the garden in the cool of the day.' We two in one, did I say? We were one and yet a thousand. We were the gentle breeze that rustled in the branches of the poplars and that stirred the pollen in the cups of the flowers, so that the air was laden with the fragrant spirits of divine odours. We were the birds that clave the upper air with tireless wings, now seeking their beautiful mates who appeared to linger in the light that rived the sun-capped clouds, anon dipping into the shadows that intensified the glow of the sunset. The silken rustling of their wings upon the musical air conveyed to the soul the sense of the presence of eternal Spirit.

We were the stately trees that quivered and shone in the golden light of the autumn evening, and when the cry of a heron came up from the marsh where the reeds and rushes whispered together their unforgotten lore of Pan, we knew that there we were also. Presently the whistle of a workman returning across the fields to his little dwelling standing in the protective shelter of the village church, fell upon our ears; it was a cheery sound, and told of home and rest. And we smiled, Love and I, because of the great brotherhood which, in the realms of the Understood, makes of all one. Then a long sob, breaking into a rush of laughter, told us we were on the wings of the wind, sweeping over the downs, skipping through the meadows, crying 'Hush!' to all else, and gathering, and carrying away into oblivion, much that hampered and desecrated the bosom of our opulent mother earth.

The stars began to come out shyly, one by one, as the last rays of the sun disappeared, and left the sky a cloudless canopy of magic and mystery. We talked to the stars, and they led us to oceans and seas full of hidden wonders, and bearing the while upon their restless billows the frail barques of the hopes of men. And we knew that between us and them also was the link indissoluble and eternal.

In strange lands we wandered, and found in the faces of the children of all climes, and in their glances and hand-clasps, that we were one. And love grew in us all and we saw, and what we saw was always He who walked beside me, for God is Love. And as we travelled and thought and communed together, Love and I, walking all the time in that little garden, there came to our ears the sound of a cry—a cry, as it were, from our twin heart—the cry of a little child in trouble and full of fear because it is alone.

And we hurried together, Love and I, out of the door into the lane, and so into the fields whence the cry had come, and there we found my friend and the young child.

'I was going back to you,' he said, 'because I thought I heard you call me—a foolish fancy!—and as I ran across the meadow I heard the cry of this little child, and I have been able to comfort her. She had wandered from that tiny house over there where we see the light shining from the window, and she was afraid because of the "black man" who followed her, and so she cried out. Poor mite, I was able to tell her that the bogey was her own shadow, and then we laughed together.'

Love and I saw that the light of God was shining in this

man's face, and that he was less hopeless than he had been; his eyes shone, and his hands held the child so that the little one clung to him. He did not now speak of himself alone.

He looked at Love and me, and a new thought appeared to strike him—'I will at once, and alone, take the child to her home, lest they grow distressed when they miss her. Yes, I will go alone. Return, you; and presently I will join you.'

The night grew quite dark and my friend did not return to me. But I knew he would come, even in the grey of the dawn. So Love and I waited, and we learned many things together there in the silence. Presently my friend—the man who knew not God, who is Love—returned to me. He was changed, but Love knew him. 'I took her home,' said he, simply, 'and nursed her till she slept. I found her mother tending a sick man, the child's father—a man like to die. In the early evening the child grew weary of the quiet house and had gone out to play. None missed her. I told the woman I would watch by her man while she took rest, and she carried the sleeping child with her to the kitchen. I found my new friend to be an honest man, who in his work in the marshes had taken a chill and was now facing death. "I have money," I told him; "get better, and you shall spend some of it on your needs, for it is yours." I do not know why I said this, for I had never offered money to another before. But when I saw the shadow lift from his worn face and heard him murmur the words, "Praise God!" I was glad—I, who have never known gladness. Then the man fell asleep—he had not really slept for some days and nights—and while he slept I passed into a waking dream; it must have been so, for I planned out anew the lives of these strangers who had been nothing to me, but who now were my nearest kin, and I felt I would gladly die if that would restore health to this suffering brother, so that these people should not know want. You will think it very absurd, but as I planned these things I felt as if I was smiling and as if a wound within me had healed. I longed for the morning to break because I had a strange new belief—I, who have scoffed at "beliefs"—that the dawn was bringing me some beautiful thing. I think that then I slept. I was awakened by the woman—she and the dawn were there together. Then hope entered my soul and I knew that there was God. "You have saved my man's life," said the woman; "he has slept and he says that you have given him a medicine that is healing him. God bless you, sir! My man has asked for food, and I awakened you that you might see your work, sir." Shall I ever forget the smile on that man's face as he turned it to me? It was only a look, but it seemed to hold the world, and it opened the gate of life for me. Something entered my heart from that smile that gave me a desire to clasp my arms about all the sick and suffering ones on earth. What could that be?'

I looked at my friend, the man who was finding God, and I answered: 'It was Love. You had made of that man your brother.'

'Is that all?' asked my friend. 'But I am quite happy! You remember how dull and dark I was? It is no longer so with me—I see light everywhere. That little child thought her own shadow was a bogey. I have been like that little child—the shadow of my dark self obscured all else—it became my bogey; I am changed because I have been able to discover that. Why is it so?'

'You have found God,' I answered. And my friend's smile was as the sunrise.

'Yes, I have found God!' he cried in an ecstasy; 'found Him in my own heart!'

'For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' I quoted. 'And now let us rejoice together that all are one! Death is life for evermore.' And my friend clasped my hand and we went out into the sunshine together. And those whom we met on our way—the workers going to their work on the farms and fields—saw that we knew them for brethren, and they greeted us. And it was morning in all our hearts.

In the little hut beyond the marsh where the sick man lay, we heard a woman singing, and we found that strength and cheer had come to the weak brother and his wife. 'I got a bit

of sleep, and then I woke praying for you,' said the man to my friend, who, as we left the cottage for that day, bent down over the man and said :—

'Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats,
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round world is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.'

M. BUTLER.

OUR SPIRIT CHILDREN.

While it is true that poets often put into words the emotions of our hearts and express for us the feelings which we are ourselves unable to utter, it is also true that they share our ignorance and sometimes fail to give us light and leading.

Many parents have felt that the children they really 'keep' are not those who live to maturity here, but those who have passed through the gateway of death into the life beyond. Those who live to 'grow up' on this side often forsake the home-nest, and the desolate old folk, in their loneliness and solitude, find what comfort they can in the thought that they are not really alone but that their beloved 'dead' are with them still. Katherine H. Terry beautifully tells their pathetic story in the following lines :—

'I heard their prayers and kissed their sleepy eyes,
And tucked them in all warm from feet to head,
To wake again with morning's glad sunrise—
Then came where *he* lay dead.

Those other children long to men have grown—
Strange, hurried men, who give me passing thought,
Then go their ways. No longer now my own.
Without me they have wrought.

So when night comes, and seeking mother's knee,
Tired childish feet turn home at even-tide,
I fold him close—the child that's left to me,
My little lad who died.'

How supremely sad those last two lines are! One can feel the unshed tears and heartache in them, and yet our Spiritualism has made us think more accurately upon this subject, as it has done on so many others; we now realise that our dear, dead children do not remain babes or infants, but that they grow in stature and in mind 'over there' as they would have done here. Longfellow puts the truth clearly and truly when he says :—

'Day after day, we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which Nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with rapture wild
In our embraces we again unfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.'

Reactively our sorrows and bereavements are often beneficial; teaching us resignation and trust, and arousing us spiritually to the realisation of the transitory nature of this present life. By our griefs we learn to be sympathetic and patient, tender and helpful to others. Under the providence of the All-Father our tears often become the solvents of our hardness of heart and make us softer and more gentle, and, 'because of one,' we learn to love all. The writer of the following lines embodies the feelings of many of those whose

little ones have been lost to them amid the mist of the valley of change :—

'Because of one dear infant head
With golden hair,
To me all little heads
A halo wear;
And for one saintly face I knew,
All babes are fair.

Because of two wide earnest eyes
Of heavenly blue,
Which look with yearning gaze
My sad soul through,
All eyes now fill mine own with tears,
Whate'er their hue.

Because of little death-marked lips
Which once did call
My name in plaintive tones,
No voices fall
Upon my ears in vain appeal
From children small.

Two little hands held in my own,
Long, long ago,
Now cause me, as I wander through
This world of woe,
To clasp each baby hand stretched out
In fear of foe;
The lowest cannot plead in vain—
I loved him so.'

Who has not seen the whole attitude and outlook of a man, or a woman, changed by the passing into the unseen of a beloved child? It is to Spiritualism, formerly spurned and despised, that such sufferers turn for comfort and light in their darkness; and our own poet, Gerald Massey, one of the sweetest singers of love and its blessings, shows how the knowledge of Spiritualism inspires and strengthens us by enabling us to understand that our children in the Beyond are ever near us; sometimes nearer in fact and love than those who remain with us, and by their loving ministry constantly striving to console and bless us. He sweetly sings :—

'As, after death, our Lost Ones grow our dearest,
So, after death, our Lost Ones come the nearest.
They are not lost in distant worlds above;
They are our nearest link in God's own love—
The human hand-clasps of the Infinite
That life to life, spirit to spirit knit.

They fill the rift they made, like veins of gold
In fire-rent fissures torture-torn of old—
With sweetness store the empty place they left,
As of wild honey in the rock's bare cleft.

In hidden ways they aid this life of ours,
As sunshine lends a finger to the flowers,
Shadowed and shrouded in the Wood's dim heart,
To climb by, while they push their graves apart.
They think of us, at Sea, who are safe on Shore;
Light up the cloudy coast we struggle for.'

B. C.

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The Offices of 'LIGHT' and the London Spiritualist Alliance will be closed on December 25th and 26th, and will be re-opened on Wednesday, the 27th, but the *Library* will not be re-opened until *Monday, January 1st, 1906*.

PROPHETIC COINCIDENCES—A professional musician gives, in 'Luce e Ombra,' two cases in which certain printed words, which forced themselves on his attention, proved to be prophetic of coming events. In one case he was about to take an unsatisfactory appointment when his casual glance at a calendar was arrested by the name 'S. Pellegrino' among the patron saints. It was irresistibly suggested to him that that was the name of the place to which he was to go; he broke off the first engagement, and shortly afterwards got an appointment at S. Pellegrino di Bergamo. A year later he noticed that the words 'Indo-China' were perpetually meeting his eye, on steamship advertisements, globes, maps, newspapers, and even in the titles of books chosen at random. On writing to a Paris agency he learned that an orchestra was being formed for Tonquin, and immediately accepted the offer, so mysteriously and persistently foreshadowed during several weeks.

'THE TASK OF HAPPINESS.'

The article in 'LIGHT' of September 9th last, entitled 'The Task of Happiness,' dealt ably with the necessity for regarding happiness as a task to be worked at. Too many of us are inclined to attribute our want of happiness to faulty surroundings, and to blame our environments, influences, ancestors, our neighbours, evil spirits, or his Satanic Majesty, for our sorrows and miseries, and to ignore the fact that the causes reside almost entirely within ourselves. Thackeray says: 'Sow an act, and you reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you reap a character. Sow a character, and you reap a destiny,' and in saying this he not only recognises the important fact that we can largely make or unmake ourselves, but, what is more, he points out the way in which it may be done.

Why should we whine, and scold, and blame, and make excuse, or discover scapegoats, instead of frankly admitting, to ourselves at least, that our sufferings are due in the main to our own shortcomings or wrong-doings? The question is, however, can we *compel* ourselves to be happy? Can we purposefully set ourselves to the task of being happy with any hope of success? If so, how shall we go about it?

'It is all very well,' says one, 'to say "don't worry, stop being afraid, don't brood, keep smiling, be happy and you will be good," and so on, but you do not tell me how it is to be done!'

The Spiritualist should not find it difficult to cultivate happiness, for he, of all men, should realise that he is a spirit; that the spirit is a centre of divine energy, and therefore possesses the power to control all passions and conflicting forces, and hold together in the unity of its consciousness all phases of personal manifestation as one consistent individual. When one attains to this realisation of self, and acquires the power of concentration at the centre of his being, then his will power becomes potent for self-direction, and conflicting or fugitive thoughts and emotions know their master.

The spirit has an operative force which ordinarily acts involuntarily, as, for instance, in walking, but this force, under the control of will, may be directed into new channels, and prayer, which is a hopeful mental attitude, becomes effective, when it is supplemented by persevering effort. Habits are easily acquired—thought and feeling habits as well as habits of action. Hence it is possible to cultivate the habit of *attention* to, or awareness of, the nature and trend of our thoughts and feelings, and to *will* ourselves to think cheerfully, positively, and to feel hopefully and happily. At first we may succeed for a brief time only, and then slip back into pessimistic moods, and be dominated by fear-thoughts, but, if we are resolute, we shall soon realise that we have lapsed, and pull ourselves up mentally. We shall learn to hold ourselves in the hopeful, happy, optimistic mood, to keep in our minds the thoughts and feelings of strength and success. We shall grow out of our gloom by a change of attitude, and, with a right-about movement, mentally, we shall face the sunshine, and lose sight of the shadows. Any state of mind can be prolonged by repeated effort, and at length it will become habitual to us to think and speak kindly of others, cheerfully regarding ourselves, and bravely and confidently as regards our duties, difficulties, and dangers. We shall then, as they say in the North, 'put a stout heart to a stiff brae,' and 'win through.' But suppose we do not 'win through,' surely we are none the worse off for having tried! Nay, we are better qualified to try again, and yet again, until we succeed.

As a lady writer on this subject wisely says:—

'If you teach the sub-conscious mind to think, not always what you believe, but what you would like to believe, and impress upon it the habits of thought you wish to form, you will presently find that you have the subjective mind under your command, and that you are gaining the path of power for self-realisation and self-mastery. Plant the seeds of true, good, and worthy ideals in your own inner thoughts; nurture them by more thought and activity; think of yourself as serene, unruffled, graceful, and happy, and wait for these seed-thoughts to come up—but nourish them with the warm sunshine of hope and faith, and you will become increasingly happy and serene.'

Self-control, as regards conduct, has been frequently counselled and praised, but self-control, as regards thoughts and feelings, has been too little recognised; yet thought and feeling precede action, and, by thinking and affirming health and happiness, the spirit becomes rightly attuned, and the more capable of triumph.

W.

A CLERGYMAN'S VISION.

In a 'sketch' of the 'Aberlour Orphanage,' Mr. G. B. Davy gives an interesting account of the work accomplished by Canon Jupp, who is not only the Rector of St. Margaret's Church, but the Warden of the orphanage of which he was the founder. It is evident that he is a man of large faith and sympathy, an indefatigable worker and withal shrewd and practical in his enthusiastic humanitarian labours. Six children of one family had been admitted to the orphanage and shortly afterwards, owing to the arrival of visitors, Canon Jupp was obliged to occupy one of the ten beds in the dormitory of the little ones. In the morning he made the following statement:—

'As near as I can tell I fell asleep about eleven o'clock and slept very soundly for some time. I suddenly awoke without any apparent reason and felt an impulse to turn round, my face being towards the wall from the children. Before turning I looked up and saw a soft light in the room. The gas was burning low in the hall, and the dormitory door being open I thought it probable that the light came from that source. It was soon evident however that such was not the case. I turned round, and then a wonderful vision met my gaze. Over the second bed from mine and on the same side of the room, there was floating a small cloud of light, forming a halo of the brightness of the moon on an ordinary moonlight night.

'I sat upright in bed, looked at this strange appearance, took up my watch and found the hands pointing to five minutes to one. Everything was quiet and all the children sleeping soundly. In the bed over which the light seemed to float, slept the youngest of the six children mentioned above. I asked myself "Am I dreaming?" No! I was wide awake. I was seized with a strong impulse to rise and touch the substance, or whatever it might be (for it was about five feet high) and was getting up when something seemed to hold me back. I am certain I heard nothing, yet I felt and perfectly understood the words—"No, lie down, it won't hurt you." I at once did what I felt I was told to do. I fell asleep shortly afterwards, and rose at half-past five, that being my usual time.

'At six o'clock I commenced dressing the children, beginning at the bed furthest from the one in which I had slept. Presently I came to the bed over which I had seen the light hovering. I took the little boy out, placed him on my knee and put on some of his clothes. The child had been talking with the others, suddenly he was silent. And then looking me hard in the face with an extraordinary expression, he said, "Oh! Mr. Jupp, my mother came to me last night. Did you see her?" For a moment I could not answer the child. I then thought it better to pass it off and said, "Come, we must make haste, or we shall be late for breakfast."

The child never afterwards referred to the matter, we are told, nor has it since ever been mentioned to him. The Warden says it is a mystery to him; he simply states the fact, and there leaves the matter, being perfectly satisfied that he was mistaken in no one particular.

PLUTARCH ON ORACLES.—Plutarch gives the following reasons why the gods (spirits) had abandoned their oracles and ceased to inspire their interpreters (or mediums): 'Such improper questions were asked of them! Instead of interrogating them on the great problem of destiny, or seeking to acquire knowledge, like the sages of former times, people only put ridiculous questions. One person tries to make them contradict themselves; another seeks a hidden treasure and wants to learn from Heaven where it is to be found; a third is interested in an expected inheritance; a fourth is thinking of getting married, or wishes to know whether a certain person is not already secretly married. They take Apollo for a man of business.' It is evident that there had been a decline of mediumship, and that Plutarch ascribed it to the frivolous and self-seeking attitude of inquirers. Here is a hint for modern attenders of circles, for now, as then, many people put ridiculous and mercenary questions to mediums and their controls. We wonder if history will repeat itself still further and the spirits cease to inspire their mediums from the same cause as of old!

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Christmas and the New Year.

With this issue of 'Light' we send cordial Greetings and hearty Good Wishes to all our Friends—and to our Foes as well, if we have any. In the coming year may they all be abundantly blessed in all ways always!

THE CHRISTMAS REVELATION.

One never ceases to admire the happy accident or wise design which gave to dull December the shining days of Advent-Tide. What a yearly wonder and joy it is!—so much sunshine of the heart, so much song and innocent mirth, so much dear hopefulness coming to our darkest days, and winning us from 'the winter of our discontent.' It is indeed a wondrous gift that comes with the dying year. Surely, if the wise old men of the East had not invented this glorious crowning of the year, we of the West would have been so much the poorer that we should have been driven to invent it for ourselves.

But how came it all about? Wonder of wonders! It seems to have all grown out of the birth of a baby, for whom, in truth, there was no room in the Inn,—a carpenter's son who, by some strange heavenly magic, not yet comprehended here, got his great promotions from the manger,—first, in the temple, when the alert young spirit confounded the old custodians of dead traditions; then on the cross, when earthly hate killed heavenly love; then in the Holy Land beyond, and then in the glowing hearts of millions who, in their great love and wonder, have seen, in this homeless babe and murdered man, a God. What a sublime audacity of devoted faith, what a divine rebuke to the world's pride and scorn! But this is the gift of Christmas—a homeless infant, an ideal life, a persistent, unconquerable love, a malefactor's death, a kingship in the heavens.

Paul, who, of all the other early Christians, seemed to see so far along this road, put the whole case finely in that profound yet simple saying: 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' What a simple and yet immense analogy it is! Just as the Infinite Power and Glory shone in and through the primal darkness, so has He shone in our hearts that we might recognise His glory in the face of this ideal beloved son.

At this point we get another glimpse of the strange connection between the astronomical phenomenon of the apparent new birth of the sun, and the birthday of the

spiritual light. It is certainly profoundly interesting to observe that the times practically coincide,—that the time which tradition fixes for the birth of Jesus, 'the sun of righteousness,' agrees with the time of the sun's rebirth after the winter solstice. Whether lovely symbol or historical connection we need not stay to inquire. Our own Saxon forefathers believed that rival gods contended, and that, after the shortest day, the bright and beautiful god of light and heat triumphed over the powers of death and storm. Christmas slowly came to be kept about 350 years after Christ, and was most likely a grafting of Christian history upon the old stock of Pagan mythology. But the grafting was a beautiful and successful one, and we need not hesitate to keep Advent and Christmas time, with Jesus Christ as the central spiritual sun.

It is interesting to note that, according to Paul, the actual object of the revelation of or by Jesus was to give 'the light of knowledge.' How curious is it that Christendom has, for the most part, acted as though the object of Christianity was to bother us with mysteries! Surely, the object of a revelation is to reveal, to simplify the difficult, to throw light upon dark problems, to solve mysteries, or dissipate them. And truly, spiritual Christianity, rightly understood, is a clearing up of mysteries, and not an addition to them. We have suffered many things from the critics; but we have suffered more from the commentators. Said one, only half in jest, 'How plain the New Testament would be if it were not for the explainers of it!' And so we may say, 'How plain the Gospel of Christ would be if it were not for the creed-makers!'

According to Paul, the 'knowledge' which Jesus came to bring is 'the knowledge of the glory of God.' 'Of the glory' be it remembered. 'The glory' must mean the heavenly goodness, the spiritual beauty, the shining justice,—that which makes God what one well called 'The altogether beautiful of the universe.' Alas! what a contradiction to all this is the dominant creed of Christendom! When we think of this, with its vehement assertions of total depravity, a cursed earth, a fallen race, an angry God, and an eternal hell, and then turn to this revealing of 'the glory' of God, it is like waking from a nightmare, to find that a sweet summer morn has dawned: it is like leaving the dingy crypt of a musty cathedral in order to ascend a hill and see the sun rise.

Paul's assertion culminates in the statement that this 'light of the knowledge of the glory of God' shines in the face of Jesus Christ, a statement which has really nothing mysterious in it. Paul also said that this light shines in our hearts:—the same light. Jesus, then, was a revealer of God, and specially so as a spiritual light. His compassion, his forgiving spirit, his victory over self and over the powers of evil, were revelations of the Infinite Love. His Sermon on the Mount and his Prayer were wonderful and sufficient disclosures of the spiritual bond that united God and Man. When he took the little children in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them, he revealed 'the glory' of the Father-God. When he dared to touch the leper, and made him clean, he manifested the heavenly healing power. When he calmly faced and fought the world's ignorance and brutality, and made his way from earth to heaven through manger and through cross, he gave to the world an object-lesson which revealed as no splendour could do the eternal secret of the heavens.

But he stands not alone as the revealer of the glory of God. The happy mother, this Christmas time, may say with George Macdonald:—

My child is lying on my knees,
The signs of heaven she reads;
My face is all the heaven she sees,
Is all the heaven she needs.

I also am a child, and I
 Am ignorant and weak ;
 I gaze upon the starry sky,
 And then I must not speak ;
 For all beyond the starry sky,
 Behind the world so broad,
 Behind men's hearts and souls doth lie
 The Infinite of God.
 So, Lord, I sit in Thy wide space,
 My child upon my knee :
 She looketh up into my face,
 And I look up to Thee.

There is the perfect truth. As the child looks up to the happy mother's face, and sees there all the heaven it needs, so we, looking up to Jesus, looking up to the beautiful heavens, looking into our own souls behind and beneath and above all passion, sin and fear, see the ever shining light of the ever present God.

That faith is enough to live by : it is enough to die by : and we shall lose it only as we lose the stars, when they melt and are lost in the glorious sea of light,—in the splendour of the perfect day.

PRAYER: WHAT IS IT?

What is prayer? And what is prayer to God? The answers to these questions are not identical. 'Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,' writes the poet. But the definition is too limited. It is not the soul, or at least not the human soul alone, that prays. If we recognise that there is 'a soul in all things,' however, we may accept the statement without further question. Something, which may as well be called soul as anything else, prays in the plant when it struggles through the tangled undergrowth of the forest and climbs to find the light, turning towards the brightest part of its environment with unflinching persistency. To what or to whom does the plant pray? To the sunshine? Yes, but also to the Source of sunlight; to the unknown God, who created the plant for light and light for the plant. A man also prays when the thirst for revenge darkens his soul, or impels him to plot deeds of darkness. To what does the man pray, or to whom? His prayer, too, is sometimes effectual. The opportunity for carrying out his evil intent is afforded him, or the wish that evil may befall his enemy wings its way like a barbed arrow to its mark. He, too, has a 'sincere desire.' What evil minds in unseen spheres respond to such prayers we cannot say. We can only guess that wishes such as these may be no less infectious than microbes of disease, and may gain potency by germinating in other minds incarnate or discarnate, and may thus find their fulfilment. But we recognise that the vengeful soul does not pray to God. Wherein lies the difference between the prayer of the plant and the prayer of the man to whom we refer? What constitutes the former a prayer to God and the latter not?

The plant desiring light, or the child asking for daily bread, is functioning in accordance with the laws of the universe, *i.e.*, the Mind of God. But the evil desire is contrary to the law. The former is in line with evolution. The fulfilment of these desires is the fulfilment of God's will; the latter is out of line with evolution, and the fulfilment of prayers of this sort hinders the perfection of the universe.

No sincere desire can set in motion the Highest Power, except it be good, except it be in harmony with the purposes of that Power. The plant automatically desires what is according to Divine order; but man, more fallible because more intelligent, may make mistakes. He can discern good and evil, but on this very account he may mistake evil for good, or he may choose for himself a lesser good rather than a greater good; therefore the man who would pray to God should always in heart seek first His

Kingdom of righteousness; in other words, he should mentally condition his petitions by the clause 'nevertheless not as I will but as Thou wilt.'

The question arises, however: Is a prayer thus conditioned of any value at all, except subjectively? God's will, it is argued, is sure to be accomplished, hence prayer on the part of man is superfluous. But, let it be observed, this argument is not applied consistently. The man who is hungry does not say, 'If it is God's will that I should live, nothing can prevent my doing so; therefore I need not eat.' Experience solves many problems which theoretically are insolvable. Experience proves that God's will, which has ordained food for the body and the body for food, has also ordained that effort on the part of man shall be the *nexus* between these two, and the instrument whereby the Divine purposes shall be accomplished. And it is in harmony with this experience that prayer, that is to say, the activities of the Ego exerted by faith and desire, should be the force through which the beneficent will of the Supreme Goodness should operate. These prayers are not useless, they are not merely subjective methods for calming the mind; they are the co-operating forces of the human soul which bring the needs of humanity into active relations with the sources of supply. These sources of supply are manifold; they are all, of course, a part of the Divine Life, but differentiated variously.

To pray, to think with earnest desire out of our own need into the environing Life in Whom are contained all strength, all riches, all wisdom, and all goodness, this is neither unreasonable, nor ineffectual.

That it has proved effectual might perhaps suffice to stimulate prayer, since after all the test of values lies in living experience. But man is a reasoning being, and so long as prayer seems to him to be illogical and unreasonable he will pray without that energy and sincerity which are so essential to the most potent kind of prayer, and therefore it is desirable to consider the philosophy of prayer, as an active functioning of the human Ego, through mental and voluntary processes, in harmony with the Divine Mind whose operations we call 'law.' This law includes the mutual responsiveness of centres of force, whether these centres of force be the aggregate of electrons which are known in chemistry as atoms, which continually form new combinations in obedience to the law of chemical affinity, or whether they be centres of force on a higher plane and of a more complex kind, namely, centres of will power, thought and affection. In either case the energies evoked and the changes effected are no breach of the Divine order, and no arbitrary attempt to escape from that order, but are activities whose potency is solely due to the fact that they are exercised within that order, and that the Supreme Mind has willed that they should be exercised.

When prayer is viewed thus it becomes obvious that unexpressed prayers may be as effectual as uttered prayers. Expression may be a means of deepening the realisation of desire or of unifying the thought of various persons. And its value in these respects should not be lost sight of. The most intense prayers are often wordless, however, and since desire is prayer, we should be watchful over the region where desire springs up. The address to God in a well-known collect, as One 'unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known,' is a free translation of a Latin prayer which literally runs thus, 'Unto whom every heart is open, for whom every act of the will has a voice.' And the words of the Psalmist, 'I give myself unto prayer,' have been rendered 'I am prayer.' These two translations are pregnant with suggestion. Their full significance can perhaps only be estimated by wise and penetrating watchers in the Unseen; Intelligences who are at once

agents of the Most High and sympathetic ministers to His incarnate offspring, and who know by experience the power of the magnetic forces which bring them into contact with a man who prays.

NATURE'S THOUGHT-FORMS.

An Address by the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis, B.A., bearing the title 'Nature's Thought-Forms,' was given to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, on the evening of Thursday, December 14th. The Address was illustrated by nearly sixty lantern slides, the major portion of which were prepared for the present purpose, and were exhibited by Mr. A. E. Isaac. Mr. H. Withall, Vice-President, occupied the chair, and in a few well chosen remarks introduced the speaker, who was received with loud applause, and who, in explanation of the title of his Address, claimed to have followed the ordinary laws of human reasoning. He said:—

'We judge of causes by their effects; we argue from seen results to their unseen origin; we reason from the known to the unknown. If we are shown an object of human make, an examination of which reveals a skill in its craftsmanship, or a beauty in its design, we at once deduce the cleverness of its maker and the artistic thought of its producer. The same mode of reasoning surely is also legitimate when applied to the works of Nature.

'A student of Natural History who makes earnest study of the most common, most familiar objects found in the material world, cannot help having his power of admiration constantly excited, his sense of wonder constantly awakened, by the disclosures made to his inquiring vision and his faithful search. Many a time, like Linnaeus on the hillside, at sight of the blossoming bush of yellow broom, he will be ready to fall on his knees, as one who seeth the Lord pass in all His glory.

'The microscope especially has opened many closed doors, and unfolded many a blazing volume of revelation, and to gaze upon the radiant splendour that is hidden from our limited vision in the apparently commonplace and even unclean, is to know that poetic dreams of a New Jerusalem with gates of jasper and pearl, are not beyond, but fall far short even of the material reality.

' "There's nothing small;
No lily, muffled hum of summer bee,
But finds its coupling in the spinning stars;
No pebble at your feet but proves a sphere;
No chaffinch but implies the cherubim.
Earth is full of heaven,
And every common bush affire with God."

'Herein lies a needed lesson of humility. If the perfection of the microscope has brought to our knowledge the infinitely close, hitherto too near to see; if the perfection of the telescope has brought within reach of vision the infinitely distant, hitherto too far to see; if we are again and again shown how limited are our senses in the acquisition of even physical facts,—how dare we assume that there are not hidden from our limited knowledge worlds unseen, realms of wonder, supra-sensuous and supra-physical, which never come within our ken!' (Applause.)

The lecturer then went on to exhibit some very beautiful forms taken from every department of human knowledge, which, he claimed, carry on their surface the infallible mark of having been produced through such intelligent methods as manifested the working of a much higher intelligence than the human. We knew the visible world to be the outcome of invisible operations, and perhaps we should seek to know more about the material before we plunged into the immaterial, where the key of their meaning, however, lay. Some people were impatient with the visible shadows that darkened and hid invisible and eternal ideas. But it was to be remembered that material things, while they partly concealed, also partly revealed and expressed, the immaterial. A great mystic had

said: 'First, thou must see the visible things of thyself, before thou canst be prepared to know the invisible things of God; for if thou canst not apprehend the things within thee, thou canst not comprehend the things above thee.'

We were, perhaps, too eager to lift the veil and so neglect the tokens of the presences behind the veil which lay close at our feet. We might find messages from the unseen in the familiar things of the world in which our present destiny kept us, like Whitman, who said: 'I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each moment then; I find letters from God dropt in the street, and every one is signed by God's name, and I leave them where they are, for I know that whereso'er I go, others will punctually come for ever and ever.' Whatever the form might be, it was, in the opinion of the speaker, an embodiment of the divine life; it bore the divine impress; it manifested the divine energies, it was steeped in God. Could we find out what the crystal, the cell, the flower were all in all, we should know God and man. (Applause.)

'What are Forms?' asks Tennyson, and answers his own question by saying that they are:—

'Fair garments, plain or rich, and fitting close,
Or flying looselier, warm'd but by the heart
Within them, moved but by the living limb,
And cast aside, when old, for newer—Forms!
The spiritual in Nature's market-place—
The silent Alphabet-of-Heaven-in-man
Made vocal—banners blazoning a Power
That is not seen and rules from far away—
A silken cord let down from Paradise.'

They would remember, said Mr. Davis, the dream of the Abbot in the well-known story, who dreamed he had died and gone to heaven and was asked by God how he liked His beautiful world. The monk had despised the world in his thoughts of heaven, so remained silent and abashed. He was therefore bidden to go back and see the world he had never observed. The mystic too would do well to note the things that made the silent alphabet vocal; they were but seeming-real, but reflections—yet the real was incarnated in them.

We should like to be able to quote more fully from Mr. Davis's interesting address, especially that part of it on 'God as a Geometer,' and say something about the pictures which set forth the principle, but we have no desire to spoil it for future repetitions by encroaching in our report too much upon its contents. The instances taken from chemistry, mineralogy, botany and zoology in witness of the regularity, symmetry and harmony of natural forms left no doubt in the speaker's mind as to the evidence of design in Nature. He agreed with Plato that ideas rule the world, and that these logos were the causes as well as archetypes of all things seen in the visible world. A more controversial topic was the discussion of the agents of the divine will, into which the question of the existence and functions of ministering spirits extensively entered. Who and what are the Nature-spirits, and the part they are said to play in natural operations, were briefly touched upon under this head. Quotations were made from Kepler, Ruskin, Alfred Russel Wallace, Huxley, and W. B. Yeats as admitting the possibility, or teaching the actual existence, of a vast spiritual hierarchy between the highest known man and the Oversoul, and the address closed with the following parable:—

'In the long ago, a Great Intelligence distributed among a number of his ministering spirits a piece of carbon each, and bade them mould from it something good and beautiful. One went and placed his piece between two stones and rubbed and squeezed it in his attempt to make of it some orderly shape. Beyond faint shinnings visible where he had pressed hardest, however, there was not much beauty in the black mass we now name Graphite. Another was of a more mathematical turn of mind, for he made a host of regular octahedra, which he piled in symmetrical fashion, making together a crystal of transparent and glittering facets which we now call a Diamond. The third was something of an artist, and he sat holding his carbon task in his hand, wondering to what use he might put his gift. As he mused, his eyes fell upon the scorching deserts and blinding sands, he saw the bare rocks and the hard mountain-sides, and he resolved to clothe this nakedness and

hide the bareness with a fabric that would be ever fresh and self-renewing, and soften the hardness of the world, and gladden the coming children whose eyes would be hungry for beauty. So he drew the carbon into threads and wound with it the protoplasmic cells of living substance, and made many patterns, each improving on the last, liverworts, mosses, ferns, and fronds of lovelier foliage, until the world was garbed in vivid green, the rock mantled, and the plains carpeted with a soft clothing of numberless spears.

'And seeing this world so adorned, a poet in the after-time wondered whether Earth

'Be but a shadow of heaven; and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought!'

'No wonder he wondered!' (Loud applause.)

The proceedings terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to the Rev. Tyssul Davis for his eloquent address, and to Mr. Isaac for his services in exhibiting the lantern slides.

THE MEDIUM BAILEY.

Mrs. Charles Bright, the new and able Editor of the Melbourne 'Harbinger of Light,' has an interesting article in the November number of that journal in which she pays a high tribute to Mr. T. W. Stanford, the widely known and highly respected citizen of Melbourne, whose name has become familiar to Spiritualists in connection with the medium Bailey and the controversy regarding the genuineness of the *apports* at his *séances*.

Readers of 'LIGHT' will recollect that, as stated in our issue of May 27th last, a number of the *apports* produced under 'rigid test conditions' at Mr. Bailey's *séances* at Sydney, Australia, were submitted, through the Psychical Research Society in London, to the authorities of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum, and that both Dr. E. Wallis Budge and Mr. Leonard W. King stated that the clay tablets were all imitations, such as are made to sell to travellers in the East. Regarding this Mrs. Bright says:—

'Without taking the judgment of the expert authorities of the British Museum as final on even the *apports* brought to "X." circle in Sydney, it may be said that the *apports* brought to Mr. Stanford's circle have not been subjected to this examination, and in some respects differ from those obtained in Sydney. A beautiful leopard skin, that cannot by any stretch of imagination be termed a "forgery," can be seen at Mr. Stanford's office, a skull also that is plainly cast in Nature's mould, living birds, some of whom are enjoying their lives at Stanford House under its owner's kind supervision, plants of a rare kind still flourishing in his conservatory, and many other things that are beyond the forger's power. But the chief thing, the bringing of these things under test conditions, is passed over almost silently. It matters little whence these things came, the all-important matter for consideration is their coming at all, under the strict test conditions employed at the *séances* at Sydney, and, we presume, at Mr. Stanford's Melbourne sittings.'

Referring to her own recent experiences with Mr. Bailey, since his return from Europe, Mrs. Bright says:—

'I accepted, with unfeigned pleasure, the invitation of my friend, Mr. Stanford, to attend the new series of *séances* with Mr. Bailey that he has just inaugurated. There were about a dozen of us who met on Wednesday evening, October 18th, at the first of what promises to be a most successful series of sittings. There is not a clearer-headed investigator than Mr. Stanford, and the idea of his being deluded is one that simply amuses those who know his practical common sense and freedom from illusions. All the precautions of close examination of the medium and the searching of the rooms at Mr. Stanford's office were gone through. It was not expected to receive at the first *séance* any remarkable results, as harmonious "conditions" have to be secured before such manifestations take place even of the simplest kind. But to myself it was an eye-opener, and I saw at once the value of such a circle to those who can get conviction more easily through the senses than in any other way, and also that it was worth all the misrepresentation to which Mr. Stanford has been subjected, to let people see the power of occult forces. No *apports* were expected, as only two of the Hindoo controls were present, but Dr. Whitcomb,

who is the presiding genius at the circle, announced that something would be produced. An introductory address by Dr. Whitcomb was followed by a request for the lights to be lowered, as something was to be brought, and almost instantaneously a bird in a nest was found on the table. The light was turned on, and the bird was handed round and for a few minutes rested in my hands. . . . Another remarkable *apport* was a veil worn by the women in Lower Egypt, with its fasteners of hippopotamus skin; some rare seeds from India, which could not be given at former sittings on account of the infrequent flowering of the plant. There was a handful of these seed pods laid on the table, and detailed instructions were given as to the planting and care of the seeds.'

DR. HENSOLDT AND HIS 'HINDU ADEPT.'

On p. 579 of 'LIGHT' we gave a summary of a long article contributed by Dr. Hensoldt to 'The Occult Review' for December, in which it occupied nearly fifty pages. A correspondent has called our attention to the fact that, with the sole exception of the paragraph in which the photographing of the illusory mango-tree is referred to, the whole of Dr. Hensoldt's article, footnotes and all, with only a few alterations, is to be found in 'The Arena' for December, 1893, and January, February, and August, 1894. An abstract of the first article appeared in 'LIGHT' of December 30th, 1893, and on pp. 98-100 of 'LIGHT' for 1894, Dr. Hensoldt's account of his visit to the adept was somewhat sharply criticised. Dr. Hensoldt replied with some flimsy abuse in the July 'Arena,' and 'LIGHT' published a rejoinder on July 14th, 1894.

The addition, above referred to, of the paragraph relating to the photograph of the mango-tree ('Occult Review,' pp. 290, 291), is highly significant, for the writer had just stated that he witnessed the mango feat five times in various parts of India. Precisely the same statement was made in the 'Arena' in 1893, but without the slightest hint that the 'illusory' tree had been photographed. In the 'Arena' version the phenomenon is seen five times, but apparently not photographed; in the 'Occult Review' narrative it is seen five times—and photographed into the bargain. Surely if on one of these five occasions the camera had been used, so important a confirmatory circumstance would have been mentioned in the 'Arena.' With regard to the other illustrations, there are none that could not easily have been prepared for the purposes of the more recent publication.

A FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath unto the London Spiritualist Alliance, Limited, the sum of £ , to be applied to the purposes of that Society; and I direct that the said sum shall be paid, free from Legacy Duty, out of such part of my personal estate as may legally be devoted by will to charitable purposes, and in preference to other legacies and bequests thereout.

GOD'S TRUTH UNASSAILABLE.—'He who is afraid that God's truth may be discredited, certainly is not entitled to the name of believer. If I find people afraid to have any of their beliefs investigated, I feel sure that there is a deep down doubt in their minds as to whether they will bear examination.'—REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE.

A NEW GIBSON.—Prophecies of national decay have not been wanting; the latest is 'The Decline and Fall of the British Empire,' issued at 6d. by Alden and Co., of Oxford, and represented as adopted by the Japanese schools in 2005. Our fall is attributed to physical enervation by town life and luxury, and the decline of intellectual and religious life. Piety was superficial, and philanthropy false. Few had the insight to go to the root of things. The practical and spiritual courage of a Cromwell or a Wilberforce was absent; religion and sociology had become a kind of pastime. Few battled with the great problems of the age, 'which required a grim intellectual effort and a practical imaginative fervour which was rarely discernible in church or chapel.' 'The supreme need of the Church was a great awakening on the basis of a wider and more Christian patriotism. But such an awakening never came.' A footnote adds, 'Why did it not come in 1905?' We hope it may come in 1906.

A CLAIRVOYANTE TESTED BY DR. FUNK.

Dr. Funk, author of 'The Widow's Mite,' when speaking of his experiences with Mrs. May S. Pepper to a representative of the 'New York Herald,' who interviewed him, said:—

'Mrs. Pepper is undoubtedly a psychic of unusual power, but just what that power is I am not able definitely to tell. That she has such gifts, however, there can be no doubt. In the tests to which I have subjected her every possible precaution was taken to prevent deception. Letters which she was to read without opening were written on sensitised paper so that had they been opened the admission of light would have produced a discolouration which would have demonstrated that the letter had been tampered with. Black paper was also used on the inside of the envelope, so that there could have been no means of deciphering the contents by holding the missive to the light. I have seen some manifestations of her power which incline me to believe that she has clairvoyant ability—that she is actually able to read what is within a sealed letter, just as Molly Fancher did. Recently I received a letter from a man in Chicago which he asked me to send to Mrs. Pepper. I did not myself know the contents of it. The letter was placed on the table at one of the public Services held by Mrs. Pepper.

'She picked it up and asked who had left it. I told her that I had placed it there. "But you yourself do not know what it contains," said Mrs. Pepper. She then said that the pearl necklace, concerning which a person whose name she mentioned was disturbed, had not been stolen, but was lost. On opening the letter I found that she had given the name and address correctly, and knew the whole contents of the communication. It would have been impossible for her to have opened that letter, owing to the means which had been used to prevent such a thing.

'Another case of unusual interest was brought to my attention. A boy at the age of two years had lost his mother and his father wandered away. He had reached the age of twenty-nine years when he attended one of Mrs. Pepper's meetings and sent in a communication to his mother, asking the address of his father. Mrs. Pepper gave an address in London, to which he wrote. The firm there answered that Mr. — had been there three years before, but had left its employ to go to Glasgow. The young man sent a letter to his father in Glasgow, to which he received a reply. I investigated this case myself, and I am thoroughly convinced that there was no collusion.

'There are many facts which lead me to believe that there is a faculty of the human soul which enables it to communicate at great distances without the use of the ordinary senses. It is for the scientist to investigate these psychic phenomena and to ascertain if Spiritualism can prove itself.'

KEEP THE FLAG FLYING.

In the 'Editorial Notes' in the November issue of the 'Harbinger of Light' attention is drawn to the fact that 'the general uprising throughout the world towards a more intimate knowledge of psychic facts is having a marked effect upon the public Press,' and the writer says 'there has never been a time when it was more incumbent than now on those who have certain knowledge of the intimate connection between the spiritual spheres and this mundane existence, to keep the flag flying.'

After emphasizing the need for the presentation of 'the higher teachings of Spiritualism' and for the advocacy of 'the individual cultivation of the latent powers of the soul,' the Editor of the 'Harbinger' says:—

'The time has come when some definite steps will have to be taken to present the higher teachings more prominently to the world as the ultimate and meaning of the great light that was ushered in with such simple beginnings as the phenomena of the Fox sisters. It is not to less communion with the spiritual spheres that we are called, but to a higher and more personal one. Many of us owe to phenomena our redemption from materialism, and the work of gifted mediums is as valuable to-day as it was in ancient Biblical and Gospel times. But, as all the great prophets and teachers have declared in the past, it is comparatively useless unless it sets the soul on its own divine pilgrimage towards the light—which is love. "For," as St. Paul says, "though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels . . . and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries . . . and have not love, I am nothing."

REMARKABLE CLAIRVOYANCE AND PSYCHOMETRY.

A private séance was recently held by Mr. Ronald Brailey in the West of England, at the house of a lady who had invited a large party of friends, all of them perfect strangers to Mr. Brailey. One of the sitters afterwards wrote a letter to his hostess, from which I quote some sentences, substituting initials for the names, as desired by the writer. After stating that a relative and a friend of his wife's were described with 'absolute fidelity,' he continues:—

'With regard to my brother, there were certain statements which he alone can understand, but, knowing what he does, he is astonished and comforted beyond measure. The gentleman described by Mr. Brailey with "the broad hat and the peculiarity in the right eye," was unmistakably my late father, who was also in his latter years blind in the right eye. The lady who was described as with him was an equally good delineation of my father's mother. . . . In my own case the reference to India holds good in connection with my signet ring. A place was correctly described, and a certain suburban bazaar in its vicinity. The "potent influence" referred to by the medium starts from one hundred years ago, and refers to a certain piece of family history which is known to me. The warning given by the spirit author of the telepathic messages has been given to me in writing. The "material peril" is painfully familiar. . . . The old lady described as my guardian spirit is my father's aunt, A.B., who died in 1873. I have consulted my mother, who says that her constant prayer was that she might after death be the guide and guardian of her nephew's children. My mother hunted out a book which was much internoted, as has always been supposed, by another aunt, whose name appears on the title-page, but, on carefully scrutinising the notes I discovered the initials "A.B.," bracketed with my own name, opposite an underlined passage referring to guardian spirits. . . . The "23rd Psalm" was her favourite, and my mother believes and is confident that she taught it to me in my early childhood.'

As to the last sentence, it should be explained that Mr. Brailey had described the guardian spirit as holding a Bible open at the 23rd Psalm, and pointing alternately at herself and the sitter.

In a later letter, addressed to Mr. Brailey himself, the same writer further says: 'A statement which you made to a doubting friend on my right, and to which he demurred, turned out to be absolutely correct, although, as the incident occurred at the date you mentioned—October, 1883—he had to refer to his diary to prove the fact.'

C. F.

ROBBERY FORETOLD.

The subject of conversation was Spiritualism, and a number of commercial men were making it a butt for the usual sarcasm; at last, a friend of mine—Mr. Hughes, a Liverpool tea merchant—told them that he felt conscience-stricken for remaining silent, because, although he was not a Spiritualist, he was convinced there 'was something in it,' and he narrated the following experience:—

'Some time ago a Spiritualist staying in this hotel asked if I would like to accompany him to a séance in the district. I went, and after introduction to the host, who is a prosperous tradesman, we sat down and I was invited to put my hands on a little board called a planchette. In a few minutes it commenced writing, much to my surprise, and told me to close the account with a certain man (giving the name) or he would rob me. The message ended with the signature of a deceased sister-in-law. I was astounded, as no one knew that the man named was a new customer of mine in another town, nor that I had a sister of that name. I went back to my hotel thoroughly puzzled to know what to do; the account was a most promising one and everything seemed satisfactory. However, I wrote to my son and put the case before him, and awaited his reply. He agreed with me that it would really be absurd to close so good an account for such a flimsy reason; so the account ran on. Within a month from that time the man had *bolled*, taking with him between £30 and £40 belonging to me!'

Needless to say the wit of the commercial travellers received a damper; and once more the truth was borne home that 'There are more things in heaven and earth,' &c.

Nottingham.

J. FRASER HEWES.

A GOOD TEST OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

Signor Ernesto Senàrega describes, in 'Luca e Ombra' for December, a particularly good test of spirit identity which he received through the medium, Augusto Politi, at Rome, the only other persons present being the owner of the house and his wife. After he had been touched by a fabric which did not resemble anything in the room, the medium's guide said that it was a relative who had manifested; and then, although Signor Senàrega was thinking strongly of his grandmother, the control assured him that it was his mother.

Soon afterwards, Signor Senàrega heard the name 'Ernè,' which is the Genoese abbreviation of 'Ernesto,' and was not understood by the sitters, who were all natives of Rome. Presently he heard a very peculiar sound, as of someone shaking and scratching a silk dress, and could not understand what it meant until the explanation was given through the medium that this had been a habit of his mother's during life, and that her sister would know about it. As Signor Senàrega's mother died when he was only seven years old, and he had lived apart from and seen very little of her, his ignorance on this point is not to be wondered at, but on writing to his aunt, at Genoa, he learned from her that his mother had been much laughed at on account of her trick of picking and scratching at her dress. The point of this test of identity is that it could not have been in the mind of the medium or of any of the sitters.

SWINBURNE AS A SPIRITUAL POET.

Mr. George Barlow, in the 'Contemporary Review,' has described Swinburne as 'one of the world's very great spiritual poets,' and the 'Literary Digest' (New York) quotes the introduction written by Mr. William Morton Payne, of 'The Dial,' for a new volume of selected poems representing Swinburne's later work rather than the earlier effusions which led to the 'popular misconception' of him as a 'poet of passion in the vulgar acceptance of the term.' Mr. Payne writes of Swinburne as expressing 'the most exalted ethical idealism' and as arousing 'the deepest of our religious emotions.' He tells us that 'the proud exaltation of the full-statured soul is the key to Swinburne's ethics, through its close relation to his conception of duty and his strenuous demand for complete sacrifice of self, for utter and absolute devotion to the cause of man's bodily and spiritual freedom.' Swinburne's treatment of classical themes has been called pagan, but the writer says that it only sets forth 'the contrast between classical and Christian ideals.' 'Whatever we may call it, Swinburne's religion is that of one who resolutely rejects all dogmas and historical creeds, and with equal earnestness clings to the divine idea that underlies the creeds and bestows upon them their vitality. He draws the same sharp contrast that is drawn by Shelley and Hugo between the eternal spirit of Christianity and its historical accretions.' We are also told that he 'exalts spirit above sense and transports his readers into an atmosphere almost too rarified for ordinary mortals to breathe.'

TRUE RELIGION.

'The World's Advance Thought and Universal Republic,' issued by Lucy A. Mallory, of Portland, Oregon, criticising an orthodox reply to a question asked by a labouring man, says:—

'Man cannot "have an immortal soul," for the reason that the mortal cannot own the immortal, but the reverse—the infinite includes the finite.

'Man's salvation from misery and suffering is involved in the conscious realisation of his immortal nature. As long as man is conscious only of his animal nature he will suffer, for permanent happiness does not belong to that plane of consciousness.

'Every day is holy, because life (the Divine Essence) is forever sacred; and not alone in theological forms in a church, but in all our thoughts, feelings and actions in relation to our own spirit and all spirits, incarnate and discarnate. We cannot get away from the Divine Life, no matter whether we are "mending odds and ends at home," or wherever we may be.

'There is no "future abode where only those who have spiritual life in this world can go," for all have spiritual life

here and now. The man who does not consciously realise the best within him, realises the opposite state, here and now, and leaving the body will not change his state until he wills to change it. He must of himself realise and unfold his spiritual consciousness before he can realise Heaven. This is "the narrow way of life" that few attain to, because they are always seeking it outside of themselves instead of within their own being.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Spiritualism and Science.

SIR,—According to some scientists, energy, intelligence, or soul, can only exist in combination with matter, and when death occurs this energy, soul, or intelligence is absorbed into the all-pervading universal energy. The statement that energy can only exist in combination with matter cannot, I think, be refuted, but since the discovery of radium the general consensus of opinion appears to be in favour of a still further subdivision of the atom, and if it is correct to assume that the ions thrown off from radium are a million times smaller than the atom, it would appear to the lay mind that the ultimate subdivision of matter is inconceivable by us. Should this hypothesis be tenable, I see no difficulty in reconciling the deductions of scientists with those of Spiritualists, viz., that the identity of the spirit's body can still be preserved, and that the energy or intelligence developed in our corporeal body may still exist in combination with the infinitely small particles of matter referred to. I do not pretend to much scientific knowledge, and would therefore like to have the opinion of some of your readers who may be better acquainted with the subject.

A. BRITTLEBANK.

P.O.B. 108, Pretoria, South Africa.

Prevision through the Mediumship of Madame Montague.

SIR,—On the 3rd of November last, at a séance held in the St. Lawrence Hall, Montreal, a communication was received, through the mediumship of Madame Montague, from the Rev. Robert Brown (grandfather of one of those present), who has been in spirit life for over forty years. He appeared to the medium, who heard him sing a hymn for those in peril on the sea, 'Eternal Father, strong to save, &c.' His message was a most impressive one, concerning the disaster, then impending, to some ship in which many persons were in great distress and in danger of a wreck. Madame Montague was so emphatic that she even asked that those present should take note of the date and the hour, and watch ensuing events. No one left the room till eleven o'clock (the sitting having begun at nine), and no means existed for receiving communication of outside events through material agencies.

Next morning, November 4th, all the papers contained the announcements of the disaster which had occurred between eleven and twelve the previous night to the Royal Mail Steamship 'Bavarian' of the Allan Line, homeward bound from Quebec, which was wrecked on the rocks thirty miles below Quebec, where at this date (November 25th) she still lies. Those on board were saved through the swift and intelligent action of the officers and crew.

Montreal.

ROBBIE.

The 'Carver of Cherry-Stones.'

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' for November 18th last there is copied a little poem of three stanzas beginning—

'He gathered cherry-stones and carved them quaintly,' of which the Editor says: 'Here is a charming little parable, written we know not by whom.' It is a pleasure to say that these verses were written by the Irish-American poet and patriot, John Boyle O'Reilly, whose home was in Boston, and whose death occurred in the summer of 1891.

At the entrance to the Back Bay Park in this city there is a magnificent memorial group in marble, by the great sculptor, Daniel C. French, representing Ireland, personified by a female figure, with the rose and the shamrock, and a bust, life-size, in bronze, of Mr. O'Reilly.

John Boyle O'Reilly was a poet for poets. This poem in question was written in reference to a certain well-known American novelist whose work may be fitly characterised as the elaborated carving of cherry-stones.

LILIAN WHITING.

The Brunswick, Boston, U.S.A.

'Bright's Disease.'

SIR,—The letter in 'LIGHT' of December 9th, signed 'O. K.', is even more interesting than the writer would have your readers believe. He says: 'I mentioned my trouble to an acquaintance who gives lessons in hypnotism, and he offered to cure her by that method, but I postponed the trial.' A few sentences prior to the above he writes: '*but always assured her of her recovery and she was thus kept easy in mind,*' and this repeated assurance, being of the nature of hypnotic suggestion, would indicate, I think, that hypnotism was after all at the bottom of the cure.

There seems to be a mistaken notion that it is necessary to 'send to sleep' in order to hypnotise, but this idea may be discarded.

It is, perhaps, necessary to state that I am a Spiritualist, and it must be understood that I do not seek to underrate the powers of the 'friends across the border,' but while I congratulate 'O. K.' on his wife's recovery, it appears to me that his master mind prevailed and that the cure was effected by hypnotic suggestion.

Personally I have proved that hypnotism is a powerful factor in effecting cures. A lady whom I had hypnotised several times was at a circle, and complained of having no rest on account of neuralgia. It was not convenient to induce hypnotic sleep, so I faced her, and looked straight at her eyes and said, deliberately, 'You will go home and retire to rest and sleep soundly, and have no more pain.' 'Oh,' she said, 'I cannot believe that, it's too good to be true.' I repeated the statement, and the next time I saw her she said she had had a splendid night's rest. In another case a lady, who, by the way, was suffering from Bright's disease, and whom I had treated, asked me what she should do to get relief during my absence in the country. My answer was: 'If you feel any return of illness, go to bed immediately, and when in bed say to yourself, "Mr. Elliott says I am to go to sleep, and wake up cured and refreshed."' She did as I had instructed her, with the best results. Thus patients can even cure themselves if they will put their powers to the test; for, after all, it is not the hypnotist who cures, but that something within the patient called the sub-conscious mind.

S. JOHN ELLIOTT.

'The Problem of Evil.'

SIR,—In 'LIGHT' of November 25th, Mr. A. K. Venning contrasts what he believes to be the teaching of Christianity on the 'Problem of Evil' with the teaching of Spiritualism. It is now more than seventeen hundred years since Tertullian propounded his famous question, 'Unde malum et quare?'—whence came evil, and why does it exist?—and the question is still new.

Mr. Venning writes: 'The churches and theologians have taught for centuries that man was created pure, but fell into evil ways, some say through his own perversity, others through being tempted by the devil.' So far Mr. Venning's account corresponds with recognised Christian teaching. But when he goes on to assert that the 'churches and theologians have left it unexplained how a pure being could at the same time be perverse, or capable of yielding to temptation,' he betrays a certain unfamiliarity with Christian teaching; for Christians are taught that when the Creator pronounced man 'very good,' the goodness *was not final or completed goodness*: it was only the goodness of a perfectly fair and good beginning; and further, that, 'When God willed to create moral beings with the power of choice, so that they might love God and choose good, there was, of necessity, the possibility of evil. Without this power of choice, without this possibility of evil, we might do good, but we could not love good; we might be excellent machines, we could not be moral agents.' (Dr. A. G. Mortimer, Rector of St. Mark's, Philadelphia, 'Catholic Faith and Practice,' pp. 50, 51.) Man, at the beginning, *was* 'pure,' but he was not *impeccable*: his will was left absolutely free; free to will rightly, free to will wrongly. He was free to obey, free to disobey. It was of necessity that such should be the case; for those only can truly obey and love who have the power of refusing obedience and of withholding love.

Mr. Venning credits Christian teachers with holding that man's fall into sin was an 'unlooked-for development'; unlooked-for, presumably, on the Creator's part. Let me assure him, without dogmatising, that that is not the case. The Christian Church teaches that God, in making man a free agent, foreknew that he *might* avail himself of his moral freedom and wrongfully assert it by disobedience: and that while the Fall was no part of God's original purpose, it must have been present to His foreknowledge as a *possibility*.

Mr. Venning claims for Spiritualism the doctrine of man's evolution from the animal plane, and that sin and sorrow and suffering are 'God's benign method of raising up free-willed

man to angelhood,' and 'as a convincing proof of God's love and tenderness.' As Christians we claim this doctrine too, and teach it. We do *not* assert, as Mr. Venning states we do, that sin and sorrow and suffering 'are inconsistent with the goodness of God'; nay, rather, do we echo the beautiful words of the late learned and saintly Bishop of Gloucester, and 'thankfully recognise the disciplinary nature of the struggle with moral evil, the evolution *per ardua et per aspera*—"through toil and tribulation"—of god-like characters, the almost limitless nature of the holy aspirations which are developed in the conflict.'

CHARLES E. HUTCHINSON.

Alderton Vicarage, Wilts.

SIR,—Are there not two evils—a true evil, viz., sin (or that dead state which is its cause), and a felt evil, which is not truly evil, viz., pain? Now is it not true that God does that which is not evil, but is felt to be so, to free us from the truly evil? Sin is really and truly evil, because it is man apart from God. This is not the case with pain. God is in that.

Kinloch, Carshalton.

P. PRENTICE.

Mr. W. J. Colville's Christmas Greeting.

SIR,—Being again in Canada, in Toronto, under the British flag, I feel much nearer to England than when in the United States, and this sense of nearness to friends in Great Britain prompts me to write to wish my many good friends among your readers all best wishes and cordial greetings this happy Christmas season. I find Toronto a very favourable field for work. Some kind friends arranged for a course of lectures in the St. George's Hall, one of the most popular meeting places in the city. Large audiences attended, and on several occasions numbers of people were unable to obtain admission, and the local papers gave excellent reports. Canada is very cold, but the weather is clear and bracing. I meet many English people in this Dominion who have a very warm place in their hearts for the old home. Spiritualism is exciting considerable interest at present in Toronto among very intelligent and influential people, and I wish 'LIGHT' could be freely circulated among them, as I feel certain it would appeal to many, more so than any of the American periodicals, excellent though many of them are. I have to return to New York very shortly, and letters may be sent there to my old address, 125, West 56th Street.

W. J. COLVILLE.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'The Light of Reason,' for December. Ilfracombe. Price 3d.
- 'The Herald of the Cross,' for December. Lumley & Co., South Kensington, S.W. Price 2s. 6d. per annum.
- 'Christmas Cruelties.' BY ERNEST BELL. Humanitarian League, 33, Chancery-lane, W.C. Price 1d.
- 'The Race-builder,' for December. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C. Price 2d.
- 'The Annals of Psychological Science,' for December. London: 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. Price 1s.
- 'The Crank,' for December. C. W. Daniel, 3, Amen-corner, E.C. Price 3d.
- 'Occult Chemistry.' BY ANNIE BESANT. (Reprinted from 'Lucifer.') London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond-street, W. Price 6d.
- 'The Life Elysian. Recorded by ROBERT JAMES LEES.' London: John Long, 13, Norris-street, Haymarket. Price 6s.

CHARCOAL AS AN ANTIDOTE.—'La Lumière' refers to the controversy which has been going on among French scientific men with regard to the use of charcoal by the Japanese as an antidote to poisons and as a dressing for wounds. For the latter purpose it is stated that a small bag filled with charcoal made from straw is supplied to the wounded; a layer of charcoal may also be enclosed between two sheets of wadding. Animal charcoal (bone black) is said to have even greater antiseptic power than vegetable black, and various statements are quoted as to the antitoxic effect of this simple remedy. As a precaution against epidemic fevers and cholera a small teaspoonful of a paste made by mixing two parts of powdered charcoal with three parts of honey, taken every morning, is highly recommended. It is said to be quite pleasant to take, the honey also having a tonic action on the stomach. It is stated that a large dose of strychnine has proved harmless when mixed up with charcoal, also that when mushrooms (some of which are poisonous) are cooked along with pieces of charcoal all danger is averted; in short, that charcoal is a general antidote against the most dangerous poisons, this power being dependent upon some action or property not yet understood.