

# Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOTI MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!'—Paul.

No. 1,516.—VOL. XXX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 1910. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.  
Per Post, 10s. 10d. per annum.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.  
110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

Programme of Meetings for the Coming Week.

TUESDAY, February 1st, at 3 p.m.—  
Members and Associates, 1s.; Friends, 2s.  
Séance for Clairvoyant Descriptions ... MRS. S. PODMORE.  
No Admission after 3 o'clock.

THURSDAY, February 3rd—  
NO MEETING, owing to Psychic Class Annual Dinner.

FRIDAY, February 4th, at 3 p.m.—  
Admission 1s.; Members and Associates, Free.  
Talks with a Spirit Control ... MRS. M. H. WALLIS.

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, and FRIDAY, at 11 a.m.,  
Spiritual Healing ... MR. A. REX.  
For further particulars see p. 46.

Members' and Associates' Subscriptions for 1910  
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'LIGHT' AND THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

We beg to remind the Subscribers to 'Light,' and the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1910, which are payable *in advance*, that they should forward remittances at once to Mr. E. W. Wallis, 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Their kind attention to this matter will save much trouble in sending out accounts, booking, postage, &c.

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Trance Address: 'What Think ye of Christ?'  
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Sunday next, 11 a.m. ... MR. E. W. WALLIS.  
Trance Address, 'Spirit Ministry and Guidance.'  
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PRINCESS KARADJA.

An Address ... 'THE GOSPEL OF HOPE.'  
February 6th, Mr. W. E. Long, Trance Address.

## PSYCHIC CLASS DINNER.

## THE ANNUAL DINNER

(Of Members and Friends)

In connection with the above, will be held on

Thursday, February 3rd, at 7 p.m.

At PINOLI'S RESTAURANT, 19 and 21, WARDOUR STREET, W.  
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A Discussion of Certain Communications Purporting to come  
from Frederic W. H. Myers,

By H. A. DALLAS.

With Introduction by Prof. W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.

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Frederic Myers and Psychical Research—Mrs. Verrall's Automatic Script—Mrs. Holland's Automatic Script—The 'Symposium' Episode—The Sealed Envelope—Mrs. Piper's Mediumship—Theories which have been Suggested—Causes of Confusion—Mrs. Piper's Visit to England—The Latin Message—The Plotinus Episode—Conclusion.

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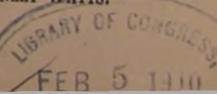
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(See page iii)

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Brixton ought to be proud of its Vicar, the Rev. A. J. Waldron, he is getting quite Spiritualistic: and yet, in all probability, some of his parishioners will be sorely disturbed over the following extract from a sermon which found its way into the 'Daily Chronicle':—

When I was a child, if I did anything wrong I was sent to bed, and was told that if I died I should frizzle for ever. That idea has gone. The old idea of heaven as a perfect place where we should sit and play harps for ever has gone, too. If we were to do nothing but sing for millions of years it would be too perfectly monotonous, and really, some of us would not much want to go there. Heaven is not a walled-in place. It is evolution. The forces will operate there that operate here. The intellectual man will find himself in companionship with the intellectual, the impure man will be with the impure, the mean man with the mean. We shall, I believe, have a chance to do splendid work, and to raise the man we have pushed down when on earth. Of course, there is a hell, or we should not believe in a just God. The man who owns a slum and goes to church and heads the subscription list, and the man who makes war between England and Germany, will suffer just punishment. But there is no such thing as 'everlasting' punishment.

The 'Occult Review,' discussing the Feilding and Carrington experiments with Eusapia Paladino and her supposed occasional lapses into cheating, says:—

The frequent tendency of the ultra-psychical temperament towards imposition and dissimulation is one of those psychological puzzles which have for the time being completely baffled the scientific world, and it is unlikely that any satisfactory clue to it will be obtained until the astrological hypothesis is thoroughly investigated, and especially in this connection the properties and peculiarities of the planet Neptune. It will then be realised that the fact that the same planet which, in combination with the moon, results in the evolution of the psychic temperament also denotes loss through fraud when afflicting in a horoscope the rulers of finance, has a direct bearing of the utmost significance on the problem involved.

We cannot help thinking that the explanation is much simpler. Very few mediums quite escape the sensation that what is done through them is more or less done by themselves, and this may, in some cases, quite readily resolve itself into helping out what is done. We remember perfectly well, in our old and frequent experiments with Kate Fox, how, in the spelling out of messages by raps, she used to make shots ahead and guess perhaps half a dozen words, and simply get 'yes,' thus helping out the communicator from her own resources of intuition or impression; and we can quite understand the possibility of a similar helping out of physical phenomena by a medium accustomed to the sensation of knowing what is wanted to be done and of being used to get it done. If we remember aright, some such explanation was suggested with

regard to Mr. Judge's supposed lapses into producing Mahatma messages. Of course, it is delicate and dangerous ground, and ground that ought to be suspected, or reserved only for experts, but it may be good ground all the same.

'The Order of the White Rose' (Boston, U.S.) publishes a remarkable pamphlet entitled, 'Proofs of Spirit Identity and Guidance: a series of Letters from Spirit Elizabeth Barrett Browning to J. C. F. Grumbine while a minister of the Unitarian Church.' We call it 'remarkable,' and for several reasons. The story of the coming of Mrs. Browning into Mr. Grumbine's life is a remarkable one, and some of the letters are remarkable for their passionate affection for her 'Dear One,' her 'Dear Boy,' her 'Dear Son,' her 'Dear Boy of Earth,' to whom she is 'Always lovingly,' 'With love and spiritual devotion,' &c.

There is very little that is of public interest in the letters. For the most part they are letters of consolation, hope and guidance, which, to the believing recipient, and probably to some of those who read them, might easily be helpful and precious.

The last poem by Gerald Massey appears in this month's 'Book Monthly.' It has in it much of his insight at his best, much also of his old battle fervour, with just a pathetic halting in the last three lines as though to indicate his failing power: and yet the last line rings out with perfect mastery.

We cannot help wondering why some enterprising publisher does not bring out a popular edition of his poems: and why not an edition of his literary lectures? They contained original thoughts of power, finely set forth.

Our readers will be interested in this last poem, for which we are indebted to 'The Book Monthly':—

He set his battle in array, and thought  
To carry all before him, since he fought  
For truth, whose likeness was to him revealed,  
Whose claim he blazoned on his battle-shield;  
But found in front, impassably opposed,  
The world against him, with its ranks all closed.  
He fought, he fell, he failed to win the day,  
But led to victory another way.  
For truth it seemed in very person came  
And took his hand, and they two in one flame  
Of dawn divinely through the darkness passed;  
Her breath far mightier than the battle-blast.  
And here or there men caught a glimpse of grace,  
A moment's flash of her immortal face,  
And turned to follow, till the battle-ground  
Transformed with foemen slowly facing round  
To fight for truth, so lately held accursed,  
As if they had been her champions from the first.  
Only a change of front, and he who had led  
Was left behind with her forgotten dead.

Redcot, South Norwood Hill, 1907.

Since Robert Louis Stevenson's 'A Child's Garden of Verses,' we have seen nothing to equal a perfectly lovely little book by Margaret Arndt, entitled 'The Meadows of Play' (London: Elkin Mathews), beautifully and wonderfully made, with heavenly grace of feeling, thought

and expression. Happy child that cuddles near mother or father to hear these read! and happy the father or mother who takes to heart some of the touchingly wise things said in Mr. Chesterton's little 'Introduction.'

We must just quote two short pieces, merely to suggest the atmosphere of these wholesome and happy 'Meadows':—

WINTER BOUND.

There is a wood in this wide world  
Where little primrose buds lie curled,  
Where pale anemones lie hid,  
Nor dare to open one fair lid;  
Where green wood spurge, with milky cup,  
Awaits the spring to wake it up,  
Where violets soft feelers throw  
To see if it is time to grow:  
But winter rules with icy rod,  
He bars and locks the earthy sod.  
Wait, wait, you darling little things,  
Soon you shall grow your two green wings,  
Soon you shall see the big blue sky,  
Strange things will happen by and by.

A MOTHER'S MORNING PRAYER.

Let Thy calm, O Blessed One,  
Through my beating pulses run,

Till my fevered frettings cease,  
Till around I shed Thy peace.

Let Thy joy, Thy gladness give  
Zeal to work, and zest to live.

Let Thy love, Thy gentle grace,  
Be reflected on my face.

Let the children see in me  
Faint remembrances of Thee.

O yes, we must also give the first two verses of 'Birthday Baby':—

Birthday baby, one year old,  
Would you like a throne of gold?  
Would you like a silken dress  
For a fairy-tale princess?

Would you like the moon or sun?  
Tell your mother, little one.  
She will see what she can do  
All for love of darling you.

'Birthday baby, one year old, Would you like a throne of gold?' seems to have taken Mr. Chesterton's fancy. He says, 'I think that is so nice and sudden.'

TRANSITION OF DR. A. J. DAVIS.

Just as we go to press we learn from Mr. Wake Cook that he has received word from a friend in America that, on the 13th inst., Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis passed to 'the Summerland' beyond physical death, regarding which, and his clairvoyant experiences there, he has written so much that has been helpful and comforting to others. Born on August 11th, 1826, Dr. Davis has had a long, a wonderful, and an inspiring life. He is to be congratulated on the fact that he has gained his promotion without the dreary waiting of a long illness. We tender our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Davis.

WILLESDEN GREEN.—On Sunday evening next, at 7 p.m., a meeting will be held at 42, Lechmere-road, Willesden Green, N.W., with a view to forming a society and holding regular meetings in the district.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a Conference meeting with the Acton and Ealing Society at Greenview, Ealing Broadway, on Sunday, February 6th, at 7 p.m. Speakers: Messrs. G. Taylor Gwinn and G. F. Tilby.

A REGULAR subscriber, not of British nationality, but who frequently visits England, writes us from Switzerland: 'I send you and the staff of "LIGHT" my hearty and best wishes for the coming year, and may the England we love so well weather the storm now gathered around her, and once more prove that where there is nobility of nature, nations and men rise ever stronger and nobler for their very mistakes.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 10TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

MR. J. W. BOULDING,

ON

'The Ordination of "Doctor Sceptic," or the Value of Critical Examination in Matters of Belief.'

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

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings:—

Feb. 24.—MR. ANGUS McARTHUR, on 'The Psychic Element in the Greek Testament.'

[This Lecture neither assumes nor involves any knowledge of Greek on the part of the audience. The Lecturer, however, believes that by using the original text he can throw a clearer light upon the psychic problems of the New Testament.]

Mar. 17.—LADY MOSLEY, on 'Spiritual Healing.'

Mar. 31.—MR. GEORGE P. YOUNG (President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists), on 'The Trend of Modern Science towards Spiritualism.'

Apr. 14.—MR. EBENEZER HOWARD (Garden City Pioneer), on 'Spiritual Influences toward Social Progress.'

Apr. 28.—REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS, on 'The Ministry of Angels.'

May 12.—MR. EDMUND E. FOURNIER D'ALBE, B.Sc., on 'Pre-Existence and Survival: or the Origin and Fate of the Individual Human Spirit.'

MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Monday afternoons, after two o'clock, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, February 1st, Mr. Podmore will give clairvoyant descriptions, at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

THOUGHT EXCHANGE.—No meeting on Thursday next, February 3rd, owing to Psychic Class Dinner.

MEDIUMISTIC DEVELOPMENT.—On Thursday, February 10th, at 5 p.m., Mr. George Spriggs will conduct a Class for the Development of Mediumship, for Members and Associates only.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, February 4th, at 3 o'clock prompt, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions relating to the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism, mediumship, and life here and on 'the other side.' Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of general interest to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

SPIRIT HEALING.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. A. Rex, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., to afford Members and Associates and their friends an opportunity to avail themselves of his services in magnetic healing under spirit control. As Mr. Rex's

unable to treat more than a limited number of patients on each occasion, appointments must be made in advance by letter, addressed to the Secretary, Mr. E. W. Wallis. Fees, one treatment, 7s. 6d.; course of three, 15s.

MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to the Friday meeting without payment.

#### RECENT PHENOMENA WITH MILLER.

The manifestations produced at the séances of Mr. C. V. Miller, formerly of California, during visits to Europe in previous years, gave rise to sharp controversies as to their genuineness, and grave accusations were made against him, which we mentioned in 'LIGHT' at the time, along with other circumstances which tended to prove that veritable spirit phenomena were produced at his séances. During 1909 Mr. Miller was again in France on business, and gave a séance at Nancy. There were no strict test conditions, but it was evident that the phenomena witnessed could not have been produced by the alleged fraudulent methods.

The spirit draping in which 'Betsy,' the negro control, appears has been thought to be a very fine fabric which can be rolled up into small compass and easily concealed. On this occasion it was examined and found to be similar to ordinary muslin, which would be much less easy for the medium to introduce surreptitiously. A luminous ball approached M. Thomas (whose report of the proceedings is published in 'L'Initiation,' and who is an electrical engineer and a leading psychical investigator at Nancy), and he passed his hands all around it so as to satisfy himself that it floated freely in the air without material support. M. Thomas also felt a sensation on one side of his face, as if from an electric discharge; he put up his hand, and still felt the same current on the back of his hand. He certifies that neither this effect nor the lights could be produced by any of the known resources of science without the use of electrical apparatus far too bulky to be concealed. Another phenomenon is thus described:—

The form of an arm, faintly luminous, appeared several times, and each time touched various persons. Mme. Beaulaton, when she was touched, leaned forward suddenly between those in front of her, and seized the hand of the medium. This action did not interrupt the production of the phenomenon; the arm continued to be visible, moving about and touching the sitters.

This, as M. Thomas remarks, disposes of the insinuation that Miller is really producing the phenomena with his hands, while the observers think that they see them constantly resting on his knees. At another séance, it is stated, the door of the room was violently shaken by a series of vigorous blows, though it was out of reach of the medium and of all the sitters.

#### A SPIRIT'S CALL SAVES A SHIP.

My friend Captain Everett, of the s.s. 'Merthyr,' which trades between Carmarthen and Bristol, sends me the following account of a remarkable experience which may be of interest to the readers of 'LIGHT':—

We were proceeding up the Bristol Channel, and were abreast of Barry. The mate, an elderly man, was at the wheel. It was my watch below, and I was asleep. Suddenly I heard a voice call me. I was aroused, but took no further heed, and settled my head again on the pillow, when the call was repeated with greater earnestness.

Without any question as to by whom or why I was called, I jumped out of bed and rushed up on deck with only my night attire on. Out of the darkness loomed a vessel in our track. I took in the situation at a glance, ran to the wheel-house (a distance of 40ft.), took the wheel out of the mate's hands, and altered our course. Even then we only cleared each other by inches. The voice sounded as human as my own.

I have lost father, mother, and brother, and while sitting in my little cabin alone I often feel them near.

W. P. W.

TRANSITION.—We regret to learn that Mr. Courtenay Veale, who has been associated with the London Spiritualist Alliance for several years, suddenly passed to spirit life on the 21st inst., aged forty-nine. We extend our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Veale.

#### THE VEDAS AND RE-BIRTH.

We have at various times published expressions of opinion as to whether the doctrine of re-birth was taught in the earlier Vedas or whether it arose along with Buddhism as a later phase of teaching. Special references were made to this question on pages 418 and 509 of 'LIGHT' for last year, and on page 533 we invited the Editor of the 'Hindu Spiritual Magazine' to give evidence for his statement, previously quoted, that the re-birth theory is Buddhistic and not of Hindu origin. In the issue of that magazine for December last, the Editor, Mr. Shishir Kumar Ghose, an experienced journalist of distinguished literary attainments, replies fully to our inquiry, and we give below some of his quotations and arguments, regretting that the space available does not permit of our reproducing the whole article. The magazine can be obtained from Miss Annie A. Smith, 5, Winchester-road, South Hampstead, N.W., or from Mrs. G. B. Adams, The Vincennes Hotel, 36th-street, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A., as well as from the Patrika Press, Calcutta.

Mr. Ghose quotes Hunter's 'Rural Bengal,' an extract from which was given on p. 26 of 'LIGHT,' as showing that 'the Aryans possessed an unwavering assurance of a future life,' and cites (on the authority of Max Müller) a sort of liturgy with which the Aryan used to bid farewell to his friend while the body lay upon the pyre:—

'Depart thou, depart thou by the ancient paths to the place whither our fathers have departed. Meet with the ancient ones; meet with the Lord of Death; obtain thy desires in heaven. Throwing off thine imperfections, go to thy home. Become united with a body; clothe thyself in a shining form. Go ye; depart ye; hasten ye from hence.' (The *Pitris*, the *Rig Veda*, X, 14.)

'May thy soul go to its own, and hasten to the fathers.' The service might fitly conclude with a chorus from the *Veda*: 'Bear him, carry him; let him, with all his faculties complete, go to the world of the righteous. Crossing the dark valley which spreadeth boundless around him, let the unborn soul ascend to heaven.'

Both Hunter and Roth express admiration of the 'beautiful conceptions on immortality, expressed in unadorned language, with childlike conviction,' to be found in the ancient literature of Northern India. Mr. Ghose continues:—

We cannot prove directly that this theory of re-birth was appropriated by the later Hindu writers from Buddhism. But we think this can be proved, though indirectly, yet conclusively. The theory is not to be found in the *Vedas*, which are the most ancient literature in India. The Buddhistic literature comes next, and this theory is not only contained in it but is also the life and soul of that creed. We find this theory in the Hindu writings which followed the Buddhistic literature. From this we can safely draw the conclusion that the Hindus got their idea of re-birth from Buddhism.

The Vedas, however, are the supreme authority, and are to be followed wherever there is a conflict of opinion. Some base their belief in re-birth on reason, because it is regarded as explaining certain mysteries which surround creation, especially the existence of evil and the inequalities of men in this world. As to this, Mr. Ghose well says:—

If we could ask God why He, being almighty, permitted His creatures to be worried by miseries, He might reply that His object was to make men almost as happy as He Himself is. But to deserve such a blessing it was necessary that they should be perfect, which means that they should be just like God Himself. Without perfection a man can never expect to overcome misery altogether. But though God is Almighty He has some limitations to His power. He cannot create a God like Himself. And thus He has to make man as an imperfect being subject to misery, and able to overcome misery step by step as he advances towards perfection, which he always approaches, but never reaches. Every misery has its end, and the end of every misery is happiness.

Are not men, with transient breaks, destined to enjoy eternal happiness, for they are all immortal, and the spirit world is infinite times better than this? What matter then if men in the flesh suffer for a few hours, days or years? A man who is spiritually awakened will find that the miseries of his life are but like bad dreams to him, they have not substantially hurt him. Let us cease grumbling for the miseries of the few years of earth life, and be thankful for the joys of eternal life *minus* those years.

On the question of justice as represented by re-birth, Mr. Ghose is equally trenchant and convincing. He says:—

It is alleged that the theory of re-birth proves the justice of God. We fear that the theory votes God to be not only unjust, but a monster of cruelty. It is alleged that a man is punished for wicked acts in his previous birth. But why did he commit the wicked acts in his previous birth? Who was responsible for them? Why was he born with tendencies to wickedness? Again we have to say that it is due to his wicked acts committed in another previous birth. So we have to go to the very beginning to solve the problem. How did the man fall first? Say in the beginning, a couple of men, A and B, were created; they were sons of God, with equal advantages. A does a good, and B a wicked act. The first is rewarded in his next birth, the second punished. But why was he led to commit the wicked act, since he had the same advantage as A? This means that God must have created B weaker than A. And if that be so, he should not have been punished for it. B commits a wicked act and is born, in his next birth, a more wicked man than before. He very naturally commits a still more heinous act in his third birth. How is this poor man to save himself?

As to equality, Mr. Ghose thinks that inequality itself may quite possibly be a myth. The Czar might be thankful if he were allowed to pass half a dozen days in peace like a peasant. The common notion is that happiness and sovereignty are synonymous; that the sovereign is wealthy, intelligent, powerful, therefore he is favoured. But it is difficult to ascertain between two men which is the more favoured, the poor or the rich, the weak or the powerful, the slave or the master.

Again, as Mr. Ghose points out, John Smith is in no way helped by being told that his present sufferings are due to a wicked act committed in a previous birth:—

John Smith knows not who he was in his previous birth, nor does anybody know it. Neither does he know for what wicked act of that personality of his previous birth he is made to suffer. He knows, however, that the man who committed the wicked act, and for whom and for whose offence he is being made to suffer, was not he. In short, the man for whom he is made to suffer has disappeared, and not finding him, God Almighty punishes the innocent John Smith for a fault which he did not commit. Can he not very reasonably complain that his Creator has acted unjustly by punishing him, John Smith, for the offences of another, say William Jones, whom he does not know? Nor does he even know for what offence he is made to suffer, so that he could take care not to offend again.

Death, terrible as it appears outwardly, when connected with painful disease, the severance of family ties, and the interruption of the life-work, becomes infinitely more terrible if it means re-birth. Everything has to be re-learned, all old ties have to be broken and new ones formed:—

So re-birth means the terrible misery of bereavement not due to the loss of one object of love, but of all those he had loved in his last life. God has ordained that we should love our children, and would it be just on His part to separate mother from child for ever and ever? Re-birth means not only more than one death, but perhaps hundreds. It involves such a horrible destiny for man that those Hindus who believe in it pray for annihilation, for extinction, for absorption in the Deity. Their prayer to the Deity is 'to deliver them mercifully from the fate of being born again and again.' If men really were obliged to come to this earth again, this would be a sort of evolution that would be repugnant to Nature. Evolution means growth, Nature does not uselessly do the same thing over and over again.

Mr. Ghose strongly insists that re-birth has never been proved to be a fact. At present it is only a theory, and must remain so unless it is proved by actual demonstration. No one has ever been able to demonstrate that a man who had died was born again in this world:—

The theory is based purely upon imagination. Those who advocate it must bear in mind that the *onus* lies on them to prove it. But we have proof, positive proof, to show that men go to the next world without the loss of their identity. Hundreds, thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands of such men, who have gone to the other world, have testified to this fact.

And to the truth of this testimony the whole of Modern Spiritualism bears witness.

## THE GATE OF LIFE.

Keen interest has been aroused among all who are looking for valid evidence on the question of the survival of the human personality after bodily death, in consequence of the announcement that the Society for Psychical Research considered that there were at least *prima facie* grounds for believing that communications had been received by some of its members, and through Mrs. Piper, from the surviving intelligence of Frederic W. H. Myers. The results of these endeavours have been published in the 'Proceedings' of the S.P.R., but they are spread over several 'parts,' each a volume in itself, and the study of these, with a view to forming even a general opinion as to the measure of success attained, involves considerable labour and sustained attention. The main features of the investigation have been brought within the reach of the general reader and inquirer by a timely little book from the pen of Miss H. A. Dallas,\* entitled 'Mors Janua Vitæ?' (Death the Gate of Life?) being 'a discussion of certain communications purporting to come from Frederic W. H. Myers.' Professor W. F. Barrett contributes an Introduction, in which he says that the author has rendered a considerable service by dealing 'in an interesting and succinct manner with one fragment of the evidence that is slowly accumulating on behalf of survival after death.' He thinks that 'a growing conviction has been produced in most thoughtful students of this subject, that life and intelligence demonstrably exist in the unseen, and can get into imperfect communication with us.' The question of identity is difficult to establish, but the collective weight of the evidence has convinced him 'that in this case it is highly probable that the unseen intelligence is no other than a fragment of the personality of Mr. Frederic Myers.' We might ask, why a fragment? It is true that one of the 'Myers messages' through Mrs. Piper said: 'Now I believe that . . . I have sufficiently replied to your various questions to convince the ordinary scientific mind that I am at least a fragment of the once incarnate individual whom you call Myers. Is it not so?' But it is not to be assumed from this expression that the personality who dictated this message regarded himself as a fragment; on the other hand, it affords some proof that he retained the scientific caution and strict moderation of statement which we are accustomed to associate with Frederic Myers.

In order to present the problem with a fair degree of completeness, in spite of the limited compass of the work, Miss Dallas gives a graphic sketch of the character and aims of Mr. Myers, indicating most clearly the spirit in which he approached the great inquiry, and the motives that he would naturally carry into the Beyond, as incentives to endeavour by every means in his power to communicate with his surviving friends in such a manner as to furnish all possible proof of his identity. Even those unacquainted with Mr. Myers are thus enabled to form an opinion as to how far the communications received are in accordance with what he might be expected to send: but allowance must be made for the difficulties of communicating through sensitives, and especially of sending, through different mediums, messages which show the necessary degree of concordance with each other. Miss Dallas gives a clear description of the method by which the messages were received—Mrs. Verrall and Mrs. Holland being automatic writers, and Mrs. Piper a trance medium for writing and speaking. The causes of confusion in the messages, and the various theories regarding them, are briefly but pertinently set forth, and two episodes from the S.P.R. reports are chosen for special description as typical specimens of the evidence presented by the system known as 'cross-correspondences,' which appears to have been instituted by the spirit personalities, and is just such a method as we might expect Mr. Myers to employ for demonstrating his survival and identity. The incidents chosen are the 'Plotinus' and 'Latin Message' episodes, and Miss Dallas, in her brief summary, brings out the main points of value, and shows, too, that they suggest both a

\* 'Mors Janua Vitæ?' By H. A. DALLAS. Wm. Rider and Son, Ltd., 164, Aldersgate-street, E.C. Price 2s. 6d. net, or 2s. 9d. post free, from office of 'LIGHT.'

hitherto unsuspected reason why Myers had selected a passage from Plotinus as the motto for his sonnet on Tennyson, and a connection between the same words and the description in Tennyson's 'In Memoriam' of the conditions of perfect calm, within and without, which are most favourable for communion with the unseen.

In summing up the evidence, Miss Dallas points out that Mr. Myers' earthly life was full of ideation, and that the Myers communications deal almost entirely with ideas, and says:—

That the communications are stamped with the mental characteristics of Frederic Myers there can be no manner of doubt. If we accept these communications as from him, we have proof positive that death has not destroyed the special characteristics which distinguished the man and the writer. The script exhibits the activity of the same earnest, ardent nature, and the tastes of the classical scholar and lover of literature. . . . We are thus led to the conclusion that those who die to the physical environment do not necessarily forget and leave behind those things which interested them during their life here. What is true of Frederic Myers applies equally to others, and this affords a clue, of general application, to the life beyond. . . . Experiences after death will probably differ widely. We cannot doubt that those who have turned the pursuits of this life into means of spiritual progress will have a fuller, richer memory of the past than others who have only lived on the surface of life here and have harvested little that is worth remembering. If these experiences testify to their continued interest in matters which occupied them during their earthly life, still more emphatically do they assure us that love and friendship continue unabated, and that these liberated spirits are moved by enduring affection to help us in our need.

There are also corresponding obligations on our side, as Miss Dallas well points out, to facilitate intercourse by furnishing conditions for profitable communion, for if we regard our friends as dead and forget them, or merely lament our own loss, we raise barriers to their approach; when we think of them we enable them to become more aware of us, to become cognisant of our condition, and thus to participate in our interests and delights, and in some measure in our sorrows also. The inferences and lessons which Miss Dallas draws from the records of the 'Myers Messages' are thus full of hope and comfort for all who are able to regard them from the Spiritualist point of view, and to accept them as lights on the path from here to the Hereafter.

#### PREMONITORY AND CLAIRVOYANT DREAMS.

'John Bull' for January 22nd gives an account of two remarkable dreams which occurred to a passenger by the 'Waratah,' Mr. Sawyer, who left the vessel at Durban, and proceeded to England by another ship. The 'Waratah' sailed from Durban on July 26th, 1909, and should have reached Cape Town on the 29th; she failed to arrive, and has never been heard of since. Mr. Sawyer, who has confirmed his narrative personally to the editor of 'John Bull,' had come from Sydney in the 'Waratah,' and noticed that she rolled heavily, and was slow to right herself; he expressed to some of the officers and passengers the opinion that she was dangerously top-heavy.

On the Wednesday night previous to reaching Durban (July 21st) Mr. Sawyer had a vivid dream, three times over, and on each occasion he still saw it after he was sufficiently awake to sit up in bed. The dream, or apparition, was that of 'a man standing at the head of his cabin, with his left foot forward, with a long straight sword in his left hand, holding up a rag saturated with blood in his right hand. The sword was between Mr. Sawyer and the rag, as if to keep him off.' Mr. Sawyer related his experience to other passengers.

A week afterwards, on the following Wednesday night, when the 'Waratah' should have been nearing Cape Town, Mr. Sawyer, who was then at Durban, had a second dream, which was not repeated. 'He saw the "Waratah" in a big sea. She partly took it, then pitched over on her starboard bow and disappeared.' When he called at the steamship office to select his berth on another ship, he was told that he was most fortunate in having waited at Durban, and must have had the gift of second sight, for the 'Waratah' was overdue

and a steamer had just been sent in search of her. Mr. Sawyer, it is stated, feels that he was strangely guided by his dream to leave the 'Waratah,' contrary to his arrangements. He is 'not a nervous or Spiritualistic person, nor, as a rule, a believer in dreams.' This same may be said of 'John Bull,' and the narrative will therefore carry all the greater weight from the fact that it comes through a channel which is anything but biased in favour of the supernormal. The first dream may be taken as a symbolic warning of danger of death, the second probably as a kind of clairvoyance.

#### DISCARNATE SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS.

Permit me to offer a few arguments in support of Spiritism. Many sceptics overlook the remarkable features of personality. The first person 'I' can never be the second person 'You.' The individualism in every human being is so uniquely marked that it cannot be, and never has been, exactly copied or represented by any medium in earth-life. Each notable man has a mind, distinct from all others, operating upon and through his own self-made brain instrument and nerve-system, such as no other human being can possess in verisimilitude. This marvellously distinct personality is displayed in the uniqueness of the personal scent, the gleam in the eyes, the tone of the voice and the characteristic movements of the body. As each one expresses himself through the instrumentality of the brain and its radiating nerves, and as the brain and nerve-system of a medium can never be an exact *facsimile* of those of any other person, a medium cannot correctly manifest, or reproduce, in full measure, the personal characteristics or thoughts of the original, as do the camera and the phonograph. As blind old father Isaac said: 'The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.'

This is undeniably logical and scientific truth, which must be realised in any useful criticism of Spiritism.

All that we can gain through secondary mediumship is a limited and imperfect re-presentation, or manifestation, of the personal peculiarities and mental powers of discarnate spirits, which afford indications of their actual presence and identity. But notwithstanding this fact, we do get positive evidence of continued human existence in the form of small matters, which we term trivial, and which—in our supposition and expectation of the higher status of the spirit-world—we are so apt to term silly and inappropriate. These small matters consist in the giving of names, references to past earthly incidents, episodes and relations, and to current events in which we are interested, all of which are natural and intelligible, and on a par with our social and family life.

Let us keep an open mind in respect to all psychical phenomena, and reason thereon in a sensible and natural way, and not in an ignorant and anæsthetic spirit of negation.

R. M. BREBETON.

#### QUESTION DEPARTMENT.

QUESTION: Do you know of any valid reason why I and a few friends should not investigate and experiment in telepathy, clairvoyance, and psychical phenomena: is there any prohibition against our doing this? If not, what suitable books can you recommend?—P. S. SEWARD.

ANSWER: There is nothing to prevent you making the experiments you suggest, and there is a recommendation that you do not remain ignorant of 'spiritual gifts,' but cultivate the best. We suggest that you 'read up' on the subject first, both as to its benefits and its alleged 'dangers,' so that you may understand how to inquire and what to avoid. One of the most practical works is 'A Guide to Mediumship,' by Mr. and Mrs. Wallis, especially the third part, which deals with 'Psychical Self-culture.' You will also find 'Human Magnetism,' by Mr. James Coates, very helpful. You would do well to join the London Spiritualist Alliance, and get books from the library.

QUESTION: Can any reader of 'LIGHT' put me in the way of procuring a copy of the poem by Edward Markham, quoted in 'LIGHT' of October 16th last year? I do not know its name, but it tells of how 'Conrad the Cobbler' makes a tryst with Christ.—L. V. L.

QUESTION: Were materialism and denial of a spirit world ever known amongst Christian peoples prior to about the middle of the seventeenth century? Are they not outgrowths, among shallow thinkers and feeble minds, of the progress of modern science in the study of Nature and physics?—A. K. VENNING.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29th, 1910.

## Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. E. W. WALLIS, Office of 'LIGHT,' to whom Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable, and should invariably be crossed  
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### THE UNVEILING OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

We are not among those who scoff at Christian Science. We do not even oppose it: on the contrary, we believe it is the casket in which lies a precious pearl. But its exaggerations have often puzzled us, as much so as its reported healings in serious cases. What we have all along felt is that its core of truth is what it has in common with all kinds of modern schools of mental and spiritual healing, and that its teachings and its 'worship' are simply ingenious contrivances for mental and ethical concentration.

We have also all along felt that it was nursing a theory and encouraging a practice which might some day turn into something sinister. Its distinction between the human mind and 'the absolute' or divine mind lends itself to duplexity, which is own cousin to duplicity; and its emphasis on the power of suggestion, self-suggestion and otherwise, opened the door for evil as well as for good. Christian Science, as such, need not have been blamed for that, for it need not have been used for evil: but the possibility has ripened into actuality, and the result is 'Malicious animal magnetism.' Hence what we ventured, on the 8th inst., to call the 'crash' in New York Christian Science circles.

That high-class New York monthly, 'Current Literature,' in a perfectly unprejudiced reference to the matter, asserts that it has 'excited national and international attention, and been "featured" in all the newspapers of the country.' It describes the 'controversy' as one which 'involves issues far transcending what is technically known as "Christian Science."' 'It is a psychic age,' says 'Current Literature,' and all psychic developments are of general interest; and therefore, as the conflict between Mrs. Stetson and Mrs. Eddy is a question of the use and misuse of psychic power, it is a question which interests the public.

As we indicated in our Note (page 9), Mrs. Stetson draws a distinction between 'mental malpractice' and 'indispensable defence,' between 'malicious animal magnetism' and the administration or use of spiritual power for self-protection. We pointed out that the old Adam, still existing in human nature, might easily confuse the two, and that even a saint, of a kind, might slip into 'M. A. M.' without observing it. Any way, they say that Mrs. Stetson has been practising it and teaching it: let us charitably suggest, unconsciously. But not so, say her

accusers, who charge her with attempting to get her way and to maintain her position in the Church by 'treating persons without their consent,' by 'attempting to control and injure them by mental means,' and by 'making mental and audible attacks upon persons in the nature of imprecations and curses.' It is even said that Mrs. Stetson administered 'the death treatment' to a lady with whom she had quarrelled.

But it is much more than a personal matter; and Mrs. Stetson only stands for a clash of forces or possibilities that may involve groups of inquirers far beyond the pale of Christian Science. For instance, there is that grave question of the influence of mind upon mind without the knowledge of the possible victim—an influence which, however, may be made possible by the victim's adhesion to the doctrine which affirms it, or to the organisation which encourages it. We have always admitted that belief in Spiritualism and the practice of it may lay the believer open to spirit influences, by making the whole inner self more receptive of and more responsive to them. Of course this is not necessarily a bad thing: it may, indeed, be an entirely good thing, but it is a circumstance which it becomes us to take into account.

Here, for instance, is a Mrs. Babcock, who gives her testimony to what followed the administration of the 'death treatment' by Mrs. Stetson:—

That night in Cedarhurst, Long Island (February 13th, 1903), I was awakened by an icy blast sweeping in through the open window from the direction of New York. My teeth chattered. My heart fluttered.

Luminous waves rolled towards me, covered with the faces of the dead. I just felt like a man being electrocuted. It seemed that my soul went out from my body; that I saw through the walls of my house. And in the hour of agony I saw Mrs. Stetson's blue eyes all around the room.

I tottered from the bed, lighted all the lights, and staggered to a table where lay my Testament. Opening it, I chanced on the 15th chapter of St. John, beginning, 'I am the vine and ye are the branches,' and falling on my knees I began to read it aloud.

Staggering into the bathroom, I drew a tub of steaming hot water and got into it, but I did not feel the temperature of the water. I was as cold in it as during the first moment, when the icy blast of the death treatment enveloped me.

I realised that no human arm or agency could defend me. I was wrestling, not against human flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness and of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Impersonal ever present omnipotent love bore me up, up beyond the reach of the would-be midnight mental assassin, the human hatred of truth, the mad ambition for personal place and power.

Now it is perfectly conceivable that at this time Mrs. Stetson was doing the very thing she declared was customary with her—sending out personal thoughts towards an opponent with a view to turning out evil thoughts and securing the dominion of the good. This she calls 'indispensable defence,' but, as she herself described it, it is personal conflict, and really personal assault, although assault intended only to cast out evil. She says:—

If I felt sure that I was being attacked, either ignorantly or maliciously, by any person, I should fill my thought with the qualities of God, truth and love which alone render one invincible to the entrance of evil in any form—fear, doubt, envy, malice, jealousy, revenge, and whatever proceeds from the carnal mind. From this fortress of defence I should speak to the person, &c. . . Then I should declare that malicious animal magnetism in all its phases and forms was powerless to work through his human personality.

And so on: all possibly angelic in intention, but, for all that, an assertion that 'I am right' and 'You are wrong,' and 'You want cleaning out'; the total result of which might be the very kind of 'death treatment' described by the unfortunate Mrs. Babcock.

Very closely connected with this is the dangerous distinction made between 'the carnal' (or 'mortal') mind, and the 'real self' (or 'divine' mind), a distinction which has already worked out as a short cut to perjury and its excuse. When confronted with certain statements of hers, Mrs. Stetson quite calmly said that she never made them: she was not 'in the absolute' at the time, and therefore it was not her real self which made them, and, again therefore, she could with perfect propriety deny that she had made them. The person who reports this says:—

I could not quite believe my ears. . . . It began to dawn on me that by this sort of reasoning I might commit murder or arson, and if by any mischance I should be caught I could say I had never done it, and would go scot free simply because it was the human that did it, and that was not me. An immunity bath is not in it with this sort of logic.

It is denied that these revelations have produced a 'crash' in American Christian Science: but we have had a considerable amount of evidence laid before us, and we stand by our account of the matter. We are not opponents of Christian Science, we repeat, and our sincere hope is that what has happened will purify it and in every way work for its good.

### IS NATURE ANTI-HUMAN?

BY P. GALLOWAY.

Of all that live upon the bosom of 'mother earth' man seems to be the only one for whom she has no welcome, and for whom no preparations are made. The animals, the trees, the birds, the flowers, the insects, in fact, the earth with its multitudinous inhabitants, the sea with its living things, are all obviously parts of a complete scheme without man. Enter man, and at once there is want of harmony; he is different in form, in characteristics, in habits; he is neither animal, fowl, fish nor vegetable, but something different from everything else—an extra to the general scheme that is complete without him—and in so far as numbers are concerned, he doesn't count at all. He seems to have no friend on the earth or off the earth, and, although he has lived with the animals for untold ages, the dog is the only animal that has ever been able or willing to leap the chasm which separates them, and be at amity with him. No other living thing on the earth, in the waters or in the air, will have anything to do with man: all creatures either fear him or ignore him.

The earth brings forth no food specially for him, and as he cannot live without food, he has to get it second-hand and by guile. His body cannot be nourished on air, and as he cannot assimilate the soil directly, he is dependent for his food upon plants that can do so, and if he were to cease to exist altogether, it would make no material difference to any of the myriad children of the Great Mother on earth or in the sea.

Before man came there was vegetation for millions of ages. Mighty forests of strange trees flourished, decayed, and were slowly buried millenniums before he walked upon the earth. Many species of plant life lived and died without man's acquaintance, and we only know of them by their fossilised remains. Animals which took great spaces of time to fulfil their destiny had come and gone long, long before his time. The seas changed their positions, and from the deposited remains of their teeming life vast continents were built up ages before man appeared; and all these wonderful activities of the life that seems to be part of the earth still go on unaffected by his presence and as independent and unconscious of him as they were before he appeared at all. There is nothing more beautiful known to man than the loveliness of the face of Nature, unless it be the face of his friend, and yet all that beauty of colour and form was not created for man's enjoyment—it was there for innumerable seasons before he was present to appreciate it. The sun and the stars were ancient before man arrived, and, although his life would be impossible without them, they acknowledge no relationship with him and care not whether he lives or dies. The sun will

unmercifully burn him up, the waters quietly and silently drown him, the frost while veiling the world in beauty stops his heart beating; the rain and snow bring him disease, and he is at enmity with everything that is. Animals kill him when he would befriend them, insects torture him, plants poison him, and he has no knowledge of what poison is until he has experienced it. He walks upright and boasts of mighty deeds, even to the chaining of the lightning, but let him out-step the little he knows of its ways, however slightly, and the place which knew him once knows him no more for ever.

He builds ships to make the seas a highway and, for longages, although he defies them, the storms overwhelm him and, adrift on the mighty waters, he dies for want of water and his gods heed not his prayers. He builds mighty cities and great strongholds, but the earth quakes, or the tornado swoops down without warning, and his buildings fall and kill him; yet the sun shines, the cattle graze in the meadows, the flowers bloom and the trees wave as peacefully and as contentedly as before—his going or his staying seems always to be and to have been of no consequence. He fights and he kills, he builds barns and palaces; he 'can put a girdle round the earth,' and weigh the stars, but a smell, a whiff of cold air, or even a tiny seed from some fruit that he ate overnight, neither of which would be of the slightest inconvenience to an animal, may put an end to his boastings and his knowledge altogether, so far as this world is concerned.

Man propagates his kind like the animals, but no animal brings forth its young so immature, so long dependent, and so absolutely defenceless and ignorant of the vital necessities of its life. From the cradle to the grave human life is a perpetual struggle against this unfriendliness of Nature, and man's ignorance of her ways is a constant danger to his health, happiness and existence. There is nothing in Nature for him, but everything is against him. The trees do not grow to give him shade; the flowers do not bloom nor the grass grow for him, neither for him do the birds sing. He gets milk from the cow by stratagem, as he gets honey from the bee. The horse is his slave through fear. The sheep gives him wool under compulsion, and the wealth of the earth is his because he wrenches it by force from her storehouse. The wind is never 'tempered to the shorn lamb' any more than to the unshorn, to the righteous or the weak any more than to the wicked or the strong. Fire warms his house only when prevented from destroying it; disease brings pain and misery to rich and poor, saints and sinners, without apology; and if man were to be wiped out to-day the earth would not stop her activities by one heart-beat, nor would the animals shed tears. Yes, undoubtedly Nature is anti-human, and every living thing in the earth or upon it would prefer man's death to his living presence, if it troubles about him at all.

But, if Nature be anti-human, as there seems little doubt, man must be greater than Nature, for, although Nature ignores him, he is surely discovering her secrets and, by means of his knowledge, ruling her. Although he is born the weakest and most dependent of all that lives, nothing else is so strong and independent. If Nature takes no care of him, he can fend for himself more than well. He can coax and entice and humour Nature to grow what he wants in infinitely greater abundance and of better quality than she would do if left to herself. Although he is born naked he can clothe himself, and, in spite of Nature's neglect, he is more comfortably and pleasantly clothed and better protected from the elements and his enemies than any other living creature.

The trees produce seed for their own purposes, man compels them to produce better seed for his. If the cow gives milk for her calf, he induces her to go on giving milk for him long after the calf has been weaned. The sheep grows wool to cover itself, but he compels it to grow wool to cover him, and of a greater quantity and finer quality. If man cannot eat grass directly, he can eat it when the ox has transformed it into flesh, and he compels the ox to make better flesh than it would do if left to itself. He can make two blades of improved grass grow where Nature, without him, could only make one, and unimproved at that. Should he withdraw from the battle, everything he has so miraculously improved

and developed would degenerate to the position and quality that Nature decreed for it before he interfered. It is man's power which has caused the miracles, and the fact that all his improvements would be swept away if he ceased to hold them shows that it has been done against rather than with the consent or goodwill of Nature.

Although Nature compels her children to live in certain restricted zones, man has overcome such restrictions, and can live anywhere on the face of the earth. True, even yet the lightning sometimes destroys his house, but he has learned from many such experiences how to protect it as no other living thing has, and that fact is a prophecy that one day he will defy the lightning as completely as he now defies the wind and the rain.

In his great ships he now sails the seas without fear, and although sometimes his ships are destroyed, such catastrophes become less frequent year by year, and even already one is considered to be as safe on the sea as on the land.

Man's life is a struggle against diseases, much more than is the case with any other living member of the earth's inhabitants, and these diseases are brought on in many cases by the disharmony between him and Nature: but, patient in suffering, he is slowly but surely learning to live so that disease must die. He has not yet learnt how to organise himself so that food and health can be every individual man's portion: he is not yet certain of the way, but whenever he is, the cure of most of his diseases will be assured in spite of Nature's enmity.

Between the Seen and the Unseen powers he has no rest, he fights the one, and humbles himself to the other—but as yet he fully understands neither, nor why he fights nor why he fears. He faces the Seen without much flinching, but of that great unseen power that sends death he is afraid. The Seen he can to some extent master by craft and daring; the Unseen, being so far beyond his comprehension, he dreads, and tries to gain its friendship by other means. His struggle against the unfriendliness of the Seen of physical nature has taught him to bend her crude forces to his will and compel her to do for him what she would never do otherwise. His suffering, due to countless failures, does not slacken his determination to discover her secrets, and if the chained lightning sometimes destroys, the fact remains that he has chained it and made it his slave.

Man can make fire, but no other creature can. By its aid he has made tools to strengthen his weak hands, and with these tools he has torn the heart out of the earth for his enrichment, made the rough places smooth, cultivated the wilderness, tunneled the mountains, and made the seas, which Nature had ordained to be barriers of separation, highways of communication with his kind.

Nature decreed that legs were the means of progression, but man made wheels and laughed at her decree, and one day he will fly, but not with wings. His power to do was weaker than his will, so he turned the water into steam to drive his engines, and compelled the water to give him its strength and lift his burdens. Nature said that the sun should be the light of the world, but he made a light of his own and lengthened the day. Nature gave him no language, he made one, and this achievement alone would have enabled him to bind all his enemies to his chariot wheels.

In everything man and Nature are opponents, and in every fight man sooner or later becomes the victor. He may be defeated many times; he has suffered agonies untold and untellable, but is never defeated for long—his very sufferings lead him surely and eventually to victory. To-day, although he is but young and is only beginning to know himself, man stands the victor, and his progress so far justifies the conclusion that in the fulness of time, without help from above or from below, he will stand upright in the face of the universe as master of himself and of Nature, his cruel and persistent foe.

Now arises the question: What is man? Is he natural or supernatural? To that question there can be only one answer; for as nothing can be greater than its source, and as man's ability to rule Nature shows him to be greater than Nature, we are compelled to claim for him a spiritual origin.

There is no option: for as we only know of things natural and things spiritual, if he is not one he must be the other. True, one has to admit that the things concerning which one is most certain are often the things most difficult to prove to the satisfaction of others; and in this case, although personally I have no doubt that man has a spiritual origin, and at the end of his earth life returns from whence he came, yet to prove that it is so may not be easy. As a first step in indirectly proving man's spiritual origin, I would advance as a possibility and almost a certainty, that parents are not the creators of their children, but that they only give the necessary conditions for an Ego to manifest itself physically.

Although man has a body constructed similarly and with similar material to animals, that does not make him an animal any more than clothing himself with a lion's skin makes him a lion (for the body is only a covering or a house in which the human being dwells). All men and women know that their children are only bound to them by the long associations of childhood, and perhaps, occasionally, by something in the physical organism for which they supplied the material; for the children born of them develop characters and habits absolutely independent and peculiar to themselves, and are often quite different, not only in physical proportions but also in mental ability and moral characteristics. The wise man sometimes fathers a fool, and the genius has often been born in a cottage or a palace where no genius ever lived before. If man is a spirit to-morrow, he must be one to-day, and if one to-day he must have been one yesterday, for it is quite inconceivable for spirit ever to have had a beginning, in a physical sense, or to have had a beginning through any physical cause.

It may be that man is a pilgrim without 'any abiding city,' or he may be as a man 'who went into a far country,' or an Alexander gone out to conquer a world, or he may be a mixture of some or of all of them, but, at any rate, whatever the reason or cause may be for his earth visit, it seems to be necessary in the great scheme of things that he should have experience in the earth life, or he would not be here. But as he has scarcely become conscious of himself, naturally his conception of his place in the universe—either on the physical plane or on the spiritual plane—must be limited and crude, far too crude indeed for any man or sect to be dogmatic about it.

'Spiritual,' as a word, is used merely to express something opposite to material: to express something that is not materially perceived, and not something that is definitely explained by the word itself; for the spiritual side of life must be much vaster and more complex than man is ever likely to be able to conceive while on this plane, far less to express in a word or in a dozen words. But, however physically ignorant man may be concerning a spiritual state, indirect proof and fair inferential evidence can be given of its existence and of his connection with it.

In all the ages, in so far as we have traced him, we find that man held a belief in a spiritual world—a world of disembodied human friends and enemies, as well as a world of good gods and evil gods. The statement made by Spencer, I think it was, that early man came to believe in another life because he saw his reflection in the water, or his shadow on the ground, or that he dreamed dreams, is very inconclusive. What primitive man was, or was like, or of what he thought, we have not the slightest idea, but whatever he was he could only have 'thought' of things spiritual if he himself was spiritual; and if he believed in the dead being alive he could only have so believed through his having had experience of spirit visitations. This is not too much to claim, for even to-day, with all our knowledge and intellectual development, we cannot really know of anything without experience, or think of anything that is absolutely foreign to our constitution, and if man is not innately spiritual, spiritual conceptions must of necessity be beyond his mental reach.

Higher animals, such as the horse, the cow and the dog, as well as man, have seen their shadows and their reflections in the water, and according to the arguments of the 'reflection' order, they are as intelligent as primitive man was at the 'shadow' period. Are we then to believe that the animals who

have seen shadows, and have seen their reflections in the water, also believe in a spirit state? that to them these shadow cows and horses were real though immaterial cows and horses? If not, why not?

May not the belief in a spiritual world be the knowledge of such a realm that man brought with him when he came, and its proclamation be as 'natural' or instinctive to him as swimming is to a duckling hatched under a hen? May it not also be that this very 'instinct' for life is the cause of the fear of death? for if there be no death really we have an explanation of the strong and desperate objection to death which the human race in agony and in tears has always shown; and Hope—the most powerful factor in human life with the exception of love—may be a striving to express that native knowledge of the greater life which every man brings with him when he comes into the world.

To argue for a belief in a future life seems almost a waste of time, for the belief in a spirit world is as universal and as strong to-day, in spite of the great developments in physical knowledge, as ever it was; and although the belief in spirit visitation is as old as the history of man, it is not held to-day merely because of this antiquity, but because its truth has been continually proven by the personal experiences of every generation. The fact then that man has always believed in a spirit life strongly suggests at least that it is true: the fact of his dominance of Nature indicates that he is of spiritual origin, and has an innate knowledge of spirit; and the fact of his belief in ghosts implies that he has had visits from those who now are dwellers in the spirit states.

To say that man is a 'religious animal' does not explain the facts of his consciousness. But whether he be animal or not it is quite true that he has had a religious belief of some kind, crude or complex, for all the historical ages at least, and for how much longer we cannot say. The individual man holds his religious beliefs as tenaciously as ever he did, and fights as determinately to dominate his fellows with his special belief in a spiritual world as he fights for domination over the material world. May not all sectarian bitterness and cruelty be caused, although unconsciously, by man's inability to express fully through his physical machinery the indwelling knowledge of spiritual life? Much of it is clearly the result of some such dissatisfaction, and the human inability to grasp the greatness and the complexity of the spiritual life may be the cause of, or create in some, that monumental conceit in the specialness of their own spiritual knowledge which causes so much mischief. Although man often expresses himself with much spiritual genius, these sectarian persecutions show that he has also many bad habits—some so bad that no animal is ever likely to equal them.

Man is the only being who shows pity, whose love can reach over the Valley of Shadows, who is 'humane,' not only to his own family and race, but to all the sub-human families on the face of the earth—even to those living monstrosities that are a horror to him. These expressions of life—with justice, mercy, morality, faith, honour, love—are greater than Nature can produce, and belong to man only, and thus show him to be of a different order of being altogether.

Man alone proclaims that in a spiritual sense the greatest development of all is the unselfishness of him who serves, and that he who devotes himself laboriously to making number one a success is from the human standpoint the greatest of all those who fail. This result could never have evolved from the brutal and non-moral natural struggle for survival, any more than figs can be grown from thistle seeds, and therefore, as man's highest functionings have not grown from a physical basis, it leaves us no option but to claim for him a spiritual origin, for he could not function spiritually if he were not spiritual himself.

If man were only a higher animal he would always be of the earth earthy, and his development prescribed by the limitations of his animal progenitors. The law of the forest, kill or be killed, would be the law of his life; wars and hatred and greed would only die when he died, and all his hopes and aspirations for human happiness and progress would be but as the stuff that dreams are made of. But man, having

a spiritual origin, and being, as he is, the master of Nature and not its slave, it is impossible to think of a limit to his human development—a development that eventually will bring him to that long-dreamed-of Golden Age when the world will be an Eden, and, the barrier between the two worlds being completely removed, the 'Sons of God' will walk hand in hand with the children of men.

And then the mysteries of our physical travail will be solved.

#### A TIME FOR PRAYER: A SPIRIT'S APPEAL.

On the 3rd inst. a correspondent, 'F. H. P.,' sent us the following 'message' which she had received from her husband, who is on the other side. Feeling it to be of more than personal importance, she requested that it might be published in 'LIGHT,' in the hope that others would be equally impressed, and act in accordance with the suggestion it contains. The message is as follows:—

This will be an eventful year in every way, and it should be a year of united prayer by all God's children, for never in the history of this nation have you so needed divine direction. So, my dear, I want you to form, on a little simple scale, a prayer union for two things: pray for guidance in the conduct of national affairs, and for peace on earth, goodwill and brotherhood among men. I know the thought of this united prayer is not new to you, for some time it has been in your mind; now I ask you to give it form, and ask each personal friend to join you in it. Never was it more needed than now, and, as I have often told you, earnest believing prayer has a far-reaching force and power beyond anything you can even dimly imagine. I consider, as I look down upon England, that she has fallen in these latter days, as a leader of Christian thought amongst nations, and no longer does she hold up before the world the standard of Christ. The bulk of her people are careless and godless, and unless she repents and turns again to the divine source of all purity and goodness, she must fall from her high estate. The people of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, but the warning of the Boer war has been forgotten. England stands between two perils at present—one from within, one from without, and though I cannot predict the ultimate issue, I see heavy shadows over the land. Now prayer, united and continuous, can dispel these shadows, and nothing else can, because the man or woman who sincerely prays must be willing to receive and act upon the divine impressions that will come in response to prayer; and so this land may yet be saved. You are apt to think that because God has singled you out as the leading nation of the earth, He is bound to maintain you in this position. This is not so. His standard must be one of purity, truth, and righteousness, and if you fail to bear it aloft, He will take it from you and give it to a nation more worthy than you. And so I say to you this first Sunday of a New Year, pray, pray, and get everyone you know to pray too, for only by repentance and prayer can the dangers which threaten the Empire be averted. Now, my beloved, begin this to-day, it is needed at once; ask everyone in this house to join you, and beg each one to try and interest someone known to him to pray, too, once at least every day; and the theme, for direction and guidance in the government of this nation, and that peace may be maintained on earth and brotherhood established amongst men.

This is my message, and may God be with you.

#### SOCIAL GATHERING AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

On Thursday afternoon, the 20th inst., there was a large attendance of the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance in the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, at the first social gathering of the year. An enjoyable hour was spent in pleasant conversation, refreshments being handed round in the meantime. Mr. H. Withall, vice-president, then took the chair, and in the course of his remarks mentioned that the Council desired in every possible way to afford the Members and Associates opportunities for becoming acquainted with each other, and learning all they could of Spiritualism. For this purpose the Council invited them to make use of the lecture room on Mondays, after 2 p.m., and to bring their friends who are interested in psychical subjects, for informal conversation, interchange of experiences and ideas, and mutual helpfulness. Mr. E. W. Wallis then gave interesting answers to many questions from the audience.

## JOTTINGS.

A lady who resides in the Midlands, and is nearly eighty-three years of age, recently renewed her membership of the London Spiritualist Alliance, although, as she said, she was 'never likely to be able to use the tickets for the meetings, much as she would like to do so.' She also sent us subscriptions to 'LIGHT' for herself and for a friend, and said: 'I have been glad to notice how much "LIGHT" is appreciated in many quarters. It is a great pleasure to me to receive it week by week, and I wish for it all possible success throughout the year.' Another correspondent wrote, on the 9th inst.: 'Kindly add my name to your *Members'* list. I have been an Associate for one year and consider it such good value and have had such kindness and helpful suggestiveness in my dealings with the library, that I beg to enclose P.O. for one guinea.'

The 'Morning Leader' states that Dr. Wu Ting-fang, the retiring Chinese Minister at Washington, says that he wishes to live to be two hundred years old. For the accomplishment of his desire he has, he says, given up breakfast—taking only luncheon and dinner. His diet is rice, or, when he goes out to dinner, whole wheat bread, fresh vegetables, nuts and fruits. He avoids all meat, coffee, cocoa, tea, liquors, condiments, rich foods, and salt, because it makes one's bones stiff. He does not drink at meals, but between or after meals, practises deep breathing and takes moderate exercise. We hope Dr. Wu will live as long as he wants to—but anticipate that he will tire and wish to retire to another sphere before he gets far into his second century.

'Healthward Ho!' is a new monthly magazine edited by Eustace Miles, M.A., and published at 40, Chandos-street, W.C., price 7s. 6d. per annum, post free. The very title has an invigorating sound, and the contents include articles on 'Break your Worry Circle,' 'Home Hobbies,' 'Curative and Remedial Exercises,' 'How to "Batch" Cheaply,' 'Cold Weather Dishes,' 'Window-Sill Gardens,' and advice on various subjects connected with diet and training. Mr. Eustace Miles recommends going without flesh food for one day in seven as a rule for public institutions, but he gives the other side a hearing by admitting a plea for flesh foods in moderation. We shall look out with interest for future issues.

According to a newspaper report Mr. T. A. Edison does not entertain a very high opinion of our present-day civilisation and knowledge. He says: 'How ignorant we are! We do not know what gravity is; neither do we know the nature of heat, light, and electricity, though we handle them a little. We are only animals. We are just coming out of the dog stage and getting a glimpse of our environment. We do not know, we just suspect a few things, and it will take an enormous evolution of our brains to bring us anywhere. Our practice of shooting one another in war is a proof that we are still animals. The make-up of our society is hideous.' We were not aware that matters were quite so bad. Evidently there is still much work for Spiritualism to do to help in the work of spiritualising humanity.

'It is more than a decade,' writes a thoughtful correspondent, 'since Scotland permitted the age to see the direction in which thought was moving, namely, in harmony with the results of critical and scientific research. Many of the then fresh sermons might resound in England now as up-to-date light. Take this extract as a sample: "Even on its subjective side religion is not the mere opening of the flood-gates of emotion towards the unknown and unknowable—emotion awakened by the sense of mystery—it is also the intellectual recognition and moral discernment of an object. No theory of religion, which omits this fact, is complete or satisfactory. It meets us at every stage in the path of development. The records of religious history invariably disclose some effort of the human mind to penetrate further into the mystery of things, both by thought and by feeling to rise higher in the apprehension of the infinite, to descend deeper towards the eternal ground of things: in other words, not only to feel the overshadowing mystery, but also to perceive the light that is within it. But, always associated with the effort to apprehend this object, there is a corresponding disclosure of the object itself. Divine revelation is accomplished simply by a removal of the things which had previously obscured the object revealed. It does not bring the latter any nearer to us: it merely draws aside the veil which prevents the human eye from seeing it." This is quite in keeping with the thought of the Rev. Rhondda Williams and other 'advanced' teachers of to-day.

Mr. A. K. Venning, of Los Angeles, California, U.S.A., writes: 'In an article on "Spiritualism," by Robert Hugh Benson, in the "Dublin Review" of October last, it is stated, amongst other prejudiced remarks about the evil effects of communication with the world of spirits, that "the Church points out the extraordinary dangers that menace those who attempt by any back-stairs entrance to penetrate regions closed by the hand of God." Now, I should like to know how a region "closed by the hand of God" can be entered by the "back-stairs" or any other approach. The more these clerical gentlemen criticise Spiritualism the better it is for Spiritualism! They only bog themselves in a morass of contradictions and absurdities.'

It is a significant sign of the times that the recent General Election largely turned upon the question of the welfare of the toiling masses of the population: all other issues being overshadowed. Surely this is an indication of the growing sensitiveness of the people, and of increased sympathy with the suffering of the poor and needy. Many promises, more or less sincere, were made by all parties in the strife; promises of more work, higher wages, increased prosperity, and greater equality of opportunity for well-being and happiness for the workers. We do not enter upon the question as to which or whether any of these promises will be fulfilled. We leave that for time to disclose, but content ourselves with noticing the fact that high hopes have been raised in the hearts of the toil-worn and struggling poor—hopes of a good time coming very soon—and we trust that all true men and women will cooperate, irrespective of party, to alleviate distress, to succour the aged, and to bring about the promised conditions of peace, prosperity, and plenty.

The importance of being in earnest can hardly be over-emphasised, and judging by what Mr. Philip Snowden writes in 'The Christian Commonwealth,' the election fight has been worth having from that point of view alone. He says: 'It has made thousands of men and women feel that life was worth living for the sake of great causes, which have to be served. Such an election contest is like a time of religious revival, and many men and women do really find salvation in this fight. Among those who have been my most earnest workers at this election have been men and women who came into the movement ten years ago, and since then their lives have been devoted to the work of social redemption. If we are engaged in a good work, we are always on the winning side.' If we believe that evolution is 'a guided process,' we shall affirm that all is well—but it is sometimes a little difficult not to take counsel from our fears and to maintain the evenness of mind and the serenity of spirit of the philosophic on-looker. However, since progress results from reactions as much as from first causes, and is sure, if slow, the spiritual reformer will be encouraged to greater earnestness in his efforts to disseminate truth and to ensure its application in daily life.

Clairvoyants are not the only vision seers—or, to put it in another way, all visionaries are not clairvoyant. Still the ability to dream dreams and see visions is not to be scorned—indeed, wisely fostered, it is indispensable to our well-being and spiritual progress. Thus Sir W. B. Richmond, speaking at the Royal Academy of Arts, on the principles of art, said that the artist was the delineator and master craftsman of sounds, verses, or shapes. He saw images of perfection transcending any visible object and impelling a desire to create. It was in solitude that the spirit spoke, and by the sincere study of Nature and tradition that the craftsman succeeded. Every great artist saw visions, and his perfection in technique was the means of expressing those visions. Beauty was not obvious, and the will had to be exercised to retain the sense of it. It meant digging deeper and deeper to the heart of a subject, which when reached was in the nature of a revelation, opening up a new world of ideas. This age of rush was not favourable to the development of this form of deep feeling. The true scientist also has his visions. His trained imagination enables him to see behind 'appearances' the unseen realities of Nature, and in like manner the trained 'psychic' can see spirit people.

To a correspondent who asked for advice because of a hasty temper and inability to control it, Mrs. McIvor Tyndall, writing in 'The Swastika,' says: 'Life is a school and mistakes are lessons, and they call for no apology. Whatever you do may be a lesson, and therefore it is right for you at the time you do it. Regret, if indulged in, will unfit you for everything in life. As Dr. McIvor-Tyndall says, "Regret is the grave-digger of hope and attainment." Instead of expending so much effort in trying to "overcome," I would

suggest that you let it go, and busy yourself with something that will erase from your mind the thought that irritated you. Resistance to a habit or a desire often merely adds to the force of the desire. Supplant the feeling with another, rather than resist it. In the terminology of slang, "forget it." The "I am" consciousness of you owes neither blame nor praise to inheritance. It is a part of the Universal Intelligence, and as such has the right and the power to manifest in you, as peace, poise and control of self and circumstance.' We should be inclined to qualify the word 'regret,' and in place of it use the word 'lamentation,' or 'repining.' Regret may mean sorrow and penitence, and, in that sense, it is an evidence not only that the lesson has been learnt, but of a wiser attitude and a desire for self-control. Mere lamentation, or idle repining, is useless, but repentance, accompanied by desire for poise and peace, is the first step on the upward way.

The Bournemouth Spiritualists are pushing ahead. They have just secured on lease for their sole use the centrally situated Assembly Rooms in Town Hall-avenue, and have completely refurbished and decorated the hall. A new platform and a new organ have been purchased. The society began the new year free of all liabilities, and with about three guineas in hand, although the expenditure during 1909 amounted to nearly £226. The new hall was dedicated on Sunday last, and it is hoped that under the new conditions better and more enduring success will be achieved by the society in its endeavours to promote the spread of knowledge of Spiritualism in the town.

We sometimes speak of Christianity as though it embodied, or even introduced, the whole ethical conception of right and justice. Here is a part of the so-called 'negative confession,' from the Egyptian 'Book of the Dead,' or ritual for the surviving soul, who thus addresses Osiris:—'Homage to Thee, O Great God. I have come to Thee, O my Lord, and I have brought myself hither that I may behold Thy beauties. I know Thee and I know Thy name. . . I have come to Thee. . . I have not done ill to mankind. I have not oppressed the members of my family. I have had no knowledge of worthless men. I have not made to be the first consideration of each day that excessive labour should be performed for me. I have not ill-treated servants. I have not caused pain. I have made no man to suffer hunger. I have made no one to weep. I have not encroached upon the fields of others. I have not misread in the pointers of the scales. . . I have not repulsed God in His manifestations. *I am pure. I am pure. I am pure.*' These invocations date from at least as far back as B.C. 1600, and exhibit at once faith in God and a high standard of social morality.

#### 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.*

##### Mr. Wake Cook's Lecture.

SIR,—I cannot say how much I have enjoyed reading Mr. E. W. Cook's lecture in 'LIGHT.' It seems to have thrown a meaning on my long and troubled life. Disasters and trials of the past, which I thought I might have been spared, now seem to wear another aspect, and I feel that I must not look at them in such dark colours or brood over them as I have done. I have read Mr. Cook's lecture, for which I thank him, over and over, and have sent it to an old friend.—Yours, &c.,  
E. P. J.

##### The Ten Thousand Shillings Fund.

SIR,—With reference to the proposed London and Southern Counties' contribution of ten thousand shillings to the Spiritualist National Union Propagandist and Organising Fund, permit me to call the attention of your readers to the séances advertised in another column. As Mrs. Imison and other mediums will give their services free for the benefit of this fund, I earnestly hope they will be supported as they deserve. The local societies having granted the free use of their halls, the results should be a financial gain to the fund. I desire also to remind those of your readers who have kindly accepted 'collecting sheets' that the fund will be closed on March 25th, and I shall take it as a personal favour if they will forward those sheets to me, with remittance, on or before that date. Official receipts will be forwarded in due course in each case.—Yours, &c.,

R. BODDINGTON, 'Missioner.'

65, Holland-road, Brixton, S.W.

#### Dematerialisation Phenomena.

SIR,—I must thank Colonel Begbie for his courtesy in furnishing further particulars of the case described by him in 'LIGHT' of January 8th. He makes it quite clear that it was impossible for anyone to have left the room by the door, and I think we may safely dispense with consideration of the box having been removed from the room in any other manner to accomplish the act. It really was not necessary for his letter to have been read for a suitable reply to be written on the postcard. Anyone who cares to study Sir Oliver Lodge's new book, 'The Survival of Man,' can read instances of wonderful thought-transference, which have now been established as facts; and in Chapter XV. he specially refers to mediums being able to read the thoughts of the sitters. It appears to me that it is not so much a matter of being 'duped' as our want of knowledge of the deeper nature of humankind.

As a result of Colonel Begbie's questions to me, I purchased a half-pound box of chocolates, inserted a sheet of notepaper, wrapped the box in brown paper, tied the package tightly with string both lengthways and crossways, and sealed the ends of the string with a threepenny bit impression; then in total darkness, with my eyes closed, I wrote on a postcard, 'Thanks for chocolates; have left you one,' which I inserted in the box, having previously removed its contents to my pocket, put back one chocolate in the box, returned the box to its paper case, and put the string on again without breaking the seal, all in the space of two and a half minutes. When the box was returned to its wrapper—before the end was reclosed—I remembered that I had omitted to insert the written postcard, and had to withdraw the box again to do so; this doubtless prolonged the proceedings half a minute. Will Colonel Begbie kindly give us a copy of his letter and of Sūsū's reply?

I am well acquainted with the acute silence and occasional faint raps of the séance room referred to by Colonel Begbie, but feel sure that he would not wish to infer that the slightest movement or noise could be heard during singing, and it must be remembered that the alleged dematerialisation occurred during the singing of two verses in total darkness, with several minutes' continuation of darkness while the message was being rapped out.

As to the proximity of the sitters, one could better judge if the circumference of the table and the number of sitters present that evening were given. It should not be overlooked that, however closely seated, a sitter could extract the chocolates during the singing, provided a confederate was on each side of him, or possibly if only on one side. Further, it is quite easy to write in the dark, but it is more difficult to place the paper of the package in exactly the same folds as before. Was Colonel Begbie quite satisfied as to this, and why was he not allowed to retain the box unopened? Being made to open it at once prevented any critical examination of it.

I do not consider this case any 'encouragement to sitters in other circles to persevere in their work of investigation' unless they can be satisfied of the genuineness of the extraordinary phenomenon. Possibly it may be quite genuine, but as mediums in the trance state are considered sometimes to unconsciously practise fraud, will Colonel Begbie, for the good of the cause, kindly undertake to get Sūsū to extract the chocolates from a half-pound box, packed in the presence of two witnesses, and sent to him by me?—Yours, &c.,

S. B. MCCALLUM.

46, Connaught-avenue,  
Mutley, Plymouth.

##### Was it Thought-Transmission or Clairvoyance?

SIR,—The following instance of thought-transmission between the animal kingdom and mankind may be of interest to readers of 'LIGHT.'

A gentleman who enjoyed perfect health and, generally speaking, dreamless sleep, on one occasion dreamed that his horse was being strangled by getting its head and foreleg entangled in some peculiar way with the halter by which it was bound to the manger. He was so 'impressed' by the dream that he felt impelled to get up from his bed and go to the stable. On arriving there he found the horse in the dangerous position indicated by the dream, and was able to release it in time to prevent its death. Being acquainted with the gentleman I have no doubt of the truth of the account, but it is difficult to explain or understand on the ordinary plane of experience.—Yours, &c.,

C. W. SCARR.

[The probable explanation of this experience is that the sleeper became clairvoyant and actually saw the dangerous position of the horse.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

## Affirmations.

SIR,—Will some reader of 'LIGHT,' who is interested, kindly say which of the following affirmations is the most spiritual, and consequently nearest the truth :—

(1) 'In so much as I am God's child, entirely spiritual and not material, I must be perfect. I am sinless, without fear, care, or anxiety. I live in spirit, not matter. I am not in any danger, no one can hurt me or deprive me of any good. I have no such thing as pain, suffering, or disease, because I am a reflection of Life, Truth, and Love—God. No condition of body, nor any one personality, is essential to my happiness, for God and God alone is the spring of my joy. I am never disappointed nor grieved. The harmony of my being is never broken because I live in the spiritual. My whole life is hid with Christ in God. Therefore I am immortal, for nothing can die or be lost in God. Study this till you see it is the truth, then declare it mentally or audibly as you are led, no matter what mortal sense may say to the contrary. Abide with it till the truth, which it *certainly is*, shall make you free from the beliefs of sense, and you realise, as Jesus did before you, that I and my Father are One.'

(2) I am in essence a child of God, or a ray from the One All Mind, and consequently perfect. I am also, for a time or state, incarnated more or less thoroughly, in a body of flesh, in order to learn by experience of good and evil; and besides the spiritual, God-like, perfect mind, am endowed with a carnal or mortal mind which is imperfect, undeveloped, and the cause of all sin, suffering, disease and discord. Without denying the existence of the mortal mind on its own plane, I affirm that I have power to conquer it and bring it into subjection to the higher, spiritual mind—to be the captain of my own ship in fact—and thus refine and purify the carnal envelope and bring my own being on all planes, into harmony and union with God, who is eternal Love and Wisdom.—  
Yours, &c., A. K. VENNING.

Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

## Light Vibrations Perceived by the Blind.

SIR,—The points brought out in Miss Chapin's article ('LIGHT,' page 17) on 'Light Vibrations as Perceived by the Blind,' struck me with force and vividness. As one who has suffered considerably from eye troubles, with their attendant anxiety and fear of blindness, I have frequently found myself contemplating what total obscurity would feel like.

Oftentimes I have tightly bandaged the eyes, entirely shutting out all light, and from this condition of darkness endeavoured to bring some dormant sense into activity, to perceive my surroundings, to see. Much to my surprise I have, almost without exception, found that I am *distinctly conscious* of light vibrations; the shape and form of objects I know without touch, and much else occurs which is too curious and elusive to describe in this letter.

In my case the perception of light vibrations does not seem to be confined solely to the face, but some other parts of the body also seem equally susceptible. At times it would almost seem that the *whole* body is capable of sensing. That I am hyper-sensitive and to some degree clairvoyant may explain the phenomena; but in any event, it is certainly light in darkness, hope for the hopeless, and should bring comfort and solace to many weary hearts.—Yours, &c.,

F. W. MAXWELL.

## A Question Regarding Spirit Photographs.

SIR,—I have been reading 'The Busy Life Beyond Death,' by Mr. John Lobb, in which there is a spirit photograph of Gerald Massey, taken as an old man. I understood that when we pass through the change called death, we leave behind us all signs of age, and commence life on the 'other side' in our prime. If this is so, how is it that in spirit photographs old people appear as they were before they left their earthly bodies? I can quite understand that this is done so that they can be recognised by their friends on earth; but I should like to know if there has been any explanation of this phenomenon from anyone in the spirit world. I am, of course, a believer in spirit photographs, as I have seen some that have been taken in a home circle by serious-minded Spiritualists, where fraud was absolutely out of the question.—Yours, &c.,

PUZZLED.

## For a Library at Southend.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to thank most heartily those readers of 'LIGHT' who, in response to my appeal on December 4th last, kindly sent me valuable books for the library in connection with the Spiritualist society at the Milton-street Hall.—Yours, &c., MISS N. M. CUMINGS.

10, Victoria-road, Southend.

## SOCIETY WORK.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—On Sunday last Miss McCreadie gave successful clairvoyant descriptions and helpful messages to a large audience. Mr. Fred Spriggs presided. Sunday next, see advt.—D. N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Fairclough Smith delivered a thoughtful and interesting address on 'Seek and ye Shall Find,' and gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions and spirit messages. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis, trance address.—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Harold Carpenter gave an uplifting address on 'Comfort ye my People.' On the 19th inst. Mrs. Fairclough Smith gave accurate auric readings. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis, trance address. February 2nd, Mrs. Miles Ord, address.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, MUNSTER-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. G. R. Symons gave an interesting address. Sunday next, Mrs. Neville, address and psychometry. Wednesday, 8, circle.—R. J. H. A.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—On Sunday last Mrs. Whimp gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mr. Baxter. Thursday, Miss Ellis. 31st, opening of new organ and grand concert. (See advertisement.)—H.

CLAPHAM.—RICHMOND-PLACE, NEW-ROAD, WANDSWORTH-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mrs. Neville gave an address on 'The Man Jesus,' and successful psychometric delineations. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Symons.—C. C.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—On Sunday last Mr. Sarfas gave a good address and clairvoyant descriptions. On Saturday, the 29th, social evening. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Beard, address, and Mrs. Annie Boddington, clairvoyante.—H. B.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Miss Florence Fogwill gave an interesting address on 'Development,' and ably answered questions. Mr. George F. Tilby presided. Sunday next, Mr. H. Boddington.—W. H. S.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—24, MARKET PLACE.—On Sunday last Mrs. Wesley-Adams gave an address on 'Homes in Spiritland' and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Osborne, address and psychometry; Miss Duverge will sing. Wednesday, social evening.—T. C. W.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Abbott gave an address. Sunday next, at 10.45 a.m., public circle; at 6.45 p.m., Miss Sainsbury. Thursday, 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Podmore. Wednesday and Friday, 8, members' circles.—J. J. L.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—On Sunday last Mr. W. F. Smith gave an address on 'Responsibility,' and Mrs. Smith clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham), clairvoyante; Monday, 8, Mr. J. Roberts, clairvoyant descriptions.—N. R.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. Webb gave an address on 'Our Duty to our Neighbour,' and Mrs. Webb good clairvoyant descriptions. Misses M. and V. Parmiter rendered a duet. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., meetings; at 3 p.m., Lyceum.—A. B.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Blackburn's address on 'Why I became a Spiritualist' was much appreciated. Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. Stebbens, Answers to Written Questions; Miss N. Brown, psychometry. Monday, 7, ladies' circle. Thursday, 8.15, public circle.—W. Y.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—On Sunday morning last, at the 23rd anniversary, Mr. W. E. Long gave helpful personal messages. In the evening Mr. D. J. Davis and Mr. W. E. Long gave encouraging addresses. The collections amounted to £9. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long.—E. S.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL.—On Sunday morning last Mr. J. Huxley conducted an interesting circle. In the evening Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn gave an instructive and encouraging address. On the 20th Mr. J. Jackson spoke. Sunday next, at 11.30 a.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, 'Questions Answered by a Spirit Guide,' and at 7 p.m. an inspirational address. February 3rd, Miss N. Brown, psychometry; 6th, Mr. H. Pye.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. H. Boddington gave fine addresses on 'Hypnotism' and 'Mediumship.' Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. R. Boddington. At 3, Lyceum, Special Group Lessons. Monday, 8, and Wednesday, 3 p.m., Mrs. Curry, clairvoyante. Thursday, 8, public circle.—A. M. S.

**HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.**—On Sunday last Mr. Abrahall spoke on 'The Fight,' and Mr. Richardson spoke on 'Automatic Writing and the Coming Message to the World.' In the evening Dr. Stenson J. Hooker gave an address on 'Yoga as a Help to Spiritualism' and answered questions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion; at 7 p.m., Mrs. A. V. E. Perryman. Wednesday, Mr. Walter Underwood. February 13th, special visit of Mr. E. W. Wallis.—J. F.

**PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.**—On Sunday evening last Mrs. M. Davies gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions.—G. E. R.

**WINCHESTER.—MASONIC HALL.**—On Sunday last Mr. F. T. Blake gave an instructive address on 'What is Man?' and clairvoyant descriptions.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—14, HARCOURT AVENUE.**—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Millard spoke on 'Love's Actions, Here and There.'—E. H.

**SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.**—On Sunday last Mrs. Jamrach gave an address on 'The Humanity of Jesus' and clairvoyant readings.—A. J.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—MILTON-STREET.**—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. Horace Leaf's addresses and clairvoyant descriptions were well received.—H. E. V.

**SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD.—5, SPENCER-ROAD.**—On Sunday last Mr. Dyster gave an address. On the 18th inst. Mrs. Roberts spoke and Mr. Roberts gave clairvoyant descriptions.

**CROYDON.—SMALL PUBLIC HALL, GEORGE-STREET.**—On Sunday last Mrs. A. Boddington made an eloquent 'Plea for Spiritualism,' and gave excellent clairvoyant descriptions.

**READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.**—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. P. R. Street gave addresses and clairvoyant descriptions, also on the 17th inst.—A. H. C.

**SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHEAD HALL.**—On Sunday and Monday last Mr. S. B. Jones delivered addresses on 'Reminiscences' and 'After Death Life is Real,' and gave psychic readings.

**EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.**—On Sunday last Mrs. Letheren spoke on 'The Divine Purpose of Spiritualism' and gave clairvoyant descriptions.—E. F.

**EXETER.—MARKET HALL, FORE-STREET.**—On Sunday morning last Mr. G. West spoke on 'Godliness,' and in the evening Mr. W. H. Evans gave an address on 'Brotherhood.' On the 21st inst. Mr. West spoke.—H. L.

**SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.**—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. T. Olman Todd gave eloquent addresses on 'A Spirit Anthology' and 'Symbols of the Infinite.'—J. W. M.

**KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES' CRESCENT, N.W.**—On Sunday last Mr. Petz gave an interesting address and Mrs. Petz rendered a solo. On the 21st inst. Mrs. Pulham gave psychometric readings.—J. A. P.

**BIRMINGHAM.—30, JOHN-STREET, VILLA CROSS, HANDSWORTH.**—On Sunday last, morning and evening, Mr. James B. Tetlow discoursed on 'Spirit' and 'Life, Truth, Love,' and gave psychic delineations.—D. L.

**BRISTOL.—28, BATH-BUILDINGS, MONTPELIER.**—On Sunday evening last the President, Mr. A. C. Osborne, gave an address on 'There is No Death.' Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Steeds gave clairvoyant descriptions and spirit messages.—H. O.

**PORTSMOUTH.—VICTORIA-ROAD, SOUTH.**—On Sunday last splendid addresses were given by Mr. Hector Lacey on 'Our Salvation' and 'The Philosophy of Ghosts,' also recognised clairvoyant descriptions, and on Wednesday psychometric delineations were given.—G. McF.

**LITTLE ILFORD.—CORNER OF CHURCH-ROAD AND THIRD AVENUE, MANOR PARK, E.**—On Sunday last Mr. Abel gave an address on 'If a Man Die shall he Live Again?' and named two infants. On the 19th Mrs. Webster gave psychometric readings.—M. C. A.

**MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STRONBOARDS, E.**—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Roberts gave an address on 'My Guide and I,' and Mr. Roberts clairvoyant descriptions. On the 20th Mrs. Jamrach gave an address and psychometric delineations.—C. W. T.

**BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.**—On Sunday last, morning and evening, at the dedication services, Mr. E. W. Wallis delivered addresses on 'Basic Principles of Spiritualism' and 'Fundamental Principles of Spiritual Religion,' and rendered a solo. Mrs. Ambler sang with harp accompaniment. On January 20th Mr. Holloway gave an address and Mr. J. Walker psychometric delineations.

**SCOTTISH SPIRITUALISTS' ALLIANCE.**—On Saturday last the annual meeting was held in the Ebenezer Church, Glasgow. Delegates were present from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Motherwell, and Falkirk. Reports were read, tours with English workers arranged, and other business transacted. Officers for the current year: President, Mr. George P. Young; Treasurer, Mr. William Guild; Secretary, Mr. J. M. Stewart.

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Being a Series of Articles illustrating the Truth and Teachings of  
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By **Lux Aurea.**

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