

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—*Goethe*.

'WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—*Paul*.

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	529
L.S.A. Notices	530
'The Voices, 1912.' By Vice-Admiral W. Usborne Moore ..	531
'The Strange Case of Miss Orme'	532
The Scientific Basis of Religion ..	532
'As the Spirit Giveth Utterance'	532
Fact or Fiction?	533
'With Clay and Cloud'	534
Basis of Unity in New Schools of Thought. An Address by Mrs. Mary Seaton	535
Thoughts and Things	537
The Real Hell	537
Items of Interest	537
A Recognised Psychic Photograph	538
From Catholicism to Spiritualism	539
Problems of Thought, Consciousness and Personality	539
An Ancient Chinese Temple	539
An Inquirer's Needs	540
Spiritualism and Theosophy in Ireland	540
The Saving Sense of Humour	540

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Before these lines appear the great war cloud which has so long brooded over Europe—and which has already given us a foretaste of its horrors in the Balkan campaign against Turkey—may have burst in its entirety. We hope for the sake of humanity that so great a catastrophe will be averted. Mr. Norman Angell, we observe, has with tongue and pen been preaching the wisdom of peace, but his argument leaves us with mixed feelings. His logic is admirable. War, he shows convincingly, is a ruinous policy—as ruinous to the conqueror as to the conquered. Commerce and finance are now so complex and so delicately organised that the country which draws the sword on its neighbour brings about economic reactions that may be even more disastrous to itself than to its enemy. But the morality which impels nations to abstain from war merely because war does not pay is not an exalted one, and we can conceive of a kind of peace—fat, selfish and craven—which in its way would involve spiritual perils more to be dreaded than the most barbarous warfare. We do not say that is Mr. Angell's ideal. Doubtless he uses the arguments which he conceives are alone capable of weighing with the mass of mankind.

Of course, if war can be averted by the method of showing its devastating effects on the material welfare of the life of nations, well and good, provided always that the greater lessons are gained along other lines. It is not necessary that self-sacrifice, citizenship, courage and fortitude should be taught only by war. But sometimes, alas! by reason of human perversity, they are to be learned in no other way. We were reading lately a lecture by Andrew Jackson Davis, delivered in the early 'sixties—at the time of the terrible struggle between the Northern and Southern States of America—in which he says:—

All the kings and emperors, all tyrants and potentates go to war from the dictates of the brain. These are the wars of aggrandisement . . . wars for the possession of larger territories, wars for the acquisition of greater resources of wealth, wars for the establishment of kingdoms already possessed, wars for the accumulation of wider privileges on sea and land. These brain-wars are planned and premeditated with as much indifference to the claims of humanity as one would cipher out figures on a slate. Spirit is not heard from in the jargon of such wars. It is very still—in the depths of the mind; locked up, imbedded, as life sometimes is in the germs of trees.

Whatever may be said of the warfare between the Balkan League and the Turks, any greater struggle that may grow out of it will almost certainly partake of the

character of those wars described by Davis. But, as he goes on to point out, there is a warfare of the spirit:—

But the spirit, on the other hand, goes to war from its highest standard, to penetrate the darkness of ignorance and error, and to shine lovingly into and through the darkness that rejects it; to persevere in warring its way through until it reaches 'the point of light' in the world, or in the kindred spirit of a brother man. The moment the heart of love is touched by the penetration of spirit, like the rod that smote the rock, the waters of truth and affection flow, reconciliation takes place, and the lion and the lamb lie down together. . . . The man who fights 'the good fight' from his spirit is infinitely more of a power than he who proceeds to battle from the forces of his brain and blood.

From our 'Letter Box' we select for brief reply two letters which we have not space to reproduce in our correspondence columns. 'Pax' takes exception to our suggestion (on p. 481) that 'appeals to antiquity and deliverances of a "Thus saith the Lord" kind are out of date,' on the ground that messages from 'high intelligences' on truths of the deepest import are sometimes couched in this form. But that does not touch the argument, which related to the form in which spiritual teachings should be presented to the world of to-day. We are all for the highest modes of expression, but also we hold that these should be adapted to the age in which we live. The great poets and teachers of our own time write in the fashion of their time. To revert to the diction of Chaucer or Wycliffe might lend impressiveness to what they wrote, but it would lose in force and intelligibility. There is no 'want of reverence' in our view. On the question of Shakespeare, Mr. Thomas Raymond remarks that 'Shakespeare's sublime poetry was the result of a heart fuller of impersonal love than that of other men, hence he was continually in touch with the spiritual world and its Sun—"the face of the Father."'

We have already referred to the 'impersonalness' of Shakespeare's work (p. 34) as an explanation of its greatness. The greatest thinkers and writers of all the ages have been undoubtedly recipients of inspiration from the unseen world—the messengers of Divinity. Hence the extent of their influence on the world. It is a mistake always to narrow down the idea of inspiration to one of personal 'spirit control. Let us take an instance in the case of Oliver Goldsmith, 'who wrote like an angel and talked like poor Poll.' But he was far from being the 'inspired idiot' depicted by his shallow critics. A shy, sensitive soul, he did himself less than justice in uncongenial surroundings. But when not oppressed by his company he said some witty and brilliant things. His head and face revealed the greatness of the normal man, who in the quiet of his study could be inspired to the expression of high and beautiful thought. The greatest instruments of the higher world are always those who are great in themselves. The channel of inspiration necessarily bears a close relation to the volume and quality of the stream poured through it,

(November 9, 1912.)

We have received and perused with interest a number of copies of 'The Truth,' a Jewish newspaper published at Jerusalem in English. In one of the issues we note a discussion on Spiritualism, a subject which the editor, Mr. Solomon Feingold, has been led to entertain by a persistent demand on the part of his readers. The subject is opened by an article from a writer who is described as a 'profound thinker and acknowledged man of letters.' Its value and the ability of its author to discuss the question may be gauged by some of its allusions. For example: (1) Spiritualism is defined as the power or ability to summon the souls of the dead; (2) it is described as anti-Biblical and anti-Christian; (3) 'its performances are conducted in mystery and darkness'; (4) 'what sublimities, ethical or spiritual, can an ordinary dead man teach?' and so forth. We respect the courage and open-mindedness of the editor of 'The Truth' in opening his columns to such a discussion (the fact that it has been demanded by the readers is significant), but we should be better pleased had the 'profound thinker' taken the trouble to learn a little about his subject before setting down his conclusions concerning it. We welcome fair criticism, but judgments based on misstatements are a simple waste of time, to say the least.

In the 'Notes by the Way' in our issue of October 26th we commented on Mrs. Besant's work on 'The Self and its Sheaths' and referred to the Sanscrit terminology with which it abounds as being intimidating to the simple-minded. An explanation reaches us from Kathleen E. Taylor, to the effect that the book comprises a series of lectures given in India to some Indian students, to whom the terms would be quite familiar. As, however, the work has been published for the general reader we see no reason to alter our comment. It is quite true that a similarly formidable nomenclature is associated with botany, medicine and physical science and that the professors say in effect, 'If you won't learn our terminology you must give up the science,' and if Mrs. Besant and Theosophists generally desire that the general reader who does not understand should give up the science nothing more need be said. We only put in a plea for the average man. Miss—or is it Mrs.?—Taylor also takes us to task for our little bantering remark that 'our Theosophical friends deal in "lives" with a painful prodigality,' and enters into a defence, or explanation, of reincarnation. With the best will in the world towards our Theosophical friends, we do wish they did not take themselves quite so seriously. Anyway, we cannot regard our comments on this booklet as a sufficient peg on which to hang a discussion on reincarnation.

In 'The Mysticism of a Rationalist' in the current issue of 'The Quest,' the author, Mr. C. Delisle Burns, M.A., makes some effective points in a consideration of the question of reason as applied to mystical experiences:—

The man who really thinks about himself and the world is always something more than a calculating machine. He is already on the threshold of a mystery, already on the point of seeing what cannot be said.

And yet, as he points out, 'a man may be really a thinker and yet never feel the deeper facts.' Pursuers of truth may travel far without arriving at any stage qualifying them for the title of mystics. The mystic finds access to interior sources of truth, and may thereby gain a vision that for him is incomunicable except in hints and suggestions. But one may be at once rational and mystical. Mr. Burns, indeed, is impatient of the 'nonsense concerning the limitations of reason.' The limitation of reason, he claims, is no ground for mysticism, for the more that reasoning advances the deeper will be our comprehension of mystical

truth. Without denying the reality of exceptional experiences, the reasonable man will only accept those which are comprehensible in the light of other experiences of his own. It is a cautious attitude, but the caution is not without warrant.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

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, NOVEMBER 14TH,
WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY THE
REV. ARTHUR CHAMBERS

ON
'Spiritualism as it Affects us in our Outlook upon Human Life and Experience.'

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, 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 Thursday evenings:—

Nov. 28—Mr. E. Wake Cook, on 'The Great Problems in the Light of Spiritualism.'

Dec. 12—Mr. H. Biden Steele, on 'Psychic Investigation from Several Aspects,' with some illustrations.

The arrangements for next year will be announced shortly.

MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C. FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, November 12th, Mrs. Minnie Nordica will give clairvoyant descriptions of spirit people at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee, 1s. each to Associates; Members free; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

PSYCHICAL SELF-CULTURE.—On Thursday next, November 14th, at 5 p.m. *prompt*, an address will be given by Mr. Horace Leaf on 'Clairvoyance,' with descriptions.

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, November 15th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience 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.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Daily, except Thursdays and Saturdays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Every Wednesday during November special Evening Meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C., at 8 o'clock, at which Mrs. Minnie Nordica will give clairvoyant descriptions. Admission 1s. each.

As an inducement to new and casual readers to become subscribers, we will supply 'LIGHT' for thirteen weeks, *post free*, for 2s., as a 'trial' subscription, feeling assured that at the termination of that period they will find that they 'cannot do without it,' and will then subscribe at the usual rates. May we at the same time suggest to those of our regular readers who have friends to whom they would like to introduce the paper, that they should avail themselves of this offer, and forward to us the names and addresses of such friends, upon receipt of which, together with the requisite postal order, we shall be pleased to send 'LIGHT' to them by post, as stated above?

THE VOICES, 1912.

BY VICE-ADMIRAL W. USBORNE MOORE.

(Continued from page 507.)

The best general circle séance I attended at Cambridge House, apart from the 'Julia' evenings (Wednesdays), was on Monday, June 24th. One of the sitters had come from Poole at my invitation. It was the only time he had seen Mrs. Wriedt, and the evidence he obtained of the presence of his wife and children who had passed over was, he assures me, wholly satisfactory. The stenographer's report, which is before me, is about as good as such records can be. 'Dr. Sharp,' after greeting me and other friends, said :—

'How do you do, Mr. Osman?' [the sitter from Poole]. 'I am very glad to see you.'

Mrs. Wriedt : 'How do you know him?'

'Dr. Sharp': 'His dear wife and children told me he was here.'

I was sitting next but one to Miss M., a well-known member of the S.P.R. and a psychic. The lady on my right was also a psychic. After I had introduced Miss M. to 'Dr. Sharp' he spoke to Mrs. Harper about one of her sons who was in hospital, giving a diagnosis of his disease and advising certain treatment. Whether his advice was good or bad I have no means of telling, but the address was delivered in a clear, firm voice without any hesitation.

A white form moved towards me, but there was no voice. Mrs. W. and Miss M. both saw forms. Then we sang, and the form of a little child was seen by psychics going round the circle. Mrs. Wriedt said, 'Admiral, it is your little grandchild; your aunt E. brought her.' I could hear the word 'grandpapa.' (This infant would now be two years old had it lived. The relative named is the one who has always been said to be in charge of it.) A sitter entered into a conversation of some minutes with his sister, who during the talk gave the name of a living sister. Then a spirit sang a verse of 'Lead, kindly light.' Cardinal Newman spoke, and bestowed upon the circle a Latin benediction. A brother came to Mr. M. E. (see 'LIGHT' of October 12th) and talked for many minutes; among other things he mentioned the name of a sister also in spirit life.

'Grayfeather' renewed a warning he had previously given about an accident he saw as likely to happen to one of the sitters. He was introduced to the lady on my right, who had not met him before. The Indian spirit-girl called 'Blossom' manifested to the sitters who knew her best. The room appeared to be filled with white clouds and Miss M. was addressed by a voice which gave her a test satisfactory to herself. Several spirits manifested to sitters and were recognised. One, purporting to be Robert Boursnell, came to me and we had a brief talk. In one case 'Dr. Sharp' intervened to assist a spirit who was apparently quite strange to this method of communication. One spirit, who gave his name as 'Charlie,' attempted to prove his identity by whistling a tune. Asked by a sitter if he was Charlie Grimaldi, he replied : 'Yes, why sure,' and added : 'Do you remember who played the mocking-bird with variations of "Home, Sweet Home"?' (Whistling again.)

Mrs. Wriedt : 'There is a thin, little man—smooth faced—standing in the centre of the room.' Voice : 'Lincoln Cox.' Mr. C. : 'I know who that is.' Voice : 'This is a treat, what in the world are you doing here?'

Mr. C. : 'Because I had a great wish to come, and I thought I might meet someone who would tell me something' (Mr. C. explained to the other sitters that Mr. Cox had a place in New Burlington-street).

Voice to Mr. Osman : 'Marie. How are you, dear?' Mr. Osman : 'I am very pleased to hear you, I have come a long way to meet you.'

Voice : 'Mother is coming to talk to you, and Reggie. Father dear, it is very lonely for you, but we are with you every day in the home. Mother is here. Leonard is not here, but mother is. Father dear, give auntie my love. Good-bye, father.' Mr. Osman : 'Good-bye, dear.'

Mrs. Wriedt announced that she saw the name of 'Bee.' This was recognised by the inmates of the house, who explained that she was a lady teacher many years ago. 'Miss Bee' : 'We have a lot of little evening parties in Heaven with the children. They dance and are happy—it is fine. I still keep on teaching.'

Here two sisters, Mrs. Jacob and Mrs. Richards, were visited by the spirit of an ancestor, a naval officer who was drowned in the eighteenth century (see 'LIGHT' of October 26th, page 507). These ladies sat on my right, between me and the psychic. I was introduced. The voice said : 'I want to tell you I am J. They called me —' (using an abbreviation). Question : 'What sphere are you in?' Answer : 'The celestial sphere, but I have been over a long time.' Question : 'I heard that you were in the sixth sphere and seventh realm.' Answer : 'I am, but I am also in the celestial sphere.' Question : 'I suppose there is no difficulty in coming here from the higher spheres?' Answer : 'No, my pleasure is here till my friends come.' Question : 'What is the colour of the seventh realm?' Answer : 'Lavender. There are thirty different colours in each sphere, but the principal ones are red, purple, blue, lavender, scarlet, white and green.' Question : 'You were a sailor-man—how did you come by your end?' Answer : 'By a sudden dip—the ship was wrecked.'

Mrs. Wriedt : 'Does anyone recognise the name of Temple?' A Voice : 'Chester.' Admiral Moore : 'Who are you for?' Answer : 'Pardon me, I am not for you.' (Spirit left, apparently annoyed.) A Voice : 'Mrs. Osman.' Mr. Osman : 'Are you my wife?' Answer : 'Yes, I am glad to welcome you. All the children are here.' Mr. Osman : 'I am so glad to hear it.' Answer : 'I am so glad to be with you here. It is so good of you to have come. I have been looking forward to this for a long time.' Mr. Osman : 'It is a long time since I spoke to you.' Answer : 'The children and I are with you every day. I do not miss you as much as you do me, because I am there every day, and the children as well. How is auntie?' Mr. Osman : 'Auntie is very well, thank you.' Answer : 'Give her my love. Oh, dear, it is such a comfort to have a chat with you. God bless you for your long wait. Good-night.' (The voice turned in my direction.) 'Thank you, Admiral, for your trouble.' (Much surprised that the spirit should be aware of the small share I had in bringing her husband there on that evening, I could only say, 'It is very kind of you to speak to me. Good night.)

A French artist came who was recognised immediately by the ladies on my right. He gave an explanation about a fault in the eyes of a certain picture he had painted which they appeared to understand.

A voice to Miss M. (on my left). Miss M. : 'Please can you tell me your name? Who are you? Are you a relative?' 'Dr. Sharp' : 'My dear lady, this spirit is for a certain individual that you know very well.' . . . (The control went on and talked for a few minutes. Miss M. stated that she quite understood what was meant.) A Voice : 'Reggie. Dear father, how are you?' Mr. Osman : 'Are you better than you were?' Answer : 'All right now; never any trouble.' Mr. Osman : 'I have been so anxious.' Answer : 'You have come a long way to see us and talk to us. We are in the house just the same.' The trumpet then dropped and he was gone.'

A voice to me : 'Aunt E. Did you hear the little child? She attempted to say "grandpapa." I am very glad, W., to see you to-night. I was afraid I might not have another opportunity. All is well at home.'

Now occurred a rare phenomenon—flashes of light. I had never seen it before. Some of the sitters saw, or thought they saw, crosses of light, and the stenographer says he saw a light like a full moon; but I only made out two or three flashes (this phenomenon is occasionally seen when sitting with Miss Ada Besinnet).

'Julia' now gave an address consisting of one hundred and sixty words, in her usual style and refined English voice. Whilst she was speaking 'Iola' called me by name very clearly five or six times, and gave a brief message. The voice came from a position between my neighbour on my right and myself; and about level with the top of my head. During this séance all the sitters except one were visited by more than one spirit friend. Mr. Osman has kindly sent me the following particulars :—

My daughter Marie was our only girl out of a family of eight; she passed over in January, 1896, aged thirteen years. Leonard passed over when a baby. My wife passed away three years ago without being able even to say 'good-bye' to me. My son Reginald passed over in November, 1910, aged thirty-one years, after suffering for four years from consumption; he was very reluctant to go, except the last day or so; and, after passing over, he was very unhappy indeed for a time. I was so glad to hear him say in his characteristic way, 'I am all right now, never any trouble.'

'Auntie' is my wife's favourite sister who lives at a farm a few miles from here. She and my children thought a great deal of one another, and it was the custom of the family to speak of her in this manner.

Marie mentions 'mother,' 'Reggie,' and 'Leonard.' There was no person present in Cambridge House who could have connected those names together except myself.

(To be continued).

'THE STRANGE CASE OF MISS ORME.'

Under the above title there recently appeared in several continental papers an account of a remarkable occurrence in India. It was originally sent by an Indian correspondent to, and was published by, the 'Berliner Lokal Anzeiger.' The story is as follows :—

Miss Orme, an independent English lady who had lost her mother in childhood, decided on the death of her father, some five years ago, to travel rather extensively. She advertised for a suitable companion, and engaged a Miss Stephens, also an orphan, to whom she took a great liking. This liking soon developed into mutual affection, and the two ladies agreed to travel henceforth as cousins. About two years ago they reached Calcutta, and visited a well-known native astrologer. He told Miss Stephens that she would soon become a rich heiress, but at the same time she would have to endure a terrible trial and much sorrow. To Miss Orme he predicted sudden death between September 15th and 25th. Miss Orme, who was full of life and fun, regarded this prediction as a great joke, and laughingly remarked to Miss Stephens: 'I will make my will first, and leave you my sole heiress.' This she actually did, partly out of amusement and partly to show her disbelief in the prophecy. Her relatives and friends, on becoming aware of this, accused Miss Stephens of having influenced Miss Orme to make the will in her favour, whereupon Miss Stephens insisted on leaving her friend until after September 25th, to avoid any further suspicions.

The two ladies separated early in July. Miss Orme, who was then in perfect health and excellent spirits, took up her residence in a large hotel at a fashionable watering-place, whilst Miss Stephens went to stay in a doctor's family. During September Miss Orme sent a wire every morning to her friend, always containing the same message: 'Perfectly well.' Miss Stephens, however, was much depressed, and repeatedly wrote to Miss Orme that she would become seriously ill if the tension lasted much longer. Miss Orme's pet dog had accompanied Miss Stephens into her self-imposed exile. This dog slept in the same room as Miss Stephens, which was also occupied by the wife of the doctor and his little daughter.

September 24th passed without any alarming incident, and when retiring for the night Miss Stephens was in a more hopeful frame of mind, but at about two o'clock the ladies were awakened by the whining of the dog. Miss Stephens lit a candle to ascertain the cause of the disturbance. She suddenly exclaimed: 'Oh, Miss Orme, why have you come?' On the wife of the doctor inquiring 'Where is Miss Orme?' Miss Stephens pointed to a corner of the room to indicate where Miss Orme was standing. The dog evidently saw his mistress as well, for he ceased his whining and joyously jumped about. Miss Stephens rushed from her bed with outstretched arms as if to embrace someone, and then uttered a terrified scream, exclaiming 'She is gone, she is gone! I know she is dead, she came to tell me so!'

The doctor and his wife vainly endeavoured to pacify Miss Stephens, and, as soon as possible, the doctor wired to the hotel, asking Miss Orme to reassure her friend with the usual message. A reply came from the manager of the hotel, stating that Miss Orme had passed away suddenly during the night. She had been found dead in her bed in a peaceful attitude, and with a smile hovering round her lips. According to the medical statement, death must have taken place at the same time as Miss Stephens saw the apparition of her friend.

Immediately after the funeral of Miss Orme, Miss Stephens succumbed to a severe and prolonged illness. Meanwhile, the will of Miss Orme had been opened, and her relatives instituted a lawsuit against Miss Stephens. Last year the trial came to an end, the judge declaring in favour of Miss Stephens. This remarkable case caused a great sensation in Calcutta, where the two ladies were well known in society.

We understand that the correspondent who sent the foregoing story from India to Germany gave his name and address, and was regarded as a trustworthy writer. But a somewhat different complexion was given to this tragic affair in a 'Reuter's' telegram from Simla, recently published in the London newspapers. It is as follows :—

In the Garnett-Orme will case, which came to an end to-day, Mr. Burkitt, district judge of Saharanpur, dismissed Miss

Mount-Stephens' application for probate of Miss Garnett-Orme's will on the ground of fraud and undue influence in connection with Spiritualism and crystal-gazing. The judgment gives probate to deceased's relatives, who opposed the application. The action was a sequel to the trial of Miss Mount-Stephens before the High Court at Allahabad last March on a charge of poisoning Miss Garnett-Orme with prussic acid, which resulted in the acquittal of the accused. Evidence showed that Miss Garnett-Orme had been initiated into crystal-gazing and that she had believed in her approaching death, for which she had made elaborate preparations. The *post-mortem* examination also showed that death was due to poisoning by prussic acid. The defence was that deceased committed suicide owing to grief at the death of her *fiancé*. At the trial the judge remarked that the true circumstances of Miss Garnett-Orme's death would probably never be discovered.

We wonder if any readers of 'LIGHT' in India can supply us with fuller particulars of this case, especially of the alleged spiritualistic part of it. The judge's decision regarding the will certainly falsifies the astrologer's prediction that Miss Mount-Stephens would become an heiress—if such a prediction was made.

'THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF RELIGION.'

We commenced the perusal of 'The Scientific Basis of Religion,' by J. O. Bevan, M.A., F.G.S., F.S.A. (George Allen & Co., Ltd., 44 and 45, Rathbone-place) with pleasant anticipations, but now that we have read it we confess to a sense of disappointment and dissatisfaction. The author deals thoughtfully, tersely, and in many respects broadmindedly with his theme, but his impartial attitude is not maintained. Too frequently he drops from the universal to the particular, and argues too much like a lawyer with a brief, or like the average Christian Evidence lecturer. His work is both expository and controversial. His points are aimed at secularists and unbelievers, and while he deals ably with Religion *per se*, he unwisely seeks to identify Religion with a particular form of the expression of man's religious consciousness. This kind of thing is being overdone.

If it be true that Religion 'had its origin, even from the earliest times, in the necessities, the hopes, the fears, of human nature,' grew 'with the growth of the world and of man,' and 'gathered its votaries in every land, in every age,' then it is manifest that man is, as Mr. Bevan himself admits, potentially religious by nature and progressive in the development and expression of that religious nature, and therefore that progressive development is still going on.

Mr. Bevan says that 'apologists for religion have frequently placed themselves in a false position, and laid themselves open to damaging attacks, by neglecting to keep abreast of the times in respect of the advances in the New Learning, and by clinging to positions that have been outflanked,' but we look in vain for any evidence that he himself is abreast of the times in respect of the new learning in psychical research and spiritualistic investigation. Not one solitary hint or reference can we discover, although he devotes a chapter—a very meagre one, by-the-way—to 'Immortality,' and another to 'Miracle.' We are the more disappointed because Mr. Bevan himself seems to be fully alive to the importance of any evidence which will give a foothold of fact for faith in a future life, for he says that he is nearing the term of man's natural life and is, therefore, becoming 'increasingly conscious of the supreme importance of realising any foothold in the way which affords promise of assured firmness and advance.' He adds :—

The resolution of these problems of Life and Death is of greater absolute interest and value to the individual than is that individual's apprehension of what all the rest of the world should hold as true. By his own belief or disbelief must he stand or fall at the Bar of Judgment; and that each of us will be ultimately judged as to the character and outcome of our life's thought and work would appear to be axiomatic, altogether irrespective of one's ideas as to the character of the possible Judge or the canons of His judgment. . . If this world were all, it would be difficult to regard it otherwise than as a failure, or to rebut charges of favouritism and inadequate treatment against its Fountain and Sustainer; but believers feel complete justification in the assertion that this world is not all, that present time is not all, that another world is to be called into existence [surely the other world already exists!] to redress the

balance, to correct the partial, and, therefore, imperfect judgments of this life by an eternal standard ; to cause the buds to revive which here untimely fell to the ground ; to permit the accumulated wisdom and experience of the aged to reach further fruition ; to arrange that (in a higher sphere and under more lengthened and favourable conditions) a new lease of life should be granted to man, together with multiplied and enlarged faculties, so as to lead onward to a stage of existence in which may be perfected (on a still more exalted plane) the nature which has been tested and developed here below.

All this is so much in keeping with our Spiritualist belief, based upon our experiences of intercourse with discarnate friends, that we could wish that Mr. Bevan had had the courage to investigate and find the truth for himself. While there are many things in his work with which we are in entire agreement, and while it is well worth reading for its author's manifest sincerity and ability, we are reminded of and agree with his own statement that 'conversions are rarely wrought by controversy.'

W. F. M.

'AS THE SPIRIT GIVETH UTTERANCE.'

BY JAMES LAWRENCE.

One Sunday in June last I attended public worship in Macduff Parish Church. The minister, who is a particularly well-beloved man, both as a preacher and a friend, based his sermon on the words, 'And a cloud received him out of their sight' (Acts, ch. i., v. 9).

As a Presbyterian discourse it was above the average, and displayed original and at times broad, even bold thought ; but it was spoiled by its delivery. Written, every word of it, and read in an even, monotonous tone, I wondered, short as it was, not that a few of the congregation dozed to sleep, but that more did not follow suit.

From where I sat I could see, lapping the rocks and far out to the horizon, the waters of the Moray Firth, and thought : 'Ah, just this place, this subject, and a living speaker !' Undoubtedly this humdrum, uninteresting style of preaching is responsible, in great measure, for the empty churches now so universally lamented.

I remember another Scottish minister, a D.D., and a man of cultured general attainments, who was so undemonstrative in the pulpit that he came to be known as 'Stucco John.' In the hands of a capable exponent, an indifferent subject can be made to glow, made to impress deeply, while a good one, dealt with half-heartedly, is so much wasted effort. I knew a clergyman in Newcastle whose sermons, on paper, could not be equalled in the city, but when listened to they were sorry things indeed. Surely both subject and delivery should be made interesting.

Christian Science, for instance, could be made much more attractive were its leaders allowed latitude in their utterances. Even as they are, I enjoy hearing the simple readings and responses, but the addition of a leaven of personal opinions, personal zeal and fire, would exalt and strengthen the printed words.

A country church on a summer's day is too often a veritable 'sleepy hollow,' atmosphere and surroundings alike contributing to the lethargy. Town churches are usually but little better, contrasted with the allurements around them. Some years ago, on a June morning, I stood and noted how apathetically intending worshippers approached a certain church in West Cumberland ; and last year, on a church road in Aberdeenshire, I counted only two where, twenty years ago, thirty could be seen hieing them to the kirk, yet the population is practically the same now as then. This in spite of the fact that all the evidence indicates that the world is getting better, not worse. If rightly told, the Gospel message wins the interest and appeals to the heart of the hearers. 'Pulpit eloquence,' however, in its highest sense, is undoubtedly a gift, enjoyed by comparatively few orthodox exponents, and, unfortunately, these few seem to be the exclusive possessions of certain centres noted for fashionable congregations and big collections. But there are ways of stirring the people outside scholarly expositions. It can be done by genuine heart-to-heart talks, even by illiterate messengers. I hold no brief for a revival in the Christian churches ; I plead only for those whose leanings turn them thitherwards, who long for a fuller light to be shed on the Testaments, Old and New,

than is contained in the ordinary discourses. I cannot help thinking that had that preacher in that northern Scottish fishing town spoken from his *heart* to his hearers, had he cast his eyes appealingly from floor to gallery, had he put life and power into his message, had he, instead of 'composing' his sermon in his study, entered his pulpit and, as is recorded in the chapter succeeding that from which he chose his text, spoken 'as the Spirit gave him utterance,' his success in the capture of souls and the arrestment of others on the downward grade would have been more marked.

Spiritualists have much to learn in this direction. On such platforms as ours, the semi-informed run a greater risk of discomfiture from intelligent critics than where time has caused a passive acceptance of orthodox propositions. An understanding of the great facts on which Spiritualism builds ; of the why and wherefore of mediumship, a grounding in general spiritual philosophy and a cultivation of the faculty of driving home the truths and appeals of our religion and of dealing forcibly with present needs, are features of pressing interest to our movement.

In a word, Church, Chapel, Mission Room, Spiritualist Hall, &c., require a thorough rousing, a shaking up, a real awakening ; for, it is painfully true that, just as familiarity ultimates in carelessness, so does acquaintance with any movement tend to lessen the activities of those most concerned. Only a realisation of the sacredness and deep significance of spiritual communion can really win whole-hearted and enthusiastic devotion to the work of the Spirit—for humanity and the truth.

FACT OR FICTION ?

A kindly correspondent sends us a copy of 'The Forum' (New York and London) of September last, and draws our attention to J. D. Beresford's circumstantial 'Case of Prevision,' regarding which he writes : 'The account reads rather like fiction—as if the writer were afraid of boring us with the all-important details ; besides, why does it come out in America ? Perhaps you may kindly look into this.' The scene is laid in Cornwall, the time given is March and April last year. Mr. Jessop is said to have visited St. Ives accompanied by a friend named Galt. They visit 'Man's Head Rock' and turn into a path where four rough steps lead up to a granite quarry. Jessop draws back at the top of the steps and exclaims : 'There has been a landslide here. How terribly dangerous ! Anyone might easily walk over these steps.' Galt, however, sees only a table of flat land before him, and walks upon it to assure his friend that he is under an hallucination. Omitting the intermediate incidents we may say that Galt returns to town. Jessop recovers his health and assures Galt in a letter that before his return he will go to the steps and walk across the flat so as to 'lay the bogey.' Four days later Galt sees in the newspapers details of a 'cliff accident in Cornwall,' by which a visitor had been killed. On reaching St. Ives he learns that a great landslip had taken place by Man's Head Rock, and that Jessop got up early that morning and walked over the steps, which, although still in place, were trembling on the verge of an abyss. Can any reader acquainted with St. Ives inform us if this story is based on fact ?

THE remarkable answers given by medical men when under cross-examination in the recent 'consumption case' tend to show what an empiricism so-called 'medical science' really is. As Mr. Walter Whitehead, F.R.C.S., F.R.S. (Edin.), who was president of the British Medical Association in 1902, pointed out in an article in 'The English Review,' June, 1911, dealing with the action against Mr. H. A. Barker, the well-known bonesetter, Harvey, in his day, was denounced as a 'circulator,' or quack, Lister was scoffed at, and when the idea of open-air treatment for consumption was first put forward by Bodington, it was ridiculed, although to-day it is regarded as indispensable. It is clear, however, that some at least among the doctors are open-minded. Here is an illuminating statement : "A very large number of cases recover under methods of treatment to which no fair-minded man would ascribe any specific action upon the tuberculosis." "To what do you ascribe the recovery ?" "A variety of circumstances—peace of mind, sanitary surroundings, and all sorts of things." "It comes back to nature ?" "Yes."

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APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

'WITH CLAY AND CLOUD.'

To gain a clear and just view of the Modern Spiritual Movement it is necessary to remember that it is two-sided. It proceeds externally by objective evidences, and internally by vision, monition and inspiration. We work, as Mrs. Browning put it, 'with clay and cloud.'

On the external side there is all the noise and bustle of building—much hewing and hammering, raking and sifting, testing and experimenting. There is plenty of apparent confusion, as at the beginning of every great undertaking, particularly when it involves an excursion into little-known departments of life-activity. Some of the workmen are unskilled and have to be painfully trained to do their part. Others grow impatient of the slowness and monotony of their tasks. Here and there one shows a disposition to 'scamp' his work. Occasionally it seems like 'chaos come again,' especially to idle onlookers who sit on the fence and give the builders the benefit of their disinterested advice and the encouragement of their cheerful witticisms. Never having built anything in their lives more important than a rabbit hutch or a woodshed, they can hardly be expected, perhaps, to have a very clear appreciation of what is going on. But they quite realise the advantages to themselves of being merely spectators and avoiding the labour and responsibility. When the worst of the difficulties are overcome, the labourers organised, and the building begins to reveal its true proportions they may be willing to take part. For the present they prefer to look on and criticise. Meantime the architects are patient, serene and assured. The great structure that is to be has already been completed—on the ideal side. The plans have been carefully drawn and checked, and what was at first the baseless fabric of a vision is to be the well-based fabric of fact—the realised ideal of seers and dreamers.

Turning from parable, it may be useful to consider for a while the true direction of our movement in its twin aspects—the scientific and objective, on the one hand, the religious and subjective on the other. We are prone to draw a dividing line between them, but they are subtly interlinked. Clay and cloud are nearer akin than they appear to be. The patient accumulator of the facts of clairvoyance, clairaudience, prevision, physical phenomena, is handling the raw stuff of spiritual existence. A few transmuting touches of the essential soul, and lo! it has become religion, poetry and philosophy. Bulbs and dry roots—what metamorphosis when they unfold to leaf and flower!

Ungrateful we who, comfortably housed, despise the labours of bricklayer and plumber, plasterer and carpenter.

'They have no souls above such work,' do we say? And yet it is their work that gave us what we have of shelter and comfort. And it may be far more valuable than anything that we can contribute to the well-being of our fellows.

There are 'phenomena-hunters,' true. But they are little more than lookers-on. They want, like the inquisitive infant in the old story, to 'see the wheels go round.' But with them—less conspicuous, perhaps, because so absorbed in their work—are bands of patient investigators discovering, examining and testing. They experiment, compare and analyse, and finally set in their places an array of facts. The work may seem dull and uninspiring to those who labour on what they regard as higher levels, but the phenomenalist, the observer of facts, finds his task interesting and satisfying—the best evidence that he is doing the work which has been appointed to him. Is he slow, grovelling, unimaginative—hesitating over things which the more advanced souls have long settled and left behind? May be, but he is not labouring for those who have gone on, but for those who are to come after. He is not working for the winged minds who can spurn the solid earth and tread the airy spaces, but for those who can only trudge afoot and who will need earthen viaducts that will bear their weight. Clay will be more to these than cloud. Let him accumulate his facts in his own way. He has no lack of censors amongst the uninstructed and sceptical, and his fellow workers in other departments should not be found amongst these. They should rather rejoice that he can perform with zest tasks that to them are tedious and repellent.

From the rap, the levitation and the 'direct voice' to the dream, the inspiration and the telepathic message may seem a long step, but the connecting line runs through all. The lower rungs of the ladder are as important as the higher ones, for, as in the vision of the patriarch, there are angels ascending as well as descending.

Both on the 'clay' and on the 'cloud' side there are things at present to offend the fastidious. There is much 'rubbish,' we are told. True, but (to take up the parable again for a moment) when was a building ever erected without rubbish? Its presence is the best evidence that work is being done. And, to speak plainly, a good deal of the 'rubbish' is the result of the demolition of old and obsolete thought-structures that have to be pulled down and cleared away. It is not *our* 'rubbish.' Then there are our mistakes, too. We have no objection to be reminded of them. It is a chastening experience, and prevents us from being over-confident. We do make mistakes, but we are comforted by the reflection that the man who never made a mistake never made anything. Censure in this direction is peculiarly salutary as regards our workers in cloud. Sanguine, aspiring, emotional souls—they have their times of exaltation and behold the vision of things yet to be. And they come in, ecstatic and triumphant, to announce the imminent approach of a new era. The world is on the very verge of a great and beautiful dispensation. The angels are at the gates. And then one of the onlookers (who has not heard the good news and would not welcome it if he had) throws a brickbat— Meantime the workers in clay are grubbing at their lowly tasks. They do not mind brickbats. They are used to them, and are under no illusions as to the speedy completion of the edifice. They are content to know that the foundations are well and truly laid. They cannot soar into the empyrean, and have no roseate dreams. They are stolid and practical. They will never emulate the dreamy builder who erected a beautiful house, but forgot to put in a staircase.

Workers in clay and cloud, builders with facts and evidences, builders with dreams and visions and intuitions—they do their appointed tasks and pass on to take up their work again under better conditions. And under the hands of labourers, visible and invisible, the building rises, a worthy habitation for the generations to come.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen ;
Make the house where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire and clean.

THE BASIS OF UNITY IN NEW SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT.

ADDRESS BY MRS. MARY SEATON.

On Thursday evening, 31st ult., at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, MRS. MARY SEATON addressed the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance on 'The Basis of Unity in New Schools of Thought, including Spiritualism, Theosophy, Christian Science, Mental and Spiritual Healing, New Thought, and Bahaism.'

MR. H. WITHALL, Vice-President of the Alliance, occupied the chair, and in the course of some introductory remarks, said : 'One of the things with which Spiritualism impresses us is the necessity for toleration in our ideas concerning those who differ from us. We realise that although we are seeking for the truth we can never see truth in its entirety. We can only perceive one aspect of it, and as each individual differs from every other individual, of necessity the perception that is gained of the truth must vary, however slightly it may be, in each case. And so we have toleration for and sympathy with all religious and philosophical movements whether we agree with them or not—with Theosophy, Mental Science, Christian Science ; and indeed with all those systems that aim at making people better acquainted with themselves and realising their relationship to each other and to the Source of their existence.'

Referring to Mrs. Seaton, the chairman remarked that she had gained considerable experience in these various schools of thought, and would testify to the identity of the underlying impulse in each movement, and that each was adapted to its particular section of humanity. As a teacher, Mrs. Seaton's special interest was Mental Science, but her work was particularly directed to awakening in the individual mind a sense of its spiritual nature, and thus she paved the way for membership of the Alliance and kindred societies. Hitherto her work had been carried on alternately in London and in Washington, but she had now decided on a permanent residence in London.

MRS. SEATON, who was cordially received, said that in considering the relationship between the different systems of thought with which she proposed to deal, it was not necessary for her to make any extended reference to Spiritualism, because as Spiritualists those present would be sufficiently well acquainted with it. They had, in fact, not come there to hear about Spiritualism so much as to learn the relationship it bore to other movements. It was an excellent sign of the times that such a desire existed. It indicated a great advance in thought that they as Spiritualists were desirous to examine other systems and to find out their similarities as well as their dissimilarities. When two years ago she addressed the members of the Alliance, it had been on the subject of the similarities and dissimilarities of Spiritualism and Theosophy. She had not then dealt, except incidentally, with Christian Science and the other systems of thought to which on this occasion she intended to make special reference. As to Theosophy, as they all knew, it was largely an intellectual movement. There was a great need in the world of to-day for a more intellectual conception of our relationship to our Source than that which most of us had been taught in early life. Modern Science had discredited very much of those teachings, and therefore the intellect was demanding more satisfying answers regarding the nature and destiny of mankind. Theosophy was one of the ways in which that demand had been met. The strong side of Theosophy was philosophy, but it did not leave out the spiritual aspect, as those

knew who had heard or read the beautiful teachings along that line from its very forceful and eloquent leader, Mrs. Besant. Still, it might be said with truth that Theosophy as a movement hinges on the intellectual and the occult, rather than the spiritual side of things. It had aimed at demonstrating the relationship of all religions and all sciences and arts—all the expressions of the human soul. As they knew, it had been started with the authority of a human being, Madame Blavatsky, and the teachings received through her derived *their* authority from Masters, either embodied or disembodied, to whom Theosophists appealed for what is true about the nature of the Source of life and man's relationship thereto. Such teachings were regarded as authoritative, and emphasis was *not* put upon the unfolding illuminations of the individual soul. In other words, the emphasis was put on the soul getting its knowledge regarding the problems of life from certain other souls in or out of the body.

Now, Spiritualism, as they were aware, had come into existence to answer a great need of humanity for some assurance that its dead were alive, that the souls which had passed on retained their identity and human affections—that nothing was changed in them except that they had put off the 'old clothes'—the raiment of mortality. Spiritualism had come to teach this, and also the fact that these arisen souls could return and communicate with those still in the flesh, just as soon as they knew how to set in operation the laws which governed that particular kind of experience. So numerous and so marked had been its illustrations of these facts that it was being slowly forced upon the world that it was a great truth, and not simply a theory or a vain imagining. The psychical societies had taken it up, the scientific world (to some degree, at least) had investigated the matter, and its claim to the world's attention had been strongly demonstrated. It had gained a hearing even amongst those classes who formerly would not listen to it because it lacked the support of authority. But now that authority was forthcoming in the persons of scientists, lawyers, doctors and clergymen whose influence on large classes of people created a disposition to consider the claims which Spiritualism made concerning the reality of a future life and the possibility of communion between the two worlds.

'Now, you know,' continued the speaker, 'that there is a philosophy attached to Spiritualism. It does not deal simply with the occult. There is a conception of life which is being taught by those who have passed out of the body, and who communicate with us. I heard the other afternoon a most beautiful discourse given by Mrs. Wallis dealing with the life beyond, and telling us many things which we wanted to know—beautiful things having an appeal to the intellect as well as to the spiritual nature.'

Nevertheless, it could not be claimed that Spiritualism was a religion, although it had its religious side. Its emphasis was rather placed on the fact of our ability to communicate with the souls who have passed from the mortal body. It taught the healing of the body by those who dwelt in the next life, and who performed this work through the agency of mediums.

Theosophy had left this question of healing alone until quite recently, but it was now beginning to show an interest in it, for there was a theosophical group who were handing on this truth, that there is a force within ourselves which we can use in order to heal the body. The Theosophists, indeed, were treating the matter generally from the standpoint of mental healing.

But although the two great movements, Spiritualism and Theosophy, came into existence to answer certain human needs, there was a third need, and that was the spiritual need which had been largely met by Christian Science, which placed, moreover, a tremendous emphasis on the healing of the body.

Christian Science was a great reaction against the abuse of drugs, and also a great reaction against the teaching that God was a separate existence outside of man. It taught that man can go straight to the Divine, and that he is part of Divinity. It was the religion of *here and now*, its teaching being that we did not have to wait until we had left the body in order to attain the objects of our aspiration. Like all great reactions, it had shown a tendency to go to an opposite extreme. Its extreme method had brought upon it ridi-

cule and abuse, because it had denied the reality of anything except the one Power, and some people under the treatment of Christian Science healing methods had died because they did not respond to the treatment, having in the meantime given up the medicine which kept them alive, even though it did not cure them. But such cases were relatively few, for the number of people healed by Christian Science was enormous. People who had been bowed down with worry and anxiety, with sickly, feeble bodies, had been made healthy again and lifted out of their cares and sorrows. That showed the existence in Christian Science of a magnificent power for good. (Applause.) Because of their extreme method in repudiating the use of drugs in any form Christian Scientists had forced on the world the fact that healing can be accomplished without the druggist's aid. Christian Science was perfectly correct fundamentally in its assertion that God is the only reality. Its philosophy was not always consistent and logical, but it had the beautiful principle and used it whether its reasoning was or was not in accord with the facts. Philosophy, indeed, was not its strong point ; it was a religious faith—a spiritual force. It relied upon authority—the authority of its founder, Mrs. Eddy, who claimed that she had given to the world a perfectly pure and unadulterated truth. Since her death her book had constituted the authority at the back of the movement.

Dealing next with mental and spiritual healing, the speaker referred to the fact that after the advent of Christian Science there came schools of thought which discovered that the healing forces were not the monopoly of Christian Science and that access to them could be gained through other channels. True, the fact had been demonstrated many times in the past, but the knowledge had been put aside. The early Christians exercised these healing powers from mental and spiritual sources, and long before Christ came to earth they were known. These modern spiritual and mental healers, although, as a rule, calling themselves by no special name, were doing the same work as the Christian Scientists, and the fact that they made splendid cures was evidence of the fact that the healing source was common to all of them.

Many of them had formed a group under the name of 'New Thought,' feeling that the world demanded a name which would avoid the necessity of a long explanation of the nature of their teaching. Each member of this group, however, had the fullest liberty with regard to what he believed or taught. Some believed in drugs, others were almost as extreme as Christian Scientists in this regard. But none acknowledged the authority of Mrs. Eddy and her book. One cardinal principle they held alike, and that was the ability of each soul to receive directly from the Fountain of Life all that it needed.

As to the difference between the mental and the spiritual healer, Mrs. Seaton referred to Mrs. Wilmans as among the first of the former school to take the title of 'Mental Scientist.' Her method emphasised the power of the mind over the body, the power of thought influences in healing. A splendid healer, Mrs. Wilmans made no claim to the use of spiritual forces. Some of the doctors adopted the idea, and it formed part of the John Hopkins College medical course in America, under the name of psycho-therapy. An eminent Boston divine, Dr. Worcester, rector of the Protestant Episcopal Church there, had espoused the cause of Mental Science and spread its fame all over America. Some years ago Dr. McComb visited England and assisted to establish it here, since which time it had taken root amongst the clergy, Archdeacon Wilberforce being one of its advocates. It meant the great revival of an old truth, this discovery that the healing powers known to the early Church were still available in spite of the neglect into which they had fallen for centuries. These powers, it was found, could be used for the healing of the body, the mind, and the soul. Some doctors considered that they were only efficacious for nervous ailments, but many other physical disorders had been cured by them. 'Many people,' said Mrs. Seaton, 'think that they are using spiritual forces when, in point of fact, they are simply using mental suggestion. Spiritual forces cannot be used by any soul unless that soul is living the life of the Spirit, unless it so lives that it can bring that Divine power into it and use it for others. We are all aspiring after this life of

the Spirit, but there is a difference between aspiring and living our lives in such a way that we can use the spiritual healing force for ourselves and others. (Applause.) But while there is this enormous difference, I think it should be understood that the fact that we see the certainty of being able to use infinitely higher forces than the mental, when we have sufficiently unfolded our spiritual natures, does not do away with mental healing.'

Discussing next the subject of Bahaism, Mrs. Seaton described it as one of the greatest unifying movements in the world. After a brief sketch of the history of the movement and the trail of martyrdom and persecution which followed in its steps—from the execution of the 'Bab' to the imprisonment of Abdul Bahai and his followers—the speaker referred to the universal tolerance of the new faith, to the fact that it made no claim to a monopoly of truth, and that its great work seemed to be the breaking down of the barriers which separated religious creeds. We could not go all the way with Bahaism. We could not believe that it was the only great revelation of truth since Jesus Christ or Buddha, or that truth is only manifested through some special individual. We knew that Universal Spirit was still at work. We did not have to approach our Divine Centre through any soul, embodied or disembodied, no matter how exalted. The deeper teachings of the spirit could be received direct from the great Source of Light, and Divinity was expressed through all souls, through all religions, sciences, philosophies—everything was a manifestation of Divinity.

In the course of her concluding remarks, Mrs. Seaton said :

'We have heard much of the possibility of the self becoming God. The self can never become God. The self is always that which it is. It becomes more and more capable of using the powers of God and more and more capable of realising its relationship to Him. For God is not a cold abstract principle. That He is universal does not take away from Him the aspect of a certain personal identity as expressed in the life of each individual soul, to which He gives continually all that is needed to sustain it in its efforts to live true to its Source and to co-operate with the Power that lives and works in all things.'

At the conclusion of the discourse, which was received with applause, a short discussion took place. In reply to questions, MRS. SEATON said that so far as she knew there had been no special movement in Bahaism in the direction of healing. She believed that Abdul Bahai took the view of many of the Mental Scientists that the use of drugs was advisable until it could be superseded by higher methods. In his teachings and methods he showed an immense amount of common-sense, and his movement kept very close to scientific truth. As regards Archdeacon Wilberforce, it was pointed out by a lady in the audience that he had long taken an interest in the subject of mental and spiritual healing, to which the propaganda carried on by Dr. McComb had not been his first introduction.

On the subject of patent medicines Mrs. Seaton agreed with the view that the cures wrought were often merely due to mental suggestion, although there were patent medicines that in themselves were efficacious. The effects of suggestion arose through the appeal made to the subconscious mind—that mind which had charge of those automatic operations of the body with which the conscious mind was only indirectly concerned. As to the criticism excited by some of the Christian Scientists, these were not an argument against the vital side of Christian Science. One might just as well condemn the Christian religion because of the misdeeds of some so-called Christians. An effective point was made by one of the speakers. Curative agencies, he claimed, were only a secondary part of the problem of disease and suffering. It was better to emphasise the necessity of right conditions of living which would abolish these evils than concentrate too much on the subject of providing remedies for them while they were active.

The proceedings closed with a cordial vote of thanks to Mrs. Seaton.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—'PURITY.'—Your experiences are very similar to those of others who possess normal clairvoyant power. T. RAYMOND.—We are well aware of the militarist tendency of the Boy Scout movement, but that does not blind us to its many excellent and beneficial features. 'Honour where honour is due' is our motto.

THOUGHTS AND THINGS.

We were given pause on the very threshold of Mr. William Walker Atkinson's little book, 'Thoughts are Things' (stiff cover, 1s. net, L. N. Fowler & Co., 7, Imperial-arcade, Ludgate-circus, E.C.), by the author's emphatic intimation that the reading of it was going to form 'a distinct epoch' in our life, and that when we realised the benefits we received from its teachings we should feel that we had not paid fully for it. Being sufficiently satisfied with the 'epochs' we have already experienced, we are in no hurry for another, and conscience, we reflected, might reproach us if we perused and benefited by a work for which we ought to have paid a sovereign but had not even invested a shilling. Frankly, we are inclined to discount the profundity of a philosophy which needs such heralding. Great thinkers do not advertise their wares in this fashion. With regard to the writer's pronouncements—we must not call them 'views'—we have not a doubt as to the power and influence of thought, even of thought as defined by Webster, which does not, as does Mr. Atkinson's definition, include 'feelings, emotions, will, desire—but as to the 'thingness' of it, to quote the very ugly word which the author coins, that, again, depends on what we mean by 'thing.' If the word may be applied to 'a quality, fact or idea,' as well as to 'whatever exists as a separate entity,' then we need no argument on the matter. We do not dispute the value of Mr. Atkinson's teaching, whether it is epoch-making or not. Dealing with 'Thought as a Magnet,' he says:—

Have you never noticed that when a man is filled with a strong, burning desire to express a certain line of mental activity and sets to work to make his thoughts take form in action, there seems to be set into operation a train of circumstances that tend to draw to him the persons, things, and environments conducive to that particular line of expression, or else to draw the man himself away from his old environment, occupation, and surroundings into the presence of those better adapted to the expression of his thought? A little consideration will show you, either from your own experience or that of others, how common is this occurrence. . . . There is no chance or accident about these things. They are a part of the working of the law of cause and effect in its phase of thought attraction. Life is full of these occurrences, but we pass them heedlessly and carelessly, until we become acquainted with the law.

THE REAL HELL.

Writing recently in 'The Saturday Journal' on 'Is there a Hell?' the Rev. Richard Roberts affirmed that 'the universe would not be complete without a hell,' and explained that 'all that is implied in the idea of hell is that there is in the after-life a condition in which sin unrepented and unforgiven meets its "due recompence of reward." Continuing, he said:—

We must conceive of hell in ethical terms. But once it is admitted that we do not lose our personal identity at death, we have perhaps a clue to the inwardness of the condition. We, our unchanged selves, shall find ourselves in a changed environment. . . . He that is filthy will be filthy still; but his filthiness will be raised to the dimensions of eternity, whatever those may be. Anyway, that will be his hell. . . . The form of sin is dependent upon its instruments and occasions, and these pass away from us when we pass out of the world. The craving which found its satisfactions through them will remain, and it is hard to conceive of a more intolerable hell than that in which we are left with the craving and bereft of the opportunities of satisfying it. That is how Jesus defines hell. It is the place where 'the worm dieth not and their fires are not quenched.' It is a condition in which a man suffers the fires of lust and the torments of desire without possessing the means of gratifying or assuaging them. But does this last for ever? May not the sinner, after passing through the purging fires of retribution, win through at last into the peace of God? . . . I am free to say that my hope (I have not the data to form a settled conviction, and no man has) is that at last all men will be saved. But no man has any right to presume on this hope.

We suggest that the Rev. Roberts should read 'Spirit Teachings,' given through the mediumship of Mr. Stainton Moses (M.A. Oxon), and himself communicate with spirit people. He will then be able to speak with more definite conviction on this important matter.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

On page 496 we recorded a remarkable coincidence: here is another of recent occurrence. When the Congregational Union met in Manchester in 1882 it passed a resolution of sympathy on the assassination of President Garfield. It assembled again in 1902, and had to pass a resolution on the assassination of President McKinley. This year it met with the news that ex-President Roosevelt had been shot. Only the week before a Manchester paper, commenting on the two previous resolutions, said, 'Happily, there is little likelihood of this coincidence recurring this year.'

The many friends of Mr. J. J. Morse, the editor of 'The Two Worlds,' will be interested to learn that he entered on his forty-fourth year of public work for Spiritualism on October 15th last, and that he contemplates shortly publishing his autobiography. As our old friend has been associated with the leading people in the movement during his long career of service, and has himself, both as medium and as writer, taken an active part in almost all the efforts which have been made to spread the knowledge of Spiritualism in Great Britain and to establish the movement on a stable basis, his forthcoming book should be an interesting and valuable addition to our historical literature.

Ghostly knockings were reported in the 'Daily Chronicle' of the 1st inst. as having occurred at Park Farm, an isolated home-stead at Anslow, three miles from Burton, occupied by a widow named Thompstone, her brother and several domestics. The sounds, which resembled blows from a hammer, were heard for several successive days at each door of the house in turn, and it was remarked as a strange feature that the door never vibrated in the least. Mrs. Thompstone enlisted the aid of the Burton police, who watched the house inside and out, but failed to discover the cause of the phenomenon. A police officer held the latch of a door for an hour and a-half, and just as he released his hold the knocking recurred. The officer darted out, but nobody was to be seen. The occurrence, it is said, has caused much excitement in the village, and quite unnerved the occupants of the farmhouse.

In his Harveian Oration before the President and Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians last month, Sir J. F. Goodhart, M.D., F.R.C.P., declared, as reported in 'The Star' of October 19th, that 'good old age was both more prevalent and more enjoyable' to-day than formerly. After likening radium 'in all but death to what he would call the aureole of life,' he asked if the spirit of life died, and went on to say: 'It might correlate with other forces of Nature! It might perhaps transfer itself to other forms of being. Had we begun to see that it might transcend the firmament of space? The physician thought not of death, but of the tenacity of life, and of how long, save by catastrophe, it took to bring the machine to a standstill.'

Fatigue, Dr. Goodhart said, was a disease nowadays; even rest furnished no remedy, and it was clear that 'a fresh stock of some form of energy was required. With fatigue might well be coupled pain, and in chronic pain one needed to recreate the nervous elements or to instil them with some electroid that should reset the spring of the machinery in motion and guide it smoothly on the livelong bent.' This is practically what the spiritual and magnetic healers do. They supply the missing nervous elements or the required electroid, and in that way set the machinery working smoothly. That medical 'science' is empirical was also admitted by the speaker when he said that he supposed 'there had never been a dose of medicine administered—however much they thought to have divined its action—that had not been in some measure an experiment.'

A valued correspondent writes: 'As you were so kind as to take an interest in my perplexities at my people, who are in the spirit world, giving up writing to me so entirely, and giving their reasons for doing so, namely, that they were constantly with a dear friend of mine who was in great trouble and in very bad health, you may be interested to hear that about a fortnight ago I received a letter from her (from Australia) which had crossed mine telling her of this, in which she says, "Your people seem to be constantly with me, they rap and impress me with their presence." In the middle of her letter to me, she interrupts her writing and my husband, son, and daughter all write their names in their characteristic handwriting; this is all they dared to do, in her state of health. So what they told me was absolutely correct, and I suppose I ought not to have worried at all, but as you are so much more experienced in these matters, I felt that it would comfort me to ask you *why* they had to be so constantly with her, and you *did* comfort me, and now comes this wonderful proof that they were really right in their explanation of their desertion. I certainly have had the most convincing proofs, again and again, of the fact of spirit "communion."

This passage, which we quote from a friend's personal letter, will bear thinking about: 'The idea of the medium as a kind of dummy, of no spiritual account until the spirit operator puts life and mind into him, is one to be strongly opposed. The prophet is no Balaam's ass who can only speak when the "angel of the Lord" gives him utterance. This notion of a medium as a sort of mechanical instrument operated by spirits is very dear to some of our friends, who do not seem to understand that the best way to propagate the truth of spirit existence is to show that man is a spirit before death quite as much as afterwards. Prove the man a spirit *here* and the rest follows naturally.'

In reply to a correspondent who, in 'The Literary Guide' for November, asks 'Keridon' if he regards 'such learned men as Sir Oliver Lodge and Dr. A. R. Wallace' as being 'guilty of ignoring the part played by "organisation" in the phenomena of life and consciousness, that writer says: 'Yes, certainly. They are both Spiritualists. . . . A belief in spooks and spirits of whatever ilk does, for me, entirely rob a man's speculations on psychical ultimates and realities of all value, though his name might stretch out "fore and aft" to such a length as to excite the envy of an Indian Rajah.' This frank avowal of prejudice disarms criticism, but, judging from the rest of his answer, it is clear that 'Keridon' does not understand either the point of view of the Spiritualists to whom he refers or the real nature of Spiritualism.

Under the heading, 'A Business Man's Experience with Spirits,' 'The Progressive Thinker' prints a series of interesting communications purporting to have been given by different spirits, among them being Jane Austen, Julia Ward Howe, and 'Imperator.' The recipient says that 'Imperator' was talking to him for twenty minutes 'with great power and rapidity,' and that among other things he spoke of what he saw on his 'trip to Damascus,' when he 'heard the voice of the Master say, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" &c. No claim is made that this 'Imperator' is the same as the intelligence who manifested through the late Stanton Moses, and who, we may mention, did not claim to be St. Paul.

Mrs. T. Praed's many friends in London will be pleased to learn that she is meeting with much success in South Africa, having just completed a four months' mission at Johannesburg. Large congregations listened to her instructive addresses. The spirits who controlled her related their experiences in both worlds and provided the listeners with much food for serious thought. The clairvoyant and psychometric descriptions were also satisfactory and convincing. Before her departure for Kimberley Mrs. Praed was entertained by a number of friends and presented by Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Cawdry and Mrs. T. Down with several articles of jewellery and a handbag, as tokens of appreciation from the development class, the Lyceum and a few friends. It is hoped Mrs. Praed will return to Johannesburg early next year.

The problem of 'The Origin of Life' has taken 'a new lease of life' as a subject for debate, in consequence of Professor Schäfer's speech at Dundee. Mr. E. Wake Cook suggests that any unprejudiced man who considers the known facts will find the following conclusions unavoidable: 'That there is no real inertia, no dead matter; all is life and motion, the greatest stillness being but the "sleep" of the spinning top. That even the chemical activities are but rudimentary forms of life, and that the divisions drawn are artificial, but convenient as ministering to our dull perceptions. The marvellous organising activities of the atoms compel us to endow them with god-like powers and intelligence, or we are driven to the conception to which all our religious thought is tending, which is implicit in every worthy religious philosophy throughout the world, the conception of an immanent life or spirit controlling from within every atom of this stupendous universe.' Further, Mr. Cook holds that 'Death is an illusion resulting from bluntness of vision. It is a transition from one phase of life to another. Even the molecules of a "dead" body are already preparing to rush into other forms of organisation. All these things will stare us in the face when we get our Cosmic Consciousness, our Cosmic seeing.'

ACCORDING to J. D. Quackenbos, M.D., a twelve-year-old boy when hypnotised by his father, Dr. F. N. Brett, could 'look right into and through the human body, seeing the internal organs as readily as one would see objects through a window. In dozens of instances this boy located tumours, foreign bodies, bullets in gun-shot wounds, valvular lesions and so forth.' A woman, also under hypnotism, described a patient five miles away, diagnosing his disease correctly, and on more than one occasion better than the surgeon.

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.

A Recognised Psychic Photograph.

SIR,—The following beautiful incident is, I think, well worth recording:

At the close of my annual mission with the Crewe Society on September 19th, I was privileged to have a test sitting with Mrs. Buxton and Mr. Hope, mediums for spirit photography. I had invited to be present a Councillor, well known upon our platforms, who brought with him the necessary plates—a full unopened packet of quarter plates, also a half packet which had been opened. The former were the ones chosen by the medium, Mr. Hope.

Two photographs were taken. The first, which was of myself and three friends, presents no unusual appearance. The second, which was of myself only, and which I enclose for your inspection, shows a beautiful child-form with flowers. On the 20th we held a second sitting, and this time were favoured with a message upon my plate, and without the aid of the camera. The message conveyed to me the love and good wishes of my spirit friends, and the assurance that they could see a bright and beautiful prospect before me.

The spirit in my photograph has been recognised by her parents, who are both still living, and who were overcome with emotion when they saw the dear face of their eldest child. Her name was Mary Hill. She was born on October 30th, 1867, and passed into spirit on November 20th, 1870. The flowers Mary presents in the picture are anemones, and I believe the meaning of 'anemone' is 'Lest we forget.' Within four months of the passing of Mary the home was left desolate indeed, for her brother William also passed over. They were my brother and sister, and later I came as the comforter and to stay. My dear mother tells me that Mary's body was borne to the grave attended by little companions, each child carrying a posy of anemones, which were just in bloom.

In the identification of Mary I must necessarily revert for a few moments to my early childhood. My parents were very busy people, having a large business connection, and being an only child I was placed at a very early age in the care of a governess and finally sent to a ladies' seminary, and remained there for some years.

Well do I remember the old-fashioned, rambling school-house (now an imposing row of shops), its wide staircase of dark oak, with its corners and its shadows, in which I spent hours of lonely play, rolling my ball up and down those old stairs and clapping my hands with glee when I heard the echo of its bump, bump, bump. And then how I used to long for my mother, and how I would cry myself to sleep on the old stairs, out of sheer loneliness! I had scarcely any playmates, perhaps because I was always considered such an uncanny creature, full of dreams and fancies, seeing ghosts and suchlike things, consequently not a fit associate for the young ladies of Mrs. P.'s select seminary. My somnambulistic escapades were also the means of causing much consternation in the school; but the most fearful thing of all was when I would relate how two strange children, not connected with the school, constantly came to play with me—two children who never spoke, and always ran off to the top of the stairs when I tried to catch them up, and then vanished. All this would be met with such a pitiful look, and the words 'My poor child!' meant so much from the lips of dear old 'Poppy.' Yet it was all true, quite true. Those two children stand out clearly before me to-day—the little girl in her short frock, cut low at the neck, with the sleeves tied up with coloured ribbons, and her hair a fluffy golden mass about her head, and the boy in his Scotch plaid.

And here, after many days, after joys and sorrows, and battling with the world, I am face to face once more with the dreams of my childhood. The years have moved on apace, yet still my mind reverts to the days when after scarcely more than sixteen summers, I left girlhood behind me, for the holiest of ties, wifehood, and, later, motherhood, followed by years of sorrow, and still greater loneliness. I picture once more the old staircase and the shadow children, and in the little girl I find my Mary of the Crewe photograph, with her offering of anemones—"lest we forget" days that are gone beyond recall.

How grandly beautiful is this knowledge which leads us through the dark valley of shadows to the guiding light and the presence of our loved ones, assuring us that there is no death, and that soul to soul reaches out across the dark abyss, setting up a chord of vibration and loving communion 'twixt Heaven and earth.—Yours, &c.,

STELLA SKETCHLEY.

Leicester.

A Practical Question.

SIR,—May it not be rightly said that what to think is of all questions the most practical, and for this reason : that what we think determines most of all what we do. Perhaps, hitherto, science and philosophy have been too much mixed. Why not separate them and then unify? Surely the art of thinking is, to a great extent, that of changing the form of our conceptions, making it suitable and available. Why allow ourselves to accept mysteries instead of laying aside the bias instilled by a false theology? We need a truer conception of life—one lacking the self-element, the perverted good (according to our view), then we may experiment boldly, getting what is true to thought—in the same way in which the physical experimenter gets what is true to sense.—Yours, &c.,

Sutton.

E. P. PRENTICE.

From Catholicism to Spiritualism.

SIR,—Kindly permit me to offer my meed of praise to your invaluable paper 'LIGHT' and its band of noble writers whose inspiring messages tend to imbue us—who have to earn our living by the sweat of our brows—with courage and cheerfulness. I am developing as a physical medium. Perhaps some of your readers will be able to enlighten me on what I am about to relate, or instruct me how to proceed. My wife and I, along with my friend and his wife, were sitting for table phenomena ; when by the usual procedure and in answer to my inquiry, the manifesting intelligence spelled out the name 'Harry Boyce,' adding that he passed over at Dirowthl in India on March 28th, 1909, from the effects of fever. My surprise may be imagined when I add that the person communicating was a private in the West Riding Regiment and a dear friend of mine, from whom I had not heard for over twelve years. I was not thinking about him at the time ; and I was the only sitter known to him.

Perhaps it may interest some of your readers to know that previous to becoming an ardent Spiritualist I was an agnostic, and previous to that a Roman Catholic.

My partiality for scientific literature enabled me, through the experiences of Sir William Crookes and Dr. A. R. Wallace, to have an open mind, and upon investigation I found that the 'communion of spirits' was everything that was claimed for it by its leading exponents. May I, before concluding, put in a plea for cheaper books on Spiritualistic and germane subjects? Surely in these days of cheap bookbinding and printing, it is not too much to ask. It is very hard on us workers to find the books of A. J. Davis and others out of our reach.—Yours, &c.,

H. O'BRIEN.

40, Oliver-street, South Bank, S.O.

The Problems of Thought, Consciousness, and Personality.

SIR,—In a course of reading, on which I am now engaged, I have just come to the passage which I give *verbatim* below. Whether or not we agree with the line of argument, I think the passage must be of interest, especially to Spiritualists, and 'give furiously to think' :

'Let us then, as I say, suppose the Soul of Castor separated, during his sleep, from his Body, to think apart : Let us suppose, too, that it chuses, for its Scene of Thinking, the Body of another man, v.g., Pollux, who is sleeping without a Soul : For if Castor's Soul can think whilst Castor is asleep, what Castor is never conscious of, 'tis no matter what Place it chuses to think in. We have here then, the Bodies of two men with only one Soul between them, which we will suppose to sleep and wake by turns, and the Soul first thinking in the waking Man, whereof the sleeping Man is never conscious, has never the least Perception. I ask then, whether Castor and Pollux, thus, with only one Soul between them, which thinks and perceives in one, what the other is never conscious of, nor is concerned for, are not two as distinct persons, as Castor and Hercules, or as Socrates and Plato were ? and whether one of them might not be very happy and the other very miserable ? Just by the same reason, they make the Soul and the Man two Persons, who make the Soul think apart, what the Man is not conscious of ; for I suppose nobody will make identity of Persons, to consist in the Soul's being united to the very same numerical Particles of Matter : For if that be necessary to Identity, 'twill be impossible, in that constant flux of the Particles of our Bodies, that any man should be the same Person two days, or two moments together.'

(Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding. Book II., Chap. I., paragraph 12).

I would suggest that if our real personality is spiritual (or intuitive), and our human personality merely a partial and passing manifestation in time and space of this real personality, the difficulties raised all disappear.—Yours, &c.,

F. C. CONSTABLE.

What is Belief?

SIR,—Permit me to suggest as a subject for consideration in that interesting portion of 'LIGHT,' 'Letters to the Editor,' 'What is belief?' I think original ideas on this question would be interesting and educational.—Yours, &c.,

THOMAS RAYMOND.

Discerning a 'Thought-Form.'

SIR,—Before attending séances of any kind the beginner had better study the last chapter of that truly marvellous work, 'The Strange Story of Ahrinziman,' after which he will be fairly well armed against the snares and pitfalls in the path of the investigator.

The following incident will show how difficult it is to distinguish a thought-form from a real 'spirit'—that is, a conscious being actually existing in a sphere which is not the physical.

I was one afternoon intently engaged upon writing a passage bearing upon consumption with particular reference to the sadness of the lot of the young victim whose vitality is slowly wasting away. While I was in the midst of the toil and trouble of getting the right word, &c., one of my pupils, a remarkably good sensitive, came in. She was about half an hour before her appointed time, so that I was filled with the image of consumption before I had time to dissipate it.

Now, mark the result. I had not the slightest intention to transfer the thought of consumption to her mind, but a few minutes after her entrance she described a pale-faced, wan sufferer who had been in my room before she came in. The description was lifelike, and she was certain that an actual person had been in the room, until I explained the situation.

It is possible to distinguish a 'spirit' from a 'thought-form,' but with many 'clairvoyants' this is impossible owing to their immature state. In the case of the average 'sensitive,' whether automatic writer or any other kind, the results are too confusing to be worth the scrap of paper on which the messages are written. To encourage this kind of thing is fatal to the spiritual unfoldment of humanity.—Yours, &c.,

ARTHUR LOVELL.

94, Park-street, Grosvenor-square, W.

October 26th.

An Ancient Chinese Temple.

SIR,—On Wednesday, August 28th, at night, a part of the ancient Yuen Miao Temple at Soochow, near Shanghai, was burned down. The name of the building, which was three stories high, was Me do Pah Kwah ; it must have been many hundreds of years old, but its actual age is unknown. The following facts regarding the building may probably interest your readers :—

The main temple, 'Yuen Miao,' a two-storied building, was full of idols, and had an enormous *clientèle*. Here could be seen the same condition of things described in the Bible story as existing at the Temple of Jerusalem nearly nineteen hundred years ago. When I last visited this temple there were stalls at which one could purchase all kinds of commodities. In the inmost courts, in company with the idols, were hundreds of water-colour pictures exposed for sale. Here could be seen painters finishing their pictures, the subjects of which would amuse Europeans. They represented family relations—fathers, sons and grandsons—in groups ; young wives in flowing garments nursing twin infant sons ; 'shan shin,' that is, 'mountains and water' or scenery ; gods and mythological subjects. The courtyard was full of hucksters' stalls of all descriptions, peep-shows, bird-fanciers, fortune-tellers, and others.

Facing the entrance of the temple were the images of the three gods, Fuh, Fah, Seng—Buddha present, past, and future—the 'three precious ones' of the Buddhist trinity, each over fifteen feet high, and made of clay and mud, at one time gorgeously painted, but after hundreds of years dingy with smoke and incense.

In the courts at the sides of the big idols were sixty smaller idols, each over five feet high and very ugly, representing the Chinese cycle. According to a person's age he worshipped one of these images, though some of the idols do duty for two years. It is evidently assumed, perhaps with some truth, that after sixty years one enters second childhood, for after the devotee has reached the end of the cycle, he has to commence again to worship the first images in it. The Chinese span of life is presumed to be sixty years instead of seventy, as with us.

One of the images is Erh Loong, who presides over the cycle gods. He has arms and hands for eyes, and he sees thirty-three heavens and seventy-two hells!—Yours, &c.,

Swatow, China.

H. R.

'An Inquirer's Needs.

SIR,—I notice that in 'LIGHT' of September 14th you proposed to institute a 'Circle' column for inquirers. This is, I think, a very good idea, for only those Spiritualists who have tried to find congenial circles have any idea how difficult it is. Personally speaking, I have been trying for nearly two years. I joined the L.S.A. as an Associate with that end in view, but up to now, I regret to say, I have been unsuccessful, although I reside in the south-western district of London. I shall be pleased to receive letters from any readers who can assist me, addressed, with your kind permission, to Mrs. F. W., c/o 'LIGHT.'—Yours, &c.,

F. W.

Spiritualism and Theosophy in Ireland.

SIR,—During a recent visit to Ireland, working amongst the Theosophists and Spiritualists, I have been cheered and helped wonderfully by the unity which prevails amongst our friends there. For the first week I was at Dublin, and all my work was managed and arranged by Mr. J. H. Cousins, secretary for the Irish Theosophists, whose voice and pen are ever ready in the service of both movements, and whose services are valued by both Spiritualists and Theosophists. The only Spiritualist society in Ireland exists in Belfast, and the friends there are very proud of their position as pioneers. Mr. McCormick, the president, has won the respect of all his fellow citizens, and the committee who work with him are all intelligent and business-like men. They have one of the best libraries that I have ever seen, and inquirers can subscribe to it without becoming members of the society; in fact, intending members are recommended to read the literature before joining. Several members of the committee are also workers in the Theosophical lodge, for they say they agree on the main principles, and agree to disagree on other points. Connected with the Theosophical Society there is a progressive club. A room has been taken in the centre of the city; various members have furnished it artistically and comfortably, and all phases of progressive thought are discussed. Our Irish friends, I think, have taken a step in the right direction.—Yours, &c.,

ALFRED VOUT PETERS.

The Saving Sense of Humour.

SIR,—It was refreshing to read the article in last week's 'LIGHT,' entitled 'The Laughing Philosophy.' While yielding to no one in my desire for the reverential presentation of the truths of Spiritualism in all their dignity and spiritual beauty, I sometimes think that an atmosphere of what I may describe as 'weighty sombreness' is unduly present in some of the writings and platform utterances of our exponents. There is undoubtedly a humour—the shafts of which serve to drive many a truth home—which does not lessen the dignity of the subject it seeks to illustrate. That 'he is a wise man who knows when to be witty' everyone will allow; but surely humour, wisely employed, is of great service, and a witty expression will frequently help a truth to sink deep into the mind when a lengthy dissertation would only confuse the listener. It seems to me that if we would seek to be wise and to teach wisely, we should certainly employ in its appropriate place 'the saving sense of humour.'—Yours, &c.,

LEIGH HUNT.

WINCHESTER.—The officers and members of the Spiritualist Church at Winchester strongly feel the need of a library for the use of the members, and will be thankful for books (or money for books) from readers of 'LIGHT' who can kindly assist them in this direction. Letters or parcels can be addressed to Mr. W. H. Loveland, secretary, 4, Egbert-road, Winchester.

AN INQUIRY FROM HASTINGS.—'I should be glad to hear from one or two earnest people—sincere seekers—who would join my family circle (cabinet). I do not desire to hear from any sensation-mongers, or hunters after novel and frivolous excitement, only those right-minded people who will approach our dear ones in the beyond in the right and proper spirit. Letters—which will be "sensed"—will be duly acknowledged.—OSCAR NILSEN, 8, St. Mary's-terrace, Hastings.'

We received a few days ago a friendly letter from Dr. J. M. Peebles, mentioning that he was just going to Dallas, in Texas, to attend the convention of the National Spiritualists' Association which was to be held in that city during October. He added that he hoped to be in London some time next spring, on his way to Geneva, Switzerland, to attend the International Congress there at Whitsuntide. Our friend seems to bear the burden of his ninety years very lightly and to afford a capital illustration of the fact that 'the spirit is ever young.' We shall be happy to see him once more,

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'Steps in Spiritual Growth.' By the VEN. ARCHDEACON WILBERFORCE. Cloth, 3s. net. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C.
- 'The Transparent Jewel.' By MABEL COLLINS. Cloth, 2s. net, William Rider & Son, Ltd., Cathedral House, Paternoster-row, E.C.
- 'The Open Secret.' By C. J. WHITBY, M.D. (Cantab.). Cloth, 2s. 6d. net. William Rider & Son, Ltd., Cathedral House, Paternoster-row, E.C.
- 'Initiation into Philosophy.' By EMILE FAGUET (translated by SIR HOME GORDON, BART.). Cloth, 2s. 6d. net. Williams & Norgate, 14, Henrietta-street, W.C.
- 'An Indian Pot-Pourri.' By ELISABETH SEVERS. Cloth, 1s. net. Theosophical Publishing Society, 161, New Bond-street, W.
- 'Triune Man : Immortality Proved. The Message of Ka-Ra-Om, recorded by Novus Homo, Psychic.' Cloth, 5s. net. L. N. Fowler & Co., 7, Imperial-arcade, Ludgate-circus, E.C.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3rd, &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—Shearn's Restaurant, 291, Tottenham Court-road, W.—Mr. W. E. Long delivered an inspiring address on 'Fortune-Telling : Eternal and Otherwise.' Mr. W. T. Cooper presided.—15, Mortimer-street, W.—October 28th, Mrs. Imison gave successful clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. Douglas Neal presided.—Sunday next, sec advt. on front page.—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W.—Mr. P. E. Beard gave addresses on 'The Light that Failed' and 'Brotherhood.' Next week's services see advertisement on front page.

BIRMINGHAM.—CAMDEN-STREET SCHOOLS.—Mrs. Groom spoke on 'Spiritualism and its Proof,' and described spirit friends. Sunday next, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.—W. E. R.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Mrs. A. Jamrach's interesting address on 'Man, Who Art Thou?' was followed by 'descriptions.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Podmore, address and clairvoyance; at 11 a.m., usual service.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mr. G. R. Symons gave address. Sunday next at 7, Mr. D. J. Davis, address; at 3, Lyceum. Circles: Monday, 7.30, ladies' public; Tuesday, 8.15, members'. Wednesday, 8, astrology. Thursday, 8.15, public.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mr. Robt. King spoke on 'Woman and Man from an Occult Standpoint,' and answered questions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Davies, address and clairvoyance. Monday, at 8 p.m., circle (inquirers welcomed). Thursday (members only), 7.30, healing; 8.15, circle.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Morning, Mr. W. E. Long on 'Spiritual Ideals'; evening, Mr. A. Richardson explained his call to the spiritual work. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long, address on 'Can a Spiritualist be a Christian?'

BRISTOL.—144, GROSVENOR-ROAD.—Mrs. J. S. Baxter gave addresses and answered many interesting questions. Good week-night circles. Sunday next, at 6.30 p.m., public service. Monday, healing; Tuesday, developing; Wednesday and Friday, circles. All at 7 p.m.—J. S. B.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET WEST.—Mrs. Mary Gordon gave excellent addresses and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.15, public circle; 7, Mrs. G. C. Curry. Tuesday, at 3 and 8, also Wednesday, at 3, Mrs. Curry, clairvoyante. Thursday, at 8.15, public circle.

SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD.—45, THE PROMENADE.—Mr. J. Gambril Nicholson spoke on 'Inspiration.' October 29th, Mr. H. Wake, after an address on 'Christ and Spiritualism,' answered questions. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. A. J. Neville. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. A. Jamrach. 17th, Mrs. Miles Ord.

BRIXTON.—84, STOCKWELL PARK-ROAD.—Evening, Miss Violet Burton gave a splendid address on 'The Joy of Life.' Sunday next, Mrs. A. Beaurepaire, speaker, followed by meeting to decide our future work. All friends invited. November 16th, Fancy Dress Ball; 1s. and 9d. (visitors, 6d.).—W. U.

HOLLOWAY.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Mr. J. Abrahall spoke in the morning and Mr. Horace Leaf in the afternoon and evening, Mr. Leaf giving clairvoyant descriptions at all the services. October 30th, Mrs. Mary Davies gave psychometric delineations. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., open; 3 and 7 p.m., Conference with the U.L.S. Wednesday, Mrs. Clara Irwin. 17th, service of song by Lyceumists.—J. F.