

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Some curious but practically fruitful speculations on the deep inner resources of humankind have been started by Professor William James, of Harvard. He draws attention to what he regards as a common experience—the discovery that volitional effort taps new power. He says:—

As a rule, if we feel stale we stop, but if an unusual necessity forces us to press onward, a surprising thing occurs. The fatigue gets worse up to a certain critical point, when gradually or suddenly it passes away, and we are fresher than before. We have evidently tapped a level of new energy, masked until then by the fatigue-obstacle usually obeyed. There may be layer after layer of this experience. A third and a fourth 'wind' may supervene. Mental activity shows the phenomenon as well as physical, and in exceptional cases we may find, beyond the very extremity of fatigue-distress, amounts of ease and power that we never dreamed ourselves to own, sources of strength habitually not taxed at all, because habitually we never push through the obstruction, never pass those early critical points.

It is evident that our organism has stored-up reserves of energy that are ordinarily not called upon, but which may be called upon: deeper and deeper strata of combustible or explosible material, discontinuously arranged, but ready for use by anyone who probes so deep, and repairing themselves by rest as well as do the superficial strata. Most of us continue living unnecessarily near our surface.

Here comes in the value of an extra store of emotion, an extra rush of affection, an extra impetus of the Christ-like motive of unselfish service. That may make all the difference, and positively tap power. Followed up, this might be, as we have said, a fruitful thought.

A lively American reporter gives a thoroughly readable account of a series of Theosophical meetings at Chicago, presided over by Mrs. Besant. Asked to indicate the difference between Theosophy and Spiritualism, the following is given as her reply:—

Where does Theosophy differ from Spiritualism? It does not: every doctrine taught is a part of the tenets of the faith of Spiritualism. Theosophists believe most thoroughly in all the phases of mediumship, but they are not interested so much in the physical phases as are the large majority of Spiritualists.

The reporter continues:—

Were it not for the fact that our mediums make their gift the means of making their living, in giving demonstrations (this open door through which so much that is unworthy and undesirable has come into our ranks) we would not be the cause for so much offence to the unbeliever.

The Theosophists live their teachings in their daily walk and earn their bread and butter by the toil of hands and brains. Their 'gifts' are higher perceptions and more lofty ideals.

The two philosophies are actually one—but many of the Spiritualists are still flocking in the outer courts of physical demonstrations which appeal more to the sensations, while the Theosophists have entered deeper into the philosophy, fully recognising the facts and truths and value of the phenomena but needing and desiring no daily or weekly physical demonstrations. After all, the differences are simply in the names. You can go into the West Madison-street lunch room and get a small steak, garnished with onions and potatoes, for 15 cents, or you can go to the College Inn and call for a châteaubriant and pay 1.50 dol., and after you have tried each and figured it all out, you find you simply had —beefsteak each time.

So the main difference is in the name, and as our followers of the blessed truths of Spiritualism shall rise above the planes of sense to the planes of inspiration and high living, loving their brothers and sisters, without guile and criticism, seeking not their own, they will find in that highway men and women of all religions, creeds and cults, of all colours and races, each seeking the same goal with eyes strained to reach the same haven, and there in unity and loving comradeship finding that after all we are all one.

We do not care to criticise this statement, but if we compare organised Spiritualism and organised Theosophy during the past dozen years, Spiritualists need not shrink from the test of 'high living, loving their brothers and sisters, without guile and criticism, seeking not their own.'

Mr. Tilak, whose opinion should command respect, speaking lately at an Indian festival, put a novel interpretation upon the curious tradition to which we referred on page 534. He says that the four castes were not intended to indicate grades of superiority or inferiority, but the uses of different functions in a real unity. The head was not regarded as superior, and the feet as inferior, but both were regarded as symbols of separate powers, 'like in difference,' as Tennyson says of womanhood and manhood.

We rather doubt this, but it harmonises with the well-known explanation of the plurality of arms, hands, eyes, &c., in many sacred images. We entirely agree, however, with Mr. Tilak when he says of India:—

The prevailing idea of social inequality is working immense evil. Capital is made out of the ideas of inequality, and class is set against class. Such disintegration of society, if unchecked, will involve us in utter ruin. The saints and prophets once averted the danger, and we are now called upon to play the same rôle.

Epistles of Swami Vivekananda, published in 'Prabuddha Bharata,' often give enlightening or touching glimpses of this alert man's teachings and meditations. His recording disciple, in one chapter, says:—

Some of the most beautiful scenes in the world have been made for me more beautiful, by listening, in their midst, to these long soliloquies.

It was dark when we approached Sicily, and against the sunset sky Etna was in slight eruption. As we entered the straits of Messina, the moon rose, and I walked up and down the deck beside the Swami, while he dwelt on the fact that beauty is not external, but already in the mind. On our side frowned the dark crags of the Italian coast, on the other the island was touched with silver light. 'Messina must thank me!' he said. 'It is I who give her all her beauty!'

It is this blending of rhapsody and science that so frequently gives such charm to meditations from India.

How absolutely true it is that it is always the human beholder who creates the picture! What does Etna know of its glow? what the moon of its mysterious beauty? what the dark crags of their gloom and of their artistic relationship to the glow of the fire and the beauty of the moon and her silver light?

Ah no! it is in the eyes that see, in the mind that translates, in the heart that loves and feels. Man is above Messina. It is he she must thank for being beautiful, after all.

At a late 'orthodox' Conference, Dr. Powicke started a discussion on 'The relation between Theology and Spiritual Life.' The following is a summary, full of suggestions of modern thought:—

(1) Spiritual life is primary, and is operative in myriads of souls that know nothing of theology, as the life of sensation and perception is active in many who know nothing of biology and psychology.

(2) The immediate effects of spiritual life are given in those emotional—generally instinctive—attitudes of reverence, trust, gratitude, self-abasement, aspiration which are connoted by the term religion, and are expressed in various religious cults.

(3) Theology begins with the first conscious effort of reflective thought to analyse, account for, formulate, the contents of religion, or religious experience.

(4) Theology, at any given stage of religious experience, will be felt as satisfactory, will be alive, so far as its form seems to be an intelligible and adequate reflection of that experience.

(5) A completely true theology presupposes not merely an intelligible and adequate reflection of the religious or spiritual life, but also, and still more, the purity of that life—*i.e.*, its full correspondence with the life of God.

(6) And this is conditioned by two factors—on the one hand, by God's progressive revelation of Himself to man, and, on the other, by man's progressive assimilation of what is revealed.

(7) Given, then, a complete revelation of God, a spiritual life completely responsive to that revelation, and a completely adequate intellectual explication of that spiritual life, the result would be a theology altogether true.

But surely these conditions are not forthcoming; neither, therefore, can the perfect theology be.

The following verses by a writer unknown to us, Ellen Glasgow, have an animation, a dash and a daring in them which make us wish to hear more of her. The last line is distinctly original and surprising:—

A PRAYER.

Grant me but courage, Lord!
I ask not that Thou smooth the appointed path;
I ask not any joys the years afford,
I ask not even Thy averted wrath.

Let me but learn to smile—
Let me face lightly any blow that falls;
Bear bravely with my bondage all the while,
And hug my freedom within prison walls.

Thus when the end draws near,
With lifted head let me the potion quaff,
And so—as one who never learned to fear—
Pass on to meet Thy judgment with a laugh.

MR. ELLIOTT O'DONNELL, if we may judge from his experiences narrated in a sixpenny pamphlet entitled 'Bonâ-fide Adventures with Ghosts,' appears to be a specialist in 'haunted houses.' If there is a 'perturbed spirit' attached to any house in which he may be, it is sure to manifest its presence by sight or sound. But there are also open-air ghosts. On one occasion, while cycling along a straight stretch of road, he was passed by a cyclist whom he saw ride with a crash into the back of a van which had for some time been seen on the road. On reaching the spot, however, Mr. O'Donnell could see no sign of the man or his machine. The van was a real one, and Mr. O'Donnell afterwards learnt that a cyclist had been killed on that very spot by a similar accident. The second part of the pamphlet contains a story of a ghost 'as it was told to the author.' Messrs. Baker and Son, the Mall, Clifton, are the publishers of this 'book to thrill—especially for Christmas,'

A VINDICATION OF THE MARVELLOUS.

The Rev. Augustus Jessopp, D.D., has recently published a book of remarkable stories, antiquarian notes, and personal impressions, entitled 'Frivola' (T. Fisher Unwin, price 3s. 6d.); and in this we find a section entitled 'In Wonderland.' Dr. Jessopp speaks first of the dying out of the marvellous, and instances a man who compiled an excellent notebook of ancient ghost stories, but added a note on the last page to the effect that he did not believe a word of them. Dr. Jessopp says: 'I was angered as I read, for why should any man collect a mass of narratives which he looks upon, not as mere fiction, but as mere lies? This arid scepticism makes me hate my generation.' He finds himself 'breathing a purer air' as he reads the narratives themselves, which date from five hundred years ago, and deal with ghost stories in which the dead dispute with the living, strange portents, tales of the devil and hobgoblins, dragons, and the like; and he concludes his summary by saying, 'What a dreary, monotonous, uneventful age we live in! We have sneered the ghosts and dragons away; we feed our children upon grammar and the multiplication table. Yet there are wonders still if we had but eyes to see them.'

Next comes 'An Antiquary's Ghost Story,' being, in fact, an experience of Dr. Jessopp's own, in which, while he was making transcripts from books in a friend's library, after midnight, he saw a large white hand within a foot of his elbow, and on turning round saw the figure of a large man in an ecclesiastical habit; the form vanished as soon as he moved, then reappeared, and vanished again. Another story, connected, like the former one and many of the incidents in this book, with an old Norfolk house, relates to a phantom coach which is seen and heard and then disappears. As Dr. Jessopp says, it is easy to offer suggested explanations of such facts, which content the Philistines but 'distress their more psychical fellow-creatures.' 'Whenever you are compelled to admit facts that are hateful to you, you may always get rid of them by *accounting for them*'; by suggesting, for instance, that a band of 'indiarubber idiots on the spree' had 'hired a carriage and pair from somewhere and driven down from nowhere in particular,' arriving at a certain lane in the dead of night and secretly returning. But it does not *explain*.

Dr. Jessopp fears 'that dreaming is going out among townfolk,' but believes that 'among our country folk dreaming is coming in again.' Religious dreams are common in East Anglia, and the visit of a menagerie will sometimes suggest dreams of fearful shapes of 'raging hyenas with horns.' Dr. Jessopp evidently thinks that over-incredulity is a fault of a too artificial and strenuous civilisation. A chapter on 'doubles' is interesting as referring to coincidences by which two men of the same name have sometimes attained distinction simultaneously, just as at present we have two Winston Churchills. There were, for instance, 'two John Wycliffes at Oxford at the same time,' and two great scholars at Cambridge, both bearing the name of John Boys. The celebrated Dr. Caius, of Cambridge, had a contemporary namesake at Oxford, 'double stars suddenly appearing in the firmament,' and Dr. Jessopp thinks that as the study of the occult sciences is reviving, 'in the revelations of the future the phenomena of doubles cannot but find a place of prominence.'

A CLEVER French pantomimist, M. Séverin, is in London, and his dramatic scena entitled 'Conscience' is on a higher plane than is usual with such performances, while M. Séverin's art is an illustration of how ideas may be conveyed without words. It depicts the remorse of a pierrot who, after having witnessed a murder, being bribed by the murderer, remains silent while an innocent man is tried and convicted for the crime; then he can hold his secret no longer and reveals the real culprit to the police. The fact that the author of this sketch, M. Durel, was himself murdered a year or two ago in a train, adds a sad interest to the performance. Some months previously M. Durel presented to M. Séverin an opal scarf-pin, on which was carved the head of a pierrot. M. Séverin told a representative of the 'Daily News' that, 'One morning, while he was dressing, he noticed that the pin had been broken in two, and the pierrot's head had disappeared. The day after came the news of his friend's terrible death.'

'VOICE' SPEAKING AND 'DIRECT' WRITING.

In 'LIGHT' of October 20th and 27th, 1906, we reprinted an account, written by Mr. David Abbott, an expert and sceptical conjurer, of some convincing evidences of spirit identity, which he had communicated to the 'Omaha World-Herald.' The messages were given by the spirit voices speaking through a tube or 'trumpet,' and we think our readers will be interested by the following detailed account given by Mr. S. A. Aykroyd, D.D.S., of Kingston, Ontario, Canada, in 'The Progressive Thinker,' of his experiences with three mediums during a visit to Lily Dale Spiritualist Camp Meeting, New York State. Mr. Aykroyd was a perfect stranger at Lily Dale, and the morning after his arrival he visited a 'trumpet medium.' Without giving any information about himself to anyone, he went into the séance-room with the medium, who did not ask him any questions—not even for his name. He says:—

A trumpet, an aluminium horn about three feet long, five or six inches in diameter at the large end and one-half inch at the small end, was placed upright on the floor in the centre of the room. After extinguishing the light, the medium sat by my side at the end of the room and placed her hands on my knee, requesting me to put my hands on hers. These may not be called absolute test conditions, but the results cannot be referred to fraud, because I was an absolute stranger in the house. We sat a few minutes, then I heard a child's voice at my knee, apparently saying 'Sybil.' I asked, 'Whose little girl are you?'

'Aunt Etta's.'

'Who brought you here?'

'Anna. Tell papa, tell mamma I was here. Tell grandma, and tell Aunt Bella and Aunt Annie.' Then repeated: 'Tell papa, tell mamma. Good-bye, Uncle Sam.'

Now, 'Sybil' was the name of my sister's little girl who died five years ago at or near the age of five years. Her mother's name is Etta—we all speak of her as 'Aunt Etta.' The other names given were also correct. The medium was in her normal state and described the person whose name was given as 'Annie' so correctly that I had no difficulty in recognising her as an old school friend and sweetheart, now dead some twenty years or more. The medium said: 'Is she your wife? She looks as if she belongs to you.'

After this conversation the horn tapped me on the forehead very lightly. The room was pitch dark, and I don't see how this could have been done so gently by physical hands or persons in the flesh. Then a voice in the horn said: 'Hello, Sam. How are Jen and the children?'

'They are well,' I replied. 'Who are you?'

'Charlie Wamp. How is mother?'

'Oh, she is not very well, Charlie. I guess you will soon have her over there with you.'

'I know that,' he replied. 'How is Bella?'

'She is not very well, either.'

'She has been sick a long time, but she will get better,' replied the voice in the horn.

Charlie Wamp was a cousin of my wife's, and he used to call her Jen; Bella is my sister, who has been in poor health for a number of years, her first serious illness taking place some time before Charlie died. His manner of speech was so characteristic and life-like as to be almost startling.

Next, the medium said: 'There is a man here connected to you, not a relation, who was killed by accident,' and a voice in the horn said, 'William Wamp. I showed myself in that way so that you would know who it was.'

'Yes, I know, you were killed in a railway accident at Georgetown, Ontario.'

'Yes, I never had the pleasure of meeting you in the flesh,' the voice said, 'but I am pleased to meet you here to-day. Will you tell your wife I had a talk with you?'

'Yes, I will. You were with us the other evening in Rochester and wrote a message through my wife's hand?'

'Yes.'

'How does she do?' I asked.

'She gets along well,' was the reply.

William Wamp was a favourite uncle of my wife's, and he met his death at Georgetown, as has been stated, in 1880. What purported to be he had come to us in private at our own home, and it was a great satisfaction to me to have him thus identify himself and speak to me so distinctly without being thought of by me, or asked for at this time, through this strange medium.

A voice said, 'Sister.'

'Yes, I have a sister dead. What is your name?'

'They call me Lily here.'

'Why! that is the name of my daughter. You were not named before you died!'

'No.'

'Did you know I had a name picked out for you?'

'No. What were you going to call me?'

'I was going to call you Ethel.'

'I like Lily better,' was the reply.

'Do you know what was the cause of your death?'

'Spinal meningitis.'

'I did not know that. Was there any other cause?'

'I had whooping cough, but the meningitis was the cause of my death.'

'I suppose you are a fine young lady now?'

'Yes.'

'What is your appearance?'

'I am fair.'

Well, I remembered my sister, the youngest of the family, who died in infancy, of whooping cough as I supposed, twenty-five years ago. She was a beautiful child of fair complexion.

After this the trumpet seemed to be floating near the ceiling from side to side of the room, and voices in it, with a receding, far-away and solemn sound kept saying, 'Good-bye, good-bye.' Then suddenly the trumpet struck the floor with a rattling sound, and the séance was ended. The medium arose from my side where she had remained all the time conversing with me, answering questions and speaking to the voices in the horn, opened the door, and the trumpet was lying on the floor some little distance from the place where it stood upright when the séance commenced.

Now I think I had in this séance some evidences of personal identity of deceased friends that cannot be accounted for on any other theory than the spiritistic. To say the medium was a ventriloquist, and that she got the 'communication' from me telepathically, is an explanation that does not explain to anyone who knows anything about telepathy.

Some years ago British Spiritualists were familiar with 'direct' spirit writing through the mediumship of Mr. W. Eglinton and others, but of late years this phase of manifestation seems to have ceased in this country. There are, however, still mediums in America through whom convincing proofs of spirit action are given in this way, if we may judge by the testimony of Mr. Aykroyd, who says:—

I next made an engagement with a medium for slate writing. I asked him if I could bring my own slates. He said 'Yes.' I had a pair of new, marked slates which I had brought with me from Rochester, and at the appointed hour I was on hand. I had never met this man before. He did not ask my name. We sat down on opposite sides of a small table by a window, through which the sun was shining brightly. (This was no dark séance, to which so many people object.) I laid the slates on the table, and never for one moment did they get out of my sight or reach. They were not placed under the table nor manipulated in any way. The medium snipped off a small piece of slate-pencil, which I placed between the slates. It was too thick; the slates would not lie flat together. I removed it, and he shaved some off the side of the piece of pencil, which I again placed between the slates. I then shook the slates to see if the bit of pencil was free, and it was. The medium then slipped a rubber band, about three-quarters of an inch wide, around the slates and laid them down on the table. He asked me if I had any questions prepared, and as I had not, he told me to write the names of five or six persons, not children, but those who could write in life, asking any question I wished. I did so on separate slips of paper and signed my name to each, while the medium leaned back in his chair on the opposite side of the table. I folded these ballots up tightly and placed them on the table in a heap at the right hand and awaited developments. We sat ten or fifteen minutes and nothing happened. The medium remarked that it was rather unusual to have to wait so long, and added, 'You are not opposing it, are you?'

I replied, 'No, I am not; I want to get the writing, and believe we will get it; others have in your presence, and I don't see why I should not. I am willing to sit longer if you have the time.'

He glanced at the clock on the wall, and said, 'No hurry; plenty of time yet.' Just then he said, 'There is someone here now,' and the medium picked up the pencil from which he had broken off the piece which was between the slates, and reached over and wrote across the top slate the name 'Aykroyd.' He pushed the slate around to me and said: 'Can you read it?' I told him. He said: 'That is a strange name; not many of that name in this country, are there?'

'No, none that I know of. There are some, but they spell the name differently.'

'Did you ask for anyone of that name?'

'Yes.'

'Find the ballot and put it on the slate.'

I did so. Then the medium said, 'Mack—who is Mack?'

I replied, 'I know.' I had asked for J. B. McKay, who was familiarly called 'Mack,' although I had not been in the habit of doing so, and had not thought of him by that name at this time. I found his ballot and placed it on the slate. We kept on till we got five ballots on the slate, then the medium said, 'The control says that is all he can get.' We then took hold of opposite sides of the slates and immediately the pencil between them began to write. I could distinctly hear the pencil scratching away between the slates, while they were thus held tightly together by us, and in less than a minute three raps were heard apparently between the slates, and the medium said, 'They are done; open the slates.'

I did so and on the inside of the bottom slate were five messages in five distinctly different handwritings, signed by the five people whose ballots I had placed on the slates. These messages were written in three directions; two from my side of the slates, two from the medium's, and one diagonally, in red pencil, across the face of the others. Moreover, they were written in the handwriting of those people while in the flesh. The message by J. B. McKay, who was the writing instructor for the public schools of the city of Toronto at the time of his death in May of last year, I showed to his business college partner here, who says it is McKay's handwriting and characteristic style.

On the ballot I asked him to give me a message in his own fine style of penmanship for purposes of identification. He did the best he could, I am sure, with a stub of a slate pencil lying flat between two slates. His signature was finished with a flourish, and dotted, as was his custom. If it was not J. B. McKay who wrote that message, then there was some clever forgery somewhere. This is the message: 'Dear Aykroyd,—Does it surprise you to receive a letter or hear from me? I assure you I haven't just come from the cemetery. I am no spectre, neither am I a resurrected body out of the valley of dry bones. I am a natural person from a real state of substantial life, and I see and know you. Help me to come to those who think I am dead and buried.—I am, J. B. McKay.'

I will not take the space to give the other messages, or comment on them more than to say each was characteristic of the person whose signature was appended, and some of my questions were definitely answered.

(To be continued.)

HOW SPIRITUALISTS ARE MADE.

In a breezy letter to 'The Progressive Thinker' Laura G. Fixen refers to the test-messages given by Mrs. Margaret Gaule-Reidinger at a recent meeting in New York, and says:—

'The wonderful messages that she delivered to entire strangers were most comforting and convincing. She speaks with no uncertain sound.

'A personal friend of mine had come to the hall to meet me. She was formerly a business woman at Kansas City—clever, positive, a college graduate, but very sceptical. She had not the least bit of faith in spirit messages. After the meeting she came up to the platform and some spirit at once took control of Margaret Gaule, grasped my friend's hand, and began to plead with her for forgiveness for a wrong she had committed against her chum when in earth life. My friend was surprised; then conviction strong as holy writ came to her of the truth of the message. She trembled like a leaf; tears streamed from her eyes as she sobbed and cried out, "My God, this thing is true after all!" This was really the most touching scene and the most convincing of the whole afternoon.

'When this sceptical woman—a stranger to all in the city but myself—an unbeliever who was not desiring nor expecting any message, was halted by a discarnate spirit and convinced against her will, it meant the opening of a new path to her, the dawning of a new light.'

WE desire to thank all those friends who have kindly furnished us with newspapers or cuttings, containing matter of interest to Spiritualists generally. Although we may not always be able to make use of newspaper cuttings we are pleased to receive them, and appreciate the kindly spirit and the interest in our work which prompt those who send them.

THE PROGRESS OF PSYCHICAL SCIENCE.

'The Annals of Psychical Science,' edited by Mrs. Laura I. Finch, whose address on 'The Psychology of Mediumship' closed last winter's lecture-season of the London Spiritualist Alliance, always presents the latest developments of scientific research into psychical problems, and the number for December, which completes the sixth volume, contains several noteworthy features. We learn from it that the 'Annals' is henceforth to be issued in an enlarged form to facilitate the publication of illustrations where needed; the review will also appear on the first of each month instead of on the 15th as hitherto, the subscription rates remaining unchanged. Answers to correspondents, and a monthly prize for the best first-hand narration, as yet unpublished, of a psychic event, preferably of a premonitory nature, will form additional features of the 'Annals,' and we congratulate the directors and editor on their enterprise and initiative.

In the current number Professor Bottazzi's observations with Eusapia Paladino, carried on by the aid of accurate recording instruments, are concluded. The writer continues to regard movements of objects, pressure on telegraph keys, &c., as being effected by the 'invisible limbs,' as well as by the direct volition, of the medium herself; and he notes, as others have done, that a muscular contraction, gesture, or other slight movement of Mme. Paladino's hand accompanies each action on the part of the invisible agency. He also states that the medium appears to feel with her 'invisible hands,' for when finger-impressions are made on clay or putty, without visible contact, she, at the same time, remarks on the consistency of the surface touched, and sometimes asks what it is. Referring to the allegations of occasionally attempted fraud—which, when consciously employed, he thinks is done 'to make fun of someone who is not sympathetic to her, rather than to deceive'—Professor Bottazzi says, using italics:—

'In our seven sances we never saw anything of the kind; Eusapia never used any kind of expedients to deceive us; on the contrary, she always warned us every time she moved the table or the curtain with her visible hands. . . . The results [of an additional séance] were very favourable because they eliminated the slightest trace of suspicion or uncertainty as to the genuineness of the phenomena. We obtained the same kind of assurance as that which we have concerning natural phenomena, physical, chemical, or physiological.'

Mrs. Finch tells us 'All about "Rama,"' this being the name assumed by a person who also calls himself Count Dr. Albert de Sarak, and who claims to be the authorised agent of a 'Supreme Council of Initiates or "Mahatmas" in the hidden recesses of Thibet.' Mrs. Finch thinks that he is probably an Italian who has been for some time in America. No university appears to have his name on its registers as a 'doctor' of any science whatever, and he seems to have 'forgotten the Sanskrit supposed to have been taught him by his learned masters in Thibet.' An exact reproduction is given of Mrs. Finch's certificate of initiation as a first-class member, and we note that the Sanskrit text, which occupies a prominent position on the certificate, has been printed wrong way up, showing that whoever had the initiation-form printed was either very careless or quite ignorant of Sanskrit. Mrs. Finch concludes a scathing exposure of the methods she attributes to 'Rama' by saying that if she did not make her convictions known she would be 'endangering the good repute of honourable men, and of the work itself, by tolerating the presence of charlatanism in the precincts of loyalty and devotion.'

Professor Richet defends his proposal of the term 'metapsychism' to denote the study of the phenomena hitherto known as 'occult,' and we may remark that the French word *psychique* does not cover nearly so wide a field as our word 'psychic,' and therefore a word is more needed in French than in English to describe the phenomena which are not due to mental action, normal or abnormal; so that 'metapsychical phenomena' are, in fact, what we call 'psychic phenomena'—namely, those arising from a source beyond the sphere of the mental faculties.

FAITH, ANCIENT AND MODERN :
OR THE EGYPTIAN BASIS OF CHRISTIANITY.

In our previous notice of Gerald Massey's last and greatest work, 'Ancient Egypt the Light of the World' ('LIGHT,' pp. 568, 585), we reserved our consideration of the chapters on 'Egyptian Wisdom in the Revelation of John the Divine' and 'The Jesus-Legend traced in Egypt for Ten Thousand Years.' We now give a brief outline of Mr. Massey's views on these subjects, for the information of our readers.

With regard to the Book of Revelation, Mr. Massey says :—

'The present contention is that the book is and always has been inexplicable—because it was based upon the symbolism of the Egyptian astronomical mythology—without the gnosis, or "meaning which hath wisdom," that is absolutely necessary for an explanation of its subject-matter ; and because the *débris* of the ancient wisdom has been turned to account as data for pre-Christian prophecy that was supposed to have had its fulfilment in Christian history. In the Book of Revelation the drama of the mysteries has been mistaken for human history, and a mythical catastrophe for the end of the world. The book as it stands has no intrinsic value and very little meaning until the fragments of ancient lore have been collated, correlated, and compared with the original myths and eschatology of Egypt' (p. 690).

The Apocalypse of John, Mr. Massey tells us, might be described as 'scenes and characters from the mysteries of Taht-Aan, who was literally Aan (= John) the divine penman. This was the sacred scribe to whom the 36,000 books or papyrus-rolls were attributed by tradition.' Mr. Massey endeavours to show that Taht-Aan was the pre-Christian John the Divine, 'that the matter of Revelation was derived from the Egyptian astrological mythology and eschatology,' and that the Jesus of this book is one with Iu the Su or son of Atum-Ra, who was portrayed as the divine man and bringer of peace to earth many thousands of years ago. As John was in the Isle of Patmos, which the present reviewer has long regarded as a mystical expression, so Aan was on the Mount of Glory in the Isle of Flame.

The subject-matter of Revelation is described as being very similar, indeed closely corresponding, to the details given in the Ritual or so-called Book of the Dead. The Ritual 'contains the divine words that bring about the resurrection to the glory of eternal life.' Horus as the Word gave voice to and executes the decrees 'which Ra hath spoken in heaven,' and 'Taht-Aan is the recorder of the decrees for human use.' The seven great spirits of Revelation are the seven servants or *seshu* of Horus. Further :—

'The day of judgment was periodic, like the deluge. It was the ending of a time, an age or æon, sometimes called the ending of the world by those who were ignorant of the sign-language. It is not an ending of the world, but of a great year of the world. . . . The cult of the lamb and the bride is at least as old in the astronomical mythology as the time when the vernal equinox entered the sign of Aries, and the lamb of Sebek succeeded the calf of Horus on the mount as the type of sacrifice. . . . In Revelation ii. 10, it is said, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." The crown of Horus was the crown of life that was the gift of his father. Horus was lord of the diadem ; through him the deceased is made master of the double crown. . . . In the Ritual the judgment is designated as that of the clothed and the naked. The righteous are clothed in the white robe of the worthy by the hands of Taht, and the wicked are synonymous with the naked in antithesis to those who are the clothed (compare Rev. xvi. 15). In the Ritual it is said, "The mouth of (the deceased) has been thirsty ; but he will never hunger nor thirst any more, for Osiris-Châs delivers him and does away with hunger" (compare Rev. vii. 17). "To him that overcometh I will give a white stone" (Rev. ii. 17) ; in the mysteries of Amenta a white stone or pillar of crystal was given to the initiate. . . . A method of obtaining knowledge by swallowing the book was also employed in an Egyptian tale. In the original the book of life was literally the food of soul' (pp. 694-697).

Other mystical and allegorical figures in the Book of Revelation are also compared with corresponding types in the Ritual :—

'Among the most prominent are the mystery of the seven stars ; the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads ; the mystery of the two witnesses and the four living creatures ; the mystery of the war in heaven ; the mystery of God ; the mystery of renewal in the ancient heavens. In the mysteries of Amenta there is a resurrection of the body-soul, or *manes*, and a transformation into spirit. This summons to the transformation into spirit, "Come thou hither," or "come thou to me" (in "Pistis Sophia" it is "come thou to us"), is repeated and applied to John in Revelation as the mode of resurrection into the spirit' (pp. 699, 700).

The 'falling of a star from heaven' is explained as the shifting of the pole of the heavens, whereby the old pole-star ceases to mark the approximate place of the pole, and a different one comes into use for this purpose. Some fourteen thousand years ago Vega was the pole-star, and at another time Alpha Draconis. The 'war in heaven' was originally the daily contest between light and darkness, then astronomical, and lastly eschatological or theological. Even the closing verses of Revelation are a paraphrase of the end of a book in the Ritual : 'Do not add to its chapters or make commentaries on it from imagination or from memory. This is a true mystery, unknown anywhere to those who are uninitiated.'

Mr. Massey carries his identification with Egyptian mysteries into a consideration of the question of Jesus and the Messianic mystery, saying that Jesus is Iu-su and that 'the Egyptian word "mesu," to anoint, and as a name for the Anointed, is earlier than the Jewish Messiah.' The advent of the Messu, or Messiah, was periodic, not once for all, for 'once for all could have no meaning in relation to that which was ever-coming from age to age.' Eternity was synonymous with millions of repetitions, as in the yearly springing forth of Nature into renewed life. Sacrifice is represented by the great Earth-mother, giving herself for food and drink, and by her ever-coming child. 'Ten thousand years ago a divine ideal of matchless excellence had been portrayed in the elder Horus as a voluntary sacrifice of self, not for the sins of the world, but for human sustenance.' We cannot go into Mr. Massey's exposition of the symbolical significance attached to the change of position of the Vernal Equinox, but we may note that the Wise Men of Egypt and Chaldaea considered that every 2,155 years, as the equinox passed from sign to sign, the Prince of Peace would be reborn as the Calf in the sign of the Bull, as the Lamb in Aries, and as the Fish in that of Pisces ; and all these are divine types in the Bible and early Christianity, as the scarab or beetle had been in the sign of Cancer and the lion in Leo. The dates of Christmas and Easter have an astronomical significance which has often been pointed out, and is enlarged on by Mr. Massey, who also says :—

'We shall find that the virgin motherhood, the divine sonship, the miracles, the self-sacrifice, the humanity, the compassion, the sayings, and the resurrection of Jesus had all been ascribed in earlier ages to Iusa or Iusu. Thus Egypt was, indeed, the cradle of Christianity, but not of the current delusion called historic Christianity. The saying attributed to the Hebrew deity, "Out of Egypt did I call my son," was true, but in a sense undreamt of by the Christian world. A religion of the cross was first established in the mysteries of Memphis. We have evidence that from 6,000 to 7,000 years ago the dead in Egypt were buried in a faith which was founded on the mystery of the cross, and rationally founded, too, because that cross was a figure of the fourfold foundation on which heaven itself was built. . . . It was a symbol of the power that sustained the heavens with the supporting pole and the arms of the four quarters. The god as the sustaining force within the cross may account for the legend of Jesus being the bearer of the cross on which he was to suffer death.' (pp. 749-751).

(To be continued.)

Mr. C. Brown, of Elm-crest, Kingston-on-Thames, informs us that he has recently developed healing power and has been very successful in the treatment of rheumatic gout, deafness and local pains. He is prepared to treat sufferers free of charge.

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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 CHARM OF CHRISTMAS.

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

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

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

The heart of it all is intensely human, arresting and winning—the birth of a child of wonder in a stable. It surprises, it makes one want to bend with the shepherds, and with 'the wise men from the East,' as we bring our small gifts of 'gold and frankincense and myrrh.' It is all so quaint, so mysterious, so artless, so heavenly and yet so homely, and the music and poetry and art of Christendom have naturally grown out of and fastened upon all this: and it is all potent still. 'Age cannot wither, nor

custom stale' its perfect human beauty. Therefore it will live: and the music, the poetry and the art could never have grown out from anything but a stable and a manger and 'no room in the inn.' The birth of a prince in a palace could never have worked the wonder, and captured the imagination and heart of the world.

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

How would it have fared with a Messiah such as the Jews predicted and desired—a fighter, a national deliverer, a bender and breaker of competing powers? He would have gone down with the vulgar herd of kings. The world laughs at his great daring saying that it is the meek who inherit the earth; but it is true. It has been and is a hard struggle, but the man of Nazareth will win.

Yes, and there is always the hovering about us of that thought—'This Christ will win!' and this grows out of the deep conviction that he ought to win: and multitudes who disown him in their actions are drawn to him in their hearts; and, at Christmas, they are aware of a strange wonder and tender fear.

The great ideal belongs to the future, with 'the Christ that is to be.' We cannot recall who told of that in the following masterly lines, but we are strongly moved to cite them, as summing up all we had in mind to say:—

Long ages since, on Bethlehem's star-lit plains,
The silent, listening earth
Heard angels chanting, in celestial strains,
Messiah's birth.
Clear rose the evangel on the midnight air,
And, ringing down through time,
Its echoes reach us, soothing man's despair
With hopes sublime.
Yet, its full meaning, fraught with unselfish love,
Ages have failed to teach—
Heaven's lowest music soars so far above
Earth's highest reach.
Slowly we learn its harmonies, and mortal ears
Are dull to catch the strain:
And feebly human voices, choked with tears,
Join the refrain.
What dissonances interrupt its sweetness!—
Harsh chords of conflict; the moanings of the dying
Nations, like Rachael, for their children crying.
Low falls the song, in mournful incompleteness—
O'ercome by bitter wailing,
Sin and woe,
Yet we know
Hereafter, to a pean, all-prevailing,
Its sound will grow.
Though, like music heard in dreaming,
Faint and broken, almost ceasing,
Now the cadence dies;
With the circling years increasing,
In the centuries before us,
Swelling to a fuller chorus,
It will spread and rise;
Rolling on in waves sonorous,
Filling earth and skies.
Now a streamlet, then a river,
Broadly sweeping to the sea,
And receiving tribute ever
As it nears eternity.
It shall gather from each nation,
Till the universal voice
Sings the wonders of salvation
That made the angel-hosts rejoice:
And the world, not only listening to their music, as before,
Rings with 'Gloria in excelsis' that to heaven's own gate
will soar.

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS AND 'THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.'

BY E. WAKE COOK.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday evening, December 5th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, Mr. H. Withall, Vice-President, in the chair.

(Continued from page 597.)

In his great work, 'Nature's Divine Revelations,' Davis makes an advance on all previous scientific and philosophic conceptions. The duality of Cause and Effect is there turned into a trinity of Cause, Effect, and Ultimate, as in the great generalisation: Cause, the Great Positive Mind; Nature the Effect; and Spirit the Ultimate; the whole cycle of operations being to produce Individualised Spirit. Davis says: 'It is the object that spirit should be *individualised*. The object of such individualisation is to establish a communion and sympathy between the Creator and the thing created; for the spirit progresses to its Source whence it came, and then only becomes fitted for new spheres of its eternal existence.'

In the whole range of speculation I have met with no system which exhibits such essential unity amid diversity; that so orders the multiplicity of effects into 'series, degrees, and representations,' making each fact the index to a larger fact, and every fact a symbol of measureless significance.

Time will not permit me to give the barest outline of the wonderful conception of the Cosmos as a whole, or the 'Univercœlum,' as Davis calls it; that must be studied at first hand. But the following quotation from 'Nature's Divine Revelations' gives some hint of the lines on which it is conceived:—

'I am desirous of enforcing the great spiritual and eternal truth which it is necessary for man to know and appreciate before he can know himself and be happy; and that is, that all manifest substances, forms, compositions—indeed, that *all things visible* are expressions of an interior productive cause, which is the spiritual essence; that the mineral kingdom is an expression of motion; the vegetable an expression of life; and the animal an expression of sensation; and that man is an expression of intelligence; that the planets in our solar system are a perfect expression of the sun from which they sprang; that the various combined bodies and planetary systems in the universe are a perfect expression of the Great Sun of the Univercœlum; that the Great Sun is a perfect expression of the *Spiritual Sun* within it; and that the Spiritual Sun is a perfect expression of the Divine Mind, Love or Essence. The Spiritual Sun is thus the centre and cause of all material things. It is a diverging or radiating sphere, or atmosphere, of the Great Eternal Cause. It is an aroma—a garment and a perfect radiation of the more interior essence, the Divine, Creative Soul.'

Thus the sublime central spiritual sun has its corresponding material sun which has thrown off, somewhat on the lines conceived by Kant, Laplace, and Herschel, circle upon circle of suns of unimaginable splendour; which in turn have thrown off planets with attendant satellites. These blazing suns have not only the 'promise and potency of all terrestrial life,' they have the promise and potency of spiritual worlds, or spheres, grand beyond poet's dreaming.

Our stupendous stellar system is but a part of the fifth circle of these suns. Davis says:—

'The vast ocean of materials in ceaseless motion and activity, from whose bosom these systems were born into existence, and each inconceivably extended system and system of systems involved together, with all their accompanying excellences and beauties, are everlasting indices of future, inevitable, and corresponding emanations from the great exhaustless fountain from which these all have successively flowed. All these productions—all these suns and systems of suns with all their accompanying worlds—are but as one particle, are but one breathing forth of internal qualities from the great eternal fount, in comparison to the glorious developments that are to be extended throughout the height, and depth, and length and breadth of the whole Univercœlum!'

The centre of the universe is always spoken of as the 'Great Positive Mind,' the whole system being conceived on electrical principles, the higher being positive to all below. Electricity is described as immanent and all-pervading, and it is the means of connecting all bodies throughout the immensities, and their means of mutual communication; and much that we call matter is electricity. Gravitation receives a new and significant interpretation. It is conceived somewhat on chemical lines, all things attracting or repelling each other according to their inherent affinities, as they are fitted to associate with each other. The principle of marriage is thus incipient in the minutest particles; Davis says that all the celestial bodies are reciprocally exchanging, 'almost intellectually,' particles and influences as they become fitted for the new associations. Affinity, or attraction, thus becomes a rudimentary form of love. This conception of the Cosmos, as a whole, is the grandest and most united that ever got through the mind of man, and the description of it is a perfect mine of scientific, philosophic, and poetic suggestion.

Leaving the immensities which are apt to set us gasping for breath, we now come to humanity. Man is regarded as king of all below him. All animals are sections, or parts, that are developed and are synthesised in him. So we are related to our dumb friends, the animals, on one hand, and to the angels on the other; it is the conflict between these two parts of our dual nature which forms the drama of life. In accord with the marvellous unity of conception which characterises the Harmonial Philosophy, man's outer form is the exact expression of the inner principle; his outer faculties are the index to the more splendid faculties of the spirit, the organs of the soul, or the spiritual body. The existence of these inner and higher faculties proves, to the logical mind, the existence of a spiritual world in which they function.

As the whole purpose of this philosophy is educational, the training of the young is fully considered. Davis would begin at the beginning, and commences with the conditions affecting birth into this rudimental sphere—marriage is therefore fully dealt with. He would emancipate woman from sexual thralldom, and would promote true conjugal unions, the resulting harmony producing harmonious offspring.

Davis says that the principle of marriage is universal: the union of the positive and negative principles. God is the Great Positive Principle, typified by wisdom; and Nature is the negative principle, typified by love. This union of complementary principles is traced throughout every department of being down to the smallest atom which seeks its counterpart by a rudimental love which the scientist calls 'chemical affinity.' It is further stated that:—

'Every individual is born married; every male and female has a true and eternal companion. This marriage is solemnised by supreme sanction, and is sanctified by angelic harmony. It depends not upon personal beauty or education; neither upon wealth, position, situation, time, age or circumstance; it is the spontaneous and inseparable conjunction of affinity with affinity, principle with principle, and spirit with spirit. . . . That spirit which is still seeking and praying for conjugal companionship should rest perfectly assured that it has somewhere a mate—somewhere an eternal associate! Life will not be always incomplete.'

Every soul shall meet its true mate, here or hereafter; and whatever obstacles time and chance may throw in their way, the meeting is inevitable, and will be joyous in proportion to the length of the delay.

All this is very consoling when we think of the piteous procession of the unloved; the starved half-lives to which so many sensitive souls are condemned by the cross-purposes of love, the tragedy of adverse circumstances, or by the chilling hand of 'death.'

Next in importance to being brought into the world under favouring conditions, is the preservation of health; indeed Davis puts it foremost, and the first volume of 'The Great Harmonia,' entitled 'The Physician,' is devoted to the philosophy of health and disease.

Davis would combine the functions of the clergyman with those of the physician; he would heal through teaching. The mind or spirit is the predominant partner; when that is right, all

is right. The mind, the will, has enormous power over the body ; every atom is moved by the spiritual principle, and obeys its behests. Health is harmony, and disease is discord. The human brain is a spiritual or vital galvanic battery, and thought is powerfully dynamic. The positive and negative forces prevail throughout ; when they are evenly balanced you have the harmony of health ; when the positive is in excess you have the feverish diseases ; when the system is negative you get chills and all the ague-like diseases ; hence the primary address must be to the mind, for its spiritual forces are the most potent in restoring the balance.

Disbelieving in all scientific medicines, Davis says : 'The only true medicines in Nature for existing diseases, and the only true divine elements which, by operating magnetically upon the body through the spiritual principle, unfold and advance individual health and happiness, are the following : Dress, food, water, air, light, electricity, and magnetism.' He insists on the greatest moderation in eating and drinking, and the thorough mastication of every particle of food, the avoidance of worry, and on the necessity of plenty of fresh air and exercise, and the taking of very little meat.

In the first volume of 'The Great Harmonia' Davis gave all that is new and true in Christian Science sixteen years before Mrs. Eddy made her 'discovery.' The whole volume is fascinating in its manifold suggestiveness, and the light it throws on the problems of health, and the way it anticipates later discoveries.

In dealing with social matters Davis makes a profound and searching analysis of the conditions then existing, pointing out the causes and the remedies with rare instinct. Free thought, unrestricted inquiry, the use of reason, and the investigation of the principles of Nature, are essential. He says that the world is existing on wrong foundations ; that interests conflict where they should harmonise ; that interests conflict not only with each other, but with conscience and duty. The pecuniary interest of the physician is that disease should abound ; the undertaker's that deaths should multiply ; the lawyer's interest is to set people at loggerheads, and promote litigation and strife. Davis would remodel institutions so as to make men's interests agree with their duties, and thus take away all inducements to dishonesty. To this end he proposes various co-operative schemes of great ingenuity, which are sounder, and better adapted to human nature, than the so-called 'scientific' schemes of some Socialists. This part of the Harmonial Philosophy is very interesting and suggestive, but it is far too large to be even outlined here.

We will now glance at the more distinctive and purely spiritualistic parts of the philosophy.

Having given the history and the philosophy of the universe, and dealt with all man's physical, mental, spiritual, social, and industrial needs in this world, he deals in an inspired and inspiring way with the glorious portal of so-called 'death,' and gives glimpses of what follows that inevitable promotion.

From the moment that we attain physical maturity the process of death begins, as the body is less and less fitted to meet the needs of the ever-expanding spirit. When the physical organism is no longer able to respond to the calls of the spirit it is sloughed—is cast off like a worn-out garment. This final stage of the process, which has been pictured with such revolting terrors, is described as very beautiful ; when the body seems to be struggling in agony the spirit is panting in nascent ecstasy. 'Death, or the transition so termed, is of all things the most to be admired, and its prospect is the first thing to be cherished and appreciated.'

As the spirit sinks into its last sleep on this earth, it awakens in the second sphere of existence. This sphere is the first of the 'many mansions.' It bears the same relation to this world that our ideals do to the realities of life. Davis says :—

'I behold the *spiritual* sphere as containing all the beauties of the *natural* sphere combined and perfected. And in every natural sphere these beauties are represented, though in the first and rudimental degree ; so that every earth is of itself an index and an introduction to the beauty and grandeur that

are existing in the second sphere. For from the natural the spiritual is unfolded or made manifest.'

This conception of the first stage of the after-life carries the stamp of truth, and is of profound import and significance, differing as it does from the old orthodox notions. The first thing to note is that it is a step upward ; there is no descent into any sort of hell or purgatory. There are sorrow and suffering enough in this world to form the only hell that is needed, or is compatible with a God of love. 'Sin' is but another name for error, for ignorance, and there seems more than enough of pain and misery here to serve as the punishment, or corrective, and to stimulate to higher endeavour. As a man's status in the next sphere is determined by the life he has lived here and his stage of development, all good will receive its just and appropriate reward in the degree of his promotion ; and as we carry memory with us the remorse and the regrets which it will bring us for ill-doing here will satisfy all the demands of Divine justice.

The second point to be noted is that there is no break of continuity. If, as formerly supposed, a man at death were suddenly changed into an angel it would almost destroy individuality. He would be somebody else ; there would be a break of continuity, and the lessons of life would be wasted. Another point is that the next stage is not some unimaginable 'heaven,' but the things we are accustomed to raised to a higher stage of beauty so that they will delight us as never before ; they will not be strange or foreign to us, we shall feel *at home* more sweetly than ever we do here.

As the scenery, or our environment on the next plane, will be but the glorification of this, so will there be no stagnating idleness, no paradise for the 'Weary Willies' ; there will be a continuation of the activities which interest us here, and we shall pursue them with a higher range of faculties and in vaster fields.

When those who leave this world prematurely, those who die young, cut off before their time, arrive in the next sphere they are received into educational establishments, and the knowledge they failed to obtain here is imparted to them and they are thus developed and fitted to associate with the higher ranks of society. Those who are tied to earth by unexhausted interests may have their progress retarded ; they may try to get into communication with those left behind on earth. In the higher circles of society in the second sphere inhabitants from other planets mingle with those of the earth ; thus a vast range of new interests is opened up in the exchange of experiences. I can only give one more quotation from Davis who, speaking of a peculiarity of the second plane of existence, says :—

'They have a sense of music ; but it proceeds not from *hearing*, for they *perceive* harmony, and the soul of harmony, which is music. Such floats along the strata of the atmosphere, and is wafted into the soul as the fragrance of a flower into the senses. I do not *hear* but *see* music. I see it in the united voices of flowers, that speak, yet make no sound—in the shrubbery and foliage that proclaim truths, yet speak not—and in the harmony of each heavenly society ; for that harmony is heavenly music. Music is perceived by the unfolded senses, and appreciated by the wisdom. It is the soul of order, the creator of all celestial harmony and melody. The music thus perceived sinks into the depths of the soul, and unfolds sentiments of which the spirit-home alone is worthy.'

From the second sphere Davis ascended to the higher stages, each one the glorification of the one below it ; the third sphere being the glorious fulfilment of the promise and prophecies of the second, and so on in ascending series, until he reached the seventh, or Celestial Sphere. From this the seer returned blinded and overwhelmed, his language beggared by the ineffable splendours awaiting us.

Here I must abandon my futile attempts to give an account of the contents of this wonderful philosophy ; but I will conclude with a few words giving the general impression it has made on my mind, and I hope you will all study it for yourselves.

As I have said, it is a philosophy and a history of the whole scheme of existence ; it examines all the great problems

and illumines all. Human interests are touched at all points : beginning with pre-natal influences, then the educational influences, and the whole conduct of life is laid down with masterly insight. The works of no one man have ever approached the vastness of range of the system revealed by this uneducated boy, and the self, or spiritually, educated man. The scientific unity of the whole, and the loyalty to the great underlying principles are its most striking characteristics. It is essentially an all-reconciling system ; the truth on both sides of the great controversies is discerned and reconciled in higher synthesis. All the legitimate claims of the Materialist are met and reconciled with Spiritualism ; while the essential unity of science, philosophy, and religion is insisted on, and all are seen to be indices, or prophecies, of more glorious developments to come. The central conception is something between what Tennyson calls 'The Higher Pantheism' and a glorified Christianity. Its ethics might be described as scientific eclecticism, for the good of all systems is taken and harmonised. Its sanctions come from the conception of the Fatherhood of God, the Motherhood of Nature, and the Brotherhood of Man.

The conception of the after-life is the most logical, consistent, and scientific known to me. A vast system of progressive evolution ; each successive stage the logical outgrowth of the preceding stage, with no break of continuity and no attainment of a sudden perfection that would mean stagnation to all eternity. There will be an ever-increasing clearness of perception, ever-growing powers and ever-widening fields for their activities. Happiness, felicity will steadily increase without cloying ; each attained stage of beatitude, of knowledge, of scientific or artistic achievement will be but a platform from which to view the still more glorious heights beyond.

Now this Harmonial Philosophy is a double revelation : it is a marvellous revelation of the wonders of this stupendous Cosmos, and it is a glorious revelation of the spiritual faculties and powers within each of us ; latent in many, developed in the few. Davis was aided in his spiritual development by spirit guides and friends ; but the greater part of his knowledge was obtained by the exercise of the spiritual faculties of his spiritual body, unhampered by the 'muddy vesture of decay,' the earthly body. His was a case of the 'open vision' spoken of in the Bible. But these glorious faculties, this boundless wealth of knowledge, are our own inalienable birthright. So there is resident within each of us the powers of a Shakespeare, a Newton, a Beethoven, or a Michael Angelo. These powers are always knocking at the door of our consciousness, seeking recognition and use ; they prompt our thoughts, and when a clearer gleam can get through it is the inspiration of genius. The more we can refine our organism the more clearly this light will shine through, until the lightning flash of genius may be an abiding splendour with us, and the highest teaching for the attainment of such God-like powers in a not distant future is given with lavish prodigality in the Great Harmonial Philosophy. (Loud applause).

At the conclusion of the above Address, which was followed with the closest attention and was frequently applauded, a few interesting comments and remarks were made by the chairman and several members of the audience, and the proceedings terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Wake Cook for his instructive Address.

THAT the difference in the point of view affects the estimates of value formed by different persons is frequently brought before us by the letters which we receive. Thus one correspondent writes : "LIGHT" is a great joy and delight to me ; another, on the other hand, observes : 'I wish I could feel that I derive any enlightenment through reading the paper, "LIGHT" ; while still another says : 'I think "LIGHT" becomes more and more acceptable. Instead of so much Spiritism the highest form of spiritual life is placed before the reader. What I like in its pages so much is its broad-mindedness.' Evidently the personal equation has to be reckoned with. The attitude of the reader largely determines in each case the extent of the benefit derived from reading our pages.

THE ANTIQUITY OF 'CHRISTMAS.'

Mr. Dudley Wright, in the Christmas number of the 'Christian Commonwealth,' published on the 11th inst., points out that it is a mistake to think that the custom of celebrating December 25th as an important annual festival arose with the establishment of Christianity. So ancient is this festival, he tells us, 'that we find details of the celebration of Christmas in the historical records of every nation, and always on December 25th.'

Originating, no doubt, in the fact that on that day the return of the sun towards the northern hemisphere first becomes perceptible, and that 'the promised restoration of light and the commencement of a new era led to the day being kept with great rejoicings and thanksgivings,' the idea was afterwards applied to the religious conceptions of which the sun and its course were used as emblems ; in Persia, Mithras was the divine incarnation who was represented on the physical plane by the sun, and therefore 'December 25th was held to be the day on which this God-man was born, the anniversary being celebrated with even more pomp and rejoicing' than the modern festival is with us. In Egypt, Mr. Wright says, Osiris became incarnate and was born on December 25th :—

'He was the son of Seb and Neith, who was known as the Lady of the Sycamore, and the images which represented her bear a striking resemblance to the more modern representations of the Madonna and the ancient ones of Sophia, the goddess of wisdom. Horus, another Egyptian name for the sun, was said to have been born of the Immaculate Virgin, Isis. He is generally represented as an infant in the arms of his mother, or sitting on her knee ; and in many of these representations both mother and child are black, as is the case in some of the earlier Roman Catholic representations of Jesus and Mary. Isis was worshipped in Europe as well as in Egypt for centuries after the commencement of the Christian Era as the Virgin Mother, and styled Our Lady, Queen of Heaven, Star of the Sea, and Mother of God.'

Mr. Wright mentions that Gautama Siddhartha, whom the Buddhists revere as the Lord Buddha, is also said to have been born on December 25th, five hundred and sixty years before the advent of Jesus. In Greek mythology Hercules, another divine incarnation, had his birthday at the same time, and a similar coincidence is found in the case of Bacchus. The Saxons, Germans, and Scandinavians had their 'Yuletide,' and altogether Mr. Dudley Wright's article gives the impression that Christmas is far more pagan (so-called) than Christian in its origin.

Gerald Massey says of the Christmas festival that it 'can be identified with the yearly celebration of the rebirth of Osiris (or Horus) in the moon.' December 27th was the first of Tybi in the Egyptian calendar, and 'this was the day on which the child-Horus was crowned and his festival celebrated. If we reckon the 25th of December to be the day of his birth, the day of resurrection and of the crowning *in Amenta* is on the third day,' December 27th, or Tybi 1st. 'There are several symbols of this resurrection on the third day,' says Mr. Massey, and he explains that it took place in Amenta (the after-world) and not on earth. Thus the Egyptian Christmas included our Easter as well, the birth celebrated being the after-death birth into the spirit world, or in other words, the resurrection. Mr. Massey also explains the 'unlimited gorging and guzzling,' which too often takes place at Christmas, as a survival of the festival of the rebirth of the Nile-year, or of returning food and drink, when the grapes were ripe in Egypt. Mr. Massey says that the 25th of December has been celebrated for at least ten thousand years. It is a good old custom, if practised in moderation, and it is likely that for another ten thousand years people will wish each other 'A Merry Christmas !'

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The Offices of 'LIGHT' and the London Spiritualist Alliance will be closed on December 25th and the following days, and will be reopened on *Monday, December 30th, 1907.*

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL OF HAPPINESS.

The necessity for a reconstruction of society by the general diffusion among mankind of new ideals leading to new courses of action and new methods of solving old problems, has been before the mind of every thinker since the time of Plato, and, no doubt, ever since man founded anything like an organised society, or civilisation. Mr. J. Brierley ('J.B.' of the 'Christian World') has taken up the idea of St. Augustine in his 'De Civitate Dei,' and in his new book, 'Our City of God,'* has drawn a picture of the ideal 'which the modern consciousness demands.' He says:—

'We see to-day truly "A City of God," but one built on broader foundations and with a mightier population than the one we read of in the African Father. Our *Civitas Dei* is Humanity itself. But not humanity alone. For us, as for Augustine, it is always man and God; humanity and the Divine Power that is forming humanity. With us, as with him, the ultimate solutions are religious. For Theology, properly conceived, is not a shut-up compartment of things, but an all-embracing scheme, a true *scientia scientiarum*, holding in its scope all that belongs to the life of nations and of men.'

By way of definition, Mr. Brierley begins by stating the nature of the fundamental principles which underlie all such discussion—the doctrines of man, of God, of the Incarnation, of the miracles in the Gospels, of sin, sacrifice, and salvation; then he discusses the forces which make for fixity or change in religion, and shows that religion has always been transitional, and must continue to move and progress. The real conditions of happiness, those things by which the soul lives, are spiritual; they are 'love, joy, peace, temperance, meekness, faith; fidelity, comradeship, trust; the disciplines by which man becomes conscious of his best self, of the Divine in him and around him'; and 'the supreme moment for the Church lies in the fact that modern society is finding all this out for itself. It discovers that neither in science nor in wealth lies the satisfaction it craves.' But the Church too often 'offers peace at the expense of truth,' and in order to recover its lost place in the world it must have 'at least as lofty a cult for the mind as it has for the heart.'

In other words, the religion of the future must be intellectually acceptable as well as morally satisfying and spiritually enlightening. Nor must Christianity starve the heart, or the emotional side of man's nature. In the early days, its gift to the world was 'an unspeakable joy and an incomparable spiritual reinforcement.' The joy came from an 'actual contact with a Perfect Love'—with 'Love Incarnate, love that goes forth in constant joyful service.' When the Church preaches and practises this love, which 'offers itself everywhere without expectation of return,' its great moment will have come again as a power in the world.

Starting from these principles, Mr. Brierley outlines the present state and future possibilities of our social system, discussing the pressure of modern civilisation and its hardship on the unprotected classes; the duty of the State in regard to happiness, its relation to private ownership, the gospel of work, and many other themes. We quote a few trenchant and profound expressions:—

'The world will not have reached its happiness until every holder of power—the parent with the child, the mistress with the maid, the master with the servant—has, in using it, learned and caught the spirit of Christ. . . Happiness depends on things which no social manipulation can of itself secure. Man is a spiritual being in a spiritual universe. Just as in this world his soul cannot get on without his body, any more than his body can get on without his soul, so in the community the spiritual and bodily requirements need to be supplied together.'

'True Socialism proposes, not the extinction of property, but its universal diffusion. We would give every man his joy of individual possession. We want all that develops individuality; we want also all that solidarity can offer. The end is the highest well-being of every individual man; the means, the use for his benefit of all that the wisest combination can secure.'

* 'Our City of God.' By J. BRIERLEY, B.A. ('J.B.'). London: James Clarke and Co., 13 and 14, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 6s.

'The State can do much to organise happiness. . . There is no abiding happiness away from effort. Man can only preserve health of body and mind by labour. It is by constant exercise that our faculties exhibit their possibilities and augment their powers. We only know ourselves, reach ourselves, by energising.'

'The supreme want of our time is a spiritual teaching which, addressed with fearless impartiality to all classes, shall, with irrefutable argument and irresistible appeal, urge them to inner improvement as the indispensable accompaniment of any external advance. This teaching must be adapted to the new thought conditions. One of the leading features of it should be the creation, in the minds of the young, of an intense sense of social obligation. We are where we are and what we are because of boundless benefactions bestowed upon us by invisible donors, because of measureless service rendered us by invisible helpers.'

'Religion has always stood for a world beyond the visible, a world not so much seen by the intellect as sensed by the heart; a world which takes matter and its manifestations as a secondary affair, and finds its life in will and purpose, in moral values and spiritual affinities.'

'Whatever the situation, our happiness is, to an enormous extent, in our own hands. A man is happy when he thinks he is. Inside us is a force that can drive away the clouds. Our will-power, which can call up good thoughts and disperse bad ones, and concentrate on the lighted side of things, is our philosopher's stone, that turns all things to gold. . . The faith that lifts you most, that extracts from outer events the wholesomest nutriment, that makes for the fullest life—is not this plainly the thing to seek?'

As to creeds, men may accept and 'fancy they believe them,' but the inward mind 'calmly works on the hypothesis that the universe is reasonable.' 'The soul's argument is in its own aspiration and ceaseless desire. It knows that purity, love, reverence, fidelity, are life's highest things, and that their existence in man means their existence elsewhere in fulness.' Through the older conceptions 'we are creeping into a roomier, vaster temple of God.' Our incompleteness is the soul's preparation for completeness. Experience presents us with opposites, behind which we have to find the Reality.

This, then, is the lesson of this beautiful and luminous book, every page of which inspires great thoughts and encourages us to work out our progressive soul-evolution despite all seeming difficulties. 'Life is a process carried on for the extract it will yield. The process is here and now; the extract is what we shall be in the world invisible.' The nearer we get to Reality the greater our happiness; we are meant to be happy, we are meant to find Reality, and the true search for happiness for ourselves and others is that which leads us to find Reality.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Owing to the serious illness of Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, which we regret to say still continues, Mr. and Miss Rogers will not send out any Christmas cards this year—but they desire to extend, through 'LIGHT,' their kindly greetings and seasonable good wishes to all their friends.

In a recent letter to one of our correspondents a well-known public man, who shall be nameless, said: 'I am bound to tell you that I had a daylight sitting with the famous rogue Dr. Slade, and I was puzzled to know how, on the top of my head, a slate (shut up) could be written upon by a piece of pencil enclosed therein. But I did hear the scribbling, and when the slate was opened there was writing upon it.' The writing purported to be from a departed person known to the sitter, but because the message was untrue the sitter 'firmly' believes that the writing was 'due to trickery, so clever that I cannot tell how it was done. But the noise was certainly made on the slate, and I heard it.' Surely this is an illogical attitude to take up! The writing may have been a perfectly genuine psychic phenomenon, in spite of the inaccuracy of the message. The communicator may have made a mistake, or have been misinformed; or, as the guide of the medium frequently wrote the messages on behalf of the spirit friends of the sitters who could not control the pencil themselves, he may have misunderstood what the spirit wished to convey. It is hardly fair to call the medium a 'rogue' and charge him with duplicity on mere suspicion and because of an inaccuracy in the message.

JOTTINGS.

We recently noticed some prophecies of further great disasters on the Pacific Coast of North America, and now it appears from an article in 'La Lumière' that there have been repeated predictions of the complete destruction of Paris by a great fire, during a war, between 1906 and 1911. We hope that these prophecies will not be realised, unless, indeed, they refer to events now well over thirty years old.

A report in the 'Natal Mercury,' of November 22nd, says that unabated interest is being displayed by the public in the work of Mrs. Inglis at Durban. At a recent meeting 'her clairvoyant descriptions were as usual exceedingly clear and distinct in detail, ensuring no less than eight unmistakable recognitions out of ten given. The messages given were also significant of the correctness of the clairvoyant descriptions, and constitute a remarkable feature of Mrs. Inglis's mediumship.'

Dr. J. M. Peebles informs us that he is just commencing to write a new book to be entitled, 'The Angelism of the Ages and its Teachings'; it should surely be a great deal better than 'Demonism.' This ever-young 'grand old man' cannot rest, for, in addition to writing and publishing books, he flies about the country lecturing; evidently he is bent on living to be a hundred, and 'growing old gracefully.' His Spiritualism does not appear to have injured his health or shortened his life!

We send out sincere thoughts of sympathy to Mr. W. T. Stead, and we feel assured that Spiritualists the world over will do likewise when they learn of the loss which he has sustained by the sudden and premature death of his son, Mr. William Stead, who, it was generally expected, would succeed his father in the editorship of 'The Review of Reviews.' As the 'Daily News' says: 'The pathos of the calamity is accentuated by the fact that the late Mr. Stead would have been appointed permanent deputy to his father at the very hour that death intervened. Mr. Stead has many friends among high and low; they may have held different views of his opinions, but they will be unanimous in tendering to him and his family such consolations as are possible under these sad circumstances.'

A very 'human document,' entitled 'A Journalist's Dying Message to the World,' has just been laid on our table. It is written by a Spiritualist who was face to face with death, and is instinct with the true spirit of spiritual insight and anticipation. Mr. H. G. Somerville, the writer, was a London journalist for thirty years and died last May from an exceedingly painful disease, leaving his widow in great poverty. His Majesty the King has consented to accept a copy of Mr. Somerville's 'message,' which can be had post free for 3½d. from J. Wooderson, 23, Oxford-street, London, W. Despite his sad circumstances Mr. Somerville's 'message' is hopeful, and it is one which we can very heartily recommend to those who have suffered bereavement and to those who feel that they are drawing near to the Great Beyond.

Mr. Somerville says, evidently addressing his wife: 'Do you remember saying to me once, "only earth-bound spirits appear in séance-rooms; the others, those who aspire, who long for spiritual progress, are far away?" I do not know about séance-rooms, but it comes to me that I shall not be far away, though it will not be because I cling to earth, but because from the other side my work will still be here, the work of helping you. It will be at once my joy and my stepping-stone to higher things. On earth you helped me, beyond I shall help you. Will you feel it sometimes, I wonder?' We should like to quote more, but that would not be fair, especially as the proceeds are to go to help Mrs. Somerville, who greatly needs assistance.

At a meeting of the Newcastle Psychical Research Society held on the 10th inst., Mr. W. H. Robinson read a paper written by a lady member, in which it was suggested that 'the soul or case of the spirit might be electric.' This appears to be only another way of saying that in the spirit-body the ions or electrons recently discovered by science may be in a more active or more plastic condition than when grouped as material atoms. This spirit-body was defined as a semi-material envelope which unites the spirit to the physical body, and persists after the latter has been stripped off at death. Clairvoyant perceptions were adduced as showing that in a state of passivity the medium and sitters threw off ethereal substances which spirits were able to discern and to mould into any shape. The inner vision, it was intimated, was an important faculty to cultivate, as those who possessed it could see more at a séance than was visible to others, and to those who could perceive them these subjective phenomena far outweighed in value the physical manifestations.

An enjoyable 'Welcome' Reception was accorded to Miss Lillian Whiting on Monday afternoon last at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. A report of her interesting address will appear in our next issue.

'The Sunflower,' of November 16th, gives a report from Rome, dated November 11th, that Professor Lombroso, in a recent article in 'La Lettura,' states that: "There can be no doubt that genuine spiritualistic phenomena are produced by intelligences totally independent of both the medium and the parties present at the séance." On many occasions he has proved this to be the case, a notable instance being when three spirits actually appeared in the room together, each at a considerable distance from the others, and each producing distinct phenomena. Professor Lombroso says that he must refuse to follow the example of the great majority of his brother savants, who, where Spiritualism is concerned, "deny the truth on principle."

THE 'Globe' of December 16th contained a telegram from a Rome correspondent to the effect that some American millionaires, who are anxious to study Spiritualism, have engaged Eusapia Paladino, and that she will shortly go to the United States. It is further said that the 'celebrated medium claims that last week, while giving a séance at the residence of a princess in Rome, she was lifted to a height of six feet from the floor by spiritual hands, the table also being raised and held suspended in the air.' Eusapia has of late been instrumental in carrying conviction of the reality of the phenomena to so many leading minds among Continental scientists, that we hope it is not true that she has succumbed to the 'money power'—unless, indeed, she may thus become the agent for converting the money kings!

Commenting on Professor W. F. Barrett's articles in the 'Westminster Gazette,' to which we referred last week, the 'Peripatetic Philosopher' in the 'Christian Commonwealth' says: 'Spiritualists will hardly follow Professor Barrett in his claim that telepathy affords adequate explanation of certain well-attested phenomena, such as phantasms of living or dead persons, though he admits it does not explain all spiritualistic phenomena. Can science or the Psychical Research Society give a more efficient explanation? The question is not asked in any carping spirit, but as one seeker after truth speaking for the many.'

In another paragraph this writer says: 'It was my privilege to hear a trance address through Miss Florence Morse, at the Lecture Hall of the London Spiritualist Alliance, in St. Martin's-lane. The control reviewed the progress of religious thought, pointed out the mistakes made in the past of endeavouring to narrow down within the limits of a set form of words the religious life of the people, and emphasised the part which Spiritualism must play in the future development. There are those who think there is danger in sweeping away the old safeguards, but the same warning cry had always been raised at every preceding reformation, and the world having started upon the broad pathway of unfoldment, no dread of danger could ever hold it back. The word of warning which should be sounded was, "Be ye ready." The open door will admit truth and righteousness. Not the least interesting feature of these addresses are the answers given to questions asked at the conclusion, answers which are in themselves weighty words of wisdom, and which carry the stamp of sincerity. Although these Wednesday afternoon meetings have been well attended, it has been decided to alter the hour from 5 to 6.30 p.m., in order that people engaged in business may have the opportunity of attending.'

Dr. Robert Bell, in an address to a large number of the members and friends of the Psycho-Therapeutic Society, on Monday, the 16th inst., in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on 'The Evolution of the Cancer Cell,' remarked that it was a mistake to look upon the local manifestation of the disease as the disease itself, and not to accept the more rational view, that it was really the disease process having come to a focus at a particular spot, associated as a rule with an injury, which rendered that spot prone to attack. Cancer was a disease of what was ordinarily healthy tissue, and was due to the neglect of hygienic laws. Each of the twenty-five billion cells which go to make up the human frame was an independent unit, and in certain vitiated conditions of the blood the epithelial cells tended to assert a morbid individuality and activity, which is recognised as cancer. But, said the speaker, there was abundant evidence to prove that these diseased cells could be reclaimed, and compelled once more to resume their normal functions, by the adoption of measures which promoted a healthy condition of the blood stream.

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 which may elicit discussion.

To Help the Children.

SIR,—I propose holding meetings at 69, Wiltshire-road, Brixton, S.W., on Sunday, the 22nd inst., at 3 and 7 p.m., in aid of the fund for providing with their annual Christmas treat the poor and destitute children in connection with the Spiritual Brotherhood Mission, Mayall-road, Brixton. Illustrations of psychometry and clairvoyance will be given, and addresses will be delivered by Miss Earle. A shilling collection will be made, and I shall be glad to receive donations from any friends who take an interest in the cause, but who may be unable to attend.—Yours, &c.,
ZEILAH LEE.

Is Cruelty a Mental Disease?

SIR,—The letter of 'One who has Suffered through Cruelty' seems to me lacking in discrimination. To imply that deliberate cruelty is always a 'mental disease,' and that those who indulge in it ought therefore to be 'pitied,' is to confuse cruelty for which a man is *irresponsible* with cruelty for which he is *responsible*. Both forms of cruelty undoubtedly exist; although it must be admitted that the dividing line between them is sometimes exceedingly narrow. The writer of the letter says, 'We now hold that Nero and Domitian were insane because they were cruel.' But *do* we hold that? Nero and Domitian were undoubtedly cruel; but that their cruelty was *by itself* a convincing proof of their insanity we cannot admit. The assumption that it was so is based on the false logic that because some maniacs are cruel, all cruel men are maniacs! These two Emperors were cruel, but they were not necessarily, and for that reason, insane. 'Deliberate unkindness and injustice to man and beast' may be, as the writer says, a proof of 'mental aberration'; but they may be, and more frequently are, a proof of *moral* aberration. Speaking personally, I can say that should I come across a boy cruelly ill-treating a dog, it would not be my *pity* that the young ruffian would taste.—Yours, &c.,
C. E. HUTCHINSON.

Alderton Vicarage.

The Barbarity of Death Sentences.

SIR,—The 'Daily Mail' of December 5th contained what I think is a striking and thoughtful comment on the sentence passed on the Goolds at the recent trial at Monaco. In his description the reporter says:—

'It was a horrible scene. As my eyes rested upon the crucified figure hanging behind the president's chair, I could not help wondering how Christ would have dealt with such malefactors as these. Of one thing, at any rate, I am very certain. Nothing could be less in accord with the spirit of Christianity than such torture inflicted even upon the most hardened criminals.'

It is a comment that one hardly expects to find in the daily Press, which appears rather to harvest up sensational and degrading detail. If only our Press writers would eventually come to see and understand how barbaric and savage are many of the ways of so-called justice, it would be a strong ray of light in a very grimy place. The spirit shown by this paragraph makes one feel hopeful of the advancing humanity of our race, and its broadening consciousness of what is due to evil-doers. I doubt the possibility of such an expression being found in a paper fifty years ago.—Yours, &c.,
IDA W. HARDY.

Bereaved Parents desire Information.

SIR,—Three weeks ago (on Sunday, at midnight, October 27th), our darling, a little boy of nineteen months, died after an illness of only three days' duration. The loss to us, his mother and father, is a terrible one, and I now appeal to any of your correspondents who can point out some hope of our hearing of him. It is needless for me to say that I cannot accept the orthodox (or conventional) hereafter as preached and taught by the Churches, but I am anxious for light.

Some eighteen months ago when a lecturer on Spiritualism came here, I identified myself with the movement, sympathetically, although my knowledge of Spiritualism at the time, as now, was practically *nil*, for I cannot say the lecturer convinced me, although she said my wife was mediumistic. Probably some of your correspondents (who may have experienced a similar sad loss) can inform me if it is possible to hear of so young a child, and in the hope of information on this I now address you.—Yours, &c.,
Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

A READER.

SOCIETY WORK.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Owing to the Christmas Holidays, 'Light' must be sent to press next week earlier than usual, and we shall therefore be unable to print reports of Society Work in our next issue.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On December 9th Madame Zeilah Lee and Miss Earle held a successful meeting for poor people's Christmas treat. On Sunday last Mr. Underwood gave an address on 'Prayer.' Sunday next, Mr. and Mrs. Imison.—W. U.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Ord gave an interesting account of how she came into Spiritualism and the benefit and comfort she had derived from it. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Robert King.—W. T.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last Mrs. Boddington gave good addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Miss Chapin; also on Monday, at 8 p.m. December 25th, at 11.15 a.m., public circle.—A. C.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Burton ably answered written questions, and Mr. Chaplin conducted the after-circle. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Podmore. Members' developing circles Wednesday and Friday, at 8 p.m.—J. L.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday morning last good clairvoyant descriptions and advice were given. In the evening Mr. W. E. Long delivered an interesting address on 'Spiritual Mysteries.' Tuesday, December 31st, at 8 p.m., social party and watchnight circle; tickets 1s.—E. S.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. J. G. Nicholson's address on 'The Gospel of Freedom' was thoroughly appreciated by an attentive audience, Mr. Geo. F. Tilby presiding. Sunday next, Mr. J. H. Pateman will give an address on 'Spiritualism: Its Effects on the Lives of the People.'—W.H.S.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday last Madame Zeilah Lee's clairvoyant and psychometric delineations were heartily appreciated by a good audience. Mrs. Barton presided. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Wright. 29th, Mr. J. Jackson. January 8th, social evening.—C. J. W.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Mr. J. McBeth Bain gave an address on 'The Power of Service.' Messrs. S. Rist and R. Wittcy rendered solos. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Adams, address, and Mrs. Webb, clairvoyante. Sunday, 29th, at 7 p.m., Mrs. H. Boddington, address and clairvoyant descriptions.—N. R.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. E. W. Wallis's excellent and logical address on 'Man's Need of Spiritualism' gave great pleasure to his hearers. Miss Otten delightfully rendered a violin solo. Mr. F. Spriggs presided. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. V. Peters, clairvoyant descriptions; doors open 6.30 p.m. Silver collection. January 7th, members' re-union.—A.J.W.

CHISWICK.—56, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last the subjects considered were 'Unity' and 'Theology.' In the evening Mr. J. Adams' stirring address on 'The Witch of Endor' and answers to questions were greatly enjoyed. On Monday last Mrs. Atkins gave helpful psychometric delineations. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 2.45 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. Samuel Keyworth, on 'Yuletide and Christmas.' Tuesday next, healing.—H. S.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—On Sunday morning last Mr. F. T. A. Davies opened a discussion on 'The Essenes and Christianity,' and clairvoyant descriptions were given. In the evening Mr. G. Morley spoke on 'The Trinity Aspect in Faithism,' and gave clairvoyant descriptions. On Sundays, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., and on Wednesdays, at 8.15 p.m., services are held for Faithist teachings and clairvoyant descriptions. No service on December 25th.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. M. H. Wallis's helpful address and answers to questions were highly appreciated. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. McBeth Bain (see advt.).—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mrs. Fairclough Smith delivered an instructive address on 'Healing,' and gave good clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mrs. Fairclough Smith, answers to written questions and clairvoyant descriptions.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Gode gave an interesting address on 'Healing,' and Mr. Jackson spoke on 'The Fact of Spirit Return.'—E. F. S.