

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATSOEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!"—Paul.

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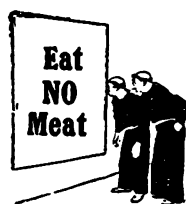
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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

To meet the loss of income occasioned by the 'discontinuance of mediums' advertisements, a fund has been started to which readers interested in the welfare of LIGHT are asked to contribute. Several friends have proposed the raising of the price of LIGHT, a course which we are anxious to avoid; but we would suggest to these that a small donation equivalent to the difference of a penny or twopence in the weekly cost of LIGHT for a year would be a welcome contribution. It is a painful task to appeal for funds, especially at a time like the present, but Necessity, although it knows no law, is no stranger to "special pleading." This, at any rate, is a special plea, urged with reluctance, almost with the blushes that may possibly mantle the countenance of conscious merit. We recall the story of a Highland piper who, in sending in his bill for his musical services to a former Duchess of Buccleuch, accompanied it with a note to the effect that her Grace's forgiveness for the liberty taken in doing so would be sufficient payment for her humble piper! We hope at least to be pardoned, and are anxious that the voluntary tax suggested shall be in every sense a light one, being, whether large or small, nicely proportioned to the circumstances of the giver. Donations will be acknowledged in these columns unless a request to the contrary is received. It is, perhaps, needless to point out that the sacrifice of income referred to comes on top of a heavy increase in the cost of producing this journal.

\* \* \* \*

Quite apart from its uses as a weapon in the agitation against laws as cruel and clumsy as they are antiquated, Dr. Powell's pamphlet, "Psychic Science and Barbaric Legislation," is notable for the beauty and aptness of some of the quotations with which, as a man of wide literary interests, he has enriched it. We have on the title page the touching "Apology" of Socrates to his judges when he described how "something divine and supernatural" came to him—something "which the prosecutor mentioned in a spirit of mockery in his indictment." It sounds exactly such a plea as Socrates might have uttered to-day if, entrapped by police spies, he were haled before a London magistrate as a rogue and vagabond, claiming to be inspired by a voice from the unseen ("Spookery!"). Amongst the other quotations we have an effective extract from Mr. V. C. Desertis' "Psychic Philosophy," which is rapidly becoming a classic in the literature of Spiritualism. It is a passage which opens with the words:—

There has never been in any country a new proclamation of any great truth or principle but it has been derided as puerile,

subversive, contrary to religion, ridiculous, blasphemous and absurd.

But, of course, for the campaigner of practical mind the main interest of the pamphlet will lie in its review and analysis of the offending laws and the consummate skill with which their absurdities are exposed. Nothing more valuable in its way has ever been produced. Dr. Powell has earned the gratitude of all of us, as a man who, having many distinguished gifts, has placed them freely at the service of a new truth in its time of ordeal and shadow.

\* \* \* \*

A learned friend lately confessed his surprise to hear that Socrates occasionally delivered his discourses in a state of trance. We referred him to Plato's beautiful "Phædrus." In that dialogue Socrates commences a discourse by calling upon the Muses to inspire him, and at its close remarks, "By the way, my dear Phædrus, do I appear to you as I do to myself, to have been speaking under some influence divine?" And then this conversation follows:—

PHÆDRUS: There certainly can be no doubt, Socrates, that an unusual kind of fluency has come upon you.

SOCRATES: Hearken, then, in silence to my words, for in very truth the place where we are sitting seems holy ground. So that if haply in the course of my oration I become entranced by the spirits of the spot you must not marvel thereat. . . .

A little later in the conversation the sage desires his companion to listen to the remainder of his discourse, saying that this time he may escape the trance. It is in the Phædrus, by the way, that Socrates is described as demonstrating by reason the nature of the soul. "Every soul," said he, "is immortal—for whatever is in perpetual motion is immortal." The passages which follow are of the fine flower of philosophy—sayings the truth of which is apprehended instantly by the intuitions. We do not forget that the dialogues were written by Plato. The main point is that utterances in trance are clearly recognised.

\* \* \* \*

The sharp and searching wind—to many it will have seemed more like a tornado—which has lately blown all through the province of psychical inquiry and practice has no doubt its appointed task. Before our subject could be lifted to a higher level, it was necessary to submit it to a severe ordeal, so that the elements which had no virtue in them should be finally purged away. It was a severe challenge to slipshod methods, to intellectual and spiritual flabbiness, to over-confidence, to the locus-pocus of the adventurer, and to the forces of misdirection generally. The bullying insolence, the unscrupulous and blind force employed by the instruments chosen for the work will have their day in turn. In their case Nemesis will not take so much the form of threshing and winnowing as of breaking and crushing. The punishments of amiable stupidity and the parasitism which preys upon it are always smaller than those reserved for wilful malice and brutish malignity. The lessons for Spiritualists are in the main sufficiently clear: greater cohesion, concentration on

our central truth to the exclusion of all side-issues, a higher standard of efficiency and severer canons of psychic evidence. Method and organisation are sadly needed in the direction of scientific experiment and the dignified exposition of the subject. But there are aspects of the question—the religious, for example—in which devotion, aspiration and meditation play their parts, and here the introduction of commercialism and the business spirit only leads to confusion and disaster. These elements will never mix.

## PSYCHIC SCIENCE AND THE AMERICAN PRESS.

In its issue for February (the last which has reached us at the time of writing), "Current Opinion" (New York), one of the leading American monthly journals, contains several articles and illustrations of especial interest.

In a review of "Raymond; or, Life and Death," which is accompanied by a portrait of Raymond Lodge, "Current Opinion" remarks on the deep impression which the book has made on the British public, quoting *LIGHT*, the "Spectator" and other journals, and endorsing the opinion expressed in these columns to the effect that the reviews of the work are "eloquent of the change that has come over the educated opinion of the country."

"The Insubstantiality of the Body as an Evidence of Immortality" is another article worthy of attention. It is a commentary on a statement by the Rev. Dr. Bixby, an American divine, to the effect that the monistic theory of life and death is being markedly undermined by scientific investigation. Dr. Bixby makes particular reference to "the discontinuity of matter in the human body." The facts to which Dr. Bixby alludes are now quite familiar to scientists—*i.e.*, that the molecule is simply a group of atoms united by electrical or other energies, the atoms in turn being composed of still smaller particles—the electrons or units of electricity. He quotes amongst the views of other great physicists the opinion of Sir Oliver Lodge that even in such an exceedingly solid atom as that of lead or gold the space within the atom which is not occupied by material particles . . . is more than a million times greater than the cubic space occupied by material substance. In the light of these and other scientific facts, Dr. Bixby finds the materialistic view of death utterly untenable. After citing Haeckel with his three great eternal "realities"—*viz.*, matter, ether and force, and Grant Allen, with his theory of material forces being perpetually radiated off and transferred to interstellar and inter-atomic ether, Dr. Bixby asks, *apropos* of the question of human survival:—

Is it not entirely probable, then, that in accordance with scientific laws and natural processes such a psychic etheric organism might both survive and build up for itself a new physical body, and might betake itself to some other environment where a fuller development and happier existence might be its destiny?

We might answer the question cheerfully in the affirmative. St. Paul, who was not a scientist, but only a seer, said the same thing nearly two thousand years ago, only in a "few other words." He told us that "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." It takes a long time to reach by logic the truths which are apprehended instantly by the higher faculty of vision.

"Current Opinion" also reproduces the remarkable picture, "The Imprisoned Christ," by that distinguished Pre-Raphaelite artist, the late Mr. William S. Burton, whose decease was recorded in *LIGHT* last year. Mr. Burton was the father of Miss Violet Burton, the well-known speaker, and a reproduction of the painting, presented by her, is on exhibition in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

It may be added that the January issue of "Current Opinion" contained a portrait of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and an article dealing with the important pronouncement made by him in these columns in November last—a statement which has made the round of the civilised world and has formed the theme of innumerable articles and notices.

## THE LATE LADY STAPLEY.

### THE ALLEGORY OF "THE RIVER."

A correspondent writes:—

Lady Stapley, who passed away on March 7th, was not widely known by many outside her own circle of friends, but her genial, loving influence on those who were privileged to come into touch with her has had, and will continue to have, through them a far-reaching, humanising, sweetening and uplifting effect.

Her way of living was so divinely human that anyone knowing her became aware of the presence of something exceptionally rare in the common everyday experiences of life.

It is the simple manifestations of life in Nature that symbolise the most precious experiences of the Divine. To many of her intimate friends her symbols were the tree that spreads its branches, giving shade to the weary traveller, and a hen gathering her chickens under her wings. It might be said that no fluttering heart was with her long before she divined its trouble, and enfolded it in warmth and security, so that it felt the throb of her loving heart and found rest in her deep intuitional sympathy.

Lady Stapley was best known beyond her immediate circle by two little books entitled "What came to me in the Silence." The first of these was published in 1899, and the second in 1902. One of the allegories—the "River of Death"—in the second book, is an apt description of her own attitude towards death and the life beyond, while the "dweller in the house that faced the river" might well stand for her own portrait.

It was the prospect from that "room beyond" that enchanted her most, and which she loved to contemplate. Into that room but comparatively few cared to enter.

It is in the "vestibule, filled with all kinds of lovely things," where most friends congregate, that the pleasant exchange of friendly feeling finds expression and the things of time and sense form the all-absorbing theme.

A very prevalent idea is that concern about spiritual things has a tendency to unfit one for the practical part of life and for the proper discharge of family and social duties. In her experience, however, this was not so, but home and social life were enlivened and entered into more fully through her realisation of the more abundant life beyond with those who have gone before into the eternal Reality.

We reproduce here the allegory by Lady Stapley, referred to above, entitled—

### THE RIVER OF DEATH.

I lay me down in a certain place (as John Bunyan has it) and fell asleep, and in my dream I found myself on an island covered with verdure and most lovely in some parts, but in others bare and desolate. There were many dwellings scattered here and there among the trees, and to each was a long strip of garden that went down to the water's edge. The water appeared to be either a wide river or lake, as I could see a faint outline of mountains on the horizon.

The houses, strange to say, had all been built with their backs to the river and what lay beyond it. Most of the windows that looked that way had shutters that appeared as though they had never been opened.

As I passed in front of the houses I saw that they had scarcely any outlook except to the public road, which was hot, dusty, and commonplace to a degree.

A man, standing at the door of one of the houses, courteously invited me to enter, and as I did so I remarked, "How strange it is that your windows do not face the lovely prospect, but only look into the street."

The man replied, "We do not call *that* a lovely prospect, and we only wish there were no river, and that we did not live on an island."

"Is there no narrower part that you could bridge over?" I asked.

"That we dare not do," he replied; "we know nothing of the land that lies on the other side, nor do we wish to; all we desire is to forget there is such a place until we have to go there."

"Are you compelled to go there?" I said with surprise. "Don't you want to see the country that lies so near your own?"

"Why should we? We know this place and are fairly happy in it; our life is suited to us; we eat and drink and enjoy the few pleasures that come to us, and we let the future take care of itself."

"But are there no boats you could go across in and see what it is like?" I asked.

"Boats!" the man said, with a little shudder, "*we* build

boats to cross that river! No, no, you do not know what you are talking about!"

"Has no boat ever crossed to you from that other shore?"

"Yes," the man said, "that is the worst of it, we can't prevent the boat coming here; we would if we could."

At this I was more puzzled than ever, and I said to him, "Who comes in the boat? Surely the one who brings it knows about the place he comes from?"

"No doubt," he answered, "only, you see, we don't care to look at him, much less speak to him."

"Has no one spoken with him?"

"Well, those who go with him may; but they cannot come back to tell us, so we know nothing of what happens when they enter the boat. But don't let us talk of it," continued the man hastily, "for to-day my neighbour, who has lived next door to me for fifty years, has been summoned, and I know not but that accursed boat may be even now waiting for him. Oh, we could be fairly happy but for that. Why, look you, I have seen a lovely girl of mine taken, and she hated to leave all her happy life behind her to go to some dull, dismal place, never to come back to those who loved her. Ah," he cried, "it is fiendish! Why have we been made to live at all?"

And I, touched by the man's misery, could do nothing but move silently away, wondering much at what he had told me. As I walked sorrowfully up the street I saw at the end of it a bright, sunny-looking house which, unlike all the others, was built with its front facing the river. Flowers grew in rich abundance round it, and birds were singing among the shrubs and trees that grew near. I was struck by the bright, cheerful look of the place, and as I drew near a woman came up the garden, softly singing to herself as she came, and in her hand was a bunch of roses. On seeing me she ran up quickly, saying, "Do come in and rest; you look so tired!"

As I passed in at the open gate she put her roses up to my face and said: "Are they not heavenly sweet?" And as the scent of the flowers came to me, and with it the sweetness of her friendly voice, all my sadness seemed to vanish like a mist before the rising sun.

Taking me through the hall into a room beyond, she led me to a window-seat which looked out on the garden that stretched far down to the river.

"Ah," I cried, "you don't mind the river being there, or try to shut it out!"

"My dear child, why should I?" she said. "That way all my best beloved have gone, and when I hear, as I often do, the plash of the oars as the boat is passing, my heart almost leaps within me as I think, perchance, it may be coming for me."

"But," I said, "you cannot come back, and you don't know where you are going."

"Come back!" she cried, "but did any ever dream of wishing to come back when once they reach that other shore? And," she continued, softly smiling, "I know enough about the place where I am going often to wish myself there."

"Haven't you been happy here?" I asked.

"Yes, very, very happy," she replied, "and just because I have, I feel so sure I shall be still happy; no place can change the condition of one's mind, you see."

I said, "If the people would only try to see the one who comes for them they might not be so much afraid."

At this a lovely light came into her eyes, and she gave a little sigh. "We are so foolish," she said; "I have lived for many years in one of the houses you passed, and I hated the very thought of the river and all that it meant. The only thing that helped me was the knowledge that all had to take this journey sooner or later. As one after another of my loved ones left me, I greatly longed to know how it fared with them, and would often go on a clear day and gaze and gaze across the river, wondering if they, perchance, might be looking back at the place they had left. After a time someone very dear to me was summoned, who greatly feared to go. I did not speak the thought that arose in my mind, but I wondered if I, too, might go with my beloved. So when he went to the water's edge and stepped into the boat, I cried to the shrouded figure in the bow, 'Ah, do not separate us, but let me go with him!' The figure turned, and, with uplifted hand, forbade me; but I saw underneath the dark garment that he wore a robe of dazzling whiteness, and his face was as the face of an angel. Since then I came to live where I could shut out, sometimes, the dull sordid street, and forget we live on an island altogether. And do you know," she continued, "on a very still, quiet night I can often hear far-off voices of glad and happy people, and sweet strains of music are wafted across, and the river seems all blotted out, and there is nothing between me and that land but fair meadows, carpeted with flowers, and there the dear friends come and meet me and together we hold sweet converse."

"But," I said, "does this not unfit you for this place and make you less happy in it?"

"There is no fear of that," she answered, "I love the people here too well."

Then I rose up and she led me into the hall, which was very spacious and filled with all kinds of lovely things. As I looked round, she said: "I have made this as pleasant as I could, because very few of my friends come any farther than here."

"How strange!" I cried. "Do they not go into the rooms that you live in?"

"Oh, no," she replied; "why, some do not even know there is any room but the hall, and others would not care to go into any place that had its windows facing the river."

As she said this, and with the sound of her friendly voice yet ringing in my ears, I awoke.

## PHYSICAL PHENOMENA AND THE ETHER.

A QUESTION FOR SIR OLIVER LODGE.

By F. C. CONSTABLE, M.A.

It is stated by Sir Oliver Lodge:—

But it will be remembered that Dr. Crawford finds that if a scale-pan below the table is at a height of about a foot, then there is a considerable downward pressure on it—considerably more than the weight of the table. In that case there must be pressure on the floor.

I venture—trembling at my audacity—to ask if this be necessarily true?

To argue, we must accept fully Dr. Crawford's observations, and from them it follows directly that the force levitating the table is *not* the result of matter pressing on matter. When, for instance, the scale-pan is below the table, the table is *not* levitated by matter (a material spring?) between the table and scale-pan, in which case action and reaction would follow a known law; but the table is levitated by something which is not matter as at present known to us.

May not the reaction on the scale-pan be the result of the scale-pan being within the area of the force (?) moving the table? And, if so, that part of the scale-pan *not* within the area would be unaffected by reaction, and so the floor remains unaffected. A new experiment by Dr. Crawford would easily determine the fact of whether there is or is not reaction on the floor.

What I write hereafter would come better from Sir Oliver himself; but I think what I state is scientifically correct.

By far the greater part of the table itself exists not in matter, but in etheric form. The etheric form of the table is determined by the motion of a comparatively few entities confined to movement within the etheric form of the table, and the (material?) resistance of the table as a table is a function of the movements of the said entities.

It follows, directly, that the greater part (the etheric part) of the table is open to the effect of forces unknown to us, so that *incidentally* the table which to us appears a continuity of matter may be affected in a way which the laws of Nature, *so far as we know them*, do not explain.

Sir Oliver Lodge, to whom the above communication was shown, writes:—

My comments on Dr. Crawford's experiments proceeded on the assumption, on which I understand he also was working, that the ordinary laws of mechanics applied; just as they apply, so far as is known, to the sometimes puzzling action of live things in general.

My friend Mr. Constable postulates the possibility of modified or extended laws of motion, and it may be that facts will be discovered which drive us to this extremity: but I expect that both Dr. Crawford and I will wait to be driven in this interesting but hypothetical direction. I hope to see the Ether brought into the scheme of Mechanics some day; but there is much to be done first.

OLIVER LODGE.

THE "Times" of the 17th inst. contains a remarkable article, "Before Caiaphas. The Closed Mind," to which we hope to make a further reference next week.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT," 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
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## SOME EXPLANATIONS AND A MORAL.

Much of the criticism which is offered by readers regarding the conduct and policy of LIGHT—criticism which, it is pleasant to observe, is nearly always friendly in tone—relates to things of minor importance that have already been taken into consideration. But now and again a point emerges which seems to call for a clear explanation and reply.

We find that some readers of late have been exercised by the appearance in LIGHT of notices of, and not unfriendly comments on, the activities of certain cults and movements which have somehow fallen out of the main track of philosophical and scientific Spiritualism. These groups consist of people who have become infatuated with systems, doctrines, and special revelations resting on the authority of particular persons. Our correspondents seem to fear that the notice taken by LIGHT of these matters suggests a danger of its being "drawn in" as a supporter of some particular cult or cults. There is no cause for any such fears. We abide, as always, by our fundamental principles—the reality of a world beyond the present and the possibility of communication with it. That is broad ground, and it calls for breadth of vision and breadth of policy. The central ideas are unitary; they link up all groups and schools of thought which follow them. However much we may disagree with some of these coteries, however much we may deplore the strange medleys of fact and fantasy into which they have turned our simple truths, we should not forget that differences of view, however acute, should never be allowed to develop into prejudice or animosity. The danger of being too broad is less to be feared than the peril of narrowness. We can be very indulgent with those who have strayed into thickets and by-paths which lead nowhere. They will all in due time have to return to the great high road.

Others of our correspondents wonder at the fact that after so many years of exploration and inquiry there is still so much doubt and disputation concerning the nature of the next life. Yet only a few days ago one of our foremost dramatists, in the course of an article in a London daily, referred to the hopelessness of trying to get reliable information on any special subject by consulting experts. They were often wildly at variance in their statements, and he noted a tendency on the part of each expert to explain the divergences on the ground that any statement which differed from his own must have been made by a person who did not know his own business. It is quite

true. We can speak from painful experience in the same direction. Yet these contradictory statements related to physical facts in the physical world, and not to the super-physical regions which we are only just beginning to explore. Is it necessary to say more?

We stated recently that the solution of the problem of a life after death was now a *scientific* proposition. Then why, we are asked, do we make so much of the question of morals—conduct and right living? What have these things to do with scientific inquiry? A great deal, a very great deal. Go into a munitions factory or a laboratory in which dangerous chemicals are being handled, and see how strictly the factor of conduct is insisted upon. The safety of those concerned depends on the strict observance of rules, and the honour and conscience of those who are asked to observe them. We might take another illustration—perhaps a better one, since a question of life material comes in—we mean the science of training wild beasts. The man who goes fearlessly into the lions' den will tell you how necessary it is that he shall live a clean life. By some strange instinct the wild beasts know when their trainers have descended to vicious courses. They scent the weakening of will and moral fibre which follows, and are quick to take advantage of it. The man's ascendancy suffers, and if he persists in his evil course he inevitably falls a prey at last to the vigilant savagery which he has lost the power to subdue. Do not tell us that Science or Art have nothing to do with morality, with Religion. That is a monstrous and horrible doctrine. We have only to look at the world to-day to observe the fruits of it.

## "THE REALITY OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA."

A TESTIMONY OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

BY SIR WILLIAM F. BARRETT, F.R.S.

I was glad to read in a recent number of LIGHT Sir Oliver Lodge's appreciation of Dr. Crawford's book on "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena." Having had the opportunity, through Dr. Crawford's kindness, of a couple of sittings with the remarkable medium, Miss Goligher—through whom the manifestations described in Dr. Crawford's book were obtained—I can testify to the genuineness and amazing character of these physical manifestations, and also to the patient care and skill which have characterised Dr. Crawford's long and laborious investigation.

Every opportunity was afforded me for critical examination; the light was sufficiently good for me to see the medium and the sitters, who were seated around and a short distance from the small table. When the table rose from the floor to a height of some eighteen inches, I requested all the sitters to raise their clasped hands above their heads; this they did, and I counted the hands to see that all were raised. Then, having received permission to try and push the table down, I found it resisted such considerable pressure that I got upon the table, and when seated was swayed to and fro, and finally tilted off the table. The table then inverted itself, its four legs being in the air and the top resting on the floor. Grasping two of the upturned legs I found the table resisted my strongest efforts to lift it, or even displace it, from its position. I could see that none of the feet of the sitters rested on the table, which appeared glued or bolted to the floor. After I had returned to my place outside the circle, I distinctly saw the table slowly rise from the ground and return to its normal position with its legs on the floor. If the medium, or any of the sitters, had attempted to lift the table and replace it in its original position, I should have seen their hands grasping the upturned legs of the table, but this was not the case.

The rapping and blows that occurred were so noisy and vigorous that they sounded like a sledge hammer on the floor, and I fully expected the ceiling of the room below would have



fallen from the concussion. Other extraordinary physical phenomena occurred which I have described in my book, "On the Threshold of the Unseen," which Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co. hope to issue this month, and the publication of which has been delayed by the shortage of printers.

Unfortunately, though Dr. Crawford had made elaborate arrangements for me to test his weighing experiments at a subsequent sitting, I was unable to verify his results, as a message was rapped out that the medium was unwell that evening, which, in fact, turned out to be the case.

In conclusion, I may add that I was much impressed with the sincerity and good faith of Miss Goligher and her family, and their readiness to comply with any suggestion I made. Hearty thanks are due to Dr. Crawford for the courage he has shown in publishing the results under his own name.

## THE LATE W. J. COLVILLE.

### A PUZZLE TO PROFESSOR BLACKIE.

BY E. KATHARINE BATES.

I am delighted to read Mr. Stanley Gordon's tribute to W. J. Colville in *LIGHT* of the 3rd inst. Mr. Colville's friends in America, in the Colonies and in the United Kingdom must be numberless, for I should imagine no more kindly soul as well as capable seer ever lived.

I first heard Mr. Colville recite an impromptu poem in a church in New York in 1886. Several subjects were suggested to him by the congregation, most of them ethical; the last named, however, was "The Floral Tribute to General Grant," and I was much struck by the ingenious way in which this was interwoven with one of the ethical subjects. It appeared a hopeless task when he began, but it was achieved quite naturally. I heard many lectures from him later, both in the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance and in those of the "Higher Thought Centre" when it was located in Cheniston Gardens. His serene and placid temperament always attracted me greatly. He seemed incapable of a hasty judgment or a bitter word about his fellow creatures—a great asset in his life's work as well as a most enviable possession for himself. We must all struggle against *les défauts de nos qualités*, as the French put it so happily, and perhaps those more energetic and impulsive souls who are sometimes tempted to call down upon their adversaries the fire which does not always descend from Heaven, can best appreciate the rôle of the true pacifist. Readers may be interested to hear what the famous Professor Blackie said about Mr. Colville when my dear old friend Mrs. Wiseman brought him under the Professor's notice as a boy of fourteen or fifteen years old. (Mrs. Wiseman will be remembered by some of the "Old Brigade" as a most courageous and loyal Spiritualist of many years' standing.) Professor Blackie was one of her many interesting friends, but he had no sympathy with her psychical views and was fully prepared to explain away everything on natural grounds—i.e., trickery on one side and delusion on the other. After seeing and experimenting with young Colville, however, he had the honesty to say to his hostess, "Everything you have shown me or told me about I can explain—except one thing. *I must confess the only thing that baffles me and that I can't explain is that boy.*" Mr. Gordon's interesting reference to Mr. Colville's abnormal knowledge of Church history, &c., throws light upon Professor Blackie's words.

I would fain place my small pebble on the cairn that must be raised in the hearts of all who knew him—the pioneer who worked with such zeal and courage during his whole life in a cause which was far less tolerated forty years ago than it is to-day.

SIR WILLIAM BARRETT writes, expressing his approval of the advertising changes in *LIGHT*.

MR. HERBERT G. PAULL, of 395, College-street, Toronto, as secretary of the Association for Psychical Research of Canada, sends us particulars of the incorporation of the society, which, he adds, has a good membership, and is particularly well officered. The president is Dr. Albert D. Watson, well known in Canada as an author and poet.

## THE HERMETIC SOCIETY AND ITS FOUNDERS.

### SOME REMINISCENCES AND REFLECTIONS.

The perusal of Mr. Samuel Hopgood Hart's newly issued work, "The Credo of Christendom" (noticed recently in "Notes by the Way"), has stirred in the mind of Madame Isabelle de Steiger many recollections of the Hermetic Society and its founders, and reflections on their teachings. She writes:—

The new material now collected by Mr. Hart, as well as the biographical preface, a most valuable one, chiefly refers to the foundation and formation of the Hermetic Society in 1881. It should be recalled that there was then a saying repeated among persons more or less disciples of Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, or much interested in their teachings, to the effect that they stated that the world would come to an end in 1881.

Here I may mention that as my book notes, diaries, and MSS. up to that period were with all my effects (I was preparing for "a one woman picture show" in London) totally burnt in a fire in a furniture repository in Edinburgh in 1898, I have most unfortunately only my memory by which to recall dates. It was, however, in 1881 that Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland were most prominent among Theosophists and Spiritualists and others, and it was in the same year that the now important weekly, *LIGHT*, succeeded the former Spiritualist organ called "The Spiritualist."

That "saying"—often, alas, repeated as a jest much to my annoyance—was much misunderstood, for the world still exists.

Nevertheless, though the timepiece of the Universe does not exactly synchronise in its hour and minute hands with our mundane clock, neither does the universal almanack exactly repeat that of the Church or the Nautical Calendars and the figures seem somewhat astray, yet is there not a general feeling that about that period (1881) the state of things—social, political, and religious—began to heave, as it were, causing a general sensation of increasing dislocation to the then stiffly-jointed machinery imprisoning everybody?

This set of causes started on an ever-increasing momentum and culminated in the present Niagara out-rush—the war of 1914. Not a doubt about it; the world as then constituted began to come to an end in 1881.

In 1881 Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland founded the Hermetic Society. This event was also a sort of prescient indication of the course which events would take, disturbing and disrupting the trend of conventional and ordinary thought. I refer to orthodox thought in science as well as in religion and social life. Let any thinker reflect on the course of events, how shafts of dazzling but most disturbing light have broken up the conventional thought-prisms.

The object of the Hermetic doctrine is to bring man back to the true *land*, i.e., the Biblical doctrine—that of the Fall, and the consequent necessity on the part of man of an endeavour to return, by means of his re-birth, to the old truths and to his original condition called in Scripture a state of perfect happiness in Paradise; for this world, though now a wreck and a reproach to humanity, once was Paradise, and man enjoyed perfect happiness in his Paradisaical birthplace.

This Hermetic doctrine, as quoted in the classical writers and as taught by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland, entails belief in the reincarnation of man, otherwise of his living many lives, not one only, on this earth.

Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland were the great and first teachers to the British nation of this most ancient and, I think, true doctrine. Under the lead of Allan Kardec, the French Spiritualists distinctly specified the fact of human beings having to pass through successive lives on earth; but the British Spiritualists have entirely negated and repudiated this doctrine. Later on in her teachings Madame Blavatsky strongly enforced the Hindoo and Buddhist view, and in later years reincarnation and karma have been the royal flags, as it were, of the Theosophical school.

For my own part, I differ from the Theosophical point of view and hold to the most ancient one, that reincarnation is a fact, a necessity, a destiny, and is inherent in the prime fact that man is now born naturally of the flesh, and in accordance with the present terrible laws of Nature. These rule and have ruled us since that great crisis, the Fall, so that now when a man dies he passes away from this prison of the flesh, *but* unless during his incarceration in this flesh he has made every effort to "clothe himself with the Sun," a regenerate astral body *fitted* for his immortal spirit, he merely passes away into one of the many astral conditions to which he is astrally akin; *but* he has by no means thereby gained immortality; he has merely a

surviving soul, and in due time he has to redeem this soul or he never returns to his original and immortal condition, the true man.

Now, how to accomplish this true destiny of mankind is the doctrine taught in the Hermetic school. Later on came the more modern thinkers of the Evangelical school, who, despite their view of the vicarious sacrifice and their misconstruction of the true teachings regarding the blood of Christ, yet in a rough and raw fashion revived the old truth that man must be born again. What *being born again* or being regenerated means, briefly, is comprised in the fact that man is gifted with the potentiality of such God-like wisdom that he can arrive, even in this world, at such a condition of angelic wisdom that he can in the extremity of his contrition see God and yet live.

The doctrine of reincarnation so earnestly taught by Edward Maitland and Anna Kingsford may doubtless again be accepted by the Catholic Church. There seems no absolute certainty that it was ever denounced by any Œcumenical Council, but rather that it was one that gradually slipped out of public teaching. May it not be that when the great Master Teacher so often and with such authority reiterated the warning that "now is the time," there were among the various conflicting sects, views, teachings, many frivolous people who put off the day of reckoning, and who did not redeem the time nor pay heed to the Apostles' stern direction to put off the "old man." May it not be that between the various views the growing Church itself did not specially carefully endorse the doctrine of reincarnation and people were left to act as they each felt able? There must have been a great clashing of views and doctrines as the growing Christian Church fought out their claims to a world-wide religion. I say fought out, for under no circumstances can Christianity be called a religion of peace. It points, however, the only road to peace. Plainly the whole and real value of Christianity is the fact that it emphasises the inner or spiritual road to that regeneration which is necessary to every child of man in a personal, not a general sense only.

All religions, in the main, teach the same truth, and various means and ways to arrive at this end have been promulgated by the other great world-teachers. While as human beings *we must* respect them all, it is impossible for us as Christians to really follow to their appointed end other than our respective birth religions. Though a Christian may think he has a full and complete understanding of, let us say, Buddhism, and a Buddhist may think the same regarding Christianity, I do not believe it. There is an inner rift which transposes ideas equally to both, and neither of them ever passes it in this state of life. This is a mystery, and has reference to that plane of mystery—the astral world; therefore as a mystery I leave it and return to our "noble souls," as Jacob Böehme was kind enough to call his appreciative readers. Still more am I inclined to call "noble souls" those who inhabited the bodies called Edward Maitland and Anna Kingsford.

I may incidentally mention that I possess an old fourteenth or fifteenth century book called "The Doctrine of Pre-existence," written in a scholarly and careful fashion, addressed to orthodox readers, in which the writer, the "Dean of Down," claims that this doctrine was never prohibited in the early centuries, but merely overlooked.

There is one point I must frankly touch upon, and that is this: Many readers seem to think that Edward Maitland and Anna Kingsford, in their anxiety to clarify the true Christ doctrine from its seeming idolatry in its worship of the man god Jesus of Nazareth, have somewhat mystified their own doctrine, so that the figures of Jesus and the Holy Family become in their teaching practically myths only. I do not think this. What I do consider is this, that Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland did not sufficiently explain that it was not the outer lives of these people that mattered to the world, and that minute historical accuracy did not, could not, and need not exist, for what really was requisite was the right understanding of the *arch* or spiritual symbolism that these epochal people held implicit in their outward lives.

I remember but few of the Hermetic gatherings. They were held in various places, chiefly in the rooms of the Royal Asiatic Society, Albemarle-street, W. There I first met those great Kabalists, Mr. McGregor Mathers and Dr. Wynn Westcott.

I recollect one very hot June afternoon a very learned paper being read by the former. The atmosphere was oppressive and overpowering in the great dark room walled with huge books; I was tired and exhausted with a long day's work in my studio, and it was about five o'clock. I shall not easily forget the confused vision of heads I had, combined with the encircling row of white busts of the great Oriental scholars they figured—Mr. Mathers' dark, ascetic, stern features; Anna

Kingsford's fatigued and lovely face, with the slight drowsiness floating even over *her* features; Edward Maitland's brilliant gaze as he looked across us all to the scene he was mentally picturing—all the faces merged in one, for my drowsiness was no fitting sensation; it held me bound, and I confess I can remember nothing of what was a most profound and remarkable discourse, but only the fact of my awaking at its close.

But Edward Maitland and Anna Kingsford had no smallnesses. Anna Kingsford laughed, and said something about Hebrew not being a general language. Both those Kabalists and scholars much appreciated Anna Kingsford's Kabalistic attainments; at that period the name Kabala was an Abracadabra to me!

I have had in after years many opportunities of discussing "The Perfect Way" and other writings with my great friend, that remarkable classical scholar, Mrs. Atwood (referred to on pp. 46 *et seq.*) and her appreciation of the rare ability and classical excellence of these books greatly delighted me. Unfortunately when such rare people all live at the same time more or less, and under such varying circumstances and places, there are so many cross-currents at work that it is almost impossible at the time to realise the importance and value of each.

I feel very sure that Mr. Hart's devotion to these writings will bring the reward it deserves. In these days how eagerly and anxiously Church and laity are searching for truth and for some standard of authority which will clearly proclaim that Christianity is alive and in full fighting order! This, I feel sure, will be clear to any and every honest soul who studies what truly should be, and *is*, the Credo of Christendom.

ISABELLE DE STEIGER.

## THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

THINGS HID FROM THE "WISE AND PRUDENT."

By "JOY."

(Continued from page 83.)

Among my greatest privileges has been that of receiving instruction from an angel whom I call "The Mentor." From the record of my psychic experiences to which I have referred I will quote some things he has said to me:—

The souls of many are calling for more light—light to guide them to God, the great All Father. And there before them, if they could only see it, shines the light they need, the only light by which their souls can find peace, the light of God's love as revealed to them in Christ, the loving Saviour who has spoken to them in such tender accents, "Come unto me and I will give you rest."

To all who earnestly seek to know God and to open their hearts to Him, He sends His holy angels, to minister to them, to give them spiritual guidance and comfort that they may realise they are truly God's children and precious in His sight.

There are angels, hosts of angels, eager, anxious, yearning, longing to minister to mankind, to persuade them to open the windows of their souls to the light—God's light—which brings with it that peace of mind that passeth all understanding. But because most of them dwell in spiritual darkness and worship false gods—the gods of selfish gain, of earthly fame or sensual pleasures—or are so depressed by poverty and misery they do not even realise they have souls, the angels cannot minister to them as they so fervently wish to do.

Few among the many millions of mankind know anything of the angels or their ministry on earth. The great majority of their spiritual teachers are equally ignorant. They believe that the angels remain always in heaven enjoying bliss unspeakable themselves, but heedless and forgetful of struggling, suffering mankind on earth whose souls are starving.

As we rise higher in the heavenly spheres, we gain a deeper broader knowledge of God's love. To the extent that we realise it do we ourselves reflect, though feebly, it seems to us God's attributes. And as God's love for His children on earth is no less than His love for His children in the Heavenly spheres, how could we be what we are and not love them also?

Even as your heart, sister, is moved to compassion by seeing one on earth who is starving, and you gladly give him of your means that he may obtain food, so are we, to a greater extent, filled with compassionate yearning to feed the starving souls of God's many millions—to bring to them the wonderful gift of God's love.

The love of God is not a mere abstraction, it is something real; it is the most potent force in the world. It is the soul of man what the sun is to the earth on which he dwells. Deprived of the life-giving heat and light of the



sun the earth will yield man nothing that will satisfy his physical hunger. He may dig and plough and sow, but nothing will ripen for him. And the soul that is shut off from the fructifying light of Divine love will yield nothing that will satisfy the needs of the spiritual nature for sustenance. The man who ignores God, whose soul is never illumined by the glorious light of Divine love, despite the most laborious efforts of his own intellect, however gifted he may be, can find no satisfactory answer to the deep problems of existence which press upon every earnest nature for solution. But as the magnetic needle turns to the pole, so does the soul, under the influence of Divine love, turn to the Heavenly Father and harken unto Him. Then do the doubts and perplexities that assailed him when he trusted solely to the guidance of his own reason vanish. Peace wraps him round. His fears are dispelled. He feels that wisdom far higher than his own is counselling him, and that which he has yearned to know, that which will alone give him peace of mind, is being revealed to him. He realises then that God does indeed exist, and that God is directing his paths. To attain that state of mind which renders him accessible to the ministry of the angels and brings his soul into communion with his Maker, man must cease his mental struggles. He must acknowledge his own inability to find that which his soul needs. He must yield himself to that instinct of prayer which is implanted in all hearts. He must pray for help. Be it in words or in a voiceless longing, it matters not so that it be sincere. Prayer is the great purger of the soul of those things that keep it from harkening unto God. By prayer he enters the silence where all jarring discords are stilled. And there, reverently and humbly, he should await the answer to his prayer. It should not be expected in material and tangible form, nor in audible words, but in the thoughts and feelings that are impressed upon him. For it is at such times there is revealed to man the truth that makes him free—free from fear in all its varied forms—and he partakes of that blessedness which is found in rest in the Lord.

Some hymns are still sung in churches and chapels which proclaim the faith of the assembled worshippers in the reality of angel ministry, even in these modern days. It will be a glad day for Christendom when those who sing these hymns with pious fervour really believe them, and when those who are engaged in spreading the good tidings of the gospel avail themselves of the help of the angels.

### A GENERATION AGO.

(FROM "LIGHT" OF MARCH 26TH, 1887.)

We have received communications from several quarters animadverting on the employment of an antiquated and obsolete Act of Parliament against such persons as "Neptune," in whose defence Mr. C. C. Massey [a barrister and well-known writer on psychical subjects, now deceased] so generously came forward. Some correspondents suggest a petition to Parliament; but that course would not be successful, we fear. These relics of a by-gone age of intolerance must be left to die out of themselves under an enlightened and wise growth of public opinion. Every case in which an obsolete statute is unjustly or unduly pressed is one step towards its abrogation.

The "Sheffield Daily Telegraph" (March 15th) records a good case of faith-healing at Lincoln. Richard Green, son of Charles Green, of Ripon-street, Lincoln, suffered from an attack of paralysis, and from epileptic fits. He was unable to move except by the aid of crutches. He has lately attended faith-healing meetings at Nottingham, where he resides, at 54, King's Meadow-road. "The effect upon him is such as would scarcely be believed, were it not that his friends and those who know him have ocular demonstration that he has been wonderfully and mysteriously cured. . . . He is full of life and spirit and walks about as if nothing had ever been amiss with him."

We hope to publish next week an article by Sir W. Barrett on that extraordinary book, "The Weird Adventures of Professor Delapine," with some remarks on the author.

PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY.—We have received from Mr. William Jeffrey, of Glasgow, a remarkable photograph of himself and another sitter taken by magnesium-wire flashlight in his dining-room on the evening of the 26th of January last in the presence of members of the Crewe Circle. In the lower half of the picture appears a very distinct "psychic extra," which Mr. Jeffrey declares is a true likeness of his late wife. He adds that he possesses no other portrait like it, as it represents Mrs. Jeffrey as she appeared in the later years of her life, subsequent to the last photograph she had taken.

## THE PERFECTION OF THE SOUL.

A GOLDEN SENTENCE FROM PYTHAGORAS.

BY LEWIS FIRTH.

The perfection of the soul will correct the depravity of the body, but the strength of the body without reason will not make the soul better.—PYTHAGORAS.

The part played by most movements, social or religious, whose objective is either the salvation of the individual or the improvement of the race, is not unlike that which medicine plays in disease, *i.e.*, to relieve the pain, but it rarely succeeds in correcting the cause which produced the disease.

The recent mission, in the Established Church, of "Repentance and Hope," is an example of what I mean. The causes that have produced an indifference to Christianity are deeply rooted in its errors rather than the truths for which it stands.

It is the clergy—high and low—who need repentance. They have, for the most part, failed to interpret and apply the teachings of their Master, whose mission was that of a physician who did more than relieve, for he healed—"made whole."

Let the Church perfect its soul, and the depraved body will cease to grow the weeds and thistles of make-believe and unrighteousness, and religion will become, not a byword, but a living stream for thirsty souls.

After two thousand five hundred years the Pythagorean philosophy offers a solution to the evils of the body, of universal validity. It is simple and comprehensive. It is an inversion of the present methods of science, education, and social reform. It introduces us to root principles. Instead of tinkering with effects, we lay hold of the truth that will make us free, *viz.*, that the causes of disease, poverty, depravity and vicious environments do not originate in the body but in the soul.

It is probably true that myth and legend obscure much of the noble teachings of Pythagoras. But analogy will help us here as elsewhere to comprehend what he taught and knew about the soul. Yet I have no hesitation in affirming that the knowledge which we moderns possess of the soul is not one whit in advance of that possessed by the seers of all ages.

The Pythagoreans taught that the soul was one, indivisible and perfect. It was capable of ascending to the plane of a God or descending to the level of a beast. The limitation imposed by the physical body tended to hold the soul in bondage. This bondage was manifested to Pythagoras in what he called "the depravity of the body." Whilst the soul always remained one, it could inhabit successive bodies.

Perhaps a modern statement of what the term "soul" implies will help us to simplify and illumine the truth involved in his golden saying.

The soul is a finer body—the physical form is composed of matter drawn from the earth and forming a kind of matrix built upon or round the soul, which interpenetrates, or is in close contact with, the physical body. During earth-life it is attached to the physical body by what has repeatedly been described as a "silver cord"—the spiritual umbilical cord. During sleep and in the hypnotic trance, and when death takes place in a natural manner, the soul can be seen hovering over the physical body, not unlike a captive balloon, the cord permitting the soul to function daily on its own plane, whilst retaining mastery over the earthly body.

And just as the umbilical cord determines the circulation from mother to child, so the spiritual umbilicus is the bridge over which the life-forces from the soul, and impacts from the bodily senses, pass to and fro in determined orbits. Impacts from the body give rise to sensations in the soul, the material from which perceptions and conceptions are born.

Again, the soul is the great workshop of the spirit in which experiences are worked up into faculty. The memory of an act may fade and die but the results determine the kind of behaviour we manifest to our fellows. From the experiences garnered from our earthly sojourn, the soul is weaving the mosaic of eternity. The soul is the preserver of the past, the transformer of the present, and the "will to power" which determines mathematically the path we shall travel, the experiences necessary for our growth; in a sentence, it is the master of its own fate.

The soul, then, is not only the "garden of life," where seeds are sown which bloom and ripen in the physical body, in acts and habits which degrade or ennoble our character; but further, if action and reaction are equal and opposite, then every thought, desire, wish and emotion complete the circuit, returning, boomerang-like, to the cause-world from which they originated.

The key to the formation of habits and their cure is one of the most illuminating ideas in the whole Pythagorean philosophy. It is fundamentally opposed to the explanations offered by deterministic psychology, so brilliantly expounded by the late Wm. James, the Harvard professor of psychology, wherein he states—"Text-Book of Psychology"—that habit at bottom "has a physical basis," or again, "the philosophy of habit is a chapter in physics rather than in physiology or psychology."

The basis of habit lies deeper than matter, however attenuated. Physics may measure its effects, but cannot explain them. The key to depravities of the body—degraded habits—is to be found in the cause-world of mind within the soul.

The physical body holds up the mirror in which the soul's imperfections are seen in their true perspective. No Acts of Parliament will make a sober nation, nor eradicate the vices—bodily depravities—from its citizens. The body may increase in weight and size in days of prosperity, but the stronger it grows the more likely is it to fall a ready prey to those depravities of the soul which depend upon the body for their satisfaction.

The roots of bodily depravity lie deeper than the cells, fibres and organs of the brain; and if man is to be "twice born," or "baptised of the spirit" and "converted" in the evangelical sense of renewal, he can only accomplish this feat through purification of the soul from depraved desires for sensual satisfaction. Thus only can he enter the path and become the master of his own destiny.

#### FROM THE NOTEBOOK OF "M.A. (OXON)."

##### A MESSAGE FOR THE HOUR.

Looking through one of the old Notebooks of the Rev. William Stainton Moses ("M.A., Oxon") recently, we came upon a message from his inspirers written in February, 1881. It is so appropriate to the events of the present time that it may be usefully transcribed here:—

You must not take too seriously the surface differences and dissensions. They are inevitable. Our friend Epes [Epes Sargent], who saw them in his earth-life and was so distressed by them, sees now how little they will affect final issues. This strife of undeveloped or half developed minds is inevitable. They are attracted to the subject, and become influenced by spirits of a like nature with themselves. They will hover on the fringe of the movement always and in times of distress and unrest will seem to be ruining it. They have no such power. Be content. The various parasites who prey on us and you, who earn a scanty notoriety by connection with us, or gather a precarious livelihood by fraud, are of little account. They will make their little commotion and die. But be sure of this: every time that Spiritualism is incriminated through the frauds or follies of its professors it will gain by the trial. It will be seen that these are the counterfeits, that it must needs be a divine truth that can outlive such assaults, and men's minds will be drawn to consider the evidences for its truth, and these will stand out more clearly and gain added weight from the contrast. If exposures avail to wipe out the present methods of dealing with low spirits through public mediums they will have wrought a most beneficent work, for we need not point out that every exposure that has disgraced the name of Spiritualism has come from the neglect of obvious and simple precautions. . . So long as communion is sought in the way and by the people that it is, you must needs expect to have the public movement infested by the undeveloped. This phase will eat itself out, and then your wise men will begin to say that Spiritualism is dead. Not so. It will then begin really to live.

The above message appears to have reference to those fiascos in connection with physical mediumship which were so distressing to the earnest students of earlier days who had acquainted themselves with the reality of genuine phenomena. It may be observed that there is little likelihood to-day of

any verdict amongst men, wise or otherwise, to the effect that the subject is "dead." We have made a tremendous advance since 1881, and the truth has taken hold on the minds of the intelligent portion of the public.

#### SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE ABSOLUTE.

In the preface to the popular edition of his "Matter, Spirit and the Cosmos" (Rider and Son, 1s. net)—a work which in its original form was reviewed at considerable length in *LIGHT* for January 8th, 1910, and which has been reprinted without alteration—Mr. H. Stanley Redgrove repeats his former assurance that his object in writing the book was to attempt no final and complete explanations, "but to make such suggestions as I think will be found helpful to the reader in working out his own solutions to the great problems of the Universe." Personally we think Mr. Redgrove has succeeded and that no small part of his success is due to the terseness and clearness with which he states his case. We select the following passage for quotation because it forms a picturesque break in what is mostly calm and passionless argument:—

And now we come to the great question—What is God the Self-existent? What is True and Absolute Substance? What is That which requires no explanation for its Being? Matter, replies Materialism, the eternal atoms—these are our gods. And we turn to Science and ask, Is this so? And Science sighs. Ah! me, she says, I, too, used to think that way, the way of Materialism, once, and I used to talk of the indestructibility of matter and the eternal atoms; but deep down in my heart I always found it hard to believe in sixty- or seventy-odd gods, and felt that a monistic explanation must be forthcoming. And once I took an atom in my hand—radium 'tis called—and lo and behold! it exploded into a thousand tiny fragments—some, tiny units of electricity—and then I knew Materialism to be false. What is matter? you ask; that I cannot say for certain, probably the manifestation of electrical forces, probably (if we push the analysis a step further) a singularity in the ether, but the self-existent—certainly not! And we turn to Philosophy and put the same query, Does Materialism speak that which is true? And Philosophy, being in a sceptical mood, laughs. Matter, she says, what is matter—what is it but a symbol I create in my mind? I touch, I taste, I see—what? I am conscious, that is the fact I know, and I call the varying modes by which I am conscious by different names; some modes of consciousness, those I call by such names as "seeing," "tasting," "touching," I have good reason to believe, arise in some way on account of an external world; but what is this external world? Ask me of consciousness—not of matter—I know not matter!

#### DEATH OF MR. W. J. TAYLOR.

Mr. J. Rutherford, of Roker-by-the-Sea, Sunderland, writes:—

Although we all view death as a momentary matter, a swift dream out of which one awakes with the reality of a glorious life, or as the poet puts it, "the flight of a bird through the arch of gloom into the sunshine beyond," one cannot help feeling deeply sorrowful when a brother, who has worked resolutely and with wisdom for the spread of progressive Spiritualism, passes from our ordinary visible ken. Mr. W. J. Taylor, president of the Gateshead (Rectory Hall) Society, died suddenly on Thursday evening, the 15th inst. The loss to the cause in the North is very great. A gifted speaker, Mr. Taylor was a man of comprehensive mind, of deep reverence, of fine spiritual intuitions, and it need hardly be added that these elements produced in him a generous, hopeful, and enlightened religion. He was, indeed, an unconscious witness to the divine power of character, penetrated and informed by a fervent love of the right, and a supreme devotion to the cause of freedom and peace.

It is suggested that the "Daily Chronicle" must have a clairvoyant on its staff. On Saturday, the 10th inst., it announced the entry of the British troops into Bagdad—twenty-four hours before the event—and on Wednesday, the 14th inst., it actually produced a map showing Bapaume inside the "new British line." This reminds us of the exploits of another London newspaper notorious for its antipathy to psychic subjects, which, on establishing a French edition, announced that it gave all the news a day in advance!

## A LAND OF MYSTERY.

The high stages of civilisation reached by ancient Egypt and the long vista of years through which scholars are able to trace its history have invested the country and its people with perennial interest, and even the series of six lectures on the subject which Dr. W. J. Vanstone opened at the Psychic Class on Thursday, the 15th inst., is not likely to exhaust that interest. This inaugural discourse dealt with the dynasties, the first of which dated from 4400 B.C. and began with the reign of Mena, the founder of Memphis, but there was no doubt, Mr. Vanstone stated, that much further back, before 5000 B.C., there was a long line of kings who were spoken of as Divine monarchs and who professed to be the sons of God come down to earth. Among the many interesting facts brought out by the lecturer was the early passing of a law enabling a woman to succeed to the throne. The first woman ruler (3200-3133 B.C.) was Nitocris, "the queen of the rosy cheeks." The most glorious period of Egyptian history began in 1700 B.C. when, after some stern fighting, the long domination of the foreign element known as the Hyksos or "shepherd kings" was brought to a close, and the original Egyptian dynasty restored under Amosis I. His queen, who wielded a great influence over the nation, was said to be the widow of the King of Thebes who had raised the standard of revolt against the Hyksos monarch. In the queen's mummy-case were found most beautiful jewels and a wonderful belt, together with the ritual of binding the belt on her lover before he went to battle and was killed. In 1600 reigned the great queen Hatshepsut, of whom many Theosophists regarded our Queen Elizabeth as a reincarnation. She was a woman of strong personality, possessing all Elizabeth's faults and virtues magnified. Her stepson, Thothmes III., was a great conqueror. His character was well symbolised in his granite fist in the British Museum. The next most striking figure was a remarkable departure from the line of heredity, a man who was physically a weakling and an epileptic but spiritually great. His country had become intoxicated with military glory and intellectual power when he sounded the note of warning and turned the people back to the spiritual worship of God. The work for the welfare and education of the masses instituted by Seti I. (1306 B.C.), a king equally great as a soldier and a philosopher, might possibly, Mr. Vanstone thought, afford some hints to modern reformers.

## THE CHRIST SPHERE.

Among the questions put to the inspirer of Mrs. M. H. Wallis recently in the rooms of the Alliance was one regarding the expression "The Christ Sphere." Was there such a place, and, if so, what was its relation to other spheres? The control's reply made it clear that he regarded the Christ spirit as the spirit of sacrifice for the good of others, quite apart from any form of creed. Taking this view, it might be claimed that the Christ spheres were those whose inhabitants were ever ready to help and strengthen their fellows. There could not, and should not, be any monopoly in Christ influence, either on this plane of being or the next—any claim that it was to be found only in such and such a Church or in such and such a sphere. Rather, it was universal; its power permeated and radiated through many spheres. It was the evidence of the Divine presence itself, vivifying and strengthening all who were attuned to receive it and even influencing those who as yet were not so attuned. It shone in dark places like a ray of Divine light cutting the gloom. We might all become Christs in so far as our lives were keyed to the spirit of love and self-sacrifice.

**NATIONAL UNION FUND OF BENEVOLENCE.**—The honorary financial secretary, Mrs. M. A. Stair (14, North-street, Keighley, Yorks), writes to acknowledge, with thanks, the following sums received in February: Private A. Topping, 5s.; Runcorn Society, 5s.; Mr. Mark Fooks, 5s.; but she points out that they only total 15s. against disbursements amounting to £18 7s. 6d. She expresses her grief that the claims of the old workers are receiving such meagre support and begs friends who have not already contributed to do so without further delay.

The current issue of the "Review of Reviews" deals attractively with a number of important subjects. Mr. Charles Dawbarn describes the romantic career of M. Briand, the French statesman, and there is an article which comes at an opportune moment on the Anglo-Russian Bureau in Petrograd, by Mr. Robert Birkmyre. Miss Felicia Scatcherd gives a quick, clear-cut sketch of Dr. John Pollen, so well known for his splendid work in India and Russia. There is also a bright and informing little article, "A Spirited Controversy," by "A Member of the S.P.R." The Review, in short, is fully up to its usual high standard.

## SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, MAR. 18th, &amp;c.

*Reports and prospective announcements are charged at the rate of twenty-four words for 1s.; and 3d. for every additional ten words.*

**MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.**—*Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.*—Address by Mrs. Mary Davies. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided.—At 77, New Oxford-street, W.C., 12th inst., meeting of members and associates. Mrs. Jamrach, clairvoyance. Mr. Geo. Craze presided. Sunday next, see front page.

**LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION:** 13b, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W.—Mr. Ernest Meads spoke on "Inspiration," and Mr. E. W. Beard on "Man, the Interpreter." For Sunday next see front page.—I. R.

**CHURCH OF HIGHER MYSTICISM:** 22, Princes-street, Cavendish-square, W.—Both the morning and evening services were taken by Mrs. Fairclough Smith, who delivered stirring addresses, subjects, "The Two Worlds" and "Power." Sunday next, Mrs. Fairclough Smith, morning and evening.

**WIMBLEDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION.**—Spiritual address by Mrs. Neville, followed by excellent clairvoyance. For prospective announcements see front page.—R. A. B.

**CROYDON.**—**GYMNASIUM HALL, HIGH-STREET.**—Address by Mr. Robert King, on "The Training of the Occultist." Sunday next, services at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Short circle after morning service.

**RICHMOND.**—14, PARKSHOT (OPPOSITE PUBLIC BATHS).—Miss Violet Burton gave inspirational address to a large audience. Sunday next, 7 p.m., Mr. G. Prior. Wednesday, 28th inst., 7.30, Mrs. Jamrach.—B. S.

**STRATFORD.**—**IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST LANE.**—Mr. Prior gave an address; after service, successful open circle. Sunday next, 6.30, Mr. and Mrs. Smith. Good Friday, 5.30, tea meeting and circle in aid of building fund.—M. D.

**BRIGHTON SPIRITUAL MISSION.**—1, UPPER NORTH-STREET (close to Clock Tower).—Sunday next, 3 p.m., Lyceum; 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Miss Mills, addresses and clairvoyance; also Monday, 8 p.m. Friday, 8 p.m., public meeting for inquirers.

**CLAPHAM.**—**HOWARD-STREET, WANDSWORTH-ROAD, S.W.**—Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., public circle; 6.30 p.m., Mrs. Sutton, address and clairvoyance. Friday, at 8, inquirers' meeting. April 1st, Mrs. Miles Ord.—M. C.

**WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.**—**PERSVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD, PLUMSTEAD.**—Afternoon, Lyceum; evening, address by Mr. B. Wilkins. Sunday next, 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, address.

**CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.**—**SURREY MASONIC HALL.**—Inspiring addresses by Mr. H. Ernest Hunt and Dr. W. J. Vanstone. Sunday next, 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mr. Horace Leaf, addresses and clairvoyance.

**HACKNEY.**—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.E.—Impressive address, "Personal Conviction," by Alderman D. J. Davis; Mrs. Brookman, descriptions; solo by Miss Reynolds. Sunday next, 6.30 p.m., Mr. Dougall. Monday, 8 p.m., Mrs. Sutton. Tuesday and Thursday, Mrs. Brichard.—N. R.

**HOLLOWAY.**—**GROVEDALE-ROAD (NEAR HIGHGATE TUBE STATION), N.**—Morning, Mrs. Brookman; evening, Mrs. A. Jamrach. Sunday next, 11.15, open discussion; 7 p.m., Mrs. M. Brookman, address and clairvoyance; soloist, Miss E. Boulton. Members' circle, Mondays, 8 p.m.

**BATTERSEA.**—45, ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—Note change of address.—Sunday last, Mrs. Bloodworth gave address and clairvoyance. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., circle; 6.30 p.m., service. Opening day, Sunday, April 8th. Tea at 5 p.m.; 6.30, Mr. J. Adams and several speakers. Easter Monday, 7 p.m., Social. Admission, 6d.—N. B.

**READING.**—**SPIRITUAL MISSION, 16, BLAGRAVE-STREET.**—Mr. Howard Mundy, of Bournemouth, gave addresses on "The Hidden Pathway" and "The Inner Sacredness of Life."

Mr. JOHN BURNS writes that we misunderstood his suggestion with regard to the withdrawal of mediums' advertisements. He favoured either raising the price of LIGHT, asking for voluntary contributions, or inserting only the advertisements of mediums whom the Alliance could guarantee. It should be observed, however, that such a guarantee would be a very difficult matter to undertake.

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