

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOTHS MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Looking through some late numbers of 'The Progressive Thinker,' our attention has been strongly drawn to a communication by Mary T. Longley on 'Spirit Memory, "Fog-Land" and the Home of the Soul.' It is a kind of reply to certain speculations of 'The California Philosopher,' and is to be found in No. 1102, for January 7th. Mrs. Longley will be remembered by the majority of our readers as the valued medium by whom hundreds, or thousands, of messages were sent through 'The Banner of Light.' Her forty years of gracious service have been good for her as well as for others; and the proof of it is in this refined, discriminating and beautiful communication.

We would gladly reprint the whole article for our home readers, but that is not possible. The following glimpses of it, however, may serve to indicate its wise and beautiful thoughtfulness:—

As to memory, why is it not possible for the spirit consciousness to register a record of such personal events and experiences as make an impression upon the mortal brain, upon the spirit consciousness of the individual? If we are constantly building our spirit body, a body that we possess and control on passing from this one of flesh, why cannot the functions of memory flash their vibratory action upon that spirit brain at the same time they are recording it upon the physical or the mental nature that in co-ordination with the physical vibrations make up the power of intelligent expression through these mortal forms?

The violin, under the hand of the practised musician, awakens delicate and exquisite music; but to the spirit hearing—which may even ignore the strains to which we of earth delight to listen—there are finer chords and more delicious strains ascending along the scale of infinite vibration than any mortal can hear. Each tone of the violin which to us—and to the musician—is so sweet, has its higher note and more exquisite vibration; but our physical sense is too dull to receive its impress. Such tones, however, may be heard and enjoyed by the spirits who are present at concert or séance, and of which the mortal sitters are ignorant. If the musical vibrations can impress their finer tones upon the atmosphere, why cannot mind, here and now, register its memories upon the spiritual atmosphere which we as builders are using—at least in part—as material for our spirit bodies! And why cannot these bodies in their creative and building energy link on to the vibratory forces of such memories and incorporate them with the functional work of their being?

Possibly veritable 'earthbound spirits,' who have not acquired the art of eliminating noxious earth elements from their spirit bodies, and thus cannot get away from the old attractions of sordid or selfish life that held them here, are dependent on the vibratory forces of matter and of mortal brain for the maintaining of their memories concerning earthly things; but admitting this, we can see no valid reason why such beings, as they advance in experience and knowledge upon their present planes of action, cannot continue to eliminate the earthly, build the spiritual, create the interest and activity of progressive

spirits, and register their records of work performed upon the nerve sensibilities and brain structure of their refining consciousness.

'The Atlantic Monthly' for February (London: Constable and Co.) deserves special notice if only for the brilliant and impressive 'Letter to the Rising Generation' by Cornelia A. P. Comer, a truly heart-seeking appeal, and done with marvellous ability, as much for the vigour of its bold faithfulness as for the infinite tenderness of its pathos.

The writer, in her strenuous way, seems to take the Rising Generation by the collar, for a good shaking, but the tears are in her eyes. It all reminds us of the two descriptions of God, 'Our God is a consuming fire,' and 'God is Love.' She is passionate for the consuming of many sinister signs of the times, and hot against the seeming missing of the splendid heritage of knowledge and wisdom that is falling in, but she loves like a noble mother and pleads like a saint. How wonderful are the revelations of these days, she seems to say. What are you going to do with them? See what your fathers did when they had to grope their way. What are you going to do in your blaze of light? 'I think the long generations of your fathers hold their breath to see if you do less with certainty than they have done with faith.'

Will some Carnegie float a few million copies of this Appeal into our Colleges and High Schools?

A rather pretentious American monthly 'Bulletin' which professes to give health and thought suggestions surely goes far wrong in suggesting that paper, pencil and a light should be kept at the bedside for solutions of problems unsolved during the day. Here is the passage:—

At times, when something in daily life has particularly agitated the desire body, it happens that when it has severed connection with the lower vehicles, is engaged in the work of restoration by above-mentioned review, and when a trying incident of the day appears, and the desire body sees the solution, it will rush back into the dense body, in order to impress the ideas on the brain, thereby causing the dense body to wake with a start. It is only in the fewest cases that it is able to bring back the solution that was so clear in the Desire World. Even if it does succeed in impressing the solution on the brain, it is usually forgotten in the morning.

The knowledge of this fact has caused many people to keep paper, pencil and a light by the bedside, and often they are rewarded by finding solutions to their problems written in the morning, without having even a recollection of writing. It is a good idea to follow.

In our opinion it is a very bad idea to follow. When anything has disturbed the mind during the day, the one thing needful at night is to dismiss and forget it. If one should put paper, a pencil and a light by the bedside in the hope that a solution may come, that is the surest way to get worrying over it, and to continue at night the disturbance of the day. The absolutely right way to treat a bedroom is to associate it with sleep, and everything that can be done to deepen that association and convert it into a habit should be done—not a book, desk, table, pencil, anything that might suggest the reverse of sleep.

We have just received from Messrs. Dent and Sons an excellent book for school and home, entitled 'The Art of Living: Sources and Illustrations for Moral Lessons,' by Dr. Fr. W. Foerster: translated by Ethel Peck. There is a method in this book, though the method is hidden under a veil of bloom, like an orchard tree in May. The author keeps in mind a child's desire for self-activity, its keenness in relation to the simple experiences of common life, and its readiness to respond to all appeals to self-expression.

The book is divided into seventeen chapters, each one on an important subject, and each chapter consists almost entirely of illustrative incidents. In the hands of a wide-awake teacher, the book might prove a treasure-store of suggestions for talks and questionings.

We confess to being rather 'on the fence' with reference to astrology, but always with a little tilt on the side of belief: so the following sentences by Eleanor F. Baldwin, which floated past us the other day, were taken in for use when opportunity offered:—

Astrology is founded on the belief that there is no such thing as a vacuum in space, that every planet is a body radiating its own peculiar influence out into the ether that fills space. Every new discovery of science is a verification of this belief. As one writer expresses it, 'The heavenly bodies lie in the ether like cherries in jelly, only this jelly is responsive to every impact upon it, no matter how slight, and is capable of extending the results of such impact to infinite extent.'

Professor Dolbeare says that 'every molecule of matter sets the whole visible and invisible universe in a tremor throughout its radiating waves. A crystal cannot be turned over in the hand without affecting everything outside of it.'

How much more, then, must the tremendous personalities of the solar system, in their cyclonic sweep through space, act and react upon each other, their harmonics being 'the music of the spheres,' their discord the war of worlds.

Let no one who feels drawn to the study of astrology hesitate to take it up, always remembering that the wise man, the wilful man, rules his stars instead of obeying them.

We never cease to wonder at the readiness with which believers in reincarnation see proofs of it in the little happenings of life. The following from 'Modern Astrology' is really scarcely believable. The writer says:—

I make no pretence to having awakened any psychic faculties, therefore the following illustration is as inexplicable to myself as it will be to the majority who read this. I was walking in a meditative mood over Hampstead Heath on a Sunday morning, and on meeting three young ladies (whom I had never seen before), one of them seemed for a few brief moments to be myself; or, to be more accurate, I seemed to have entered into her consciousness, and to have felt and thought as she did, and this lasted for a few minutes. I related the experience to my wife, who is naturally psychic, and she at once replied: 'It is a recollection of a former reincarnation, when you had a similar consciousness.'

This is not in the slightest degree 'inexplicable.' A somewhat parallel case would be—walking over Hampstead Heath on Wednesday morning for lunch and remembering what there was for dinner on Sunday—such a lovely shoulder of mutton!—and, on arriving at home, finding—hash!

'LEST WE FORGET.'—Notable Anniversaries: March 14th, David Duguid, *trs.* 1907; 15th, James Bowman, *trs.* 1895; 15th, Miss E. D. Ponder, *trs.* 1897; 15th, William Wallace, *trs.* 1900; 15th, John Enmore Jones, *trs.* 1906.

WITH many a man it is matter for bitter regret that, when he was a boy, his parents, owing to a mistaken reticence, refrained from giving him certain information which, imparted in a wise and kindly manner, would have saved him from some of the pitfalls that await the heedless feet of youth. To parents who desire to safeguard their growing lads from such dangers, we can recommend a little book entitled 'Truths: Talks with a Boy Concerning Himself,' by E. B. Lowry, M.D. (Chicago: Forbes & Co., 50 cents). It is written so simply and naturally that its perusal can do no harm even to the small boy of nine or ten, while on the other hand it will furnish him with knowledge which he will afterwards find of inestimable value.

## 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 NEXT, MARCH 16TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN

BY

MR. PERCY R. STREET,

ON

'HEALING IN RELATION TO SPIRITUALISM AND RELIGION.'

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, Hon. Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will also 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:—

Mar. 30.—Mr. Ernest W. Beard: 'Our Spirit Friends and the Evidence of their Identity.'

April 27.—Rev. Arthur Chambers (Vicar of Brockenhurst, and Author of 'Our Life After Death,' 'Man and the Spiritual World,' &c.): 'Spiritualism and the Light it Casts on Christian Truth.'

May 11.—Mr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe, B.Sc. (Lond.): 'Essential Conditions of Life in this and other Worlds.'

May 25.—Mrs. Mary Seaton, of Washington, U.S.A.: 'Spiritualism and Theosophy: their Similarities and Dissimilarities—from an Onlooker's View-point.'

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

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, March 14th, Mrs. Imison (Nurse Graham) 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.

AURAL DRAWINGS.—On *Wednesday next*, March 15th, and succeeding Wednesdays, from 12 noon to 5 p.m., Mr. Percy R. Street will give personal delineations by means of the colours of the psychic aura of sitters. Fee 5s. to a guinea. Appointments desirable. See advertisement supplement.

MEDIUMISTIC DEVELOPMENT.—On *Thursday next*, March 16th, at 4.50 p.m., Mr. George Spriggs will conduct a Class for the Development of Mediumship, for Members and Associates.

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Friday next*, March 17th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to this meeting without payment. 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.

### SPECIAL EVENING MEETINGS.

On *Wednesday next*, March 15th, at the Rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., at 7 p.m. prompt, Mrs. Barrell will give clairvoyant descriptions of spirit people. Admission: Members and Associates, 1s. each; visiting friends, 2s. No admission after seven o'clock. Mrs. Barrell is the wife of the member of the old Manor Park Spiritualist Society on behalf of whom an appeal was made by Mr. Tilby, hon. secretary of the Union of London Spiritualists, in our issue of February 25th, and all donations and fees received will be devoted to the fund. March 22nd, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.

## PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS IN ITALY.

In 'Luce e Ombra' (Milan) for January, an interesting account is given of a further sitting with Signora Lucia Sordi in Rome, on which occasion Signor Carreras, who conducted the proceedings, took the pains to cover the medium's hands with a pair of his own gloves, securely sewed to the edges of the sleeves of her jacket; afterwards binding her hands. A small roughly-made wooden box, containing a tambourine and a bell, was placed on a little rectangular table at the side, the box having already been padlocked, tied up with ribbon and sealed. After the sitters had experienced the customary touches, pushes, and knockings, in complete darkness, Signor Carreras noticed a slight tinkling of the bell and jingling of the tambourine proceeding from the box. Before long, however, both bell and tambourine were vigorously rung and shaken some distance away from the box, and finally flung upon the table on which the hands of the sitters were resting. When the lamp was re-lighted the sealed and padlocked box was found to be quite intact, and the closest inspection failed to reveal the existence of any secret opening or mechanism in its construction. 'Remigio' (the control) had performed the marvellous feat of passing matter through matter! When darkness had again been secured, a number of lights were seen floating about overhead, and someone was spoken to and kissed by a deceased parent. Signor Carreras was also addressed and audibly kissed on the forehead by another entity, but without actual physical contact, although he felt the vibrations of the air whilst the words were being spoken into his right ear; a circumstance which he considers entirely dispels any possible idea of ventriloquial intervention. Experiments were also made to test the apparent exteriorisation of sensibility peculiar to this medium. Signor Carreras took a pin and pricked her in several places without producing any effect, but when he made corresponding motions in the air, about an inch and a-quarter away from the surface of her body, she exhibited a lively sensibility at every stab. (Poor medium!) Between the table and the door a chair had been set, and upon it were placed a small polished marble slab, an inked stamp-pad, and some plain sheets of paper. Well-marked finger-prints were obtained, and on one sheet they appeared on both sides of the paper. As the medium's hands were gloved, and she herself was fastened in the cabinet, and the finger-prints were apparently not those of anyone present, this manifestation was undoubtedly the work of the unseen.

We note from the pages of the same issue of 'Luce e Ombra' that the 'Società di Studi Psichici di Milano' has appointed a special local commission for the purpose of holding and reporting upon a series of test sittings, during a period of not less than a year, with Signora Lucia Sordi.

Signor Francesco Graus, in an article on the 'Influence of Music on the Production of Spiritualistic Phenomena' which appears in the February number of 'Ultra' (Rome), states that his frequent and almost daily experience has proved to him that successful manifestations are not obtained at séances unless the following conditions prevail:—

(a) The establishment of a magnetic chord comprised of persons voluntarily eliciting the required phenomena; (b) this chord including at least one sensitive, well known to be a medium, and (c) the greater the homogeneity of the magnetic chord in its composition of voluntarily harmonic wills unanimously animated with intense desire for phenomena, and the greater the potentiality of the medium, the greater and fuller are the results in their variety and intensity.

Signor Graus considers that music of a certain character, whether vocal or instrumental, has the effect of producing, under appropriate conditions, the emission of a fluidic force from the three principal psychic or nerve centres of the human body, *i.e.*, the gastric plexus, the cardiac plexus, and the pineal gland, and that this force can be sent in any given direction, according to the operation of the will, thereby affording the necessary provision for the production of spiritualistic phenomena.

With the view, presumably, of subsequently issuing Mr. Stead's 'Letters from Julia' in book form, the 'Constancia' (Buenos Ayres) is incorporating in its pages monthly instalments of this work with the type set to the size of the pages as they

will ultimately appear. Some so-called contradictions in Spiritualism are dealt with in the January number, in which the pros and cons of reincarnation come up for consideration, the work of Allan Kardec being eulogised as one of the 'finest and grandest monuments' to Spiritualism extant.

CHAS. WM. TURNER.

## CLAIRVOYANT DESCRIPTIONS AT SUNDAY SERVICES.

In response to our invitation in 'LIGHT,' of February 25th, a number of readers have sent us their opinions as to whether 'the time of the Sunday services of Spiritualist societies should be taken up, in whole or in part, with the giving of clairvoyant descriptions.'

Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, president of the London Union of Spiritualists, writes:—

In my opinion, the question is capable of reply 'Yes' and 'No'! We should not forget that there are people who come to our Sunday meetings because they have heard, in some manner, that Spiritualists state it is possible for a person to see, and describe the personal appearance of, beings who have 'passed away.' In many instances, probably, these Sunday visitors are prompted by curiosity, but I have known some whose motive has been of a much higher order, *viz.*, an earnest desire to know the truth. In both types of visitors there is presented to us scope for ministry, and I think we ought not to permit a single opportunity of service to escape us. Moreover, it sometimes happens that, owing to business engagements, very few strangers are able to attend our week-night services; and to relegate 'clairvoyant descriptions' to the week-night services is to practically close the door of our Heaven to such visitors. For the sake of 'the stranger within the gates,' therefore, I think we should include the 'giving of clairvoyant descriptions' at *some* of the Sunday meetings. It is undoubtedly unwise to have clairvoyant descriptions at every Sunday meeting, for several good reasons, not the least of which is the fact stated by 'Imperator': 'Man . . . is a spirit with a spiritual body which is to survive its severance from the earth body. . . . This spiritual body it is the object of your training in this sphere of probation to develop and fit for its life in the sphere of spirit'; and I am of opinion that the major portion of the Sunday services should be devoted to study and teaching, as I do not consider the constant hearing of clairvoyant descriptions calculated to develop and fit a man's spiritual body for its life in the sphere of spirit.

It is of vital importance that clairvoyant descriptions should be free from all attempts at 'fortune-telling,' and that the medium should refrain from attempting to extract information from the person to whom the description is being given by 'leading questions.' Let the medium clearly state what the appearance of the spirit friend resembles; if any message is to be conveyed to the person, let the medium refrain from either adding to, or subtracting from, the spirit friend's words; and above all, let the medium's sole concern be faithfully to act as the messenger, or interpreter, of the spirit world, caring nothing for worldly advantage or material applause. These conditions being observed, I would unhesitatingly say 'Yes' in answer to your question; but if mediums are in the habit of using the platform for the purpose of furthering their own personal ends, and if the more important purpose of aiding visitors by wise counsels, and 'edifying of the body of Christ,' is to be neglected, then my opinion is almost identical with that of those who think that clairvoyance will be the bane of the movement.

Mr. C. Parsons, vice-president of the Leicester Society, Queen's Hall, Silver-street, says that the aims and objects of Spiritualism, in his opinion, are—

the emancipation of all earnest truth-seekers from the thralldom of religious misconception and bigotry, by opening up to them a means whereby knowledge can be gained of the facts relating to spiritual existence here and hereafter. Spiritualism does not teach of a future life in which man will have nothing to do but wear a crown, walk golden streets in a city with jasper walls and pearly gates, and play a harp forever before a great white throne. What it does teach is that the life on the other side is just as natural as, and even more so than, it is here; that man, being a part of God, must of necessity return to God. Whether the road be rough or smooth depends upon himself. If he has lived a good life to the best of his ability during his earthly pilgrimage, his journey will be full of joy and happiness. The philosophy of Spiritualism is full of hope and consolation for all, and in this respect is very different from the teachings which condemn all 'unbelievers' to eternal punishments, no matter how good a life they may have lived. But many will

ask, 'What proof have you that your theory is correct?' This is just where the value of clairvoyance comes in. The seer is enabled to give actual evidence of the existence of deceased relations and friends, and can often give messages from them as to the life over there through which they are actually passing, confirming the truth which the speakers proclaim. Without proof, Spiritualism would almost be as unbelievable as any other religion is, only that it appeals more to common sense. Therefore, as both clairvoyance and phenomena are necessary, I would not do without clairvoyance entirely at our Sunday services. While it is true that many are brought into Spiritualism by phenomena, it is equally true that they are not kept there by them alone. Therefore, I see the necessity of combining teaching and phenomena—teaching for those who study the philosophy, clairvoyant descriptions for those who are seeking for evidence. For this purpose, except on special occasions, three or four brief descriptions might follow the discourse. If the services of the most capable speakers and mediums are secured, then those persons who are hungering and thirsting for the truth in regard to the future life will be attracted, and myriads will be grateful for the benefits they have derived from Spiritualism. Such is the plan adopted at the society I have the pleasure of attending, and we have audiences of about four or five hundred thoughtful persons nearly every Sunday.

Mr. C. G. Rickards, who was the energetic honorary secretary of the late Central Society of Manchester for a number of years, says:—

To my mind, after listening to a fine address on the philosophy of our movement, clairvoyant descriptions, such as are usually given, detract from the beauty and solemnity of the service and are not a fitting or desirable conclusion thereto.

Doubtless, the extra financial support societies receive from 'after circles' is largely responsible for their popularity and is an asset that cannot be despised—at any rate this has been my experience in connection with the late leading society in this city (Manchester Central). From its inception eight years ago, the committee resolutely set its face against clairvoyant descriptions being given from the platform at the ordinary Sunday services, with the result that, although the best speakers of the movement were engaged throughout the whole of that period, the society could not continue its work, while other societies, who gave clairvoyant descriptions, were able to sweep us from the field.

We cannot ignore the fact that clairvoyance and physical mediumship are the big wheels of our movement, as it is by their means that people are induced to think and to investigate. I do not agree with those who say that the practice of giving clairvoyant descriptions at Sunday services is repugnant to all right-thinking people who have lost friends and relatives. My experience is that the first place resorted to by bereaved persons is a spiritual meeting-place, where they can go in search of some loving word from their departed one—something that will be to them more satisfying than the 'sure and certain hope' of our orthodox friends' teaching.

I would say: Let all societies provide classes for clairvoyance and phenomena on week-day evenings, placing suitable persons at these meetings to answer and enlighten inquirers, and let the services be without fee, or with only a voluntary collection; Sunday illustrations of clairvoyance could then be dispensed with.

Mr. Thomas Brown, honorary secretary of the Kingston-on-Thames Society, writes:—

Our opinion here is that if all clairvoyants could give as accurate and convincing descriptions and messages as do the best developed mediums who are available, little fault could be found, but a certain number of platform workers are not developed enough to attempt it. The people are eager for descriptions of their loved ones, and veritable 'seers' will always be acceptable and do much good.

Mr. George Fowler, of Barrow-in-Furness, says that he would like to see more mediums adopt the plan followed by a medium who, after delivering a fairly good address, gave only one clairvoyant description—a really good one, which went further to prove continued existence than dozens of the ordinary type would have done.

'A Worker'—one who, as a medium, has contributed many years of service to Spiritualism, both as a speaker and as a medium—writes:—

The problem that you have raised in 'LIGHT' respecting the advisability of giving clairvoyant descriptions at the Sunday services of Spiritualist societies opens up a large question, *viz.*, What is the purpose for which those Sunday services are held? If they are religious gatherings for Spiritualists, as well as for inquirers; if they are intended to be helpful in deepening the spiritual life of those who attend them by the consideration

and elucidation of problems connected with the soul, both embodied and ex-carnate; if they are held for teaching, for exhortation and guidance, for aspiration and worship, for ministration to strengthen the weak and erring, and to comfort the weary and sad, then the time of the meeting will naturally be devoted to some form of service, to reverent prayer and praise, and the proclamation of spiritual principles.

If, on the other hand, the meetings are held for the benefit of visitors, for propaganda purposes, to convince the inquirer and the sceptic of the fact of continued existence, then explanatory addresses and clairvoyant descriptions will be in order. Exposition and demonstration should go together. If the promoters of the meetings desire to combine evidence with teaching, aspiration and worship, then a short 'service,' which will include praise and prayer, an earnest, reverent, religious address, with a few clairvoyant descriptions of spirit friends present, clearly given, will, presumably, meet the case. Not exclusion, but efficiency seems to be the need of the hour.

Mr. E. Beardsworth, president of the Southport Psychological Union, Hawkshead Hall, writes:—

If clairvoyance were excluded from our platform we should have to close our meeting-places. The movement commenced through phenomena and the whole fabric rests upon them. I am a convinced Spiritualist, like hosts of others, through absolute and positive facts, having witnessed all the phases of manifestation from table-tilting to materialisations—including personations, levitations, suspension of natural law, to which I devoted two years, morning, noon and night. Without these evidences the philosophy would have proved nothing. In my opinion it is the illiteracy of so many present-day 'exponents' that is the 'bane and curse of the movement,' causing persons who possess cultured minds, who visit us occasionally, to go away disgusted. The injury done to the movement by the 'make-fit' clairvoyants is, I admit, incalculable. If clairvoyants would simply impart what the spirit friends give and show them, and not talk of what they themselves think and sense, &c., a much larger percentage of the descriptions would be recognised.

Mr. J. G. McFarlane, honorary secretary of the Portsmouth Temple Society of Spiritualists, writes:—

The whole crux of the situation seems to me to lie in the one who gives the demonstration. Some workers, engaged wholly for their psychic gifts, are practically useless if called upon to deal with our philosophy, their attempts to answer questions being ludicrous. These friends should certainly be kept from Sunday platform work, for I think the major portion of our Sunday services should be devoted to the philosophical side. Others are engaged for their able presentation, normal or otherwise, of the religious significance of Spiritualism, and these should be encouraged by all well-organised bodies. The thinking public wants to know on what we base our religion, and an able exponent deals with the phenomenal aspects without giving actual demonstrations. The whole tone of a good address is often spoiled by the clairvoyant descriptions which follow. As a body we are far from reverent, and in this respect we should do well to emulate the actions of our orthodox friends. The giving of clairvoyant descriptions at Sunday services will never tend towards this. Still, it must be admitted that such descriptions attract the people, and as societies, as a rule, are not in very rosy financial positions, they naturally cater for the masses, of whom the 'phenomena hunters' form so large a part. How can this state of things be remedied? Most societies hold week-night circles and services. If an organised effort could be made to present clairvoyant descriptions at these gatherings only, I feel sure we could lift ourselves quite fifty per cent. as a religious people. It would mean a little sacrifice at the outset, but we should gain spiritually, and, in addition, it would be the death-blow to the practice of professional psychics making use of Sunday platforms for business purposes, as well as the funeral-knell to Sunday after-circles. I expect to be criticised for making these remarks, especially when it is realised that illustrations of clairvoyance generally follow the services at my own church. Anticipating such criticism, I can only add that my views are not held by all officials in this town. At the Portsmouth Temple ninety-five per cent. of the descriptions are recognised and only five per cent. are not.

Mr. James E. Richards, the honorary secretary of the Cardiff First Spiritualist Society, says:—

Clairvoyant descriptions should be a fitting ending to each 'divine service,' as nothing could be more inspiring, even to the convinced Spiritualist, than to learn of the continued companionship of some dear and loved relative or friend, as the knowledge of the nearness and identity of such relative could not fail to stimulate the best thoughts of all spiritually-minded persons. Unhappily, however, in practice these descriptions do not generally create such feelings, but rather those of sensationalism, amusement, and ridicule, owing to the fact that people generally are

not sufficiently prepared to understand our phenomena—the spirit people being described as they are, and not as the ordinary individual expects; also owing to the inability of mediums to give descriptions grammatically and tactfully, the result of failure on their part to realise the need for intellectual development along normal lines. It is sincerely to be hoped that mediums will recognise their great responsibility, as demonstrators of the continuity of life, and endeavour to fit themselves for presenting the subject in the best possible aspect. Then, and not till then, will the Spiritualist cause command the respect and attention of clear-thinking men and women; until this is brought about it would be better for the movement generally if the giving of clairvoyant descriptions at devotional services were discontinued. As to the statement that ‘not more than five in a hundred of the clairvoyant descriptions are correct,’ my experience has been that fully fifty per cent. of the descriptions I have heard given have been recognised.

Lastly, Mr. J. B. Tetlow, who has been a platform speaker, clairvoyant, and psychometrist for about thirty years, says:—

It appears to me that the whole difficulty centres around competence and incompetence. But does the incompetence lie wholly with the platform? Does the audience form no part in the incompetence? Let the critics examine themselves and see if they are wholly free from blame. I know something of audiences, influences, and results. Further, are the operating spirits without blame? Again, I speak of what I know. Instead of all-round condemnations, let us endeavour, by a careful study of facts, to learn why there is failure in some cases and success in others. I have said again and again that clairvoyance, &c., on the public platform can be as convincing and helpful as in private, providing the medium has the requisite conditions and knows how to command the sympathy of the people. Clear visions, clearly seen and clearly stated, command attention and carry conviction. These can be obtained if the mediums will try for them and learn how to create the best conditions. There are other gifts besides that of clairvoyant perception that are needed to attain success, *viz.*, wit, tact, sympathy, and a ready tongue. Sensitives, whether in private or in public, cannot instantaneously enter into the psychic condition. They need time for concentration, withdrawal from the outer plane and the awakening of interior power. The clairvoyant who has been speaking, say, for thirty minutes, oftentimes finds it difficult to follow on with clairvoyant descriptions. Perhaps he has never studied the difference between inspirational influences and perceptive functioning, and has not awakened to the fact that with practice he can exercise both faculties at once with advantage all round. We do not study this subject enough, or we should have less growling and more success.

Audiences consist of persons who desire to be interested, instructed, or amused, and all these mental states are factors in the problem. Which class of them shall be encouraged? It is a mistake to appeal simply to wondering ignorance and not try to interest and instruct! Raise the standard and tone of the meetings by raising the motive and then audiences will cease to wonder and will seek instruction. They will listen to thirty minutes' sensible talk followed by four clearly given descriptions, and they will do so in larger numbers.

Efficiency is needed everywhere, in committee rooms and general meetings as well as on the platform.

Judging from what has been said by our correspondents it is clear that Spiritualists realise that their special appeal to the world is for the recognition of the facts that man is a spirit now and always; that personality survives bodily death; that every individual retains his identity in a progressive state of existence hereafter; that intercourse with the ‘departed,’ more or less full, is not only a possibility, but a fact of actual experience, and that the knowledge of this communion, which can be possessed and enjoyed by all who will truly seek for it, will save the world from formalism on the one hand and materialism on the other.

As the evidences of their survival are supplied by spirit people through mediums, it follows that mediumship is the distinguishing feature of Spiritualism, and it is only natural that those who conduct Spiritualist Sunday meetings should deem it their duty to encourage the development of mediumship and desire to give to the public the best possible proofs of spirit presence and identity. Those who are acquainted with the facts of the case know that there are thousands of persons who are Spiritualists to-day who have become so through receiving from clairvoyants at public meetings ‘descriptions’ of an arresting or convincing character. We have known many instances such as the following: A lady in a state of mind

bordering on madness was passing along a side street in a north country town one Sunday afternoon, when her attention was attracted by the sound of singing. Learning from the notice-board outside the building from which the sound proceeded that it was a Spiritualist meeting-place, she felt impelled to enter. Not long before she had lost her husband. Although not a ‘believer,’ he had been a good, kind man, but, unfortunately, unable to resist the temptation to drink to excess, and, in spite of all her efforts to save him, had died a drunkard's death. In her distress she asked her clergyman the pressing question where he thought her husband had gone. The good man was loth to reply, but, finally, sorrowfully admitted that he feared for her husband, but hoped that God would be merciful to him. The poor woman was tortured almost beyond endurance by her fears, when she heard the singing and entered the room. The speaker's address interested her very little, but then came the announcement that the medium would give descriptions of departed spirits, and the next thing she realised was that she herself was being addressed. As she listened she found she was receiving a word-picture of her husband. It was so accurate that she felt that the clairvoyant must be able to see him. A plea for her forgiveness followed, and a message to say that he was truly penitent, and that, though unhappy, he was improving and wished for her loving sympathy and prayers. What ‘ministry’ could have been more timely or more efficacious? And this case is only one of many.

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#### TRANSITION OF MR. ANDREW GEMMELL.

There passed to the higher life on February 20th Mr. Andrew Gemmell, of Glasgow, in his seventy-eighth year. Mr. Gemmell was one of the oldest Spiritualists in our ranks. His father, a prominent manufacturer in Glasgow, was associated with Robert Owen, and a worker in the secular school of thought, and Andrew imbibed that deep reverence for the great social reformer which characterised all his followers whom I have known. There were few men who were more deeply imbued with the spirit of Owen than was Andrew Gemmell. Attracted to mesmerism, chiefly through the influence of J. W. Jackson, a notable man of his day, Mr. Gemmell afterwards became convinced of the truth of Spiritualism and laboured devotedly, along with Andrew Glendinning, Hay Nisbet and others, in building up the first Glasgow Spiritualist Association. When I first stepped into the meeting-place in Trongate, he it was who bade me welcome and assisted me in my search for knowledge. Though a man of the ripest intelligence, and able to do splendid work in spreading the truth among those with whom he associated, he was never a public speaker. In those early days he was scarcely ever absent from a meeting or a séance, and was amongst the first sitters who aided in the development of David Duguid and his brother Robert. Full of rich generous instincts, he was a likeable companion and exerted a helpful influence. He read widely and was capable of setting forth clearly all that related to mesmeric phenomena particularly, and it is singular that he failed to put his thoughts in print when so many with less capacity entered that field. The influence and weight of the grand truths of Spiritualism never weakened with him. He saw and felt their mighty import in bringing about better social conditions in which we might dwell, and was enthusiastic in his proclamation of Socialism as Spiritualism. For many years his deafness prevented him from enjoying public addresses, but the spiritual papers were his regular companions. Whole-souled, generous and true-hearted, his presence will be missed by his many friends who ever enjoyed his pleasant conversation.

J. R.

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FOR MRS. E. A. CANNOCK.—Mrs. H. Frost, of ‘Ventnor,’ Carlton, Notts, wishes on behalf of Mrs. E. A. Cannock to acknowledge the receipt of 2s. 6d. from Mrs. Boswell-Stone, £1 from Mr. Squirrel, and £1 from Mr. Henry Withall. Further contributions are needed and will be thankfully received and acknowledged. We are pleased to learn that Mrs. Cannock has already derived benefit from the treatment that she is receiving.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
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### CHRISTIAN AND JEW.

At the 'World Congress of Free Christian and other Religious Liberals,' recently held at Berlin, a notable Address was given by Professor Claude Montefiore (a Jew) on 'The Relations between Liberal Christians and Jews.' The substance and the conclusion of it keenly remind us of our own oft-expressed idea of Religion as a spiritual state rather than as a doctrinal point of view. The Professor, who carefully tasted and defined his subject, preferred to speak of Jews and Christians rather than of Judaism and Christianity; of life and men, therefore, rather than of theory and doctrine, and that safely held him to Religion as spirit and life.

As a practical matter, what goes on in the United States of America and in England best enables us, he says, to think 'what the good future may have in store.' Generally speaking, he says, England is a paradise for the Jews. There, 'that bad and odious thing known as Anti-Semitism, whether it be political, or professional or social, whether it depend on religious hatred or race hatred, or on pride, or on prejudice, is practically non-existent. What there is of it stalks in darkness, and does not venture to lift its ugly and unhallowed head.' Referring to his own experience, the Professor tells how in England there is perfect frankness as to Religion. The subject 'is not avoided or fought shy of.' 'There is no closed door, but, on the other hand, there is not the slightest attempt to convert.' On the contrary, it was half comical and half pathetic to see with what amazement the Jews of Berlin saw a Christian clergyman travelling with the Professor on terms of closest intimacy and friendship. "Was he a real *bonâ fide* clergyman?" they whispered to me.

Speaking of certain 'dangers' in connection with the intercourse desired, the Professor barred mixed marriages. These must be 'rigorously rejected' by every good Jew; and, as a second danger, he mentioned the possible watering-down of Jewish Theism as a consequence of unlimited social intercourse and the subtle effects of environment, education and literature. But he is prepared to face the dangers for the sake of a higher good. And here arises a problem.

In one way we do and in another way we do not want everybody to think religiously alike, he says. It is an

antinomy which may be resolved in some such way as this: Wishing that all the world should enjoy what is dear to us, is it not also possible to see that for a very long time this is impossible, and also to see that, at present,

various kinds and types and phases of Theism are good and desirable, because the conception of God and of His relation to the world is so big and so manifold that men cannot embrace and understand and realise and cherish every aspect of it with equal emphasis and intensity? May we not hold that for long reaches of time different aspects or formulations of the truth, different approachments to it, even different metaphors and symbols of it, may appeal most to different minds and to different groups of men?

This, however, is a 'counsel of perfection,' and the average man is not likely to fall in with it. In fact, we are all apt to think in our hearts that we must be right and that others must be wrong; and most of us find it difficult to be patient with the other man, and, as a set-off to ideal relations between Jews and Christians, the Professor is of course right when he says:—

Even the liberal Christian and even the liberal Jew are both inclined to think that the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, resides with their own particular creed. The Christian, for instance, even if he be a liberal Christian, and in some cases all the more when he is a liberal Christian, tends to believe that Judaism, at all events, is a religion which belongs, or should belong, exclusively to the past. He tends to believe that Judaism, at all events, has no part or lot in the modern world and no rôle to play in the religious history of the world. Judaism, at all events, belongs to the museum and not to life. Its efficiency ceased 1,900 years ago when it gave birth to Jesus and to Paul.

On the other hand, the Jew is often inclined to disparage the Christian as only a bastard Jew. All that is good and true in his religion has been taken over from Judaism, and is thus not new; and what is new is not true. So think many Jews. This expressed or unexpressed depreciation must cease, says the Professor, if we are to have the best relations with one another. We talk of 'toleration,' and even sometimes pride ourselves upon it, but Goethe is aptly quoted: 'Toleranz sollte nur eine Vorübergehende Gesinnung sein; sie muss zur Anerkennung führen. Dulden heisst beleidigen.' 'We want not merely toleration, but respect, and not merely respect, but recognition.'

Upon what should this be understandingly based? Upon this—'that each religion and even each liberal variety of each religion, will not only continue to live a long while, but will have something special and valuable to live for, something of worth and good to place upon the world's big spiritual altar, something distinctive and precious to offer towards the total religious store.' This being so, it ought to be obvious that a really ideal relation between Jews and Christians, and especially between liberal Jews and liberal Christians, must largely depend upon a mutual appreciation of the excellences of each other's faith. Often the Jew tries to use Christianity as a foil to Judaism, the demerits of the one used to set off the merits of the other: while the Christian puts 'the law' in the pillory; 'with a fine imaginary description of its burdens, the liberty of the Christian is exhibited on a grander and more delightful scale.' Instead of all that, the Jew should learn what has given the Christian Gospel strength, and the Christian should learn what was and is the power of the Law. 'To the Christians, law and legalism must no longer mean aridity and outwardness and *Werkheiligkeit* and self-righteousness and despair, and all those silly old familiar catch-words. And to the Jew, the Cross of Christ must no longer mean foolishness, and the teaching of Jesus must no longer be found to be either old or bad, and Paul (most difficult need of all) must no longer be regarded as a mere corrupter of ethical monotheism.' Well for both Jew and Christian when they wake to the discovery that both

Judaism and Christianity are not dry and dead collections of doctrines but vital states of the soul by which men and women live.

At this point, Professor Montefiore starts a consideration which ought to help both liberal Jews and Christians to a clearer meeting-place; and this time, with a prospect of some agreement. The asperities and crudities of Judaism and Christianity, he says, are toning down. The Incarnation is not quite the old Incarnation, and the Divinity of Christ is not the old Divinity: and, on the other hand, the Law is not exactly the old Law, and Legalism is not the old Legalism. On each side there are softenings down and bridges. This is an important insertion in the Professor's argument. After all, it suggests, not only seeing the excellences of each other's faith, but the possible merging of them, partially if not entirely; and, although he insists upon 'relations, not amalgamation,' he nevertheless says, 'Sympathetic and even cordial can be the relations between Liberal Christian and Liberal Jew, seeing also how much there is which is common between the two creeds.' What with 'bridges' and 'much that is common between' them, one may look for something akin to union eventually; and indeed, after all his protests and protestations, the amiable Professor concludes with these surrendering words:—

Naturally the Christian will conceive that approach to consist mainly in the Jew becoming more Christian, and the Jew will conceive that approach to consist mainly in the Christian becoming more Jewish. The truth, perhaps, is rather that there will at last be a meeting and a joining of hands somewhere about the centre, but seeing that it is a Jew who is the speaker he may be pardoned for believing that, whenever and wherever the union takes place, and with whatever modifications on either side, it will at least fulfil and realise the words of the prophets: 'And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall the Lord be one and His name one.' For 'Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.'

### 'REMARKABLE EXPERIENCES OF FORGOTTEN PIONEERS.'

ADDRESS BY MR. ANGUS McARTHUR.

On Thursday evening, the 2nd inst., at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Mr. Angus McArthur delivered an Address on 'Psychic Phenomena in England, 600 A.D. to 1200 A.D.; the Remarkable Experiences of Forgotten Pioneers,' to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. H. Withall, the vice-president, occupying the chair.

In his introductory remarks the Chairman said: I have heard from spirit friends, who are aware of the necessity of being as active as possible, that we may in a few months witness a great revival of interest in psychical matters, and, through this revival, the accession of a great many adherents to our cause. We may have to give a liberal interpretation to the word 'months,' but with this modification I think we may accept the statement, and for this reason: We know that various ministers of the gospel of all sects are accepting our philosophy and preaching what is practically Spiritualism, though they leave out the word. We also know that many scientific men are investigating the facts, and are practically convinced of their genuineness. I think that before long we shall have someone bold enough not to mind the jeers of his fellow clergymen or scientists, but to proclaim himself a Spiritualist, and if that anticipation be correct we may expect a large accession to our ranks. The newcomers will probably at first fight shy of the word Spiritualism and introduce a new name, such as 'super-physical.' They will then be able to accept our philosophy, provided they have a few stepping-stones. One of the most useful stepping-stones would be the discovery that psychical phenomena are found in the sacred scriptures of all nations, and I feel that the lecture we are to have to-night, which will show that there is nothing really new in the phenomena that we are familiar with, will aid in providing that stepping-stone.

MR. ANGUS McARTHUR said: When I last had the pleasure of addressing the Members of the London Spiritualist Alliance we were concerned with the psychic element which lay latent in the Greek text of the New Testament. Our search there was the result of inference. We argued that if the experiences of the early Christians really consisted largely of psychic manifestations, and were dependent in the main upon the use of psychic powers and gifts, there would be some trace of the fact in the Greek originals. It might be obscured, we thought, in the English translation, which is the work of men not profoundly versed in psychic lore; but in the Greek, as it seemed to us, the element must be present. Those of you who accompanied me on that expedition of research into the Greek originals will remember that we found the psychic object of our search; not with difficulty, and in meagre distribution, but with ease, and in abundance.

To-night we embark upon another voyage of exploration, starting, as before, upon the faith of an inference. Let me indicate to you what are its bases, and how the matter presents itself to my mind. We believe that Modern Spiritualism is the re-birth, so to speak, of one of the most ancient and widespread of the powers and privileges with which mankind is endowed. Nobody would dream of suggesting that because Spiritualism has only come under frequent public observation and discussion since the days of the Fox Sisters, therefore it is a nineteenth century force, previously unknown to mankind. The force was there all through the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages, only that the world at large did not know how to utilise it. Precisely the same can be postulated of electricity in all its myriad manifestations. The electric force was there in the days of Socrates, every whit as potent, mysterious, and useful as it is to-day; but the world of that age did not know of its existence, and consequently never turned it to account. It was like the incessant pressure behind a tap that is never turned on.

Now, if that inference is correct, and the psychic forces have been only dormant through the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages, it should follow that, given the existence of circumstances—whether accidental or pre-arranged—which were favourable to the psychic forces, we ought to find traces of their work. The traces may be obscure; so obscure that those who saw them, as contemporaries, may have been quite ignorant of their nature and origin, and may have referred them to some other explanation than the psychic. Their blindness, however, need not be ours. If we find that there were in operation or existence some of the same influences and conditions favourable to the production of psychic phenomena, as we see around us to-day; and if we find that the creation of those conditions was, in fact, followed by phenomena which are plainly psychic, we shall be fairly entitled to say that this is an instance of like cause producing like effect.

My point is, then, that when you get the brave ascetics of early Christian or Saxon Britain, from the landing of Augustine in the year 596 down to the Norman Conquest, living lives of the most self-denying austerity, and forming themselves into religious communities who kept up a ceaseless round of worship night and day; when you get these men living in a lonely land, such as ours was then, free from the turmoil of train and trade, free from all the hurry and rush and disquiet of our modern life; when you find such men meeting in their darkened churches night after night, at the midnight hour, with no light save that of a flickering candle in a horn lantern—when you get all these conditions, you have the exact environment which invites the onset of psychic forces. If you discover that they made their presence felt, either then or in the individual lives of the monastic worshippers, can you wonder at it? Would you not rather wonder if they had failed to do so?

From the arrival of Augustine, down to about the end of the reign of Richard I. (say 1200), religious devotion in England was at its highest. Its finest displays were those afforded by the monastic communities, small and large, as well as by the multitude of isolated hermits and devotees who were scattered all over the land in cell and cave. To take a single example. One of them used to live on the banks of a rapid stream, and would spend the whole of the long winter nights up to his armpits, naked, in the water, reciting the Psalms aloud. In our modern eyes that may appear a curious form of devotion. But devotion

it is, unquestionably; and the temper of mind which impelled to such acts, joined to the temper of body which could carry them out, make up just the very combination which is likely to lie open to spirit manifestation. It is your ascetic, not your sybarite, who gets the fine psychic manifestations. Then, again, think of the whole band of monks in a great monastery descending, in the dark watches of the night, into one of the great monastic churches, such as you may see at Durham, Ely, or Fountains Abbey. Consider the prevailing aura, the fruit of generations of devotion; the dim light; the voices of the monks rising in the immemorial chant and psalm amid the darkness—and that psalm sung to the Gregorian tones, which, more than any other music, favour the devotional and the introspective moods. What should we expect but that there would be the manifestations which all the circumstances, all the arrangements, the temperament of the participants, and the place itself, would all invite and facilitate? The brave ascetics who were the inspiration of Saxon, Norman, and early Angevin England, are the men whom I have ventured to call, in the title of this evening's lecture, the 'forgotten pioneers' of Spiritualism. Let us consider some of their experiences.

There is, to begin with, the characteristic story of St. Bega, better known to us as the lady whose name survives in St. Bees Head. She was the abbess of a community of Benedictine nuns, leading the life of labour and self-denial which is ever on the psychic borderland:—

They were simply little, quiet looking nuns of St. Benedict. The wimple which enveloped their head and throat was plain and coarse, and so was their veil; and even the ample cuculla or long white mantle which they wore in choir was not to sweep along the ground, 'for they who delight in this or in beauty of apparel without doubt are rejected of God.' For the winter they had a tippet of rough sheep-skin, and a cap lined with white lamb's wool, for it was very cold when they rose in the night and went into the church, when the wind blew across the fens of Lincolnshire, or the chill mist rose from the waters of the river which surrounded their little islands.

And now for the story:—

Now one night, about cock-crowing—that is, before Matins—Bega was lying in the dormitory at Hackness. Suddenly she heard in the spirit the great bell of Whitby Convent, which was tolled to call the community together when any of them was dead; and above she beheld an immense light pouring down from heaven, and filling every part of the building, the roof of which seemed to be entirely taken away. Amid the intolerable blaze, she discerned what she was given to understand was the soul of St. Hilda, borne by angels into heaven, and overpassing the realms of purgatory. When she came to herself, Bega, uncertain whether she had dreamed a dream or seen a vision, felt inwardly sure that God had taken St. Hilda to Himself. Half in sorrow, half in fear, she awakened Freitha, and the whole community rose up, and for the rest of the night sang psalms and said prayers for the repose of their blessed mother's soul. In the morning some of the monks came from Whitby to acquaint them with the decease of the abbess, which took place at the very hour when it had been revealed to Bega.

'In its outward circumstances,' says one of the authors of the 'Lives of the English Saints,' 'this holy legend looks at first sight like a modern ghost story.' Well (though I should hardly dare to say as much to the eminent theologian who wrote the words), the story is so like a modern ghost story because it is so true to ghost-life. These apparitions of the dying are—shall I say?—quite common phenomena nowadays, so well attested as to be beyond all reasonable contradiction. If they were purely imaginary it would be a strange thing that the hallucinations of a Saxon lady should run riot in just the same direction as that taken by the imagination of modern witnesses of these occurrences. Again, I have repeatedly been assured by spirit informants that the holding of a séance or the happening of any remarkable manifestation is marked by the shooting up of a huge column of light from the scene of the episode. The passing of St. Hilda must have been no common event, even in the remarkable history of Saxon Christianity. But how extraordinary it is that the far-off witness (unless she were telling the truth) should pounce upon just the particular kind of display that modern psychic inquiry shows to be the accompaniment of these occurrences! She might have spoken of a great noise, or of an earthquake, or of a voice. But, instead of so doing, she tells of a column of light, and that

turns out to be the precise manifestation which modern psychic science would lead us to expect in these circumstances.

Let us take another specimen narrative. 'In one of the monasteries,' says St. Aelred,

which, under the venerable Father Gilbert, are daily sending up to heaven plentiful fruits of chastity, there was once, and perhaps may be still, a holy virgin, and she had so expelled from her breast all love of the world and carnal affections, all care for bodily wants and outward anxiety that, with a burning soul, she loathed earthly things, and longed after heavenly. And sometimes it happened that when her mind was occupied in her wonted prayer, a mysterious and wondrous sweetness would come over her and put an end to all the movements of the soul, to all quick-coming thoughts, nay, even all those spiritual thoughts which concerned her friends. Then her soul, in a manner bidding adieu to all worldly burdens, would be rapt above itself; it would be caught up by a strange ineffable and incomprehensible light, so that it saw nothing else but That which is, and which is the being of all.

Nor was this a bodily light or any likeness of a bodily thing; it was not extended or shed abroad, so that it could be seen everywhere; without being contained itself, it contained all things, and that in a wonderful and ineffable manner, just as Being contains all that is, and Truth whatever is true. When, therefore, this light was shed around her, then she began to know Christ no longer after the flesh, for the breath of her nostrils, Christ Jesus, had led her into the truth itself. After lying a considerable time in this trance, the sisters could only with difficulty bring her back to her bodily senses, by shaking her. This happened several times, and they entreated her to explain what took place in these trances. Then began the others to long to attain to the height of this vision: wherefore they strove to withdraw their minds from all worldly cares and anxieties; and by tears and continued prayers many obtained the same grace, so that among the sisters many were, even against their will, plunged into this light. There was there, in the convent, a nun of consummate good sense, and she, knowing that it is not right to trust to every spirit, thought that this state was to be attributed to disease or fantastic illusions, and, as much as she could, tried to dissuade the sisters from having these visions frequently.

Here, again, is a description which tallies in very close detail with the experiences of those whose psychic personality wanders off during the physical sleep, and visits the spirit lands. As far as my knowledge goes, the terms are singularly exact. There is a very striking touch, too, in the suggestion that the lady could only be brought back out of the trance condition by means of shaking. It was a rough-and-ready mode, no doubt, though it would be effective. They handle mediums more gently nowadays. But the very *naïveté* of the description seems to me to suggest its truth, to bear out the theory that the record is based upon experience and actuality. Shaking would bring the lady back from the trance condition. It is, however, an extremely matter-of-fact method, which we would hardly expect to find among the records of religious enthusiasm, unless they had a foundation in fact, being the substantially accurate story of actual, but only dimly understood, experiences.

For the next case we may take St. Edmund, and come down as far as the thirteenth century:—

Another vision which he had, showed from what source he sought this illumination. One day he had mounted the chair from which he was to hold his disputation, and was revolving the subject in his mind before commencing. The question for the day was on the Trinity. While he awaited the arrival of the rest of his pupils, he was overtaken by sleep for a moment, during which he saw, in a dream, the Holy Spirit, in the shape of a dove, fly towards him and place in his mouth of the blessed body of Christ. On rousing himself, he disputed on the Blessed Trinity, with such surprising subtlety, depth and fervour, as almost to exceed the power of the human intellect. It seemed to his hearers that they heard an angel, rather than a man, so did he open to them the depths of that unfathomable mystery.

This can hardly be anything but an instance of a trance address. It would be superfluous to remind such an audience as this how often the subject matter and the intellectual level of a trance address transcend in the last degree anything of which the speaker is capable in the normal condition. Yet it is curious that a thirteenth century writer should describe the phenomenon—unless, as I said before, he were a witness of truth.

(To be continued.)

## PHILOSOPHY OF THE MAHABHARATA.\*

By MRS. ALICIA SIMPSON, M.R.A.S.  
(Author of *Bhakti Marga*.)

(Continued from page 101.)

## FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship has ever been a fruitful topic in literature. Poets have celebrated it in their noblest verses, philosophers have mused upon it in their calm retreats, writers of fiction have taken it as their theme for many a famous story. The reader who would search the Mahabharata, thinking to discover there rhapsodies upon the poetic side of this relationship, will not find his expectations vain. Though it has tender tales of attachment, such as linked Damon to Pythias, David to Jonathan, Brutus to Cassius, it is the practical side of friendship that is more discussed and analysed, the expediency of making friends, the policy whereby they may be retained and enemies converted, the need to guard against excessive trustfulness.

Let us see what one of the world's most ancient books has to say upon the subject.

First of all, it should be noticed that the sages of the Mahabharata esteemed friendship most highly. One of the foremost duties the self-restrained man is bidden to observe is the practice of universal friendliness. To obtain the love of all creatures is set forth by the wise Bhishma as one of the King's chief aims, and to achieve it the philosopher advocates no misanthropic holding aloof, but a diligent practice of pleasant speech to all. Thus may a man gain the favour of his fellows. 'He who, on meeting others, is the first to smilingly accost them, pleases all. A pleasant word enhances even a gift, which without it would be like rice without curry. Agreeable speech never fails of its purpose.' By such arts as these is the king counselled to create friends for himself even among his enemies.

Bhishma divides a monarch's friends into four groups: (1) those whose ambitions tally with his own; (2) those who are truly attached to his person; (3) his relations; (4) those whose loyalty has been purchased by gifts and honours: a classification which shows that even so many thousand years before the Christian era, in what seems to us the youth and 'freshness of the early world,' there were, nevertheless, time-servers, flatterers, and foes whose mouths had to be silenced by rich bribes. How was a king to comport himself towards this motley crew of friends around him? As we read, the philosopher's speech recalls to us the boding words of Artemidorus the Soothsayer: 'Cæsar, beware of Brutus; take heed of Cassius; come not near Casca; have an eye to Cinna; trust not Trebonius; mark well Metellus Cimber; Decius Brutus loves thee not; thou hast wronged Caius Ligarius. There is but one mind in all these men, and it is bent against Cæsar!' For Bhishma, too, would warn a ruler against *all* his friends. Towards each he is urged to act with suspicion, to watch them always, yet not wholly distrust them either, for there is a happy medium to which he should aspire. 'Over-much trustfulness is dangerous,' says the sage, and in his maxims on this head he shows an astuteness and worldly wisdom which, taking into consideration the period in which he lived, seems positively astounding:—

If one places implicit trust in another, one lives at the mercy of the one so trusted. Yet a lack of trust towards all is more bitter than death. Therefore, everyone should be both trusted and mistrusted. . . He whose downfall would surely be involved in thine, trust him as thy sire. . . That friend is like thyself who is filled with grief when misfortune seizes thee and with joy when the sun of good fortune shines upon thee. . . He who possesses keen intelligence, aptitude in business, a hatred of cruelty, an aversion to wrath, he who is never offended, whether he be favoured or neglected, he it is whom thou shouldst honour as thy friend.

Over and over again in the Mahabharata we find this policy of mistrust set forth as the guiding principle by which men should steer their bark through the troubled sea of life. 'Enmity,' says the bird Pujani, in one of the fables of the Santi Parva—

springs from five causes—women, land, angry words, incon-

genial temperaments, and wrong done to another. . . When enmity has sprung up between thee and a friend, confidence should not again be placed in him. For the passion of hatred lies hid like fire in wood. It can never be smothered, either by gifts, or fine acts, or attempts at reconciliation, or by knowledge of the scriptures. . . If thou hast injured anyone, never trust him as a friend again.

(To be continued.)

## WATCH TOWER PAPERS.

## THE CONSOLATIONS OF SPIRIT.

To one of the great statesmen of the eighteenth century is attributed the memorable phrase, 'Calling in the New World to redress the balance of the Old.' In another and a larger sense this expresses precisely what is being done to-day by those who are spreading amongst humanity a knowledge of the reality of spirit life and all that it implies.

As the struggle for existence becomes keener, mankind, grown anxious, careworn and world-weary, is beginning more than ever to question the meaning of life. The successful strugglers find their success a doubtful gain, and are getting restless and uneasy. With them it has become a question of 'being somewhere to go somewhere else, of having got something to get more.' With the failures it is a question of continuing to struggle or being trodden under foot. Such are the 'signs of the times' as interpreted by advanced students of the modern world, and their view-point is expressed in a multitude of books, pamphlets and articles, from 'Civilisation, its Cause and Cure,' down to the last essay on social reform. For, by the way, with most of the writers on this subject it is always a question of 'reform,' although as the wise inspirer of a well-known medium put it, 'Mankind does not need reforming, it merely needs developing and rounding out.'

But the disease is there—'modern melancholy,' as it has been aptly named—and the resources of the external world are raided and ransacked in vain. Yet here and there—few at present, but gradually growing in numbers—are those who have found the more excellent way. For some of these it has come by the method of tangible evidences of the presence and help of the arisen brethren of humanity who have 'allured to brighter worlds and led the way.' Others have found the clue in a more interior fashion. The very stress and pressure of the external world have in some cases forced the soul into contact with the deeper realities, and it has 'taken sanctuary,' like an old-time fugitive, where no adversary can follow.

I have long watched, with interest almost bordering on amusement, the tactics and debates of those social reformers who, noble, fearless, and unselfish, are yet uncertain or sceptical concerning the existence of another world. In vain they assert the dignity of humanity, the necessity of justice, the material rewards of right-living, the selfishness of the craving for continued existence, the beauty of passing into oblivion and leaving behind the fragrant memory of a well-spent life and the glory of working for the welfare of posterity. Their followers find all of it cold comfort. They have heard it before, and refuse to be satisfied with this 'dry remainder biscuit.' Some have gained an inkling of the truth that the soul persists, and have attained their own point of view. Others, to whom the vision has not yet come, are inclined to echo old Omar's jibe about the futility of joining a caravan that 'starts for the dawn of Nothing,' while the attitude of the cruder minds resembles that of the very human Irishman, 'Why should I work for posterity? Posterity has done nothing for me!'

Meantime the process of permeation goes on slowly but surely. The seekers have gained hints, slight it may be, but significant; the questioners have heard whispers in the darkness; the watchers of the night are aware of paling clouds and pencillings of light that seem to betoken the dawn of something. Man in a dim fashion is discovering the soul. Here a verified dream, there a strange premonition, elsewhere flashing intuitions, guidances, prophecies, evidences of spiritual ministry. Many a struggler in the crowd raises his bowed head and proceeds on his way with new vigour, as though he had been revived from secret sources. Certain leaders of thought who were on the point of

despair so long as the fight meant only physical means to a physical end now take their places with a new plan of campaign, or with the old one strangely amended, and they find constant accessions from the discouraged ranks of the generals who are fighting the lost cause of material progress.

The very fierceness of the conflict in the arena where the brute forces of mammon seethe and struggle shows that a critical point has been reached, and that a newer and better order is on the point of emergence.

Meantime, whether in the large aspect or the small, those who, with deeper vision, await the issues of the great unrest of humanity find courage and consolation in the knowledge that under all are the great spiritual powers slowly moulding and shaping the chaotic fabric of things. It is a counsel of hope for the thinker who, looking abroad, is troubled by the spectacle of an 'unintelligible world,' equally with the simple wayfarer who has his own specific sorrow and finds his life 'all a muddle.' And to take a special case, how great a thing is the realisation when it comes to a man or woman of highly sensitive mind thrust into the thick of the fight for material existence, maintaining a precarious foothold, bearing the 'whips and scorns of time,' and wondering the while if this is the best that life has to offer them. For these the fine lines of Victor Hugo apply with especial force :—

Be like a bird that on a bough too frail  
To bear it gaily sings :  
It carols though the slender branches fail—  
It knows that it has wings !

Without such a solace life for many of these would be bleak and barren indeed.

Here is no home, here is but wilderness,  
wrote Chaucer in one of his best-known poems. But with the consolations of the higher world even such a wilderness may become for the time a home and 'blossom like the rose.'

D. G.

#### IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR SPIRITUALISTS.

Speaking at the meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on the 2nd inst., Mr. Henry Withall said that he had been informed that there would shortly be a great revival of public interest in Spiritualism and a large influx of adherents in consequence. Mr. Angus McArthur confirmed this statement, and said that the same prediction had recently been made to him, both in Canada and the United States, and from other sources we learn that the expectation that 'something is about to happen' is in the air. In view of this fact we would ask : Are we ready for this coming awakening and 'outpouring' ? Can we do anything to prepare the way for the newcomers and help to spread the light ? Is it not apparent that if inquirers and sceptics are to be won over they must have evidence ? To convince those who, like the editors of 'The Clarion,' ask to be able to 'see something,' must we not have mediums through whom phenomena can occur that will appeal to the senses of the observers ? Dr. A. R. Wallace says, 'The facts beat me'—but where are the mediums to-day through whom such convincing manifestations occur as would compel acceptance from such men as Robert Blatchford and A. M. Thompson ? Can anything be done, individually or collectively, to supply this great need, or must we be content to point to the records of what has been accomplished in the past and admit that the race of great physical mediums has died out ?

Since spirit people are dependent on mediums for the power and opportunities to demonstrate their existence and identity, surely mediums can be discovered and developed to-day equally as well as they were forty or fifty years ago—if not, why not ?

We invite brief replies to these questions from those of our readers who feel that it is time that something was done—and suggestions as to what that something should be.

WRITERS in the public Press cannot leave Spiritualism alone. The 'London Magazine,' for February, says : 'Stories dealing with the occult are now in the air. . . . It is extraordinary how within the last few years this new science, which is gradually revolutionising our entire outlook on life, has progressed.'

### 'THE WORLD'S NEED.'

BY M. DE VERE.

Through the senses and our physical bodies, which bring us into contact with material things, we gain experience and build up character, the outward form of the inner man. Above all, through our emotions do we learn the great lessons life has to teach us, through love and pain and joy. All of us who look at life from the spiritual standpoint and believe in the immortality and divinity of man, recognise that all egos are equally important spiritually. The greatest criminal and the greatest saint are fundamentally the same. We are equally sons and daughters of God ; each one of us is conscious to a greater or lesser degree, according to development, of being a spirit, which spiritual consciousness he has been put into this world to evolve. It lies with each individual to make the best or the worst of the materials which God has given him to work with, and it is never too late to build up again on the old everlasting foundations. 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within,' now and always ; we can realise it when we will, no matter how we have failed or how we have sinned.

What matters it, from the ethical standpoint, whether we are born in a slum or in a palace ? We are all but pilgrims, journeying along this pilgrimage of life, with the same joys, the same pains, the same wants, the same bodily limitations affecting us all—spirits imprisoned, for this brief sojourn, in their encasement of flesh ; fellow pilgrims, fellow sufferers, comrades ! Why cannot we treat each other as such ? The way is so long to most, often so hard, and many are less able than others to resist temptation when it comes, being more severely handicapped than the rest. Should we not, therefore, instead of criticising, make all allowances, hold out helping hands to those who stumble by the way ? It is a greater misery to be morally infirm than to be physically sick, but, in our short-sightedness, our help and sympathy are all for the latter, whereas the former need them infinitely more. It would be well if we could only be brought to look upon this world as a temporary abiding place, a school in which we, as spiritual entities, undergo a training necessary for our further development through the medium of our physical bodies—to look upon death not as an end, but as a removal to a higher and grander sphere where we shall reap the fruits of this life, where naught will count but the advancement of the spirit. This larger standpoint changes our focus of things altogether and alters our whole outlook on life, making such material trappings as social status sink to the level of the unimportant. But we are so deeply immersed in the material that we find it difficult to free ourselves from its limiting influence, and though what I am saying is nothing new, yet comparatively few people act as if they believed it ; most of their energies being expended on pampering the body's needs at the expense of the soul's.

The body has needs and most urgent ones ; the starved body often produces the starved soul, for how can we expect a man to think much of his soul's needs when his starved body is protesting all the time, in a much more vigorous way, that it needs food ? It is no wonder there are so many criminals amongst the very poor, for their conditions are in verity little better than forcing grounds for such propensities. No one recognises more fully than I do the need for practical reform, in the betterment of wages, housing, &c., for the very poor. These grievances are very real, and sometimes very terrible, and everyone who has the welfare of humanity at heart should study their causes and help with the full force of their might to better existing conditions.

All men are equals, as human units, as divine egos, but from the social point of view, through the physical conditions of birth, we are unequal. From the moment of our coming into the world we are ticketed and belong to different grades of society. Just as heredity in each individual case differs, so does environment, and these two social factors combined determine whether a man is what we term a gentleman or not. It is not a disgrace to be either low-born or high-born ; the disgrace is when we fail to fill either position righteously, gracefully. In other words, when we try to live above our station or pretend to be what we are not, instead of in dignified content accepting

the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed and making the best use of them for further unfoldment and achievement.

We have not been sent into this world, and placed in a certain environment, by mere chance, for there is no such thing as chance; but, in obedience to inexorable laws, we have been placed in that position which is best suited for our spiritual advancement. We may grumble at our particular distribution, but to kick against destiny is worse than foolish, it is useless; the wise ones acquiesce in it, building up the immortal through those very limitations.

It is because with most of us the focus of life is so non-spiritual, that so many imagine it to be a disgrace to be poor, to have to render paid service for others. Oh, how short-sighted we are, how afraid of losing our dignity, of not getting what we consider to be our due! 'Noblesse oblige' has been taught for centuries, but the grandeur of humble, loyal, patient service has been too little commended. Money is not necessarily a guarantee of birth, and our worship of it nowadays is vulgar in the extreme. From the highest to the lowest in the land, this insidious poison, the worship of riches, has crept in, marring our social life and distorting the true values that make for real superiority, the superiority of intellect and of goodness!

What is the whole duty of man? Is it not to love God, and to love his neighbour as himself? That has been the doctrine taught in all our churches, throughout the land, for centuries, yet its inner significance seems to penetrate to few hearts. And why? Why this pain and misery in the world, half of which we bring upon ourselves? Is it not because of the lack of love in our midst, because of the worship of self and our consequent spiritual stagnation? It is the spirit of Jesus which is needed so urgently in our midst to-day—the spirit of him who has taught us over and over again that 'love and love alone is the fulfilling of the law.'

Love is the whole meaning and centre of this our earth life, and all our experiences in spiritual growth are attained through its means. So often religious denominations and their creeds have advocated the subordination of the affections to the more egotistical business of saving our souls; but our souls cannot find salvation or realisation except through love, great self-sacrificing love for others, the love that 'forgiveth all things, beareth all things, endureth all things, and taketh no account of evil.' To those who have this love is the inner spiritual vision granted—to rich and poor alike, independent of sex, class, or creed. Such love is possible for us to realise and to give, for herein lies the whole meaning of life. For this purpose were we sent into this world, to learn the lesson of love in all its many forms. The inner vision, the evolution and recognition of the soul self, can only come to those who love greatly. Wherever there is love there is God, for all love is of God. Seeing that we sojourn on this earth plane for such a brief while, cannot we be patient and help our fellow-pilgrims, not adding to their burdens? A kindly smile, a gentle word, heartfelt sympathy, do these things not count for much to those with whom we come in contact day by day?

Rich or poor, can we not all of us give these simple things, thus fulfilling the words of him who said: 'This commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another'? Where such love as this exists, there could be no room for class hatred, or for antagonism or for self; all the pettiness and the meannesses and the trivialities of this world fade into nothingness when bathed in the light of such love; and only by the flooding of the world with love can we hope to break down barriers, to alter and alleviate the misery of existing conditions.

MR. MASKELYNE'S alleged 'improvements on the cabinet manifestations of the Davenport Brothers,' who visited this country thirty-four years ago, are interesting as an illustration of what conjurers can do when they are allowed to have their own conditions, but hardly anyone nowadays will be able to decide how far they resemble the séances of the Davenports.

MR. WM. H. MASSEY, in the advertisement columns of 'The Literary Guide,' suggests 'the founding of an Anti-Spook League of Rationalists' for the purpose of forming 'a committee of four persons who will examine the claims of any sane person who may be willing to submit evidence of telepathy.' 'Telepathy,' says Mr. Massey, 'was invented over twenty years ago to help spookists out of a difficulty in regard to the dresses of ghosts.' This is 'news,' indeed. Gerald Massey could have told 'Mr. Wm. H.' a different story from that.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Our old friend, Mr. Walter Appleyard, of Sheffield, sends us a copy of a 'Coronation Ode,' of which he is the author, which was graciously accepted by the King on February 28th. We unite with Mr. Appleyard in the aspiration that King George may long 'reign in peace: in wise and prosperous rule hold sway,' and that 'the flag of righteousness and truth' may be unfurled in brotherhood by the united kingdoms of the earth.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett has written a new comedy, entitled 'Married by Degrees,' which was successfully produced at the Court Theatre on Saturday last. It is a story of a charming girl who has two personalities. At one time she is Lucy, at another she is Leonora, both nice girls, but displaying different temperaments, and she passes from one to the other about every month, neither personality being aware of what the other has said or done. Lucy is engaged to a good young man, but Leonora, when she ousts Lucy, flirts with a dangerous foreign Count. Eventually the good young man also woos and wins Leonora, she having been hypnotised and made to realise the Count's true character. It is, says the 'Daily Chronicle,' 'a confessedly "psychic" play, written by a "psychic" expert of serious reputation, and dealing with a "psychic phenomenon" —yet at the same time a bright, lively comedy, cleverly devised, brilliantly acted, appealing to intelligent interest, but full of a strong sense of humour, and bristling with delightfully Gilbertian situations.'

The correspondence in 'The Clarion' on 'Life after Life' has been very disappointing. Most of the contributors to the discussion seem to have had little experience in Spiritualism. There have been plenty of assertions and suppositions, and expressions of likes and dislikes by the writers, but few testimonies to facts. As many Spiritualists read 'The Clarion' this is rather surprising. In last week's issue Mr. J. H. Goring appositely remarks: 'If no scientist of eminence had been convinced by occult phenomena the objection would inevitably have been raised that the reported marvels of the séance could not impose upon a trained observer. But now, when Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, or Dr. Russel Wallace testify to that which they have seen, although their experiments in this direction may be no more beyond the general reach than those in other realms which are blindly accepted when vouched for by men so eminent, they are ridiculed and lose the authority they wielded so long as they kept to the track of orthodox investigation.'

## 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.*

### Remarkable Phenomena at the Hague.

SIR,—At a séance held recently at the house of Mrs. Lash, Waldech, Pyrmonkade, The Hague, some remarkable manifestations occurred through the mediumship of Mrs. Van Betuw, a private medium, whose powers have been newly discovered, for this was but the third sitting at which she had been present. The phenomena included 'direct' writing between a double slate and the lifting of the table, with all four feet above the floor, to the height of several inches. This levitation took place five times in full light. By heavy rappings the spirits promised that next time they would try to give us more direct writing between sealed slates and to produce paraffin moulds of materialised hands and feet.

There were eight persons present, including the medium. At first the light was sufficient for me to see everything in the room distinctly. We held our hands on the table and soon heard loud rappings. After that we lifted our hands above the table, which then moved without contact, going near to Mrs. Hasselt.

The séance was continued with but little light, only a feeble gleam shining through the blinds from the street. We now heard rappings on the table, as loud as if caused by a hammer. We were sitting in a chain, holding each other's hands. All at once the table, which stood quite free and untouched in our midst, flew to Mrs. Lash and pressed itself against her. She thereupon repeated the alphabet and received by loud rappings intelligent information.

After that I asked that the table should come to me and it did so, but with such force that it passed between Miss Lagers and myself out of the circle, turned over and fell on the floor. By rapping we were told that there would be some direct writing, as promised on a former occasion. A double slate, which had been provided beforehand, was thoroughly

cleaned, and a small piece of slate pencil was laid inside, and then it was locked. The medium, Mrs. Betuw, took the locked slate in both hands, and almost immediately we heard sounds from within it as if writing was going on. After about ten minutes three decided raps on the slate indicated that the writing was finished, whereupon we took the slate into another room, where there was a light, and opened it, when we found two lines of writing giving information as to Mrs. W., who passed over fifteen years ago and was grandmother to Mrs. Lash. This message was meant for Mrs. Lash alone.

All the time that Mrs. Betuw was holding the slate, rappings were going on in, or on, the table, which was still lying overturned outside the circle, between Miss Lagers and myself. At last the table lifted itself up and put one of its four legs on my left knee. I had asked before that this should be done. Very well satisfied with the results so far, we again sat round the table with our hands upon it, but this time in the light. Mrs. Van Hasselt asked if the table could lift itself up, clear of the floor, five times. This request was at once complied with. The table with our hands very lightly touching it, rose about ten inches with all four legs clear of the floor.—Yours, &c.,

F. A. FOLKERSMAN.

P.S.—The above statement is certified by all the sitters.

### 'On the Fitness of Things.'

SIR,—The versatile and capable writer of 'Watch Tower Papers' has earned the thanks of all interested in the propaganda work of Spiritualism by the article 'On the Fitness of Things,' which appeared in 'LIGHT' of February 25th. As a member of a London society which seeks to interest the 'outsider' in Spiritualism, I know I am not only expressing my own opinion, but that of nearly all my fellow-members, when I say that 'the Apostle of the Irrelevant' (to quote your contributor's words) is a most trying worker to deal with. It matters not whether his 'fad' or his pet 'side issue' is interesting to his audience, it is not what they come to hear (at our Sunday meetings particularly). Spiritualism, with spirit return and truths concerning the other life left out, is to the inquirer and all concerned like an August day without warmth or sunshine—a climatic eccentricity only bearable because it makes one value the real August day when it comes—and to expect the casual inquirer to come again and again to our meetings only in the hope of hearing something of Spiritualism is to expect too much. Surely, sir, when we gain the ears of inquirers we should present our great truths in as interesting and direct a manner as possible. It is all very well to say that societies should make sure that their speakers will do this. There are none too many really capable speakers in our ranks, and when a speaker, with good recommendations as an exponent of our philosophy, endeavours to take his hearers through the high-ways and byeways of so-called 'Higher Thought,' 'New Thought,' thoughts on vegetarianism, thoughts on astrology, and on other 'side issues' (all possibly interesting in themselves), and leaves himself no time in which to speak concerning the main issues of Spiritualism, then 'doth the enemy blaspheme' or feel uncommonly like doing so—and we see another good opportunity of presenting our subject lost.

Most heartily do I trust that the article on 'The Fitness of Things' will bear the good fruit so much needed, and that speakers will from our platforms (on Sundays, at least) give to their audiences what those audiences assemble to hear—Spiritualism, with its main teachings duly and fittingly presented.—Yours, &c.,

LEIGH HUNT.

20, Burnley-road, Neasden, N.W.

### PSYCHO-THERAPEUTICS AND DEGENERATION.

Addressing the Psycho-Therapeutic Society at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on February 27th, on 'The Power of Psycho-Therapeutics in Dealing with Degeneration,' Dr. Forbes Winslow maintained that the power of suggestion judiciously used would, in many instances, have the effect of preventing the spread of degeneration, but this treatment would not be of any avail in the use of the confirmed and hardened criminal. Vice could be eradicated by the proper use of suggestion, so could the drink and drug habits, but the method was useless unless the victim was desirous of a cure being effected. His attention had been especially directed to the suggestive treatment of schoolboys addicted to excessive smoking, and in many instances he had been able by suggestion to remedy the evil. It must be the chief endeavour of the Psycho-Therapeutical practitioner to use persistent power to banish all baneful influence and to re-establish good in its place.

### SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MARCH 5th, &c.

*Prospective Notices, not exceeding twenty-four words, may be added to reports if accompanied by stamps to the value of sixpence.*

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—*Cavendish Rooms*.—Mr. W. E. Long's address on 'A Rapping Religion' was interesting and helpful. Mr. A. J. Watts presided.—*Percy Hall*.—February 27th, Mrs. Place-veary gave successful clairvoyant descriptions to members and friends. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided. Sunday next, see advt.—D.N.

SPIRITUAL MISSION : 22, Prince's-street.—Mr. J. J. Morse gave an interesting address on 'Heaven and the Angels.'—67, George-street.—Morning, Mr. Morse's control answered many questions in his usual capable manner. On Wednesday, March 1st, Mr. Carpenter gave an address, followed by psychometric readings. Sunday next, see advt.—J. H. C.

BIRMINGHAM.—CAMDEN-STREET.—Mrs. Groom gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis.

BRIXTON.—73, WILTSHIRE-ROAD.—Mr. F. T. A. Davies gave an instructive address. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., address and clairvoyant descriptions by Mrs. Weiss. Wednesday, at 8.15 p.m., public service.—K.S.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mrs. Wesley Adams gave helpful services to a good audience. Sunday next, at 7, Mr. H. R. J. Abbott will give an address. Mr. Welbelove in the chair.—T. B.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mrs. de Bath's lecture on 'Animal Consciousness' was greatly appreciated. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Jamrach, address and clairvoyant descriptions.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. Smith gave an address on 'Spiritualism and some of its Teachings,' and Mrs. Smith clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Nurse Graham will give clairvoyant descriptions. Monday, 13th, at 8, Mrs. J. Neal. Tuesday, astrology class.—N. R.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Mr. G. R. Symons gave an interesting address on 'The Five Points of Fellowship in the Church and in Nonconformity' to a good audience. Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn presided. Sunday next, address, Mr. R. Boddington.—W. H. S.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Morning: Mr. W. E. Long spoke on 'The Power of Spirit over Matter.' Evening: Mrs. Beaurepaire gave an address. Sunday next, 11 a.m., Mrs. Beaurepaire; 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long. March 19th and 26th, 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mr. Horace Leaf gave a fine address on the 'Origin of Belief.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Messrs. Tayler Gwinn and Geo. Tilby. Lyceum, 3 p.m. Circles: Monday, 7.30 p.m., ladies'; Thursday, 8.15, public. Thursday, 23rd, social gathering; tickets 3d. each.—G. T. W.

HAMPESTEAD SUBURB.—LADIES' LIBRARY, CLUB HOUSE.—Mrs. Wallis delivered a fine address on 'Man's Spiritual Powers,' and afterwards answered questions. Sunday next, Miss Earle. 19th, Mr. Macbeth Bain. 26th, Mr. Frederic Fletcher. This centre will henceforth be known as 'The Esoteric Christian Mission.'—A. C.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. H. Boddington gave two interesting addresses. Sunday next, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, addresses and clairvoyance. Tuesday, at 8, and Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8, members' circle.—A. M. S.

HIGHGATE.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Morning, Mr. J. Abrahall gave good psychometric readings. Evening, Mr. J. Kelland spoke on 'Spiritualism: What it is,' and gave clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. J. Abrahall; 7 p.m., Miss Violet Burton. Wednesday, Madame French on 'Auras,' 19th, Mr. H. Biden Steele. 25th, social.—F.

BRIGHTON.—ROOM 'A,' ATHENÆUM HALL, NORTH-STREET.—Mr. W. Courtney-Tort gave a good address on 'Lent,' Mrs. Curry following with clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. A. H. Sarfas, addresses and psychometry. Monday, at 8, clairvoyance. Thursday, at 8.15, public circle.—A. C.

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Mrs. Mary Gordon gave an address and clairvoyant descriptions. March 2nd, psychometric delineations by Mrs. Neville. The healing circle held on Tuesdays, at 8.15, gains in power and usefulness. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf will give an address and clairvoyant descriptions. 19th, Miss V. Burton.—A. C. S.

UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' third propaganda meeting at King's Hall, London-road, S.E. (near Elephant and Castle), on Sunday, March 12th, at 3 p.m. punctually. Speaker, Mr. W. E. Long, 'Spiritualism and Primitive Christianity'; clairvoyante, Mrs. Podmore; soloists, Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush. Conference with the Brixton Society at Mayall-road, at 7 p.m. Speakers, Messrs. G. Tayler Gwinn, G. F. Tilby, and others, Soloists, Mr. and Mrs. Rush.